# How to Monitor your Monitoring

And why you should
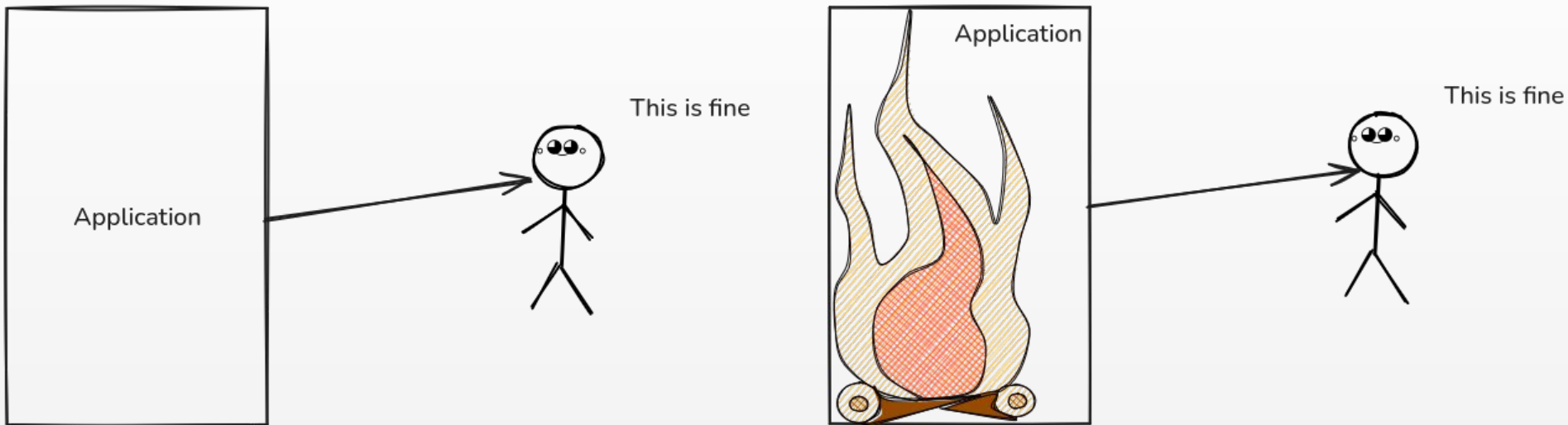
Mathias Palmersheim, Solution Engineer

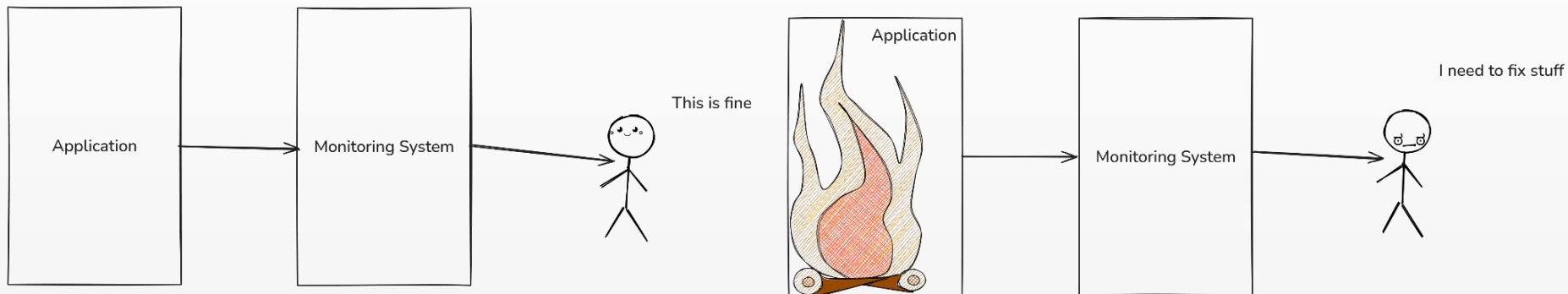# Whoami

- Solutions Engineer at VictoriaMetrics
- Maintainer of Shiftmon
- Observability Nerd
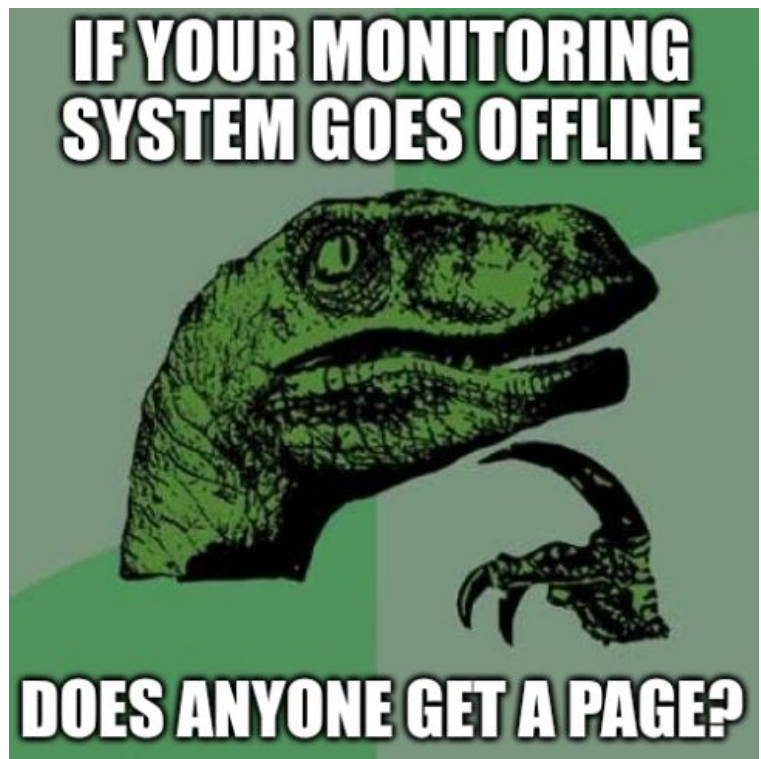
# Without Monitoring

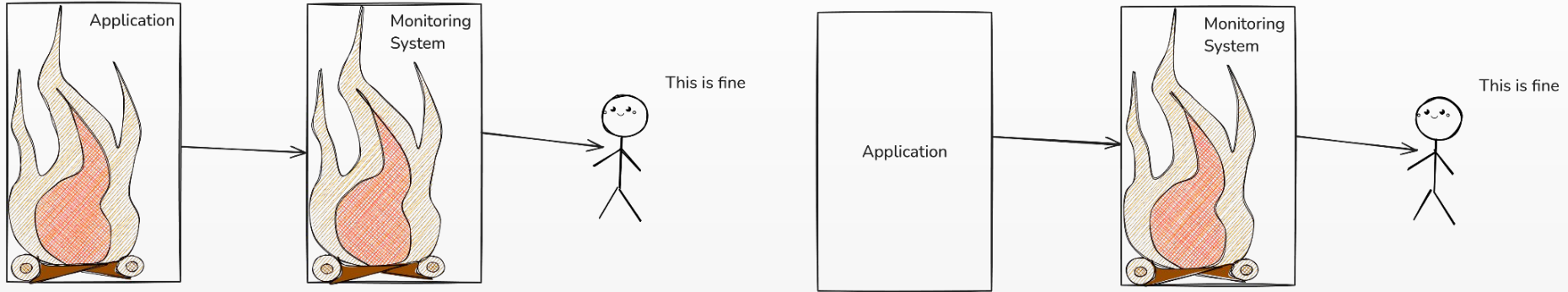# Monitoring: How it Started

# Noisy Notifications

- Only for critical alerts
- Users will configure them to ignore DND
- If not respected, they become meaningless
- If it won't lose life liberty or property then it's not important
- Make an individual responsible

# Problem

# Monitoring: How it's going

# With Monitoring of Monitoring
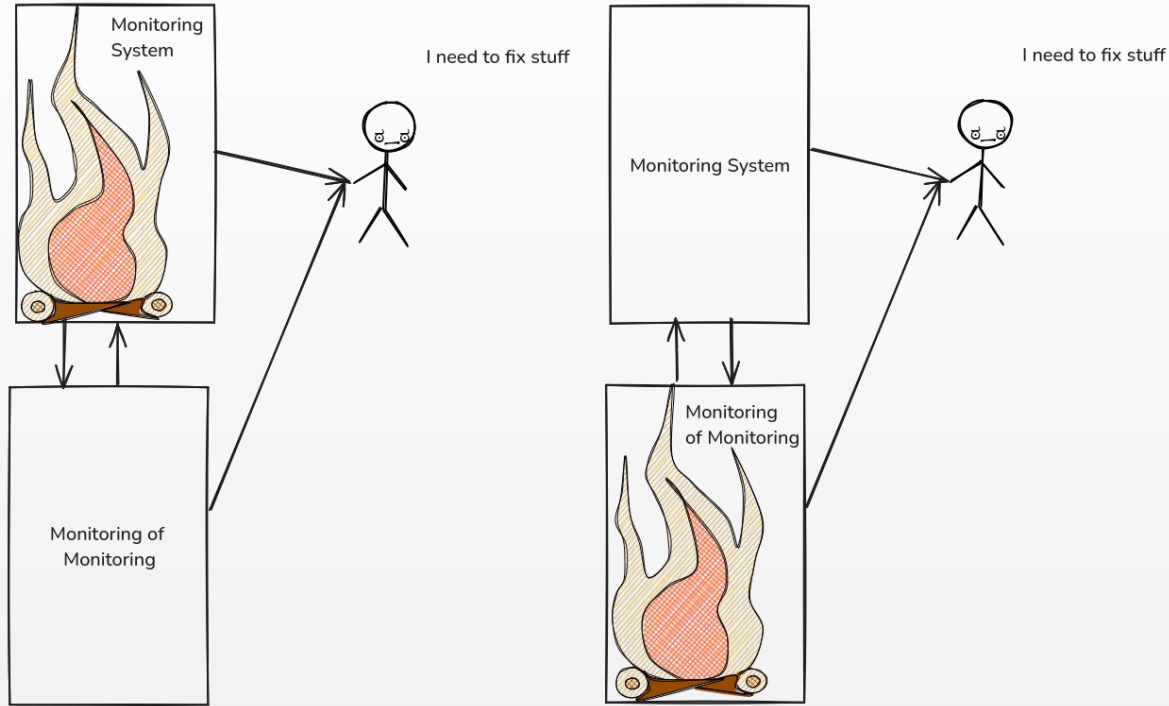
# What if Both Systems are Down

Application

Monitoring System

Monitoring of Monitoring

This is fine
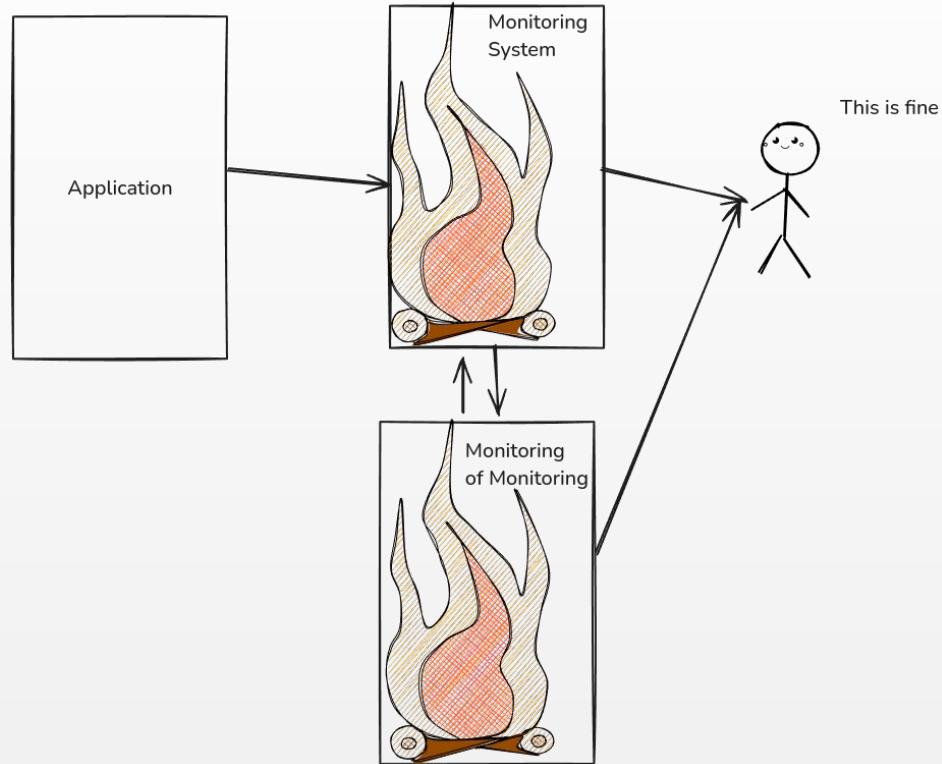
# Non-Technical Concerns for MoM

- You and Your teammates are smart
- You will make mistakes
- You will take down prod
- Different humans are flawed in different ways
- Different Change Processes

# Different Tools

- Notification Services
- Different Infrastructure
- Different Cloud services

# Summary of MoM

- Similar to Primary Monitoring of Monitoring
- Only Monitors the primary Monitoring System
- Is treated by the primary monitoring system as another application

# Minimum Requirement

- Most important thing in observability
- Health checks
- Cheap to store
- Doesn't provide much context
- Imagine only having health checks application

# Treat it like Another Application

- more context
- Slightly more expensive
- Can notify you of warning signs
- Should also include health checks

# How do we do this?

# Heartbeat

- App periodically communicates with monitoring service
- App notifies user(s) when there is not data for n seconds
- Doesn't always assign a user to the incident
- No context
- Examples
  - Anag and Nagios
  - Grafana Oncall self hosted + cloud

# Status Pages

- Find cloud vendor's status page
- Hope they are not self-hosting their own status page
- Easy to setup
- Configure your notification channel of choice
- Usually quiet notifications like Email
- Only works for cloud hosting

# Cloud Healthcheck Services

- Really Cheap
- Minimal human interaction
- Managed by other people
- Noisy Notifications
- Easy to Setup
- Minimal context
- Might require extra configuration
- Might require the same humans

# Two Independent Systems

- Configure second monitoring system
- Have 1 system monitor the other
- Make sure MoM is isolated
- Primary system treats MoM like any other application
- Hard to do well
- Periodically break MoM

# Purchase a Cloud Service

- Is managed by different humans
- Probably using different services
- Small enough Cloud Monitoring bills are not scary
- Probably in a different infrastructure provider
- Can still be misconfigured by the same humans
- Some dedicated monitoring of monitoring services exist

# Dedicated MoM Solution

- Managed by different humans
- Aware of the use case
- Using different infrastructure
- A human will directly reach out to you along with automated alert
- Most expensive solution
- Examples: VictoriaMetrics Enterprise

# Summary

- Doesn't Have to be difficult
- Doesn't have to be expensive
- Can mix and match different approaches to fit your use case