

Web Security

Week 11 - Local HTTP Server Security

Old Dominion University

Department of Computer Science

CS 495/595 Spring 2022

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2022-04-04

The most dangerous code you run every day

```
// Anyone can connect to the server at http://<your-ip>:4000
server.listen(4000)
```

```
// Only your device can connect to the server
server.listen(4000, '127.0.0.1')
```

Zoom Zero Day: 4+ Million Webcams & maybe an RCE? Just get them to visit your website!

A vulnerability in the Mac Zoom Client allows any malicious website to enable your camera without your permission. The flaw potentially exposes up to 750,000 companies around the world that use Zoom to conduct day-to-day business.



Jonathan Leitschuh

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Jul 8 · 16 min read



From 2019

CVE-Numbers

- DOS Vulnerability — Fixed in Client version 4.4.2 — [CVE-2019-13449](#)
- Information Disclosure (Webcam) — Unpatched — [CVE-2019-13450](#)

Responsible disclosure: the researchers gave Zoom 90 days to fix the problem and they did nothing, so they published this blog post.

UPDATE — July 9th (am)

As far as I can tell this vulnerability also impacts Ringcentral. Ringcentral for their web conference system is a white labeled Zoom system.

<https://infosecwriteups.com/zoom-zero-day-4-million-webcams-maybe-an-rce-just-get-them-to-visit-your-website-ac75c83f4ef5?gi=f80c27935bec>

Zoom zero day

"This vulnerability allows any website to forcibly join a user to a Zoom call, with their video camera activated, without the user's permission"

"On top of this, this vulnerability allowed any webpage to DOS (Denial of Service) a Mac by repeatedly joining a user to an invalid call"

"Additionally, if you've ever installed the Zoom client and then uninstalled it, you still have a localhost web server on your machine that will happily re-install the Zoom client for you, without requiring any user interaction on your behalf besides visiting a webpage. This re-install 'feature' continues to work to this day"

Zoom zero day

"Let me start off by saying having an installed app that is running a web server on my local machine with a totally undocumented API feels incredibly sketchy to me"

"Secondly, the fact that any website that I visit can interact with this web server running on my machine is a huge red flag for me as a Security Researcher"

"Having every Zoom user have a web server that accepts HTTP GET requests that trigger code outside of the browser sandbox is painting a huge target on the back of Zoom"

Demo: How does a site communicate with a local HTTP server?

- With the following local HTTP server:

```
const COMMAND = 'open /System/Applications/Dictionary.app'

app.get('/', (req, res) => {
  exec(COMMAND, err => {
    res.set('Access-Control-Allow-Origin', '*')
    if (err) res.status(500).send(err)
    else res.status(200).send('Success')
  })
})
```

- Any site can send a GET request to **http://localhost:4000** to launch the Dictionary application

Demo: How many servers are running on your computer?

```
$ lsof -i -P | grep -i "listen"
BlueJeans      540  mln    15u   IPv4  0xc62afb1fdf7a3d27      0t0    TCP
localhost:18170 (LISTEN)
node        655  mln    23u   IPv6  0xc62afb1fd58657df      0t0    TCP  *:5001 (LISTEN)
$
```

TrendMicro Antivirus on Windows local HTTP server Remote Code Execution (RCE)

- Local HTTP server was vulnerable to RCE from any site
 - See Google Project Zero issue:
<https://bugs.chromium.org/p/project-zero/issues/detail?id=693&redir=1>

```
x = new XMLHttpRequest()
x.open("GET", "https://localhost:49155/api/openUrlInDefaultBrowser?url=c:/windows/system32/calc.exe", true);
try { x.send(); } catch (e) {};
```

Schedule a Meeting

Topic

Jonathan Leitschuh's Zoom Meeting

Date

7/ 6/ 2019 ▾

11:00 PM ▾

to

7/ 6/ 2019 ▾

11:30 PM ▾

Time Zone

(GMT-04:00) Eastern Time (US and Canada) ▾

Recurring meeting

Video

Host

On Off

Participants On Off

Audio

Telephone Computer Audio Telephone and Computer Audio

Dial in from United States [Edit](#)

Options

Require meeting password

[Advanced Options](#) ▾

Calendar

iCal

Google Calendar

Outlook

Other Calendars

Cancel

Schedule

Zoom UI denial-of-service

Zoom UI denial-of-service

```
// It's actually better if this number isn't a valid zoom conference number
const confNum = '694138052'

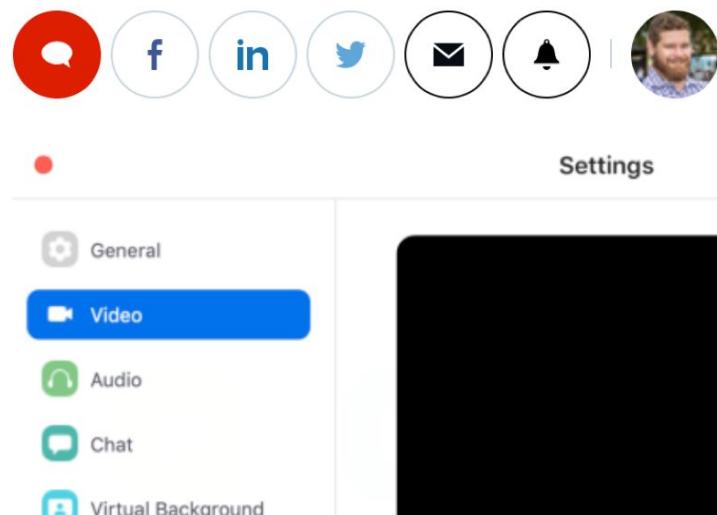
setInterval(() => {
  new Image().src =
    'http://localhost:19421/launch?action=join&confno=' +
    confNum + '&' + Date.now()
}, 1)
```

Browser loses focus briefly on each request. Repeat the requests often enough and the user can't regain focus.

MUST READ: Google's new AI tool could help decode the mysterious algorithms that decide everything

Zoom defends use of local web server on Macs after security report

Local web server will also reportedly reinstall Zoom if a user removes the application and joins a meeting.



By [Chris Duckett](#) | July 9, 2019 --
01:28 GMT (18:28 PDT) | Topic:
[Security](#)

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MORE FROM CHRIS DUCKETT

<https://www.zdnet.com/article/zoom-defends-use-of-local-web-server-on-macs-after-security-report/>

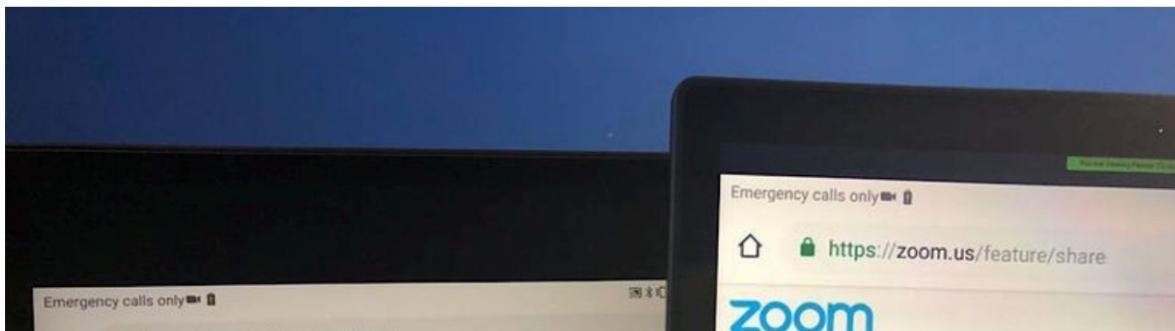
MUST READ: Google's new AI tool could help decode the mysterious algorithms that decide everything

Zoom reverses course to kill off Mac local web server

Less than a day after backing its approach to get around Safari restrictions on Mac, Zoom's local web server is no more.



By Chris Duckett | July 10, 2019 --
00:50 GMT (17:50 PDT) | Topic:
Security



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<https://www.zdnet.com/article/zoom-reverses-course-to-kill-off-mac-local-web-server/>

Cleaning up the mess

- Zoom issued an updated app which uninstalled the local HTTP server and added a new UI prompt to confirm that you want to join a meeting
- User who did not open the app for a while would be vulnerable until they installed the update
- Users who previously uninstalled Zoom would not get the update, so they'd be stuck with the vulnerable local server

Remote Code Execution (RCE)

- Around one week after the local server issue came to light, another research team discovered a RCE vulnerability
- The complete exploit allowed a zero-interaction RCE just by visiting a malicious site – yikes!
 - <https://blog.assetnote.io/bug-bounty/2019/07/17/rce-on-zoom/>

Zoom RCE

Thousands of ecosystem packages potentially vulnerable

- Discovered by Feross Aboukhadijeh and Mathias Buus
- Initially discovered our own npm package, **bittorrent-dht**, was vulnerable
- Any computer in the world could send a specially-designed message to our listening BitTorrent peer and read a 20 byte chunk of process memory
- Commit: <https://github.com/webtorrent/bittorrent-dht/commit/6c7da04025d5633699800a99ec3fbadf70ad35b8>

33 / Feross Aboukhadijeh

<http://assetnotehackszoom.com> no longer live; nor is it archived
http://web.archive.org/web/*/assetnotehackszoom.com

Apple is silently removing Zoom's web server software from Macs

For users who haven't seen all the drama

By Dieter Bohn | @backlon | Jul 10, 2019, 7:12pm EDT

f   SHARE



<https://www.theverge.com/2019/7/10/20689644/apple-zoom-web-server-automatic-removal-silent-update-webcam-vulnerability>

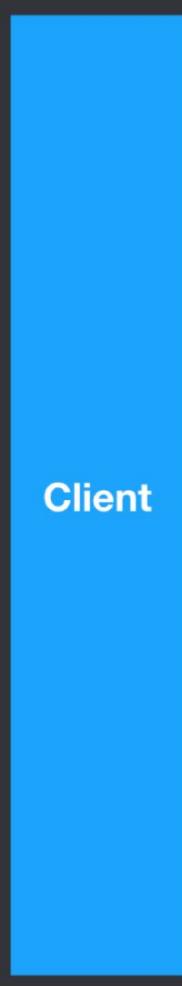
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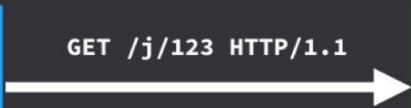
Apple takes steps

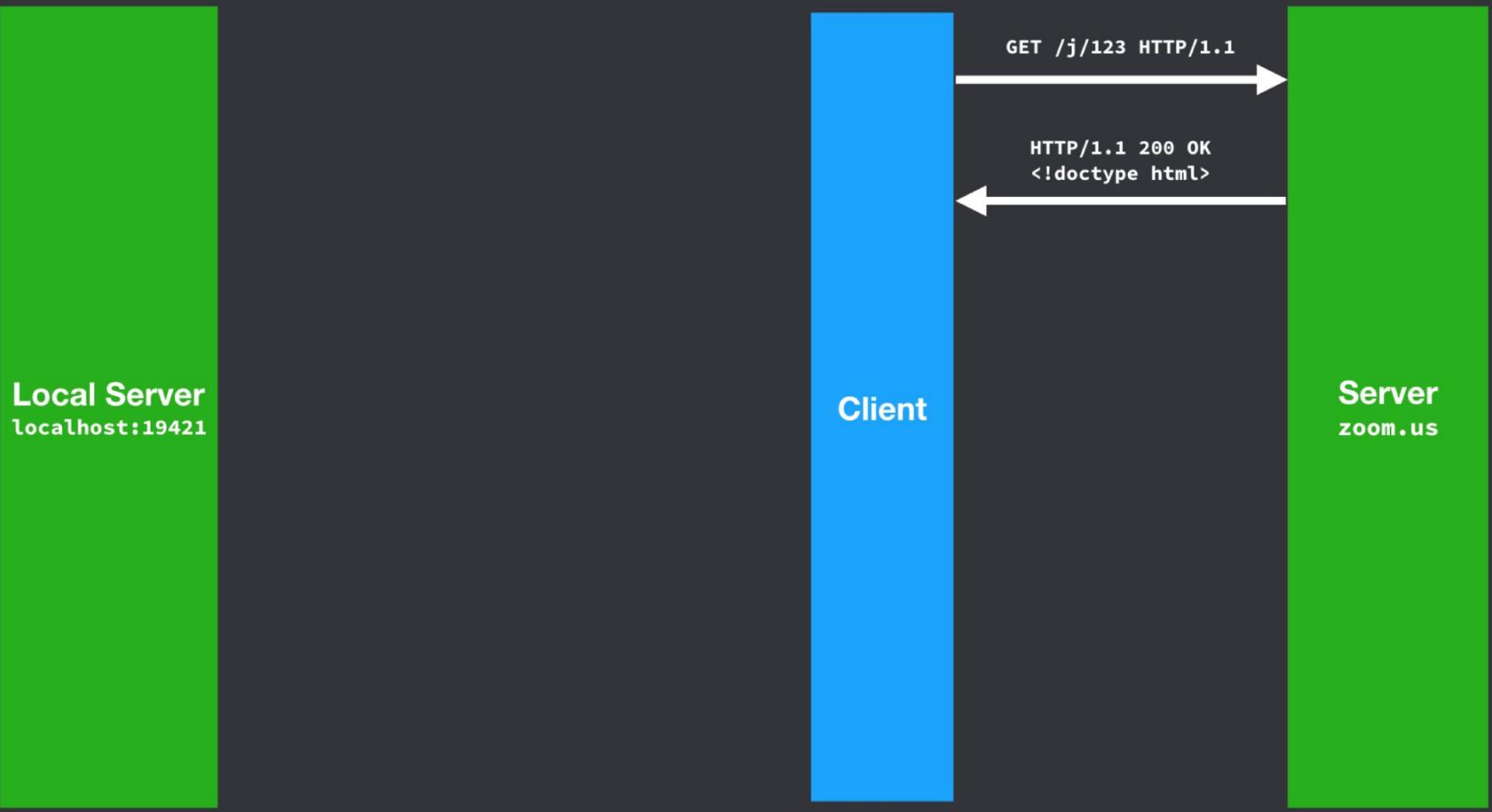
- macOS has a silent update mechanism for disabling specific executable files (Malware Removal Tool)
- No OS update required – checks for new banned executables in the background, regularly
- Useful for disabling fast-spreading malware or vulnerable software affecting lots of users

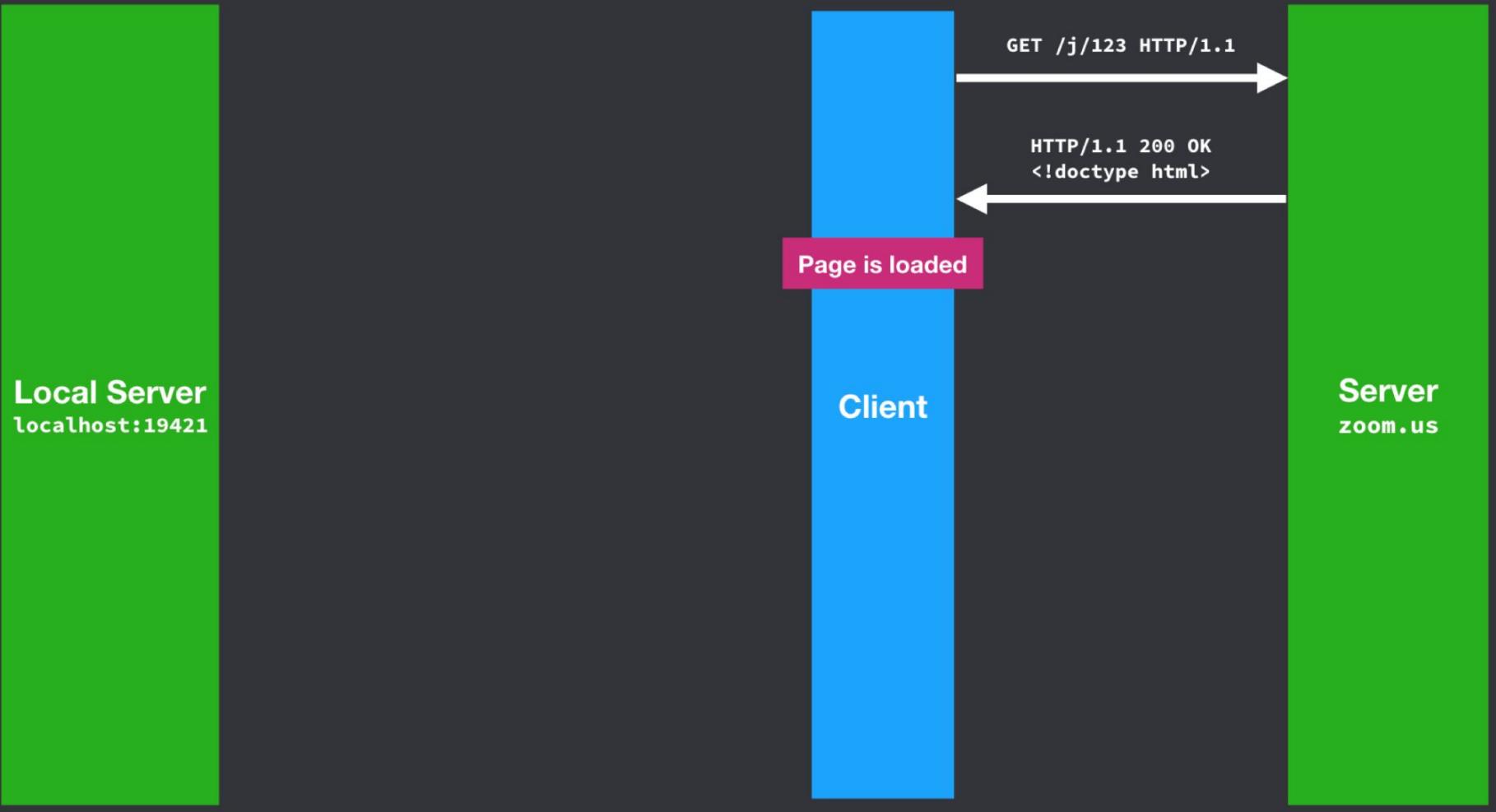
Zoom didn't understand CORS

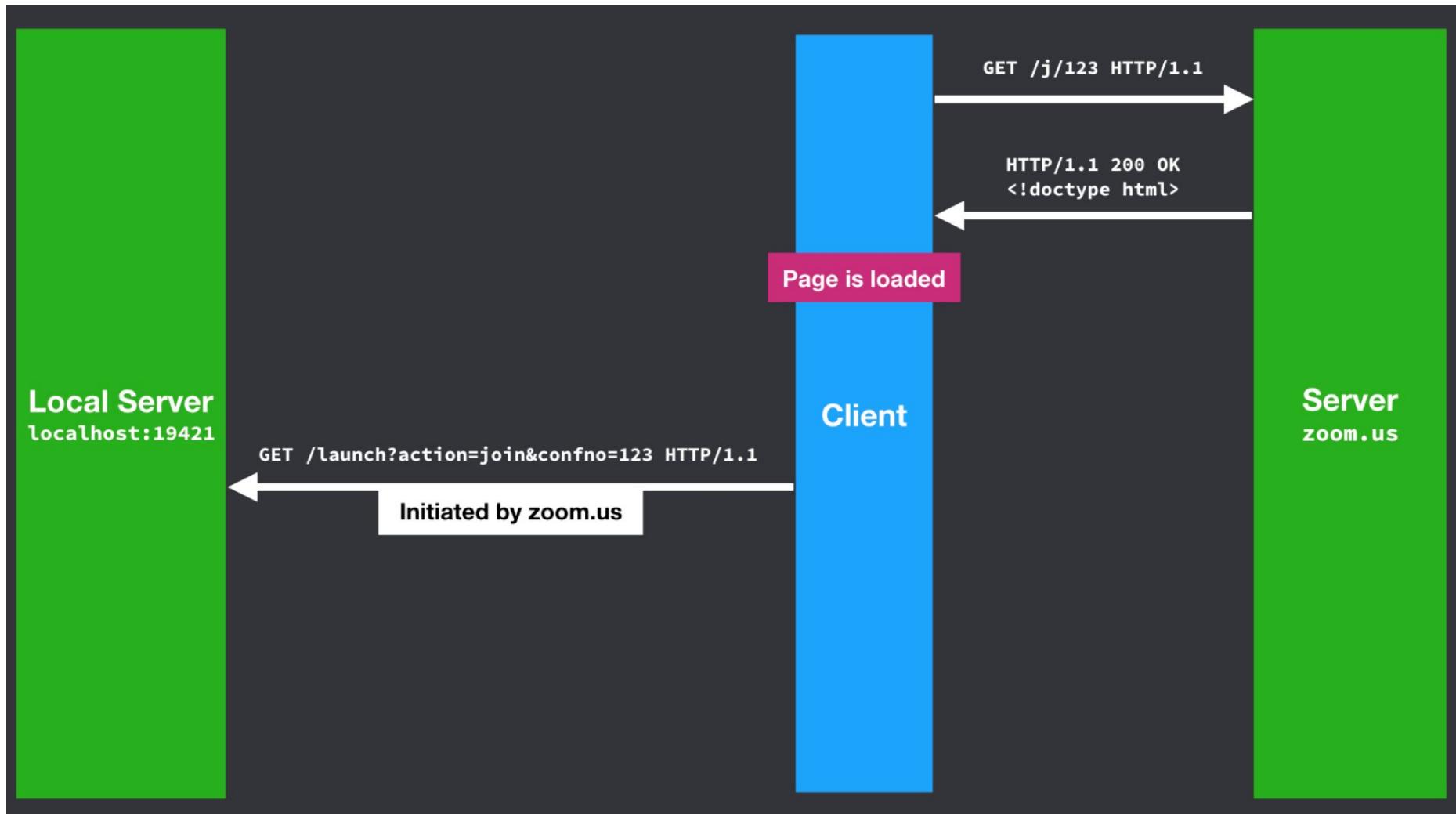
User joins a zoom call (vulnerable)

