

The Tick

"Pilot"

Original Air Date: 08 November 2001

CAST

The Tick - Patrick Warburton  
Arthur - David Burke  
Captain Liberty - Liz Vassey  
Batmanuel - Nestor Carbonell

Guest Stars

The Cape - William Newman  
Red Scare - Carrick O'Quinn  
Jimmy Carter - Brad Maynard  
Bartender - Lisa Lu  
Bus Driver - Jeff Doucette  
Station Manager - E. J. Callahan  
Mr. Ferret - Ray Xifo  
Salesman - Adam Drescher  
Octogenarian - Billy Beck  
Teenage Employee - Ahmad Stoner  
Comrade #1 - Doug Motel  
Comrade #2 - Derek Mears  
Comrade #3 - Brian Turk  
and  
Mr. Fishladder - Christopher Lloyd

NOTE: This is not an official script, nor was it derived from one. This is a transcript of a publicly broadcast episode.

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. BUS STOP -- NIGHT

Angle on the starry night sky, slowly tilting downwards throughout THE TICK's V.O.

THE TICK (V.O.)

The life of a superhero is a lonely one, filled with hardship and danger. The few who answer the call must leave comfort, safety and often sanity behind. But someone's gotta stand the heat and stay in the kitchen! Someone's gotta don the oven mitts of all that's right and strangle the throat of all that's wrong! This is that someone's story.

A bus comes into view as the camera's tilt continues. Sign letters reading "BUS", seen from behind, are in foreground. Brakes squeal faintly as the bus pulls to a stop.

THE TICK (V.O.)

Hey! A bus!

Angle on the front of the bus as the BUS DRIVER exits, and walks over to a rueful-looking BUS STATION MANAGER.

BUS DRIVER

He still here?

BUS STATION MANAGER

(nodding)

Yup.

The two men look up, and the camera tilts to follow their gaze, revealing a beefy blue-clad superhero standing on the roof, poised for action and scanning the horizon as he continues his narrative. He is, of course, THE TICK.

THE TICK

He stands in silence: stoic, godlike: the mysterious blue avenger who has become legend to the simple folk of this bus station. But glory will not distract him from his vigil.

MAN (O.S.)

Come on!

The Tick directs his gaze downwards; below him, a MAN strikes a coffee vending machine.

MAN

Come on, come on!

THE TICK

(sotto voce)  
Metal fiend!

He jumps down between the man and the coffee machine.

THE TICK

Stand back, citizen! So, vending menace:  
we meet again.

He presses several buttons, with no result. Trying the  
coin-release lever, he turns to the man.

THE TICK

You jiggle the thingy?

The man nods.

THE TICK

Armless bandit!

He picks up the vending machine and begins shaking it.

THE TICK

Empty your bladder of that bitter black  
urine men call coffee! It has a price,  
and that price has been paid!

Suddenly, a cup drops into the slot and the machine begins pouring  
coffee into it. With a grunt, The Tick drops the machine again.

THE TICK (V.O.)

Java devil, you are now my bitch.

The coffee overflows, and The Tick takes out the cup and hands it  
to the man.

THE TICK

Well, here you are, weary traveler, one  
steamin' hot cuppa justice! No need to  
thank me; it's my sworn duty to defend  
this bus station against the ravages of  
evil.

The man nods numbly and moves away. The bus station manager moves  
into frame; he pulls a bus ticket out from his shirt pocket and  
drops it to the ground, then taps The Tick on the shoulder.

BUS STATION MANAGER

Uh, you dropped this.

THE TICK

(picking it up)  
Hey! A bus ticket -- apparently, I intended  
to go on a trip to The City. Why?

BUS STATION MANAGER

Well, looks to me like you finally freed us from the tyranny of the coffee machine.

THE TICK

So perhaps my work here is done! Perhaps it's time that I moved on to a place where there's...

BUS STATION MANAGER

Stuff to do?

THE TICK

Stuff to do! Stuff to do.

He holds out his hand. Eventually, the bus station manager shakes it.

THE TICK

Well, goodbye, grateful Bus Station Man! You don't know what you'll do without me, but shed no tears.

The Tick walks away, picks up a hubcap out of a trash can and puts his arm around a teenager who's sweeping the floor.

