6.1800 Spring 2025

Lecture #1: Complexity, modularity, abstraction

plus an intro to client/server models

we care about you as people more than we care about any deadline

if you need help, ask for it. we need to balance the needs of a large group of students and the needs of the staff, but we will work with you to help as much as we can. in particular, as long as you reach out to your TA ahead of time, we will give you a 24-hour extension on any assignment, no questions asked.

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what makes building systems difficult?

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why do we care?

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why do we care?

complexity limits what we can build

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how do we mitigate complexity?

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with design principles such as **modularity** and **abstraction**

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how do we enforce modularity?

one way is to use a client/server model

the browser is the client in this example

Class Browser (on machine 1)

```
def main():
  html = browser_load_url(URL)
  ...
```

Class Server (on machine 2)

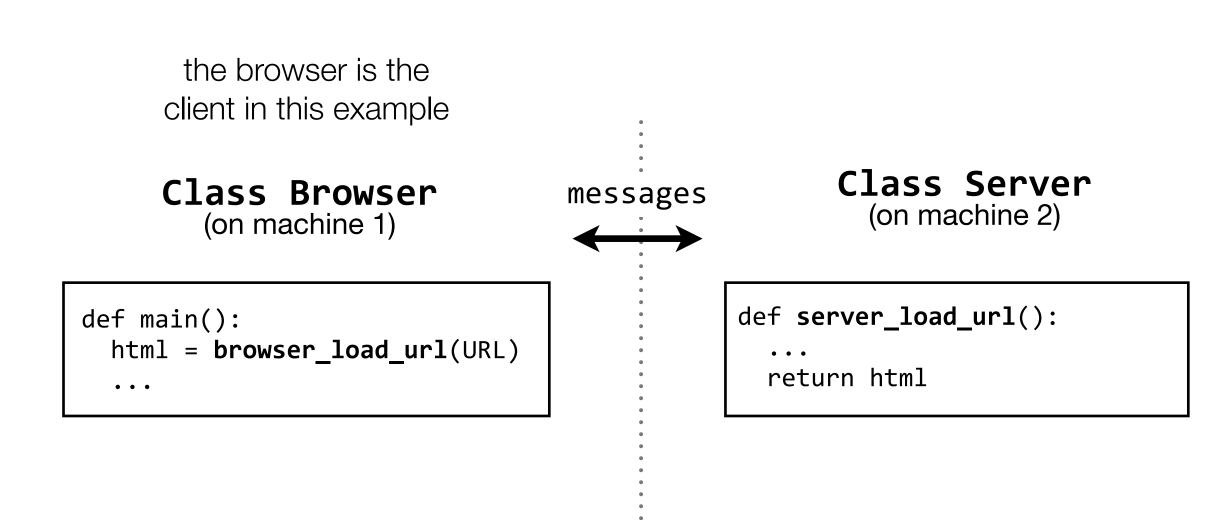
```
def server_load_url():
    ...
    return html
```

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how do we mitigate complexity?

with design principles such as **modularity** and **abstraction**

how do we enforce modularity?

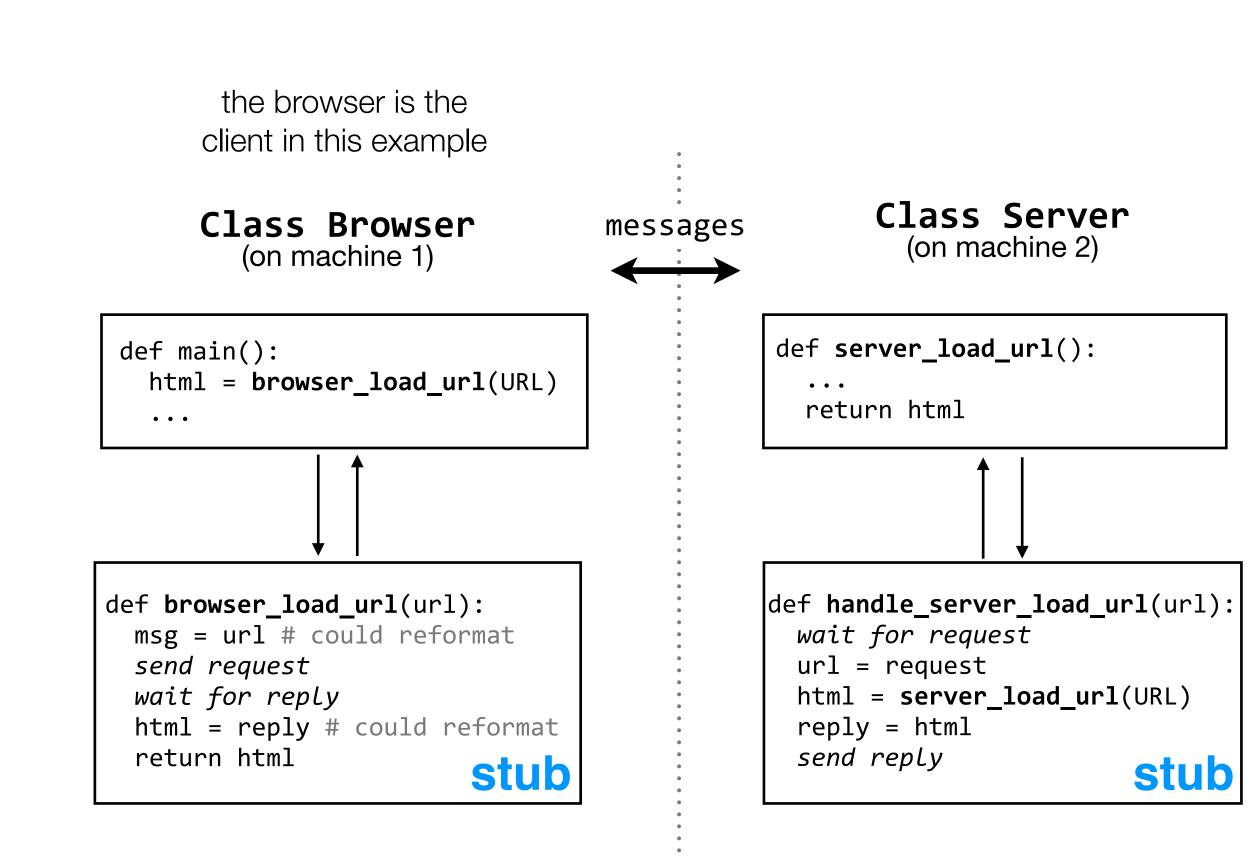


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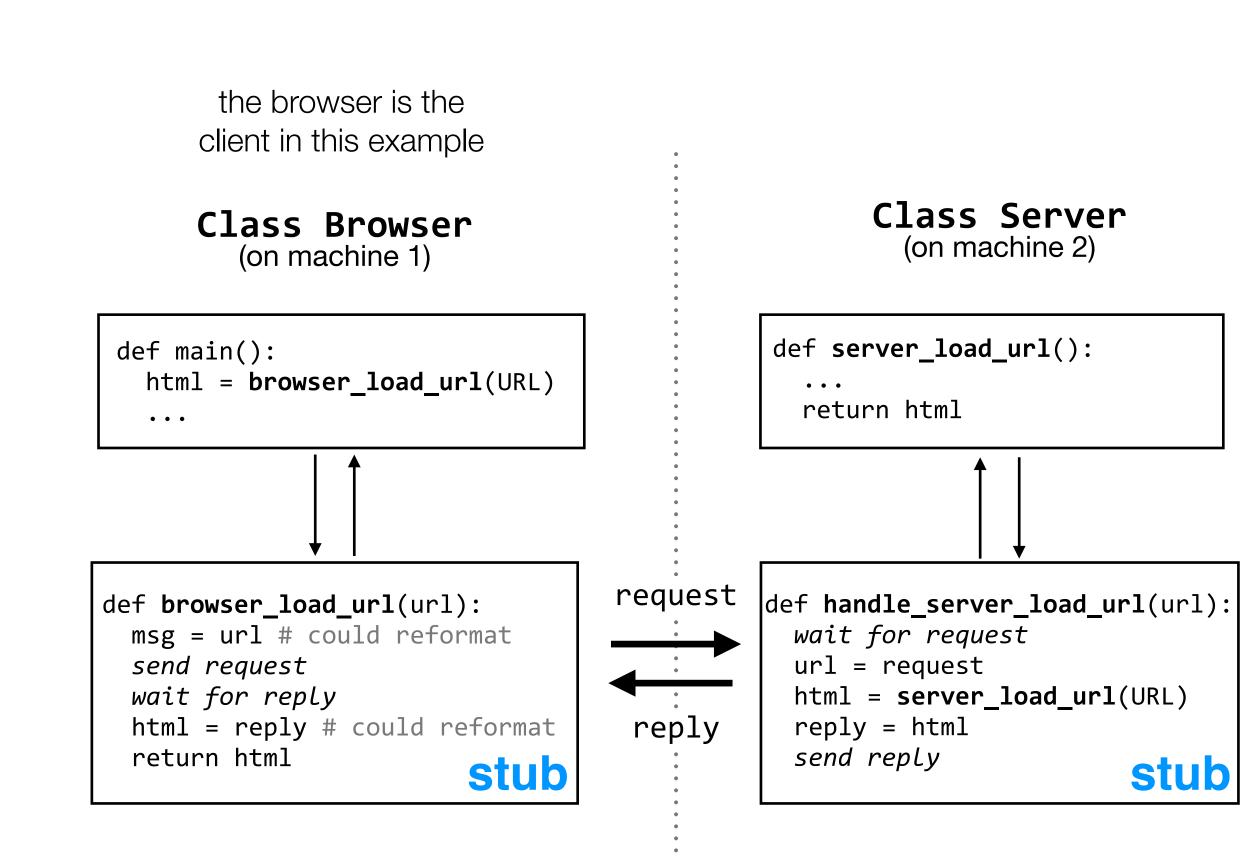


