

# Bluebird

by Charles Bukowski



*there's a bluebird in my heart that  
wants to get out  
but I'm too tough for him,  
I say, stay in there, I'm not going  
to let anybody see  
you.*

*there's a bluebird in my heart that  
wants to get out  
but I pour whiskey on him and inhale  
cigarette smoke  
and the whores and the bartenders  
and the grocery clerks  
never know that  
he's  
in there.*

*there's a bluebird in my heart that  
wants to get out  
but I'm too tough for him,  
I say,  
stay down, do you want to mess  
me up?  
you want to screw up the  
works?  
you want to blow my book sales in  
Europe?  
there's a bluebird in my heart that  
wants to get out  
but I'm too clever, I only let him out  
at night sometimes  
when everybody's asleep.*

*I say, I know that you're there,  
so don't be  
sad.  
then I put him back,  
but he's singing a little  
in there, I haven't quite let him  
die  
and we sleep together like  
that  
with our  
secret pact  
and it's nice enough to  
make a man  
weep, but I don't  
weep, do  
you?*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



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Reflect on these questions about the poem and share your thoughts.

**1** What does the bluebird symbolize?

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**2** Why is the bluebird inside the poet?

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**3** Is there a time in your life when you put on a "tough" exterior?

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**4** Why do you think people keep their vulnerabilities hidden deep inside?

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**5** Do men or women more often "bottle things up"? Why?

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**6** What situations can you name where people might behave like the poet?

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