

remember that play he was in the third grade where he was in that... little boat, wearing that ridiculous hat?

SORN. Yes, actually. You saw that?

EMMA. I did. I remember he looked so little up there, so... lost at sea. I just keep remembering that today... His head is fine, though, right?

SORN. It's a scratch. A few stitches. He might have thought he wanted to do it, but something in him knew better.

EMMA. Yes. *(Beat.)*

SORN. I'm worried / that he's—

EMMA. *(Heading to bed...)* Well, I'm exhausted. *(Missing what he said...)* I'm sorry?

SORN. Nothing.

EMMA. Okay. *(Heading out...)* Have you seen Doyle?

SORN. No. He was writing on the porch earlier...

EMMA. Ah. And Nina's still here?

SORN. Bedding down on the old red couch with Franny...

EMMA. Ah, Franny. That cat is such a little tramp...

SORN. Any warm body in a storm...

EMMA. Yes. Yes, indeed... And you're okay, right?

SORN. *(Beat.)* Of course. You know / me...

EMMA. All right. Good night then.

SORN. Good night.

*(She goes. He takes various implements out of various cupboards and drawers and makes a delicious and unique cocktail during all this to take to his room... He should go easily and rapidly about his work, the routine casualness of his preparations undercutting the complexity and pain of what he is talking about...)*

I'm a doctor. My job is to help people feel better.

Ironic. When I feel so entirely shitty myself most of the time. Not that they know that. Not my sister. Not my poor, screwed-up nephew... Not my patients or my friends or my ex-wives or... you know... anyone, really.

There is so much love in this house. Or what passes for love. "If only she..." or "Why won't he..." or "What can I do..." and the like. It matters so much to them. And I get that. It mattered to me, once, too. I had my dreams. Some came true, even. But they don't know that. They never ask. I have some memories, though. Some doozies. Remember—if you take nothing else away from this... "play," or whatever it is, remember this—when you see an old

guy... *You Never Know.* Where he might have been. Or what he might have done. Or with whom.

Or with *whoms*... You never know.

Poor Connie. He's in it now. Right in the thick of it... Can't see the edge of the forest in any direction. I remember the feeling. Awful. And wonderful...

*(He starts cleaning up, maybe...)* But here's the thing. I get up most mornings around dawn or so. It's still dark, and often still cold. And I'm alone. And I shave and shower and get dressed, and the last thing I do before I leave the house is brush my teeth. And three mornings out of five, I wonder—while I'm brushing my teeth, for some reason, always right then, in the midst of this most mundane of morning ablutions—I wonder... Why go on? Why walk out the door and into the day and do... all the things I do. And you know why I do it?

Do you? Do you? *(Good if he gets them to say "no" ...)*

Nor do I, my friends. Nor do I... \*

*(He leaves. Lights shift. Perhaps, if the radio is on, it shifts to another tune, another tone. It is now clearly later, the middle of the night. Maybe 3 A.M.?)*

## 19. Undone

*Trigorin enters, maybe singing softly to himself, and starts meticulously making a peanut butter and jam sandwich. Or eating an apple. Or... He periodically looks at the door to the kitchen, expectantly... Nina, scantily clad on the couch, is acutely with him throughout this. Maybe there is some time here, or maybe he pops in and starts speaking to us right away...*

TRIGORIN. So, you know, people ask me all the time... what's my secret? How do I *understand* them so well? How can I know their inmost secrets when I've never even met them, and the like. And I think the simple truth is... *I love them.* All of them. And by "them," I mean, of course, *you.* All of you. You're all so fucked up