



THE ACCOUNTABLES 2 - TREATMENT BY HARRY CALBOM

PERISCOPE

BILL, DUSTIN, THOM, HEATH:

It means a ton to me that you came back for “Accountables” round two. Thank you.

I've been going at this commercials thing for a long time, and I've come to believe quite passionately that our own career-defining work will be a product of our most trusting relationships. That's how I see this partnership. I know if we keep collaborating, swapping good ideas and bad, taking risks, and working our asses off, we will eventually make films that meet or exceed our highest ambitions.

With that in mind, I've approached this treatment slightly differently than usual. No need for a pilot pitch in season two. What follows are my most transparent and honest thoughts on where we stand, the opportunities and challenges we face, and how I believe we can take this campaign to the next level. We've still got miles to go, but it's already been a pleasure to dig in and workshop these ideas.

Accountable to you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harry".



WHERE WE STAND

As I rewatch the final spot from last year I am pleasantly surprised.

Here's the funny thing - I'm genuinely passionate about the message of our campaign. I drank the kool-aid hard last year and will regularly debate anyone who doesn't believe that accounting pros are massively underappreciated and unsung heroes of our society. In fact, proliferating this message of gratitude for accountants matters most to me in this work. More than awards or acclaim, I would love to have an actual impact on the way people view treat and view accountants. If last year was about proving to accountants that Quickbooks appreciates them, this year should also be about scaling that message so that clients and general audiences think twice about how they value their accountants too.

Where we succeeded most last year was in humanizing accountants. The work has humility and feels real. We also set an energetic and positive tone for a new campaign that stands out from all of the overly sentimental Covid work of 2020. My only insecurities about that spot relate to clarity of messaging for general audiences. Perhaps I'm too close to it, but I sometimes wonder if our "accountants are underappreciated" message got a little lost amidst the kind of "party" atmosphere we created. My goal for this new work is to link the voiceover and visuals in compelling, precise ways that gets passive audiences to pay attention and leaves people with a clear takeaway: accountants are true heroes, and QuickBooks exists to serve them.

In round two I'd love to keep these goals in mind:

1. Let's elevate the production value and cinematography to be immediately attention grabbing for general audiences.
2. Let's be incredibly precise with the way we tie specific visuals to voiceover and double down on clarity of message in every beat.

That said, as we pursue these higher goals we must be vigilant to not abandon the values that made round one successful. If we make two beautiful new films but sacrifice the humanity and accessibility of last year's work we will have failed. The correct path forward is one that extends the ambition and reach of last year's work while retaining its heart and humility.



A group of people are sitting on bean bags in a modern office setting. The bean bags are large, colorful, and striped. One person is sitting on a red bean bag, another on a green one, and others are on striped ones. They are all wearing casual clothing like t-shirts and shorts. A small round table in the center has a potted plant, two cups, and some papers. The background is a plain wall.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TONE

TONE

This is going to sound vague, but I feel quite strongly about it. Because the spots we're making are so short, I believe the creative quality that they will most live or die by is tone. Realistically, people won't remember what was said or the specific scenes we visualized. They will remember how it felt overall, and that tone will either make them feel closer to Intuit or drive them farther away. We need to ensure that they feel the former.

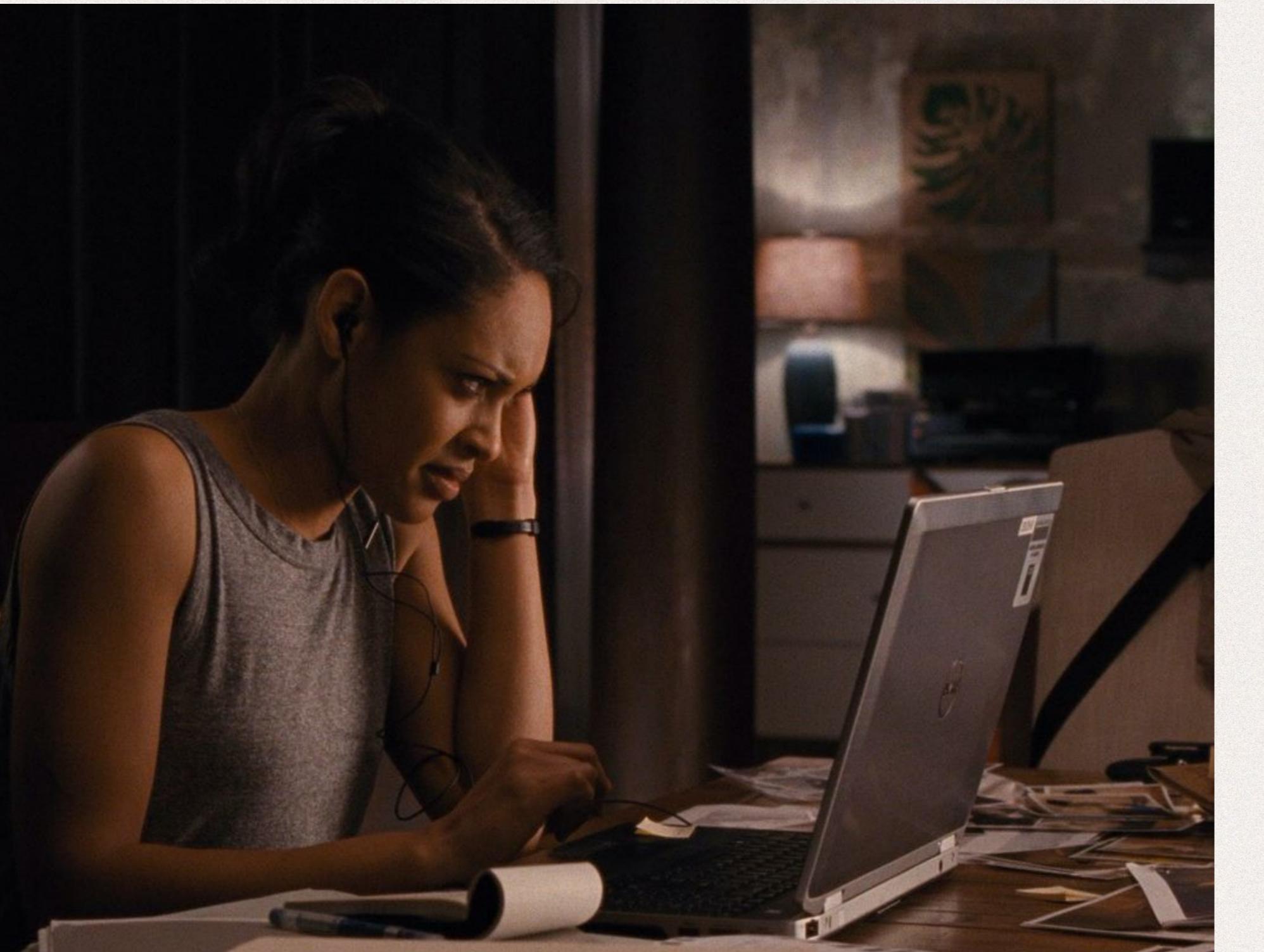
We want to make accounting pros like QuickBooks more. In some cases that involves repairing the relationship. In other cases it's just about making accounting pros feel seen and converting them from Quickbooks users into Quickbooks superfans. Because we have the opportunity to move past UGC in this new round, it's incumbent on us to set a tone for the evolved campaign. Achieving the right tone will involve a lot of trial and error throughout prep, clarity and consensus going

