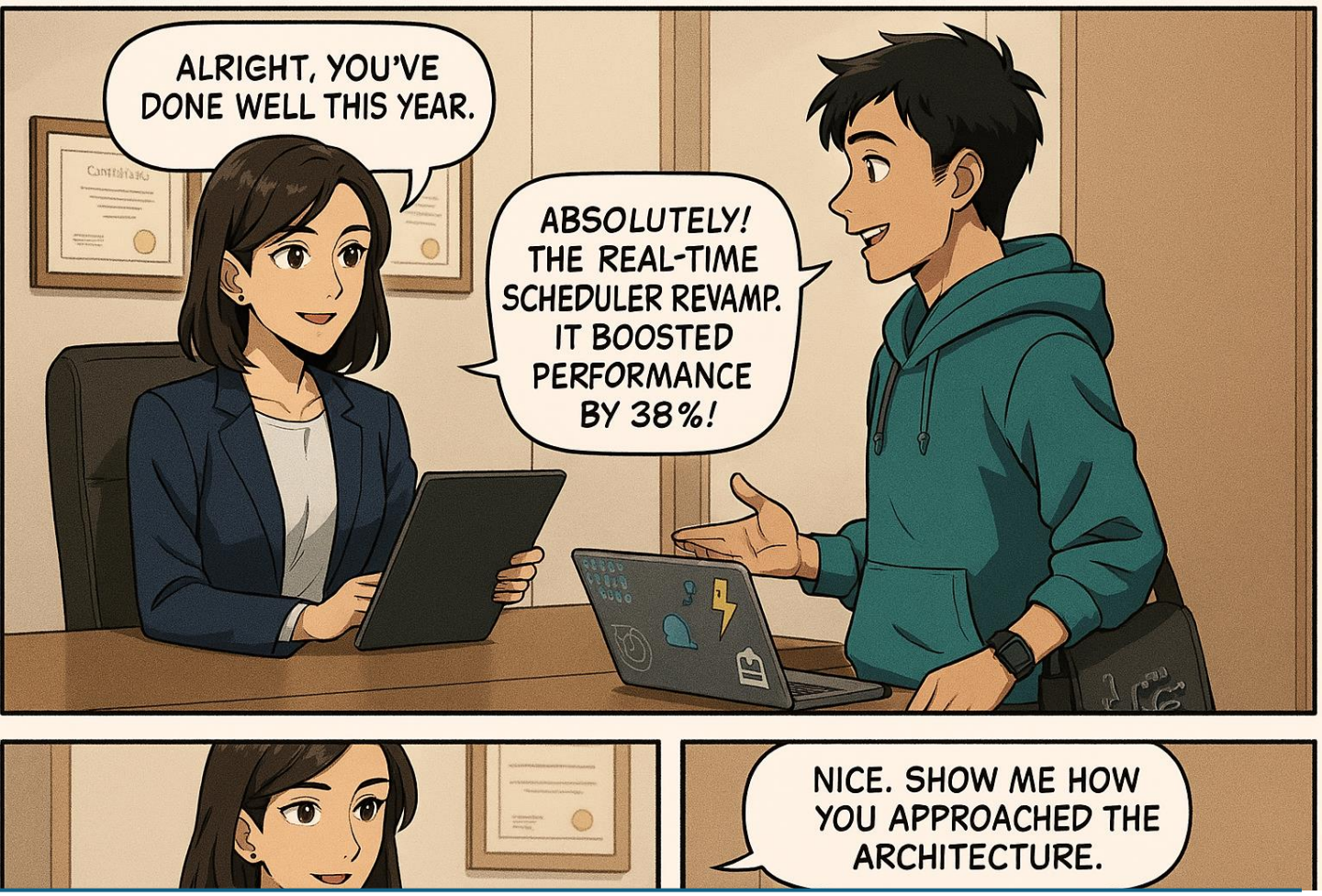
