Juniper

'Doesn't have to be this way'

Treatment by Paco

PROLOGUE

My favourite movie of all times was "Office Space" - Mike Judge's cult classic that successfully held up the mirror to the slightly depressing and occasionally farcical nature of what it is to work in a modern day office. The film's premise is the story of Peter - a software company employee - who from one day to the next stops caring about his soul-sucking job. The movie definitely provided strong comic relief for all of us who felt trapped by micromanaging bosses and offered an antidote to our 9-to-5 monotony or those who could easily commiserate with the daily schlepp of office life. What made the film stand-out in my eyes was its fantastic casting - especially Milton is a character not easily to be forgotten. One would think it couldn't get any better - but then he came out with "Silicon Valley" - and the ever-nerdy yet totally endearing Richard Hendricks. Which brings me to the force that we'll harness to power our Juniper campaign - which would be literally "nerd power".

As these days and also in our case the term "nerd" is understood in the best of ways - the past decades have definitely proven the rise of nerd culture. Words like "geek" are worn proudly, and there's plenty of people out there that are wearing non-prescription glasses than ever before. There is an ironic air to the whole thing, but whether it is being mocked or glorified, "nerd" has established itself as one of the major buzzwords of our time. And tv-shows like "Silicon Valley" or "The IT Crowd" have proven that it can be pretty cool to be nerdy. For me personally - as I am probably also a bit of a nerd - I always felt that being a nerd means that you have an innate ability to see things differently and end up being the more compassionate and meaningful humans. I feel that nerds know how to be themselves with no pretence or trying to be one up on everyone else. Personally I'd say that nerds are our future - especially in the workplace and thanks to Juniper's software their lives are about to become much, much easier. I really love the concept that you've come up with - needless to say it's exactly the type of humour that I like to base my storytelling on. It never fails to entertain me & I'd be more than thrilled to shoot this epic campaign - I've put together quite a couple of great stunts in my career so far, but hair literally on fire is a new one, even for me.

THE

CLICK ON ME!
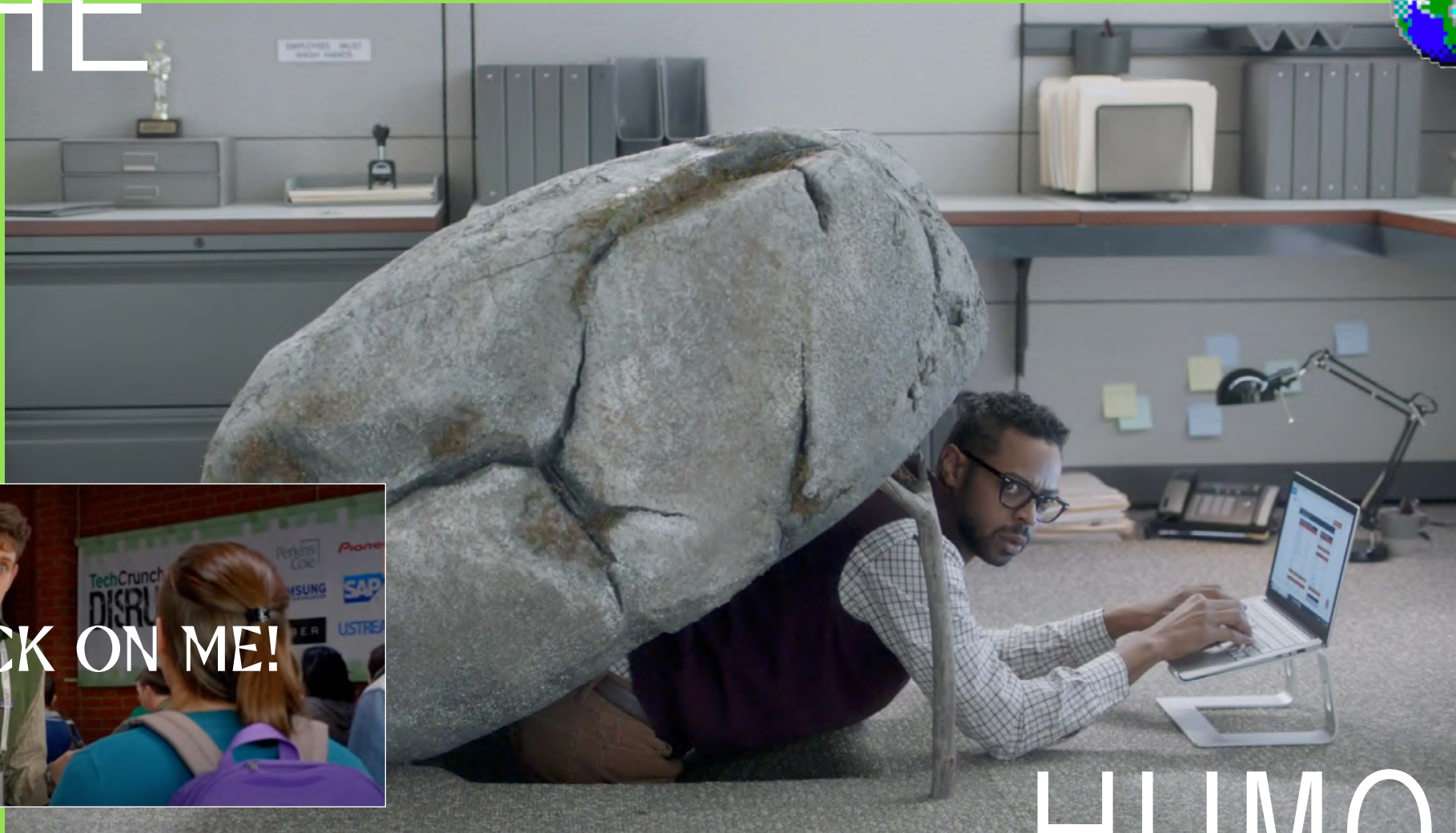
HUMOUR

Obviously these films are all about nailing the humour - it's about being funny without stepping on anybody's toes. As the saying goes it's about laughing WITH the people and NOT at them. As I was reading through the first script i.e. our office workers who are on fire - it reminded me of a super hilarious "Silicon Valley" scene in which Jared tries to save the day by pivoting, pretending everything is "business as usual" even though the company is about to go under.

It also reminded me of the crew on the British warship "Erebus" in the series "The Terror" - everything is going wrong, the ship is stuck in arctic ice - yet the crew keeps up the usual etiquette, maintaining composure. Obviously in the hierarchical pyramid that is an office reality nobody wants to be the one to blame - pretending it's all good as long as possible. That's probably also why hat classic saying "Keep Calm and Carry On" is from the UK - it makes a lot of sense in this context.

And it's exactly this maintenance of the facade which will make our films so very entertaining to watch - of course the other visual gimmicks such as fire, posture and blinders will help us to amp up the overall comedy. But the winning combination is definitely on-point acting when it comes to our office workers' insouciant attitude plus the visual tricks. That's why for me this campaign is all about casting, casting, casting - these scenarios require a bunch of memorable faces with a bonafide comic acting range. Which is something I am not only very good at - but also really enjoy doing.

