

# *Lenny's Dreams 4 — 'The Corn Field'*

By B. C. Bamber

Sarah was in trouble. Lenny gathered his brothers and went down to the barn. Across the lane from the barn was a field of corn. Larger than any English cornfield. More like the American mid-west. From there he could see two figures off in the distance. He took off into the air to search for her and as he flew over-head he could see her running frantically from her husband. He was in a rage, his face red with anger, carrying a weapon. Lenny looked behind him to see where his brothers were. They were running to catch him up but for now he was on his own. He swooped down, firing strange long luminous missiles at him knocking him down. He swooped again, further down and picked Sarah up in his arms and carried her back to the barn. As he passed over-head they stopped running as her husband slowed down to get his breath back. It wasn't over yet. As they arrived at the barn it was burning and Sarah in a panic was trying desperately to think of a way of stopping it from being destroyed, but it was too late. Eventually the brothers were face to face with her husband as a stand-off commenced. He knew he could do nothing but watch as he left him behind, his barn burning and his wife rescued from his furious temper.

Lenny woke from his dream and wrote it all down before breakfast, as usual. He ate quickly and turned on the radio, before getting dressed. The phone rang and it was Luke, Lenny's son ringing from America. His grandmother was ill and they were coming over to see her. It was all arranged. They'd be there in two days.

Lenny was excited. It was near to Luke's ninth birthday and for the first time since he was three years old, Lenny would be there on the day. If he was lucky. It was a twelve day wait, but that would be near enough. Sarah his ex-girlfriend came on the phone and explained the situation. She was uninterested in talking about access to Luke. But it was implicit. It didn't need to be said. His girlfriend's mum had timed it all perfectly.

As he left he walked across towards the shops, bought a few things and carried on round to the high street where he saw his parents. They chatted for a while, and somehow they already knew about Luke's grandmother. She was dying, she wasn't just ill. That night just as he was falling asleep, he saw a vision of her. Her body, her face. Then he saw her spirit leave her, lifting into the air and being whisked away on a wind into nothingness, her lifeless body left behind as her soul screamed in fear of separation from life into death. He jumped and sat up. He thought for a while. Could she be dead soon? This was a first; even for Lenny.

Sure enough by the time Sarah arrived her mum had passed away. Sarah was distraught. She'd missed the last few days of her life. Sarah couldn't help but feel emotional and they talked about things. They sat in the waiting area of the hospital; her back arched over her legs, her hands holding up her head, her elbows digging into her knees. She spoke into the floor, as Lenny struggled to hear every word. Her husband had refused to let her go and for days there had been a power struggle between them. Eventually when her mother's condition had worsened he gave in and Sarah left soon afterwards. As they spoke her mobile beeped, a shrill monotone noise. She pressed the button and stopped abruptly. It was him. Lenny could hear his pleading and apologies, but they were going unheard. Buried under her grief she was not going to retreat for at least a more few days. Maybe his number was up? This might be enough to get her and Luke home.

When she finally ended the conversation, Sarah tearfully confessed that he'd recently had an affair. Then as the conversation developed, it became apparent that she only suspected him. There was very little proof. The chances are there was never any affair, and she'd imagined it. The poor woman had lost faith in him, that was for sure, but Lenny didn't know why.

Luke was definitely more withdrawn than he was on his last visit home. He seemed caught up in something he didn't understand, the confusion showing on his face. Sarah was giving signs that she was interested in rekindling the relationship between them. But Lenny was unsure. The night after the funeral she invited him to stay with her while Luke stayed with Lenny's parents. She was carefully orchestrating it so that she could get him alone, keeping the world out, explaining it away. Calling it bonding, 'for Luke's sake'.

The conversation turned to the good-old-days and how she still loved him, despite everything. She kept the wine pouring and went up for a bath inviting Lenny to follow, so that they could chat. She undressed right in front of him as she continued to talk as if all this was normal. Lenny sat on a chair he'd brought up and she seemed to enjoy being watched by him. She was being provocative and the atmosphere was sexually charged. He was turned on enough to believe that the next logical step was from here to the bedroom. But when it was time, she backed off, looking horrified. Lenny was shocked at her sudden turnaround. He didn't understand this at all.