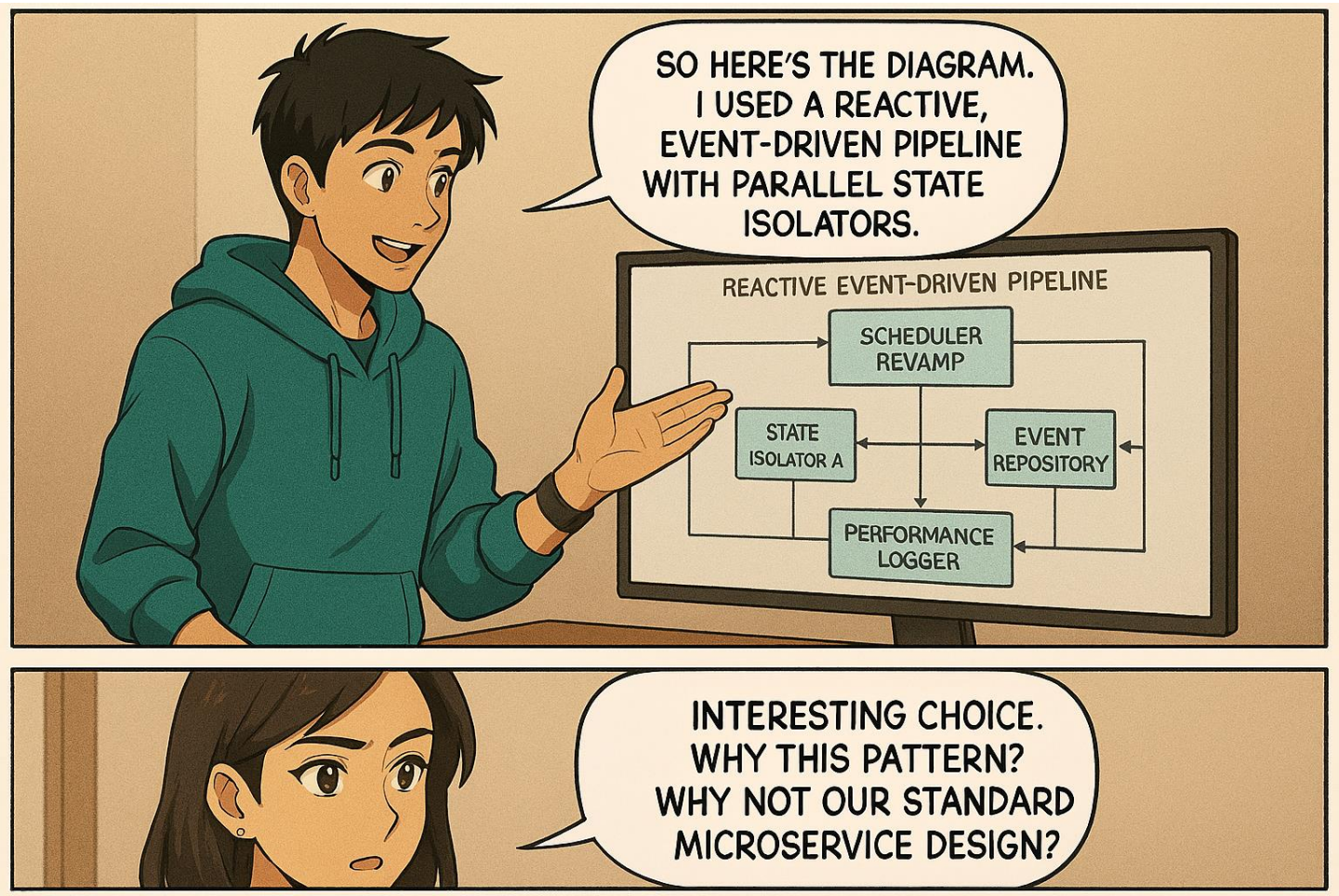
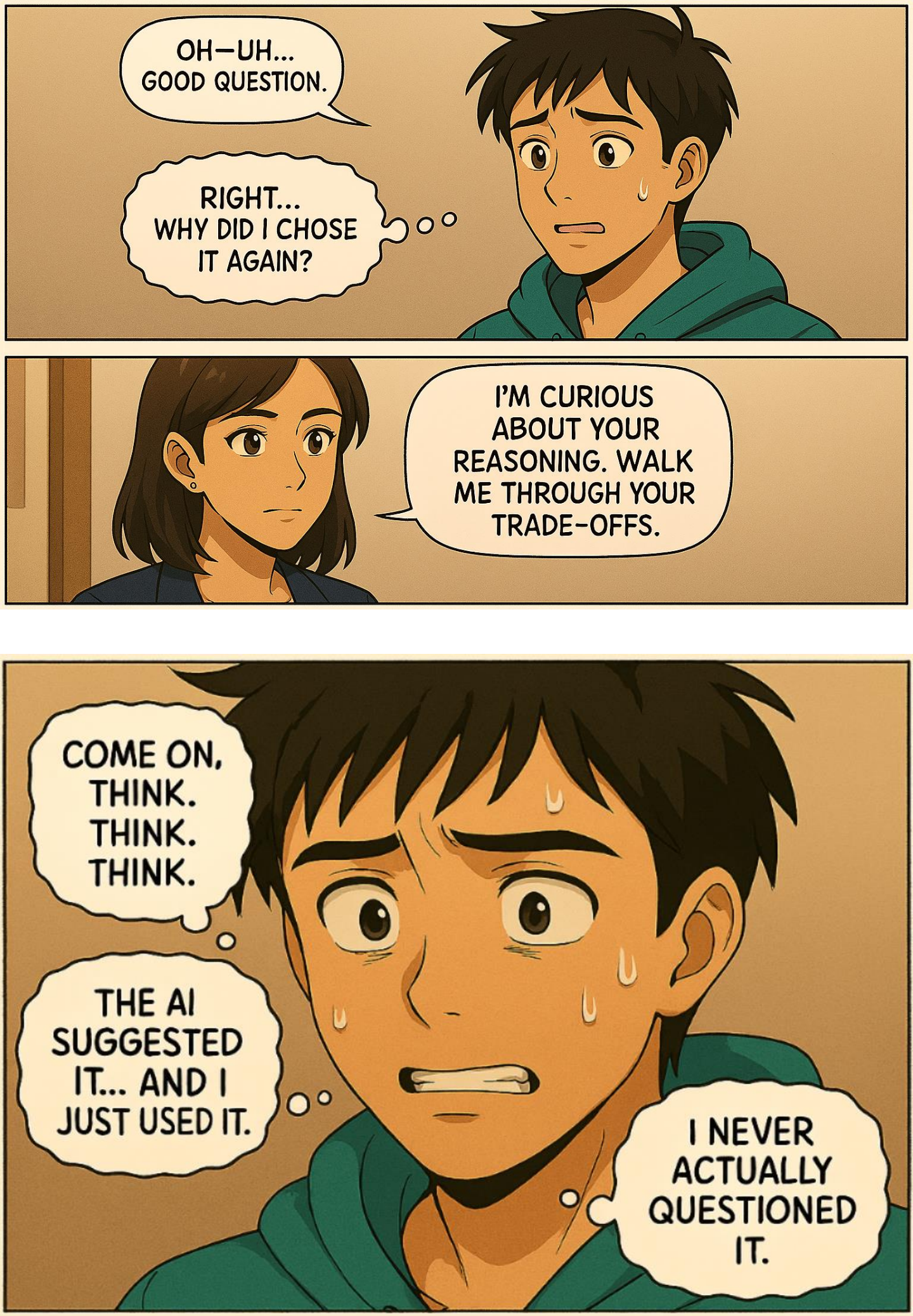