THE TICK

Goodbye, plucky, pimply teen. Think you're ready now to hear the truth. This wasn't really a magic hubcap.

He hands the hubcap to the teen.

THE TICK

The magic was inside you all along.

The bus horn sounds.

THE TICK

Ah! Well, Destiny honks the horn of "Gotta Go". To The City!

He moves off towards the bus. The station manager steps up beside the teen.

BUS STATION MANAGER

Who was that blue stranger?

The Tick leans out of the open bus door.

THE TICK

He was... The Tick.

CUT TO:

THE TICK: "Pilot" (The Tick vs. The Red Menace) - ACT ONE 4.

OPENING TITLES.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. WORLDWIDE FISHLADDER AND SONS

A set of double doors bursts open and MR. FISHLADDER strides angrily through, followed closely by MR. FERRET.

FERRET

Sir, I am sure that Human Resources can handle this. No need for you --

FISHLADDER

A man's life is at stake, Mr. Ferret; I'm taking this bull by the horns personally.

Fishladder stops abruptly and looks down in shock.

FISHLADDER

Good lord! I'm too late.

Fishladder's POV: ARTHUR sits at his desk, working an adding machine while clad in a white costume, complete with goggles and wavy antennae. Fishladder grabs the chair away from the desk in front of Arthur's, unceremoniously dumping out the woman who was sitting in it. He sits, waits for Arthur to notice him, then clears his throat after a few seconds.

ARTHUR

M-Mister -- Mister Fishladder!

FISHLADDER

Arthur? It is still Arthur, isn't it?

Arthur nods.

FISHLADDER

Arthur, my time is worth seventeen dollars a second. I want an explanation, and I want it to cost less than fifteen hundred dollars! Go!

ARTHUR

Oh... uh... Well, it's hard to explain.

FISHLADDER

Fifty-one dollars.

ARTHUR

Mr. Fishladder, I have been living a lie. I am more than just a mild-mannered accountant -- now, I do good work for this firm, and I value my job -- it's just... my entire life has become nothing but numbers and deductions and IRAs...

FISHLADDER

Four hundred and fifty-five.

ARTHUR

And granted, I've been doing my parents' tax returns since I was six -- but even then, I knew I had a higher calling. I can't hide from it any longer. I --

FISHLADDER

(pointing angrily)  
Don't say it!

ARTHUR

(standing)  
I am going to become a superhero! You know, p-part time at first.

FISHLADDER

(standing)  
Christ in Heaven!

Arthur sits again.

FISHLADDER

Look at yourself; you're built like a sensible shoe, you shouldn't be jumping around town in a body sock fighting crime!

ARTHUR

Well, I haven't actually fought any crime yet --

FISHLADDER

Good! Keep it that way! Crime fights back! Remember the lesson of Metcalfe.

ARTHUR

M-Metcalfe?

FISHLADDER

Metcalfe! Head of Shipping and Receiving, third floor. Metcalfe! He lost all his game pieces, just like you. Cashed in his 401K and bought a jet pack! Now the poor bastard needs a machine. To poop!

ARTHUR

Mr. Fishladder, I know that sort of thing can happen, but --

FISHLADDER

But you're gonna ride this thing out to the bloody, gruesome end, aren't you?

ARTHUR

Well, maybe not all the way to the end,  
but... you know... for a while. Mr.  
Fishladder --  
(he stands)  
-- I have to try.

FISHLADDER

Time's up!

Arthur sits again, abruptly.

FISHLADDER

Here's the way I see it: you're either a  
man with a job, or an idiot in a bunny  
suit, you can't be both. Not at Worldwide  
Fishladder and Sons. So what's it gonna  
be? Huh?

THE TICK (V.O.)

It's gonna be a tough row to hoe...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY -- DAY

Looking up to the roof of a three-story building atop which The  
Tick stands, arms akimbo.

THE TICK (V.O.)

... but he's just the Joe to hoe it. For  
Destiny has called on him, and even now he  
feels her warm, moist hand at the small of  
his back...

Reverse angle of The Tick's back, as he looks over The City.

THE TICK (V.O.)

... pushing. Pushing.