into production, and delicately balancing all of the different creative elements (sound, VO, music, color, performance, etc) in post. So, what is the tone we're going for here? It's grounded comedy, cinematically shot, naturally lit, realistic but a little carried away like an Aaron Sorken show. People take their jobs extremely seriously here. The stakes of everyday events are sky high. They care about everything and everyone.

Examples of Tone:



Tone!

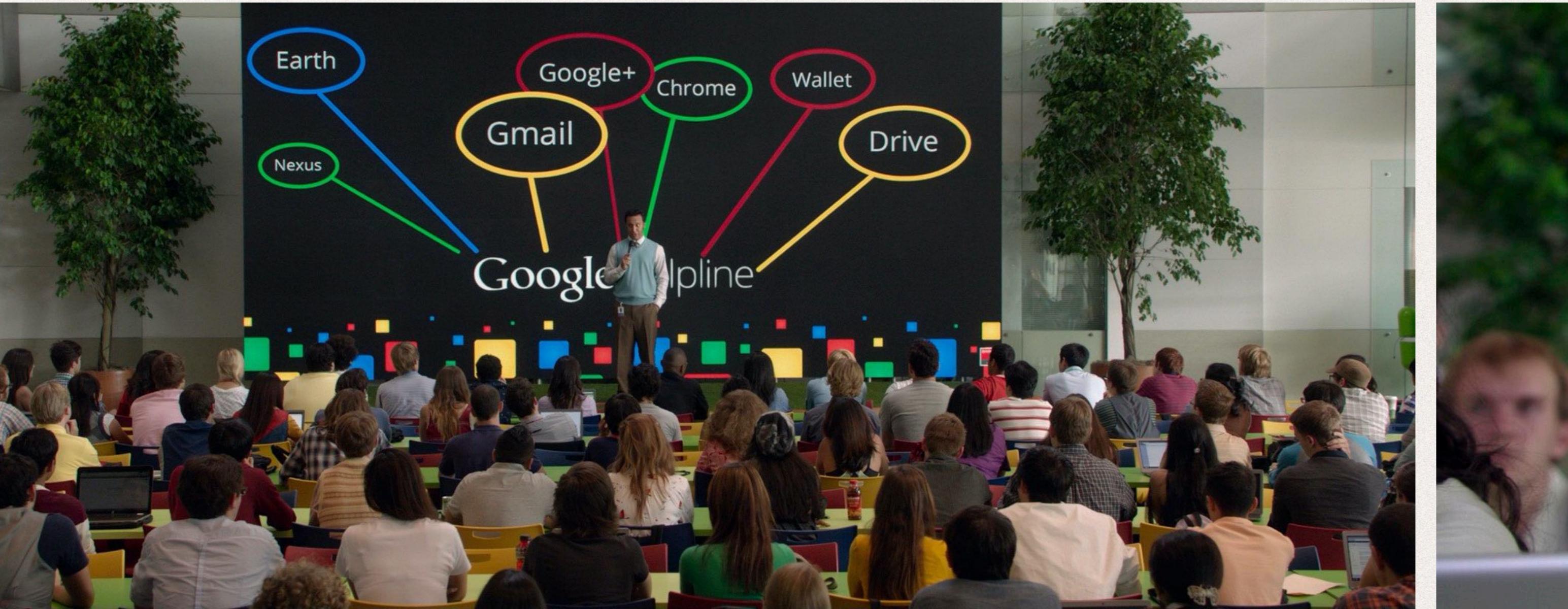


Tone!



F'ing TONE!!!

Here are some examples of tone that loosely approximate a look / feel that could work for us.



I'm cautious to even share these examples because none of them fully capture the vision in my head. Nevertheless, they work to communicate a few things.

With this new campaign I think we all want to move farther into the world of filmic storytelling, and away from the UGC and documentary styles. All of these images feel narrative to me, but naturally lit. Using window light will keep our stories bright and ease the transition from 'real people' to fictional characters.

I'm leaning toward a 2:35 aspect ratio with this work to hue closer to narrative storytelling, while still directing performances that feel natural and relatable.

As you picture any shot in this campaign, please imagine it as dynamic and in motion at all times — we're going to take the viewers on a ride.

PRIORITIES

WITH SCARCE RESOURCES AND LOFTY GOALS, WE NEED TO AGREE ON PRIORITIES

Aesthetics

The combination of locations, production design, wardrobe and cinematography will be our primary 'leveling up' factor. Let's push for the best in production AND post. My hope is that our post production not only assembles what we capture on the shoot, but gives it a significant lift.