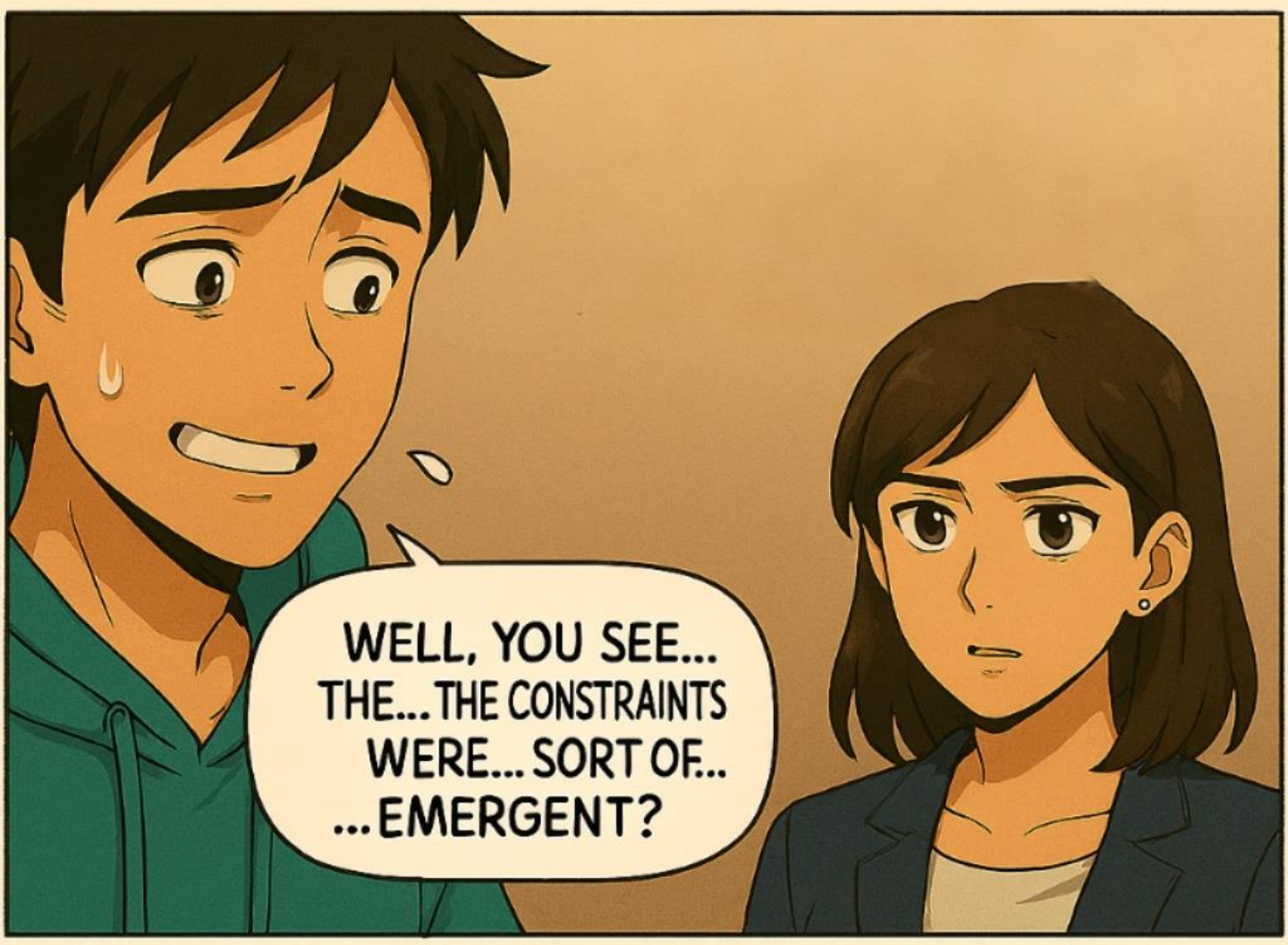
PROMPT OPERATOR

