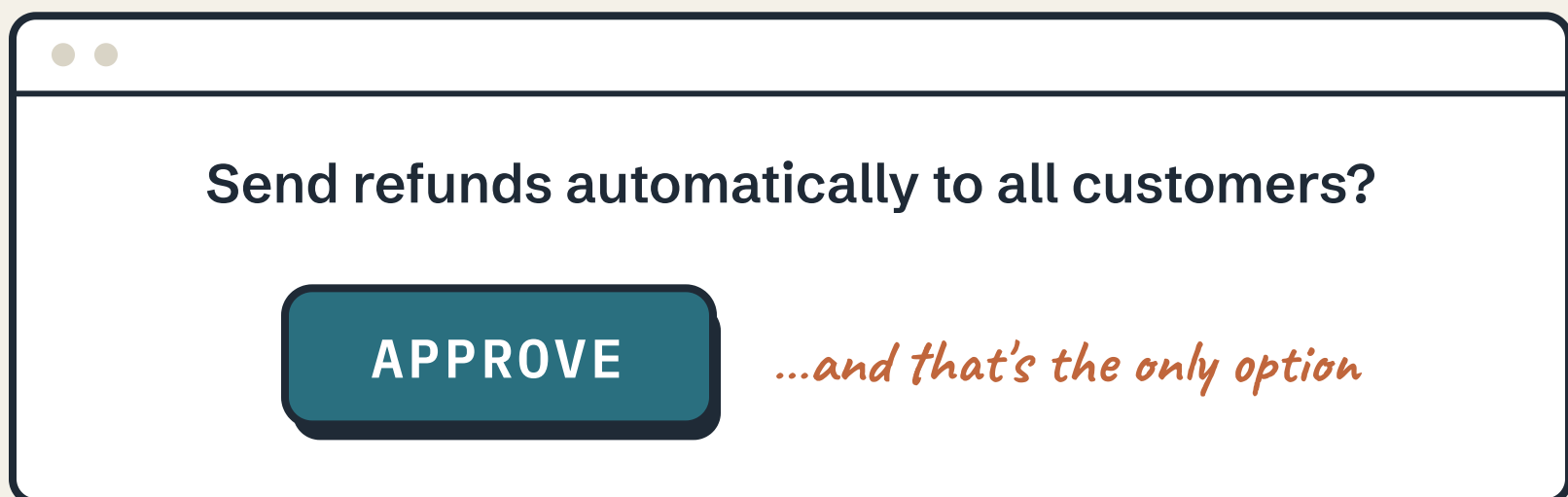
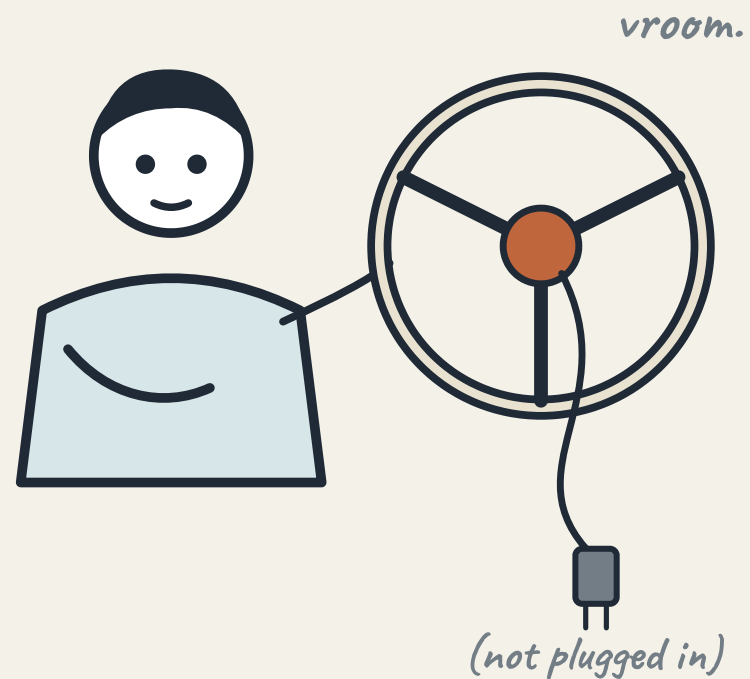


A STORYBOARD IN 6 FRAMES

Human in the loop is a design choice

present isn't the same as in control.



