



# Song of the Mountain

*Michelle Isenhoff*

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## **Song of the Mountain** Michelle Isenhoff

Mud and mire shall birth a tree,  
A sprout shall grow of ancient seed.  
The five unite to break the one,  
The curse of man shall be undone.  
But brothers rise ere dragon's bane.  
The last shall smite the first again.

Orphaned at a young age, thirteen-year-old Wei Song has grown up listening to his grandfather recite legends of the distant past. But it is his own history Song seeks to uncover to guide him toward the future, particularly the events surrounding his parents' deaths. But that is a secret closely guarded by his grandfather. Then Song discovers an heirloom that links him to an ancient prophecy. His destiny lies within the old tales he has scorned. Song must follow the path that killed his father.

## **Song of the Mountain Details**

Date : Published November 11th 2012 (first published October 17th 2011)

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Author : Michelle Isenhoff

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## **From Reader Review Song of the Mountain for online ebook**

### **Gail says**

I couldn't stop reading this story. It captured my imagination and I had to know what would happen. This story could easily be read as a family and then discuss the different personalities in the book, their choices, and why we make the choices we do. I especially appreciated the examples given of how Song asked for forgiveness after hurting Karina and how he came to forgive Keeto. This story is set in a small village that has a leader who lives up the mountain in a nice palace. Song and his grandfather live away from the village in a small hut up on the mountain too. Song's parents were killed and he was raised by his grandfather and yet his grandfather will not tell him of his parents. Song is bullied by Keeto and does not go to the village often except to run errands for his grandfather. Karina- Keeto's sister is his best friend. The grandfather has secrets that he does not reveal to Song, but he tells stories over and over again. These stories tell of 3 brothers and how they were supposed to take care of a tree which is protecting the earth from a terrible dragon. In the story, the dragon is unleashed and is going to destroy the earth, but grandfather and Song have to find the strength to defeat the dragon. In the end, we find out who Song really is and what part he will play in the problem. I found the story fascinating and wonderful in the lessons he is learning and in the ways he grows throughout the story. A good one to read and share.

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### **Gwynneth Ott says**

#### **Good short story**

The background for this tale is woven throughout the legends told by Grandfather to his grandson. But, not everything can be easily interpreted and overlaid onto our normal activities and make sense. Watch out for the dragon!

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### **Elise Edmonds says**

Overall I enjoyed this read. It had a folk-tale quality to it. The beginning was a little slow but the second half of the book was pretty immersive. I feel it's aimed at the MG age group.

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### **Betty says**

As I read this book, I could imagine reading it aloud to my grandchildren, knowing how they would love the excitement and adventure of sorcerers, dragons, and a dragon-slaying 12-year old. But would they realize that they were also hearing an allegory of the story of Adam and Eve and of Cain and Abel? Or learning lessons about respect for one's elders, the meaning of true friendship, and about betrayal and forgiveness? Would they notice the flowing language and attempt to mimic it in their own writing? Perhaps, if they read enough books of this quality.

I wish there were more books like this one for middle-graders. Fortunately, this is book one of a trilogy, so I

know there will be two more. I downloaded the Kindle version, but now I plan to buy the paperback for my oldest granddaughter.

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### **Stephen Gallup says**

I have on my wall several reproductions of ancient Chinese scrolls that I bought years ago in Taiwan, and this story prompted me to look at them anew. It's set in what is now China but in a mythical era before recorded history.

There is an old sage living in a hut on a mountainside. There is a legend about the Fall of Man and a cryptic prophesy. There is a dragon (but a malevolent one, which is a departure from typical Chinese legends). Most importantly there is an orphaned boy who longs for acceptance, and who finds that his destiny involves something far more significant than just fitting in.

The telling is in keeping with the genre, by which I mean it's simple and direct. That called for an adjustment, as I came to this after reading several novels that were heavy on introspection and analysis, but I think the tone is just right for the subject. The telling certainly kept my interest all the way through.

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### **Alex McGilvery says**

Song Wei lives with his grandfather on the mountain, but he is an outcast in the village. Karina is the only one who treats him kindly, but her brother is the leader of the bullies. It wouldn't be so hard if Grandfather weren't always telling him to forgive the boys who beat him and call him names.