He jumps forward and falls out of frame. There is a crashing  
noise as he lands on something.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONELY PANDA -- NIGHT

Establishing shot: a Chinese restaurant; a green neon sign in the  
window reads "The Lonely Panda", under which a hand-lettered  
cardboard sign advertises, "SUPERHEROES WELCOME". Beneath that,  
another sign reads "24 HR. FREE DELIVERY".

CUT TO:

INT. LONELY PANDA

"WE ARE FAMILY" is playing in the background. An aged, nervous hero, THE CAPE, is sitting at the bar, building a pyramid of overturned shot glasses. He has stacked twenty of them into five rows, and is preparing to put the final glass on top.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

Losing that job was the best thing that could've happened to me! That paycheck was a noose around my neck. Now I can be a superhero!

At that, The Cape flinches, causing his pyramid to collapse.

THE CAPE

Aw, crap.

ARTHUR

The noblest profession. Risking it all for the common good, that's our job; they may call us an accountant, but we can't deny our true natures, even if all of our friends and relatives tell us we're good at math.

He drains his shot glass and puts it down, then slaps the bar with his hand.

ARTHUR

The hero's life! Our destiny!

Reverse angle on the BARTENDER. Behind her is a printed sign reading "NOTICE - WE SERVE SUPERHEROES".

BARTENDER

Suit doesn't do a lot for you. Make you look like a... Easter Bunny.

ARTHUR

It's a flying suit.

BARTENDER

Easter Bunny can't fly.

ARTHUR

Well, I can.

He presses a control on the harness of his backpack, and four moth-like wings unfurl. Arthur gives a small nervous laugh. The Cape, rebuilding his pyramid, shoots him a sideways glance.

ARTHUR

I haven't yet. But all I have to do is go to the top of a building and jump off.

BARTENDER

Go ahead. Who cares?

ARTHUR

I'm gonna do it tonight.

He slaps the bar again and leaves.

BARTENDER

(to The Cape)

I think he's gonna fall down a lot and die.

The Cape flinches again, bringing his new pyramid down. He makes a gesture of frustration.

THE CAPE

Aw, crap.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY -- ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

The Tick leaps down into frame, bounding from point to point, chunks of debris cracking off as he lands.

THE TICK

City! City! I am The Tick!

His feet crash through the roof, showering plaster on a pair of men watching television in the room below. He recovers and leaps from rooftop to rooftop, leaving structural damage in his wake.

THE TICK

And you have melted my heart! From this day forth, I will spread my butterfly justice over your every nook and cranny! Hear me, O City! My City! Your toast will never go bare again!

CUT TO:

EXT. LONELY PANDA -- NIGHT

The door opens and Arthur walks out, wings still deployed. At first, he moves with determination, but then he falters and turns around, swallowing hard and then stifling a burp.

ARTHUR

Who am I kidding?

Pressing the control on his harness, he retracts his wings.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY -- ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

Five Russian COMRADES stand next to a truck, which bears red stenciled letters obscured by the men. They are wearing grey jumpsuits, and most of them wear black berets. One of them pours vodka into the glasses of the others. During Comrade #1's speech, another man is revealed keeping lookout near the mouth of the alley, which is across from the Lonely Panda.

COMRADE #1

Comrades, The Red Scare! The finest secret Soviet supervillain nineteen seventy-nine had to offer.

He holds up a control device covered with protrusions; on top is a large red button.

COMRADE #1

One touch of this button, and we'll have an unstoppable engine of death at our command.

COMRADE #2

Nineteen seventy-nine? Does it still work?

COMRADE #1

(mocking)

Does it still work? It's a Plotski!

Angle through the mouth of the alley towards the Lonely Panda, where we see Arthur staggering across the street towards us.

COMRADE #1 (O.S.)

Ivan Plotski, the best scientist ever!

Arthur bumps into a streetlight and belches.

COMRADE #1

To the Russian-American Coalition for the Annihilation of the U.S. Postal System!

COMRADES

(Clinking glasses)

Na zdorovye!

Arthur's stomach finally gets the better of him as he reaches the alley, and he vomits... onto the shoes of the lookout, who looks none too happy.

ARTHUR

Sorry.