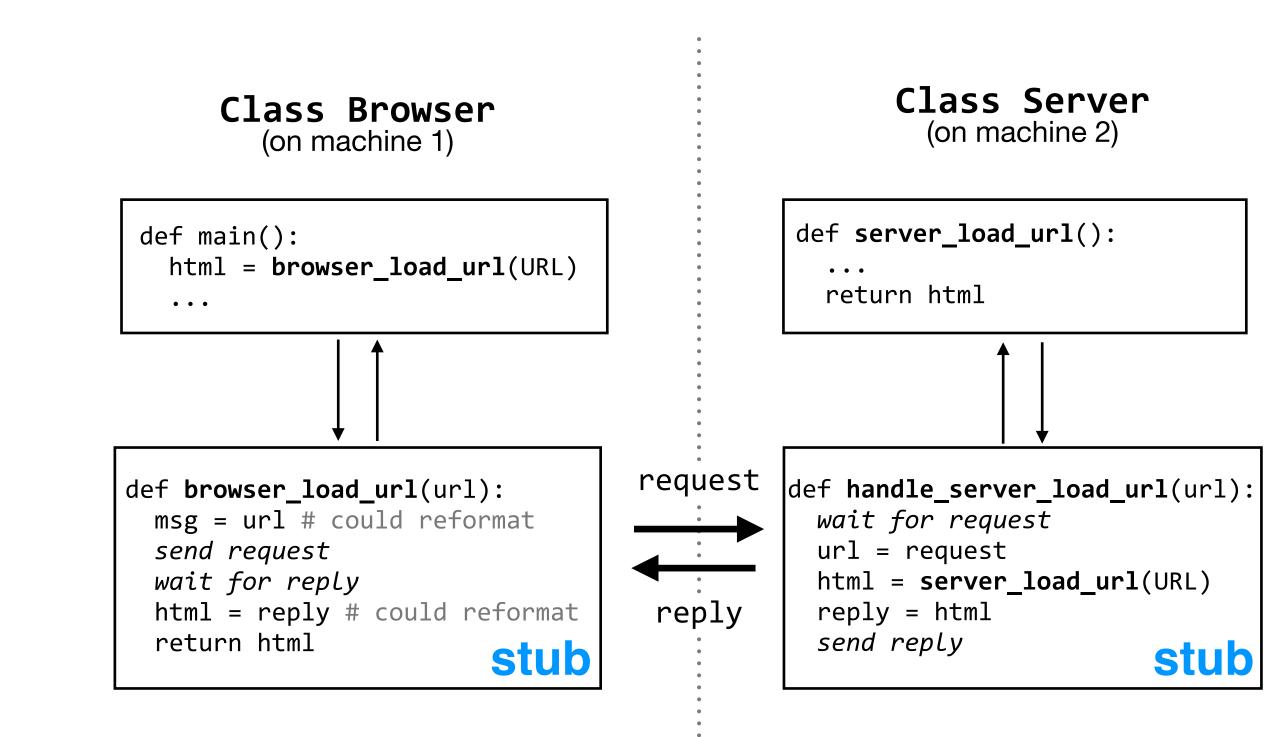
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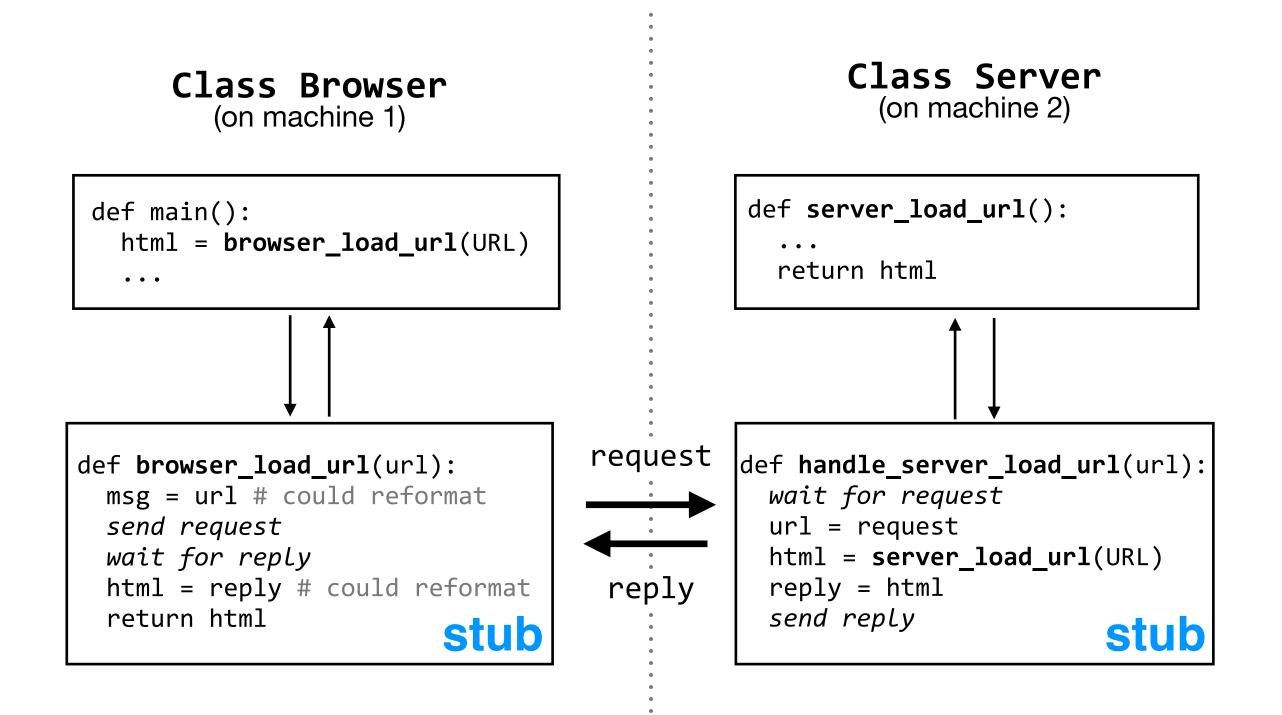
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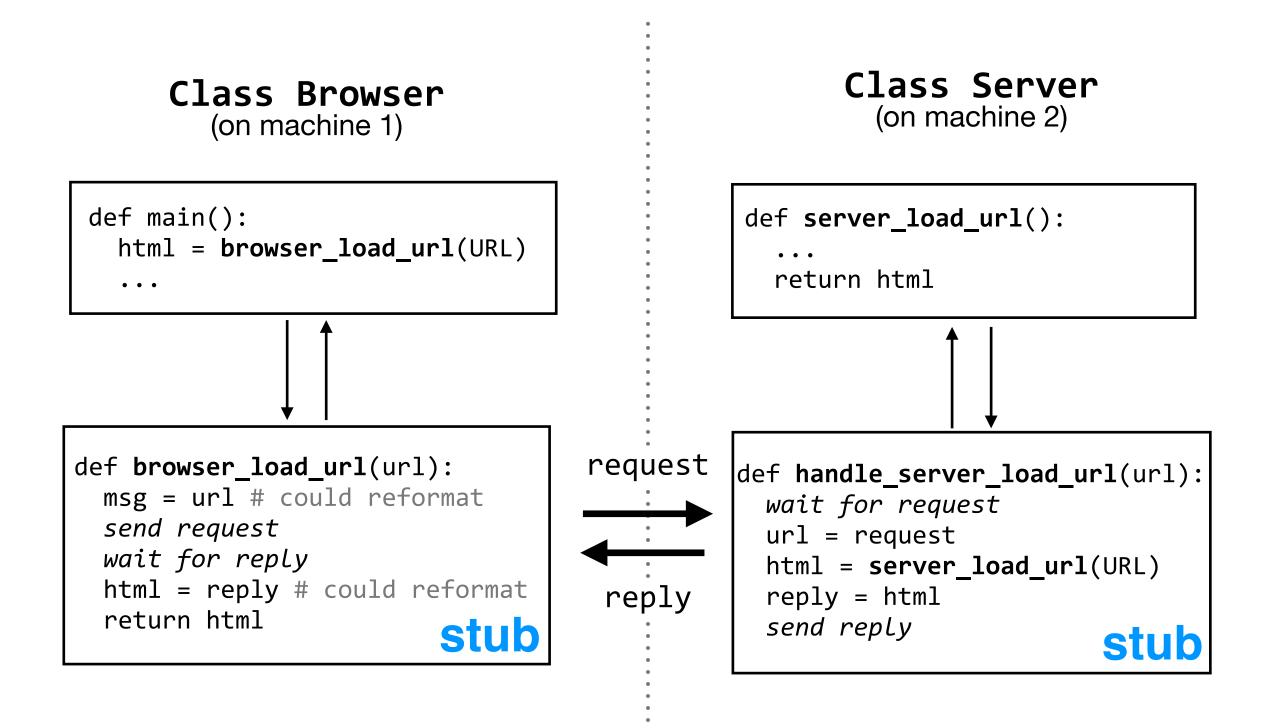
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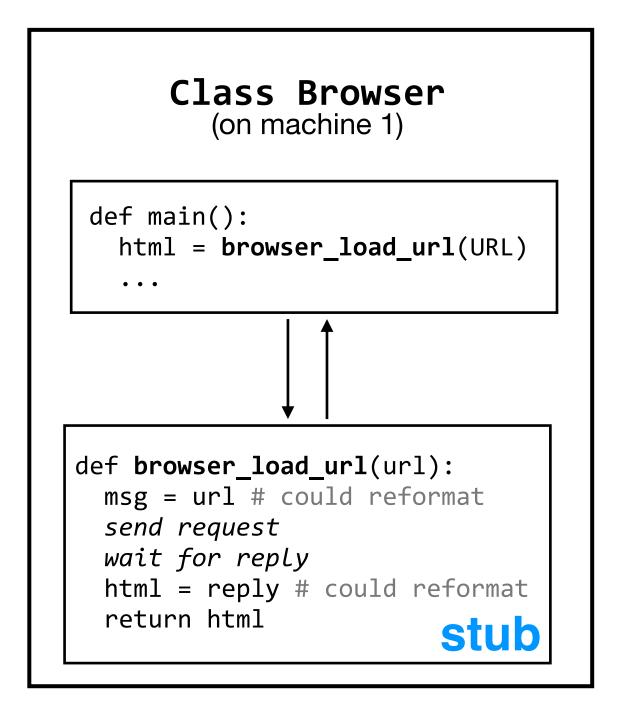
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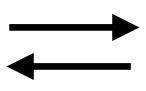