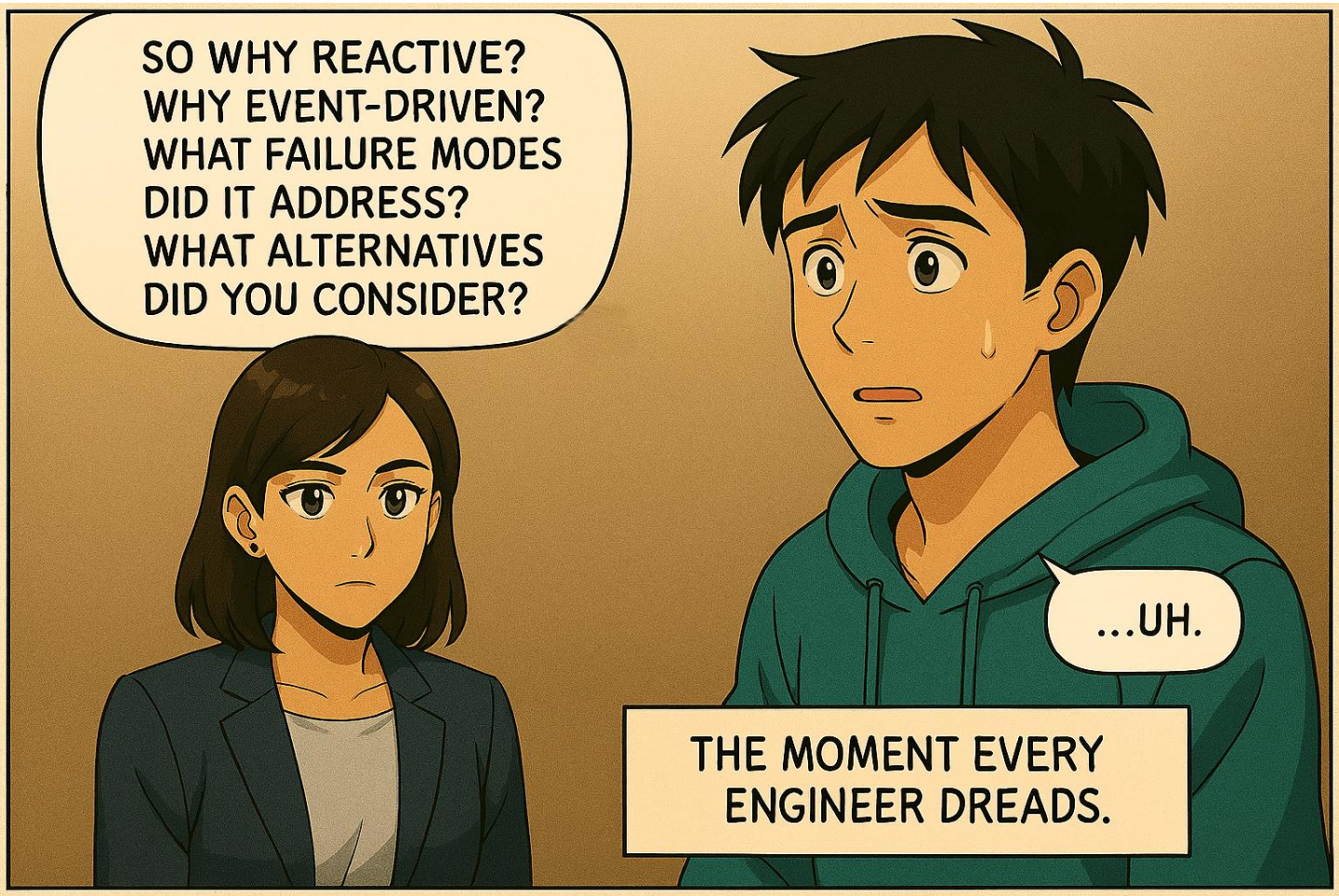
This comic series was developed as part of the “Beyond the declaration” research initiative at the University of Sydney. All artwork, characters, scripts, and prompts were created uniquely for this project using a combination of human authorship and AI-assisted generation. Released under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license. 2026.