The lookout pulls Arthur into the alley and throws him roughly against a brick wall, where he is quickly surrounded by the other Comrades.

COMRADE #1 (O.S.)

Rabbit person wants to make problems?

ARTHUR

It's really more of a moth thing.

COMRADE #2 (O.S.)

He wants to be a superhero.

COMRADE #1 (O.S.)

Let's teach him the lesson... of Metcalfe.

ARTHUR

Metcalfe?

COMRADES

Metcalfe!

ARTHUR

(high-pitched scream)

Nooooooooo!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY -- ROOFTOP ABOVE ALLEY -- NIGHT

Start with pure blackness, pull back to reveal The Tick standing on a rooftop, his antennae stiffening to attention as he hears Arthur's scream.

THE TICK

My first damsel in distress!

He jumps down off the building.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY -- ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

The Tick lands on the Comrades' van, which is now revealed to read "VLAD'S ARMY SURPLUS - I am the Czar". The tires burst from the shock of his landing. The Comrades spin around to see him standing atop their van, arms akimbo.

THE TICK

Unhand that woman!

The cluster of Comrades parts to reveal Arthur.

COMRADE

Uh?

THE TICK

(disappointed)

Oh.

(His antennae droop.)

Awkward moment. Sorry there, Moth Man. Didn't mean to interrupt. Although I sure would like a slice of your righteous combat pie. Whaddaya say?

ARTHUR

Help?

THE TICK

Well, hey, great! Thanks!

He jumps down to the ground.

THE TICK

Wicked men, you face The Tick.

With a roar, the Comrades all rush The Tick. He flings them off, and Arthur flinches to avoid being hit by the flying bodies.

THE TICK (O.S.)

Incoming!

More bodies fly. The Tick walks by, with a Comrade behind him hitting him over the head with a pipe.

THE TICK

Single file!

(he notices the pipe)

Knock it off!

Arthur ducks a bottle which shatters next to him, and more flying bodies.

THE TICK (O.S.)

Heads up! Ha ha ha! Don't do drugs! Ah, there's more where that came from!

Arthur slides down the wall, and the fight is over; the Comrades are piled up into a heap, and the control device tumbles down onto the ground. Tilt up to reveal The Tick standing on the pile of bodies.

THE TICK

He breathes in deep the sweet air of his first victory. And with the newly-won friendship of his fellow warrior, he stands tall against the inevitable horrors to come.

Arthur is sitting, clasping his knees as he stares blankly at The Tick.

THE TICK

Come on, Moth Man! To the rooftops!

Arthur doesn't move; as The Tick walks away, he steps on the control device; the red button lights up. Arthur reacts as the back door of the van opens up, and THE RED MENACE emerges with a beeping noise. It straightens up and crosses its arms: in its left hand it holds a sickle, and in the right it holds a hammer, positioned to mimic the Soviet emblem on its abdomen. It walks past a dazed-looking Arthur and stalks off into the night.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY -- ROOFTOPS -- NIGHT

Pull back to reveal The Tick looking over the edge of the building.

THE TICK

It all happens here on the rooftops.  
Brightly clad stallions running the most  
dangerous steeplechase of them all...

Arthur comes into view, panting as he climbs up the ladder on the side of the building.

THE TICK

... flanks sweaty, nostrils flaring. We  
heroes are our own jockeys, chum; we ride  
ourselves, and hard!

With one hand, The Tick lifts Arthur up over the wall and puts him down on the roof.

ARTHUR

(out of breath)  
Robot! I saw a robot!

THE TICK

You saw a robot. You lucky duck.

With a whistling noise, BATMANUEL flies onto the rooftop behind The Tick and Arthur, who turn to look at him. He is clad in brown, with an orange cape, and the outline of a facemask joined to two large bat ears.

THE TICK

Wow!

BATMANUEL

Heh! Haven't seen you around before! I  
am...

With a flourish, he throws open his cape. Disco music plays.

BATMANUEL

... Batmanuel!

He lets the cape fall, and the music stops.

BATMANUEL

You may have heard of me. I, ah, get a lot of press.

He hands business cards to The Tick and Arthur.

ARTHUR

You were the one who saved that trolley full of supermodels!