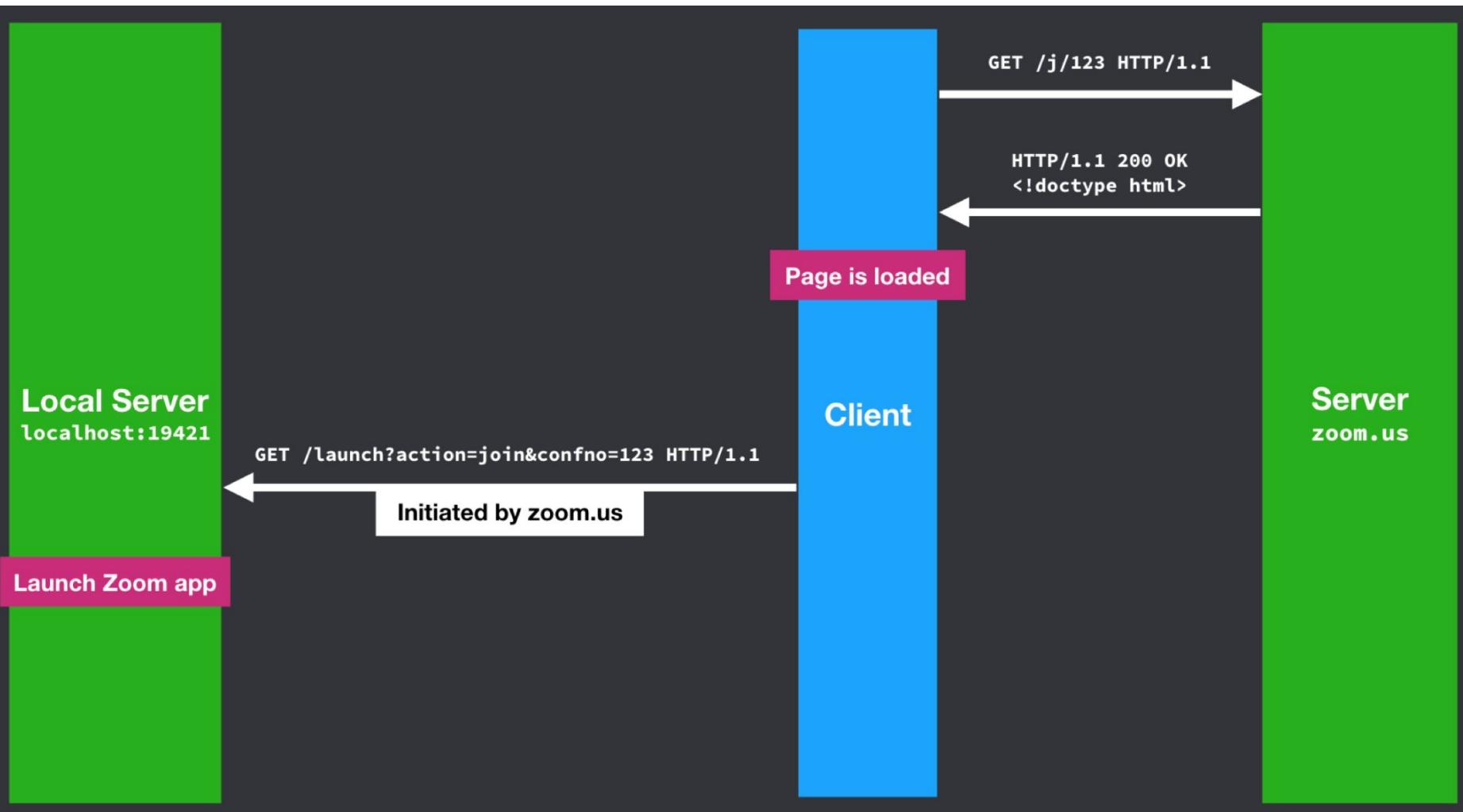


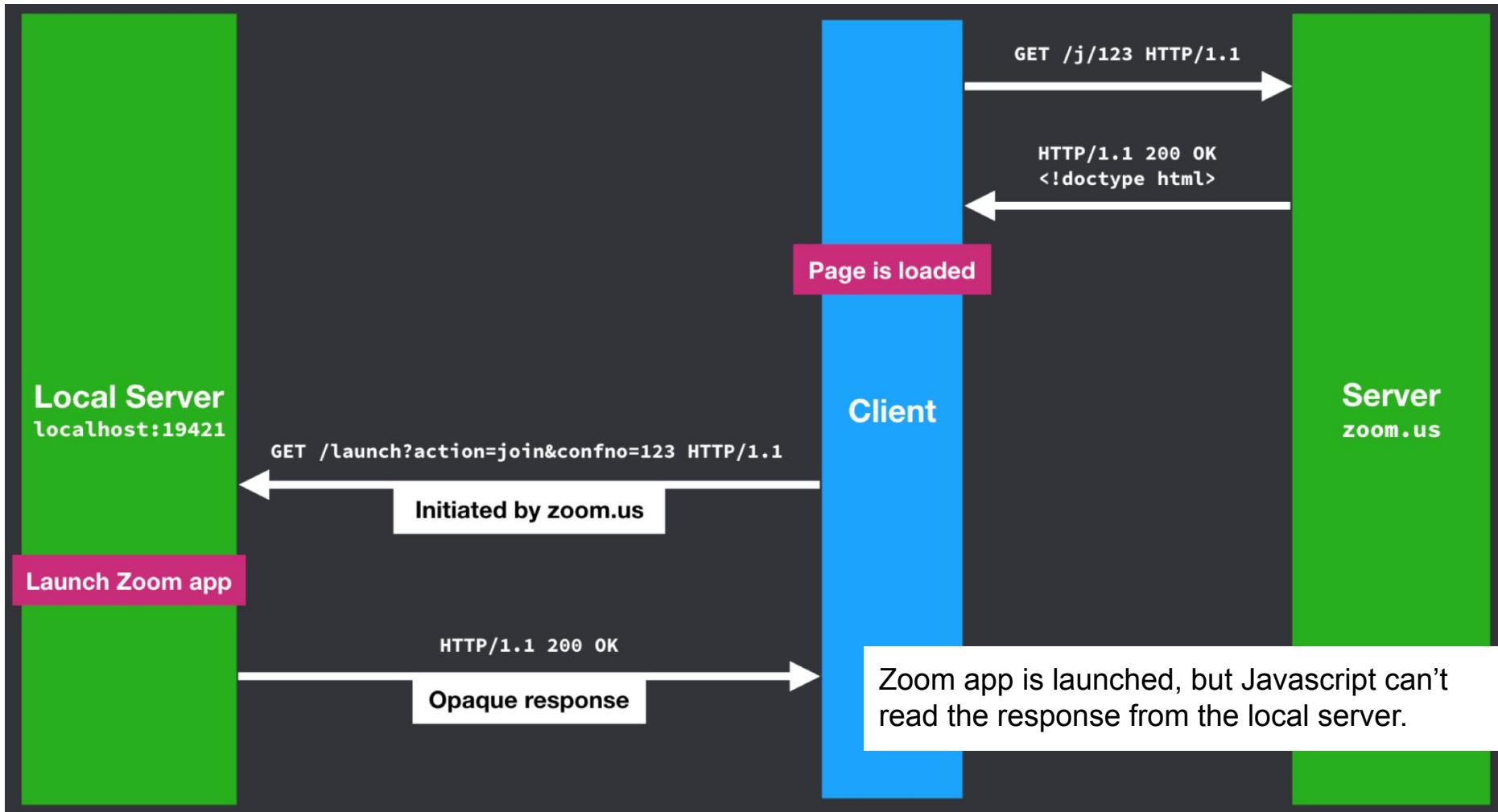


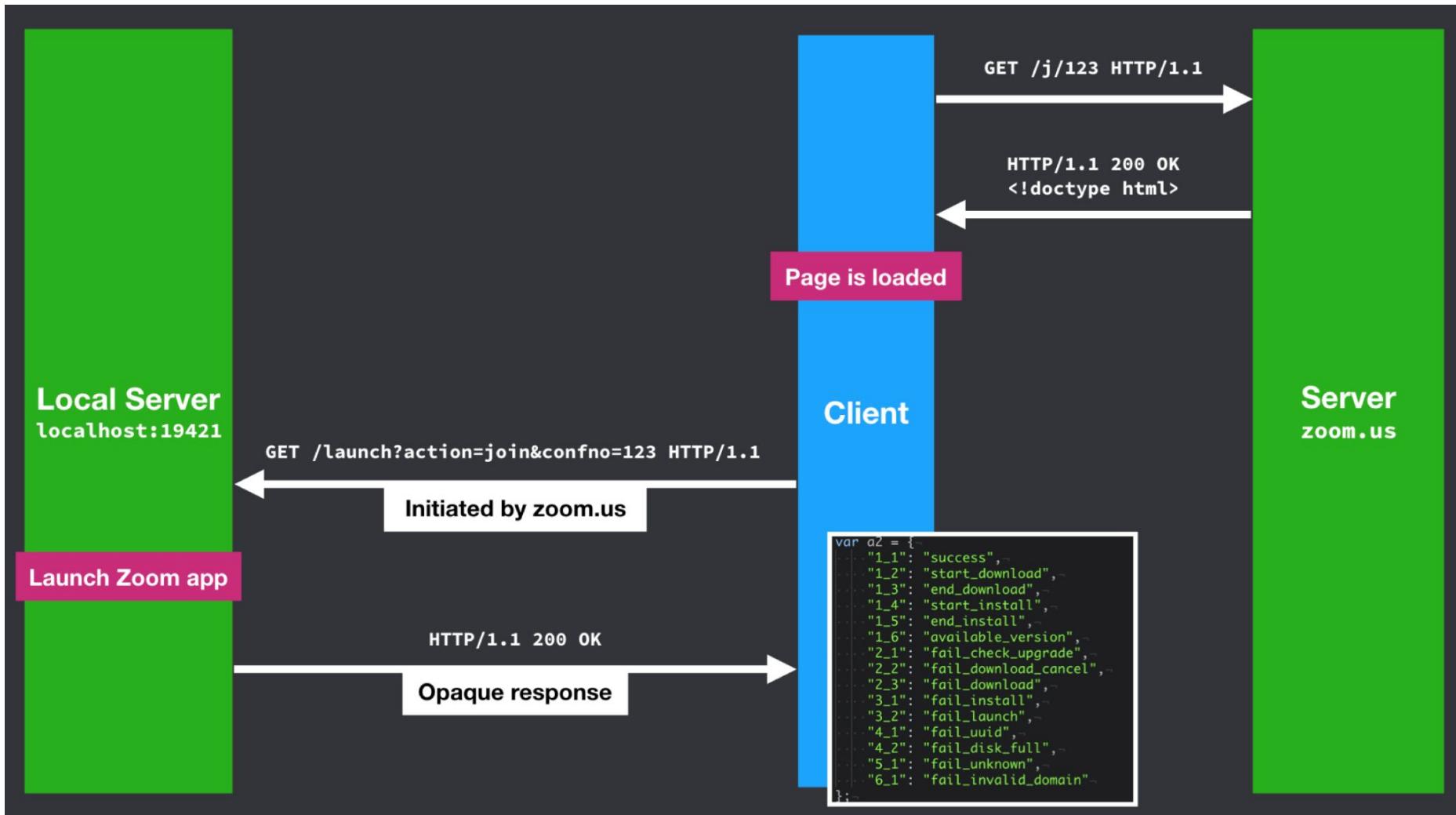










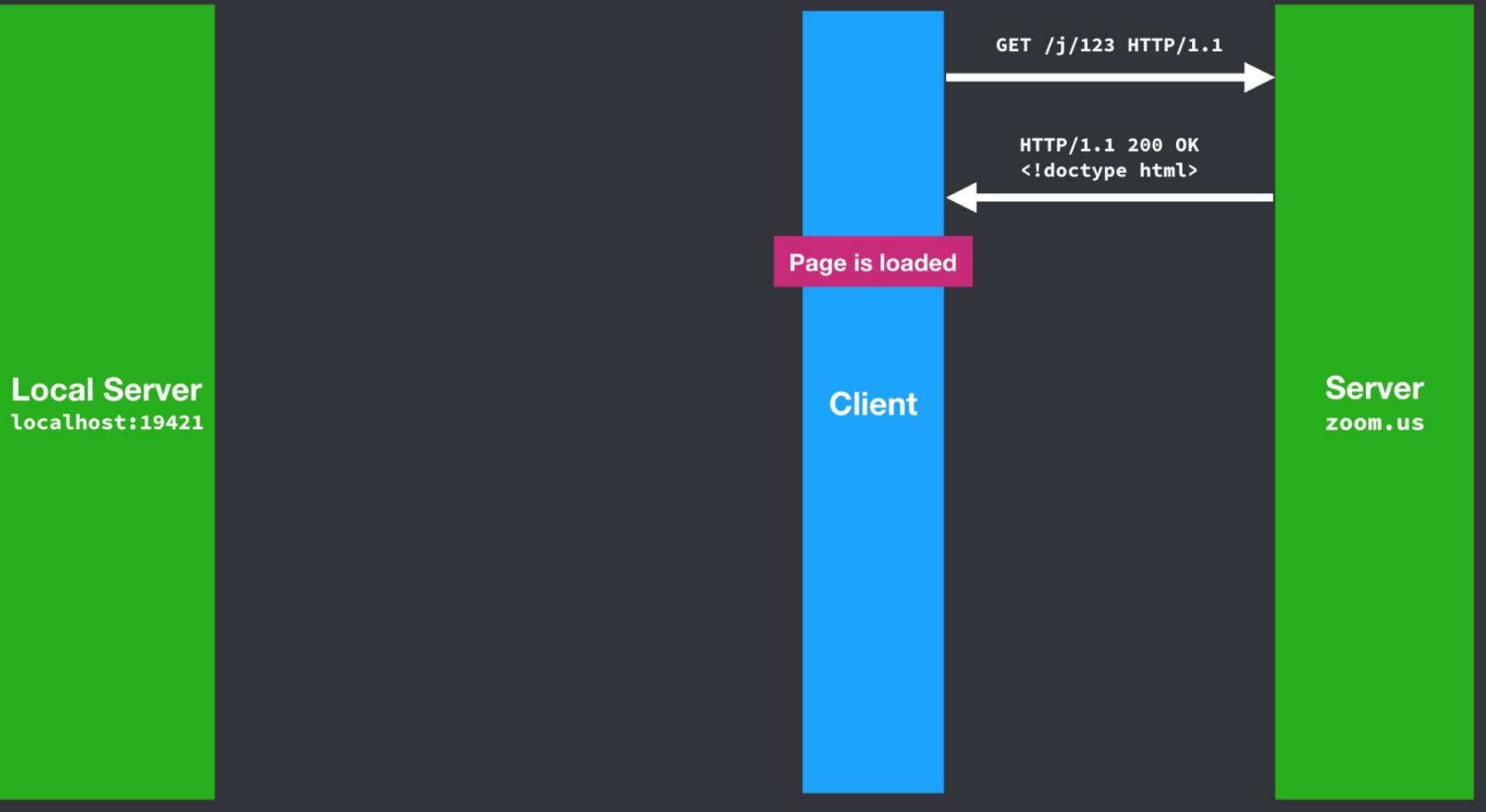


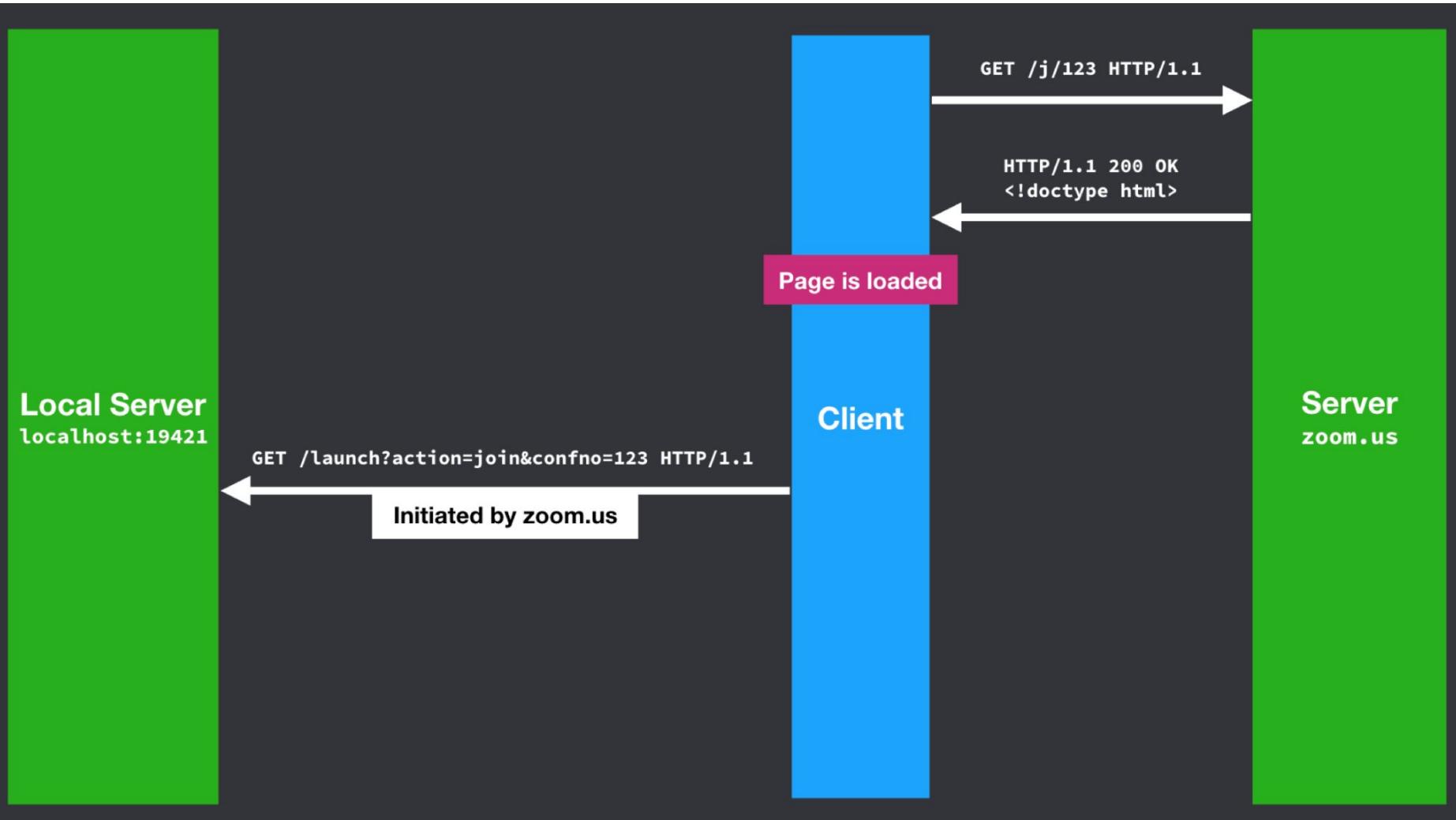
Depends on pixel width instead to convey status.

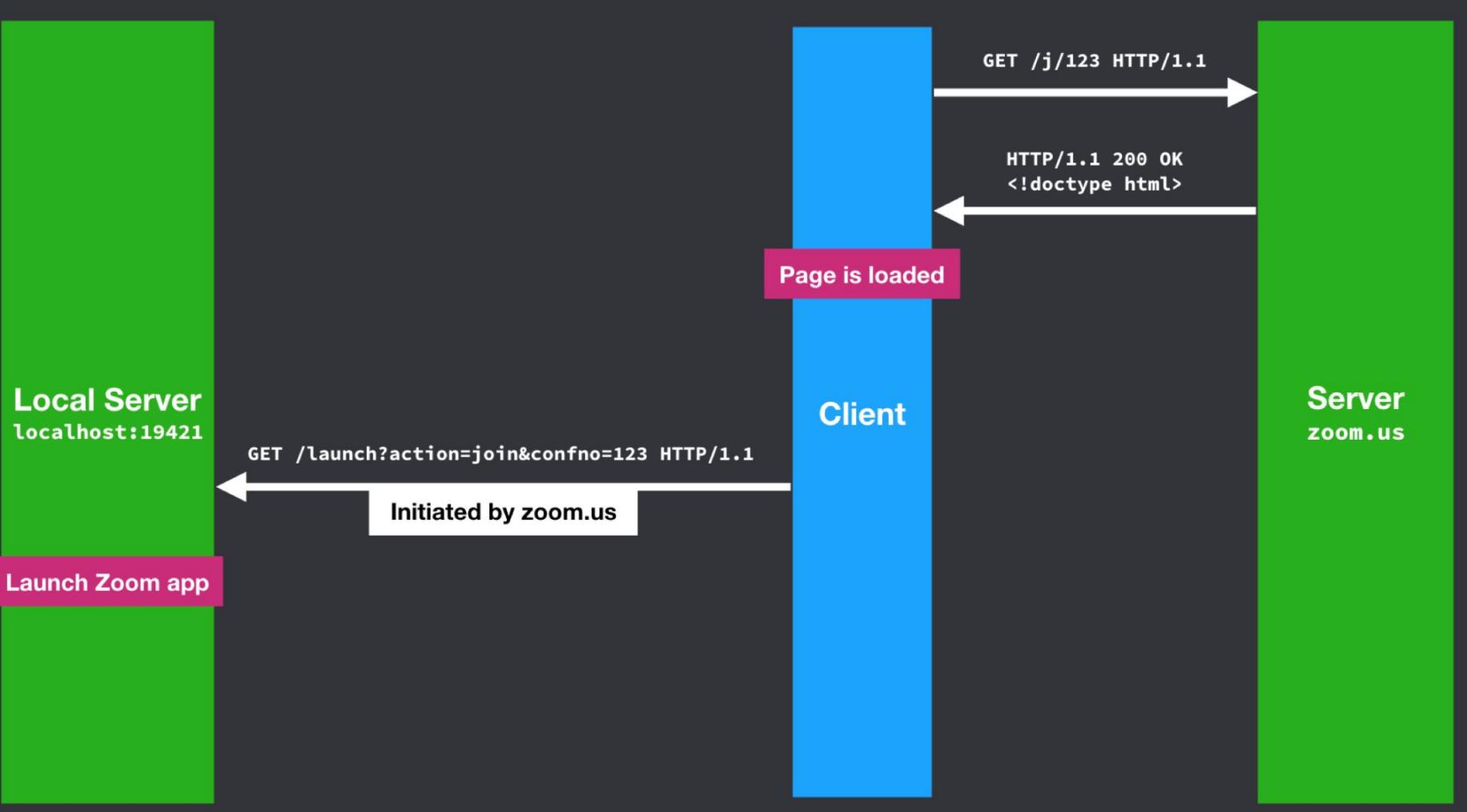
Zoom doesn't understand how CORS works?

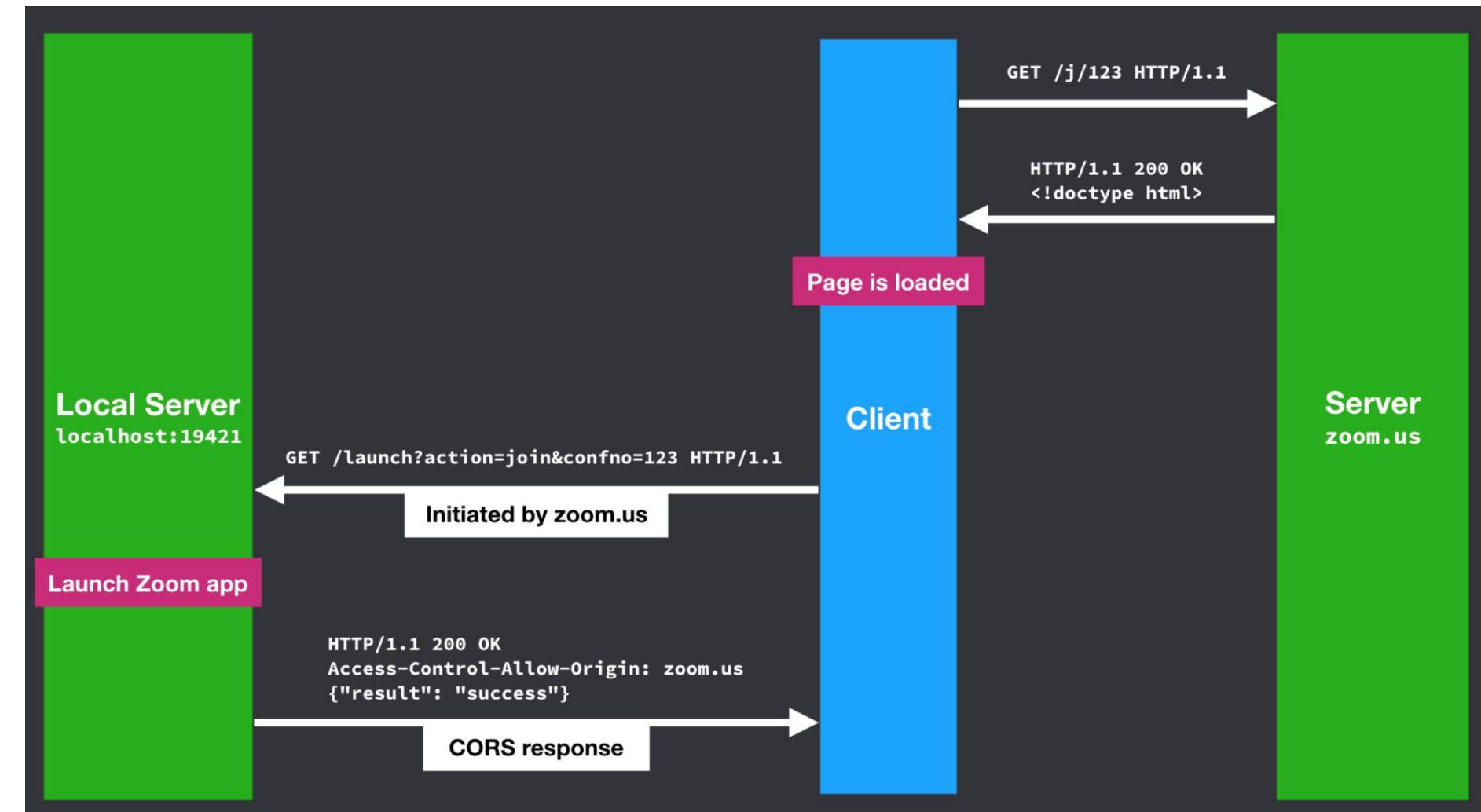
- The `http://localhost:19421/launch?action=join&confno=###` endpoint returns information about whether the request succeeded, but since it's triggered from `https://zoom.us` the same origin policy doesn't allow reading the response
- So, they returned an image with different widths/heights to "leak" information to the site that triggered the request
- They could have just used `Access-Control-Allow-Origin` to specify particular sites which would be allowed to read the response

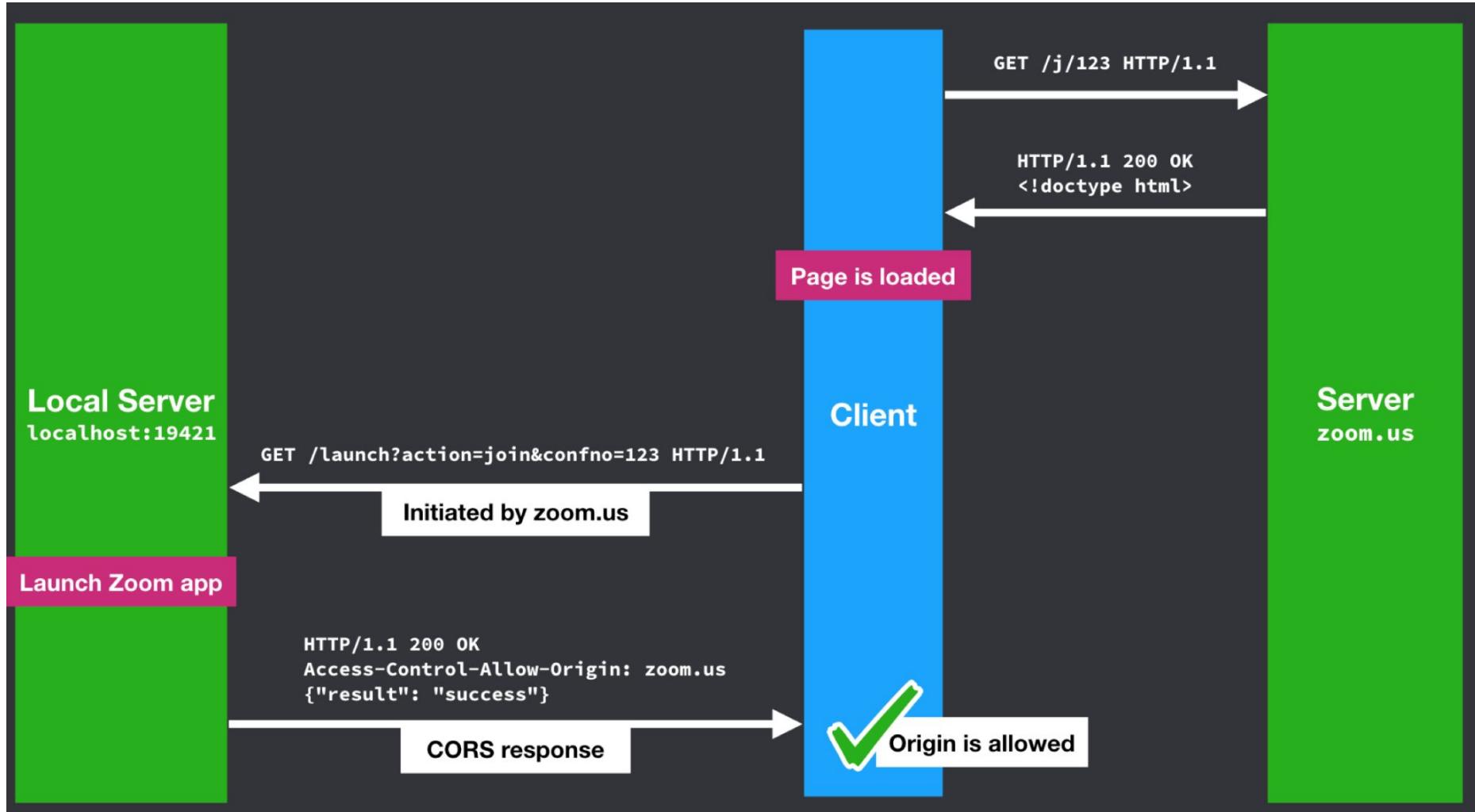
User joins a zoom call
(with CORS endpoint)
(vulnerable)