'You've assumed a lot Lenny.' She told him getting dressed. She cocked her head to one side and smiled, while she dried her hair. 'I'm flattered but it's not going to happen.' Lenny wondered if she'd done this on purpose. He disappeared downstairs and sat on the chair in the front room, analysing what had just happened, hardly believing it, unsure what to do next. Wounded he waited for Sarah to come down. It took a while.

'We've been through this a few times haven't we? I am married.' Lenny stayed quiet. He stared at the floor. He gave her the benefit of the doubt, but it didn't stop there. She lay down on the couch in her night dress and spoke as if everything was normal. She rubbed her leg up and down, revealing her thigh, and then suddenly straightened it again, pretending it was an accident.

'Lenny?' she said. 'Come and sit here.' She patted the couch. They did have sex. Lenny tried to justify her actions, with her mother's death, the drink, the problems at home. But he felt worried. There was more to this than met the eye. They went to the bedroom and there he lay awake. He thought she was asleep, but they had sex again before the night ended. They slept in each others arms clinging tightly to one another. Lenny hadn't felt anything like this in a long time. Feeling his skin against hers was wonderful. He was stone cold sober and had been all evening. He slept a few hours, and didn't dream for once.

When she woke up she was fine. Everything was fine. She kissed him and smiled, and then prepared breakfast. By late morning they arrived back at his parent's house and Luke ran out and hugged Sarah and Lenny rubbed his hair as he always did. They went inside and Sarah sat down, perched neatly at the edge of the chair, in a temporary fashion, ready to leave at any minute, while Lenny's parents caught up with Sarah. Lenny sat silently, a little disturbed by what happened last night. The truth was he wanted her back. But he knew it wasn't to be and Luke's American accent was getting stronger, year after year. He was missing everything. The conversation began to be manipulated to an unnatural end by Sarah, desperate to go, until eventually she stood up and said her goodbyes. They saw them both out, waving to Luke as they drove off; a lost look on Luke's face said it all. Sarah was unhappy with her life in America; Britain was beckoning as it always does. They went back into the house just as the car went out of sight.

The next time he saw her, a week later, she was with her husband. He'd turned up out of the blue and the arguments started quickly after that. It appeared he did not trust her. The three adults were together with Luke for one last visit. As he looked at her husband he tried to find a way in to see what he was doing to her. Somewhere to see into him. Some people are closed books; others gushers, all their secrets on the outside, to be read by sensitive people like Lenny. But he could see nothing. As he looked down, he saw a yellow flash around his shoulders. That was it. But he had no idea what it meant.

Lenny was trying hard to avoid feelings of hate towards him, but this man had taken Sarah and Luke from him. At the time Lenny was too withdrawn to fight back. But he couldn't help wondering whether this relationship was just temporary? To tide Sarah over until she could trust Lenny again. Sometimes when people become unwell, like Lenny had, their lives become permanently damaged, unable to rid themselves of the stigma, no matter how hard they try. The trust elements of personality leaves their soul: their chemistry. Everything about them is different.

He slept alone that night, a tortured soul. Every night was the same. As he lay there the yellow flash popped into his head again. What did it mean? He lay there some more, unable to get into the right state of mind to begin the seven second countdown to sleep. Unable to turn the switch. A vision appeared. A man reaching over the shoulder of another man, as if to wrench him up from his seat. A look of shock on the victims face; a look of fury from the attacker. These visions were often violent, but when they revealed their true meaning it was always much more benign than they appeared. He dared not imagine that his American rival, was going to be attacked. But if so, by who? For what reason. Would he die and leave them alone?

Sarah and her husband would become closer than ever if he was attacked and lived. Wicked thoughts passed through him. What trouble he could imagine for that man. He was an innocent though. Lenny decided to drop it from his mind and focus instead on sleeping. It occurred to him that the signs were there, but the reality might be very different.

Lenny slept in the next day. He spent the day alone. The phone never rang once. Back to the old routine. Frustrated he ended up pacing up and down in the flat, waiting for the phone to ring with news of the next chapter. Waiting for that man to leave, dead or alive.

They were due to go back to America in a week. They all got together and Lenny's mother cooked for them at his parent's house.

'My job?' said Sarah's husband in answer to a question. 'I'm a technical assistant to an engineering consultant, working on dam's and sewerage in the US.' His American accent didn't seem real. American accents never did. Nobody in Britain hears them for real all that often. 'The states has extensive sewerage works right across America. Repairing them is big business, and we're one of the biggest in our state.'

