

Bluebird Vesna Maric

About the Book

Bluebird is a memoir by a Bosnian Refugee, Vesna Maric who was 16 at the start of the war. After convincing her mother to let her leave, Vesna is sent on a coach journey with her sister to Britain. From this time until she gained asylum in 1996, she learns a lot about herself and the differences between the two cultures. Colourful characters join her on her journey and her vivid accounts of these four years are both funny and poignant.

Discussion Questions

Please note that some of the discussion points below may act as spoilers for the book's content.

1. does Vesna's description of her fellow refugees challenge your views of refugees or of the Croat-Bosnian conflict? In particular how do you feel about their indignation that UK residents treated them as though they were from the third-world?
2. how do you feel Vesna is affected by her mother and sister's separate decisions to go back to Bosnia?
3. what do you make of her experiences of the UK? What do we learn about ourselves from a foreigner's perspective?
4. out of all the people who 'helped' the Bosnian refugees, what do you think was happening with Jack and Myra (Friendship, page 143)?
5. Vesna's memoir is really a memoir from many people. From Dragan and the lady who never left the house, to Zlatko who made it to the UK in the back of a car. Are these people integral to Vesna's memoir? Does their experience tie in with hers?
6. do you think she includes them because they help her remember Bosnia during her staid existence in the UK?

You can use HMDT resources to learn more about the war in Bosnia <http://www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/bosnia> and about the experiences of Kemal

Pervanic <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/education/case-study-kemal-pervanic>, a Muslim who survived Omarska, a Bosnian concentration camp.