A workflow can contain a human and still not be under human control. Oversight needs a decision still open, an owner, enough context, real alternatives, and a path that works when they say no.

Present. Required. Able to judge.



A person is present

maybe notified after the fact



Their approval is required

a real constraint, but only on sequence

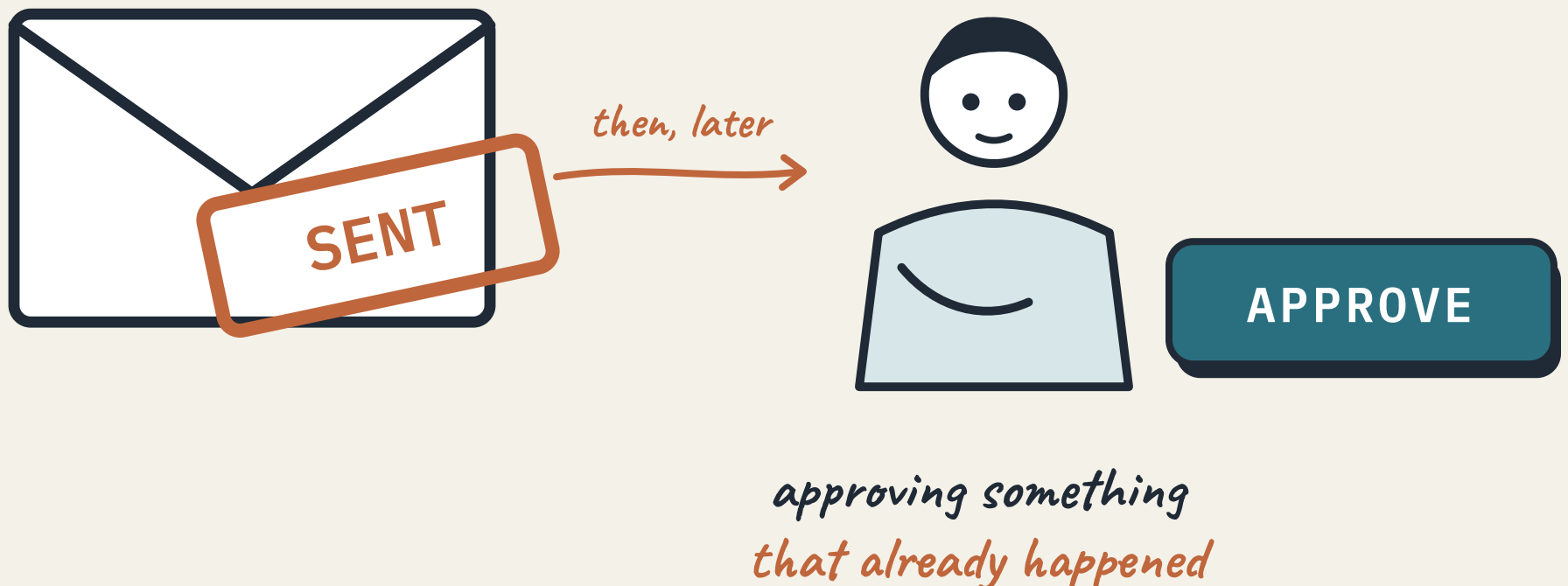


They can judge

only this one is oversight

On an architecture diagram the first two look identical to the third.
Only the third is oversight in any useful sense.

Already sent? Then it's not approval.



~~approval~~ → **notification**

If the outcome is decided before they look, call the step what it is: monitoring, audit, or the start of a correction. All worth having. None of them is approval.

“A human reviews it” isn't a design.