One day things start to change. Song meets the daughter of the local lord, a strange shadow makes Grandfather send Song running ahead, a special box is left unlocked. However hard it was when he was the brunt of teasing and bullying, it is harder now as Song starts to learn who he is and who he must become.

I liked this story. It has the clean simple lines of Chinese paintings. There is a story that we think we know, but it is show to us with a new face. The simplicity makes this a good story for younger people, though it isn't limited to the younger audience. Song himself is a complex boy with battling impulses and all the doubts you'd expect of him. The people around him gradually become less three dimensional as they move away from the centre of the story, yet because of the mythic feel of the book this feels right.

I recommend Song of the Mountain for anyone who likes a good story. It is easy to read, but no less powerful for that.

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### **Donamarie Goldsmith says**

What a wonderful legend woven into a story. This was a great story with a lot of morals built into it. I loved learning the legend come to life as Song learned of it himself. Beauty vs. true love and that there is no room for hate.

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## **Corinne Morier says**

I did read the whole thing through, but I was not impressed with it. It read basically like a clone of every other YA fantasy book.

The first three chapters are slow. Infodumps galore. You can basically skip them and start reading at Chapter Four. The beginning of the book is also riddled with typos, and each one broke my immersion in the story while I tried to figure out what the sentence even meant.

The author failed to get me to connect with any of the characters or care about the story. Song was a boring, unempathetic protagonist, and his grandfather was basically a ripoff of Gandalf and Dumbledore: the old mentor character who has important information that he'll give to the protagonist when it's time and not before. Some details in terms of worldbuilding didn't make any sense. Nori's character arc made no sense, and Ju-Long came out of nowhere and was not at all intimidating. Keeto reminded me way too much of Hans from Frozen: the guy who, at the end of the book, comes out of nowhere to be like "I'm the bad guy!" but then gets beat way too easily and the consumer never buys the double-agent act to begin with. And through the entire book, there were just way too many infodumps. For such a short book, there was very little actual substance in terms of plot or intriguing character actions. I did not enjoy this one and would not actively recommend it to others.

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## **Kristen Kooistra says**

A wonderfully descriptive and vibrant story. Reading this felt like I'd found a piece of my childhood that I'd forgotten about. To explain, this book gave me the feeling of "I've read this before, long ago," but I know I haven't. So it felt like finding an old friend, only it was a new one. Kind of like the feeling of coming home but you've arrived at a place that emulates home in every manner rather than it being your actual home.

There's not that many characters as this is a story that has a lot to do with personal growth. It was simple in its use of a bare cast and a "normal" setting and I think that really helped to accent the amazing talent of Isenhoff.

Her descriptions were just WOW. So vivid and real. Though there is an unusual amount of comparisons(especially using like/as)--enough where I did notice there was a lot by chapter 2--they're so creative and the story is so engaging, that it didn't detract in anyway for me. It's more just something I noticed(and can't help mentioning).

The characters were amazingly indepth and well-developed. I felt connected to them(especially Song and Karina) and loved the introspective nature of both.

A tale of forgiveness, looking beyond the outside, and learning that enemies don't care if you hate them, but the hatred can negatively effect you.

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## **Vera Godley says**

**My thoughts:** With her beautiful use of words, Michelle Isenhoff has created a story whose text flows with imagery and words that incite the mind to create a picture of a world in a time long ago when the world was young, man lived harsh lives, evil abounded, and dragons lurked.

In *Song of the Mountain* one might think this is a story of a mountain and the song-story about it. Not so. This is a story set in a long ago oriental world. Song is a boy growing up in primitive surroundings and being raised by his grandfather, who is not who he seems to be. They live on the mountain and in the valley is a village. Nearby is the land the "Lord" who is over them all.

But there is evil and that is in the form of a dragon who seeks to destroy.

This is a short middle-reader book that even adults can enjoy. I do not typically read fantasy which this is somewhat akin to. But I thoroughly enjoyed this little book. The story of "beginnings" and of conquest over evil is timeless. I recommend this and other books by Michelle Isenhoff heartily for classroom use as well as personal reading enjoyment.