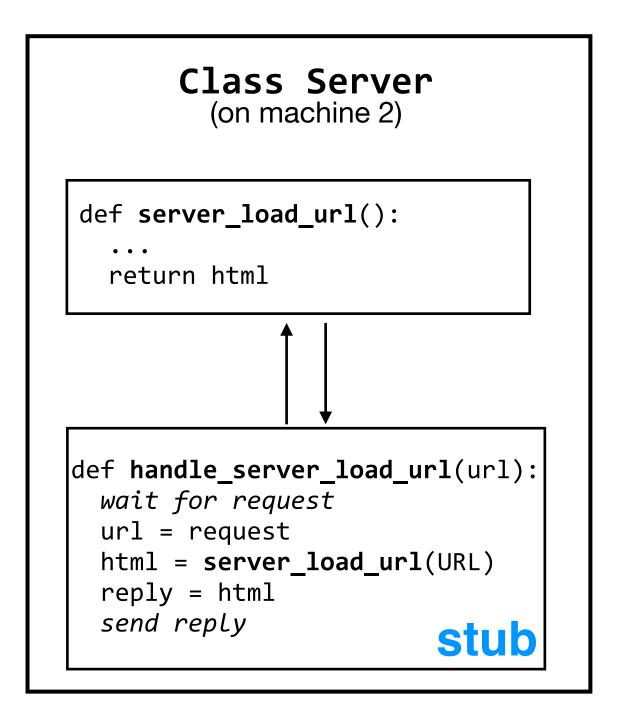


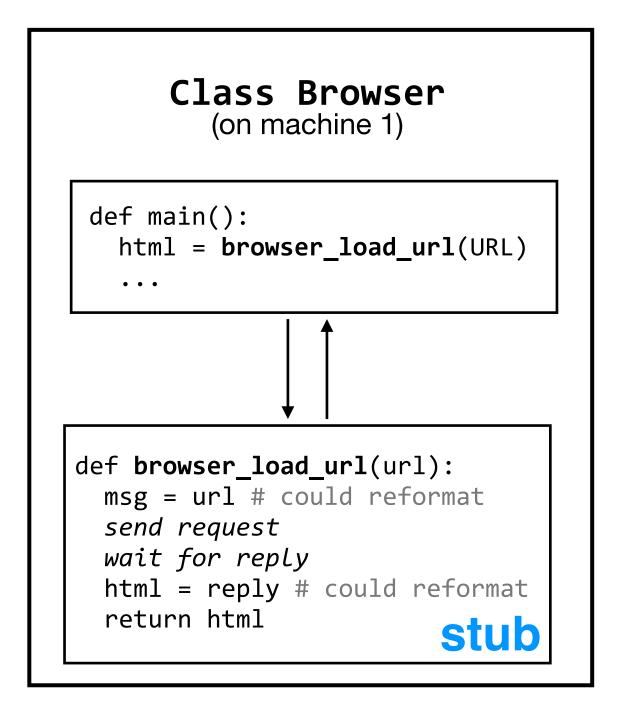


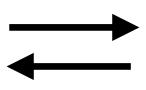


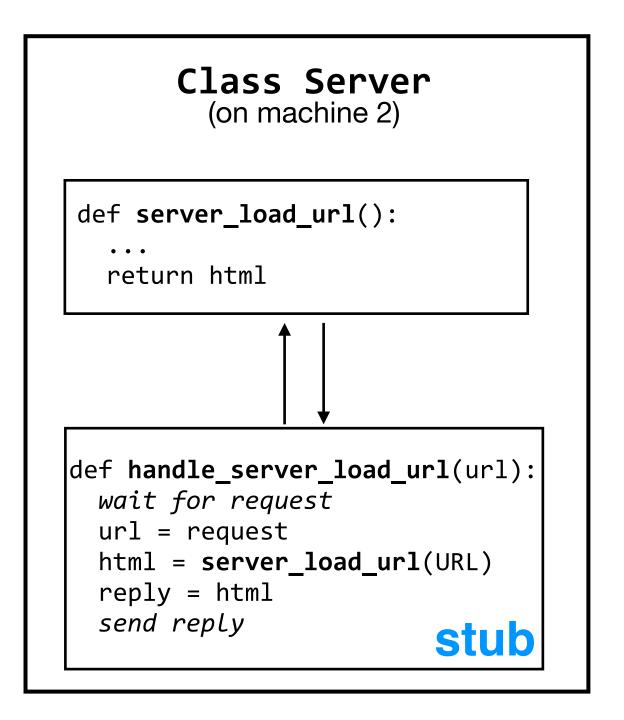


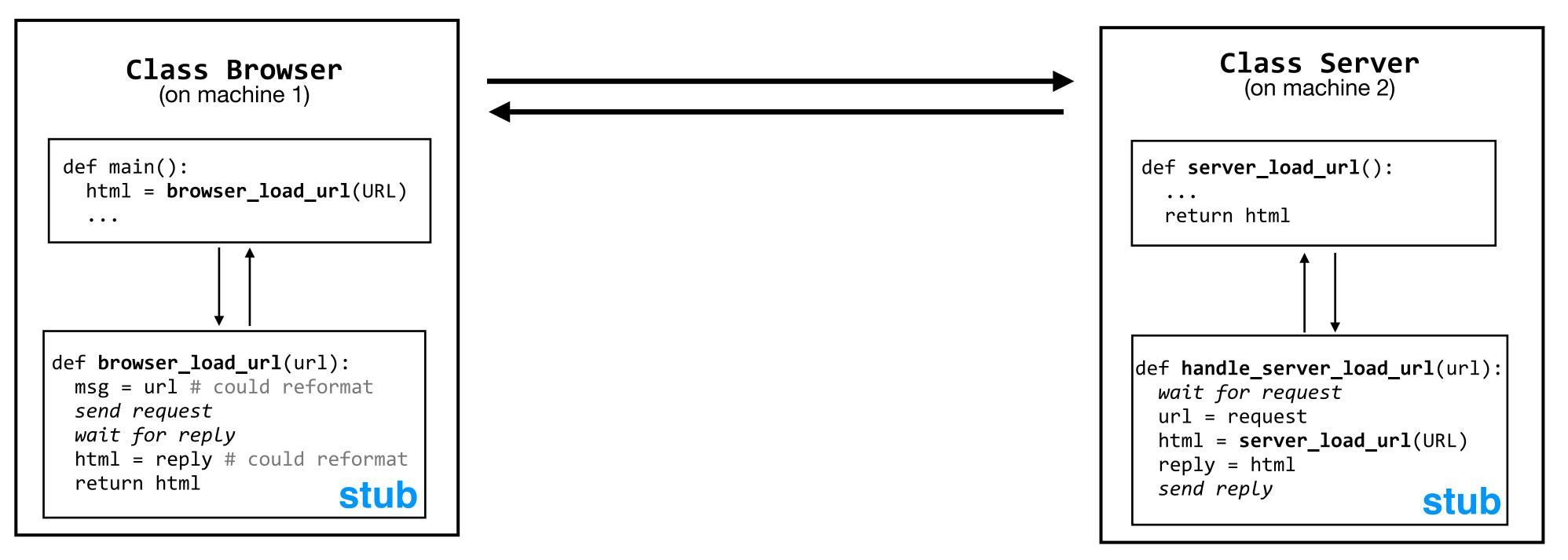


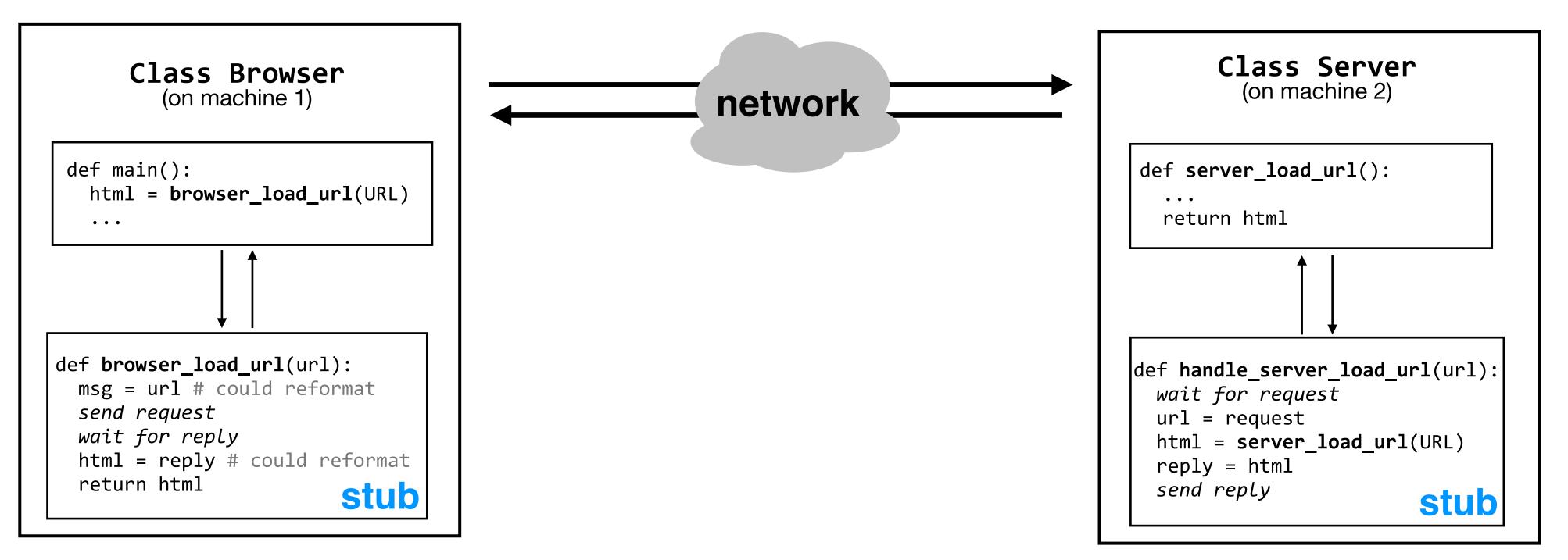


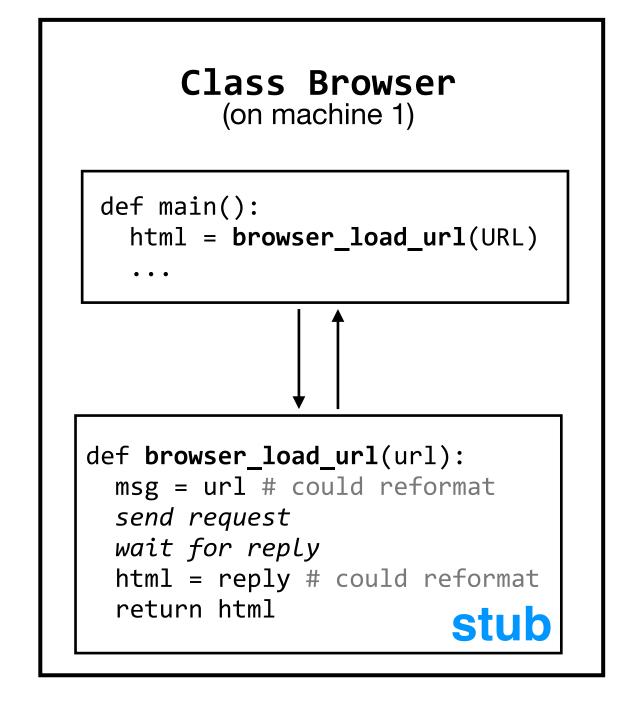




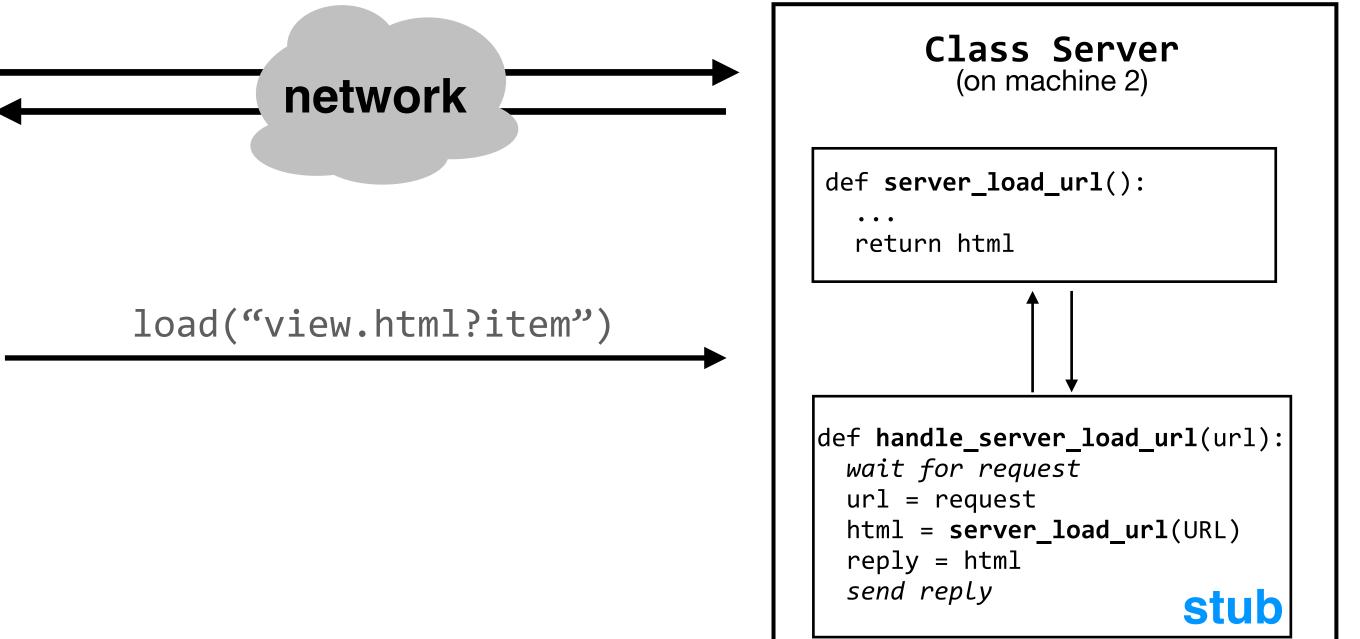


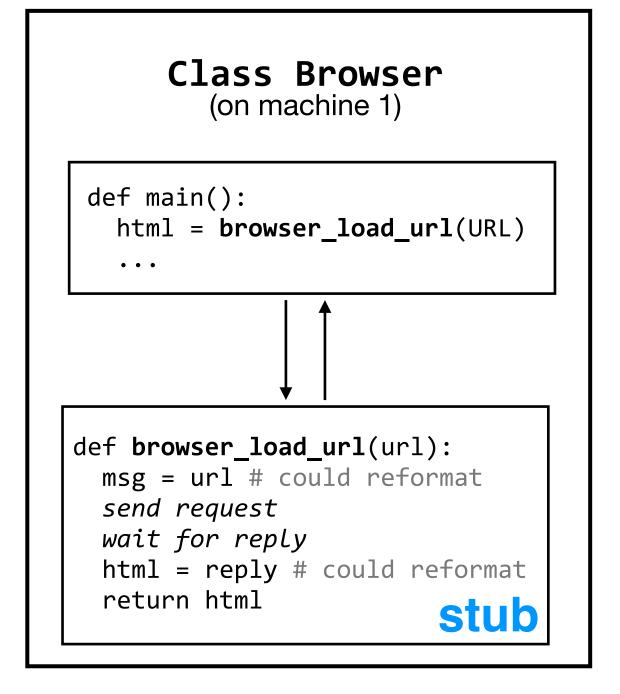


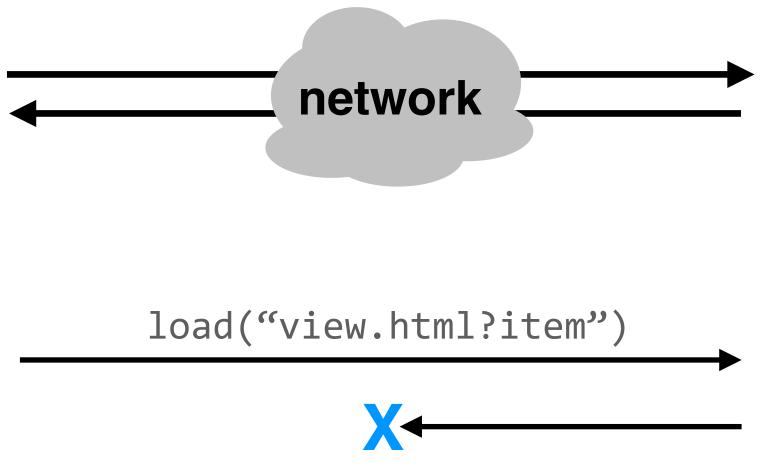


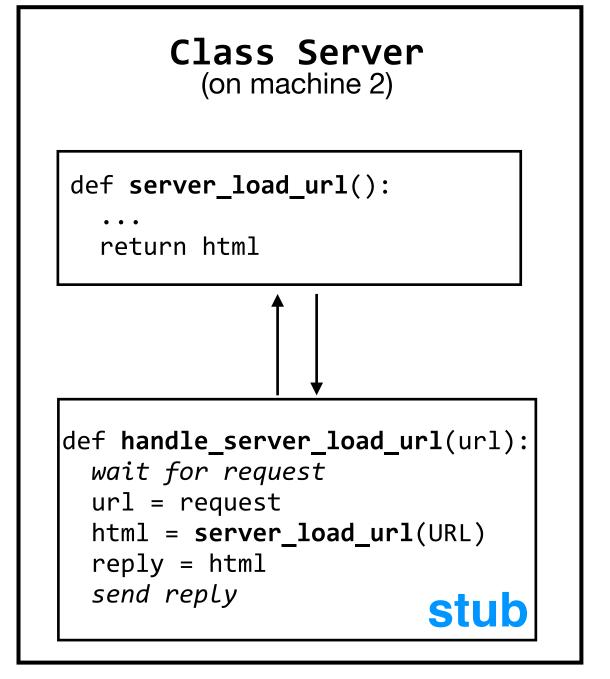


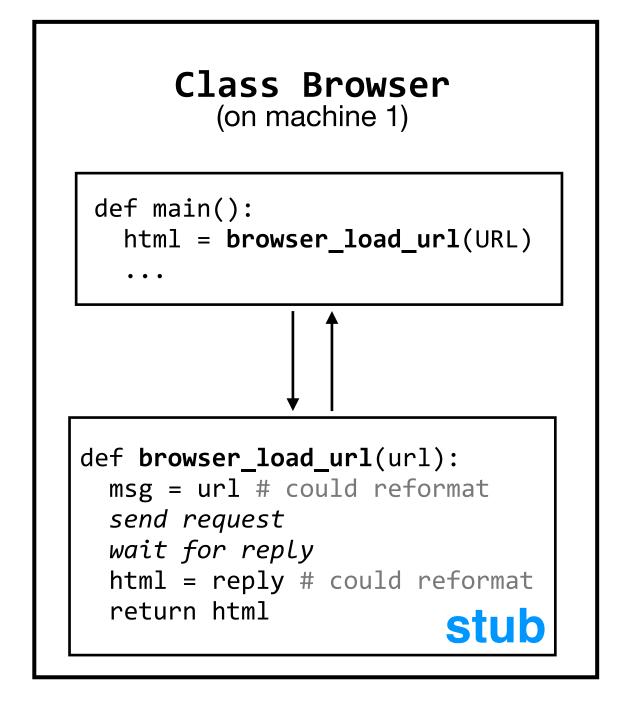


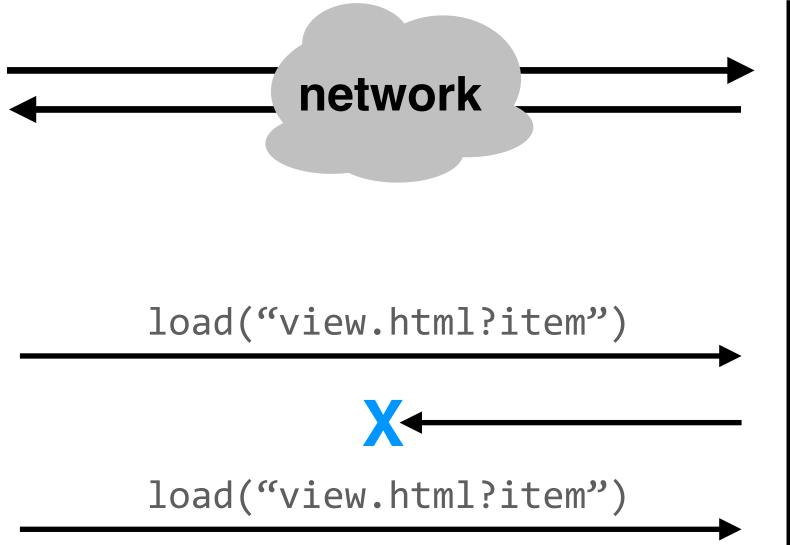


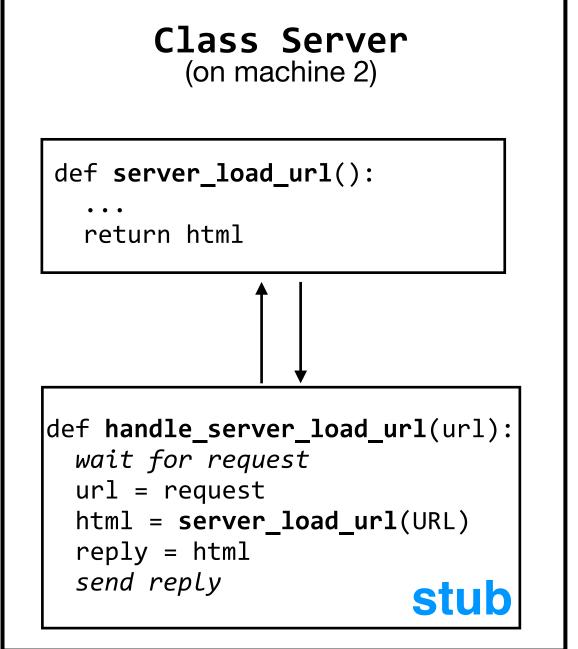


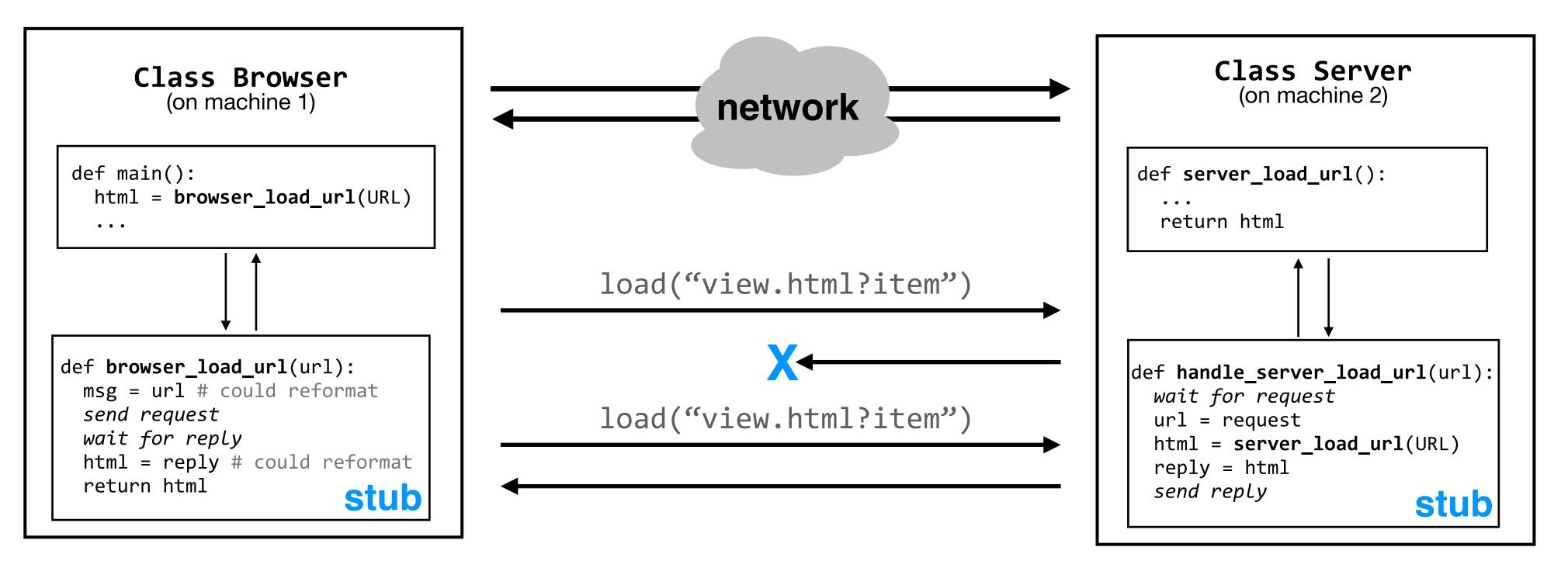


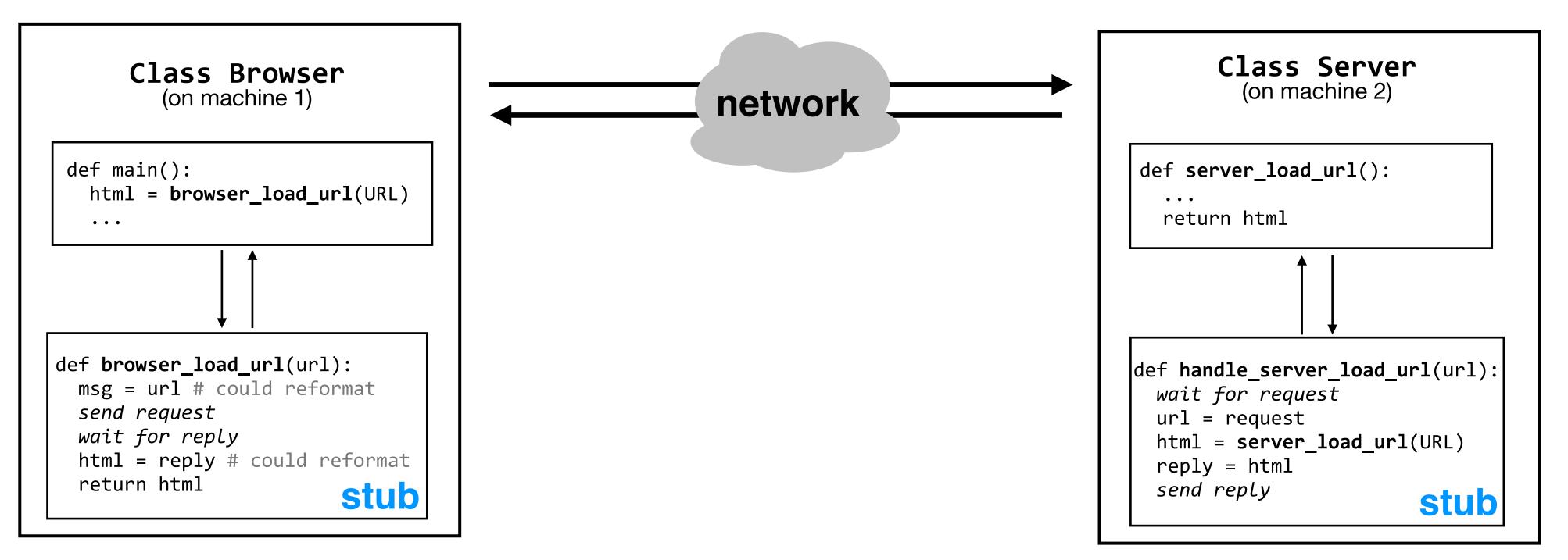