COMEDY

REFERENCES

What I usually do is flesh out a bit of a backstory for Sue, Sally, James and Vicki as this will help us to create a sort of "visual shorthand" that can instantly express what these people are all about. Obviously the workplace is the perfect place for people-watching as it is here where complex interpersonal dynamics play out during the 9-5 routine and distinct personalities jostle for air space. Therefore it could be a cool idea to focus our main cast around these kinds of known archetypes as they are timeless reflections and instantly recognisable expressions of workplace culture and human nature. I'm thinking along the lines of "The Office Gossip", "The Know-it-all" or "The Micromanager". But more on this in the casting section of this treatment - first I'd like to get to my favourite subject matter - which would be the films itself.

THE FILMS

HAIR ON FIRE

We open on a wider-set shot of what is beyond any doubt the IT department of a big retail chain. This is where the magic happens to make everything work - it's the literal back-office and backbone of any functioning company of that size. But please note that we aren't talking about a sleek, high-tech office like the Google headquarters or the Apple campus, instead we're going for something more monochrome and boring like the office in films like "Stranger than Fiction" or "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty".

My idea is to keep things grounded in reality, I mean we all know what IT places really tend to look like - it's not all lounge areas, office pods and cool coffee stations but instead it's that special mix of nerdy and techie "aroma in the air". For sure it's not the place where you want to go to grab a drink and to hang out with your colleagues - but rather it's "IT" spelled out in big, bold capital letters.
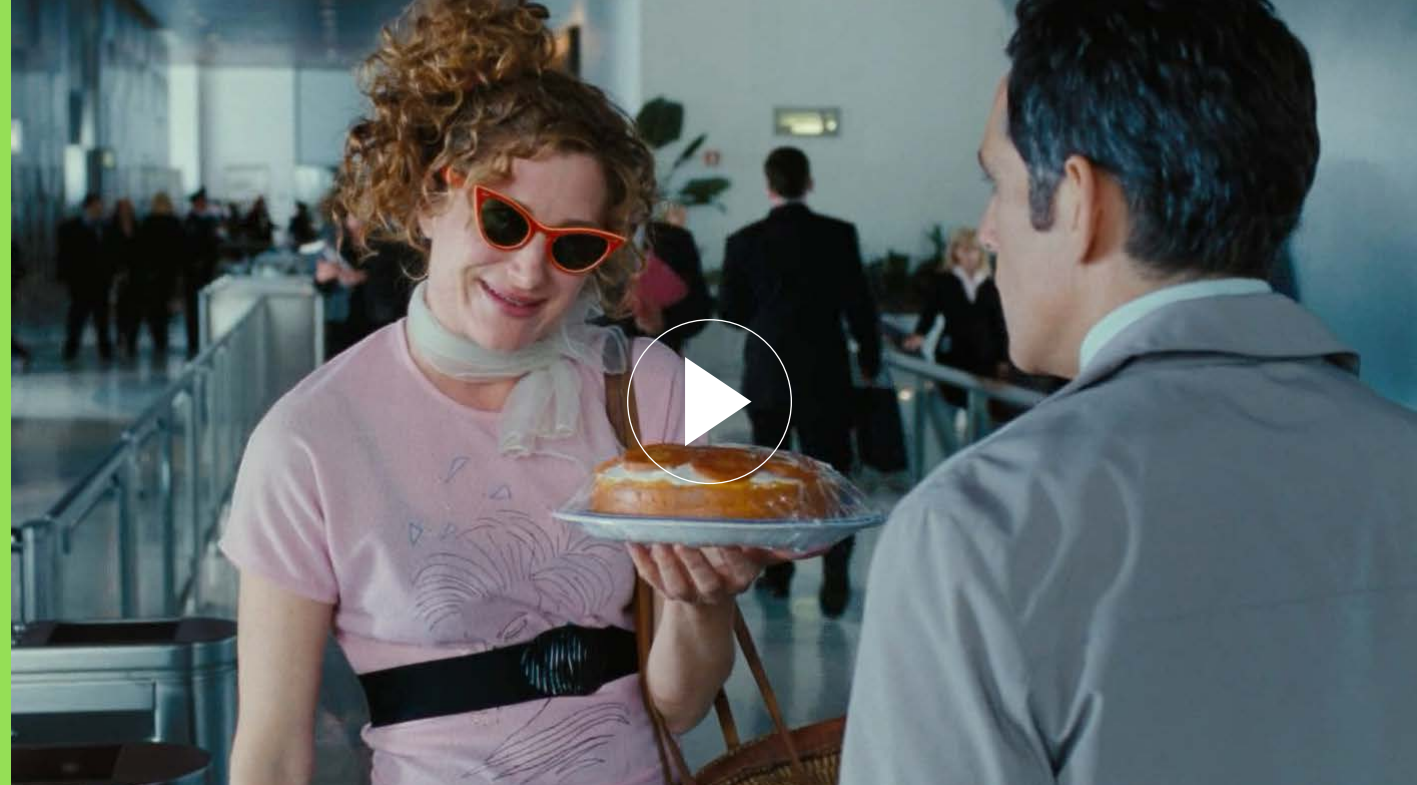
It's not a really big place, let's say there's around five to maximum eight people working there. We hear the typical office noise - there's phones ringing, people click-clacking away on keyboards, the chatter of voices can be heard from the back, etc. Behind some cubicles we quickly realize something rather odd it's happening. We need to blink twice in order to believe what our eyes are witnessing - we meet our first hero James and believe it or not, his hair is on fire!

What makes it all even more absurd is the fact that he seems to be totally o.k. with the flames encircling his head - he's clearly not in pain, neither is he screaming or in panic. In fact - he seems to be rather used to it - therefore we - as the viewer - can make an educated guess that it's not the first time that his head is on fire! Look-wise James is the cliché of a senior IT guy - he's about forty years of age and slightly "démodé" with his rolled-up sleeves, his old-fashioned suit and the pens sticking out of his shirt's front pocket. In his right hand he's clutching his lucky oversized mug where we can read something like "IT does it Best". Without delay, he approaches his colleague's cubicle and casually asks her: **"Hey, the update we just made in all our data centres?"**

We cut back to a reverse shot where we discover Sue who is seated at her desk - seemingly totally absorbed in her work. She's a bit younger than James - somewhere in her late twenties. So Sue looks up at James and funnily enough she also doesn't seem to be at all fazed that James' hair is lit up in flames. She keeps concentrating on her computer screen - still busily typing away - she responds: "Yeah?"

Keeping the same calm and collected tone, as if nothing out of the ordinary were happening James "informs" Sue about the problem: "Our stores are having a payment issue. It's hot."