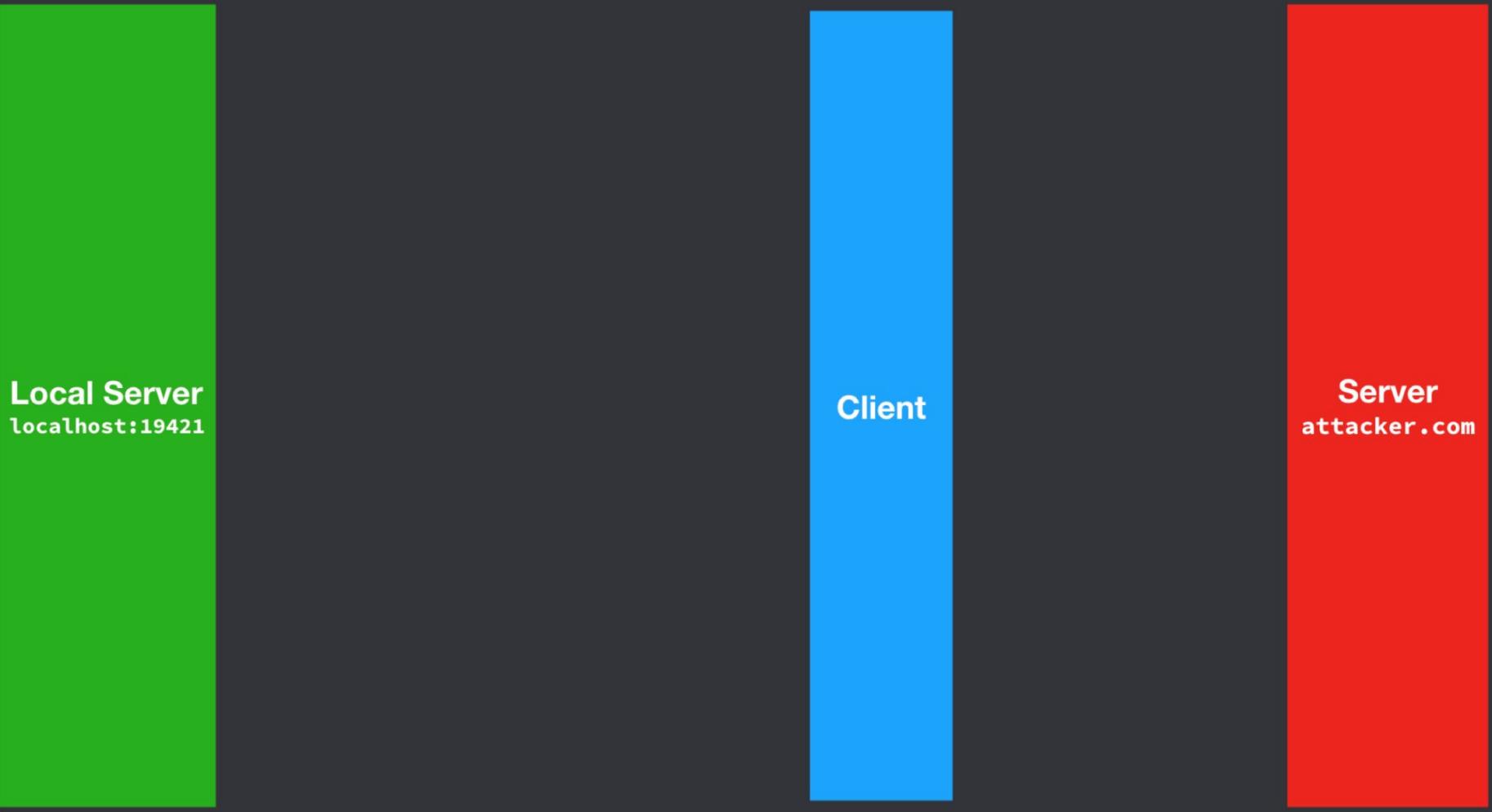


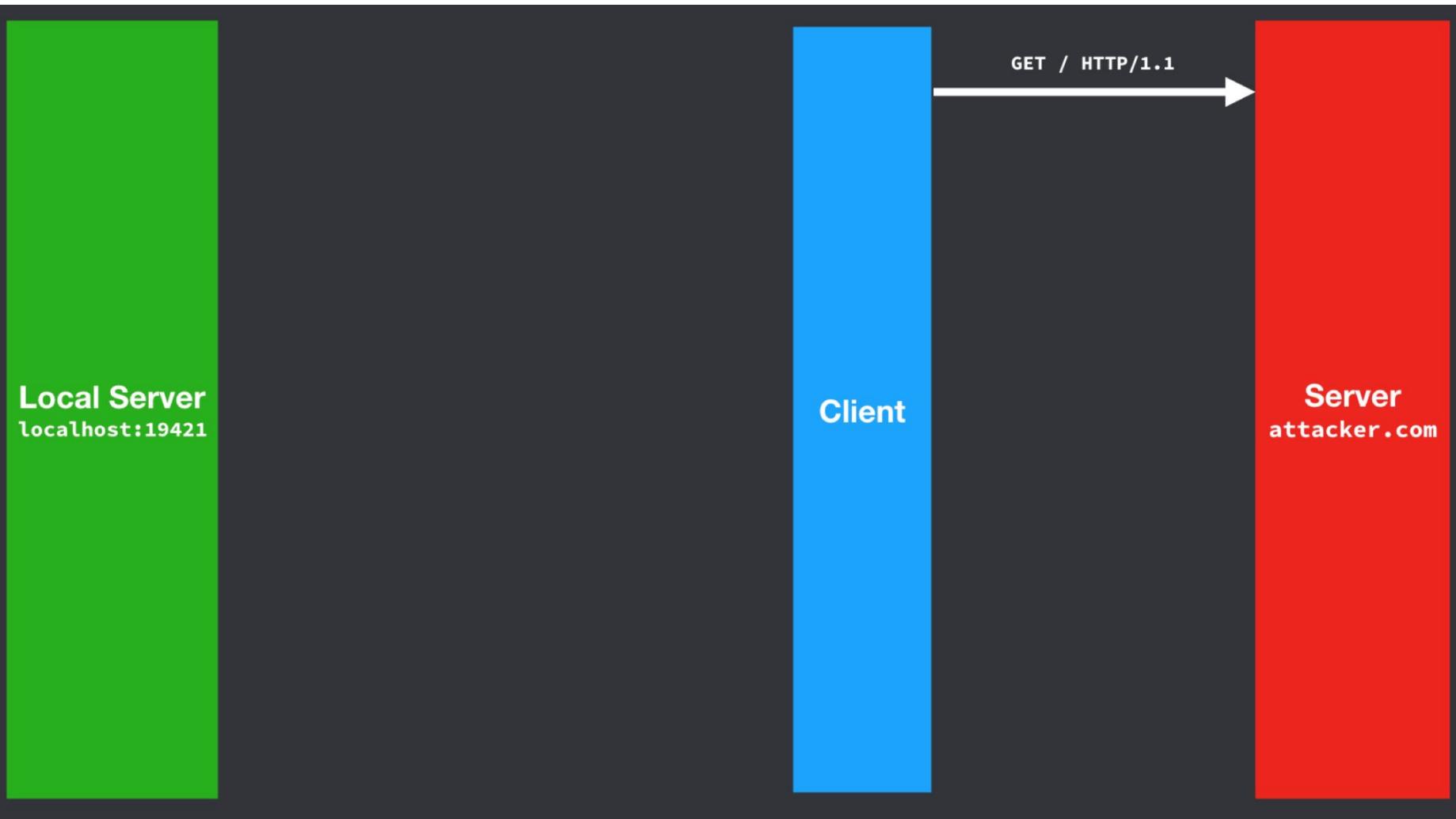


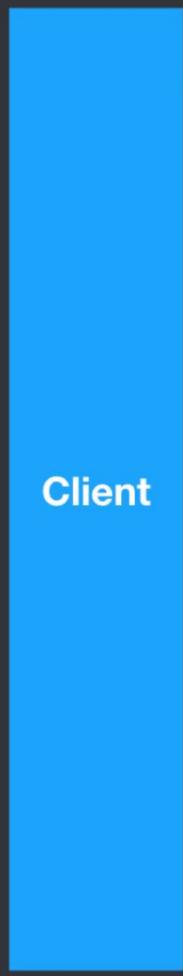


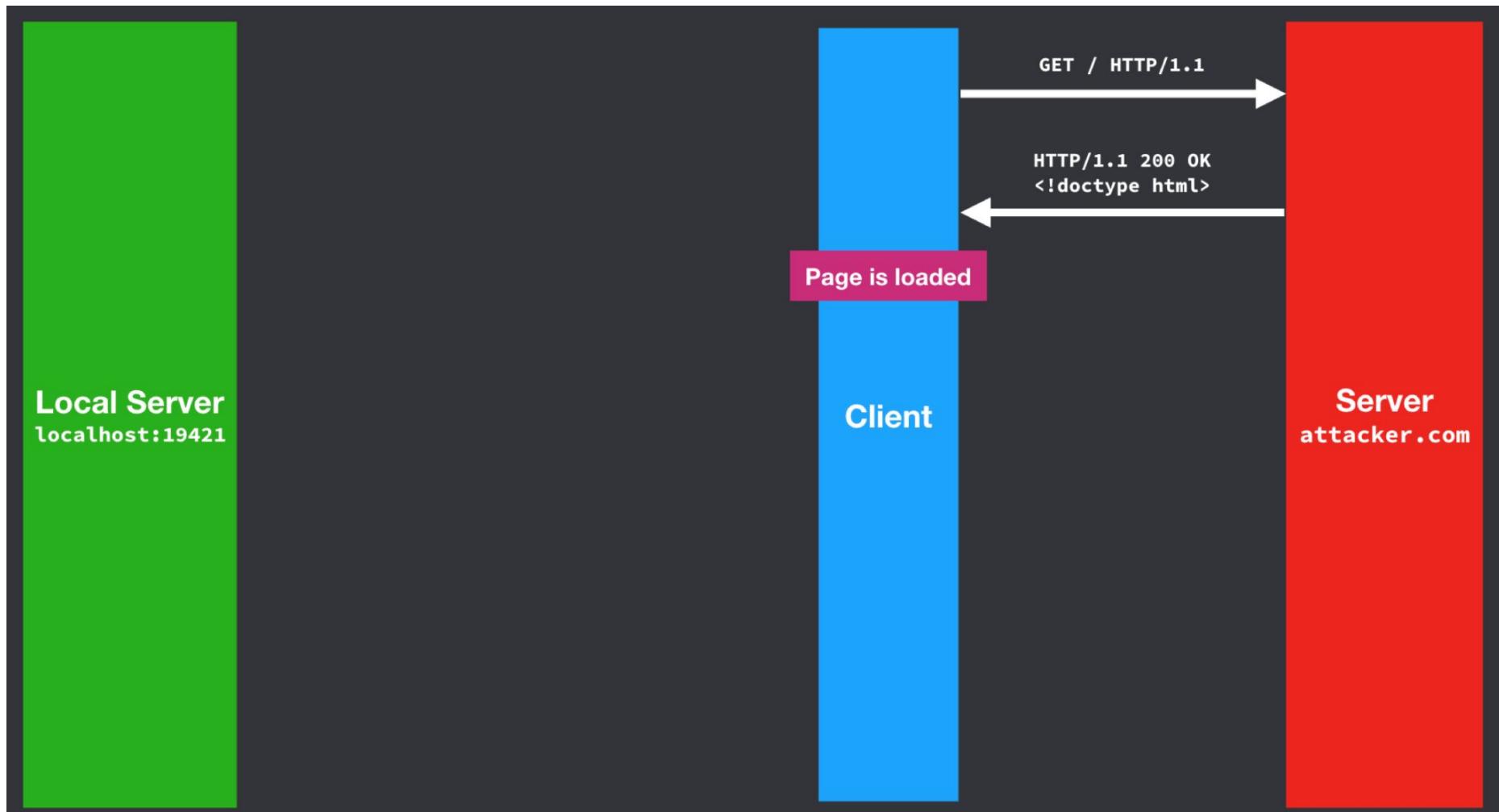


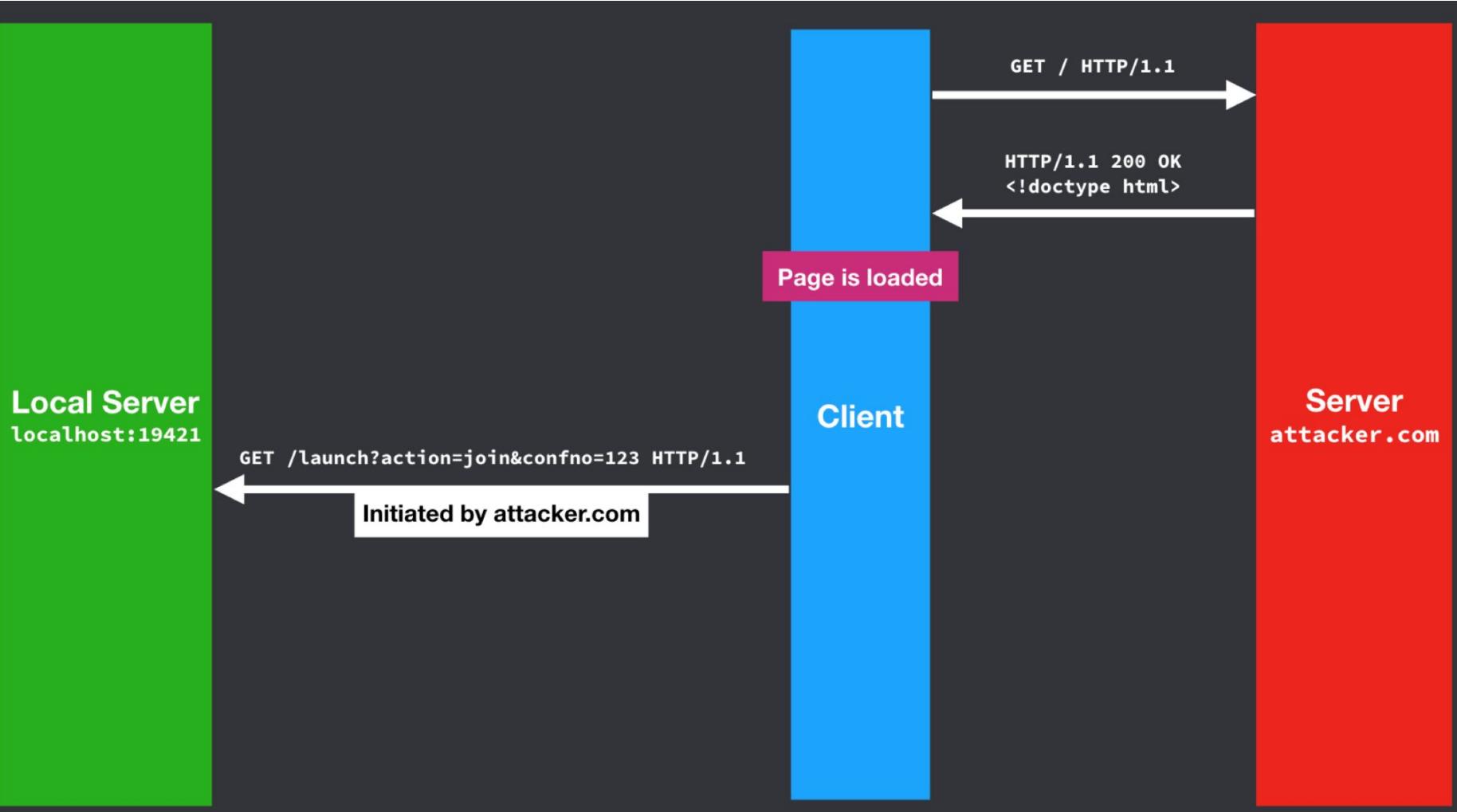
Attacker joins user into a zoom call

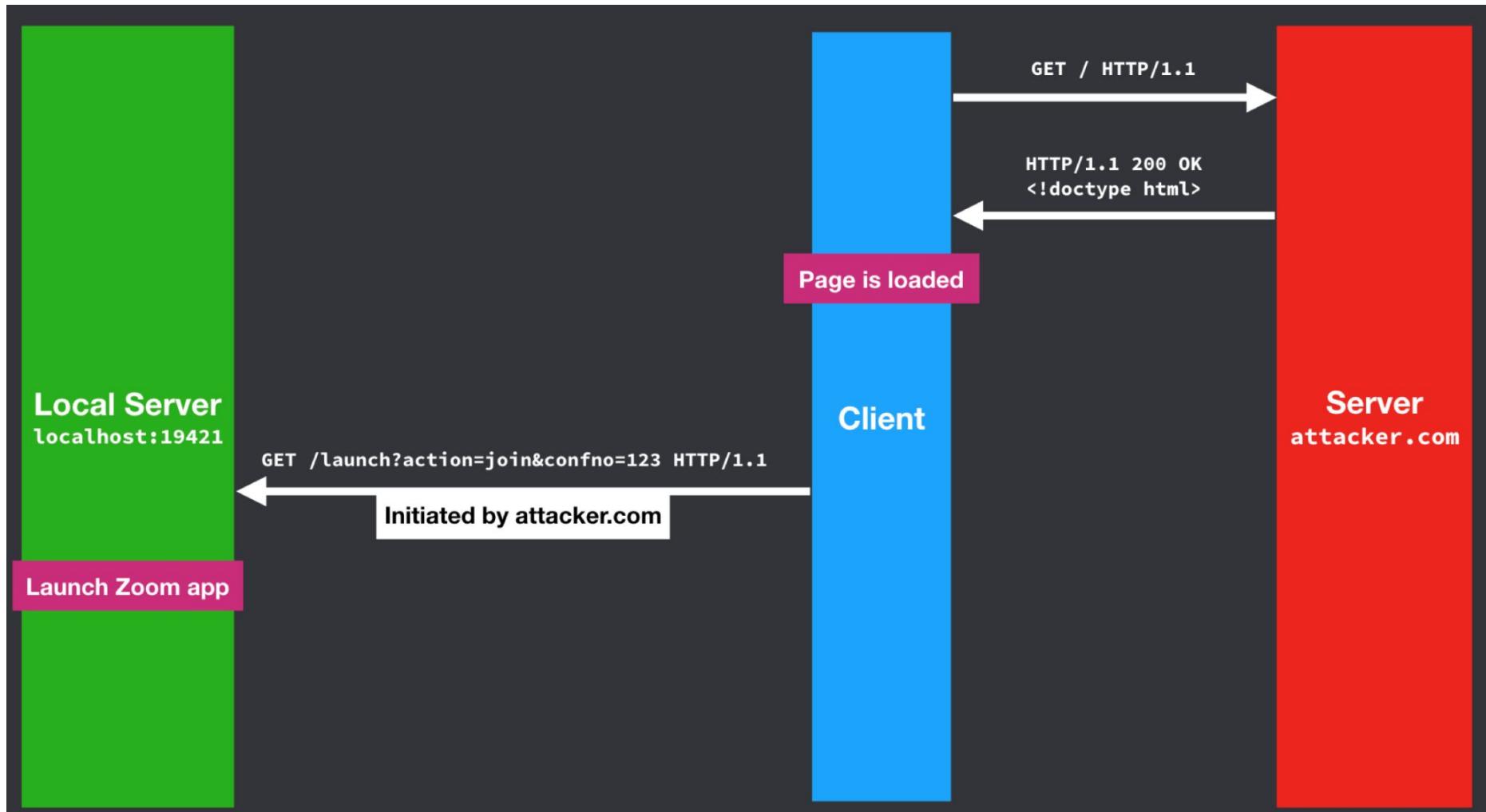


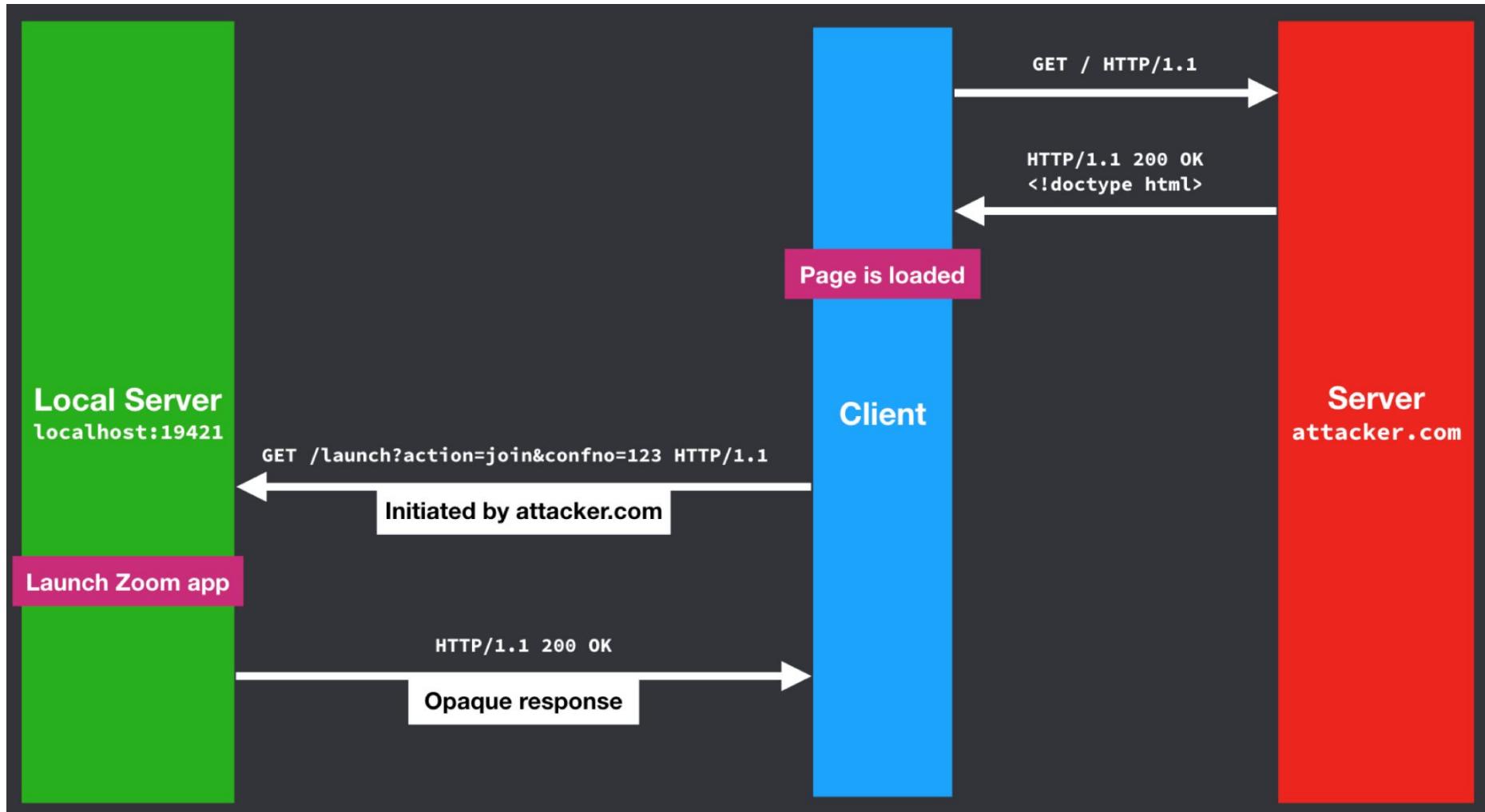




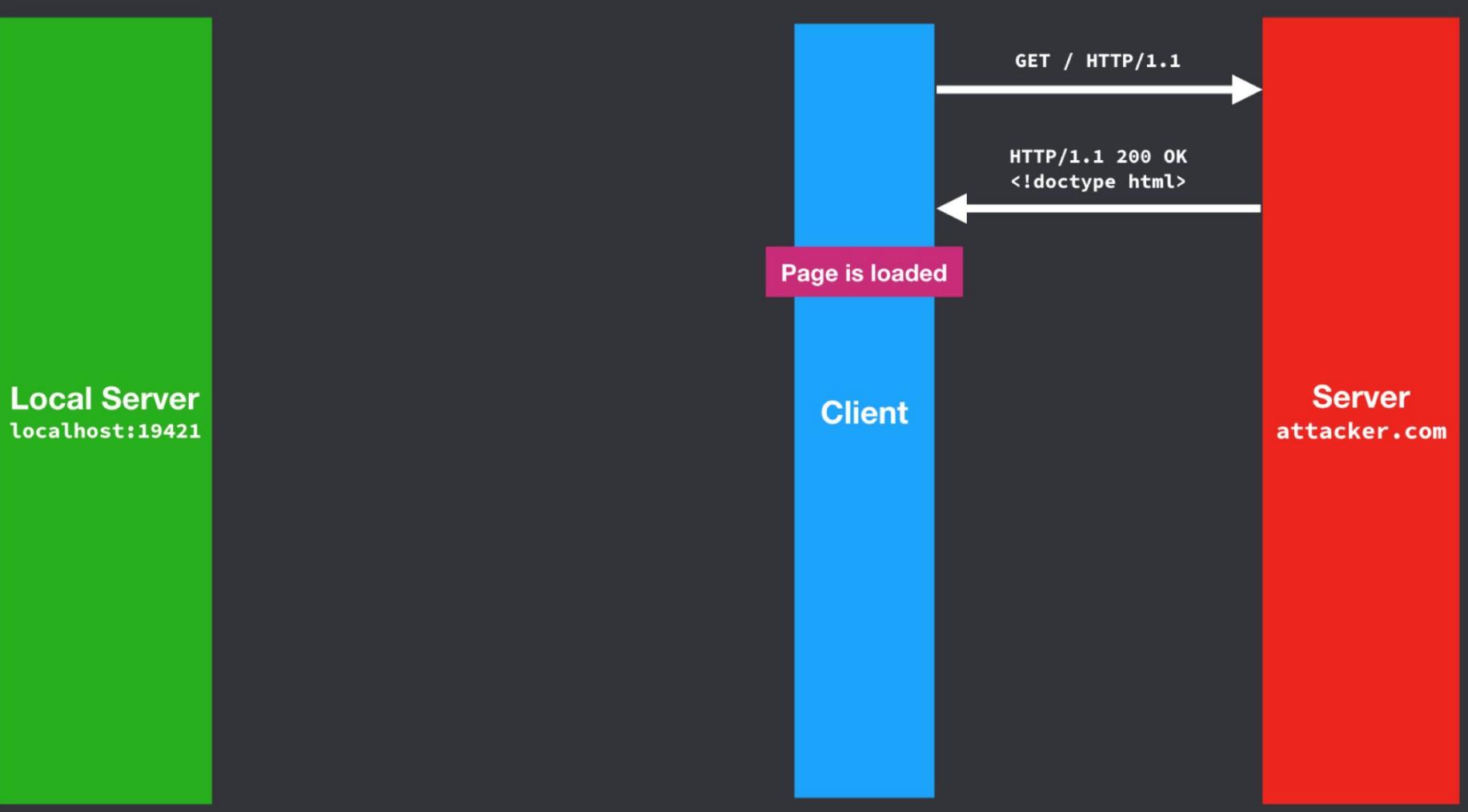


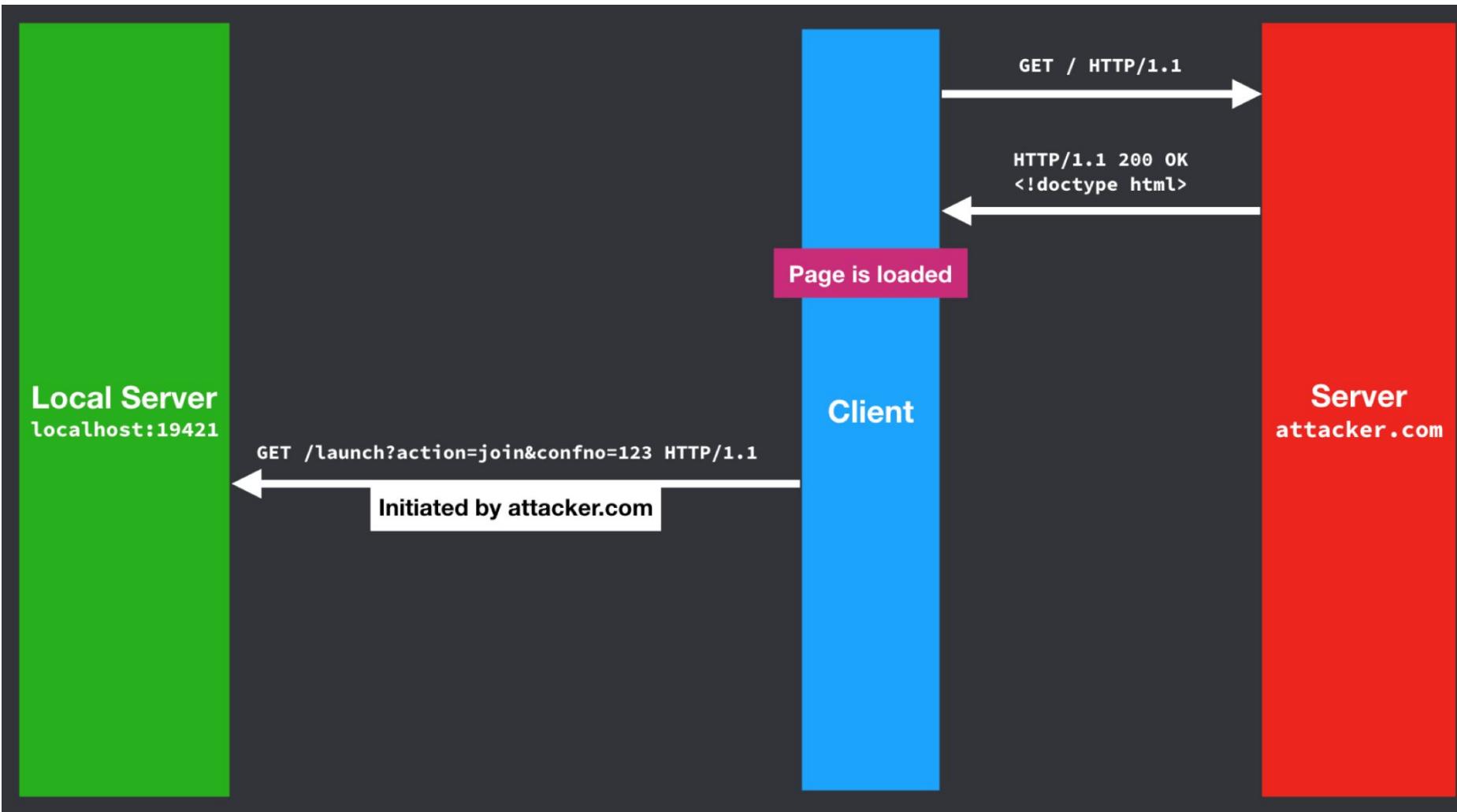


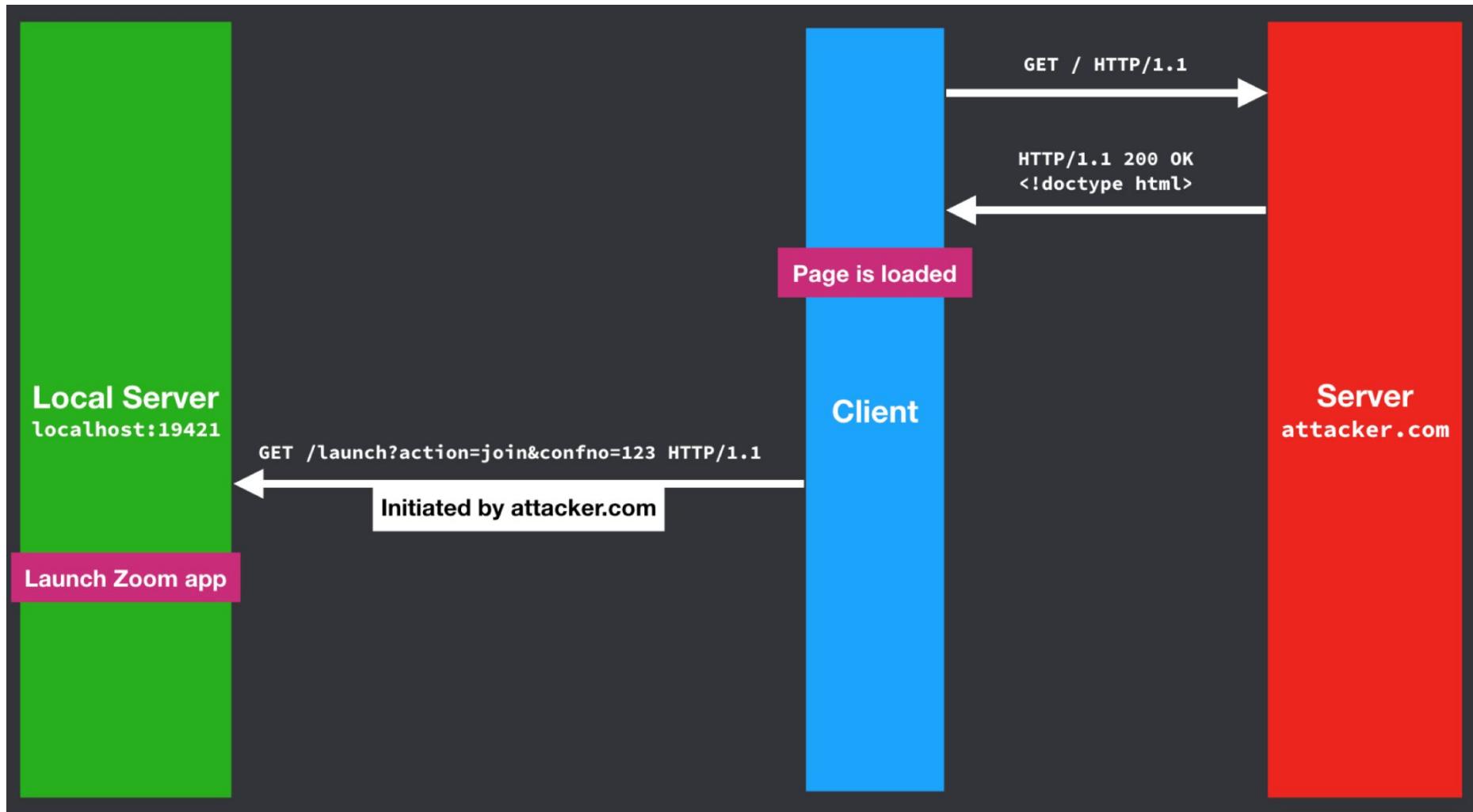


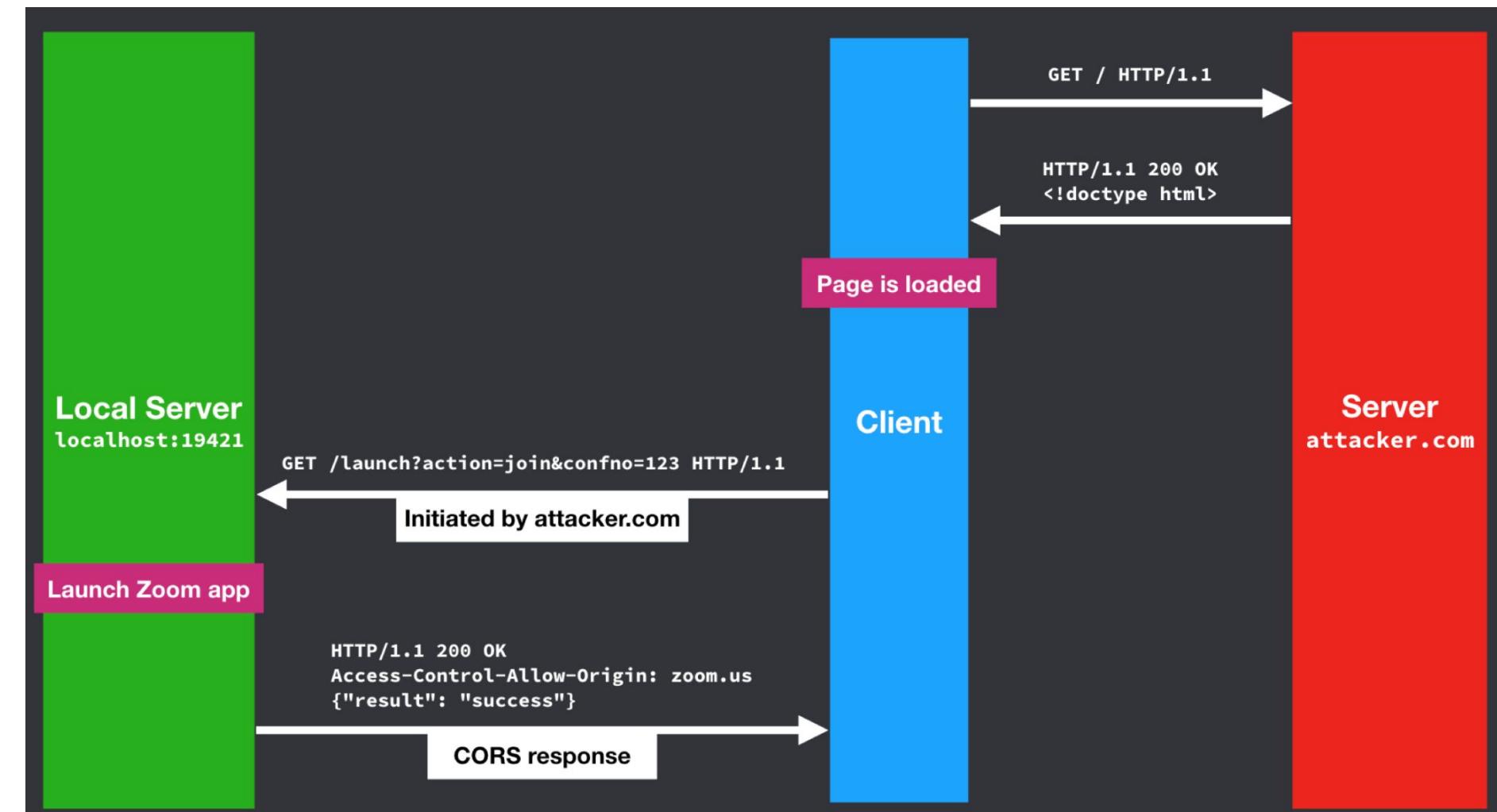


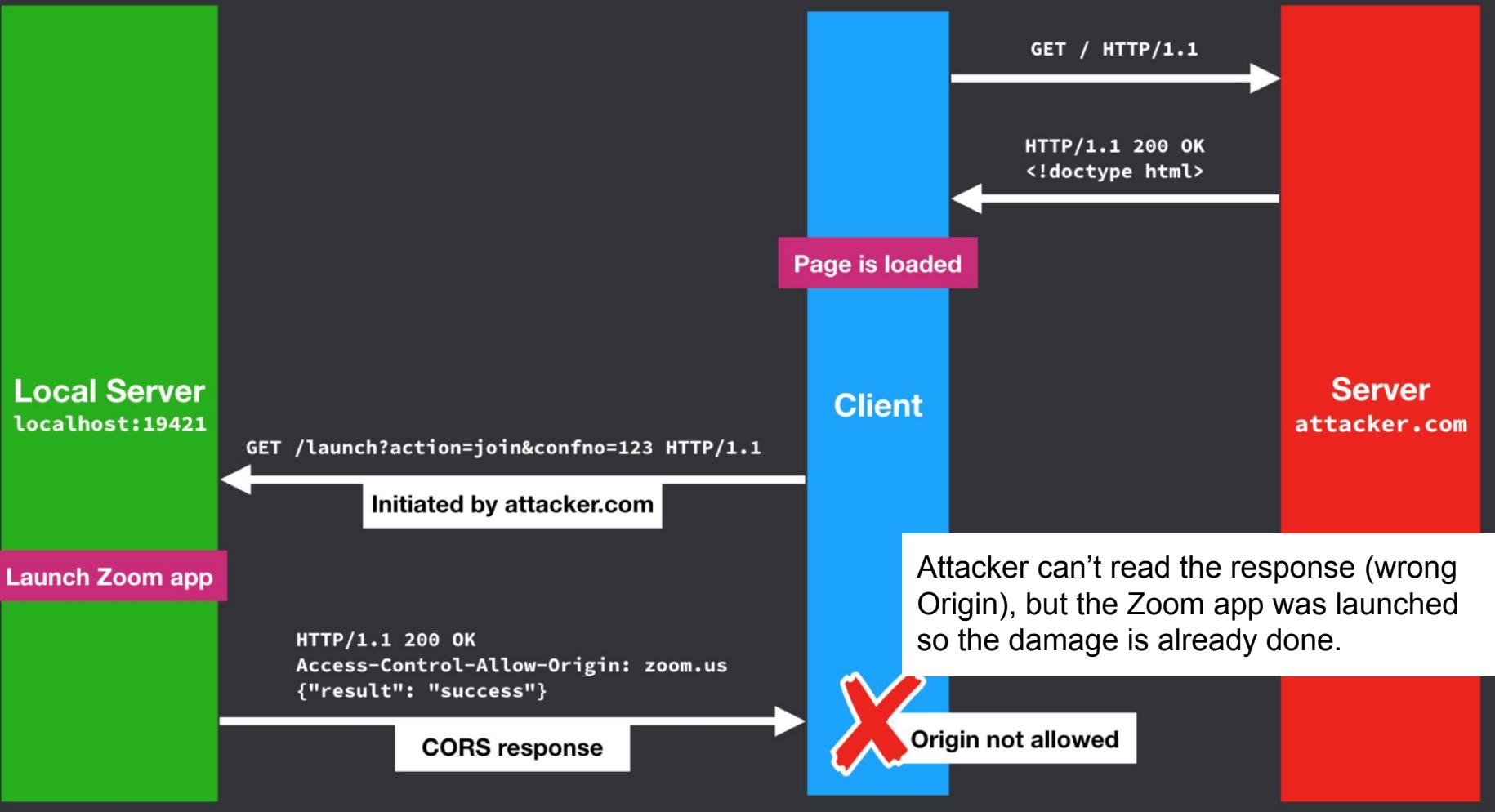
Attacker joins user into a zoom call (with CORS endpoint)