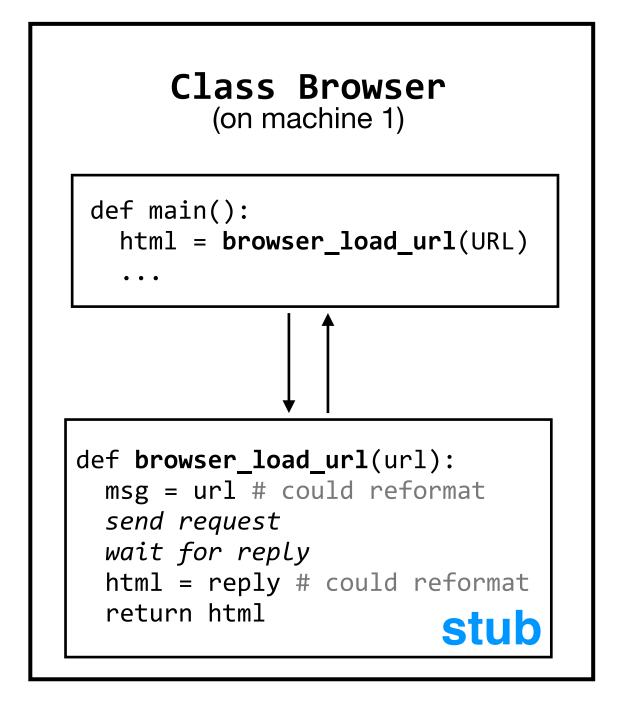


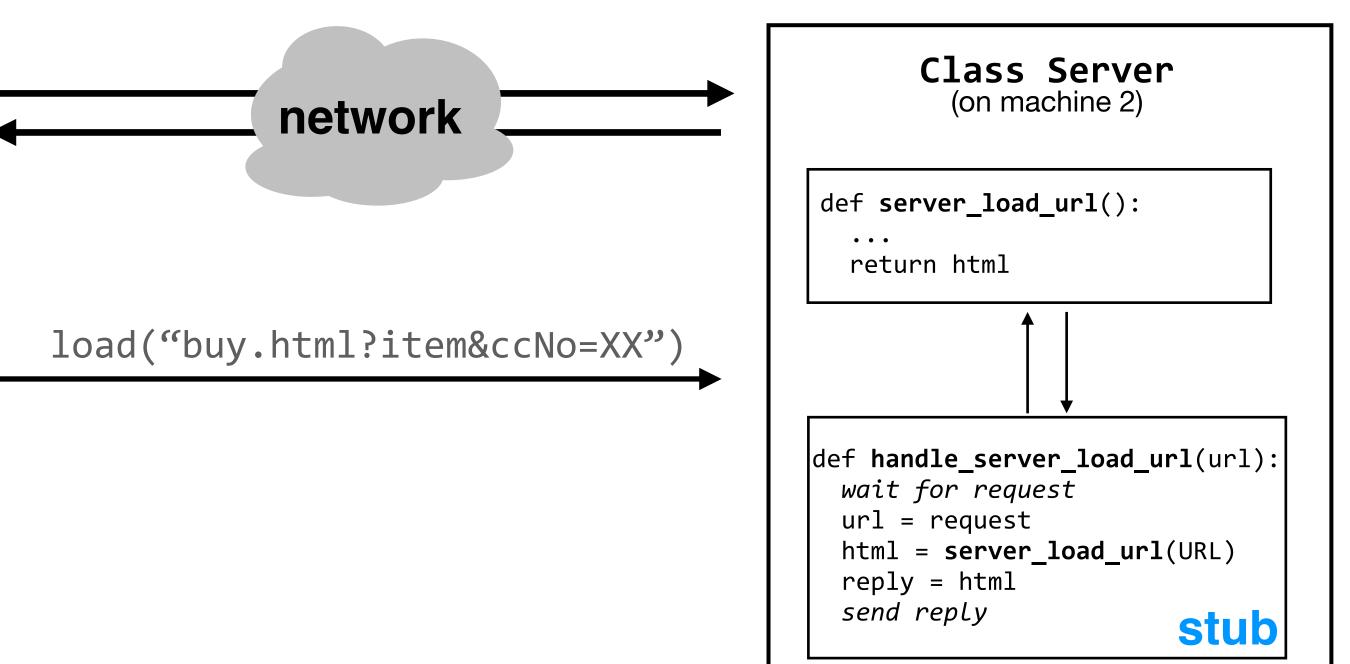


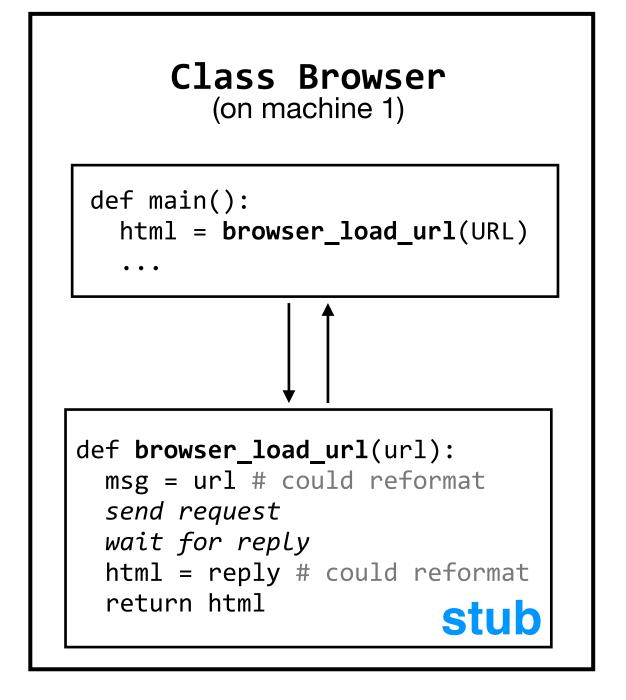


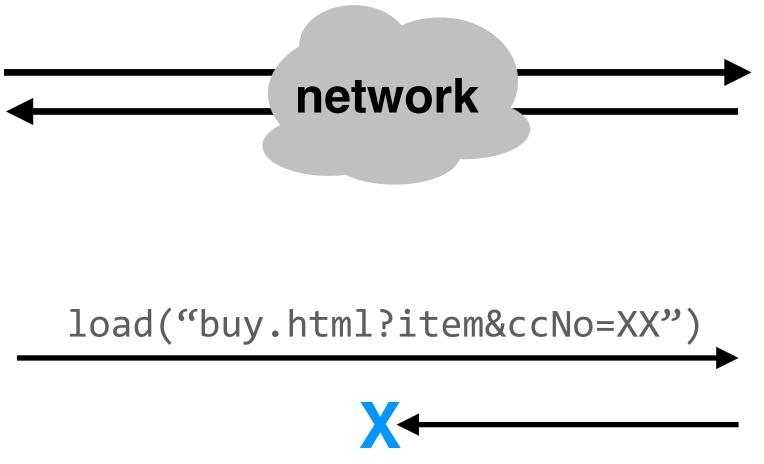


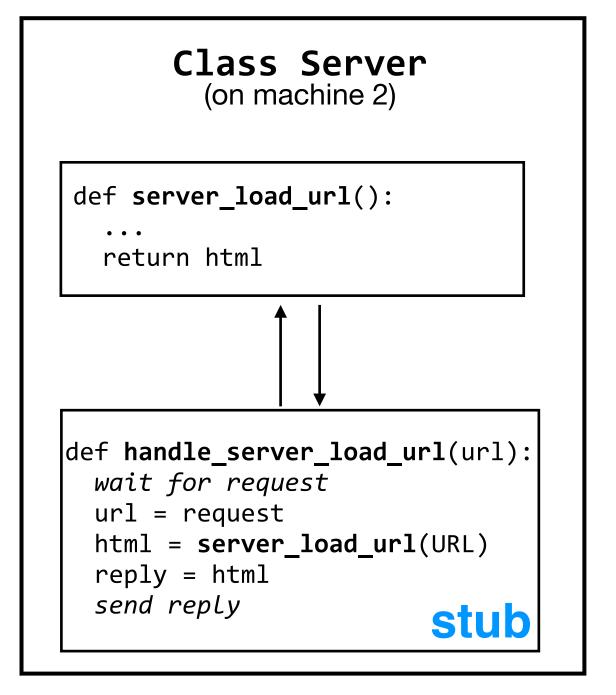


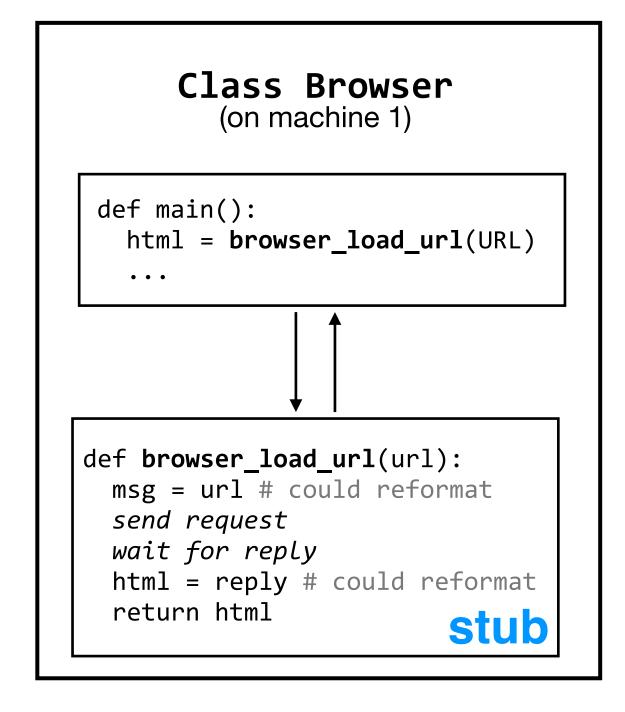


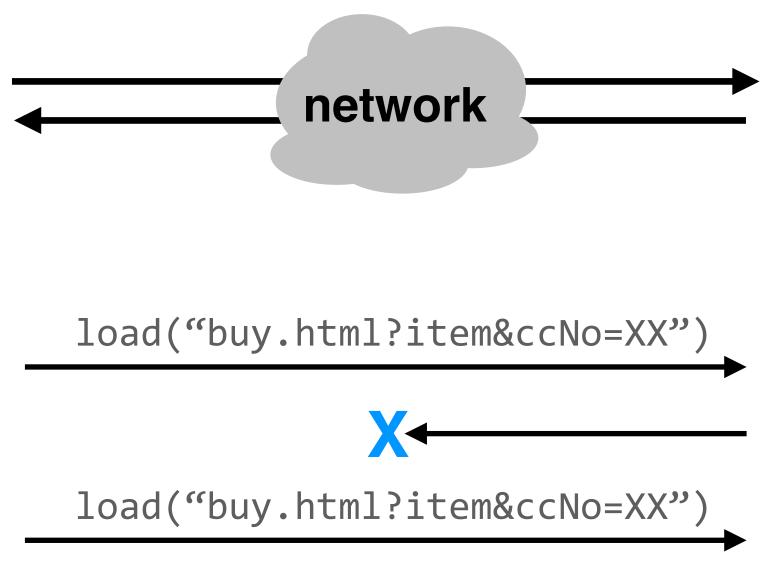


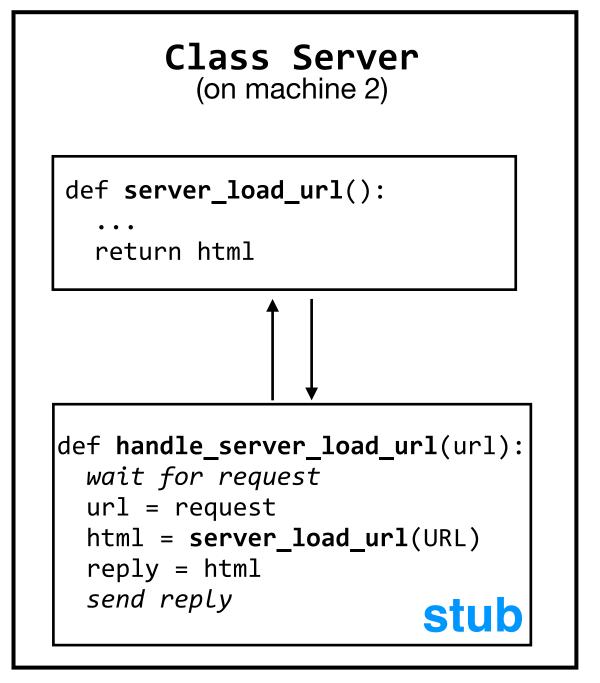




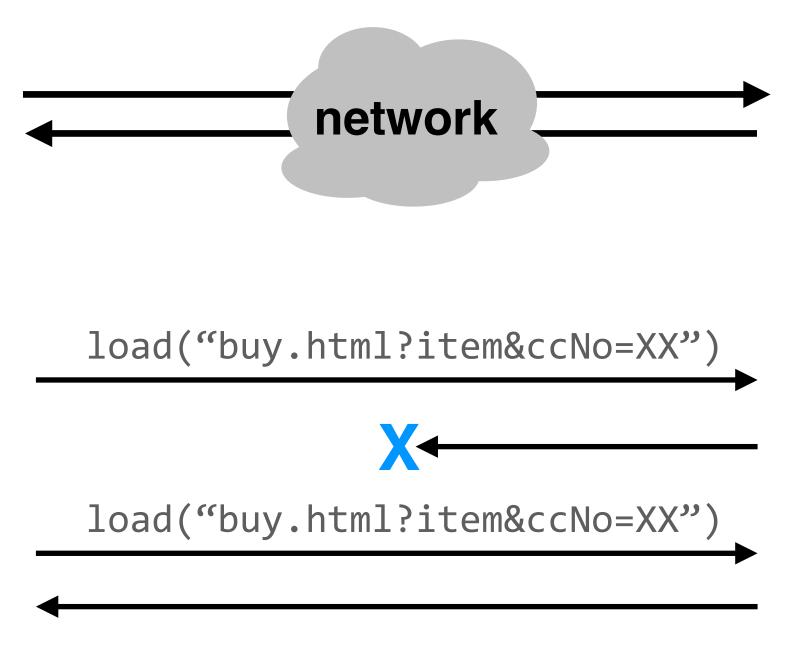


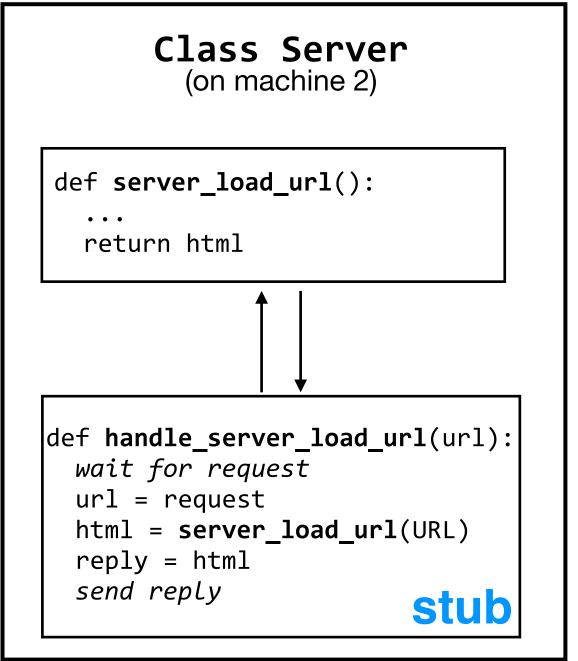


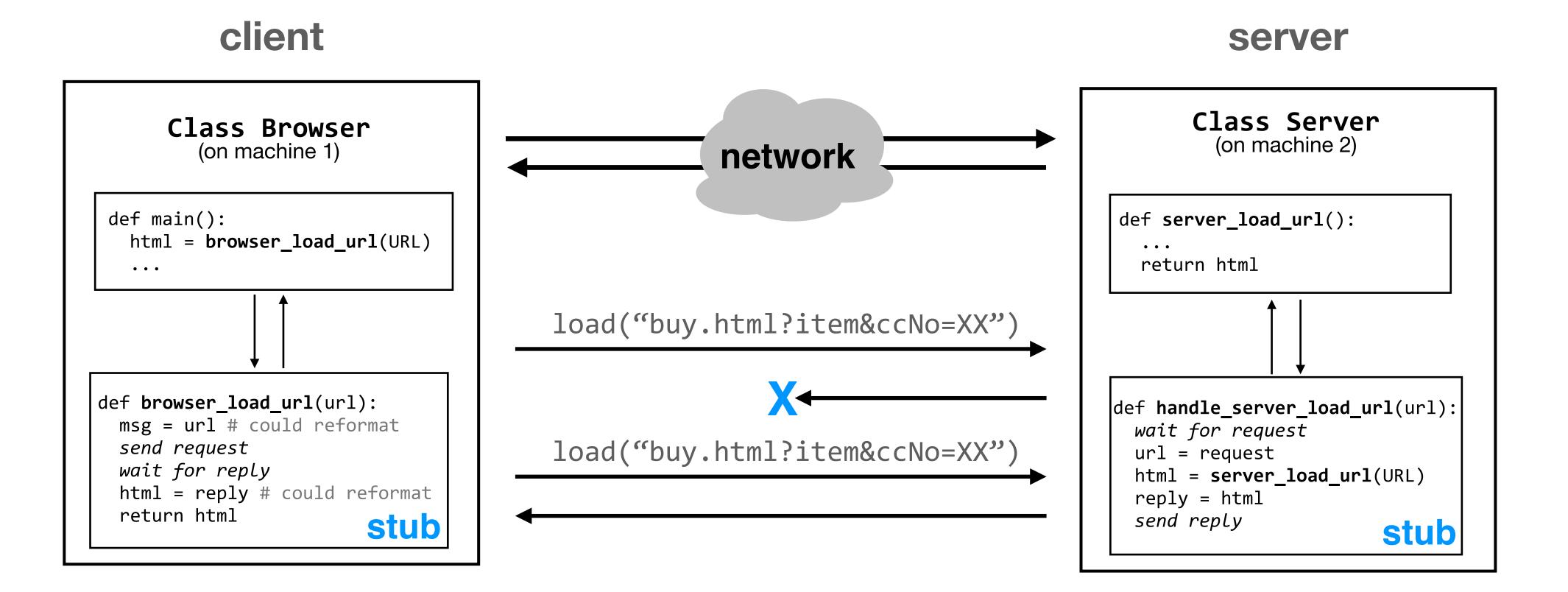




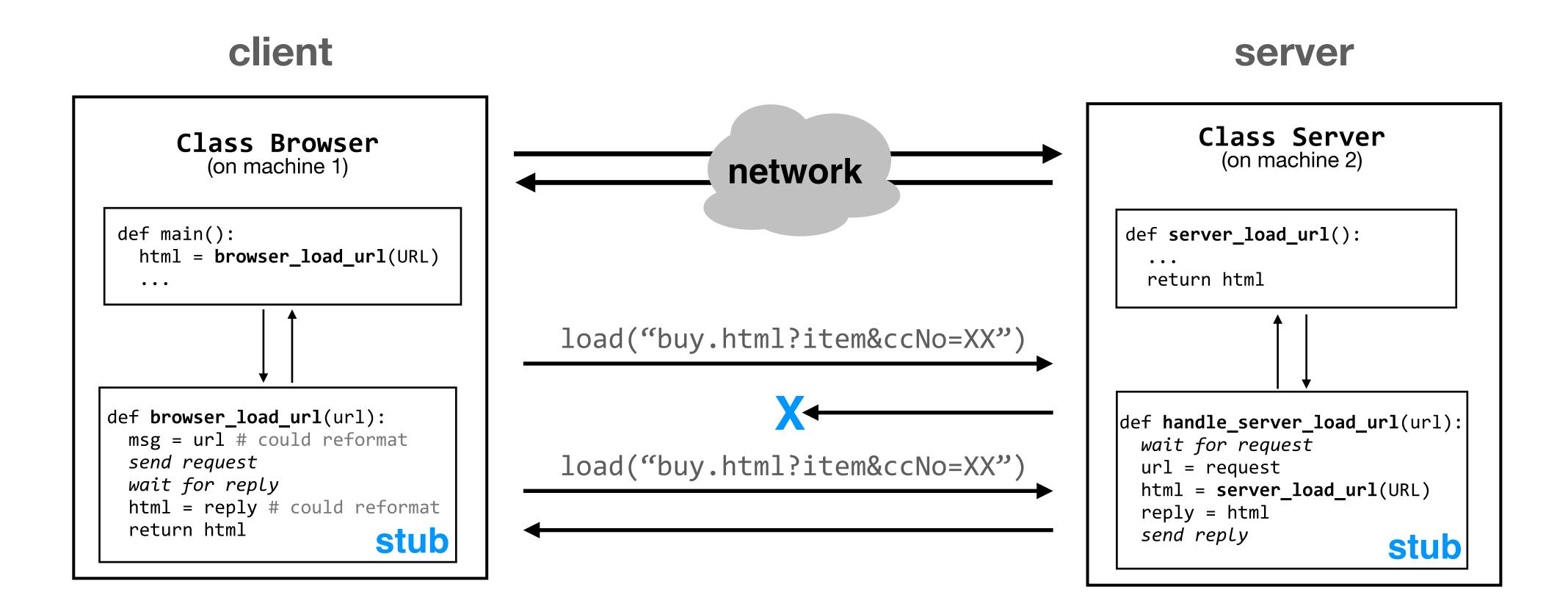
class Browser (on machine 1) def main(): html = browser_load_url(URL) ... def browser_load_url(url): msg = url # could reformat send request wait for reply html = reply # could reformat return html stub