BATMANUEL

Yes. In fact, I saved them three times in one night, if you get my meaning.

THE TICK

Nope.

ARTHUR

Batmanuel, thank God you're here! Listen, there's this big red --

A tinny, electronic tune begins playing; Batmanuel holds up a hand and cuts him off, then answers his cellphone.

BATMANUEL

Batmanuel.

(beat)

On a roof, of course. Hah? Yes, the doors open at midnight. Ah-hah. And invite Diego. I like his sister. She's Catholic.

THE TICK

(to Arthur)

Cool walkie-talkie.

Suddenly, the noise of a helicopter is heard, accompanied by Sousa's "WASHINGTON POST MARCH". CAPTAIN LIBERTY swings down on a rope ladder; she's clad in a skimpy red satin outfit, with gold thigh-high boots and long gloves, and a Statue of Liberty crown. She holds a stylized torch.

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

Gentlemen! I'm Captain Liberty. Once again, the nation is in peril.

BATMANUEL

(on phone)

I'm telling you, Falco died. Sí! Amadeus Amadeus, he is a dead person!

ARTHUR

Captain Liberty, thank God you're here! Listen, there's a big red --

She holds up her hand and cuts him off.

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

There's no time to chat, I'm afraid; this is top priority. The CIA has tracked a secret Soviet superweapon to The City. Codenamed The Red Scare, one hundred percent lethal.

ARTHUR

Exactly! Exactly!

THE TICK

(re: helicopter)

That is the biggest darn whirlybird I have ever seen!

There is the sound of an explosion. Arthur and Captain Liberty start towards it, but Batmanuel moves into her path.

BATMANUEL

So, Janet! Back in bed with the CIA, ah? You certainly do your best work undercover.

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

Stow it, you infant, I don't have time for your nonsense.

BATMANUEL

Oh? You had a little time for it last month, on top of that water tower.

(to The Tick)

I saved her too, once, if you know what I'm saying...

THE TICK

Nope.

ARTHUR

(leaning over the edge of the building)

Everybody! The robot! It's right down there!

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

(to The Tick)

I'm working on having him deported.

BATMANUEL

Ah, she fears the demons I have awoken in her... womanly places.

ARTHUR

He just flipped over a car!

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

(into her torch)

Ground One to Airship, target the Eurotrash and fire on my command.

BATMANUEL

Lesbian!

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

We should have taken your country when we had the chance.

BATMANUEL

I still have your panties.

He holds them up. She grabs for them, but he keeps them out of her reach.

ARTHUR

He's got rockets!

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

Give me those, you weasel!

BATMANUEL

Don't fight like a girl, Janet, fight like a woman!

They gaze at each other, clearly aroused, then lock into a passionate embrace. They kiss and begin moaning. The Tick looks at them, bewildered.

ARTHUR

Hey, he's getting away!

Arthur turns back to face them and stops, stunned at the tableau before him. The Tick finally breaks his stare away from Captain Liberty and Batmanuel, and looks down.

THE TICK

Awww, I stepped in gum! Oh...

Arthur puts his goggles on top of his head, staring in disbelief.

ARTHUR

What's wrong with you people? You're superheroes; you're supposed to be... you know... heroic!

THE TICK

(to the gum)

Awww... Sticky pink devil!

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

(to Batmanuel)

Greasy twerp!

BATMANUEL  
(to Captain Liberty)  
Right-wing ice queen!

They resume kissing. Arthur starts walking dejectedly, towards the stairwell.

THE TICK  
Who puts gum on a roof?!

ARTHUR  
Well, it's been a shattering  
disillusionment. Good night.

He opens the stairwell door and exits.

THE TICK  
(looking around)  
What was that about a robot?

Arthur closes the door. Batmanuel and Captain Liberty fall to the rooftop.

THE TICK  
Little guy?

BATMANUEL  
(muffled)  
Oh, stroke my ears.

Captain Liberty giggles.

THE TICK  
Little chum?