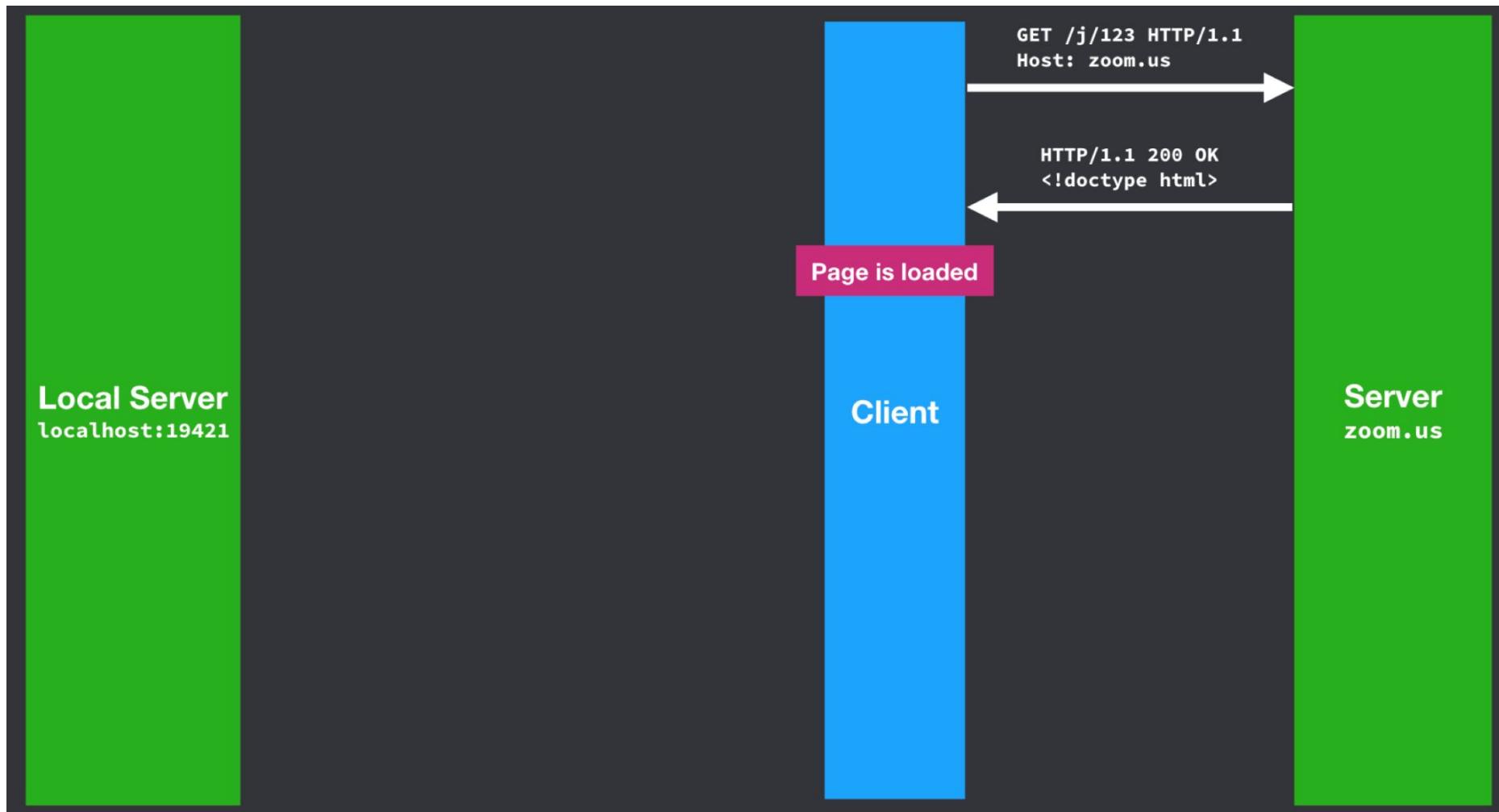


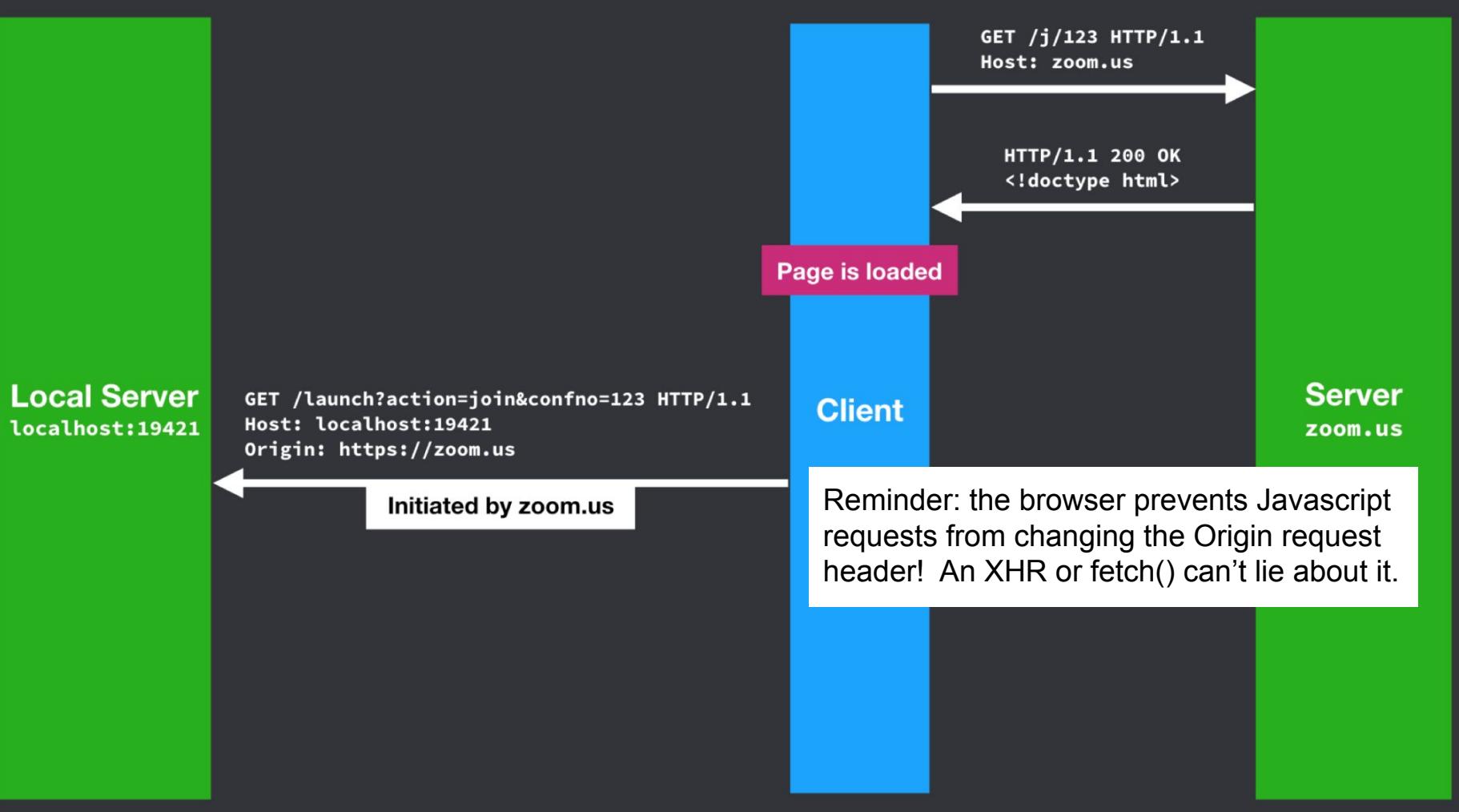


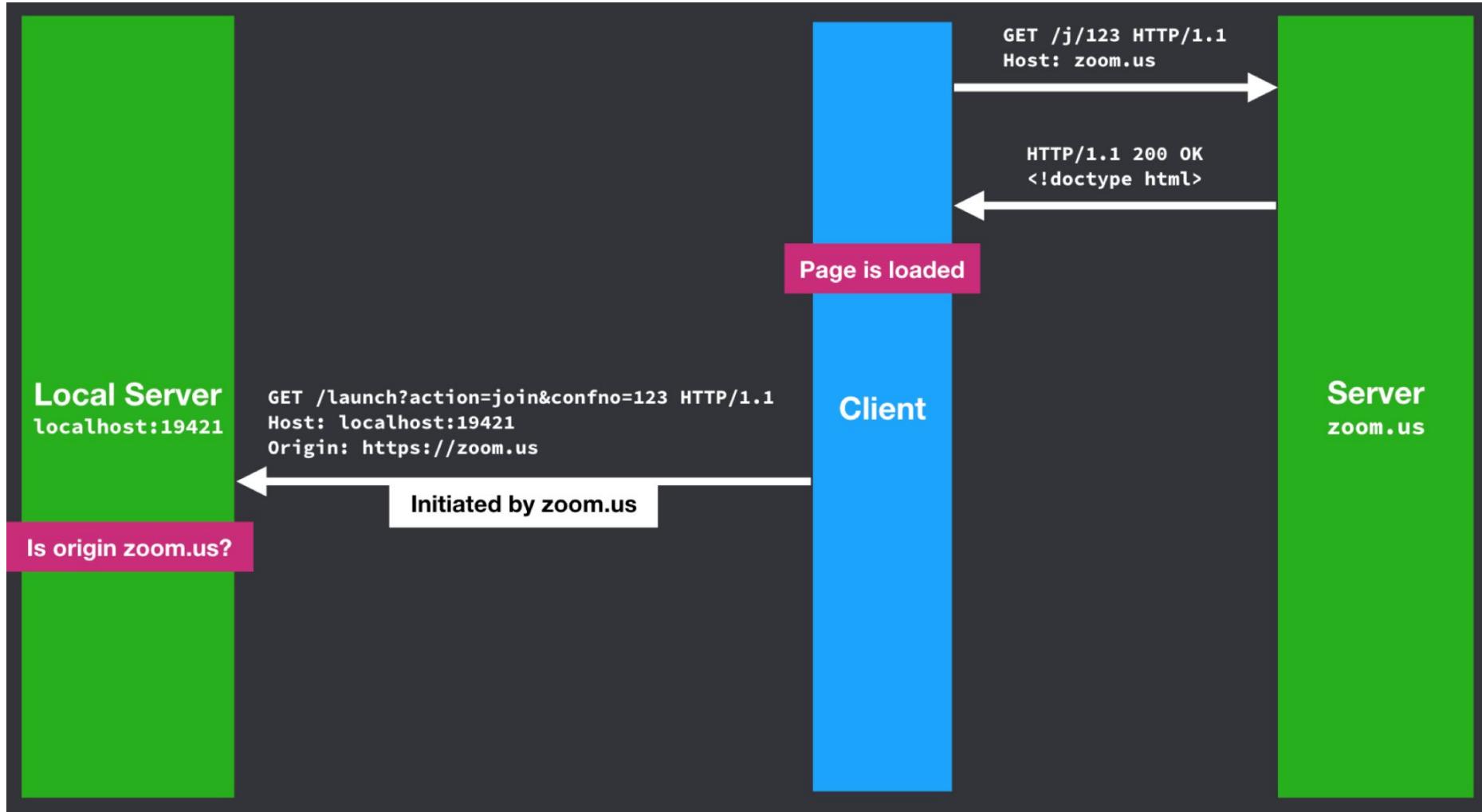
Let's fix the issue

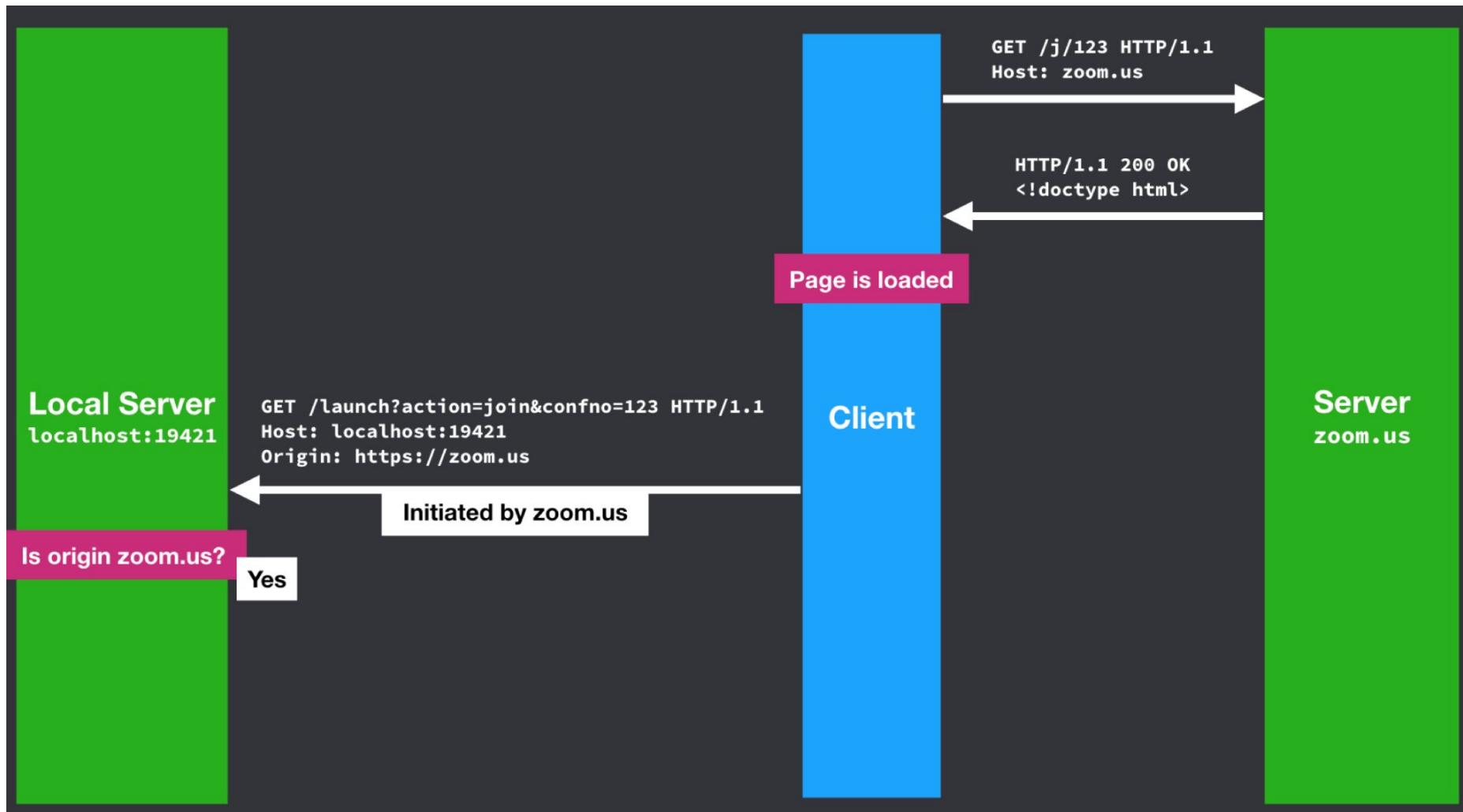
- Best solution: remove the local HTTP server and just register a `zoom://` scheme (protocol handler)
 - <https://www.iana.org/assignments/uri-schemes/uri-schemes.xhtml>
- However, let's assume we need to keep the local HTTP server (probably a bad idea)
- Ideas for securing it:
 - Require user interaction before joining, don't allow host to automatically enable video
 - Only allow `zoom.us` to communicate with the local server

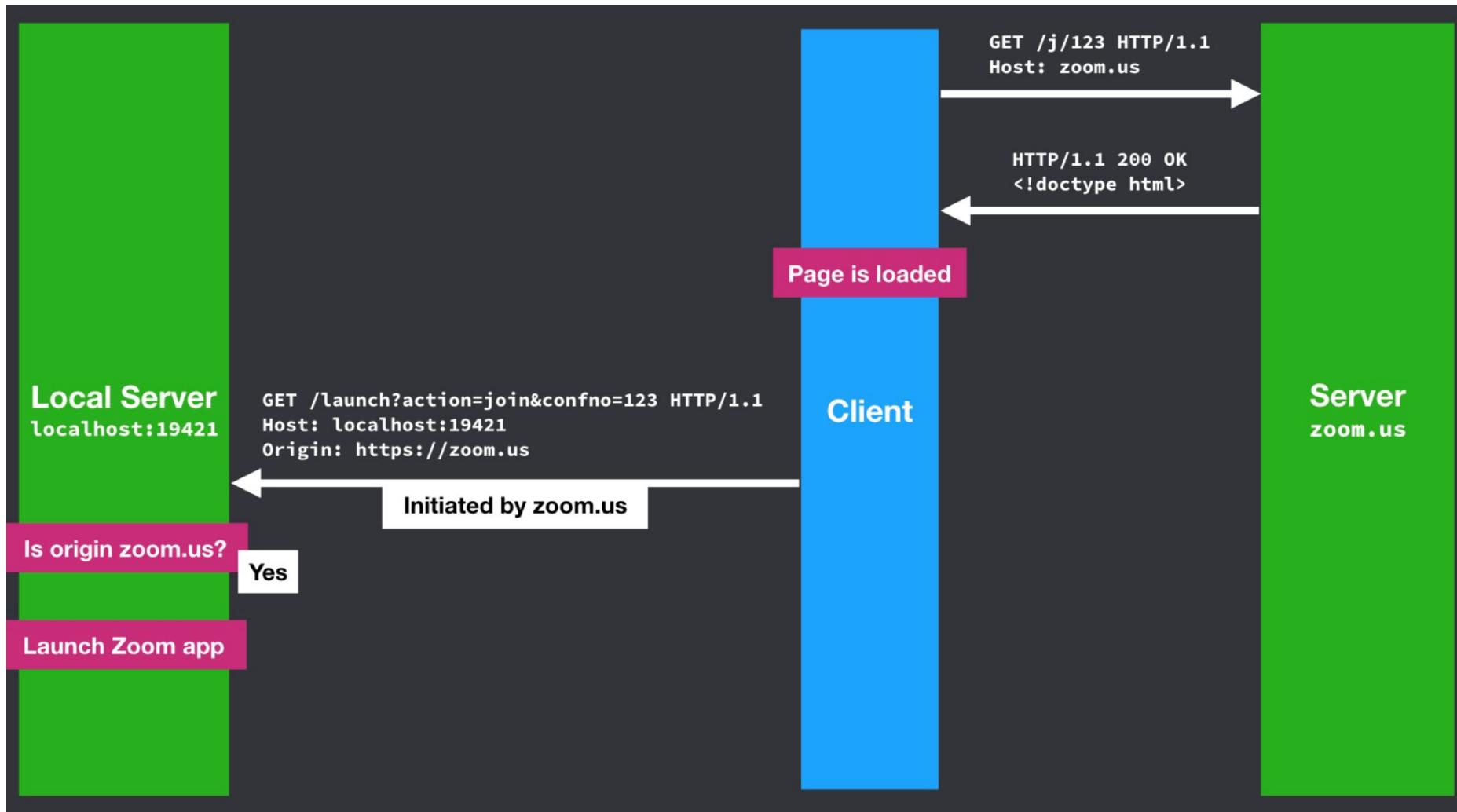
User joins a zoom call (local server inspects Origin header)

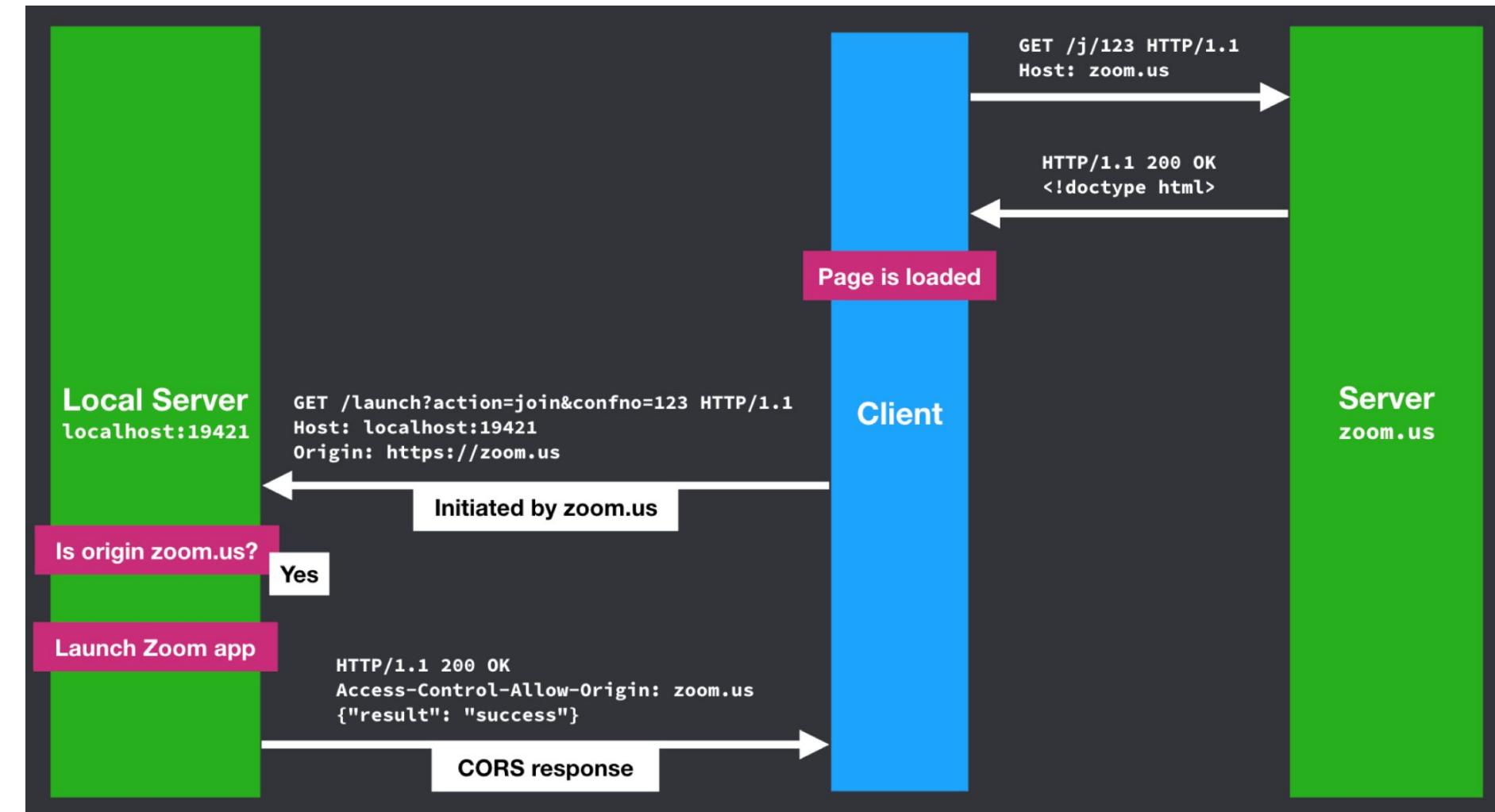


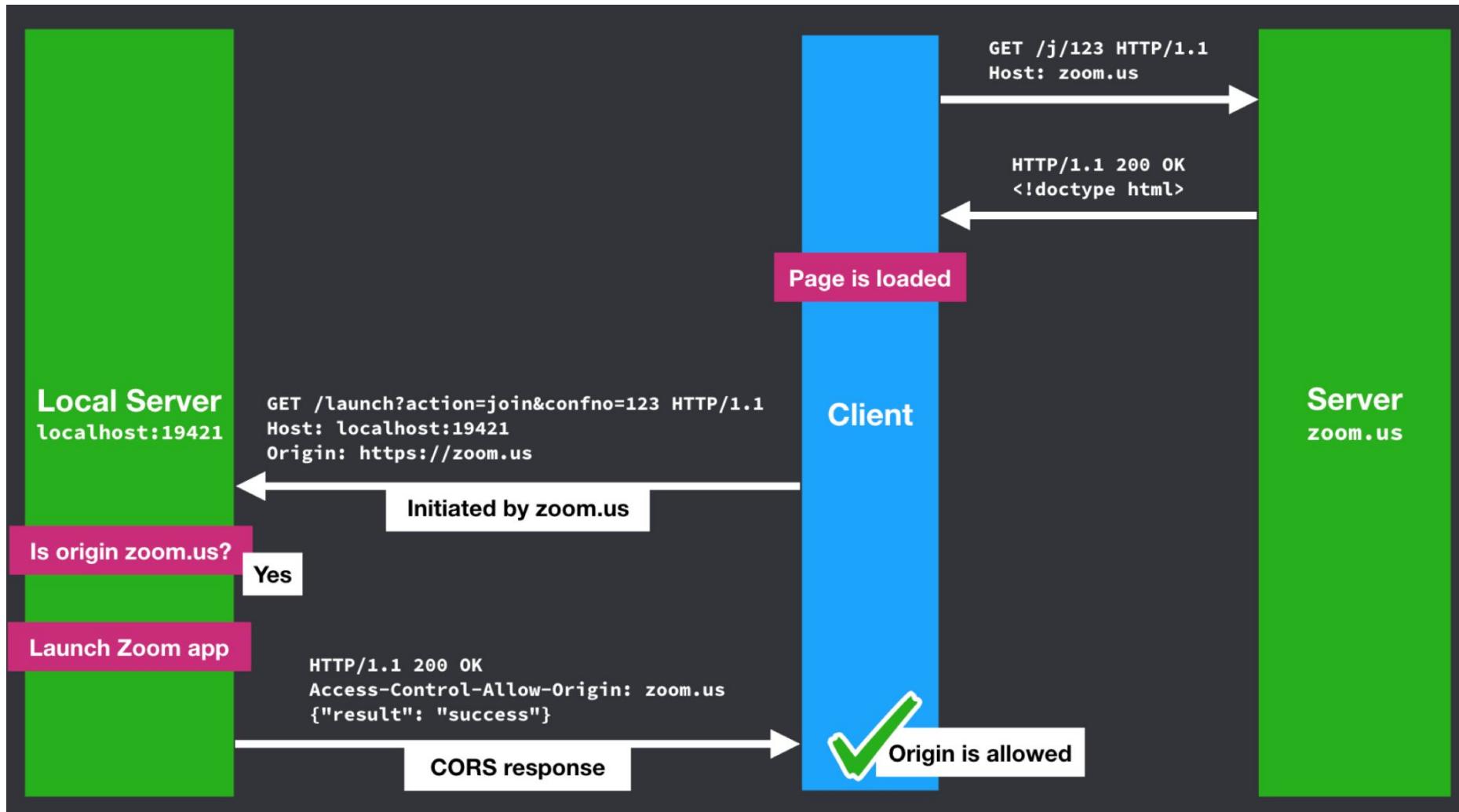




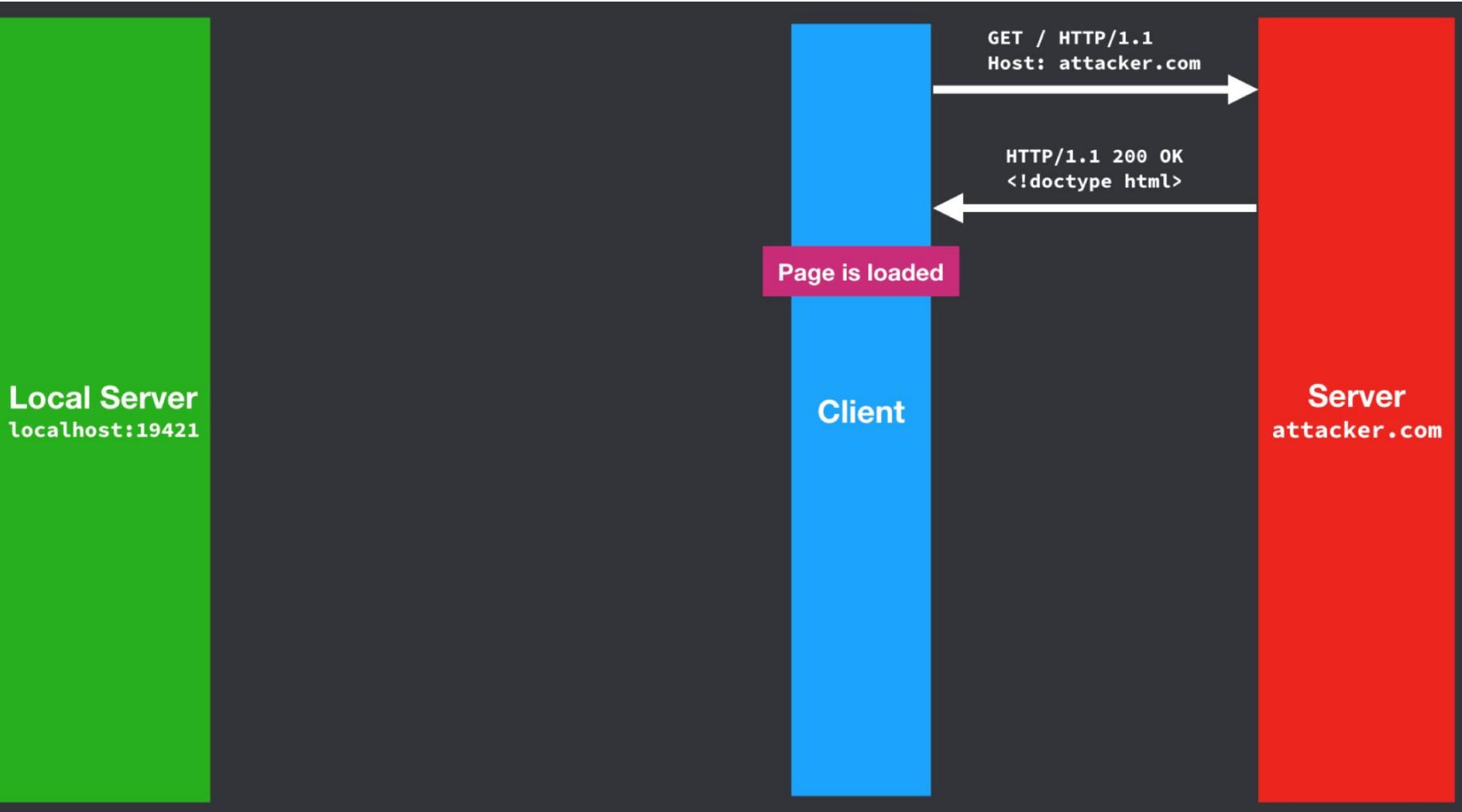


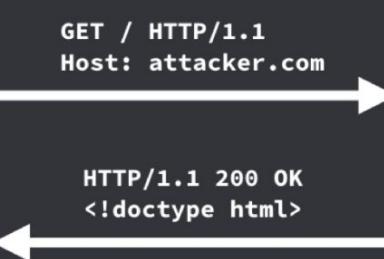
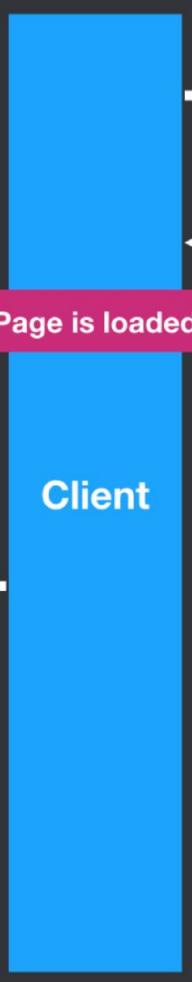




