

Why I Wrote *The Field*

The idea behind *The Field* came from several different places. The first influence was metaphysical. We all experience it. The hunch that turns out to be true, running into a friend that you were just thinking about, the answer to a question you were pondering popping into your head or an eerily prophetic dream. I wanted to tell a story about a regular person, a *normal* person, who was having these types of experiences. Most of the YA paranormal stories that I read are about teens who are extra-ordinary in some way. They have special powers that no one else possesses. In *The Field*, Eric is an ordinary high school soccer player who is experiencing something more. He's connecting to The Universal Energy Field and the Collective Consciousness; something that I believe we all can do.

The second influence was all of the disaster, post-apocalyptic literature out there. I like a good dystopian story as much as the next person, but I was starting to feel as if all we could see in the future was doom and gloom. I'd like to think that we are better than that. Certainly bad things happen and bad people exist, but why not focus on what is good? It doesn't have to be sappy or boring, either. And it isn't necessarily easy. Eric struggles with figuring out how to tap into The Field, how to play well in the goal, and in his relationships with his girlfriend and best friend. And it doesn't end with him having all the answers. The process is what matters and what he learns is that he'll never know everything and that it's not important. He just needs to know that there is something more out there than we experience, if we just take the time to pay attention.

Environmental issues play an important role in my writing as well. I have a degree in biology and while I didn't pursue science as a career, I am still very influenced by it. The earth is our home and I believe that we should take care of her. We live in a throw-away culture, not thinking about how our plastic bottles or lawn fertilizer will affect the world around us. I think the time is fast approaching when we'll have to take notice. Really, it's already here. In *The Field* I focus on so-called 'Clean Coal' and to some extent nuclear energy and compare them to other truly clean energy sources such as wind or solar and then I take it a step further. What if The Universal Energy Field is a source of energy that we can tap into? How would we do it? What is it? I don't mean to claim that I have the answers, but there are brilliant scientists who are trying to find those answers. Again, it comes back to my belief that there is so much more in the Universe than we perceive or even imagine.

The soccer focus came naturally. Both my husband and son are soccer goal-keepers. Our son is still playing club soccer in college and my husband has coached travel and high school soccer for years. You could say that I am a soccer mom, but I wish you wouldn't. Really. Even though I do have a van. And live in the suburbs. I will say that watching your son dive at the feet of a sprinting, teen-aged boy intent on scoring is the worst kind of torture. Let's just say that my

stomach was in knots most weekends and I spent a lot of time in the bathroom at games from nerves! In fact, our son recently sent a text message picture of himself with a broken nose from playing soccer while my husband and I were on vacation. At first we thought he'd been mugged or in a fight because there was no message accompanying the picture. Do you know what he said when we called him in a panic? "I made the save!" I did actually play one season of women's league soccer myself, but after being drilled in the face with a ball and knocked completely off my feet, I was glad to discover that I was pregnant and could no longer play. (Okay, it was a long time ago, but I remember it like it was yesterday. My team wore pink socks. So not my color!)

Exploring these ideas through the vehicle of story presents a unique opportunity. In fiction, I can make things up (which I love), but I can also present new ideas in a way that is more accessible and approachable. I hope that my books allow people to look beyond what they think they know is true, and, hopefully, give them a really good story to enjoy while they're doing it.