Suddenly the typing stops, Sue's eyes go a little wide, she cocks her head a little to the side and looks up at James and asks with a quiet, but serious tone: "What's the issue?"At that precise moment, her hair also goes up in flames - so instead of one person, we suddenly have two people with the hair on fire! Things are literally "catching on fire" very quickly. And exactly like James, Sue doesn't react to being "on fire - it's clear they have been here before.
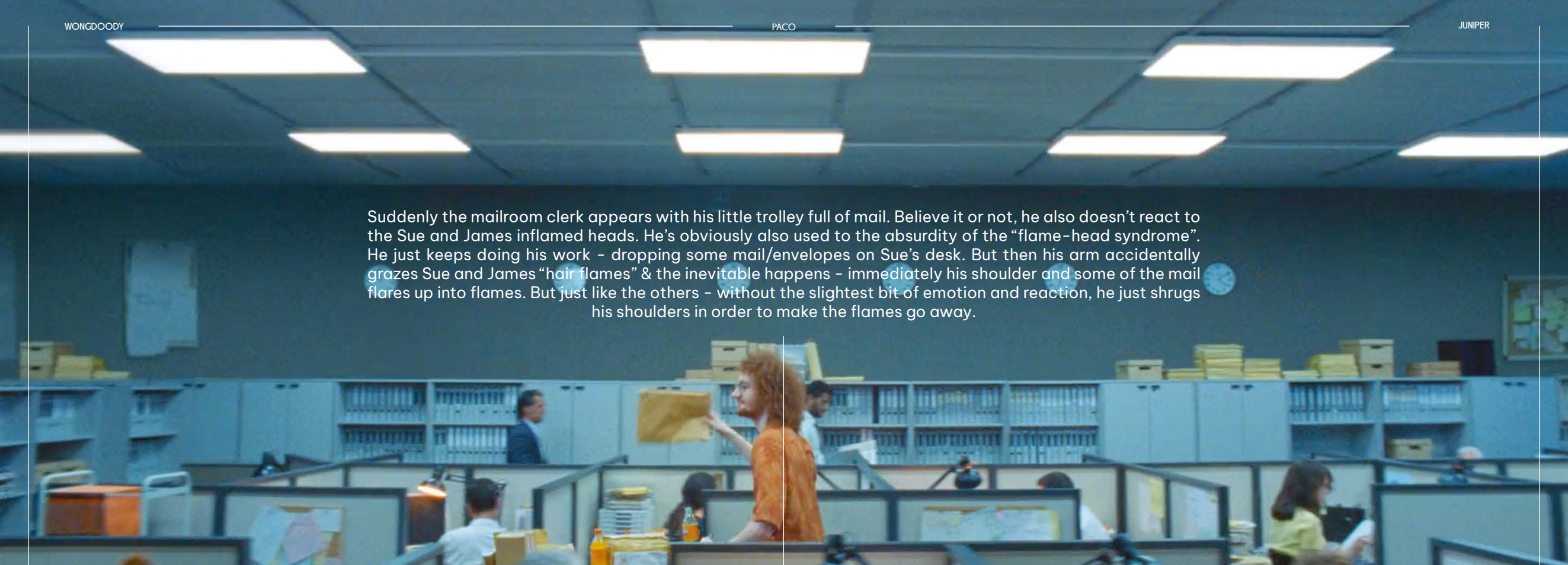
It's obvious that the IT team is facing a giant "conundrum" if not more a super melt-down moment. They're in the midst of one of the most challenging moments of their lives - and surprise, surprise - it's not the issue that their hair is lit up in flames but *"Why the stores are having a payment issue"!*

Sue and James are pretty decent IT workers - they're not the top of the class - not a Gilfoyle or a Richard - but still good enough to solve the majority of daily technical problems. And that's a little bit where their problem lies - basically they got a little stuck in their routine so that every time they face a new and different problem, they immediately switch into bonafide panic mode. And that's exactly what we are witnessing right now - which is Sue and James facing a problem that they're not ready to cope with. James replies back: "Customers can't make payments."

As they stare at each other with wide eyes the flames flicker even higher! Now we understand that they are really in trouble - as they have absolutely no idea how to fix the problem. Still staring at one another - the two of them take a deep, deep breath. James even takes a sip of coffee. Sue puts her index fingers to her temple - apparently vying for an "Eureka" moment. Both are still totally indifferent to the flames up-top getting higher and higher.

Suddenly the mailroom clerk appears with his little trolley full of mail. Believe it or not, he also doesn't react to the Sue and James inflamed heads. He's obviously also used to the absurdity of the "flame-head syndrome". He just keeps doing his work - dropping some mail/envelopes on Sue's desk. But then his arm accidentally grazes Sue and James "hair flames" & the inevitable happens - immediately his shoulder and some of the mail flares up into flames. But just like the others - without the slightest bit of emotion and reaction, he just shrugs his shoulders in order to make the flames go away.

Please note - I really love the idea of having someone who is not part of the IT department interact with Sue and James. The mailroom clerk's complete indifference to their inflamed heads and absolute lack of reactions enables the viewer to instantly realise how "business-as-usual" the situation is- Basically it's THE perfect sidekick spoof.

"That's a hot issue. How long does it take to roll back every data centre?"

We hard cut to a medium shot of another co-worker - Vickie - who pokes her head out of her cubicle. She's around thirty and comes across like a bit more energetic and sharp person - with a curious facial expression and raised eye-brows she asks: "You know it doesn't have to be this way, right?"

Sue and James are clearly clueless, they have absolutely no idea what she is talking about. They look at her with puzzled, quite bewildered facial expressions - but are clearly interested in hearing about a possible solution. Vickie keeps on going, trying to explain how Juniper Networks is a blessing from God, making everyone's life so easy - the best solution to IT problems.

"Juniper's assurance software can find and fix your problems before they become fires."

For the first time Sue shows an actual emotional response - which would be one of surprise, she exchanges a quick, clearly intrigued glance with James, like saying "Who would have guessed that it could be that simple". Raising her eyebrows she comments: "Cool"

Suddenly the flames flickering in James and Sue's hair slowly start fading out. Vicky keeps going on - explaining how Juniper Network can easily work with any vendor's hardware.

The thing about Vickie is that she is not the arrogant, cocky or berating type. She doesn't like to brag about herself, about her accomplishments - in fact, she is actually a bit shy. She's basically just an altruistic person that likes helping out her colleagues and the company itself.

"And it works with any vendor's hardware!"

Vicky flashes them one last big, beaming smile and slides back into her cubicle. And boy - we can clearly notice how happy James and Sue are to find the best solution ever to their stressful problems. They look at one another with clear relief - they are so much less stressed NOW. The flames are completely out on both of their heads - but suddenly Sue shoots James a quizzical look - something seems to be off: *"You get a haircut?"*

James is clearly surprised by Sue's comment, as he tries to arrange his hair a little plume of smoke wafts out.

Super: Demand More

junIPer
NETWORKS®

STORY 2:

"HORSEBLINDERS"

HORSE BLINDERS

We open on a wide-set shot of an IT centre - in one corner of the space there's a giant rack of routers that's frantically blinking all the way - look-wise it's the IT office of a bustling place like a large university campus. Suddenly we hear the sound of something that's being smashed/crashed. We have no idea what is happening but it clearly doesn't sound good at all. We hard-cut to a two-shot of David and Emma - they're around 30 years old & look-wise come across as the total cliché of an IT person. Not fashionable, not sharp - actually they both look a bit nerdy, like tech-geeks. Basically a mix of the "Silicon Valley " character Richard Hendricks and a younger Kate McKinnon. Both are sitting at their desks & working hard. But something very odd is happening because they're both sporting horse blinders. And they aren't just tiny little horse blinders, but actually quite massive in size so they block their view completely. But for some reason, they aren't freaking out about their head-gear - don't seem to be finding it odd in the least. In fact, they're handling the situation in a very, very nonchalant, manner. We cut to a close-up of David who keeps typing on his keyboard while stating: ***"That's strange…"***

He turns towards Emma, but the horse blinders are totally blocking the view and the way. In the second that he turns, he immediately hits the desk lamp right next to him. The lamp hits the wall thereby knocking some books off the desk. David keeps the same matter-of-fact tone, no reaction at all. He keeps ongoing: "...A ton of Wi-Fi service tickets just rolled in but I'm not seeing any network issues."

