

## **Tick, Tick...Boom! Sides**

### **JON**

The sound you are hearing is not a technical problem. It is not a musical cue. It is not a joke. It is the sound of one man's mounting anxiety. I ... am that man. Hi. I'm Jon, and lately I keep hearing that sound, that ticking. It's not a big deal, it's actually kind of pleasant, like a watch. In one week I'll be thirty. Three-zero. Older than my Dad was when I was born. Older than Napoleon was when he ... did something that was probably extremely impressive at the time – I'm not a historian. I'm a composer. Sorry, a "promising young composer." I should have kids of my own by now, a career, but instead I've been "promising" for so long I'm afraid I'm starting to break the fucking promise. And I want to get some writing done but I keep hearing those tick ticks. And sometimes after a couple of them, I'll hear something else – a distant BOOM, like a bomb as gone on not too far away and the next one might be closer and I'd better look out. TICK ... TICK ... BOOM! So that's where we are. It's a Saturday night in January, 1990, in my apartment on the edge of SoHo; I'm trying to work, trying to enjoy what remains of my extremely late 20s, trying to ignore the Tick Tick Booms.

### **MICHAEL**

The theater, the music. I gave it my shot. I think I've given it an honest try, with all the talent and effort I've got. And it hasn't worked. I'm not sorry I tried. I'm proud of it, but now it's time to take a hard look at my situation and not be egotistical, not delude myself, just admit it's time to move on. I've been stuck. Everyone else, you and Susan, have kept me moving. I'm the only one still here banging my head against the wall. My head hurts. I'm going to stop for a while. The thing is, I can always come back to it, if I want, when I'm older, when I'm smarter, when I've figured out a little more clearly what it is I want to do. [Beat.] I feel better. Just hearing myself say it, I already feel better.

### **SUSAN**

Okay, let's get started! Today we're embarking on a major endeavor. We're developing a name for a breakthrough new product. A chemical to be used in cooking as a fat replacement! It's tasteless, has no calories, no fat, no cholesterol. In fact, it can't be absorbed into your digestive tract. This is going to give Americans a whole new kind of freedom in the way they live and snack, and we need a name that will capture all of the – Jon, At this point in time we're really just idea-generating, OK? We're brainstorming, free associating ... It's a creative-process-unlocking session. We're not at the naming phase yet. Okay: concepts, people?