'And tell me, how did you come to be in England?' Lenny's mum asked, her English accent embellished by the presence of an American. The Queens English in foreign company, sounds impressive. The scratchy, loose local accent for family and friends. Just like the best china was now being used for the special guest.

'I came here to help look into markets in England for my company.'

'No luck then?' Lenny said sarcastically. His mother looked at him in disgust.

'We have signed a deal this year actually.'

'Really! Does that mean we're moving here?' Sarah asked.

'I was saving it for the right time,'

'Creep'. Lenny thought. 'I bet he's only just thought of it'. Sarah leapt up and for the first time, Lenny noticed she was wearing yellow. She grabbed him from behind and hugged him tightly, and he laughed.

'I know she's wanted to come home for a while, so I kept up the pressure on the boss to pursue our leads here. And this is the result.' She kissed him, and he smiled, slightly embarrassed at the attention. It was good news. It was a result. Luke was coming home. The cornfield dream, seemed at the time to suggest Sarah was hiding the truth about what kind of person her husband really was. Perhaps the corn field was just an expression of something else, not a prediction or insight, but playing out a scenario in his mind to express his anger at the situation he was in. He saw himself as the hero, rescuing her from the emotional presence of another man and placing himself back in the essential role in her life. A role he wanted to fulfil, but couldn't.

The events were now moving in the right direction. Maybe even a custody review could be carried out. Luke could stay with his dad at weekends, instead of these occasional long-haul flights, with months in between. Good news, definitely good news. Then breaking through his day dreaming came the reality.

'We're going back home in two days. I've got to get back early.' This came as if the previous announcement was to soften the blow of the earlier one. The room went quiet. No-one but him wanted to go back early. But the decision was made. Lenny was angry. This guy didn't need to go back. It was a lie. He stayed silent.

The next day was sunny and Lenny walked through town past the cafes and restaurants serving coffee and food in the open, a new sight here. The summers were good enough to maintain the investment in outdoor cafes and restaurants. As he walked along Luke quickly emerged from the crowd, running towards him, a look of panic on his face.

'Hello!' they hugged as Lenny greeted him.

'Mommy's arguing with a man'. He said pointing.

'Where?' he dipped his head trying to make out Sarah, among the people, not quite sure where Luke was pointing. Across the street there was a man dressed in yellow, grappling with Sarah's husband. He looked angry. Sarah's husband looked drunk. Sarah was screaming as people watched stunned and Lenny instantly recognised the attacker.

'Eh!' Lenny shouted as he ran across, Luke behind him. The man looked up, recognising him, he let go and backed off as Sarah's husband jumped up and began pushing him around. Lenny began to speed up. The attacker was a local man. Lenny didn't know him well, but enough to say hello. Before he arrived the Police had turned up, from the opposite direction with a couple of security guards, running along the street, holding onto their radios as they went. They were all arrested including Sarah.

An hour waiting in the Police station lobby went by, and then Sarah and her husband appeared looking dishevelled and annoyed with each other. The man had tried to steal her hand bag and she retaliated. The handbag was looped over Sarah's husband's chair, and when he'd reached over to grab it back an altercation started. He wasn't drunk, but the none-the-less it seemed to confirm the strangeness of events which had been running through Lenny's mind the last two days. He had been sure that Luke was coming home, and now this. It could jeopardise everything. The vision had been disproved once as an act of violence, and then proved as an violence when repeated a second time. This was a conflict of destiny; its struggle showing itself.

Sarah reassured Lenny and Luke that despite the incident they were moving back home to Britain. This was what she wanted. It's what everyone wanted. Luckily her husbands transfer had

already been agreed. It was now just a formality. It would be a day Lenny had prayed for many times and his dreams; once just a random selection of images, were realising themselves. He was manifesting some movement towards an ambition. It's nature, twisted and unrecognisable to those around him. The cornfield; the unhappiness of Sarah; the incident in town, just a flash of yellow setting off a whole series of events. He wanted to tell someone who would believe him, but he couldn't. He had no choice but to keep it a secret; that he was definitely able to manifest images and imagination into reality, where God allowed. The truth was as simple and as frightening as that.