Emma turns to check the status of the router's lights' - unfortunately her horse blinders are also totally in the way, not only blocking her view but also having her bump into the water dispenser. Just like David, she doesn't react to it, and keeps going. Next we insert a shot of the light router blinking as we hear Emma's voice off-screen: "And the lights are blinking..." we cut back to Emma who is trying to sit back down, but due to the blinders is unable to find her chair - "...so it must be fine."

We cut to a reverse shot of David who is reading the screen - "It's right in front of me."

David's landline starts ringing like crazy, he tries to pick it up, but the horse blinders block the view and as he grabs the phone it's actually upside down with the cord tangled around his arm in a funny awkward manner - "Users are complaining like crazy."

We jump to a reverse shot of Emma, she points towards the maniacally blinking lights and says: "But the lights are blinking."

From there we jump back into a wide shot – out of nowhere Jennifer appears in the frame, she wants to get a drink from the water cooler when she realises that David and Emma are once again having major problems fixing network problems. With an intrigued look, she glances at the water dispenser that is meanwhile beyond use, shrugs her shoulders, inhales sharply (we as the audience realize it's not the first time she is facing a similar situation) – *"Hey, you know it doesn't have to be this way, right?"*

Jennifer is an incredibly kind and helpful colleague, she always tries her best to support David and Emma. It's all about how Juniper can anticipate any problem and how to fix it. We cut to David and Emma's reaction, they seem a bit confused.

[Jennifer] *"Juniper's industry-leading AI gives you insight into exactly what's wrong and how to fix it, Before anyone even knows a problem exists."*

As she's preparing to wrap up her speech, she goes in for a broad, circular gesture with her hands, emphasizing the "whole" – *"So you can see the whole picture."*

Relief immediately washes over Emma and David - they're clearly much less stressed now, thanks to Juniper, they've realized there actually is a simple solution for their problem. David yelps - *"Brilliant!"* - as he whips around in his office chair - almost as if he was in a rodeo.

Emma looks up and around, a bit lost, totally not realizing who is actually speaking - "Who said that?" Jennifer shrugs, shakes her head in disbelief and simply walks away as in - *"Those two - hopeless!"*

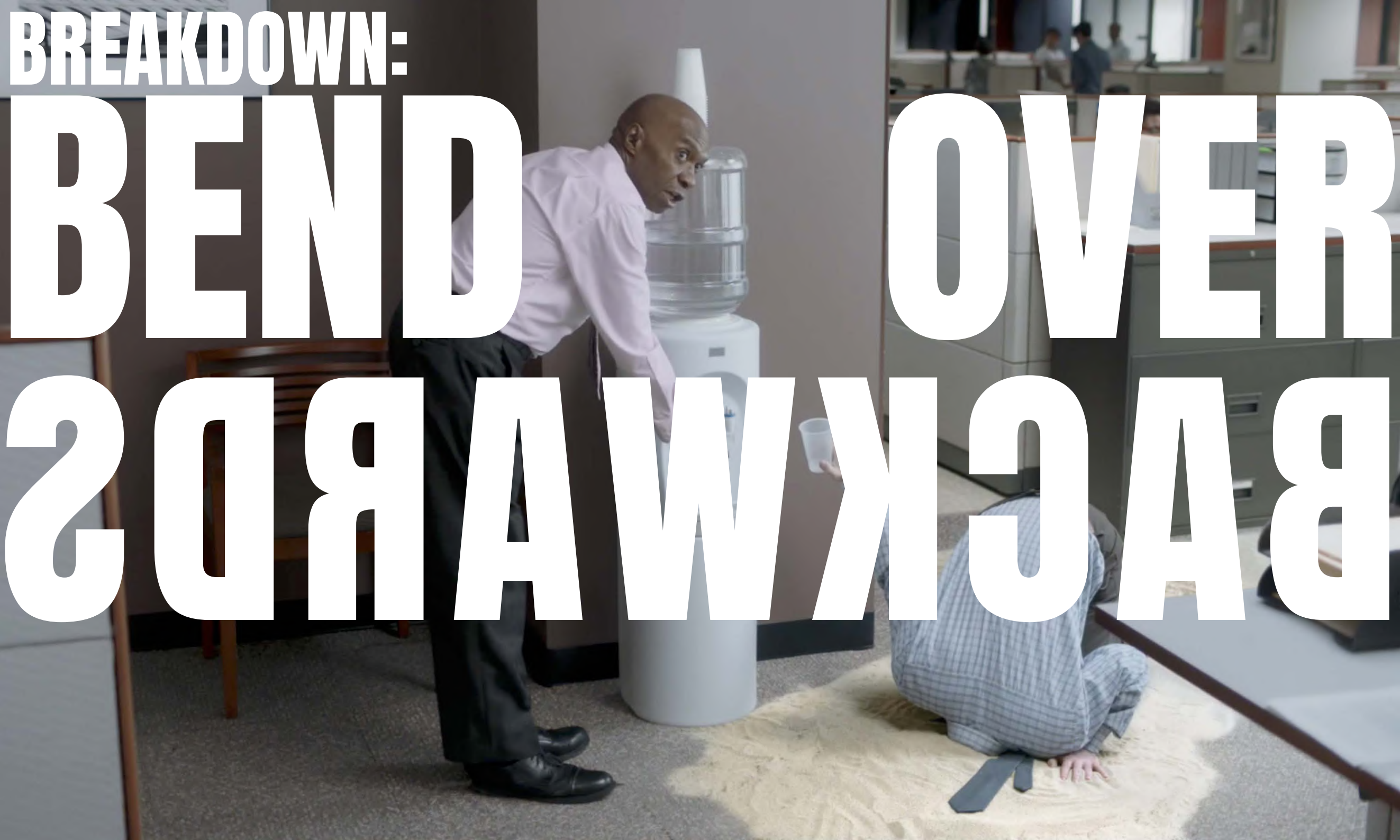# Super: Demand More

JUNIPER
NETWORKS

BREAKDOWN:
BEND OVER BACKWARDS

BEND OVER
BACKWARDS

This scenario opens on a close-up of a man, let's call him Frank. He's in his late thirties & he is sporting a trim, little moustache and slightly geeky glasses. We instantly associate this type of person with an IT job. As it's a very tight shot, we don't yet fully realise where we are. But definitely, there's something very odd going on. For some reason his forehead is stuck to the desk, and then we understand that the situation at hand is exactly what it looks like... upside down. Besides the rather strange position (let's keep in mind that we're still on a close-up, so we have no idea what is going on), Frank is totally cool and unfazed - it doesn't seem to bother him at all. He starts to speak: *"Hey team, I just got a request to install 300 new connections..."*

