

Bluebirds  
By Dave McClain

The mythical bluebird of happiness provides comfort to three people who need it more than they ever could have imagined.

FADE IN:

INT. BALLROOM - DAY

TOM, 50s, wearing a tuxedo, stands at the bottom of a spiral staircase. He looks at his son, BEN, who's also in a tuxedo.

TOM  
Straighten your tie.

BEN  
Dad, my tie is fine.

TOM  
Just fix it. I want everything and everyone to look perfect when my little girl comes down those...

Tom is interrupted by the voice of a party DJ coming through the speaker in the near corner of the ballroom.

DJ  
Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lee.

Tom sees JULIE, his daughter, appear on the balcony in her wedding dress. She smiles and carefully descends the stairs. Reception guests applaud. JOSEPH, a handsome man in a tuxedo walks slowly behind Julie, holding the train of her dress.

BEN  
Holy Crap! She looks good!

At the bottom of the stairs, Julie hugs Tom. Tom tears up.

TOM  
Oh, Sweetheart, I wish your mother could be here to see you right now.

JULIE  
Me too, dad, but I feel her presence. As I was getting dressed, a bluebird was flying around just outside my window. Remember how mom loved them?

TOM  
Of course, I do, sweetheart.

Tom and Julie embrace briefly. Tom nods at Joseph. Joseph nods back, takes Julie's hand and leads her across the room.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

XAVIER and SUSANNA, both in their 20s, eat dinner and talk quietly. Susanna suddenly stops eating and looks at Xavier.

SUSANNA

I'm sorry. I can't do this any more.

XAVIER

Do what? You can't do what any more?

SUSANNA

This! I can't do this a minute more!

XAVIER

You mean us? Are you asking for a...

SUSANNA

Asking for... Oh! No! Oh, God, no!

XAVIER

Well, what are you talking about then? If you're still not feeling well, we can always just...

SUSANNA

I'm pregnant.

XAVIER

You're who?

SUSANNA

Not who, silly. What. I'm pregnant!

XAVIER

You mean it worked?

SUSANNA

Yup! The fertility doc called this afternoon. We're having a baby!

XAVIER

Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!

Xavier jumps up and rounds the table to hug his wife.

SUSANNA

I guess those bluebirds that you painted on the wall of the nursery really were lucky!

Xavier kisses his wife.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

KARIMA, a woman in her 30s, enters the store pushing THEA, a woman in her 50s, in a wheelchair. KARIMA leans in to talk.

KARIMA

You know you don't have to do this, mom. You can give me a grocery list and I'll pick up whatever you want.

THEA

I'm only on dialysis. Getting out someplace besides the doctor's does me good. In fact, I can wheel myself.

KARIMA

But you should be resting... for when they find a donor.

THEA

You mean if they find a donor. In the meantime, I gotta live my life.

Thea looks at the cardboard sale display nearby.

THEA (cont'd)

Ooh! Grab me a bag of those Bluebird potato chips! I love those things!

KARIMA

I'm not sure those are good for you.

THEA

You're going to get all those healthy foods. Let me have this one thing.

KARIMA

Those chips do have a nice name. I'll give them that. Okay, let me go get a cart. I'll be right back.

Karima walks off and returns a minute later pushing a grocery cart. Thea is looking at her cell phone screen.

KARIMA (cont'd)

You know, mom, bluebirds are supposed to be a symbol of good health...

THEA

Yeah, and new births, hearth and home, happiness, blah, blah, blah.

KARIMA

How do you know all that?

THEA

I can work the internet too, ya know.

KARIMA

Yeah, yeah. I'll go grab your chips.

Karima steps over towards the snack display. Thea's cell phone rings as Karima returns to her cart.

THEA

That's me. You're kidding! H-Hold on.

Thea puts her hand over the phone's mouthpiece and, with a stunned look on her face, turns toward Karima.

THEA (cont'd)

It's the doc. They found a donor!

KARIMA

When? Who? I mean...

THEA

Why don't you just talk to the man!

Thea hands the phone to Karima. Karima's hands are shaking.

KARIMA

Doctor? This is Karima. Yes... yes...

Karima reaches out and squeezes Thea's hand. Thea smiles.

INT. ENCLOSED STAIRCASE - DAY

Tom, Susanna and Karima sit, dirty and bloodied, in a dimly lit stairway that looks like it's about to collapse. There's a small mail cart above them, partly smashed between chunks of wall. They each stare blankly at nothing in particular.

SUSANNA

I don't want to die. I can't die.  
What I was telling you all about  
earlier - the in vitro fertilization.  
The doctor says it has a really good  
chance of working for Xavier and me!

TOM

Listen... Susanna, is it? None of us  
want to die!

(MORE)

TOM (cont'd)

I got my daughter's wedding coming up and Karima over there is trying to find a kidney donor for her mom! What makes you so special you can't die?

SUSANNA

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm just so...

KARIMA

Scared. We all are, dear. We're going to be okay. You just gotta believe.

Tom heaves a heavy sigh. Susanna sobs. Tom coughs.

TOM

Look, we can't go up and, after that wall collapsed below us, we can't go down either. We can't even get back to our offices. We're stuck here.

SUSANNA

For how long?

Tom looks over at Karima. Karima sighs and nods.

TOM

If the firefighters could even break through all that debris below us, it could take them hours to get to us. And I'm pretty sure that loud noise we heard a few minutes ago was the South Tower coming down. I'm sorry.

KARIMA

Just think of the bluebirds.

SUSANNA

The bluebirds. Like we were all talking about earlier. They always make me happy, almost like they carry my troubles away. Just think of them.

All three of them hear a low, muffled rumbling sound and look up at the chunks of cement above them. The rumbling gets louder and closer. Quietly, they each close their eyes.

EXT. A MASSIVE PILE OF DEBRIS - DAY

Three bluebirds on a nearby building look at each other, then fly toward a crying sound in different neighborhoods.

FADE OUT: