

## From THE GOLD MOUNTAIN POEMS

*The Gold Mountain poems are anonymous works written by some of the earliest Chinese immigrants to the United States. It was not until several generations later that the poems were edited by Marlon K. Hom and published by the University of California Press.*

*These three poems express the hardship and discrimination the immigrants faced when arriving in America.*



(一)花旗：美國  
 (二)稅員：參看歌\*1  
 (三)撥：驅逐

欲覓蠅頭利。窮鄉沒作置。  
 乘危履險走花旗。<sup>(一)</sup>遇着稅員盤詰汝。<sup>(二)</sup>  
 稍忘記。撥禁荒島裡。<sup>(三)</sup>  
 好漢真無用武地。不能一步越雷池。

## JSGJ I.5a

In search of a pin-head gain,  
 I was idle in an impoverished village.  
 I've risked a perilous journey to come to the Flowery  
 Flag Nation.

Immigration officers interrogated me:  
 And, just for a slight lapse of memory,  
 I am deported, and imprisoned in this barren  
 mountain.

A brave man cannot use his might here,  
 And he can't take one step beyond the confines.

5

10

家貧柴米患。貸本來金山<sup>(一)</sup>。  
 關員審問脫身難。撥往埃崙<sup>(二)</sup>如監犯。  
 到此間。閹室長嗟嘆。  
 國弱被人多辱慢。儼然畜類任摧殘。

JSGJ I.14a

(一)金山：美國  
 (二)撥：參看歌\*  
 (三)埃崙：音譯「島」；  
 指天使島

- At home I was in poverty,  
 constantly worried about firewood and rice.  
 I borrowed money  
 to come to Gold Mountain.  
 5 Immigration officers cross-examined me;  
 no way could I get through.  
 Deported to this island,  
 like a convicted criminal.  
 Here—  
 10 Mournful sighs fill the gloomy room.  
 A nation weak; her people often humiliated  
 Like animals, tortured and destroyed at others'  
 whim.

自由爲國例。何事學專制。

不持公理美人兮。困我監牢嚴密睇。<sup>(一)</sup>

狼虎差。橫行更欲噬。

罪及無辜真惡抵。<sup>(二)</sup>幾時出獄開心懷。

(一)睇：參看歌  
\*10

(二)惡抵：難以抵受；參看歌  
\*10

## JSGJ I.13b

So, liberty is your national principle;  
 Why do you practice autocracy?  
 You don't uphold justice, you Americans,  
 You detain me in prison, guard me closely.  
 Your officials are wolves and tigers,  
 All ruthless, all wanting to bite me.  
 An innocent man implicated, such an injustice!  
 When can I get out of this prison and free  
 my mind? †