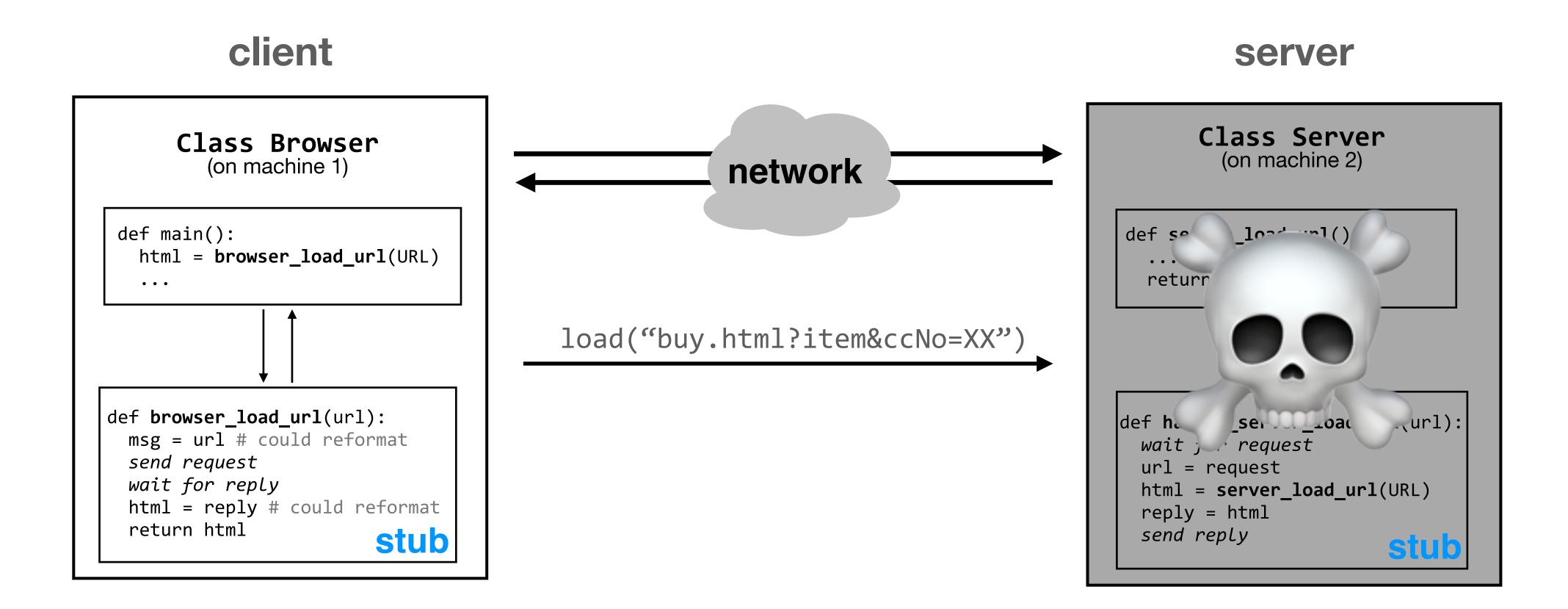


problem: we just bought two copies of item



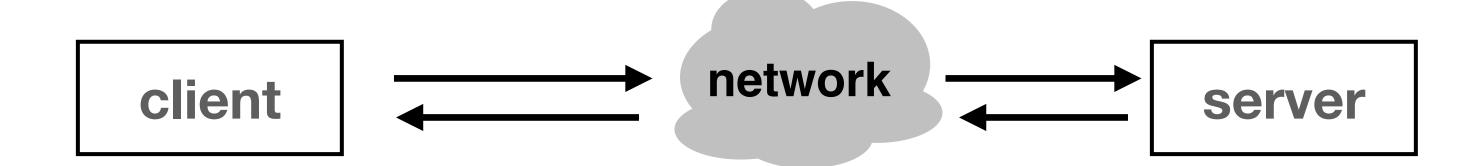
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there are ways to deal with this issue — for example, giving each request a unique ID, and keeping track of those IDs on the server



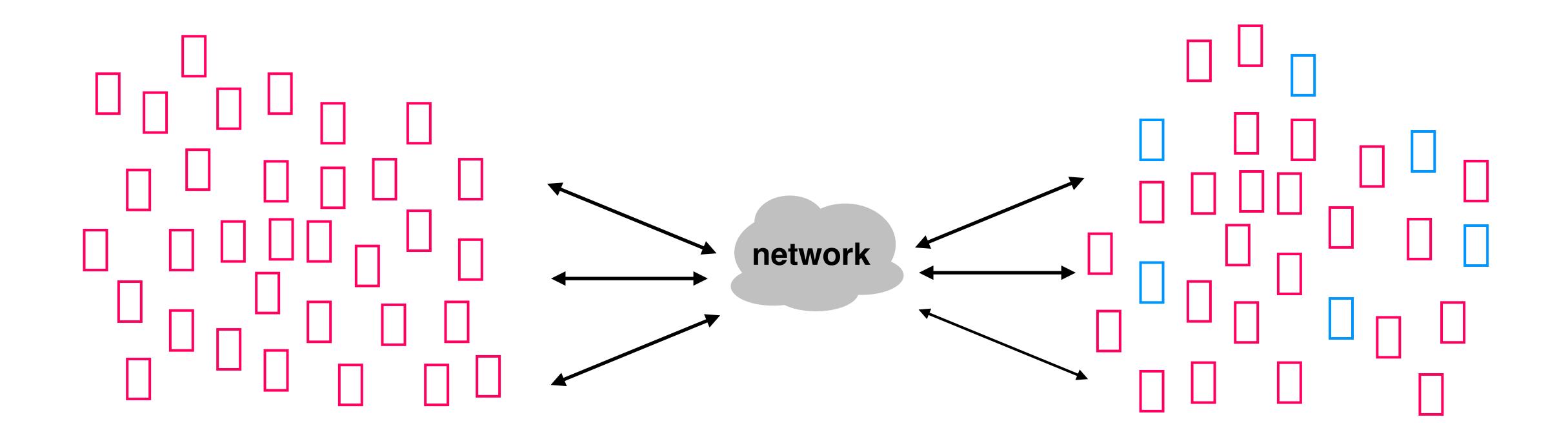
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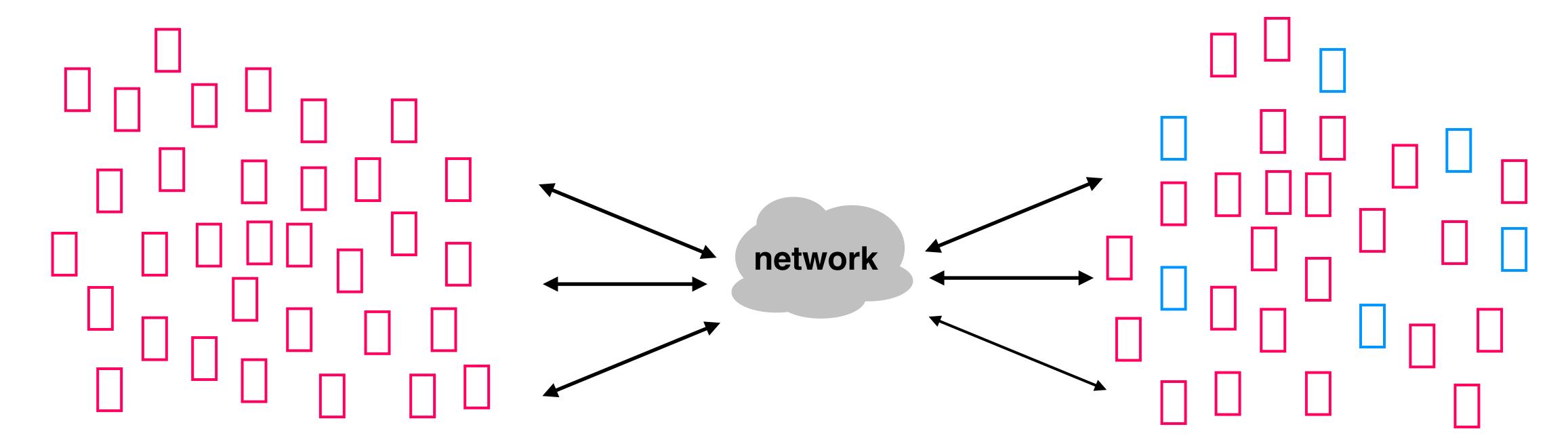
there are ways to deal with this issue — for example, giving each request a unique ID, and keeping track of those IDs on the server — but then new problems arise: for example, what happens if the server crashes in the middle of handling a request?