Performances

Authentic, endearing performances are the counterbalance to our ultra-premium production value that we need to retain humility, relatability, etc. Our characters must be likable, believable, and entertaining to watch.

Sound

The soundtrack of these spots is as or more important to clarity of message as the visuals. I want to start working with our sound designer immediately to find the right tone, rhythm, tempo of the storytelling here. With only 30 seconds to tell a full story, we need music / sound in the drivers seat.



"THE SETH SOLVE"



Payroll: The Seth Solve

To me the message of this spot is "We take the suggestions from our accounting pros seriously, very seriously." To illustrate and dramatize that story in a playful and entertaining way I see this spot as a chain reaction that is constantly escalating. What starts as a simple, off-the-cuff suggestion from Seth escalates to the highest level at Intuit HQ and action is quickly taken. By depicting the Intuit "war room" as a lively, almost raucous work environment where our characters (and our camera) are always in motion, we create the feeling that Quickbooks is constantly evolving and innovating, fueled by feedback from their accounting pros on the ground.

We open in a large, open concept, modern office. The energy is lively and the place is bustling and noisy. Post-its, sketches, UI schematics and photos of accounting pros can be seen on tables and walls. Music is dramatic and uptempo...

1a.



Medium Tight on a male, African American project manager, center frame, viewing something on his laptop. His face is half obscured by the laptop. We see in his face that he's fired up by a new idea.

1d.



He slides his laptop across the length of the table. It does a perfect 180 before parking perfectly in front of the boss, seated at the end of the table. A group of software engineers lean in to view the content on the laptop.

VO: to improve Online Payroll...

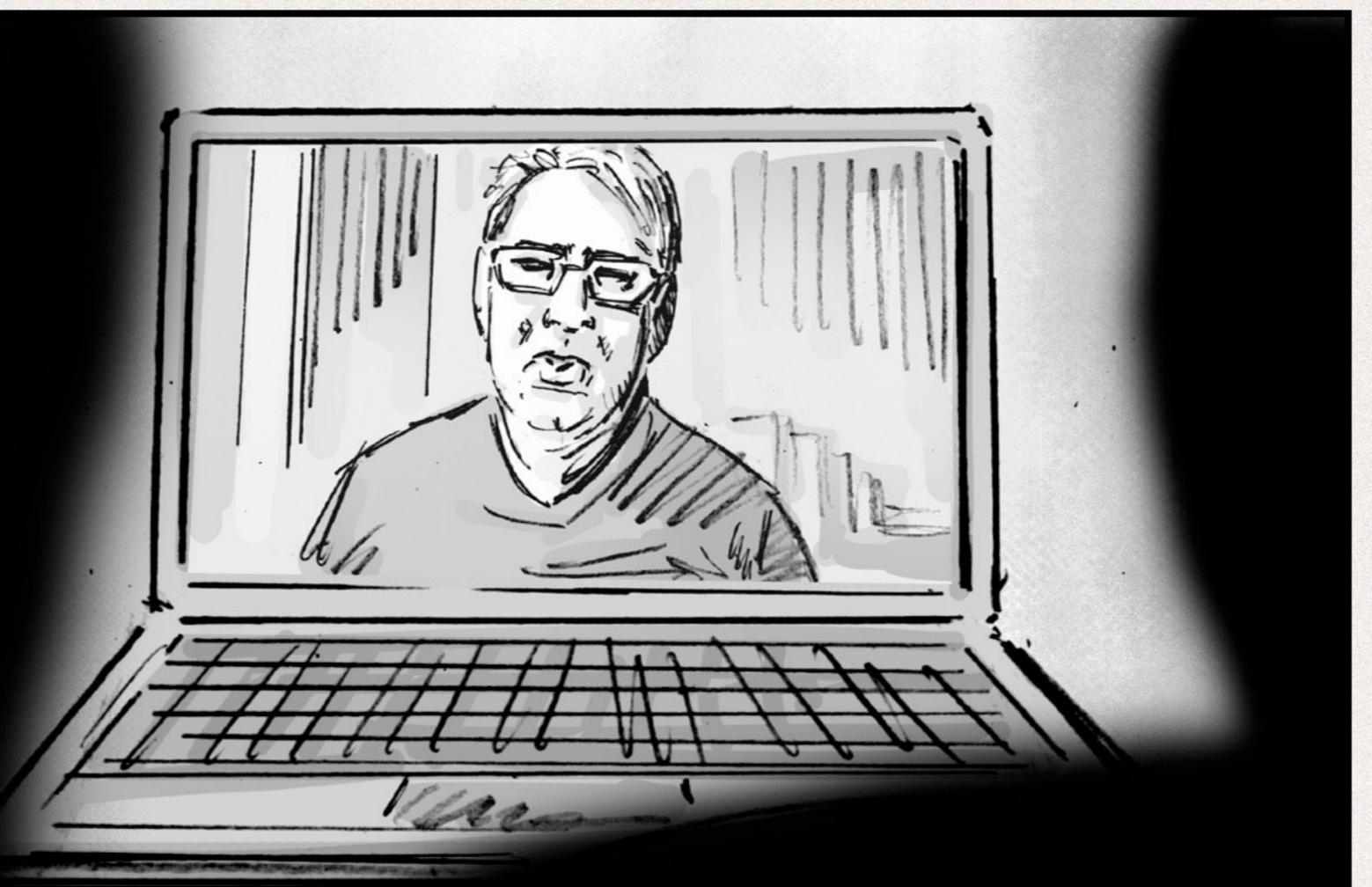
1b.



The project manager lifts his laptop from his desk and turns 180 towards camera, walks center frame with purpose down the aisle between desks as camera tracks backwards.

VO: At QuickBooks, we hold ourselves accountable to accountants.