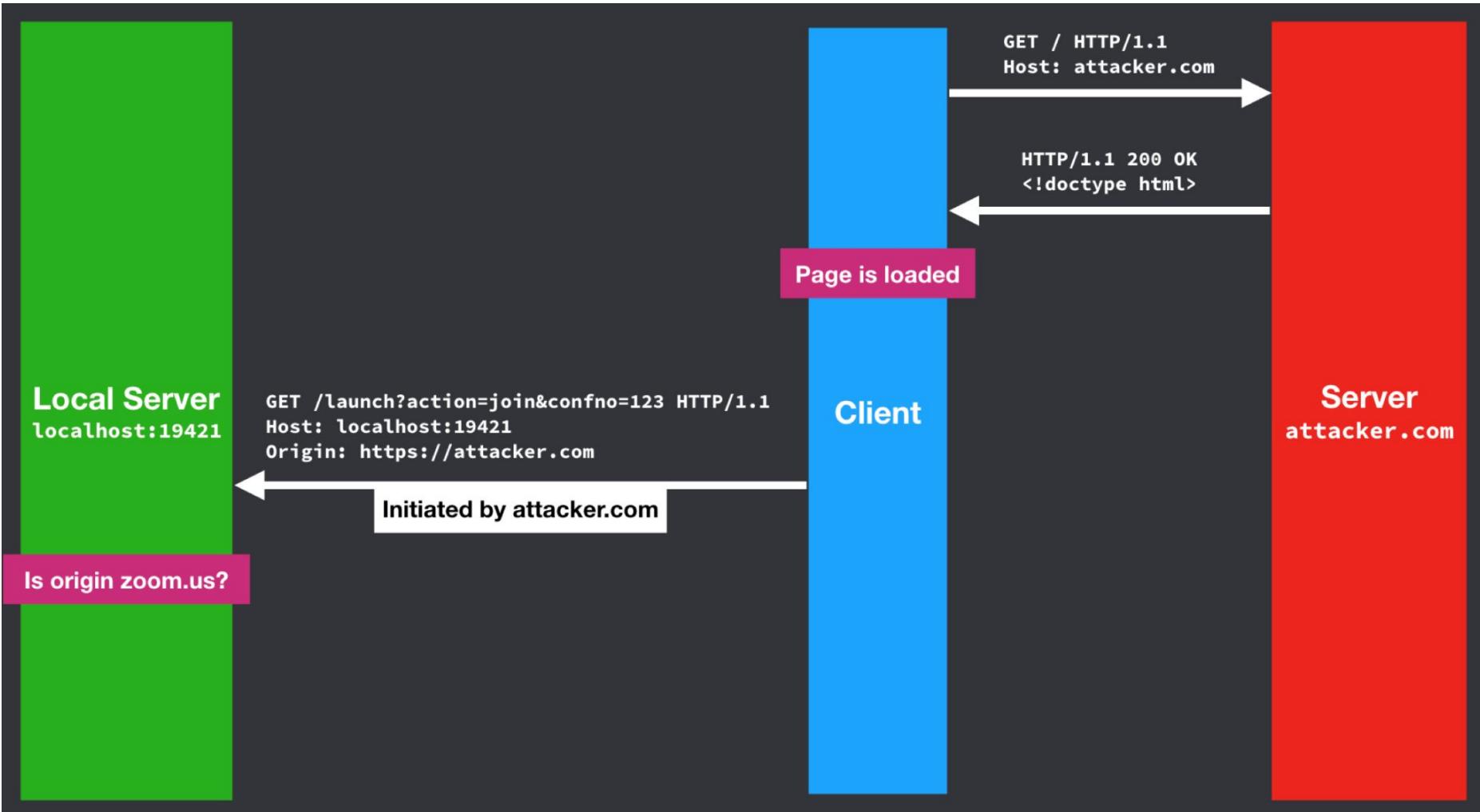


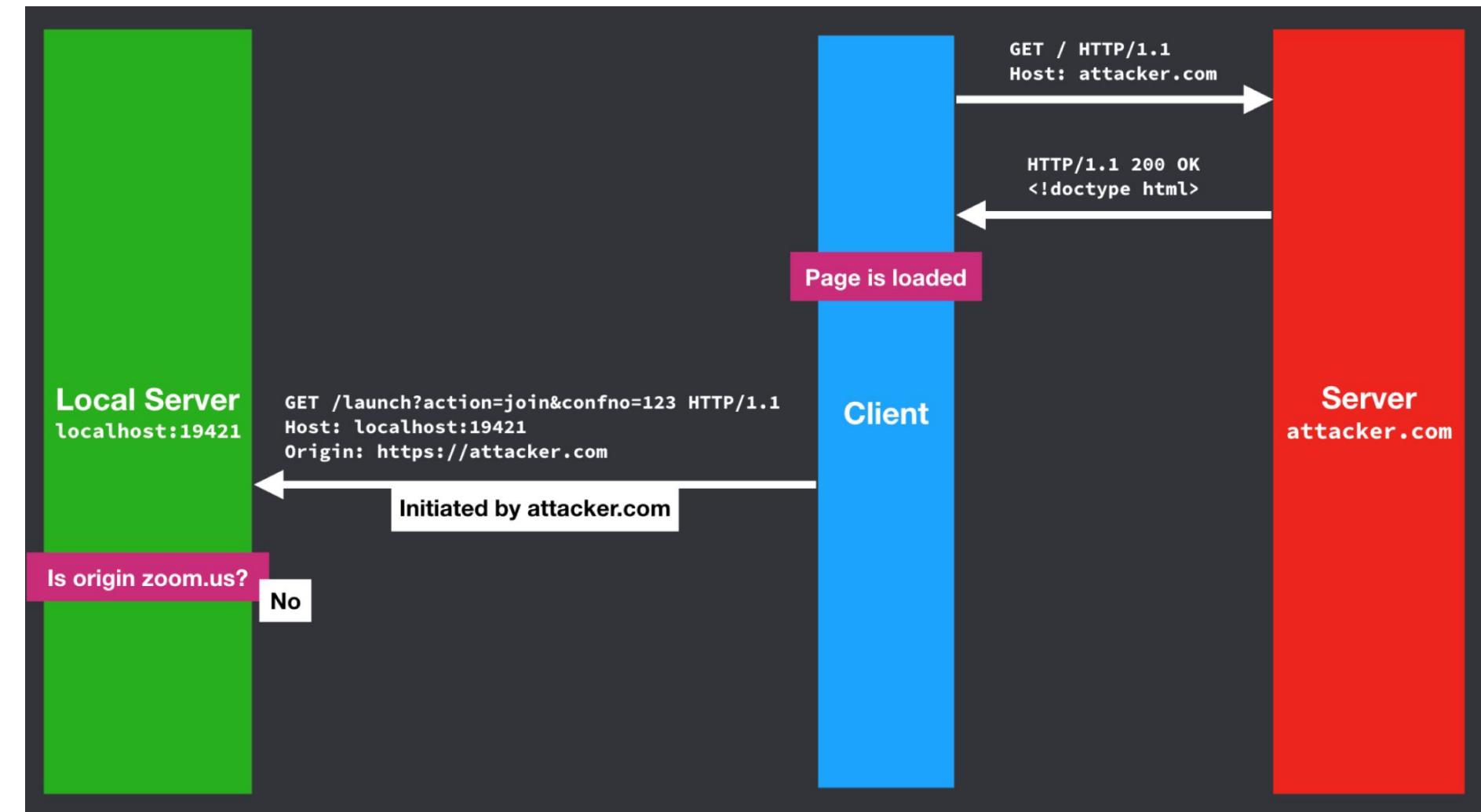
Attacker joins a zoom call (local server inspects Origin header)

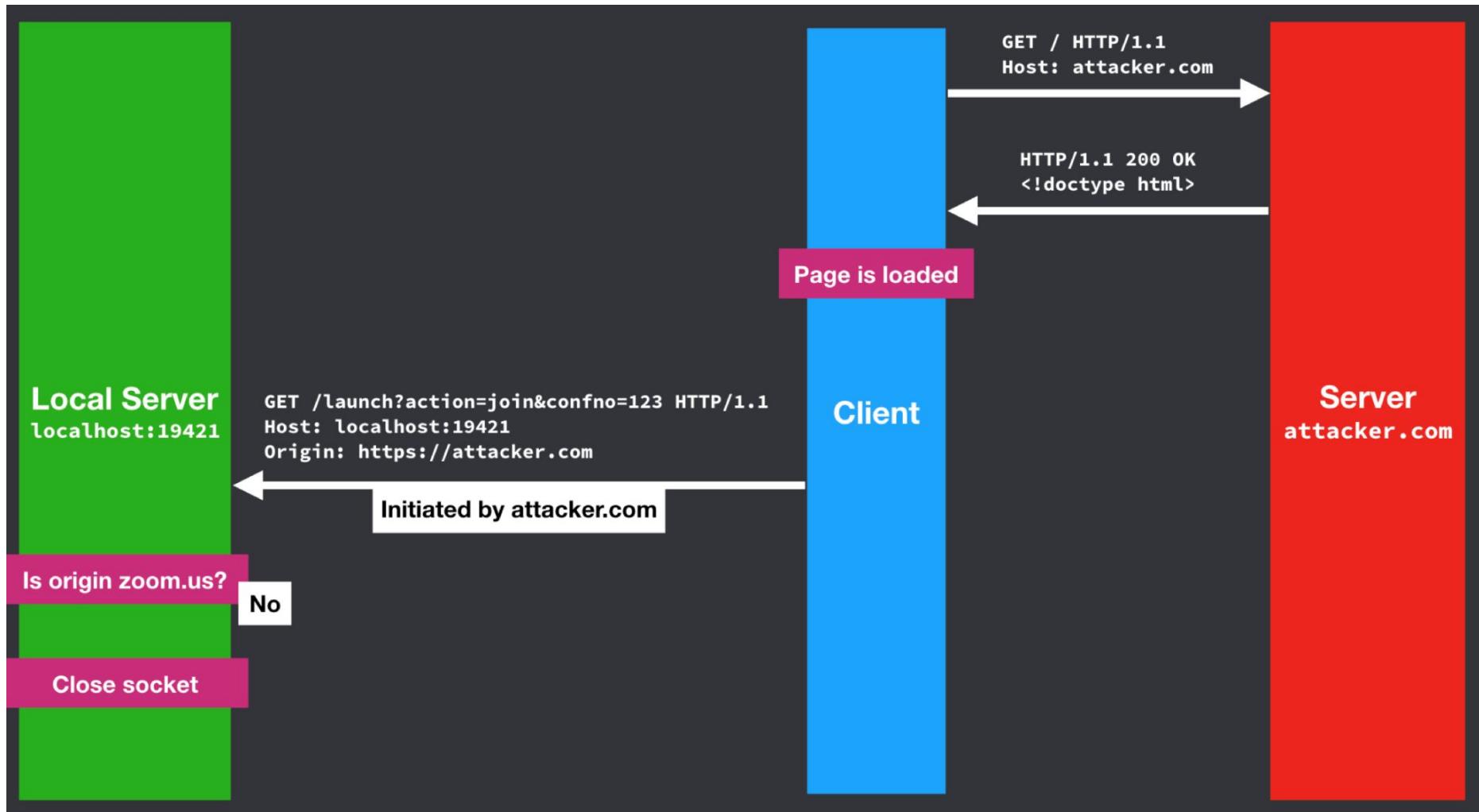




Page is loaded







Problems with inspecting Origin header

- Problem: Browser doesn't always add `Origin` header
 - for "simple" requests (e.g., `` or `<iframe>` tags)
 - for same origin requests (e.g., `fetch()` to same origin)
 - Very old browsers
- Solution: block requests where `Origin` header is omitted
- Solution: change the endpoint to require a "preflighted" request so that `Origin` header is always sent (e.g., change the HTTP method to `PUT`)

"Simple" HTTP requests

- An HTTP/1.1 GET, HEAD or a POST is the request method
- In the case of a POST, the Content-Type of the request body is one of
application/x-www-form-urlencoded,
multipart/form-data, or text/plain
- No custom HTTP headers are set (or, only CORS-safelisted headers are set)
- In other words, “simple” requests are requests that your browser can make *without* using Javascript

"Preflighted" HTTP requests

- Before a "preflighted" requests can be sent to the target server, the browser must check that it is safe to send
- So it first sends an HTTP request with the OPTIONS method to the same URL

What happens if the browser does not preflight “non-simple” requests?

Client

Server
attacker.com

Server
victim.com

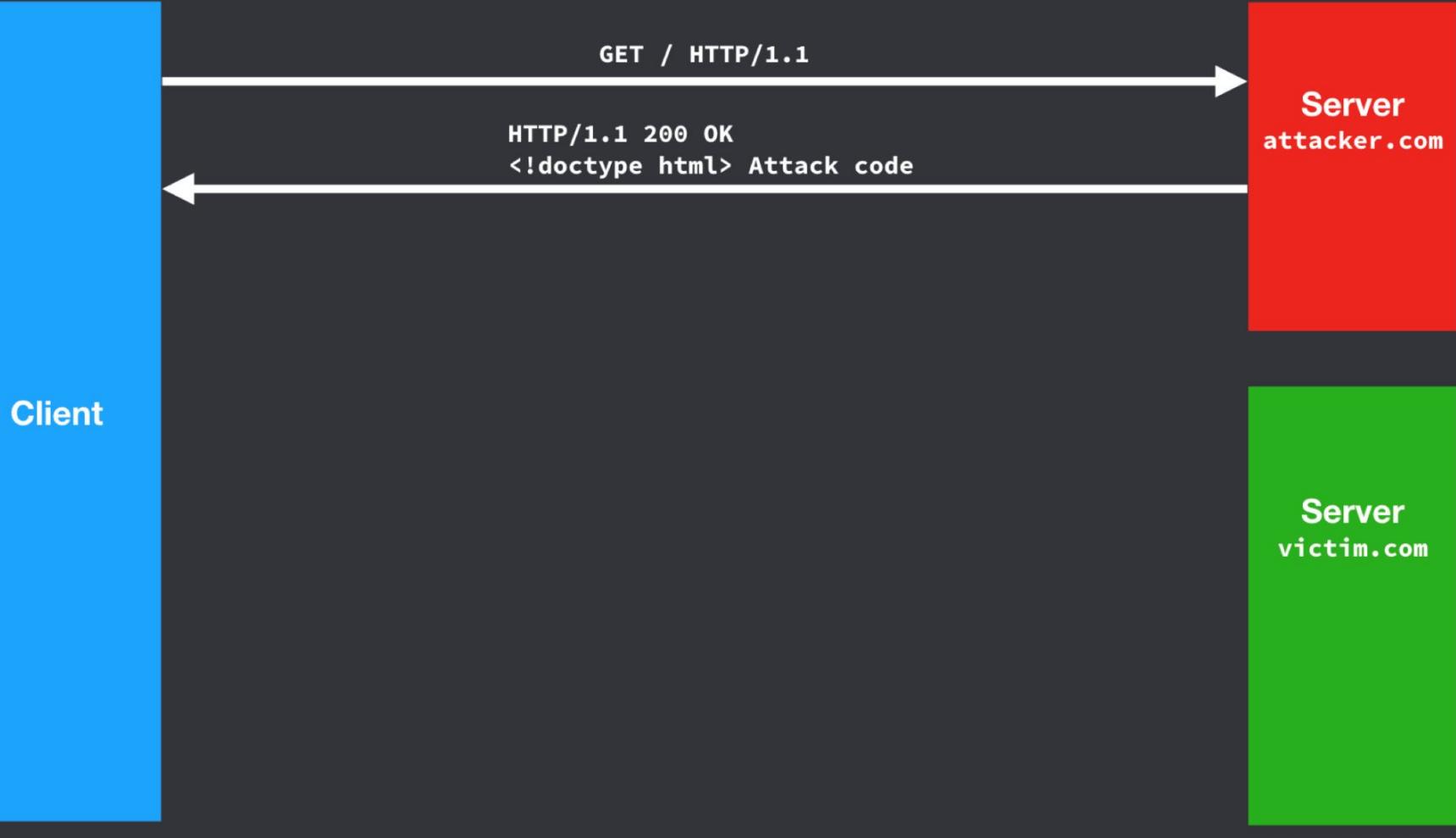


Client

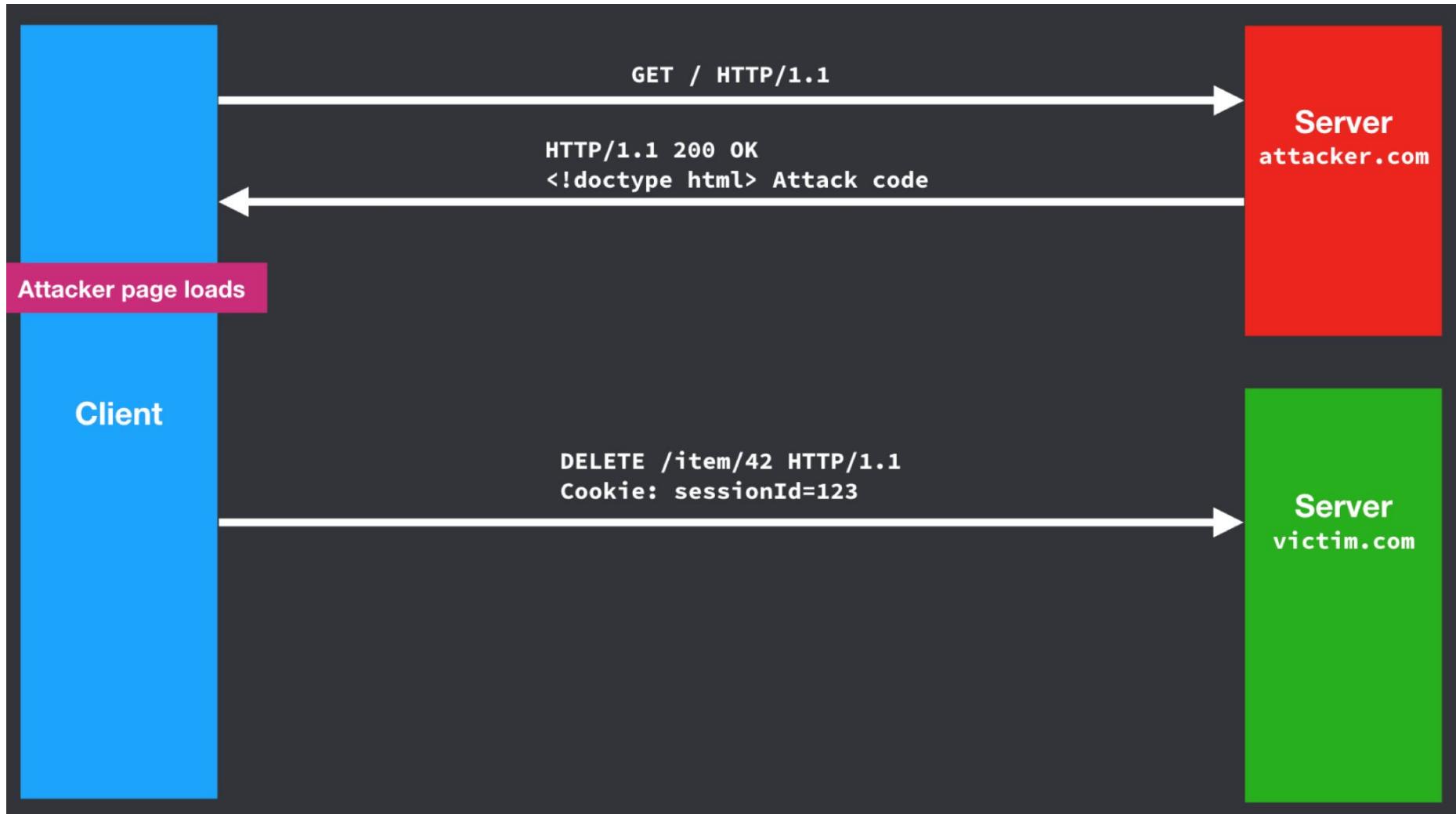
GET / HTTP/1.1

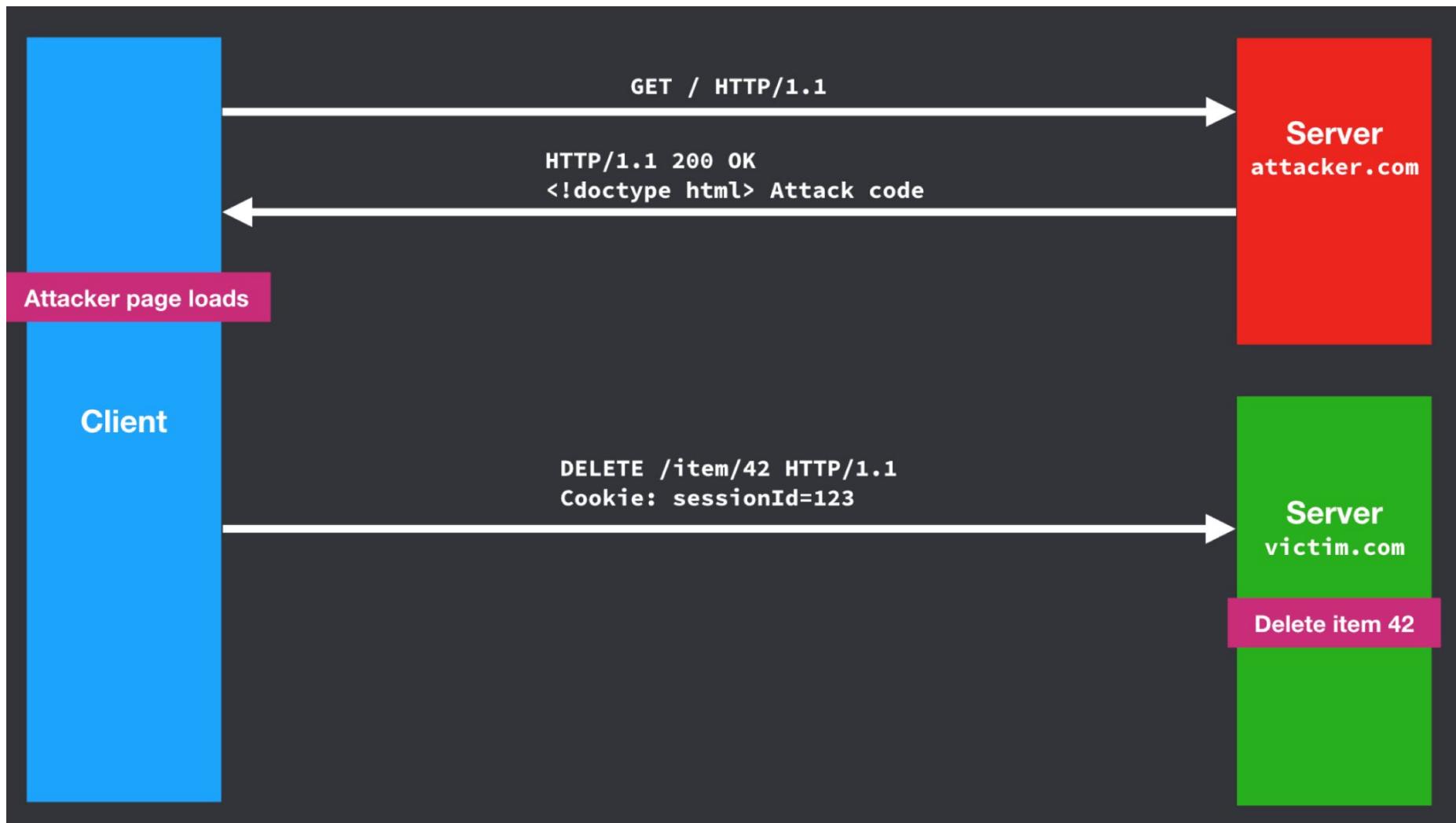
Server
attacker.com

Server
victim.com









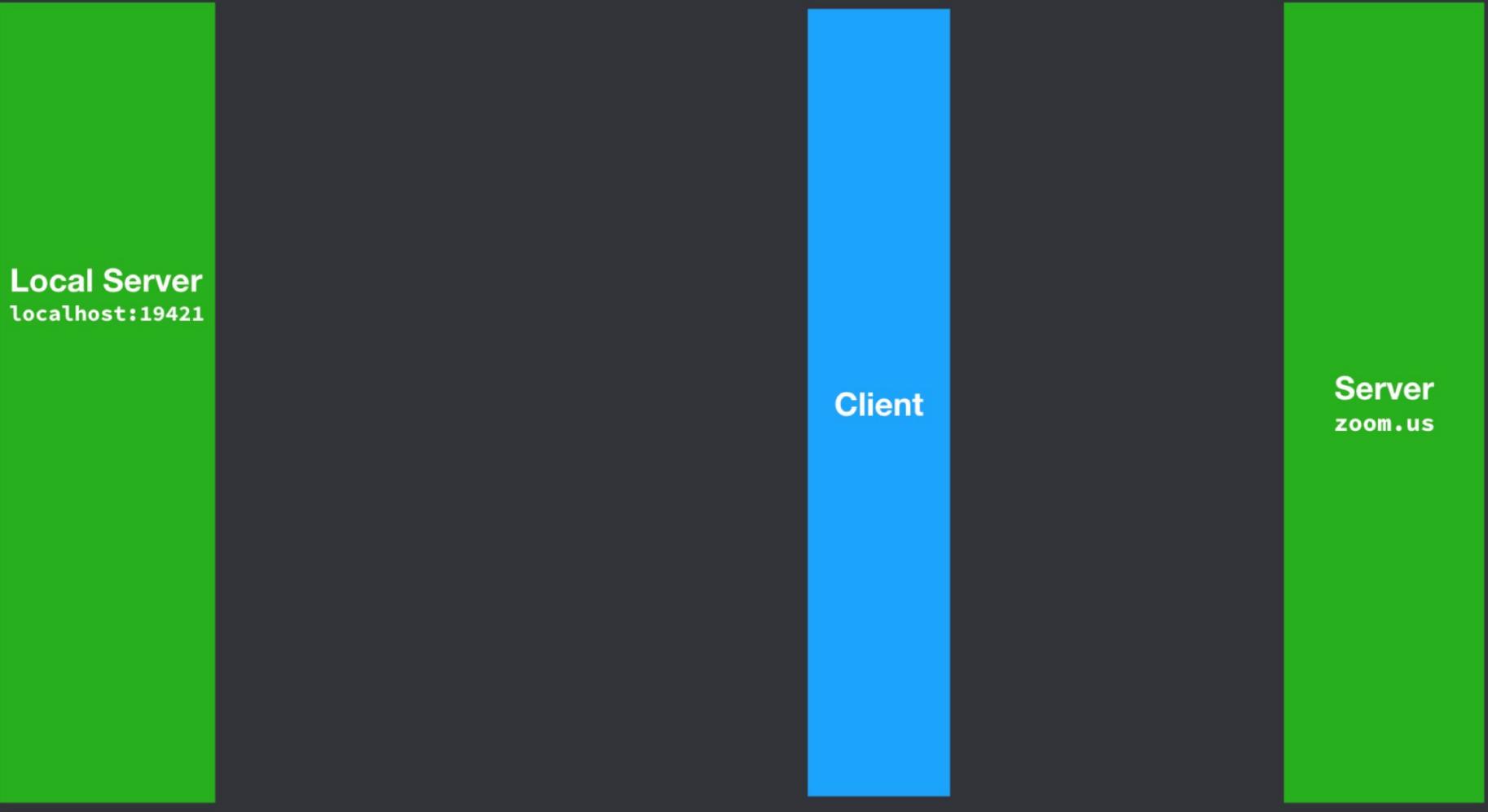




Remember the OPTIONS method?