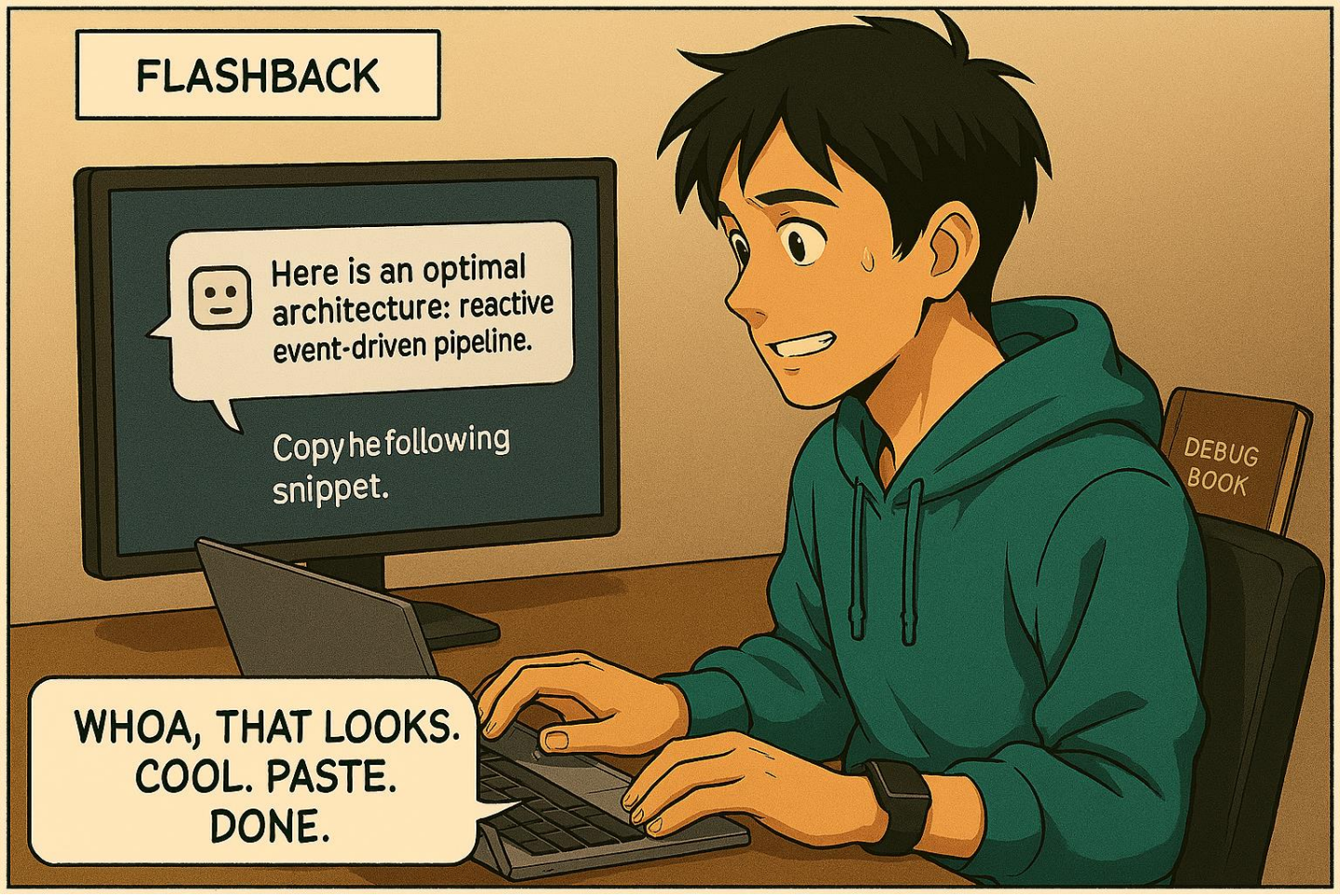

ALRIGHT, YOU'VE DONE WELL THIS YEAR.
ABSOLUTELY! THE REAL-TIME SCHEDULER REVAMP. IT BOOSTED PERFORMANCE BY 38%!
NICE. SHOW ME HOW YOU APPROACHED THE ARCHITECTURE.