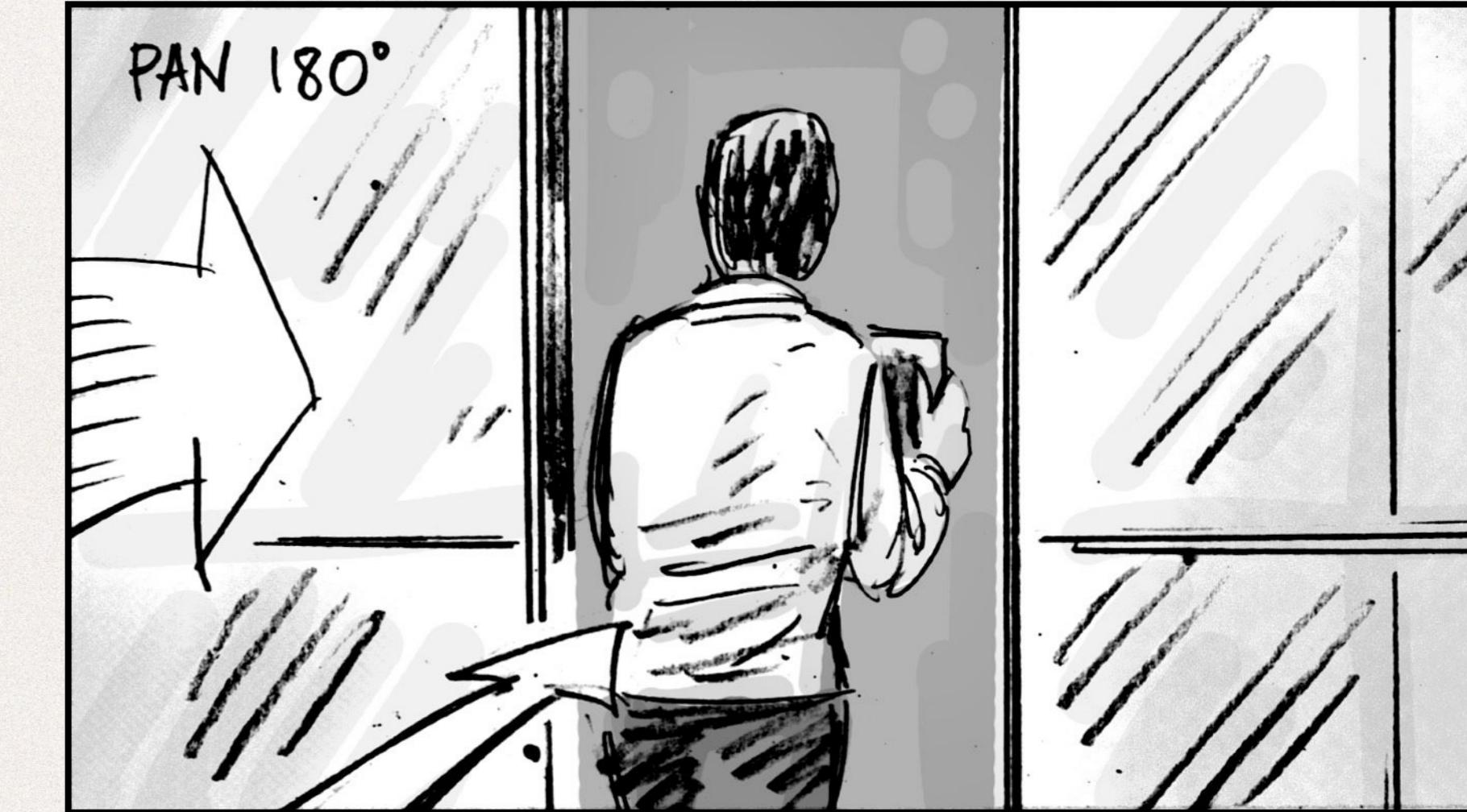
2.



Over the shoulder pushing in on the laptop screen. The music and all of the office noise abruptly stop. It's silent. We see one of Seth David's tutorial videos, playing in the youtube browser. Through tiny speakers we hear Seth's voice...

SETH: ... employee enrollment, benefit management, state taxes....

1c.



The project manager overtakes our camera on the right and we pan 180 to follow behind him as he enters a glass conference room, interrupting a meeting.

VO: So when accounting pro Seth David had suggestions

3.



We push up toward the faces of the software team, gazing in awe.

VO: we not only listened...

4.



The boss slams the laptop closed and all noise and music instantly resumes.

VO: We got to work.

7.



The boss gives a presentation in a theater like setting, standing in front of a 50ft projection of Seth.

(Ad lib)

5.



Boss throws the laptop back to Project Manager (It misses) as she turns to leave, summoning her team behind her. The project manager follows and joins the group.

(Ad lib)

8.



More coffee. More coding.

VO: efficiency stacking...

6.



A time lapse of our experts working on product screens, writing code, drinking coffee as the sun rises and sets.

VO: on benefit-backing...

9.



An intern distributes hats or shirts that read "In Seth We Trust"

(Ad lib)

10.



More coffee. More coding.

VO: ...*Seth solves.*

11.



The group is celebrating. A high five is awkwardly missed. They're talking to Seth on a wall mounted TV.

EXPERT: Now it works with HR, health & 401k!

SETH: And...

12.



Wide shot of the group as Project Manager approaches, holding a new laptop.