Suddenly his tie flops down, right over his face & therefore making it a bit hard for him to finish his sentence. He rather unsuccessfully tries to push it out of his face, but let's say it like it is - it's pretty hard to work with a tie right in front of your eyes, especially when you have to install 300 new connections.
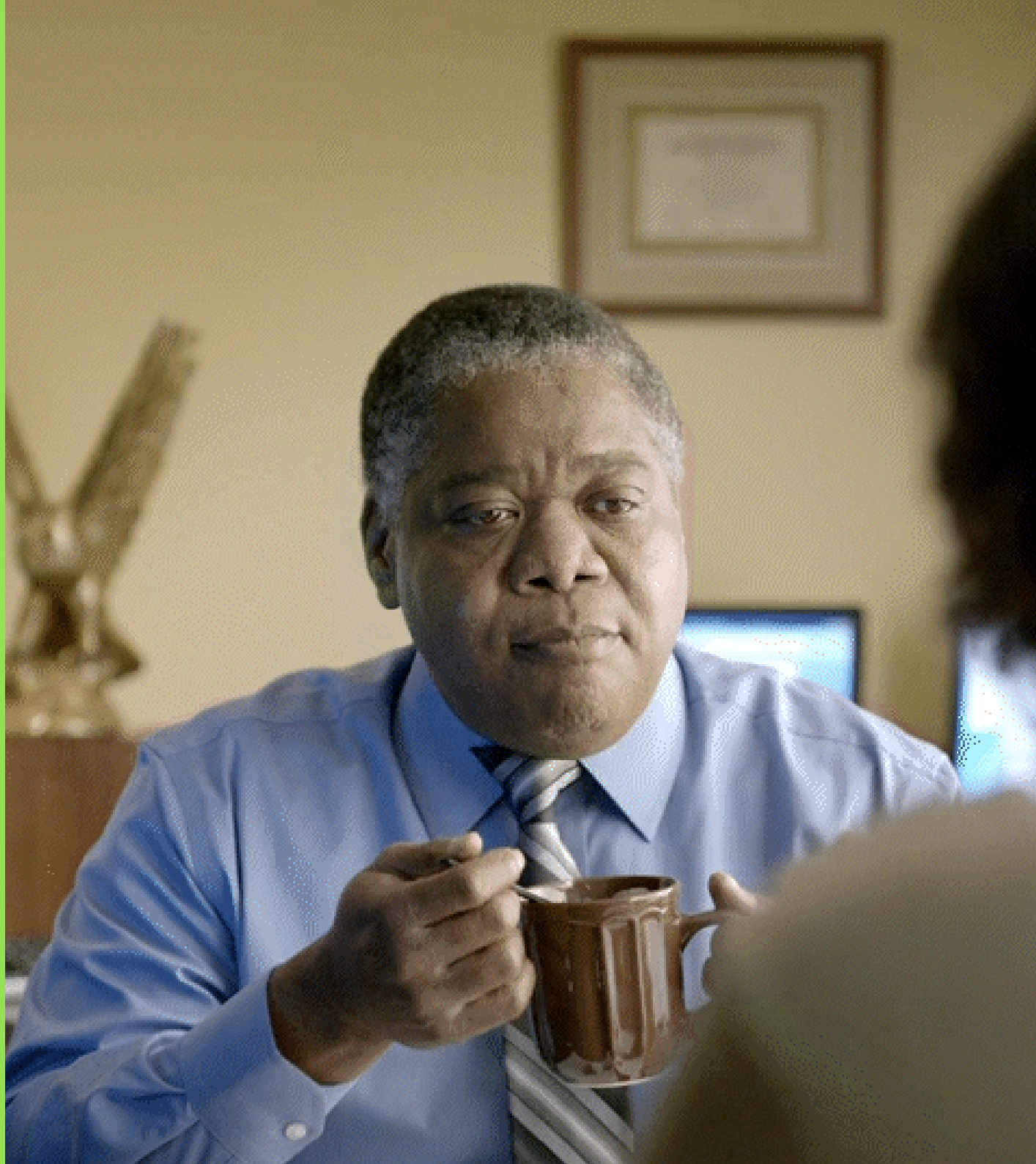
***Frank]*** *"…to our branch offices by next week."*

Finally, we open up the frame thereby revealing what exactly is going on and why Frank is situated in such an odd position. Now we see two employees, Frank and Janice - both are literally bent over backwards. Janice is a bit younger than Frank, but basically the same type of IT person, no flashy wardrobe and a high nerd factor. We cut to a close-up of Janice - her necklace falls right into her face, but exactly like Frank she's sporting a total lack of facial emotions, nothing seems to bother those two.

"… But that can take months!"

We cut back to Frank, who is maintaining the exact same awkward bent-over backwards position. What's different is that meanwhile he's found a way to keep his tie from bothering him. But no it's his glasses who are starting to slip right over his forehead.

He keeps on pushing them back into place, but each time they begin slipping down again. As before, Frank doesn't seem to be really bothered by the awkward situation; on the contrary, he keeps going like "business as usual". As he continues to struggle with his glasses, he tries to look over at Janice and says: "Exactly"
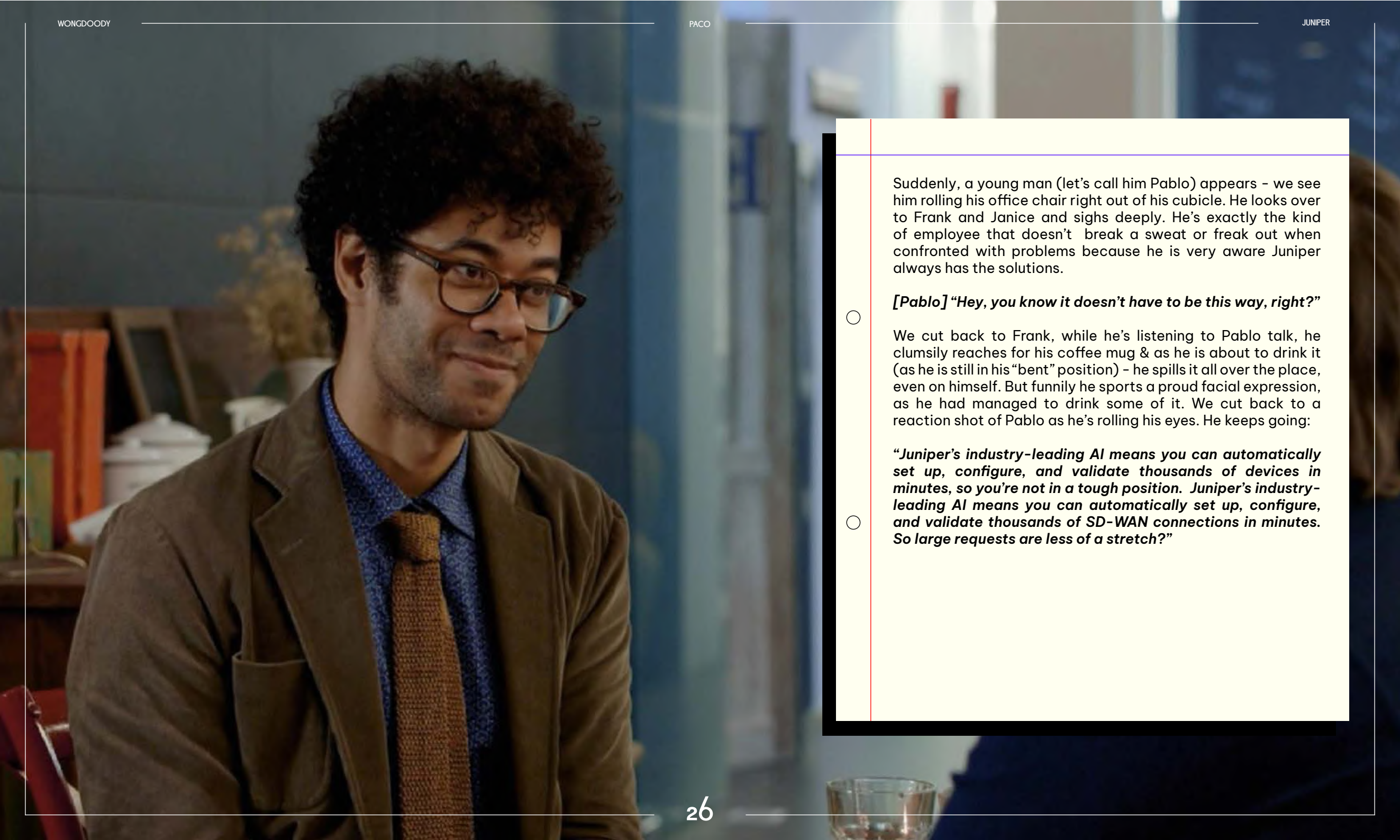
Suddenly, a young man (let's call him Pablo) appears - we see him rolling his office chair right out of his cubicle. He looks over to Frank and Janice and sighs deeply. He's exactly the kind of employee that doesn't break a sweat or freak out when confronted with problems because he is very aware Juniper always has the solutions.