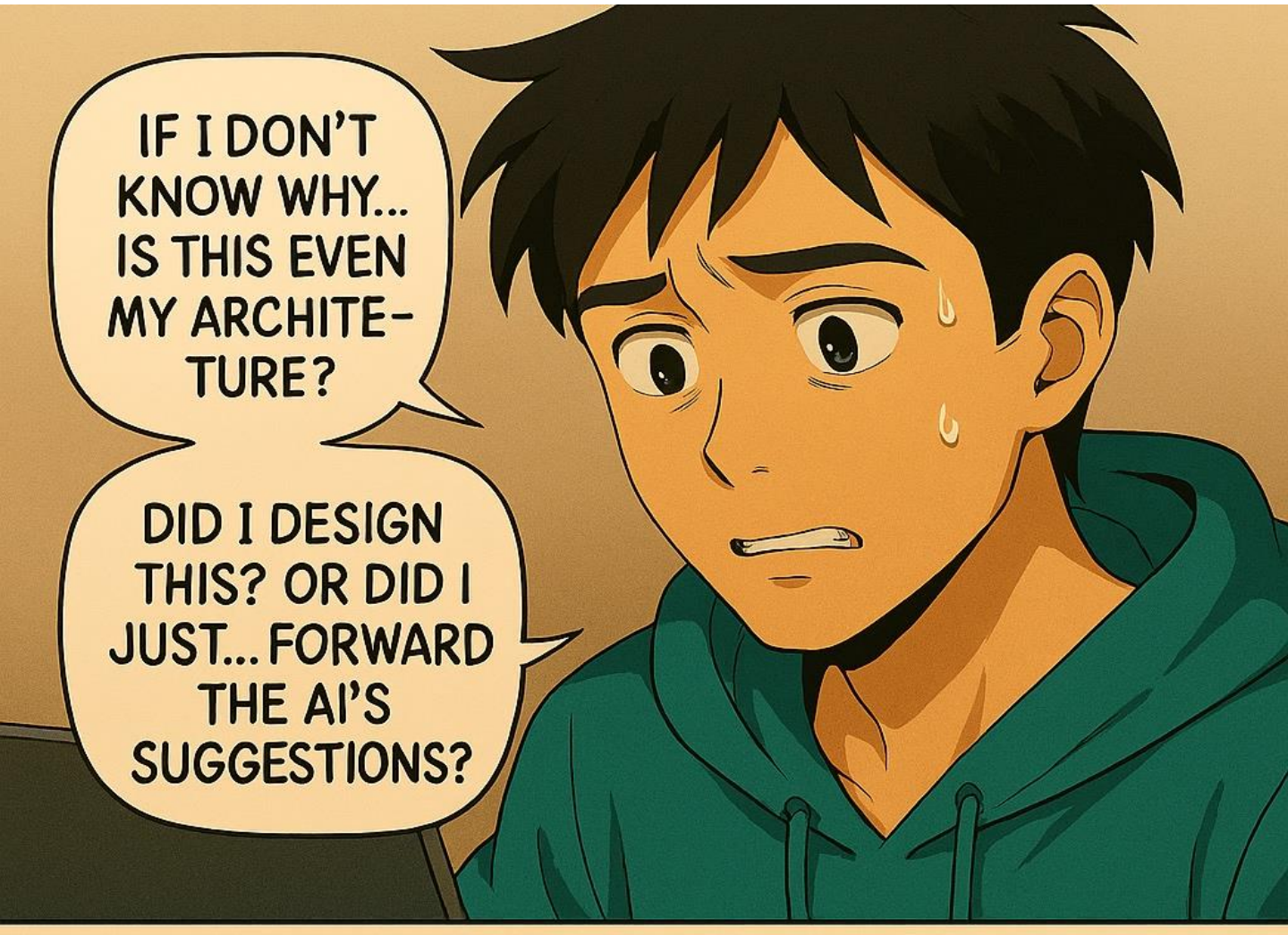

SO HERE'S THE DIAGRAM. I USED A REACTIVE, EVENT-DRIVEN PIPELINE WITH PARALLEL STATE ISOLATORS.
REACTIVE EVENT-DRIVEN PIPELINE
SCHEDULER REVAMP
STATE ISOLATOR A
EVENT REPOSITORY
PERFORMANCE LOGGER
INTERESTING CHOICE. WHY THIS PATTERN? WHY NOT OUR STANDARD MICROSERVICE DESIGN?