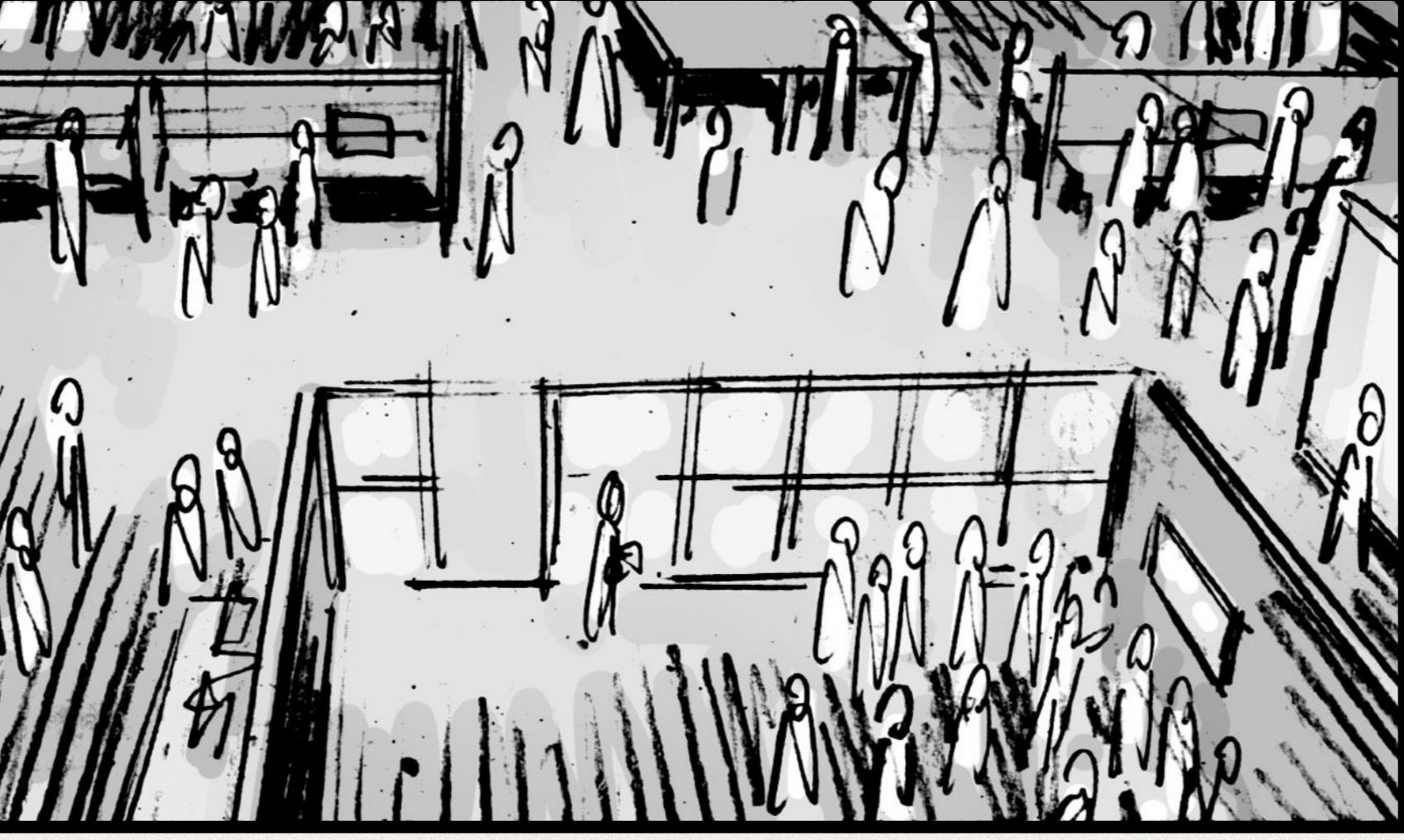
PM: Employee self-onboarding! How'd we do, Seth?

13.



SETH: My clients will LOVE this.

14.



Crane shot pulls back high and wide revealing the whole office before swing panning to end-card.

VO: No, Seth. Your clients will love YOU.

Accountants are the backbone of our businesses, but they get no love. Let's go the extra mile and give them a PROPER tribute.

You've promised your client a semi-directed, remotely shot, UGC montage, and we will absolutely deliver it. We'll cast 10 - 12 actual Quickbooks accountants from around the country, and work with them to shoot charming and authentic footage while working from home. I have no doubt we will get a TON of great stuff for our edit.

But let's take it a step farther. Whether you tell your client or not, I propose that myself, a cinematographer, and an assistant shoot 3 additional days in LA with the best camera and lenses money can by. We can do this because we own the gear and we know how to shoot socially distanced. Let's take advantage of that and add another texture of footage to our edit that separates this from the rest of the Covid era commercials. We'll shoot macro details like the calculator, the coffee cup, and the

kiss, as well as gorgeous wides and portraits that truly HERO our accountants. Just like we do in the national UGC, we will cast only real Quickbooks pros, and we will shoot them in a way that is both natural and FUCKING EPIC.

But let's not stop there. Let's do post right. We've reserved a substantial piece of the budget for a fantastic music track and sound design, as well as proper color correction, clean up, and logo animation.

Why do it this way? Because our accountants deserve an amazing tribute film too! By investing in this piece the same way we would for our first responders or nurses, we'll create a film that is as amusing as it is touching. And QB customers will appreciate it.



“SUPERHERO”



1.



2.

MAN: Is there an accountant on the plane?



Alt 1b.

