

夢中見熊

人們經常用“夢熊有兆”來表示懷孕之喜。夢熊之喜其實源出古代迷信，時人以夢中見熊為誕男孩的徵兆。《詩經·小雅·斯干》載：“大人占之，維熊維羆*，男子之祥；維虺**維蛇，女子之祥”。“大人”是古代的占夢官，引文謂占夢官釋夢，表示夢見熊羆是生男孩的吉兆，夢見虺蛇則是生女孩的吉兆。因此，“夢熊之喜”和“夢兆熊羆”均為生男的徵兆。

不過，無論是“夢熊之喜”還是“夢兆熊羆”，都不可與“飛熊入夢”混為一談。宋話本《武王伐紂平話》載：“卻說西伯侯夜作一夢，夢見從外飛熊一隻，飛來至殿下”，周公旦圓夢說：“大王夢見飛熊，必得賢也”。西伯侯即周文王，周公旦所指的賢臣，是指周公望，亦即姜尚。姜尚，又名



姜尚畫像

姜子牙，人稱姜太公，雖有雄才偉略，卻一直懷才不遇。某日周文王出獵前問卜，卜辭謂文王將獲“霸王之輔”。文王至渭水，於江邊遇一白髮老釣翁，言談間發現他語出非凡，於是招納為臣，封為太師，此人便是姜尚。姜尚先後輔助周文王、周武王治國，並完成了討伐殷紂、滅商興周的大業，名垂青史。後人遂把“飛熊入夢”視為將得到賢臣輔佐的徵兆。

雖然同是夢中見熊，但“夢兆熊羆”與“飛熊入夢”的含意大相逕庭，使用時必須格外留神，以免貽笑大方。

* “羆”，粵音“悲”，棕熊。

** “虺”，粵音“委”，毒蛇。

Word for Word



Dreams Come True

No matter what Martin Luther King dreamed of the night before he delivered his famous and influential “I Have a Dream” speech, his dreams did come true afterwards, as more and more people were moved by his outcry for liberty and equality. This much-quoted speech is often considered one of the greatest speeches in history, and today King’s words about dreams are still ringing in the ears of many.

Dreams are timeless and know no boundaries. For many years, thousands of people from around the world were attracted to start a new life in the land where King gave his speech by one single idea – *the American Dream* – the dream of freedom and equality. A notion of *the American Dream*, a phrase coined by American historian James Truslow Adams in his book *The Epic of America*, was and is the faith held by many in the States, especially early European settlers. It is a faith that promises wealth and success through hard work and determination.

A dream is not just a series of episodes or events that you experience while asleep. The word also occurs in our everyday communication in the form of idioms. From time to time, you may hear people say “The plan worked *like a dream*” or “Everything went *like a dream*”. If you do something *like a dream*, you do it extremely well or very effectively. So when something happens *like a dream*, it takes place smoothly and brings great success.

Something that is *never in our wildest dreams* might pop up in our mind all of a sudden. In this case, we are referring to

something that seems strange or unlikely to us. Maybe, for example, the thought that we might win a game is *beyond our wildest dreams*. If we describe an achievement or some good news as *beyond our wildest dreams*, we are emphasising that it is better than anything we had ever imagined or hoped for.

When a fresh graduate tells you what his *dream house*, *dream car* or *dream job* is, you may at once know that he is talking about ideal things that he yearns for. In a similar vein, if you refer to someone or something as *the person or thing of your dreams*, you mean that you prefer them to all others.

If two or more people are considered a *dream team*, they are perfect working partners and their chemistry often brings success. So will you feel flattered if you and your supervisor are said to make a *dream team*? One day when members of the dream team get promoted for their commendable achievements, will that be a *dream come true* to you? A *dream come true* is something that happens after you have wanted it to happen for a long, long time.

Martin Luther King
addressing his audience

