Lehi's Dream

Mark Bennion

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Lehi's Dream

I sleep to murmur and cracked wheat. My eyes half-open, kaffiyeh rolled back, lamp on and trimming, the goats and camels spin away. My tent door unfolds onto the valley of Lemuel’s venting. A wind rushes forward, sifts the chaff of my resistance. I walk on a trail of yucca and stone. Low clouds cover the noonday sun, and I keep moving beside a green river, beside a tar fountain where men count hooks in their bait, make nets out of their addictions. Mothers weep at their children fishing. People carry dice and chandeliers, shout, Mint. Manners. Go to the building, the building, the building. Laman and Lemuel wander in the wisps of light, then whirl away. In the fog I bow my head, taste salt in the air. The voices rise, my mind pushes on. Up ahead Sariah and Nephi peel fruit in a white garden. Sam begins to speak. The path Forbes among bellows and raw meat. I recall the dust of my gold staircase and hear a sandal lift from Jerusalem stone. I gird myself against upheaval, burrow into frontier religion.

—Mark Bennion