[Pablo] "Hey, you know it doesn't have to be this way, right?"

We cut back to Frank, while he's listening to Pablo talk, he clumsily reaches for his coffee mug & as he is about to drink it (as he is still in his "bent" position) - he spills it all over the place, even on himself. But funnily he sports a proud facial expression, as he had managed to drink some of it. We cut back to a reaction shot of Pablo as he's rolling his eyes. He keeps going:

"Juniper's industry-leading AI means you can automatically set up, configure, and validate thousands of devices in minutes, so you're not in a tough position. Juniper's industry-leading AI means you can automatically set up, configure, and validate thousands of SD-WAN connections in minutes. So large requests are less of a stretch?"

Yet Frank and Janice are still upside down. They exchange a quick look of relief - they are clearly super relieved that Juniper has the solution and the support for them to do the work in a fast & "painless" manner. Suddenly Frank gets a cramp and can no longer keep up the upside-down position. He tumbles to the floor and then comes back into the frame, it's obvious that he's trying to disguise the pain in his back:

[Frank] " I see no downside."

Super: Demand More

JUNIPER NETWORKS

VISUAL GIMMICKS

When it comes to the visual gimmicks which are the driving force behind our film's droll humour really need to pop off the screen, therefore we literally won't hold back in this regard. For example the horse-blinders must be really oversized, like old-school almost medieval horse blinders - they really bust be a major obstacle for our office workers. The flame effect on the other hand must be really alive, look super realistic and will need to react to our cast's movements and interactions, following them around and with smoke plumes curling up into the air. The fire itself will obviously be composed in CGI - I'm almost envisioning the fire as its own character. Then there's the crew that's orchestrating their work in an backwards manner - obviously this needs pan out as clumsy and funny. Obviously this is not an easy feat therefore we're going require people who are able to bend and move their bodies in this manner - maybe we'll even have to work with dancers.

TONE & MOOD

I'm convinced that it's much better and more entertaining if the spectator can recognise his- or himself in the situations. Of course it's the exaggeration that adds the humour to the situations, but I'd still like them to be grounded somewhat in the real world. What will definitely determine our campaign's success are the super funny visuals that we'll create. From the first frame on we'll draw our audience into these highly unique & surprising situations. We immediately want to see more, we remember the frame. This in combination with our incredibly amazing casting choices will play an additionally important part for our stores, guaranteeing us a highly entertaining viewing experience. I can already imagine the likes, the shares and positive buzz around this campaign.

In regards to our film's humorous tenor the idea is to create a smart, ironic satire that can instantly conjure a smile on our audience's faces. As mentioned it's not about laughing about our hero protagonists because they are dorky tech-geeks but rather laughing at their absurd actions & weirdly nonchalant demeanour. It's all about revering them for their little eccentricities and therefore sympathising with them. After all - even though they're actions might seem rather outré - we can also see ourselves in our films heroes & understand what they're going through. Because there's a high chance that maybe one day we're going to be the one in need of a Juniper solution.

In regards to the type of ironic satire that we are aiming for in this Juniper campaign - I was thinking of quirky campaigns for brands such as FedEx, Skittles or ESPN Sports. It's all about capturing the ordinary madness that daily office life entails - lastly "The Office" and the bizarre habits of employees like Dwight Shrute are a good example of how absurd things can get. Humour-wise it's all about capturing the perfect dry & deadpan humour which will be expressed via the fact that our office workers aren't showing any emotions and reaction when faced with these inane scenarios.
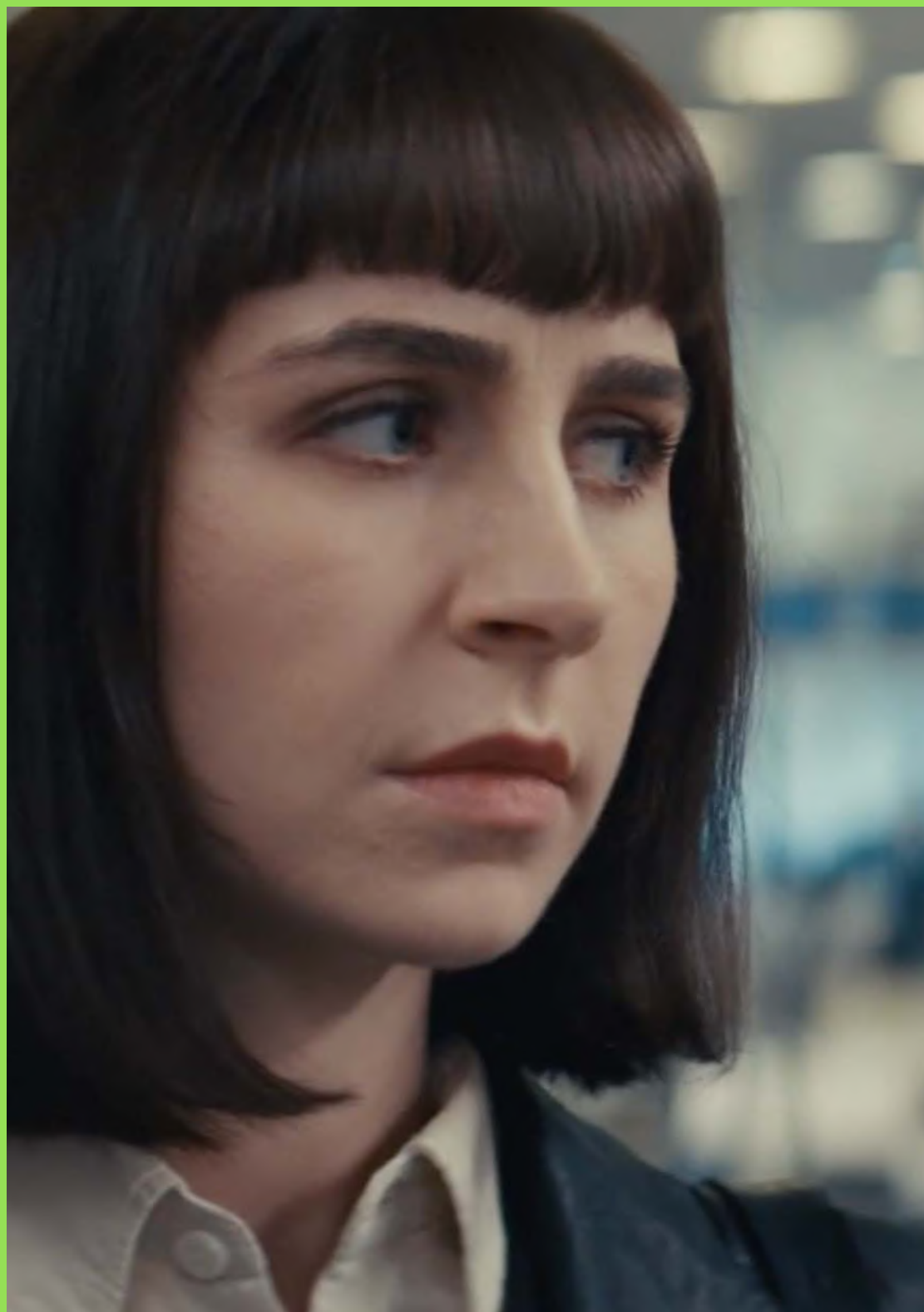
VISUAL STYLE