- Browser sends OPTIONS method first to ask the server if the request we want to send is okay
- If server doesn't support OPTIONS (either because it is old or because it doesn't want to support preflighted requests) then, preflighted requests are denied
- Idea: the browser intercepts the potentially dangerous requests and verifies if the server is willing to accept the request before the browser sends it
 - as opposed to: browser sends request without pre-checking and then checks to see if the server denied it (e.g., 403 response). If all the code running on the server was smart, that would be ok too, but we've seen lots of examples where the the code wasn't smart (e.g., 2019 Zoom exploits)

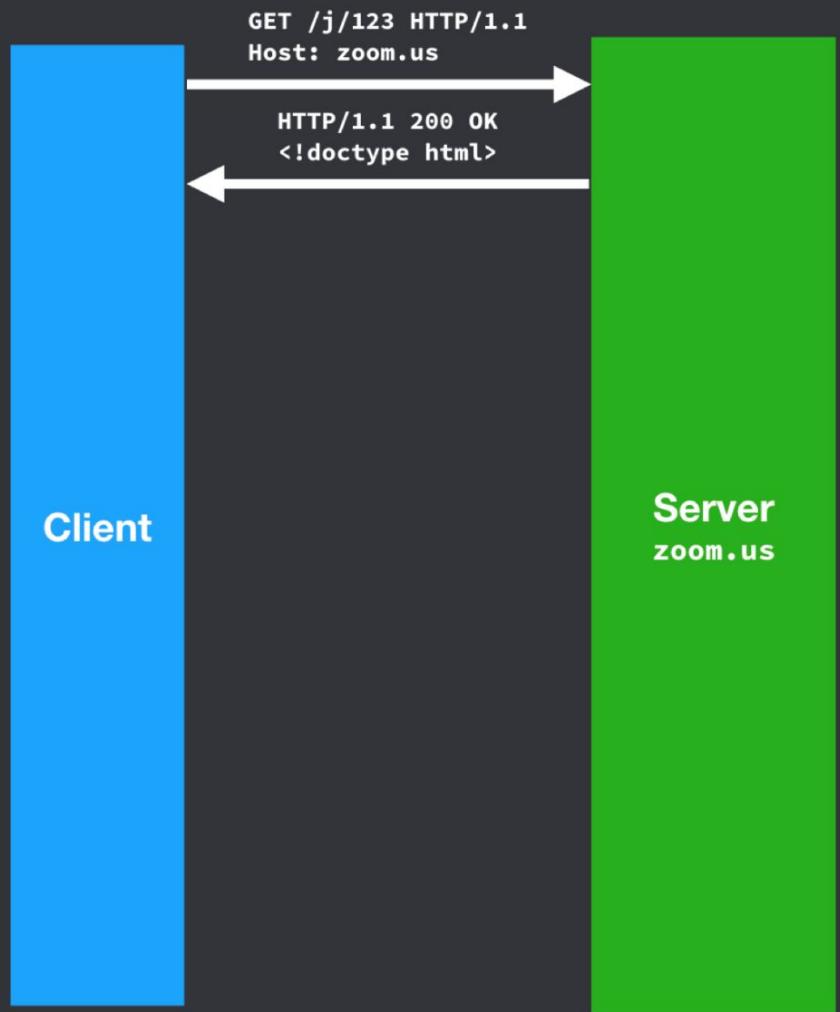
User joins a zoom call (local server requires “preflighted” request