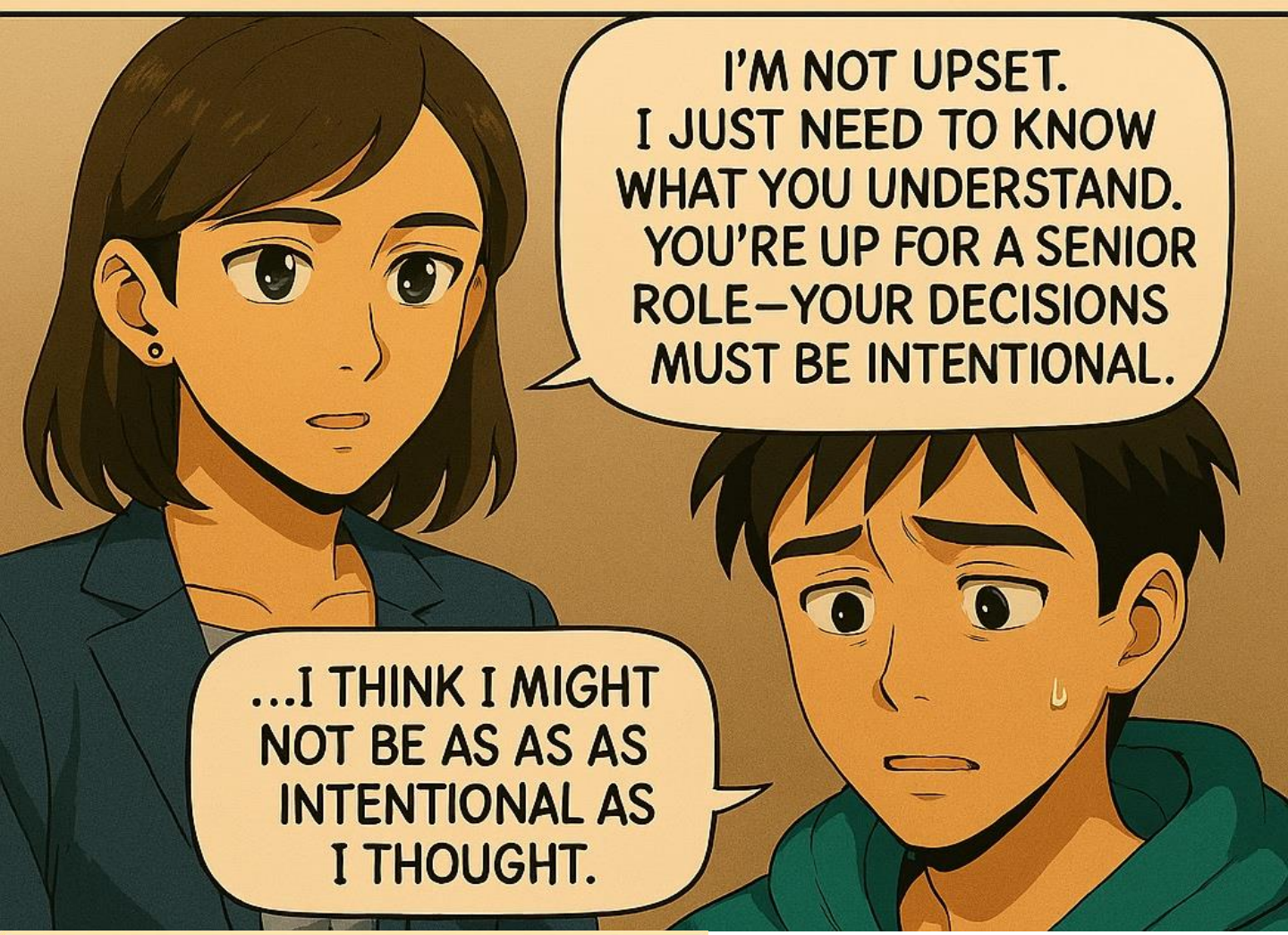

OH—UH... GOOD QUESTION.
RIGHT... WHY DID I CHOSE IT AGAIN?
I'M CURIOUS ABOUT YOUR REASONING. WALK ME THROUGH YOUR TRADE-OFFS.
COME ON, THINK. THINK. THINK.
THE AI SUGGESTED IT... AND I JUST USED IT.
I NEVER ACTUALLY QUESTIONED IT.


WELL, YOU SEE... THE... THE CONSTRAINTS WERE... SORT OF... ...EMERGENT?

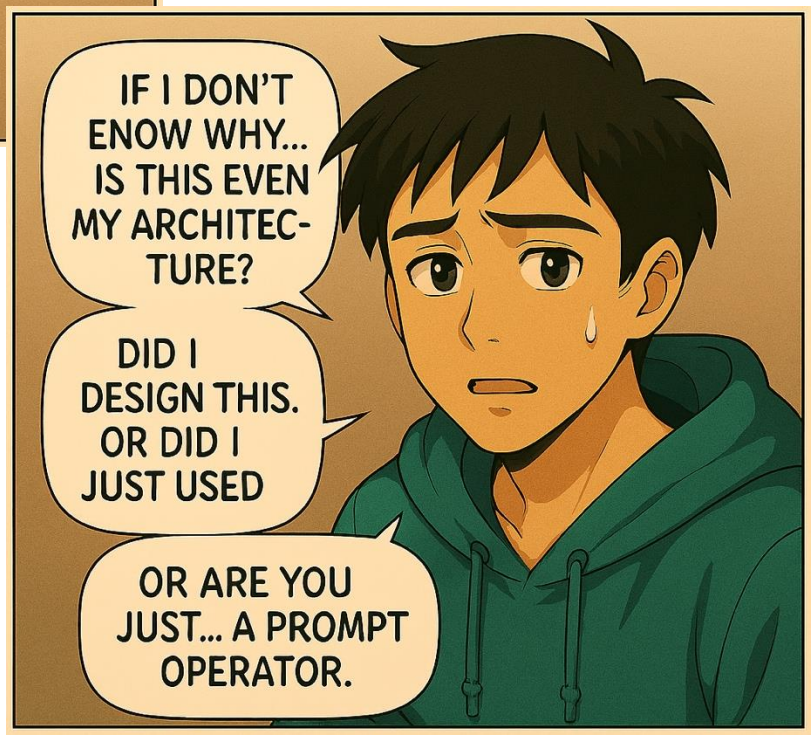

SO WHY REACTIVE? WHY EVENT-DRIVEN? WHAT FAILURE MODES DID IT ADDRESS? WHAT ALTERNATIVES DID YOU CONSIDER?
...UH.
THE MOMENT EVERY ENGINEER DREADS.