As each of our office situations is relatively short we're not going to opt for a crazy shot-list but rather it's about select, well thought-out frames that adeptly describe the overall action and to set the scene. What we need to concentrate on are our "reveal moments" of what's actually taking place in these highly unusual office situations. Without a doubt our cinematographic style is definitely another tool which we'll use to add extra texture & humour to the overall viewing experience. Consequently I'll be looking to work in some camera movements like tracking shots and pans that will help us to highlight our hero characters and thereby elevating the film's sardonic humour.

For this project I'd like to create a look & feel that's grounded in actual office life but still plays out as something really cinematic with meticulously mapped out cinematography that really understands how to amplify the situation as well as our characters in their despaired actions/situations. The wider shots will be used to capture the comedy of the situations while the tighter shots will bring us closer to our characters experience & also will help us organically draw attention to the revelatory elements, as in "what's really going on here".
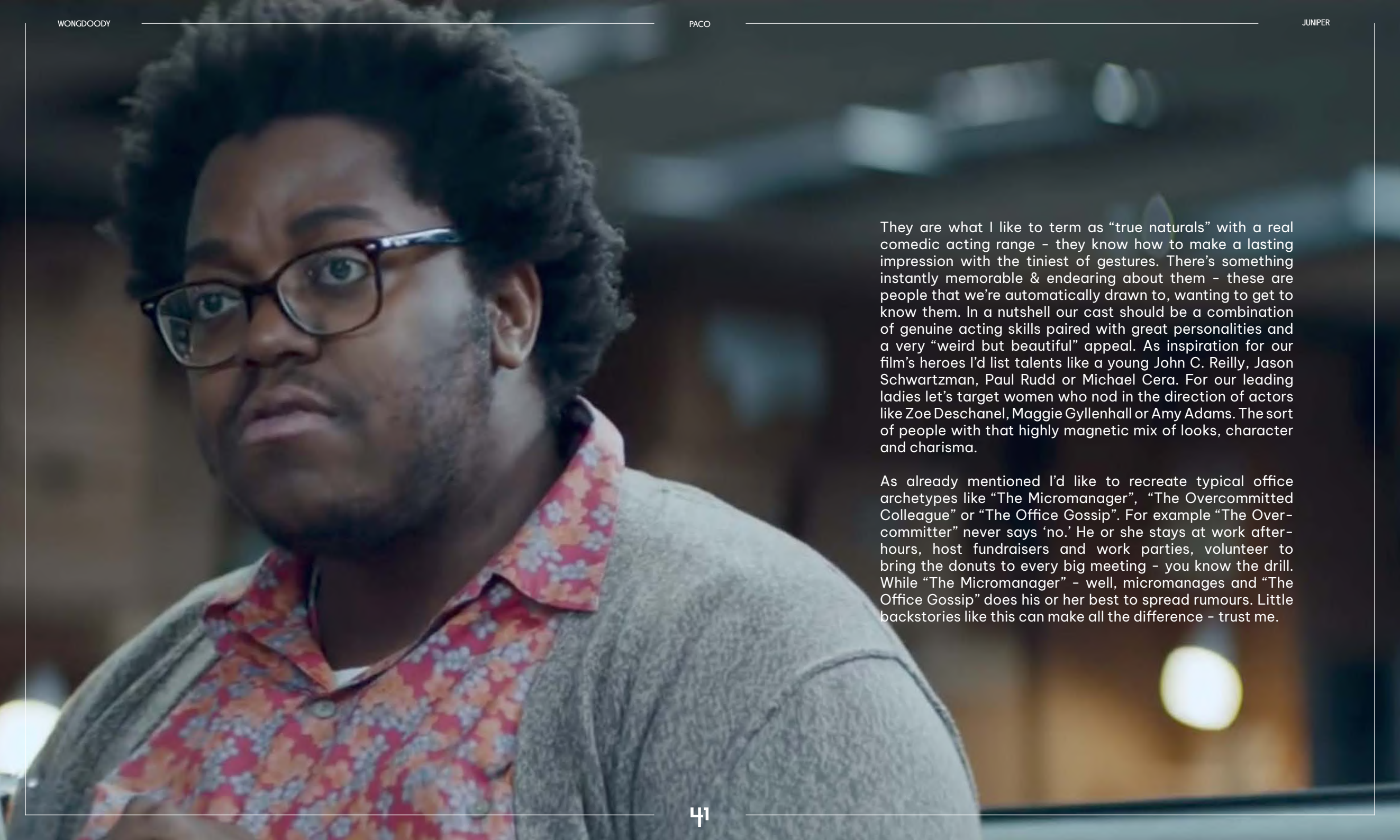
THE CAST

What will make these films tick? Well, without a doubt our films will live and breathe thanks to our fantastic casting. Therefore I'm on the look-out for characters that not only provide us with interesting facial features but that can also hold the bar to comedic geniuses like Zack Galifianakis or Kirsten Wiig. Both of these actors are totally original and thrilling to watch. As mentioned the idea is to feature quirky & charismatic personalities whose little eccentricities can immediately draw a smile on everyone's face. We definitely don't want to feature any too off-putting weirdos but rather a cast selection that we can easily sympathise and even identify with. Even if they've got a touch of "weird" these people could easily still be your friends & colleagues - as that's exactly the sort of energy and spirit that I'd like to communicate in this campaign.

Undoubtedly it's essential that our protagonists come with that certain sense of unique. You've seen my reel, so I guess you know that I always prefer true characters above the usual, stereotypical commercial actors which tend to be rather devoid of any special attributes. Therefore we want to feature people that know how to express their emotions with just a smirk or a raised eye-brow or in our case lack thereof.

They are what I like to term as "true naturals" with a real comedic acting range - they know how to make a lasting impression with the tiniest of gestures. There's something instantly memorable & endearing about them - these are people that we're automatically drawn to, wanting to get to know them. In a nutshell our cast should be a combination of genuine acting skills paired with great personalities and a very "weird but beautiful" appeal. As inspiration for our film's heroes I'd list talents like a young John C. Reilly, Jason Schwartzman, Paul Rudd or Michael Cera. For our leading ladies let's target women who nod in the direction of actors like Zoe Deschanel, Maggie Gyllenhall or Amy Adams. The sort of people with that highly magnetic mix of looks, character and charisma.