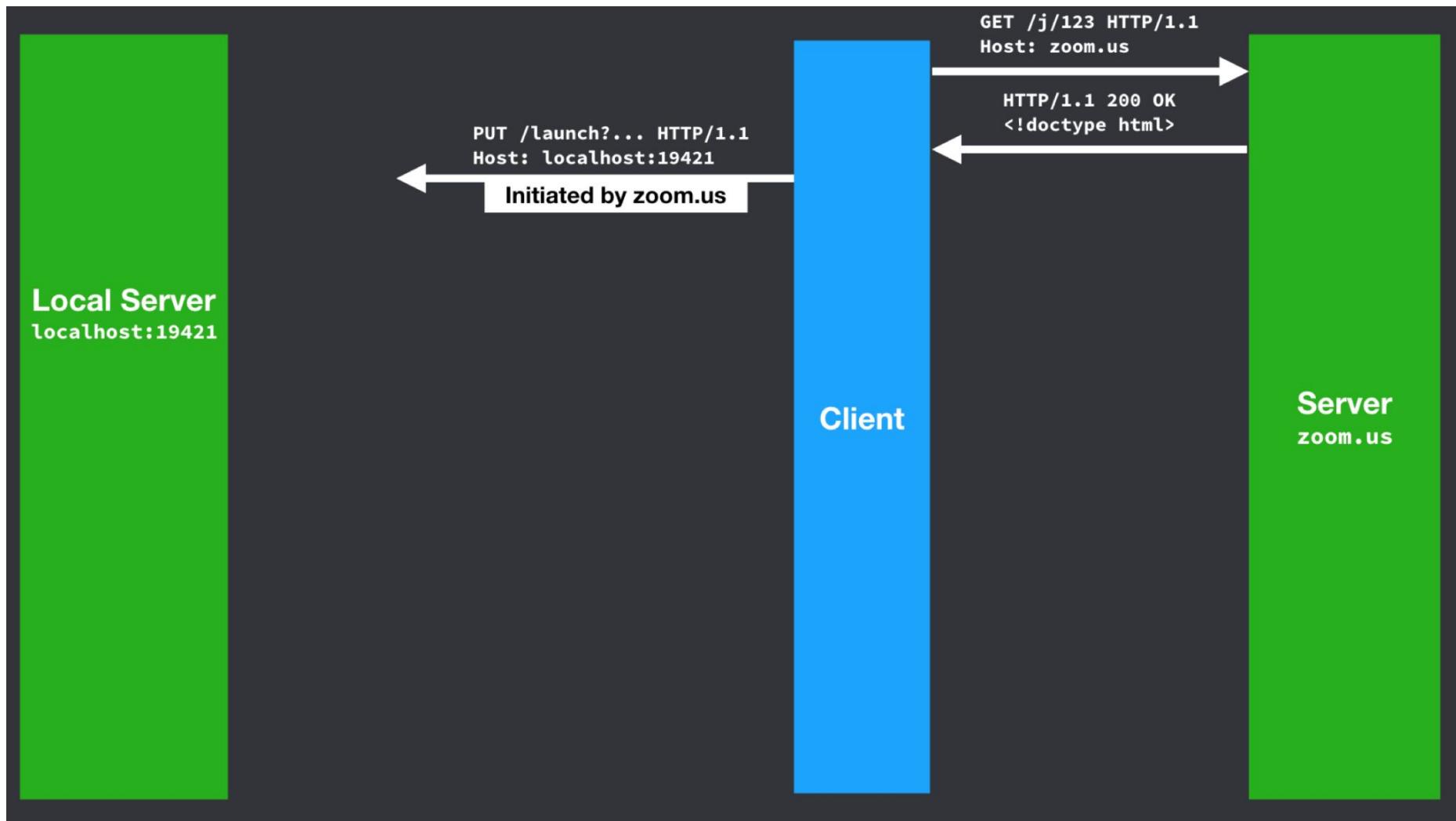


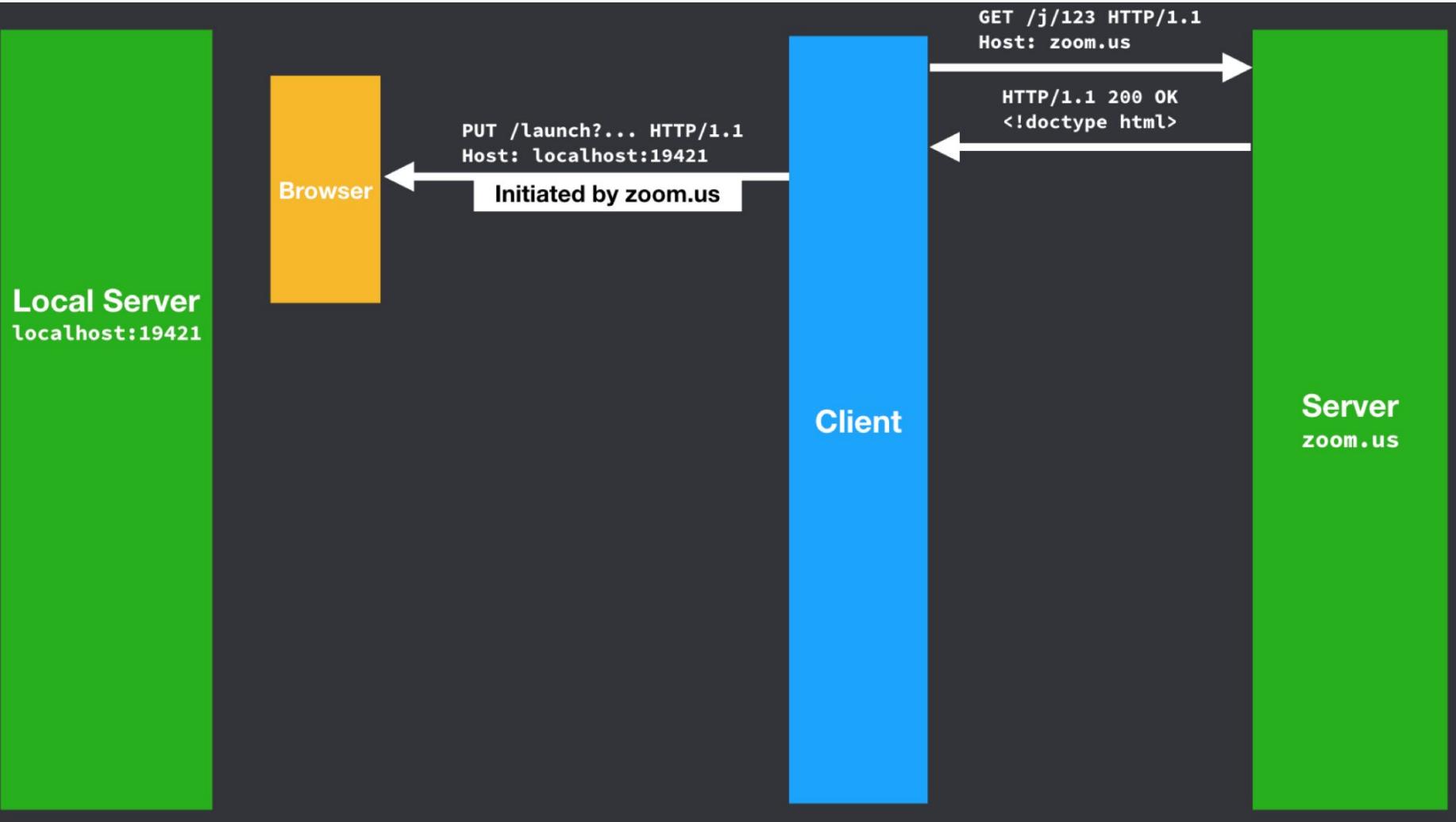


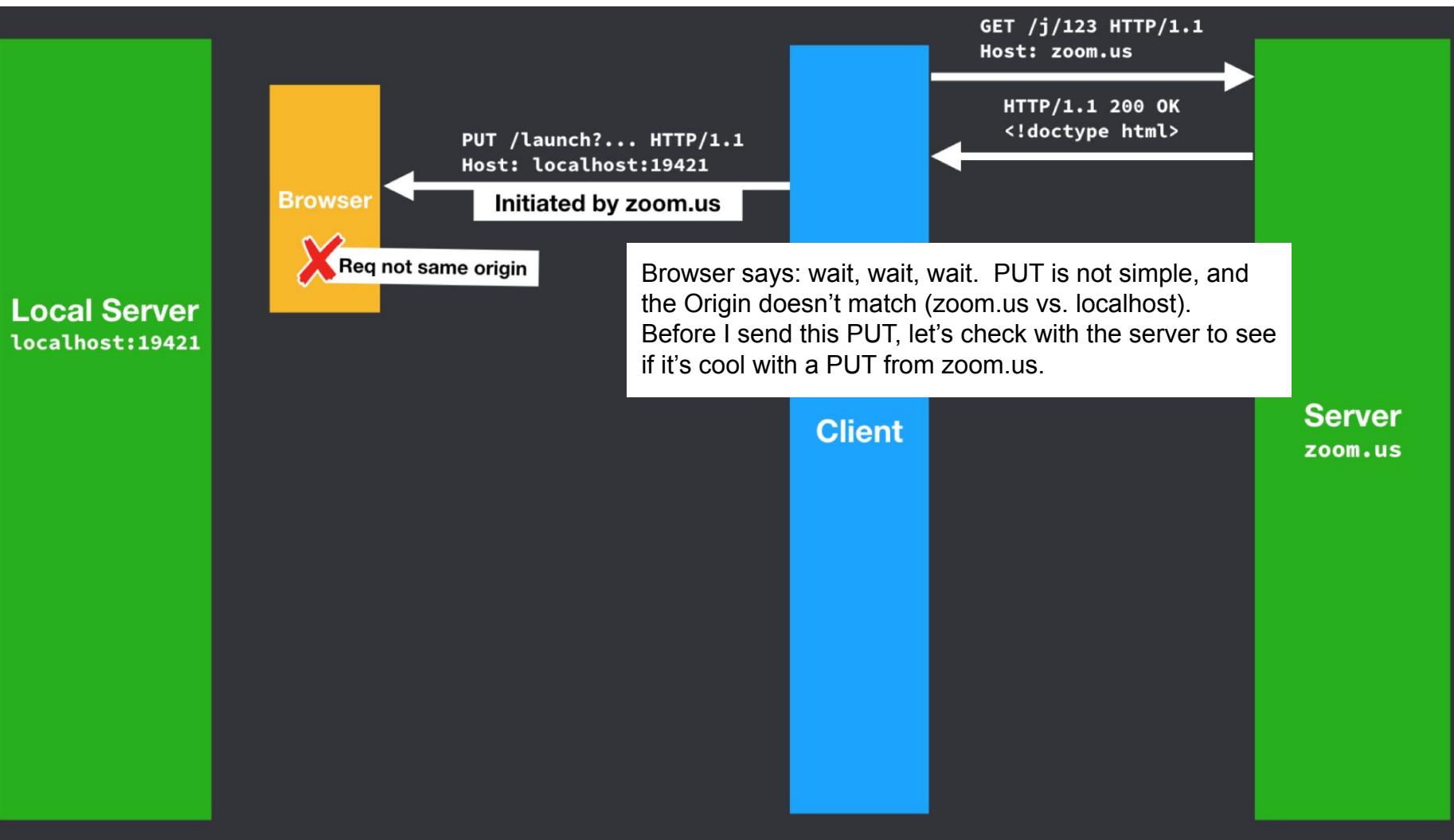
GET /j/123 HTTP/1.1
Host: zoom.us

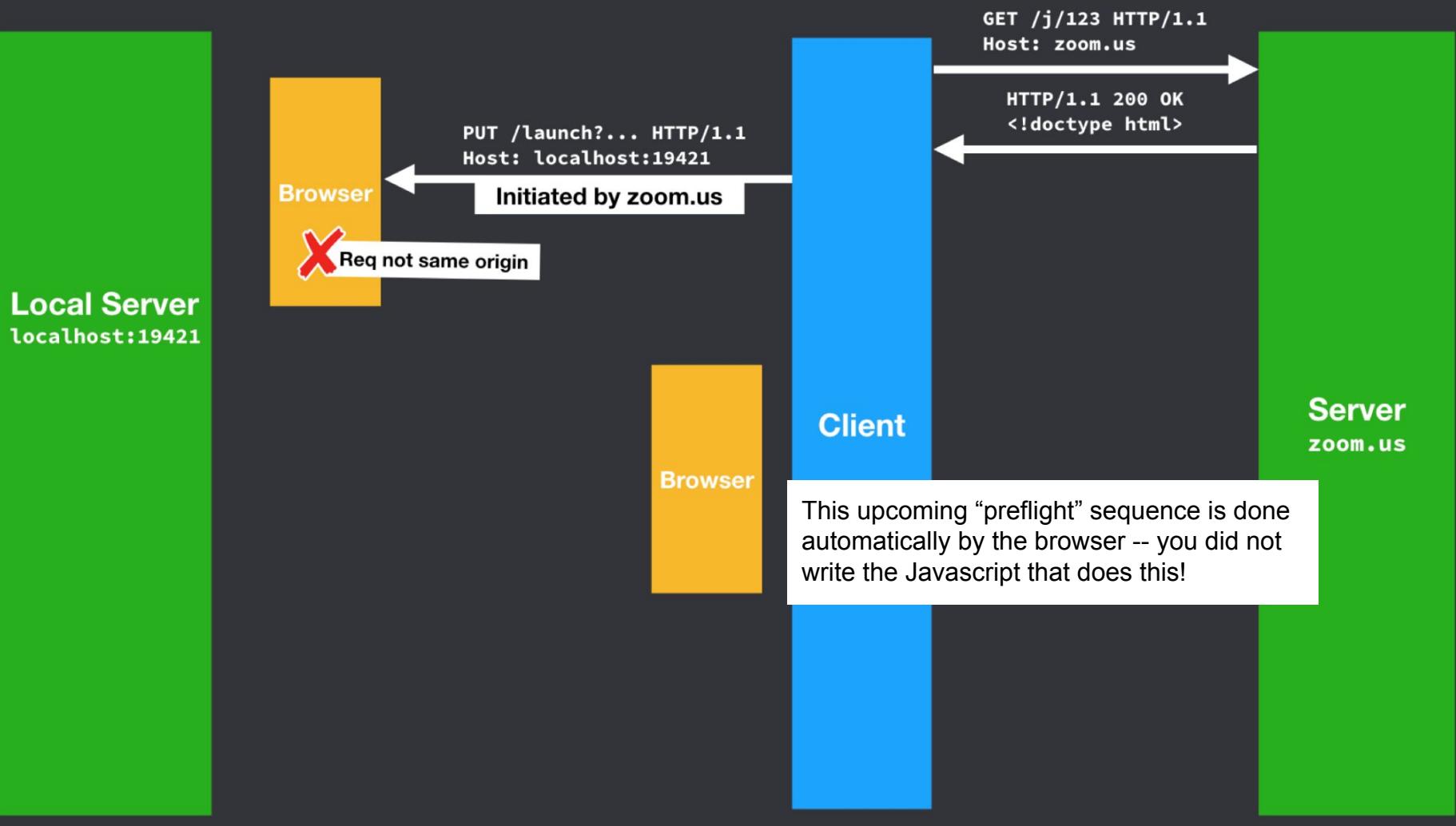


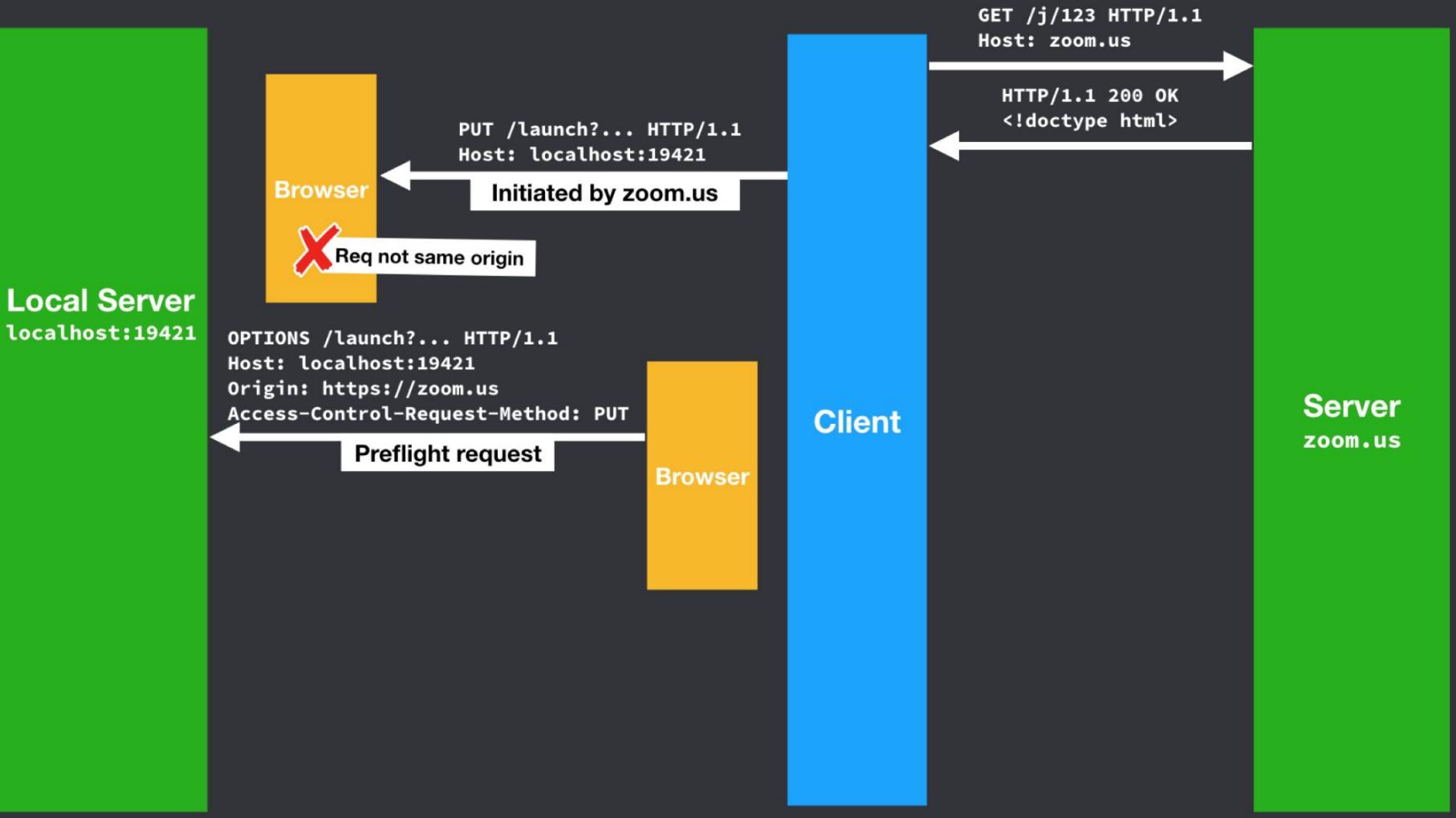


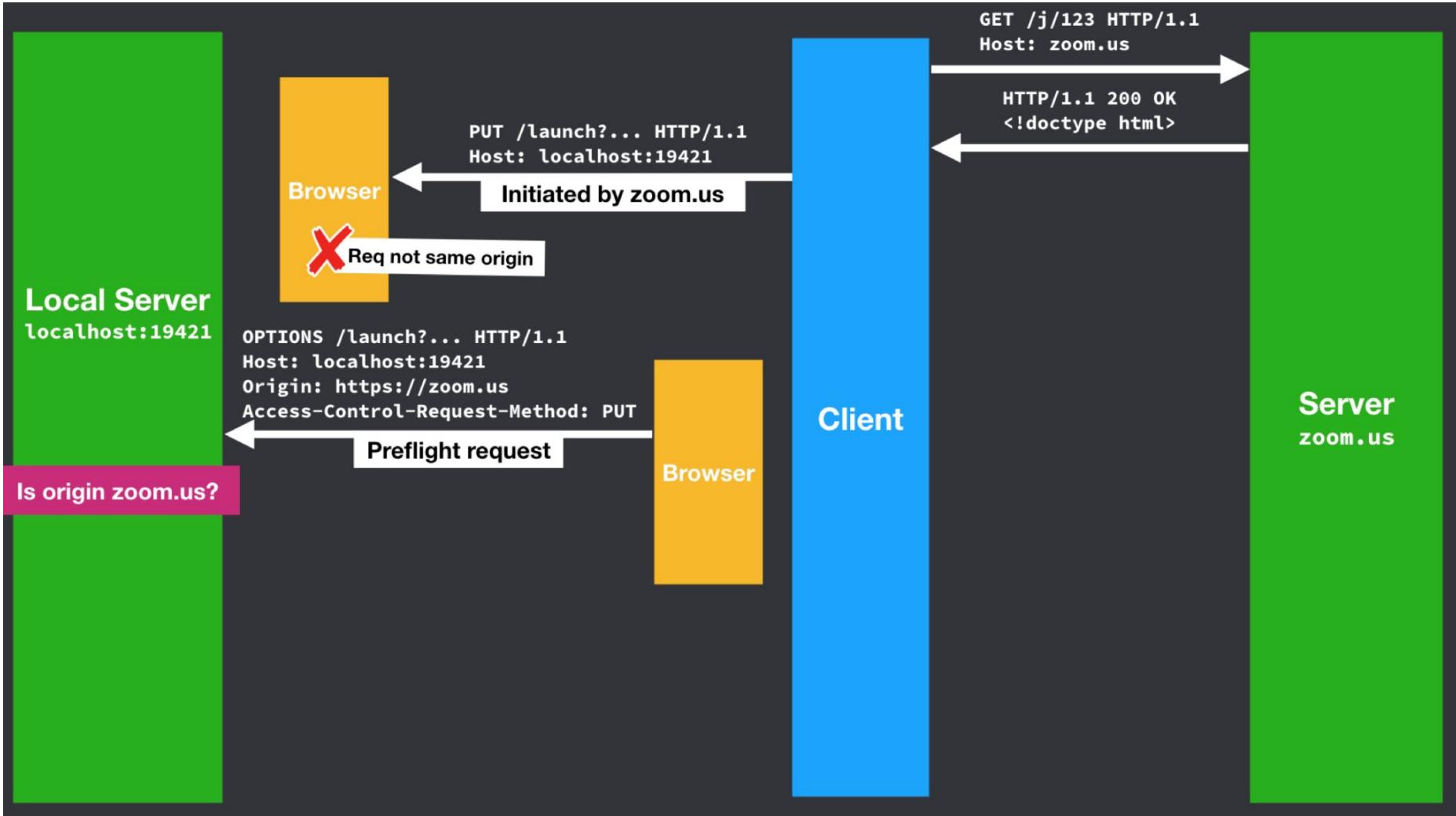


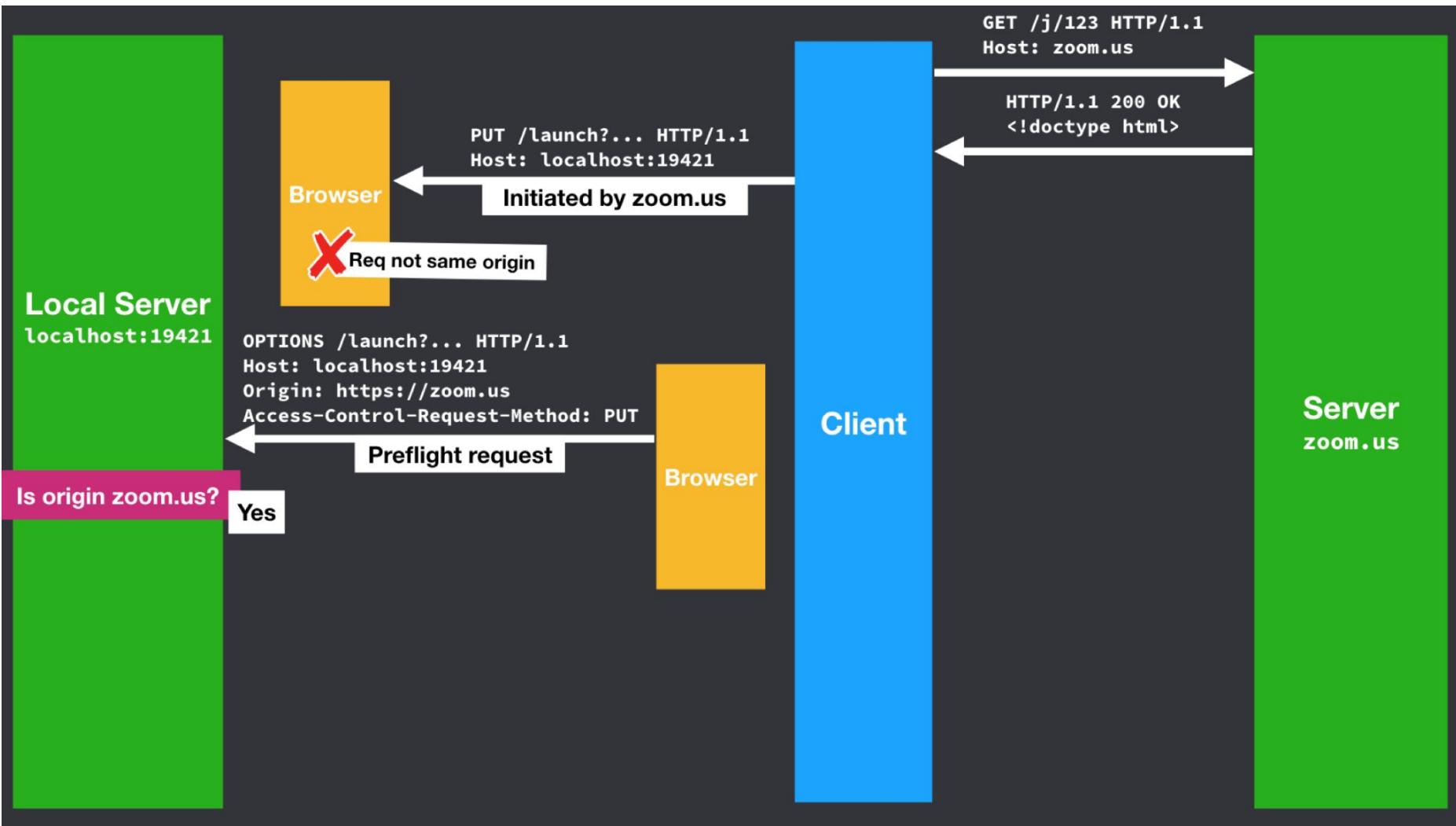


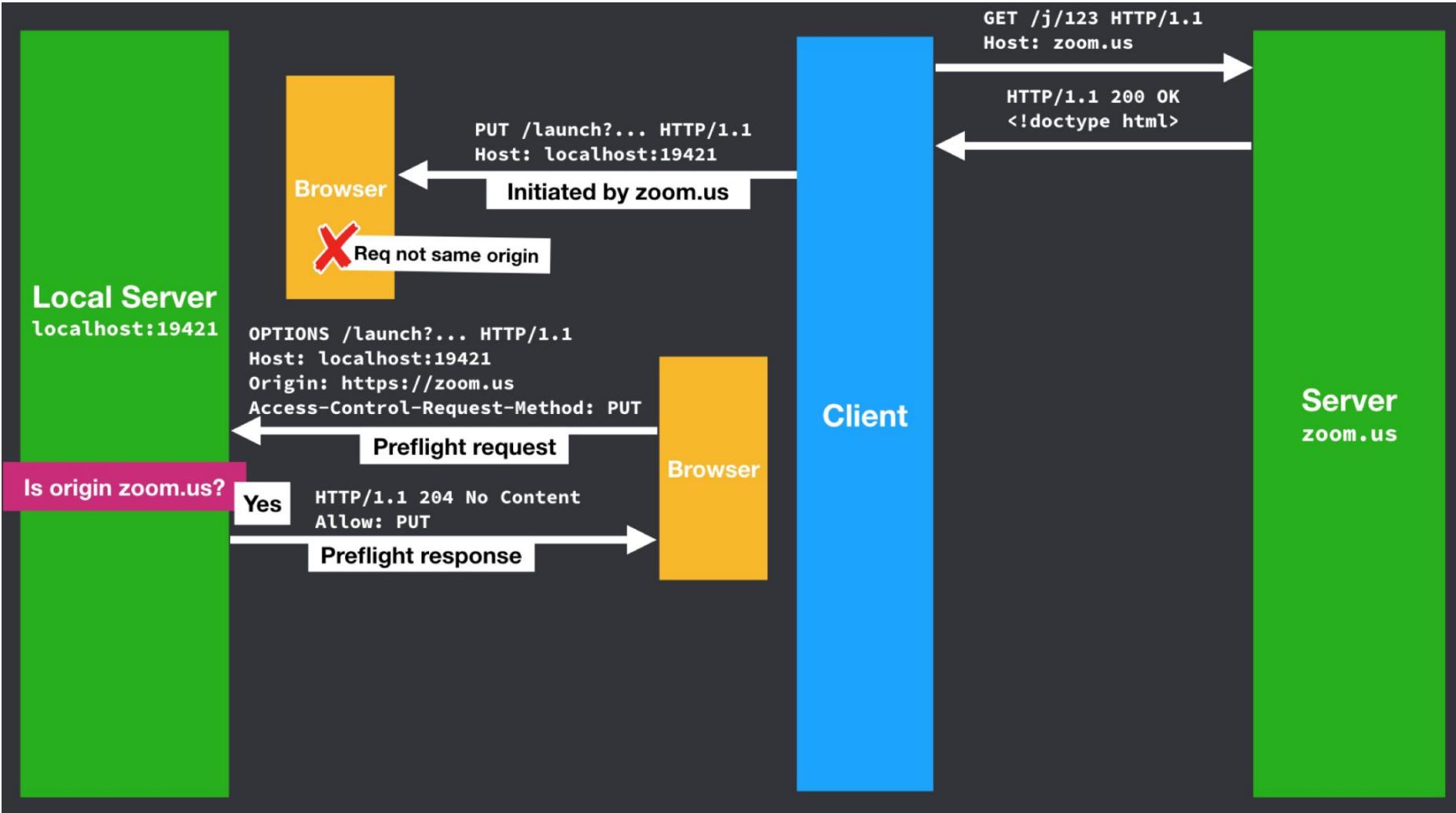


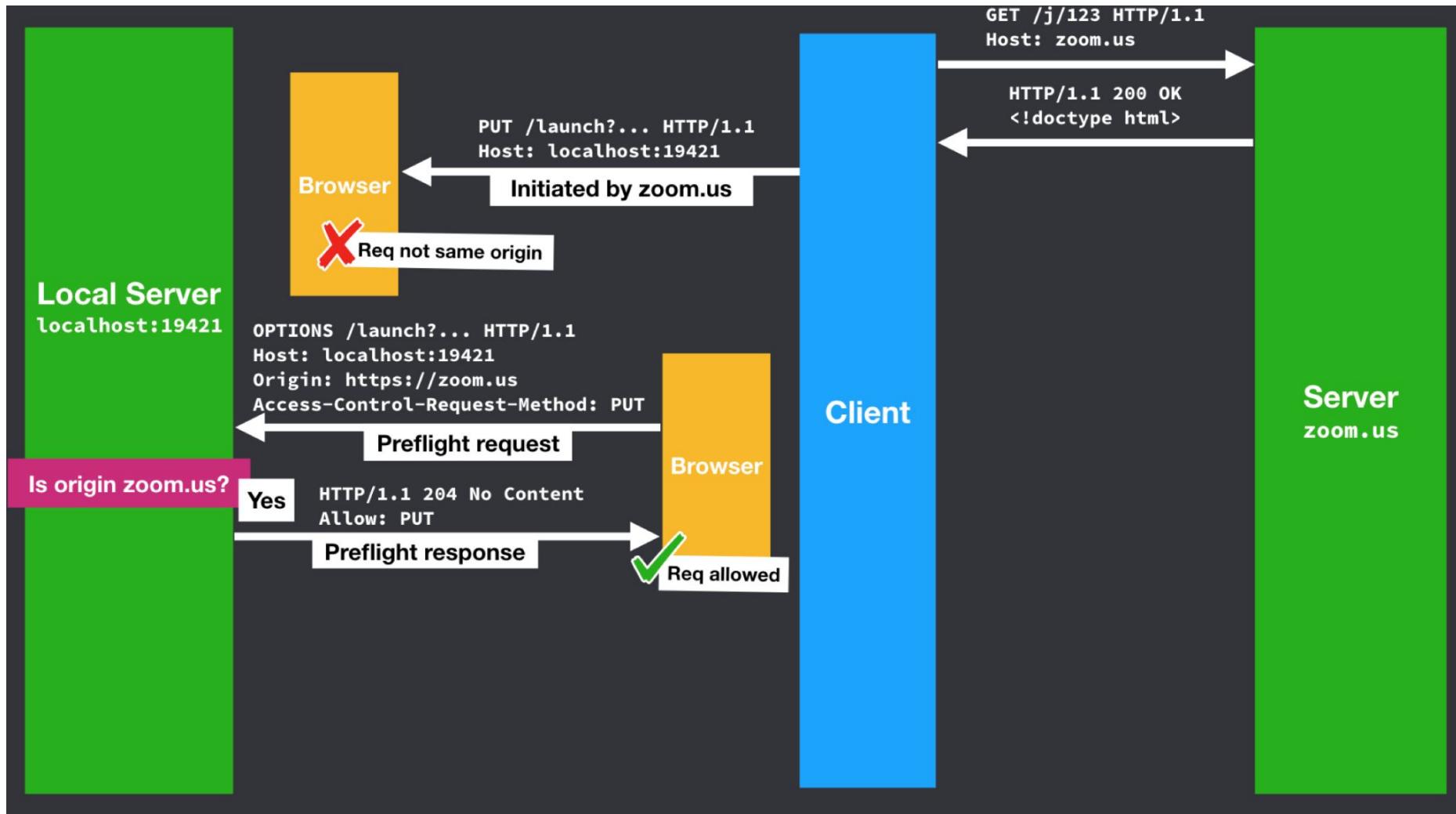


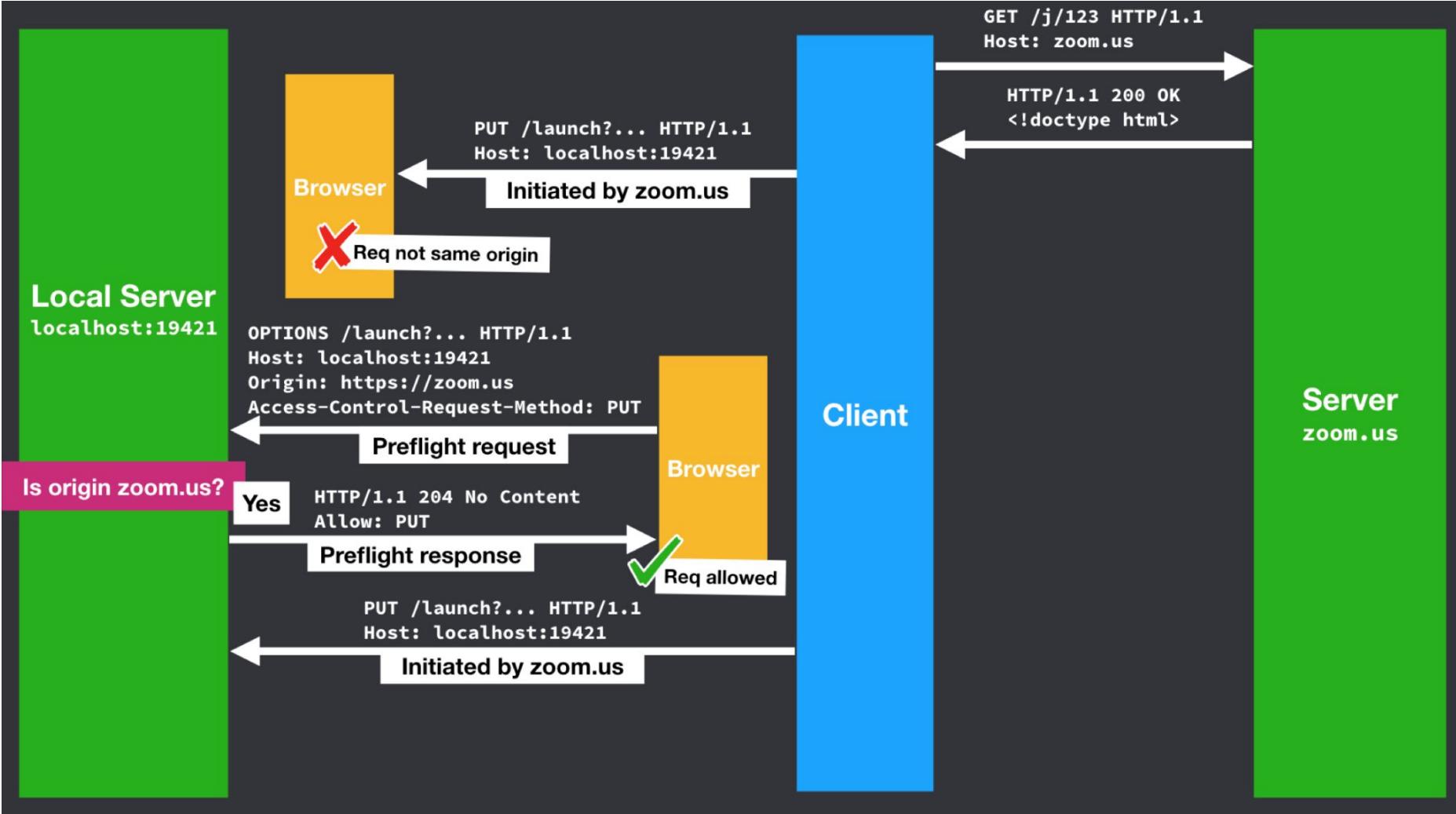


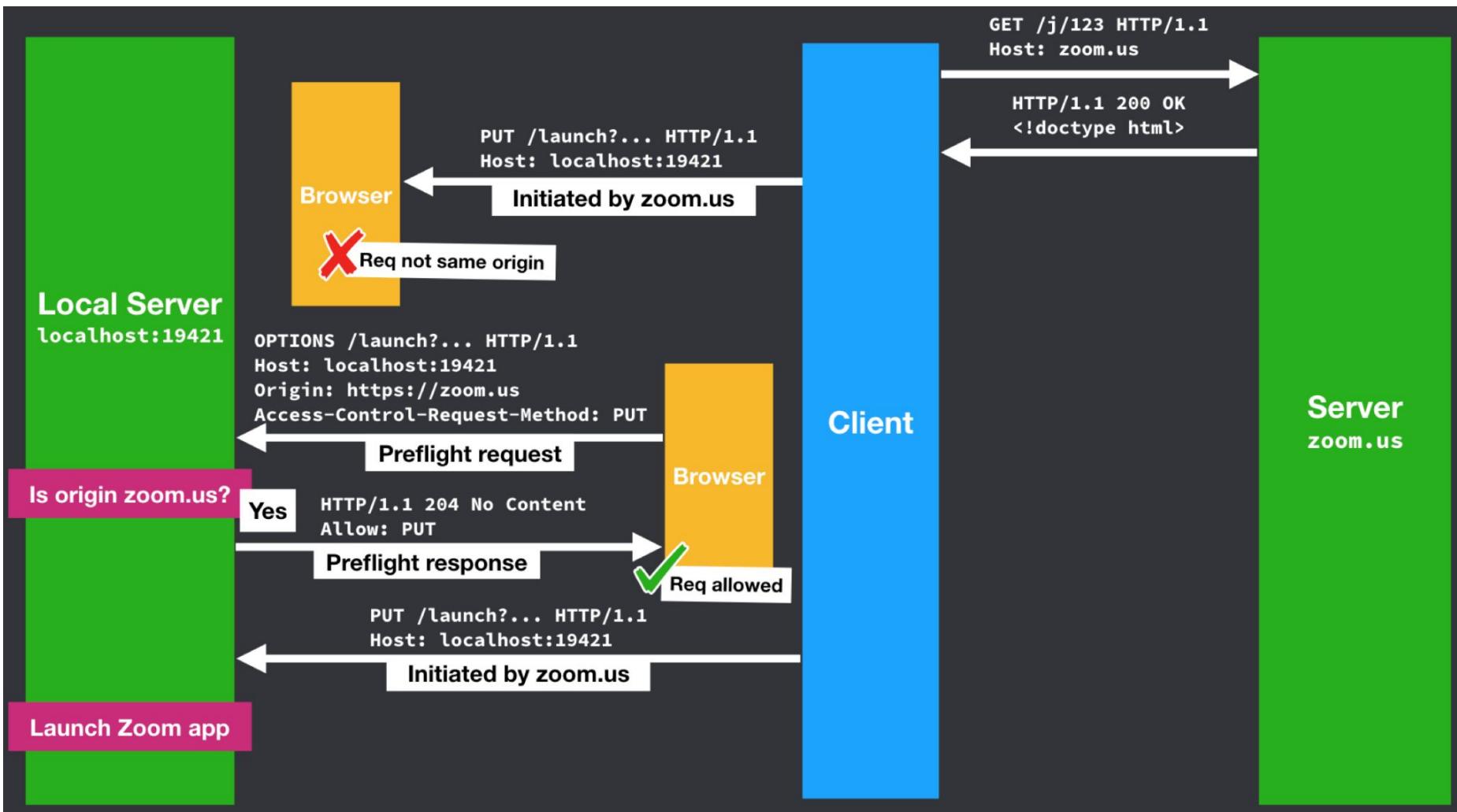


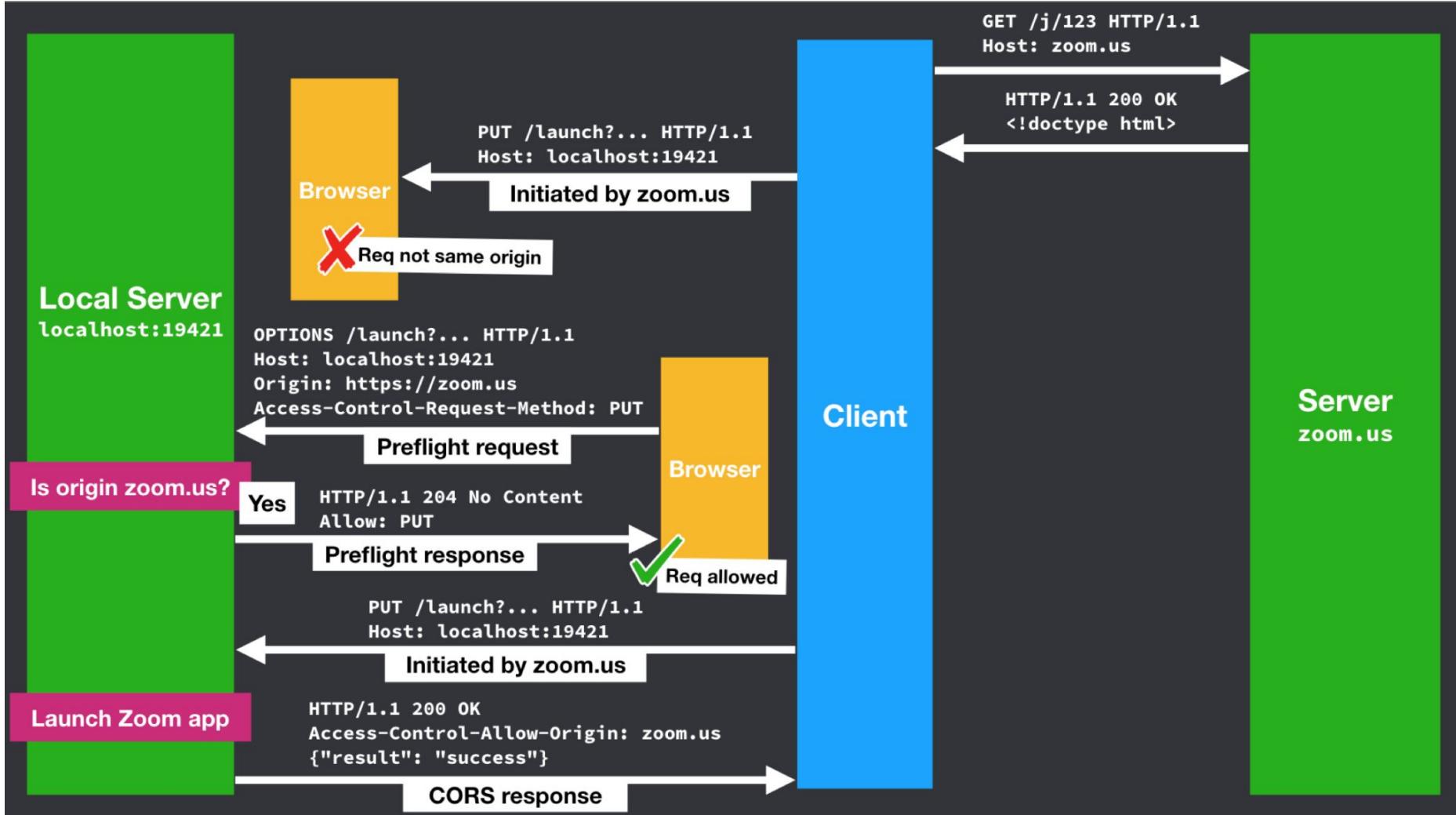


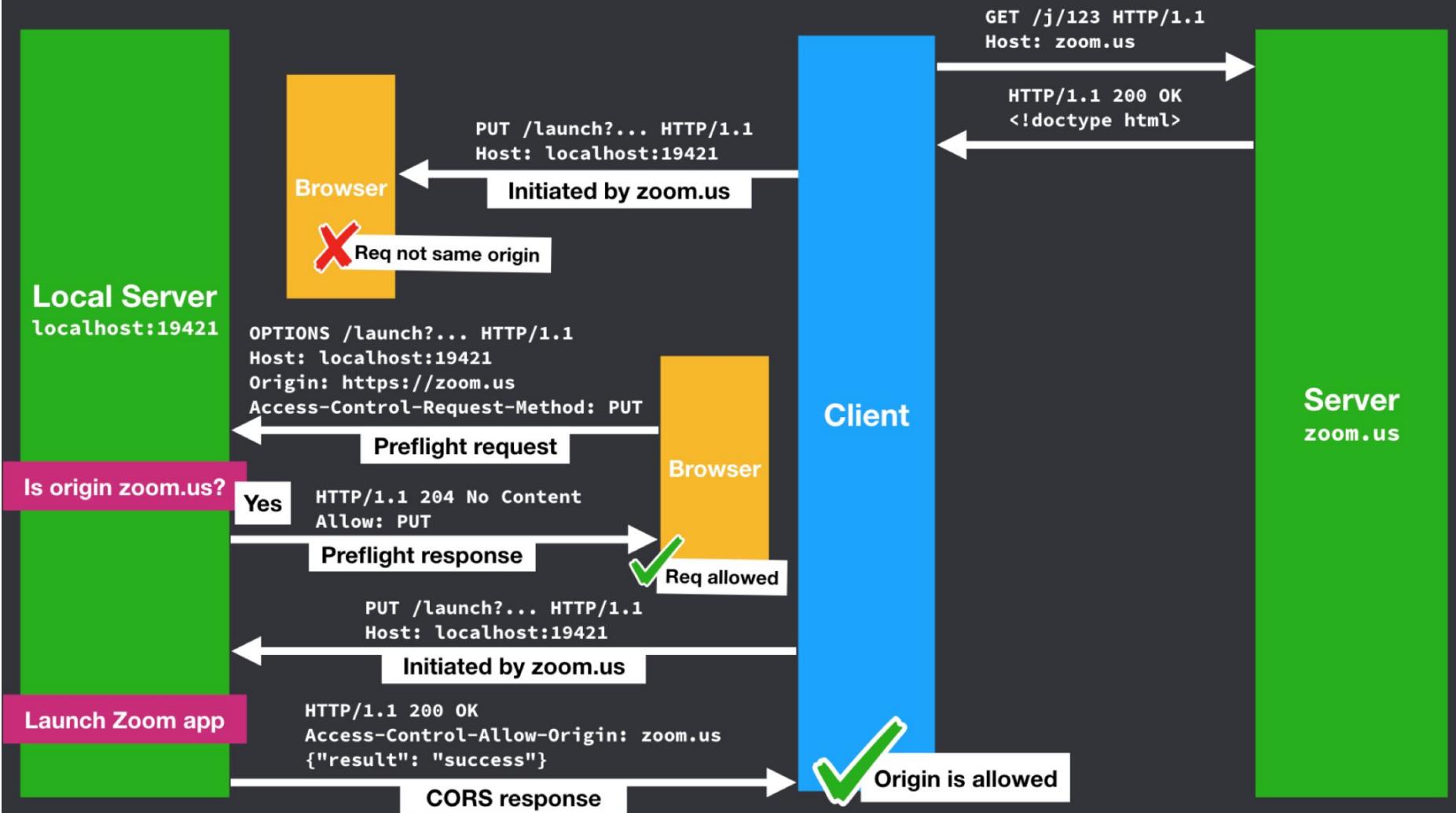




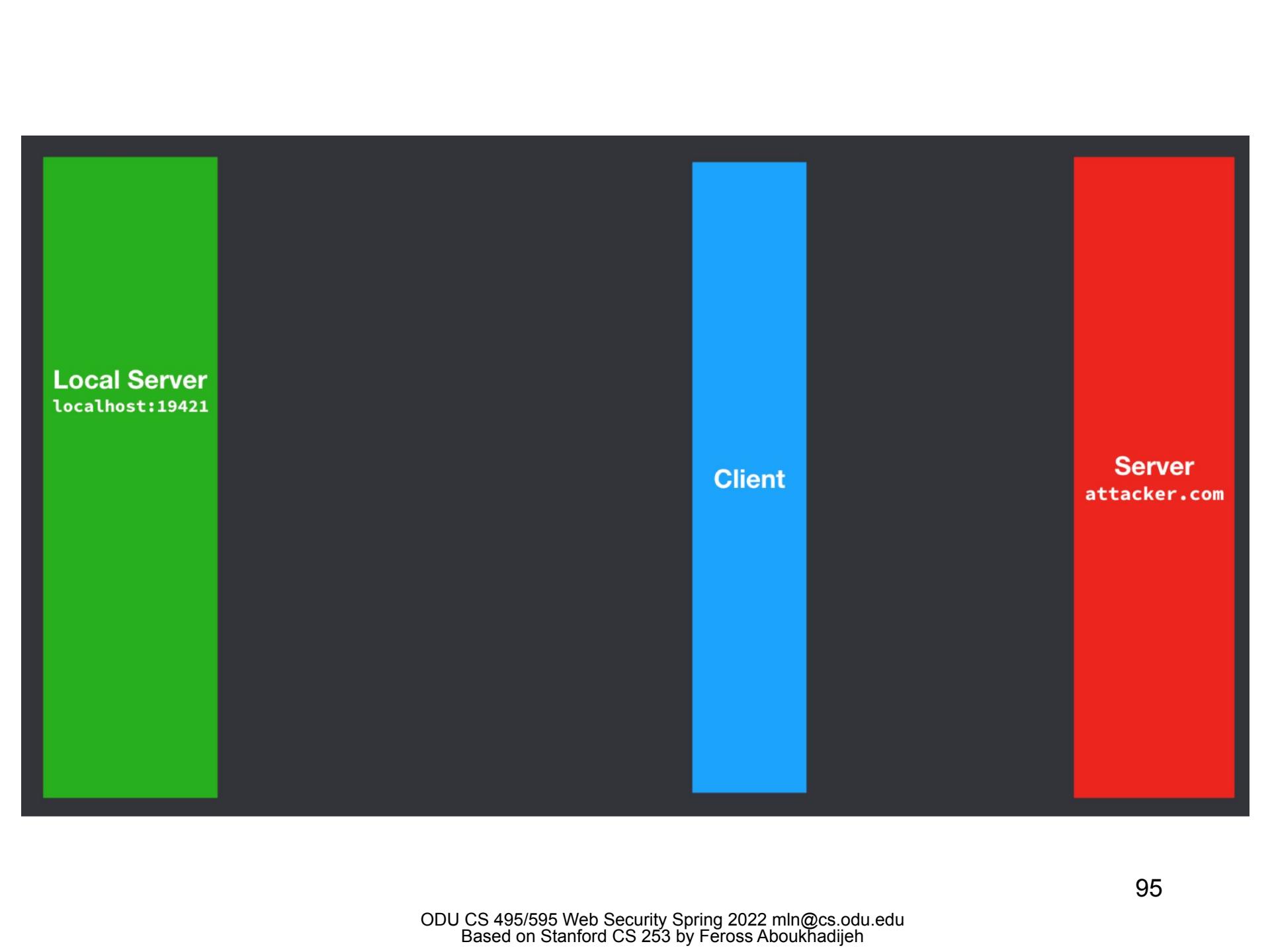








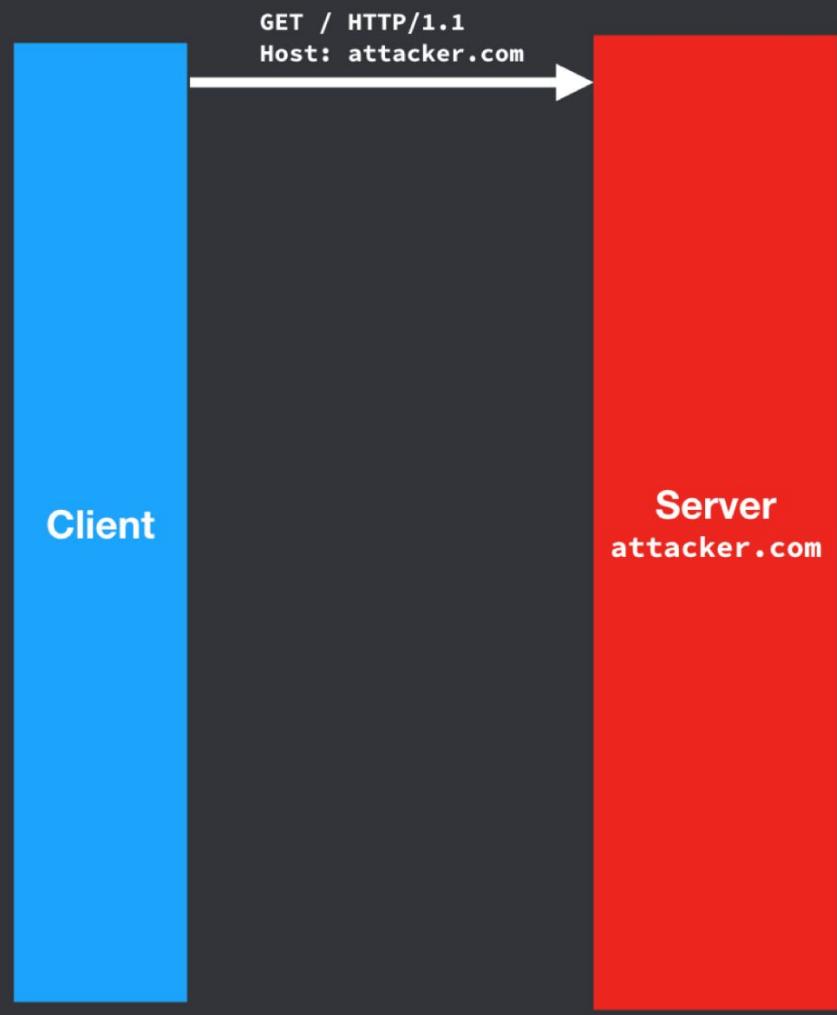
Attacker joins a zoom call (local server requires “preflighted” request

