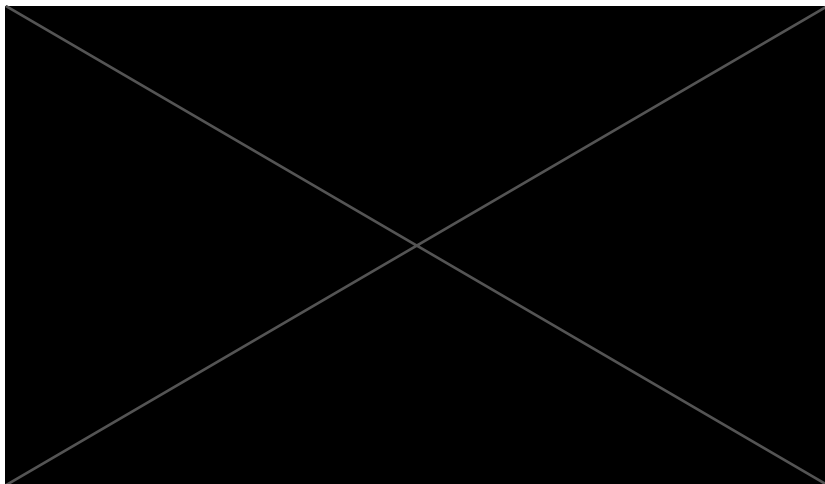


BLUEBIRDS

VERN THIESSEN





BAB: Dearest Grandpa. You'd love this. On a transport, chopping across the grey waves of the Atlantic, another world on the horizon. The things you'd teach me! Like when I was a kid:

Showing me how to dig deep for red rock crabs and purple sea stars. Teaching me to swim to the wooden buoys and back. Schooling me to catch fish straight from the ocean and fry them up right there on the beach. Training me to sail your sloop around the cove. And as we tack our way into the wind, leaving the safe shore behind, you tell me tales of the sea.

(excited) How the Salish could tame these treacherous waters in their red cedar canoes. How the reefs of Juan de Fuca became the graves of sailors on the *Tonquin*, the *Melfort*, the *Valencia*. How, at night, when the lighthouse at Trial Islands sweeps past the dark waters, you can still see the ghosts of men waving for help.

Teaching me to fear the water, but love it too.

MAGGIE: "The sea will keep your secrets, Bab. Speak to it, and it will always set you right."

UNITED PLAYERS OF VANCOUVER

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BAB: Three years ago, they find your sloop, abandoned, on Thetis Island. And no sign of you. What happened to you, Grandpa? A secret only the sea knows.