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. ARTHUR'S APARTMENT

Close-up on the door as ARTHUR enters, carrying a sack of groceries and a newspaper. He closes the door, puts the groceries on the counter and throws the paper onto his kitchen table, then shuffles into the bathroom and looks into the mirror. Angle on the hallway, as seen through the peephole in Arthur's door, as THE TICK comes into view. He rattles the doorknob, then tries to peer through the hole. Return to Arthur regarding himself in the mirror.

ARTHUR

You're an idiot in a bunny suit.

He pulls the cap off his head, sighs, and then reacts to a pounding on his front door.

THE TICK (O.S.)

Arthur!

Angle on the hallway, looking through the peephole again. The Tick is pounding on the door.

THE TICK

Arthur!

Angle on the bathroom door as Arthur walks out. There is a crashing noise. Angle on the front door as The Tick rests the broken door against the wall.

THE TICK

Hello again! Your door is broken; the knob came off

He hands the knob to Arthur.

ARTHUR

What are you doing here?

THE TICK

(looking around)

Moth Man, this is incredible! It looks just like an apartment!

ARTHUR

What?

THE TICK

All right. Show me your trigger.

ARTHUR

My what?

THE TICK

Your secret headquarters trigger, the switch that pops up all your secret crime-bustin' equipment! Is this it? Eh?

He goes over to a light fixture and rips it out of the wall.

ARTHUR

Awww...

THE TICK

Say! What does your sofa turn into?

He flips it onto its back.

ARTHUR

It turns into... a bed.

THE TICK

Well, that's a start. What else you got?

ARTHUR

Nothing! I've got nothing; this is just an apartment!

The Tick's antennae droop, but otherwise he is expressionless.

ARTHUR

What are you doing here?

THE TICK

(antennae perking up again)

I followed you home! I got something I wanna show you.

ARTHUR

Look! This whole thing was a mistake. Apparently, superheroes are just a bunch of egotistical, self-centered, sexually frustrated kindergarteners! No offense intended.

THE TICK

None comprehended!

ARTHUR

It's just... I thought they were supposed to risk it all for the common good! You know, help the downtrodden? The sad part is, I'm downtrodden. I'm not "Moth Man", I'm not a superhero... I'm not even an accountant any more! I'm just Arthur.

The Tick rushes forward and grabs Arthur's head.

THE TICK

Arthur! Listen to me carefully! I believe in you! I always have! That's why I'm here! Destiny dressed you this morning, my friend, and now fear is trying to pull off your pants! If you give up -- if you give in -- then you're gonna end up naked with fear just standing there laughing at your dangling unmentionables!

(beat)

Oh, wait! I almost forgot the best part.

He goes back out into the hall.

THE TICK

I got to thinking you might be on to something about this whole Red Scare thing.

He then drags COMRADE #1 into view, with the pole of a street sign ("ONE WAY") coiled around him.

THE TICK

Figured maybe we should interrogate somebody.

COMRADE #1

Please help me!

ARTHUR

Help you? You were gonna Metcalfe me!

THE TICK

Easy there, Bad Cop! Think you cracked this nut.

(To Comrade #1)

All right, you heard the man. Give him the skinny.

COMRADE #1

The Red Scare is a relentless robotic assassin, built in the late seventies and -- and, and, and programmed to kill Jimmy Carter. We were going to use it to kill the Postmaster General, but you thwarted us before we had the chance.

THE TICK

You see, Arthur? You thwart!

ARTHUR

What -- then it must still be programmed...

Angle on the newspaper ("The City Times"), with a giant headline reading "JIMMY CARTER IS IN TOWN". Next to Carter's picture, it reads "Ex-Prez To Pick Up U.N. Prize, Put Up Housing Project".

ARTHUR

Oh my God. Jimmy Carter is in town!

THE TICK

Jimmy Carter is in town! Heavens to Betsy, what're the odds? Quickly, chum, Jimmy needs us now more than ever!

He rushes out; the Comrade topples over.

ARTHUR

Us?

The Tick's hand reaches into frame and pulls Arthur out.

THE TICK

Us!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY HOTEL -- NIGHT

Angle down on the awning and parking lot. A Checker cab pulls up, and The Tick bolts out and runs into the hotel. Arthur begins to follow suit, leaving his door open.

THE TICK (O.S.)

I have no money!

Arthur runs back and pays the cabdriver.