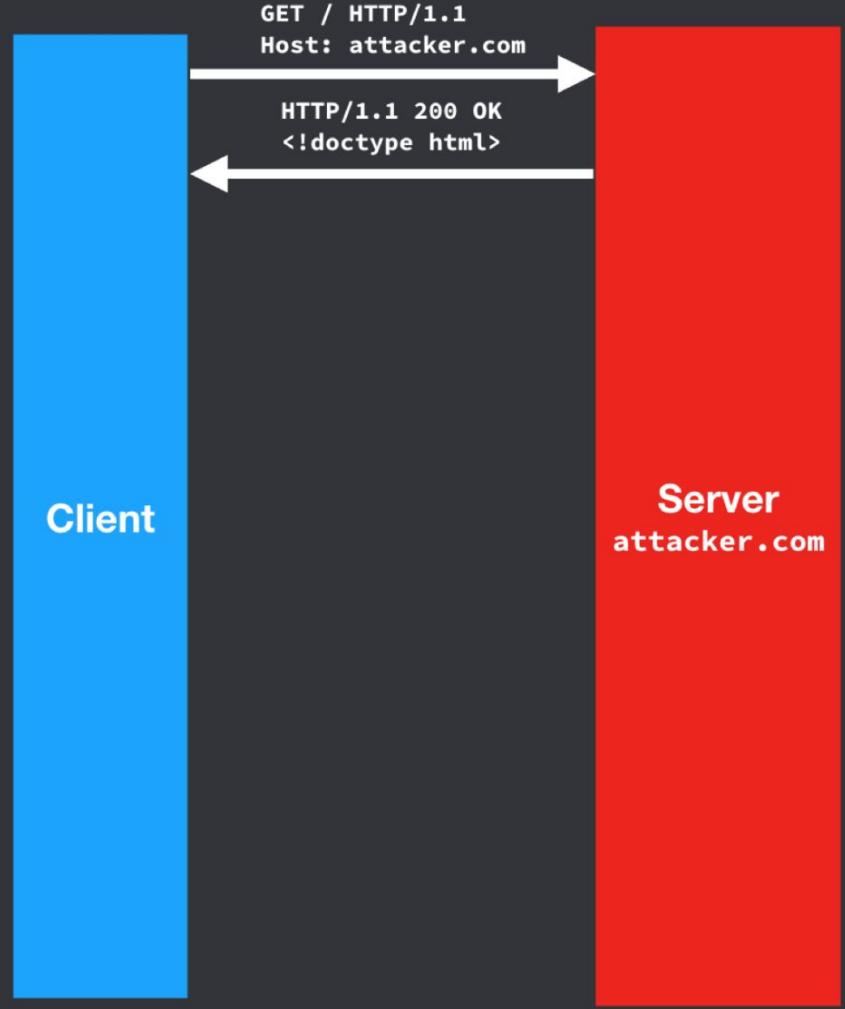


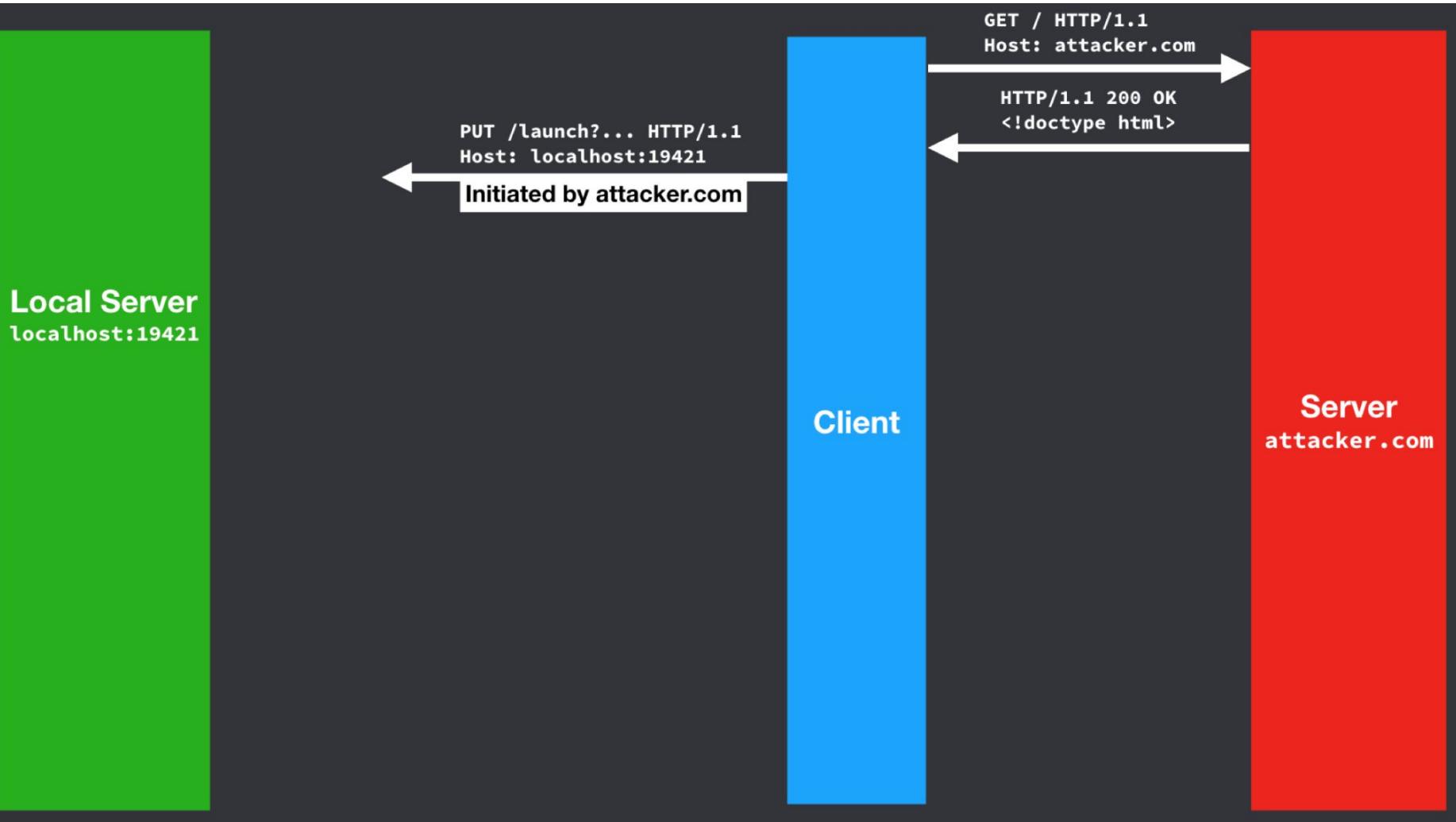
Local Server
`localhost:19421`

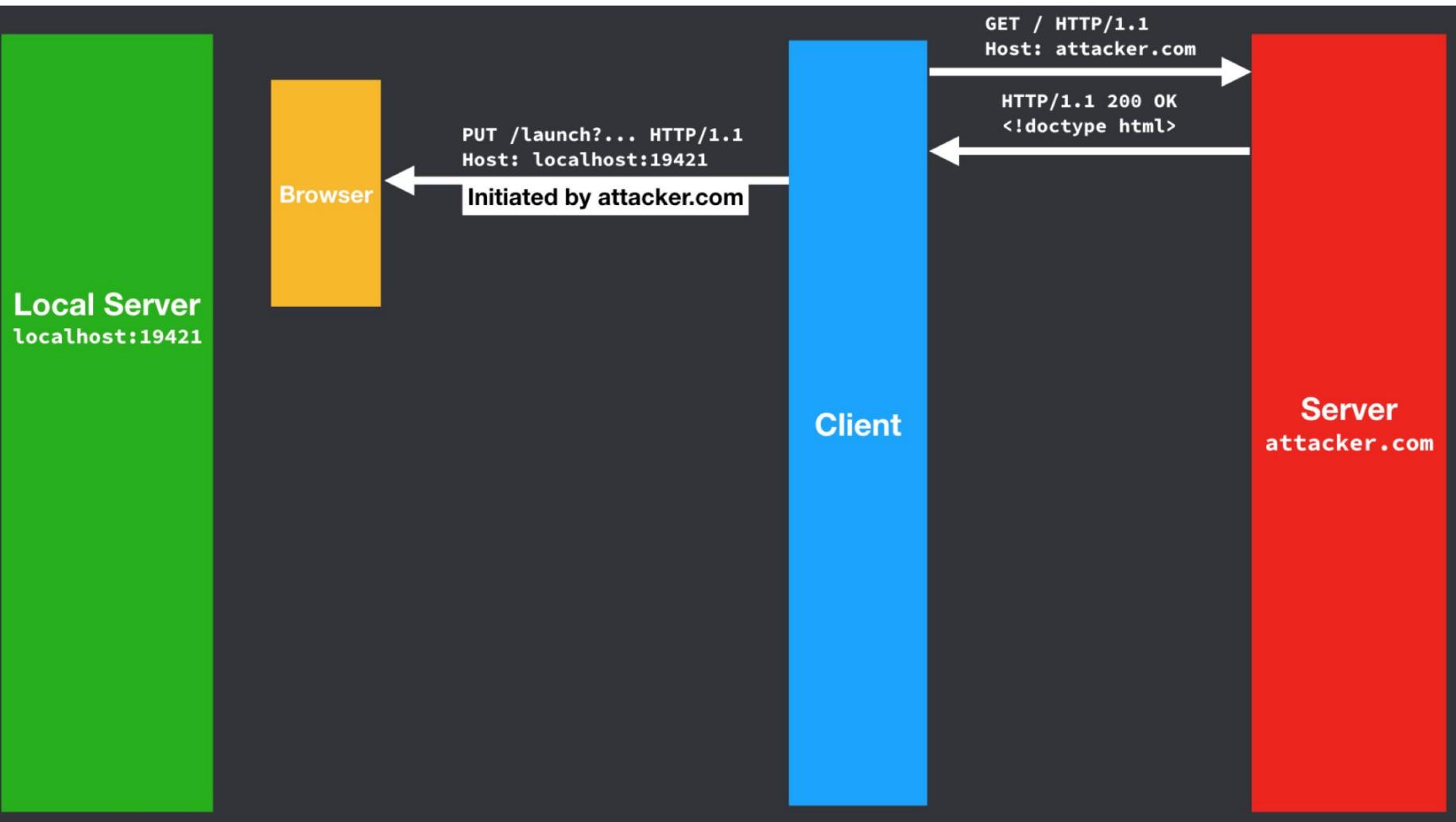
Client

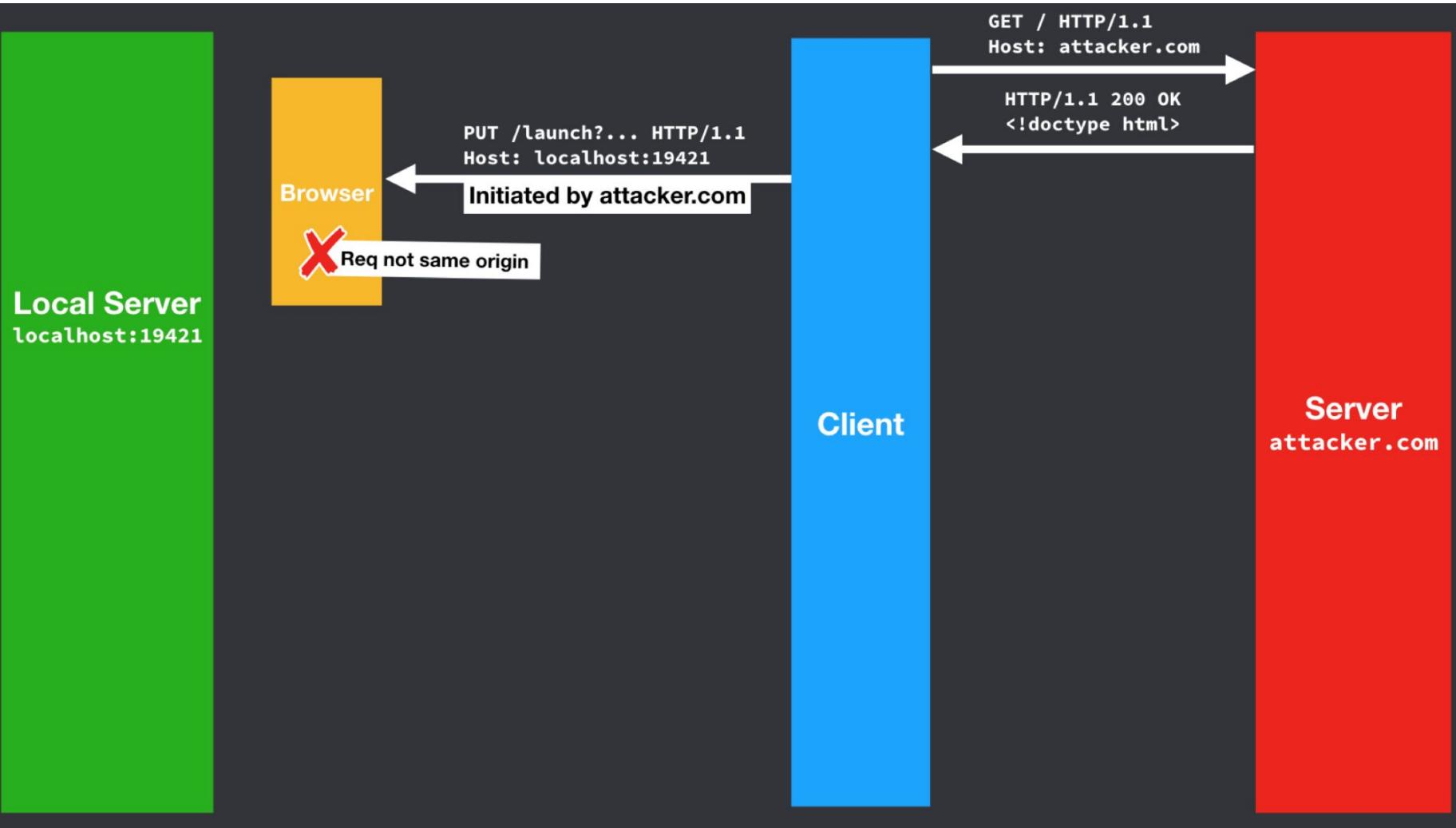
Server
`attacker.com`

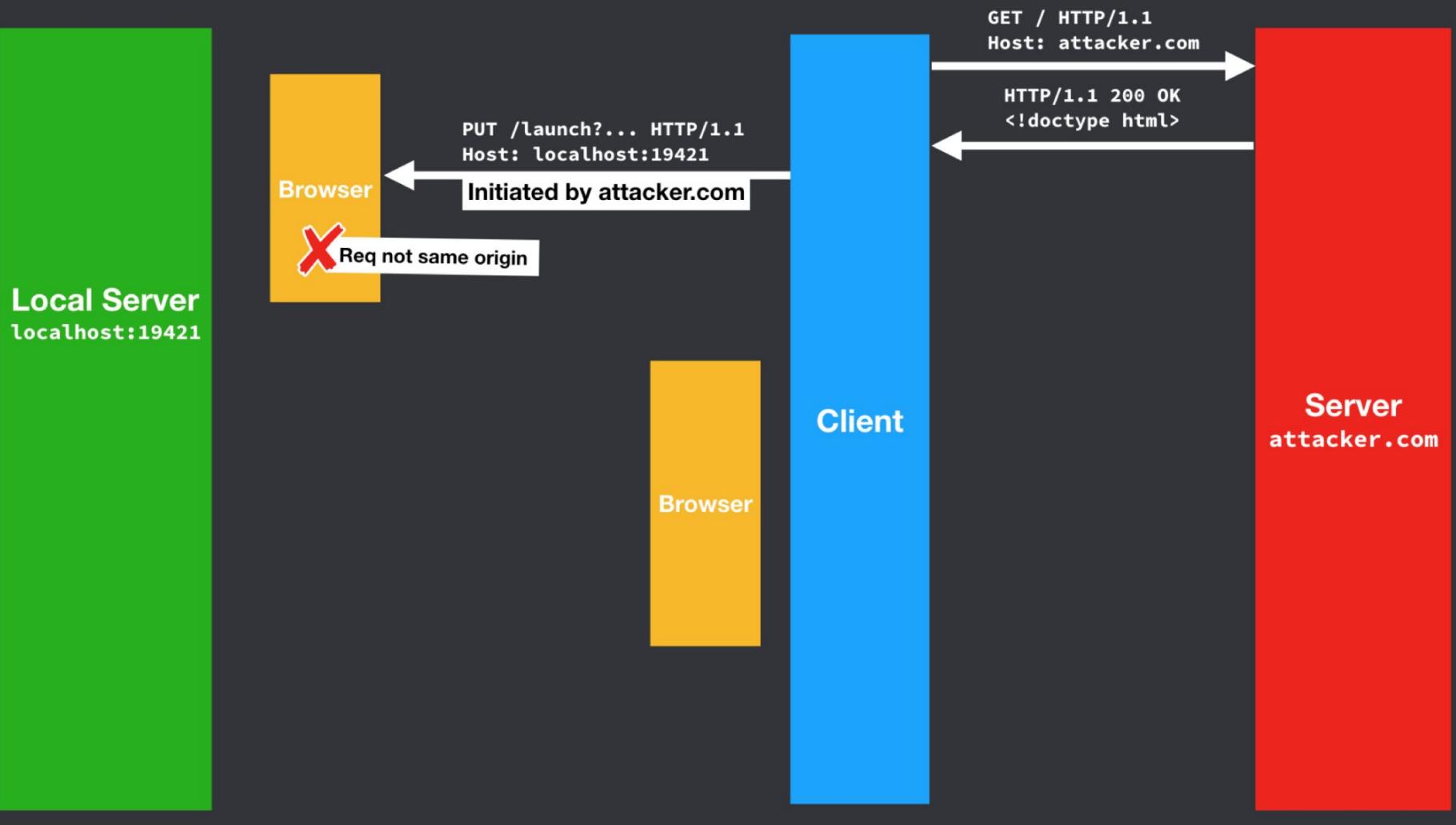


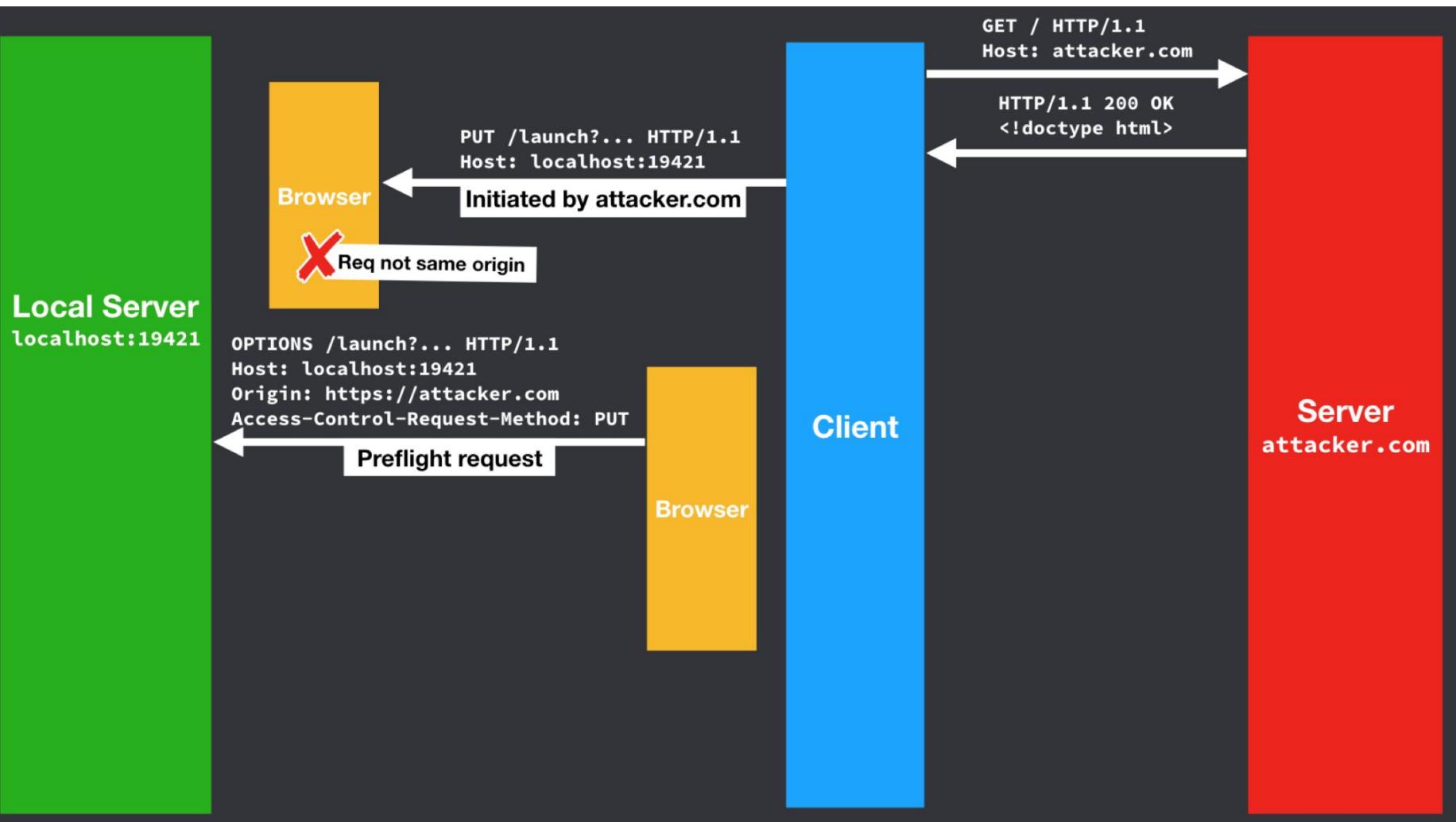


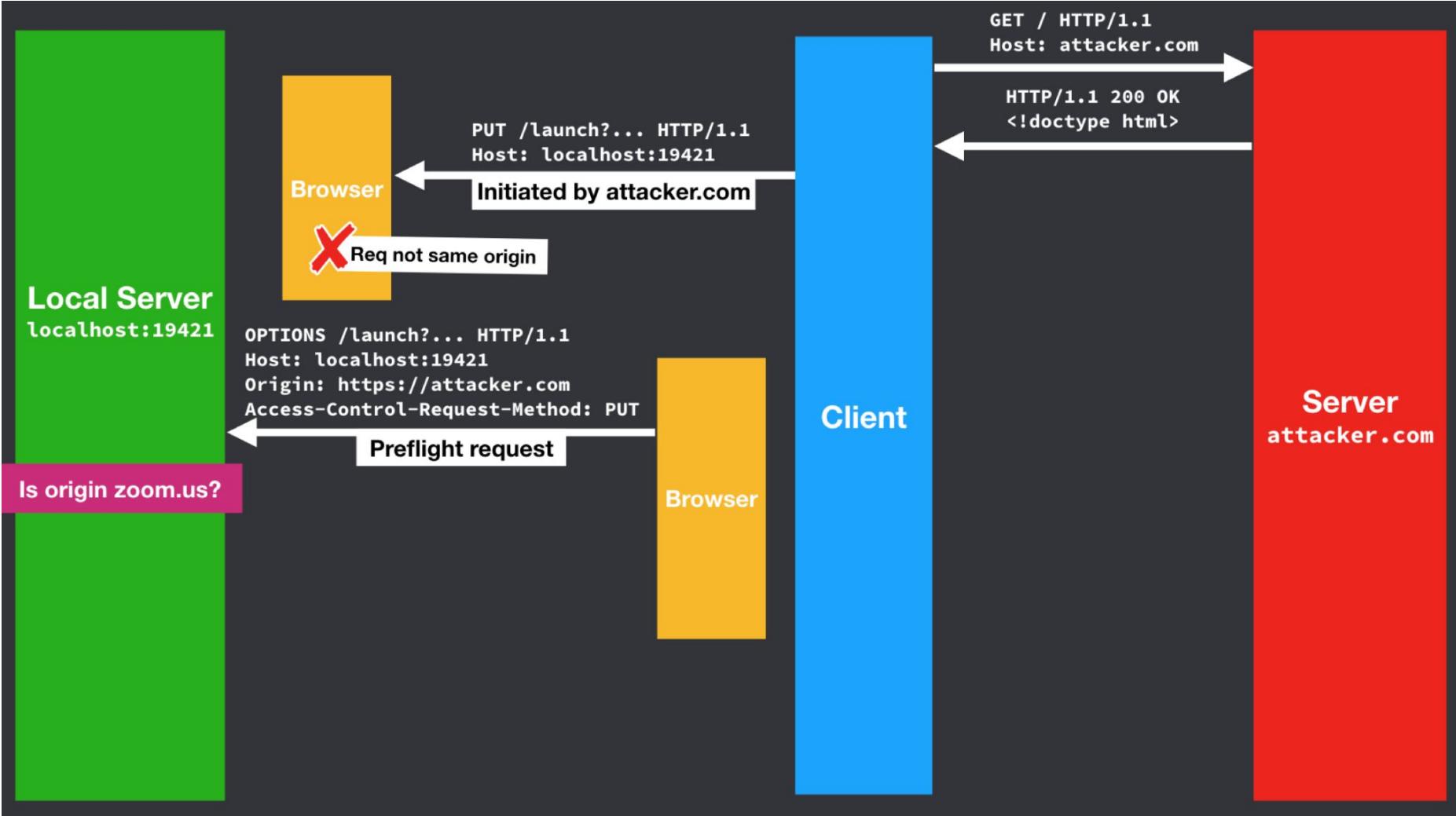


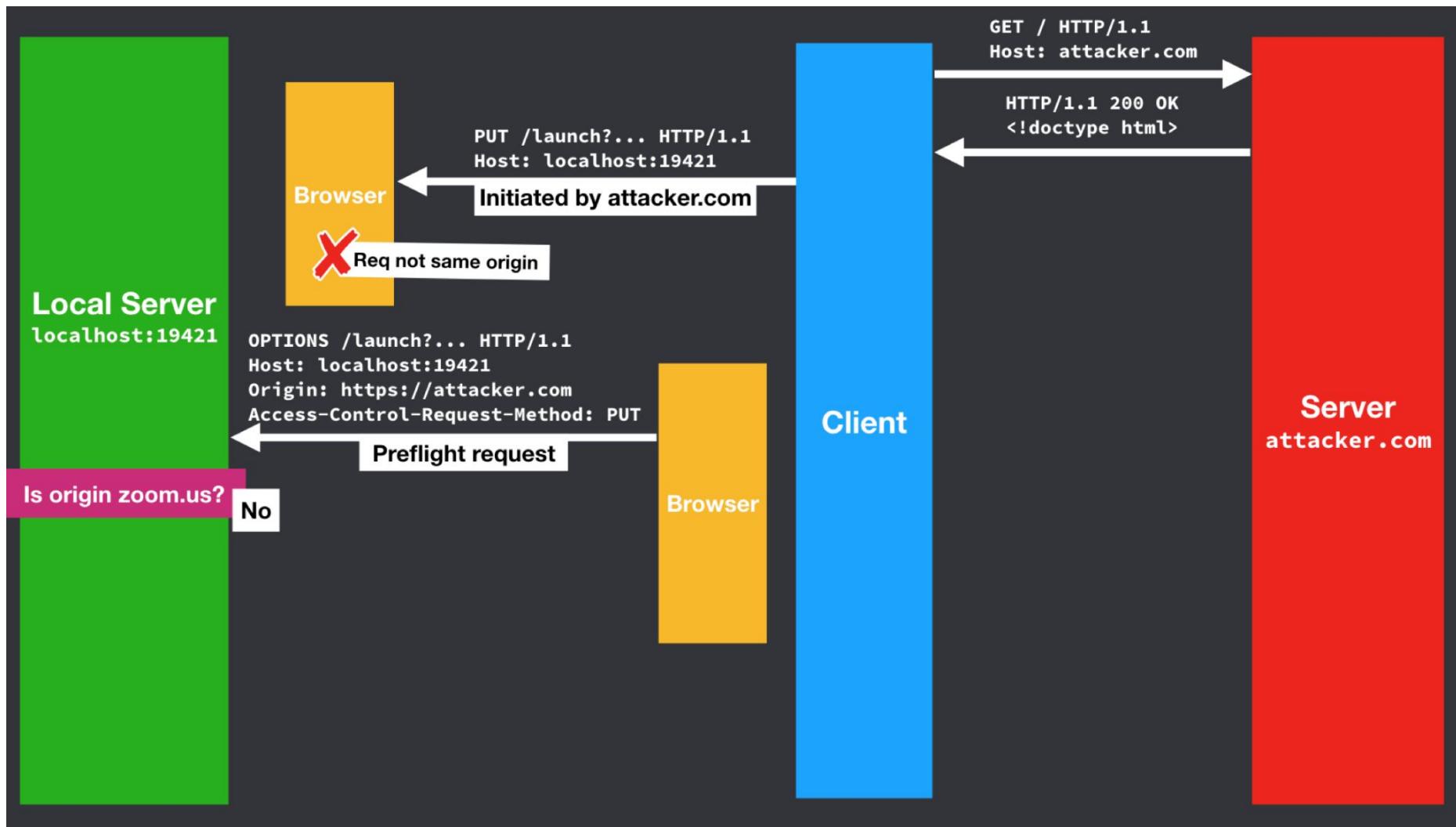


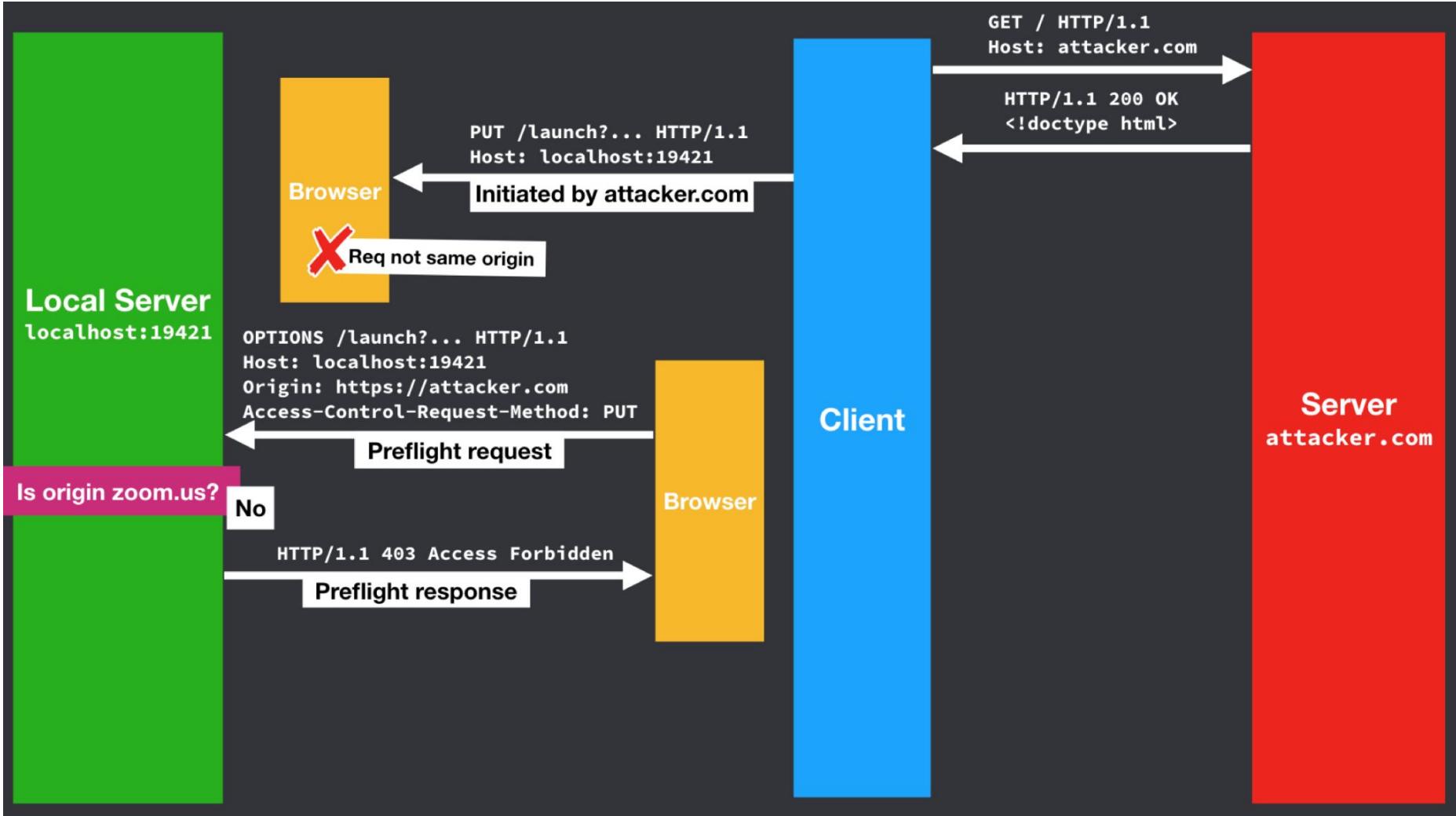


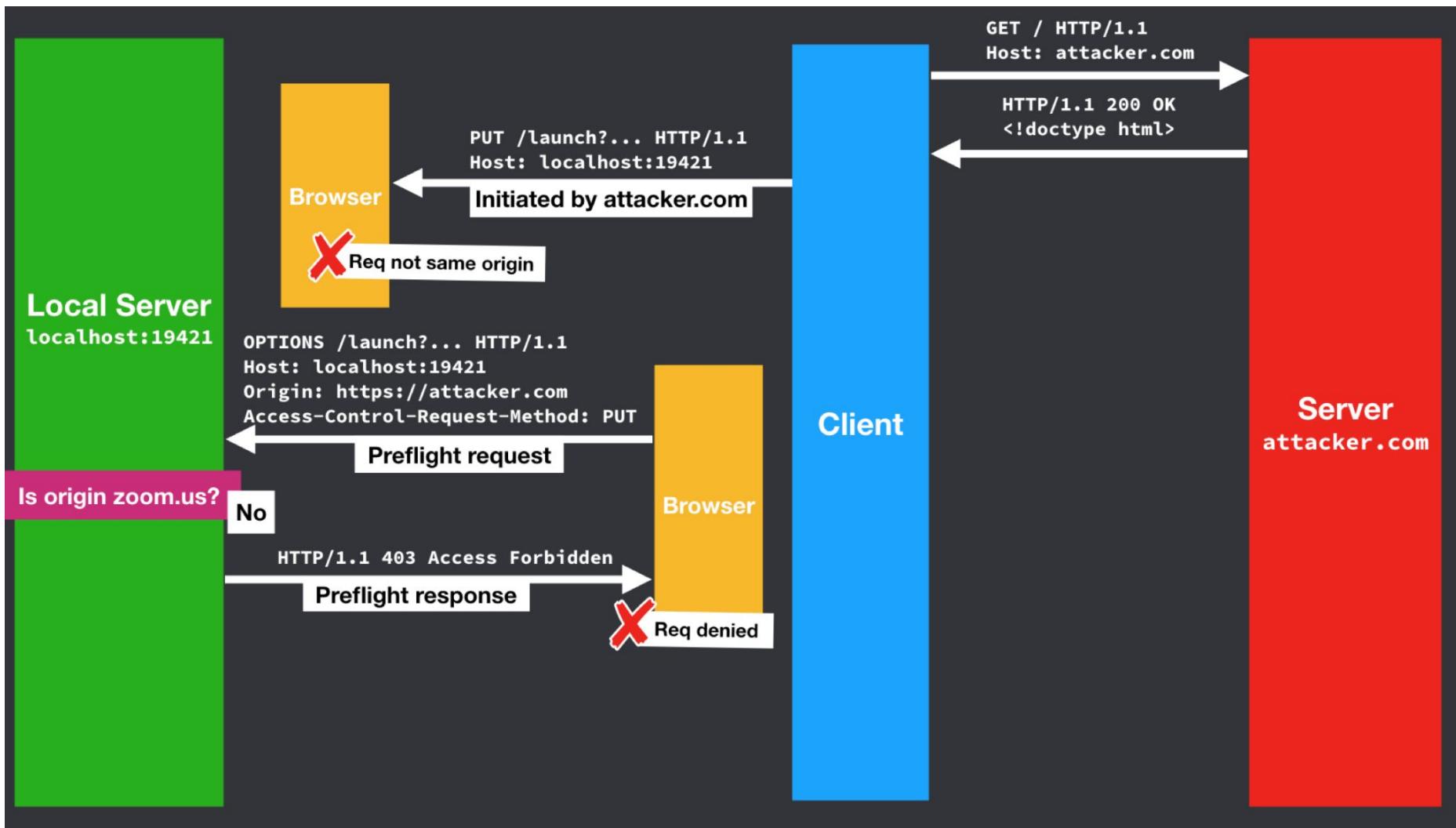












Who can still launch the app from the local server?

- Preflight requests seems to allow the local server to distinguish requests from zoom.us and those from random sites
- However, other native apps running on the same device can still fool the local server
 - The browser enforces that sites can't tamper with the `Origin` header, but a native app (e.g., a Node.js or Python script) can make a request and set the `Origin` header to `https://zoom.us`
 - Note: if a script is already running on your local machine, you have a whole lot of other (potential) problems

One more thing...

- Every site on the web can send requests to our local HTTP server!
 - Works against the server that required "preflighted" requests as well as the server which just checked the `Origin` header
- “localhost” seems simple but is actually highly magical -- what if you could redefine what “localhost” meant?
 - Next time: DNS rebinding attacks