As already mentioned I'd like to recreate typical office archetypes like "The Micromanager", "The Overcommitted Colleague" or "The Office Gossip". For example "The Over-committer" never says 'no.' He or she stays at work after-hours, host fundraisers and work parties, volunteer to bring the donuts to every big meeting - you know the drill. While "The Micromanager" - well, micromanages and "The Office Gossip" does his or her best to spread rumours. Little backstories like this can make all the difference - trust me.

THEART DIRECTION

This campaign needs to nail the visual style, cinematography, art direction as well as casting. No matter what our situation entails – each of them will be marked by a strong identity and a very recognisable "IT department" style that will feel connected to the other scenarios. Basically we're depicting three different IT department environments – that even though different will still be defined by a similar aesthetic. This will happen via our choice of colour palette & particular details in the set design that will deliver us a whimsically heightened reality and of course an additional humour factor. After all people tend to decorate their cubicles with personal knick-knacks and photos – and yes of course cacti. It's going to be really funny – let's get creative. Crucial is that no matter if it's our characters' wardrobe, the way that they decorate their office space – all of these worlds must feel quite genuine and not staged, as this is where we'll derive extra humour from.

Therefore let's make sure to opt more for the authentic instead of the all too manicured spaces. In my body of work it's always been about finding that perfect touch of true life in the locations, therefore, shooting in real spaces will certainly only enhance that feeling.

Our film's styling choices will always be in favour of pushing the art direction, with signature elements that are able to instantly express & outline what our characters are all about. As noted is about coming across as natural but with an interning edge that makes everything feel all the more personal and unique. Following this train of thought I want each character to have her/his very own universe, some more subtle than others, some more extravagant, again we need to feel they are real people and with a genuine "nerd" style of their own.

The idea is to be inspired by reality, but heighten it, making it feel more special or better said absurd thanks to cool art direction choices, always with a distinct style. Each element tells a story as we play with the office interiors as well as funny wardrobes and accessory choices. This can just be a picture of Sue's pet poodle that's tacked to her cubicle wall or the striped slightly garish pattern of Frank's tie.
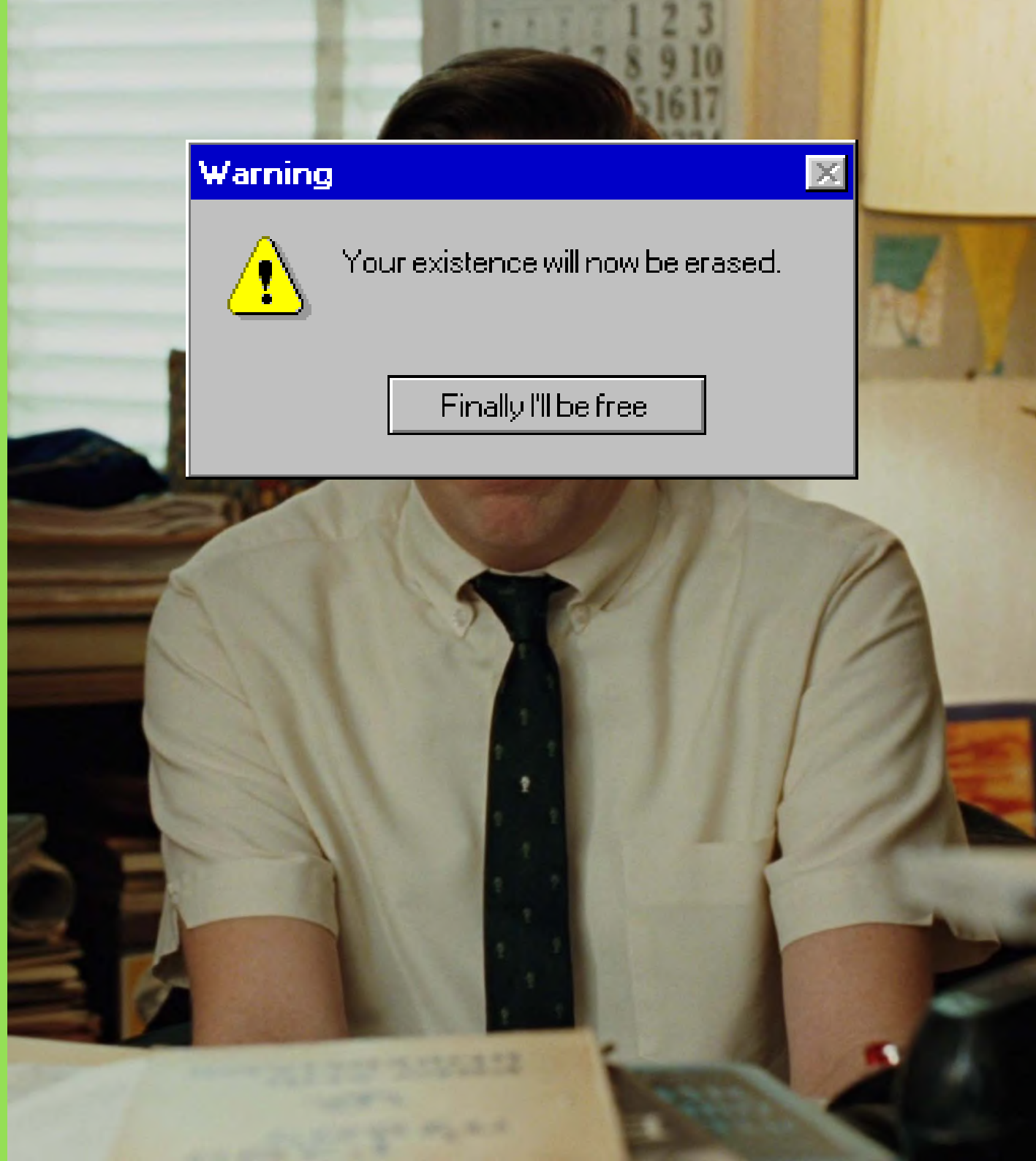
MUSIC&

SOUND DESIGN

Obviously the right choice of music tends to enhance the humorous tenor and the action of the scenes, the same applies to the sound design which will add extra dimension and texture to the viewing experience. Yet I feel that in our case the score should not overlap the dialogues, if it's really needed I feel we should only opt for it during the pack-shot segment. Great sound design will help us setting up the right office ambiance – people typing away on keyboards, muffled conversations, the bubbling noise of the water cooler. The choices and work we will do on the sound will help us to enhance the overall comedy, set the film's tone as well as convey emotion - it will basically give our film's personality.

EPILOGUE

For the moment this would be all from my side - I really hope you could notice how excited I am to bring some additional comic energy as well as a cinematic visual language to this much-anticipated Juniper campaign. I'll use every frame to reveal & deliver the on-point hilarity of the situations by successfully describing the misery of office life without the Juniper's solutions as support. I've enjoyed fitting a few of the initial pieces of the puzzle together - of course these are just initial ideas presented in hopes of sparking further elaboration. There's surely much more to explore and discuss in order to get things right – so please let's keep talking!

Warning

Your existence will now be erased.

Finally I'll be free

THANKS!