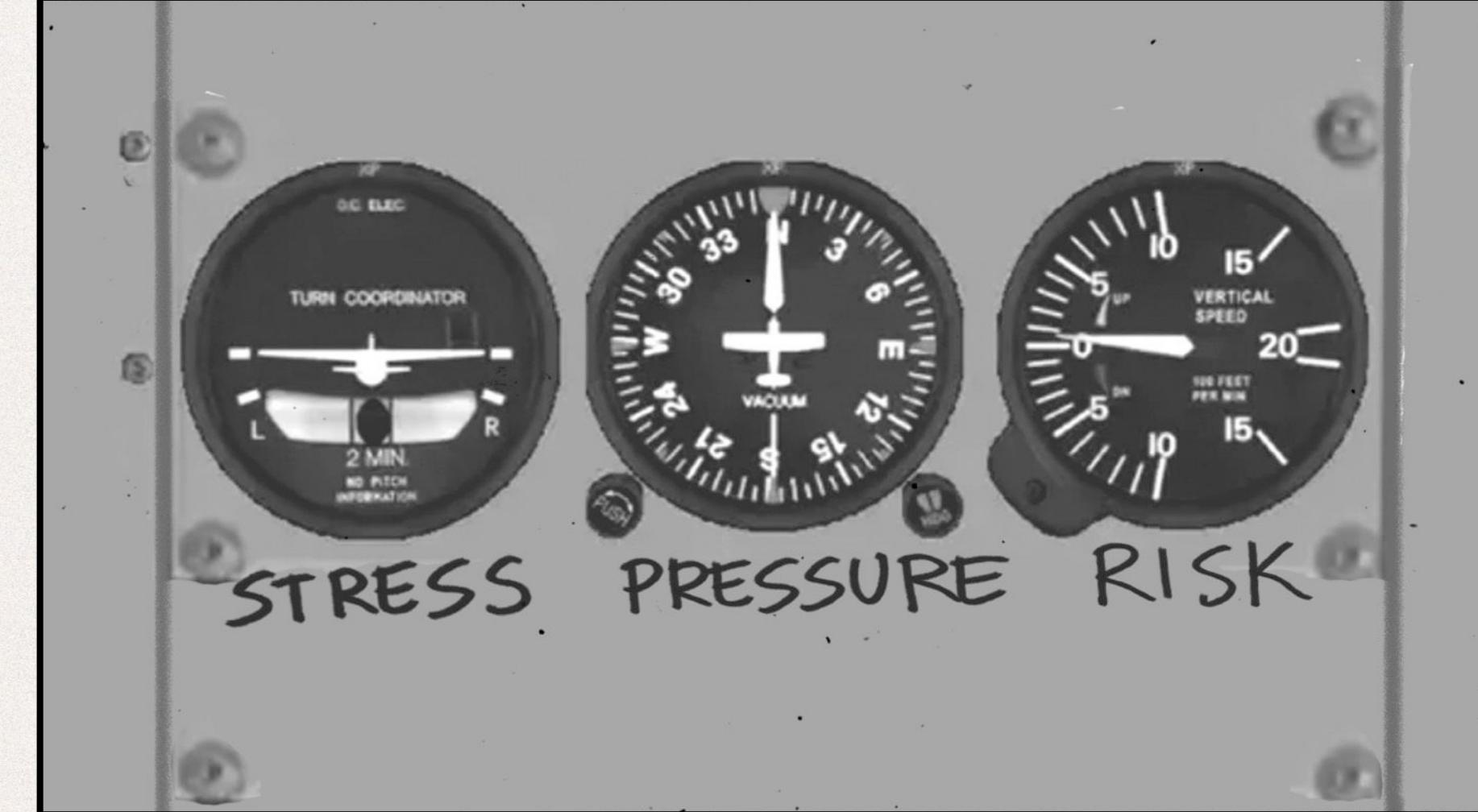


Alt 1c.

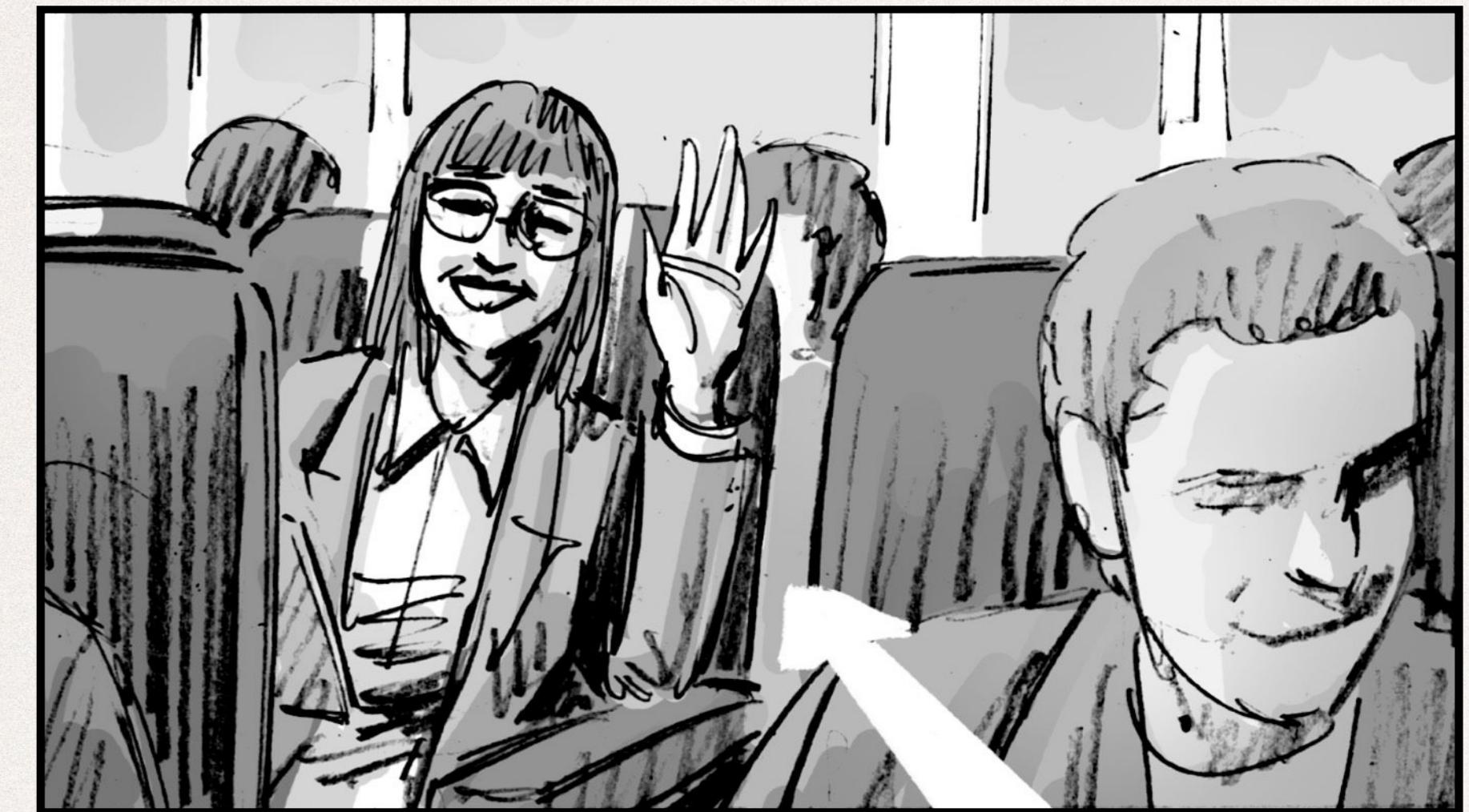
VO: When you think of a hero...