ARTHUR

(sotto voce)

Five dollars... add fifteen percent...

(louder)

Ah, just keep the change.

He runs into the hotel.

THE TICK (O.S.)

Clear the building!

CABDRIVER

Hey! Idiot!

Arthur runs back and shuts the door.

ARTHUR

(to cabdriver)

Sorry.

He runs back inside.

THE TICK (O.S.)

The Russians are coming! The Russians are coming! To the penthouse!

CUT TO:

INT. THE CITY HOTEL -- ELEVATOR

Arthur and The Tick stand in the elevator as it goes up. Arthur begins fidgeting and, eventually, whimpering.

ARTHUR

Tick, this is insane; I can't fight the Red Scare!

THE TICK

Yes, you can.

ARTHUR

I'm just an accountant!

THE TICK

People change.

ARTHUR

People die!

THE TICK

No, they don't.

ARTHUR

Yes, they do!

THE TICK

Not on my watch, they don't!

CUT TO:

INT. THE CITY HOTEL -- PENTHOUSE

We see only the elevator doors, and the backs of the heads of Jimmy Carter and a Secret Service agent.

JIMMY CARTER

Looks like we're gonna be late.

The elevator doors open, to reveal The Tick grabbing Arthur by the arms.

ARTHUR

But I don't wanna poop with a machine!

THE TICK

No one's asking you to!

Jimmy Carter clears his throat.

ARTHUR

Jimmy Carter!

The Tick lunges forward and pulls Jimmy Carter into the elevator.

THE TICK

Jimmy! In the elevator!  
(to Secret Service agent)  
We'll take it from here.

The elevator doors close.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CITY HOTEL -- ELEVATOR

From Jimmy Carter's POV. The Tick and Arthur loom close.

ARTHUR

Mr. President...

THE TICK

Jimmy, you got robot problems -- and bad!

JIMMY CARTER (O.S.)

I -- I left my money in my room! I'm  
sorry!

THE TICK

Your very life hangs in the balance.

Reverse angle. Jimmy Carter is now facing the wall, and remains so for all subsequent shots.

JIMMY CARTER

Help! Hellllllp!

The Tick grabs Jimmy Carter's head.

THE TICK

Mr. President, I believe in you! I always  
have! That's why --

ARTHUR

Tick! Tick! Don't squeeze his head!

The Tick lets go, and Jimmy Carter bolts to the other side of the elevator car.

THE TICK

But --

ARTHUR

That doesn't work on anybody.

THE TICK

(re: Jimmy Carter)  
Remarkably spry.

JIMMY CARTER

Men in wrestling outfits! Help!

ARTHUR

Mr. President, please!

JIMMY CARTER

(into elevator phone)  
Help! Circus freaks! Help!

ARTHUR

Please, Mr. President? I know we look...  
strange, but we're here to help you.

THE TICK

There's a Soviet killing machine out there  
with your name on it, and it could strike  
at any moment.

JIMMY CARTER

I don't believe you.

Suddenly, the Red Menace bursts through the ceiling and drops onto  
the floor.

THE TICK

Great Molly Hatchet!

RED MENACE

(deep, menacing electronic  
voice)  
Jimmy Carter, you have been sentenced to  
death.

THE TICK

Not so fast!

RED MENACE

Destroy Jimmy Carter.

THE TICK

You and what army, pinko?

The Red Menace head-butts The Tick.

THE TICK

Uhh!

The Red Menace head-butts him again.

THE TICK

Uhh! Knock it off!

The Tick butts The Red Menace. The Red Menace returns the blow. They continue to trade head-butts.

ARTHUR

Don't worry, Mr. President, everything's gonna be okay. I think.

The Red Menace gives another head butt.

THE TICK

Uhhh. Good helmet.

RED MENACE

Destroy Jimmy Carter.

He holds up his sickle, then strikes upwards, severing the elevator cable. The car begins to plummet. The Red Menace grabs The Tick's antennae

THE TICK

Whoa! That's dirty pool!

He staggers back and his head breaks through the wall of the elevator car. The Red Menace follows and puts its hands around his throat. Sparks fly upwards as The Tick's head scrapes against the wall of the elevator shaft.