**GIVEAWAY:** Michelle Isenhoff will give away a digital copy of her *Worlds of Magic* collection, which includes *Song of the Mountain*, *The Quill Pen*, and her brand new one, *Taylor Davis and the Flame of Findul*. Winner can choose it in mobi, epub, or pdf format. Begins May 29 & ENDS June 12 @ 12:01 a.m. EDT. Open world wide.

**DISCLOSURE:** A complimentary paperback copy of *Song of the Mountain* was provided by Michelle Isenhoff to facilitate my honest review. Opinions expressed are solely my own.

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## **Aelvana says**

Song aches to know about his family. His parents have died, and he lives with his grandfather, who refuses to speak of them. But without knowing his past, how can Song know his future? Then a dragon shows up, and Song realizes there is more to both his past and his future than he ever expected . . .

I really liked this. The story is set in an alternate historical China (with bits of fantasy, such as a fire-breathing dragon). The setting builds in a natural way, and the description never stalls describing things that would be unfamiliar to a Western audience. Instead it's all presented as Song experiences it.

Song himself is interesting in a couple of ways. His focus on wanting to know his own history is understandable, but it's also unique because he feels he doesn't have a future without knowing his family history. It's less a personal grief and more of a cultural expectation. That said, he's also the only one making a big deal of it. The villagers may or may not care about their own ancestors, but Song isn't close enough to any of them for a direct comparison.

I'm not sure what to make of Nori's ending. I don't quite believe what Song believes actually happened, and I don't have much sympathy for her in any case. At least Song comes to his senses about her sooner rather than later.

Overall this is a somewhat short read but a good one. I rate this book Recommended.

See my reviews and more at <https://offtheshelfreviews.wordpress....>

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### **John Purvis says**

“Song of the Mountain” was published in 2012 and was written by Michelle Isenhoff (<http://michelleisenhoff.com/my-books/>). This is the first of “The Mointain” trilogy. Ms. Isenhoff has published more than a dozen books.

I obtained a galley of this novel for review through <https://www.netgalley.com>. I would categorize this novel as ‘PG13’ as there is a little Violence. The novel is set in a land with oriental culture. The primary character is 13 year old Song Wei.

Song lives with his grandfather Li Min. Li lives almost as a hermit, but is called upon by the nearby village for medication. Living apart from the village, Song is treated as an outcast. A dragon returns and that involves Song in a prophecy as to how the dragon can be dealt with.

This Young Adult Fantasy is a relatively short story, only taking about 3 hours to read. I would say it is more of a novella than a novel. It also reads more like an oriental fable than a novel to me. I found it difficult to be engaged by the characters for some reason. I give this novel a 3 out of 5.

Further book reviews I have written can be accessed at <http://johnpurvis.wordpress.com/blog/>.

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### **Stacy Renee (LazyDayLit) says**

Song Wei's name means 'Great One' but Song doesn't feel great at all. He feels like an outcast who will never truly know who he is. But when a force of darkness threatens the village and the people he cares for, he finds himself immersed in what he thought was only a story that his grandfather liked to tell. He will come to find that it is his story after all.

I really enjoyed this short novel. Just a few pages in and I felt like a child, snug in bed, being told a magnificent tale by the greatest of storytellers. It is beautifully written and at times made me feel like I do when I am listening to my favorite songs, wrapped in a blanket of beauty and wonder. There was much wisdom in the characters and I think this is a great story for kids because they could learn many important lessons from it. I definently would not limit my recommendations to just children, though. I think everyone could enjoy it equally.

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### **E.B. Dawson says**

Very much enjoyed this book! It is a fun middle grade/young adult fantasy woven into a China-inspired

setting with biblically-based mythology! The plot, setting, and mythological aspects were very well conceived. I loved the themes and the way characters surprised you. I would love for my kids or nieces to read this some day and talk about the analogies in it. I recommend to any lovers of C.S. Lewis/Lois Lowry.

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### **Stephen Merritt says**

Another great book from Michelle Isenhoff. I have read most of the Recompense series that are also very good. This story follows Song Wei, a young man, in a remote mountain village of oriental style. Song is part of an old prophecy that although it involves a dragon is not over done so the story flows very well. He lives in a small hut with his grandfather as they deal with life with the nearby village, local lord, friends, enemies as the prophecy looms closer. The character development is good, drawing you into their lives, troubles and excitement. Another great book that was hard to put down. Definitely looking forward to reading the next one.

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