

Vr293SU20 Chinese American Literature

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Chapter 1

1. Why does Moon Shadow keep dreaming about a place called “Gold Mountain” (and not, “San Francisco” or “America”)?

- As a child, MS always have dream of fortune and adventure _ . A place of *adventure* vs. San Francisco
- *Curiosity*, not only from his own perspective but also mother & grandmother – they call it a place of “evil demons,” “shadows”; he *wants to verify*.
- Gold Mountain is about a place where his father lives – not just his father’s place but also spirit & motivation. He admires his father, GM is the place where his father is located.
- Circumstance of place where he lived in China: both GF and WR went for a living, others also went. It’s an opportunity for **men** to earn a better living for family. Living in China in comparison is full of hardships. GM reflects a dream, better life, problems. **Gendered**

Chapter 1

2. What are Moon Shadow's obstacles to reaching "Gold Mountain"?

- They don't have \$\$\$\$ 元元元元; still paying off father's ticket.
- MS needs a certain kind of identity to go to US: questioned by Customs strictly – get questions right
 - Intellectual ability to get to GM?
 - Experience – Hand Clap teaches MS what to say, etc.
- Father needs to pretend (later) to be a merchant to bring MS over
 - “You have to lie a bit to get into the United States.”
 - “If you only tell the truth, you won't be able to get into the United States.”
 - True in Moonshadow's case
 - But not in Uncle Bright Star's case – Black Dog
- Policy
- If GM is a social perspective (*an opportunity for fortune* in US) then reaching fortune in GM = being identified as an adventurer.
 - From characters' perspective, it's necessary to lie?

Chapter 1

3. How are “the demons” a source of conflict?

- Remember – in Chapter 1, MS hasn't met any “demons” yet
- MS hasn't met any demons yet, but he held a strong dislike of them. He's actually afraid of them. Affected by his grandfather – lynched by “demons” or returned with broken arms, in coffins.
- Many people died, but more still went to gold Mountain; Hand Clap wants to bring, but Grandmother / Mother strongly objects.
 - Hand Clap says / does something?

How do the main characters change, across the major events we've read thus far?

Use **interpretive sentences**. For example:

Windrider goes through a new stage of awareness as he fights (contests) his own brethren and acts independently from them, not causing them harm but enacting his own justice. "I acted on my own," he insists on his duel with Black Dog (117)