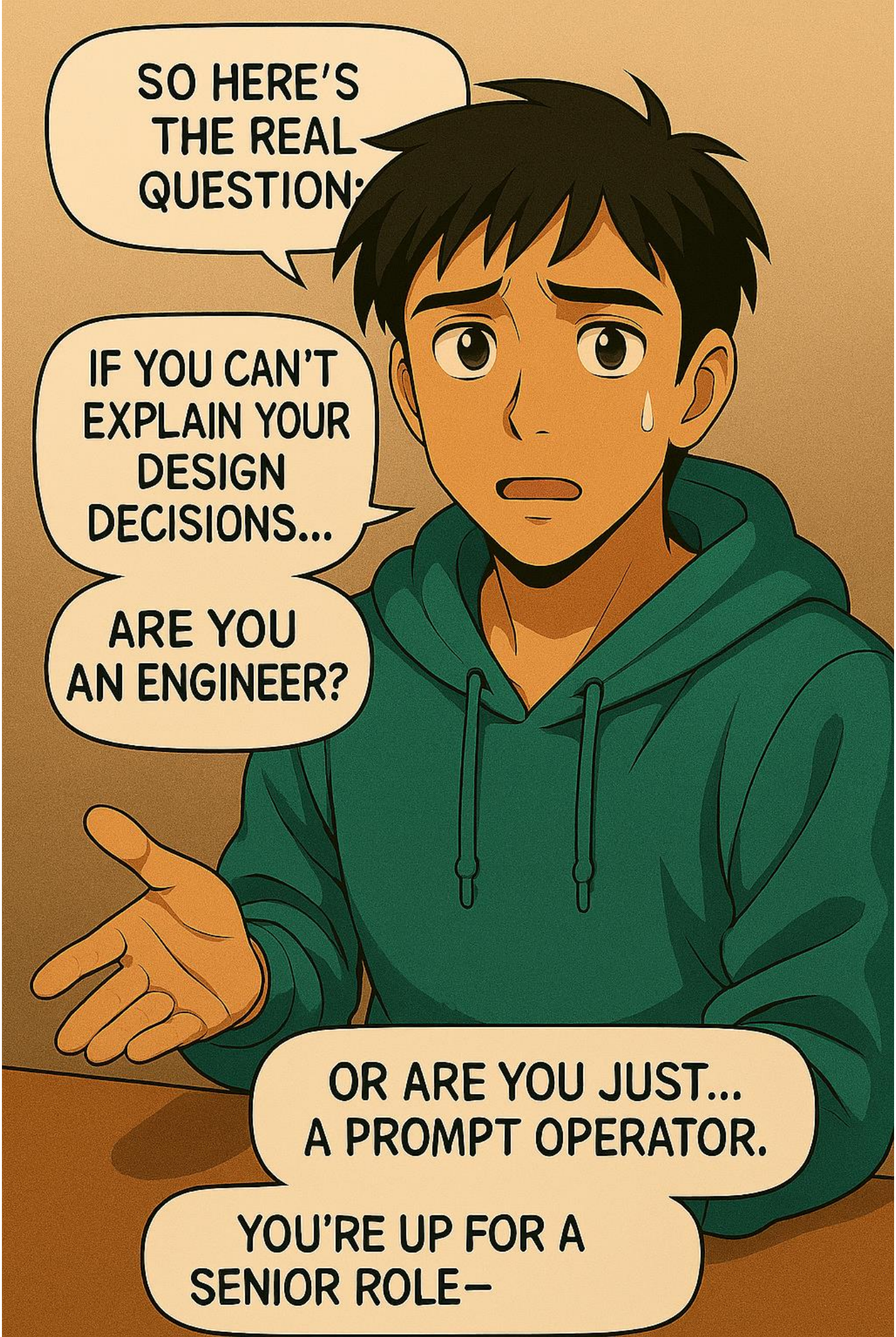

FLASHBACK
Here is an optimal architecture: reactive event-driven pipeline.
Copy he following snippet.
DEBUG BOOK
WHOA, THAT LOOKS. COOL. PASTE. DONE.


IF I DON'T KNOW WHY... IS THIS EVEN MY ARCHITE-TURE?
DID I DESIGN THIS? OR DID I JUST... FORWARD THE AI'S SUGGESTIONS?


I'M NOT UPSET.
I JUST NEED TO KNOW
WHAT YOU UNDERSTAND.
YOU'RE UP FOR A SENIOR
ROLE—YOUR DECISIONS
MUST BE INTENTIONAL.
...I THINK I MIGHT
NOT BE AS AS AS
INTENTIONAL AS
I THOUGHT.

DON'T
WORRY.
YOU'LL GET
THERE.


IF I DON'T
ENOW WHY...
IS THIS EVEN
MY ARCHITEC-
TURE?
DID I
DESIGN THIS.
OR DID I
JUST USED
OR ARE YOU
JUST... A PROMPT
OPERATOR.


SO HERE'S THE REAL QUESTION:
IF YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN YOUR DESIGN DECISIONS...
ARE YOU AN ENGINEER?
OR ARE YOU JUST... A PROMPT OPERATOR.
YOU'RE UP FOR A SENIOR ROLE—

CTRL+Save the Planet . Avoid Printing .

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All resources and materials are available at http://alishakiba.github.io/beyond-declaration.