PILOT (CLIENT): Is there an accountant on the plane?

Alt 1a.



Alt 1d.

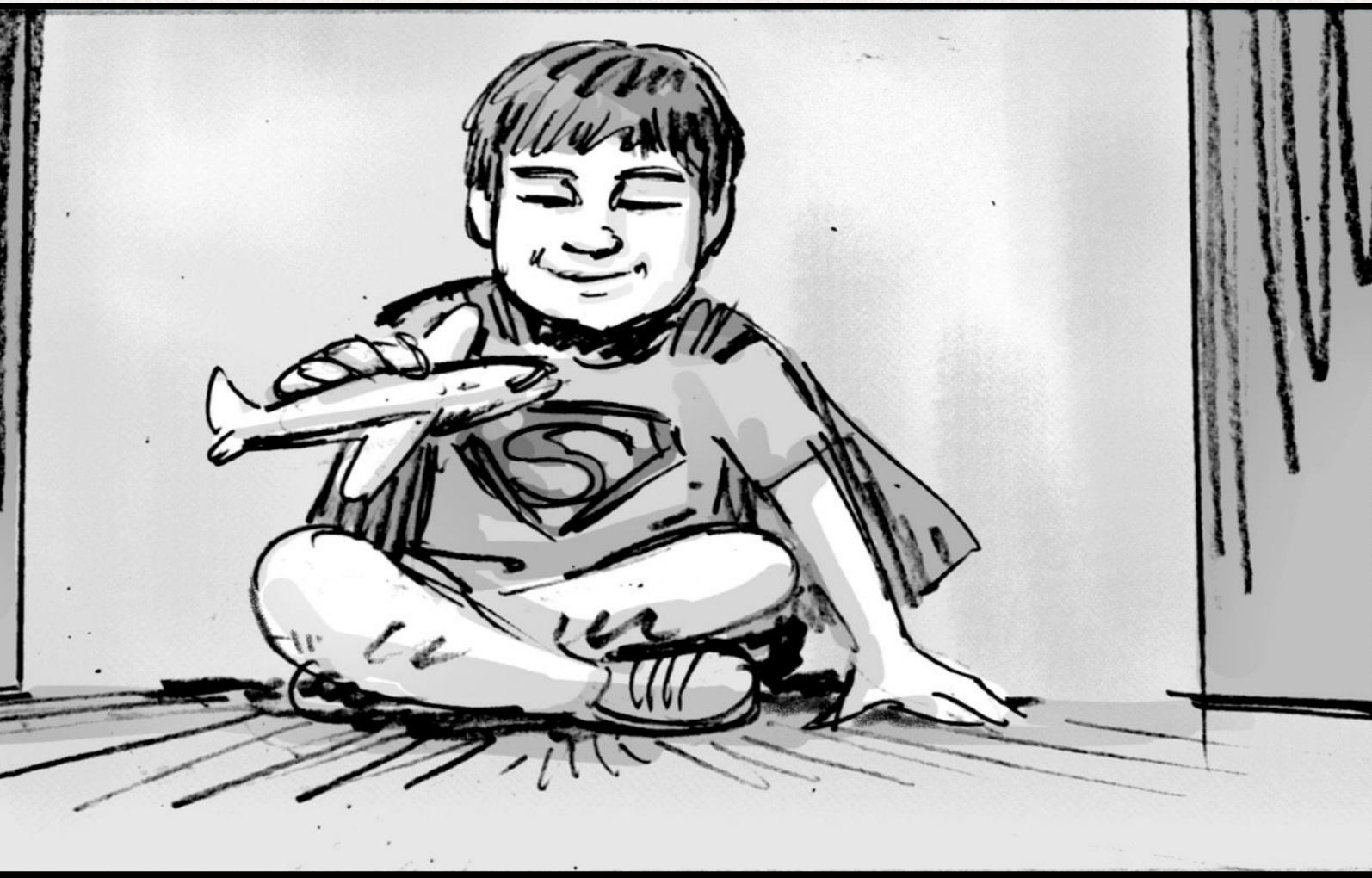


VO: You might not be picturing an accountant.