~~Whoever's free~~

*available isn't
responsible*

Owens the decision

*whose call it
actually is*

Has the standing

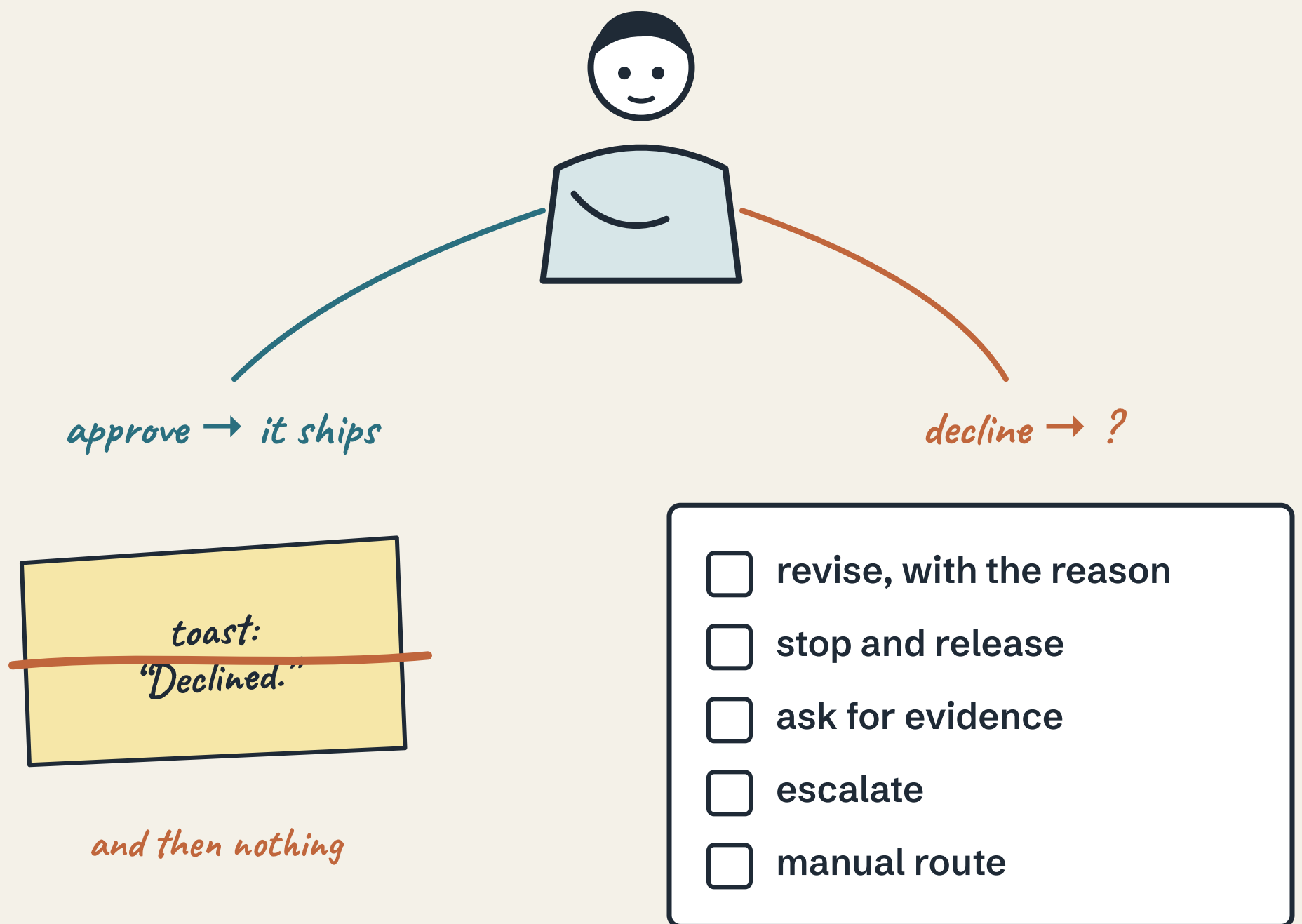
*so their yes
settles it*

Knows the subject

*or it's a delay,
not a control*

A reviewer who can't evaluate what's in front of them is a delay, not a control. Name a person with the authority and the knowledge, not a component type.

What happens when they say no?



If refusing does nothing, the reviewer doesn't have a decision. They have a delay they're responsible for. At least one real non-approval path has to exist.

Five questions for any Approve button.

- ☐ What decision stops here?
- ☐ Who owns it?
- ☐ What does the reviewer see?
- ☐ What else can they do?
- ☐ What happens on no?

APPROVE

*before you
trust this*

Take an approval step you already have and ask these five things. If any answer is missing, the gate is doing less than it appears to.

Read the whole explanation

[pruningmypothos.com/systems/
human-in-the-loop-is-a-system-design-choice/](https://pruningmypothos.com/systems/human-in-the-loop-is-a-system-design-choice/)