THE TICK

Must... use... head... to... slow... elevator's... fall!

JIMMY CARTER

Oh, merciful Lord, we're gonna die!

Arthur slowly lifts up his head, realizing something.

ARTHUR

No, we're not, Mr. Ex-President.

He resolutely puts his goggles on and takes a deep breath.

ARTHUR

Grab onto me and hold tight!

He hits the control on his backpack harness; his wings unfurl. Jimmy Carter rushes over and grabs onto Arthur. Arthur jumps up, and the two of them fly upwards, out of the elevator car.

ARTHUR

Yaaaa-haha!

The Red Menace lets go of The Tick and looks up, making a noise of frustration.

THE TICK

Oh, yes... it's too late we learn that  
communism does not pay.

(beat)

So! Don't have a snappy Soviet comeback  
for that one, do we?

The elevator continues its fall, and crashes.

SHOCK CUT TO BLACK.

INT. THE CITY HOTEL -- BASEMENT

A pile of rubble from the elevator. Amidst the twisted girders  
and cables, we see bits of blue and red. Two of the blue bits  
begin vibrating; they are The Tick's antennae. The Tick pushes a  
pile of debris off his torso.

THE TICK

Gravity... is a harsh mistress.

CUT TO:

INT. LONELY PANDA RESTAURANT.

Close-up on ARTHUR, slowly pulling back to reveal THE TICK sitting  
next to him.

THE TICK

And that's how we vanquished our first  
supervillain, and how Arthur learned to  
fly, and how we gave Jimmy Carter a mild  
concussion.

Reverse angle on BATMANUEL and CAPTAIN LIBERTY, sitting across  
from them in the booth. They laugh politely. Batmanuel is  
wearing a plaster cast on his right forearm.

ARTHUR

We saved a President!

THE TICK

Yet the evening's greatest victory is the  
friendship forged between this heroic duo.  
Inseparable! Bonded together by the Krazy  
Glue of Justice. Till death do they part!

ARTHUR

We saved a President.

Captain Liberty and Batmanuel make polite noises.

BATMANUEL

You two are the talk of the town, you  
know. I'd be honored if you'd, uh, sign  
my cast.

ARTHUR

Sure!

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

Boys, that was excellent work out there.

I'm sorry I was somewhat...

(glances at Batmanuel)

distracted... earlier, but I assure you I did come to my senses before it was too late.

Batmanuel puts his arm around Captain Liberty.

BATMANUEL

She's a -- a beautiful woman, but, ah...

(raising his cast)

her third base is, ah, very dangerous, if you get my meaning.

She elbows him.

BATMANUEL

Ow!

THE TICK

Nope.

The Bartender brings a small tray to their table.

BARTENDER

Here. Fortune cookies; check.

THE TICK

Check!

(beat)

Look! More strange treats from the Orient!

He puts an entire fortune cookie into his mouth and begins chewing. The others look at him strangely.

THE TICK

(chewing)

Mmmm! Mmmm...

He stops and pulls the fortune out of his mouth.

THE TICK

A secret message! From my teeth!

(reading)

The road to Hell is paved with good intentions.

(beat)

I don't get it.

Suddenly, a fireball ignites outside the window.

CAPTAIN LIBERTY

Damn! It's Apocalypse Cow!

She does something to her torch (which flares up briefly), and leaves the booth.

THE TICK

Arthur! Evil is afoot, and hoofing it with dark gusto! Let's go!

He leaves the booth. Arthur looks outside for a moment, and starts to follow him.

BATMANUEL

I would not go out there, my little friend.

Arthur turns back.

BATMANUEL

Apocalypse Cow is fifty feet tall; she shoots fire from her teats.

THE TICK

Quickly, chum! There's fire everywhere!

ARTHUR

B-Batmanuel said... udder...

THE TICK

Fight fire with Arthur!

ARTHUR

Uh, I'll just get the check.

THE TICK

It's your destiny.

QUICK FADE TO BLACK.

While the screen is black, we hear Batmanuel's phone ring. Fade back up on the same scene, as Batmanuel reaches for his cellphone.

BATMANUEL

Batmanuel. Diego!  
(laughs)  
How is your sister?

FADE TO BLACK.

END