

Tick Tick Boom

Jonathan sits at the keyboard, picking out various notes, searching for the right melody. The phone RINGS. It is Susan. He ignores it and goes back to work. He doesn't realize Susan is outside at a pay phone and can see him. Susan calls again.

Susan. (On the phone) Hey, it's me. Just pick up the phone. I know you're screening your calls. Every light is on in your apartment right now. I can see you!

Jonathan goes to the door to let Susan in the apartment.

Jonathan. Hey. Hi. You could have called first.

Susan. I just did. It's good to see you too.

Jonathan. I didn't mean it like that.

Susan. (Taking in the messy apartment) Jesus, Jonathan. (He says nothing) I need you to talk to me.

Jonathan. I'm writing, Susan. I'm writing.

Susan. You're gonna write a great American musical in the next ten minutes?

Jonathan. Thank you for being so supportive of my work.

Susan. Oh, because you've been such a champion of mine?

Jonathan. What's that supposed to mean?

Susan. What do you think it means? I'm sorry, I'm not allowed to talk about my needs.

Jonathan. Did I say that?

Susan. You didn't have to say it. It's implied.

Jonathan. How is it implied?

Susan. You're the artist and I'm the girlfriend. That's how you feel, right?

Jonathan. Can we talk about this later, please?

Susan. When, Jonathan? When is later?

Jonathan. Not tonight. I have been rehearsing all day. I have been up since four this morning.

I have been trying to write a song for a week and I am nowhere.

Susan. I've been telling you how unhappy I am for months.

Jonathan. Everyone's unhappy in New York! That's what New York is!

Susan. I don't know how to get through to you anymore. You keep shutting me out, you keep putting up these fences.

Jonathan. I'm not. I'm not shutting you out.

Susan. You're a million miles away all the time.

Jonathan. Actually, I'm right here.

Susan. Are you, Jonathan? Actually? Because I know you.

Jonathan. You're right. I've been distracted, but I promise you, after the workshop...

Susan. After the workshop. After the workshop! Everything is after the workshop.

Jonathan. Yeah.

Susan. What if the workshop happens and nothing changes? No producer with a big check. You don't go straight to Broadway. You're still a waiter, you're still living in this apartment, you're still broke. What then, Jonathan? What about me?

Jonathan. I can't move to the Berkshires. I can't leave my career behind.

Susan. You think I don't know that?

Jonathan. What? What are you...? What is this? What do you want?

Susan. I guess I just...I wanted you to tell me not to go.

Jonathan. Of course I don't want you to go.

Susan. Really?

Jonathan. Obviously.

Susan. 'Cause this is the first time you've ever said it.

Jonathan throws his arms around her. He holds her. And for a moment, it seems as if all the anger and the resentment and hurt have simply vanished. And then, as Jonathan seems to be working out a song as he holds her-

Susan. Oh, my God. You're thinking about how you can turn this into a song. Aren't you?

Jonathan. No. What?

Susan. You know what, Jonathan? I'm done.

Jonathan. Susan? Susan, wait.

Susan. I hope that you have an amazing workshop.

Jonathan. Susan, hold on. Susan?