



Gold

Geraldine Mills

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For middle-grade readers, Geraldine Mills's *Gold* is an adventurous postapocalyptic novel about two brothers discovering the world around them—and by extension, their own past.

Twin brothers Starn and Esper live in a world covered with volcanic ash. Their father leaves them by day to work, while an illness has claimed their mother and sister. Left alone by day, the boys amuse themselves in the house, knowing they cannot go outside in the cold, sunless world that surrounds them. But one day, the boys break into a forbidden room and there find secrets about their family and their past that set them on an adventure to forbidden lands and impossible promises.

The world in *Gold* is rich and complex, and the boys discover its complicated history over the course of the story, learning more about a time they refer to as “before the Ash.” As they do, they learn more about their own family as well, and about what it takes to rebuild the lives and land around them. The riddle at the heart of the novel is the treasure that the boys seek, the promise of which set them off on an adventure that would lead to surprising consequences about what to value in their postapocalyptic world.

Gold is a fast-paced middle-grade adventure novel set in a world that is still picking up its pieces—leaving plenty of room for Starn and Esper to make a difference. The simple, present-tense prose belies a stark, well-drawn-out land that would be perfect for younger readers intrigued by quest novels.

STEPHANIE BUCKLIN (May/June 2017)

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