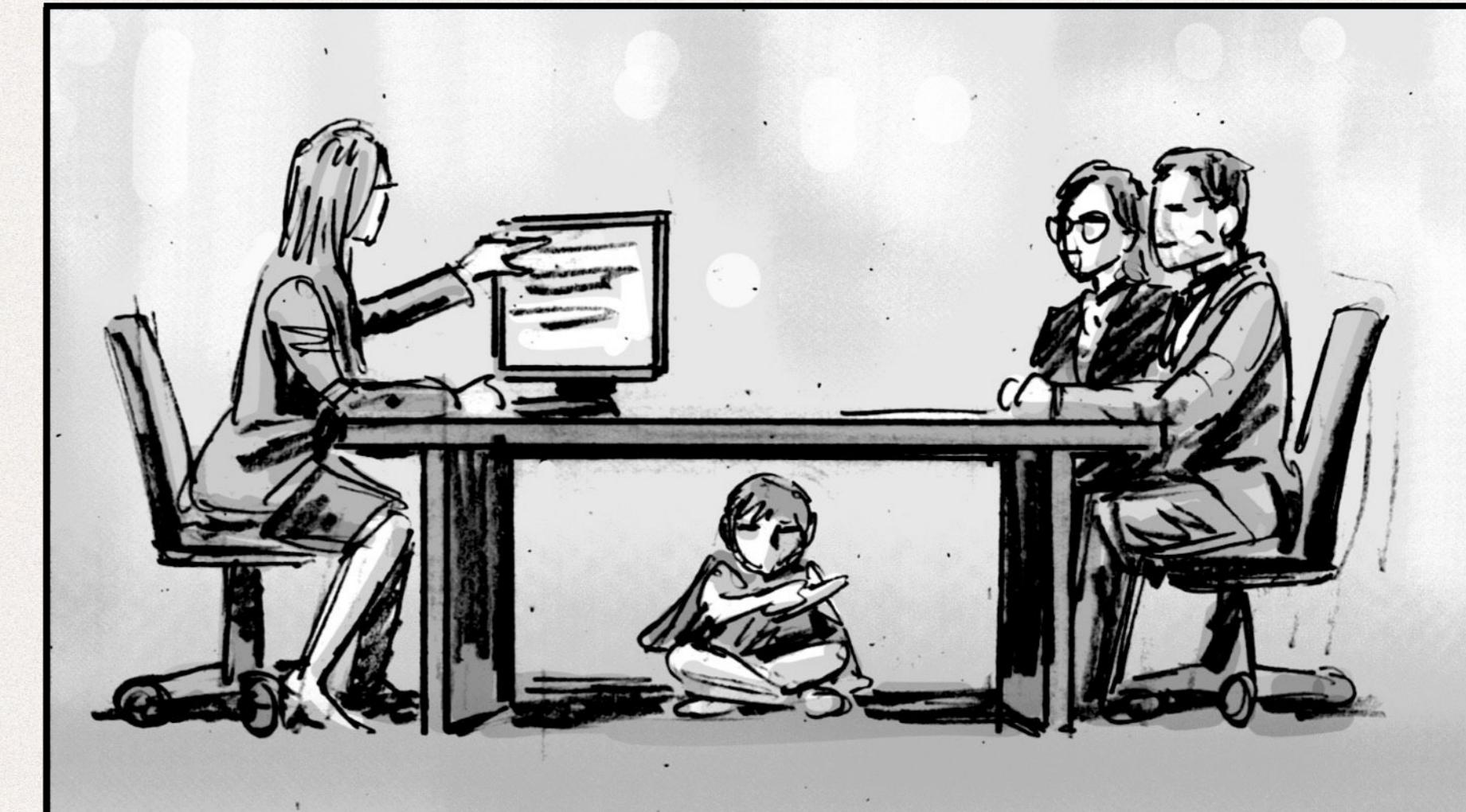
3.



4a.



4b.



VO: At QuickBooks, we hold ourselves accountable to accountants.

VO: Even though they're the ones saving small businesses...

5a.



5b.



5c.



VO: with super powered advice...

VO: ... and X-ray financial insight.

6a (Montage)

VO: *Faster than a speeding invoice. Smarter than the filing deadline.*

6b (Montage)

VO: *...able to leap tall stacks of W2s in a single bound.*

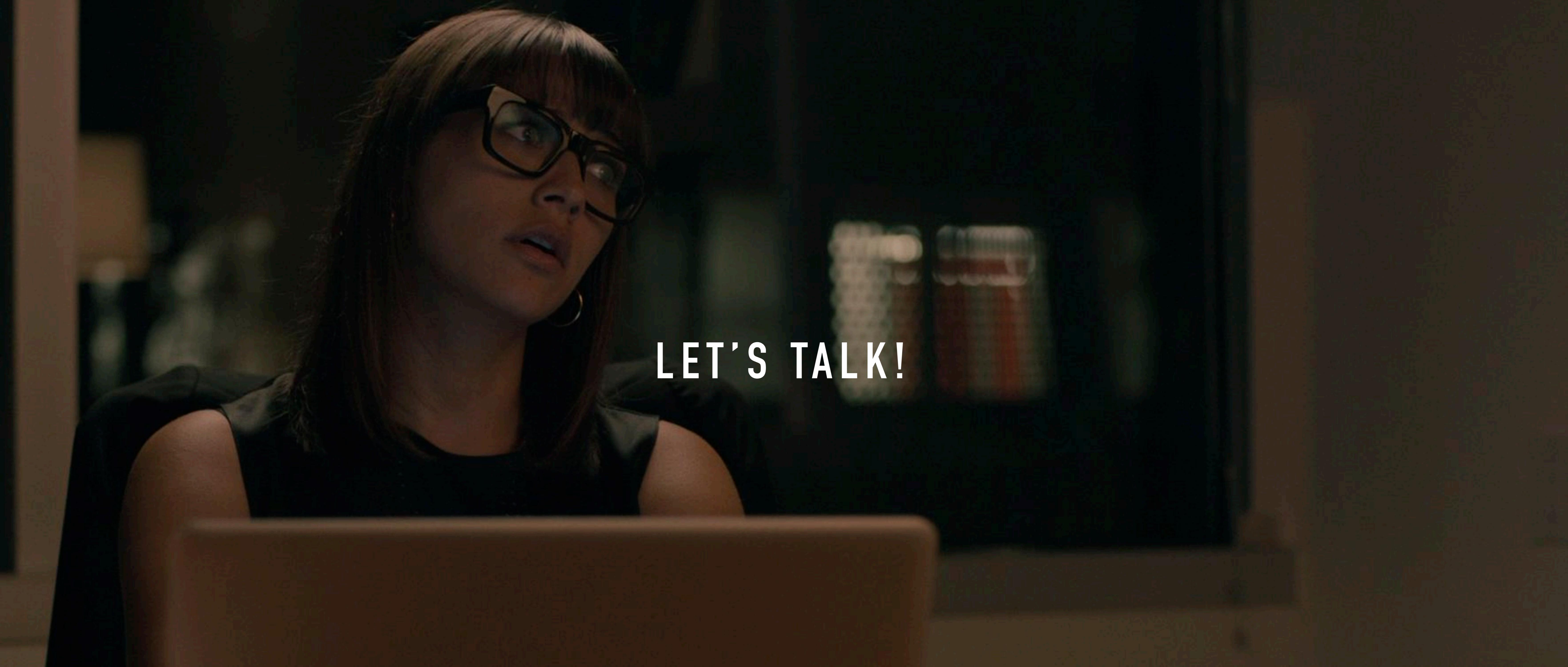
7a.

CLIENT: *Did you just read my mind?*

ACCOUNTANT: *No, just your expense report.*

7b.

VO: *That's right. If you're ready to be a hero, you're ready to be a pro advisor.*



LET'S TALK!