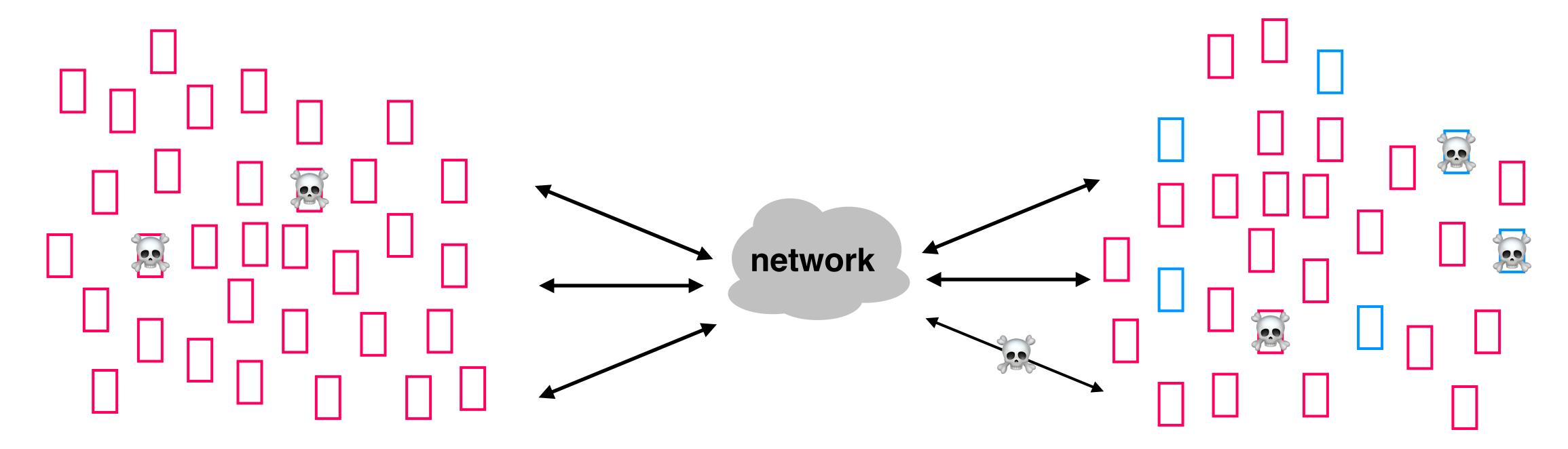






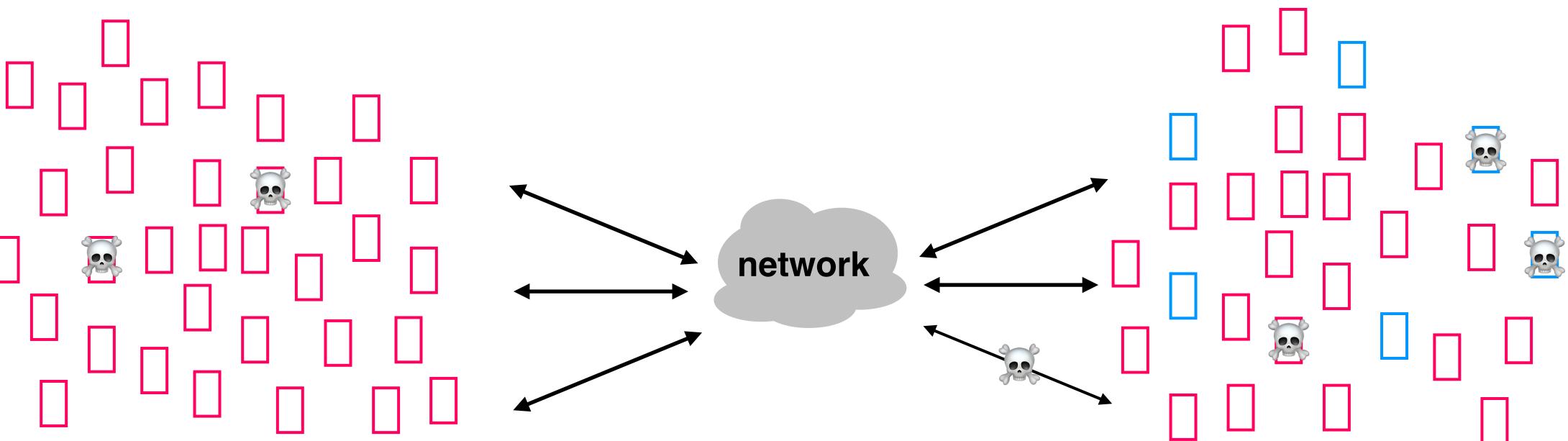






scalability: how does our system behave as we increase the number of machines,

users, requests, data, etc.?



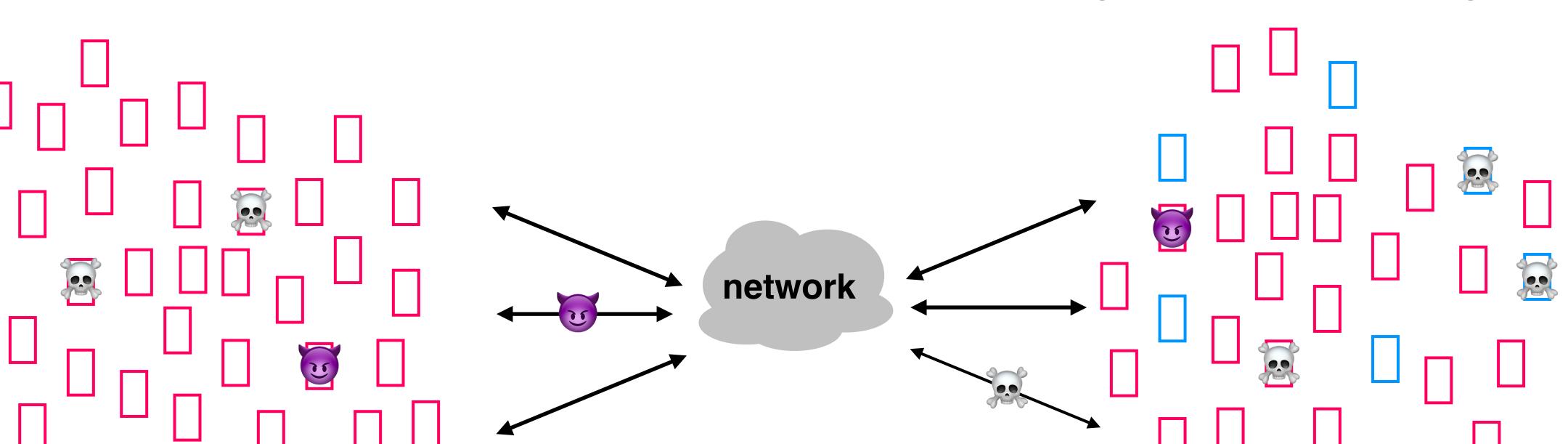
fault-tolerance/reliability: how does our

system deal with failures ()? machines

crashing, network links breaking, etc.

scalability: how does our system behave

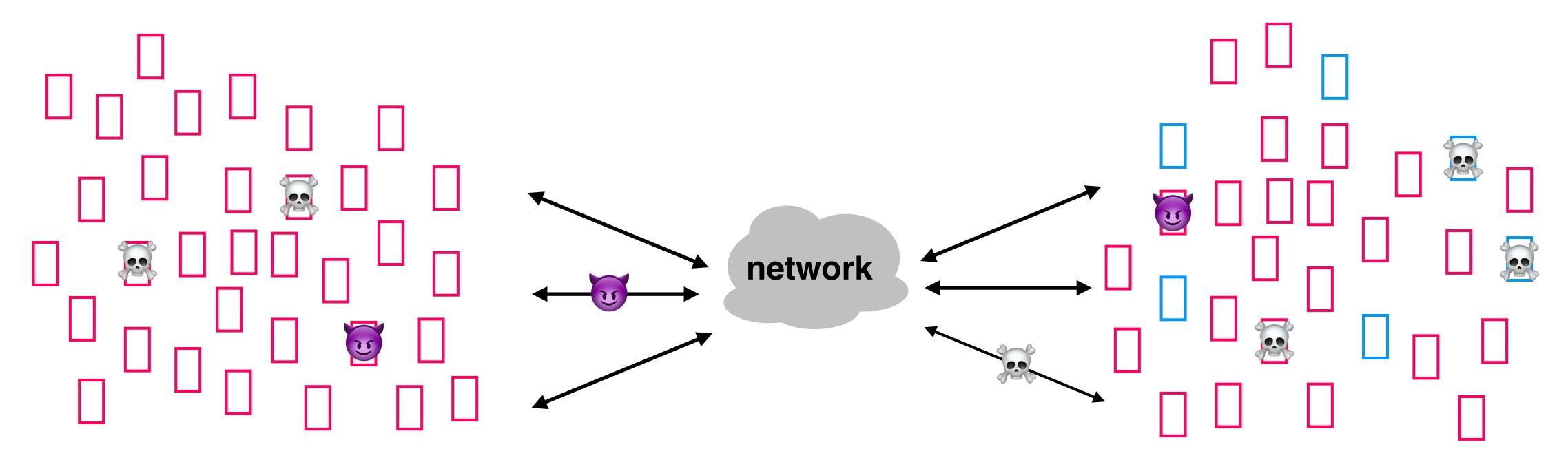
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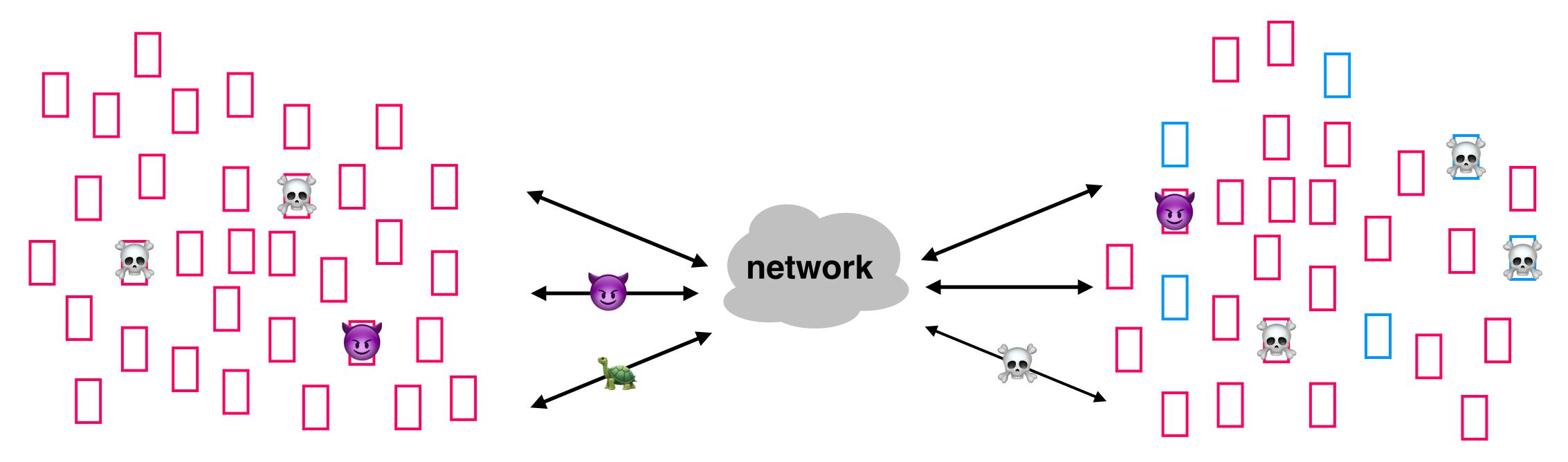
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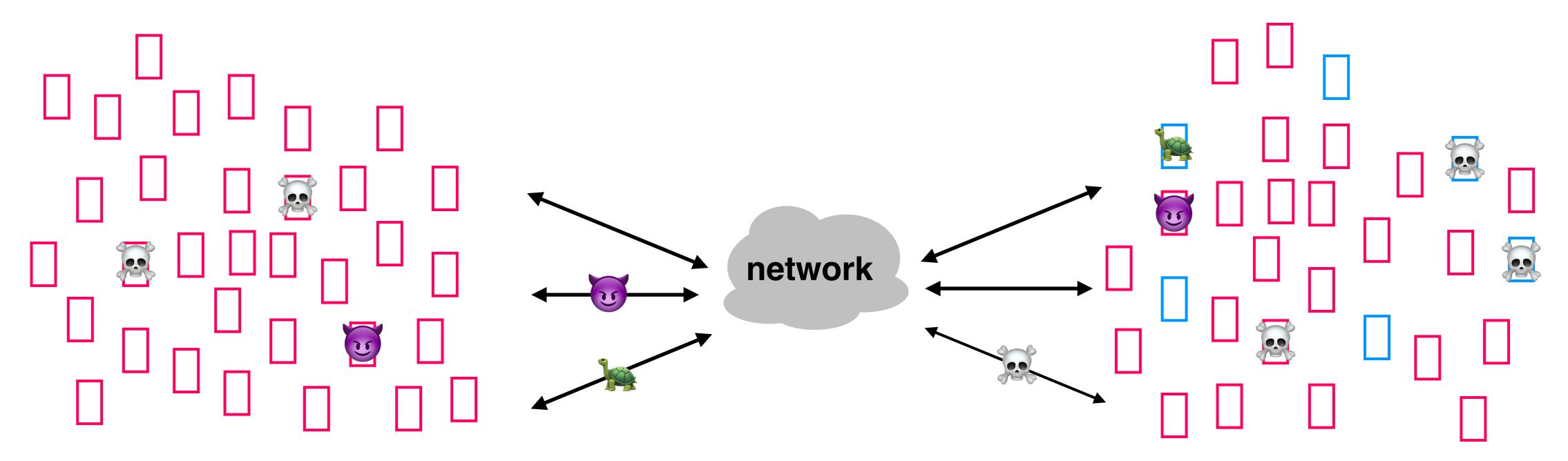
security: how does our system cope in the face of targeted attacks (***)?

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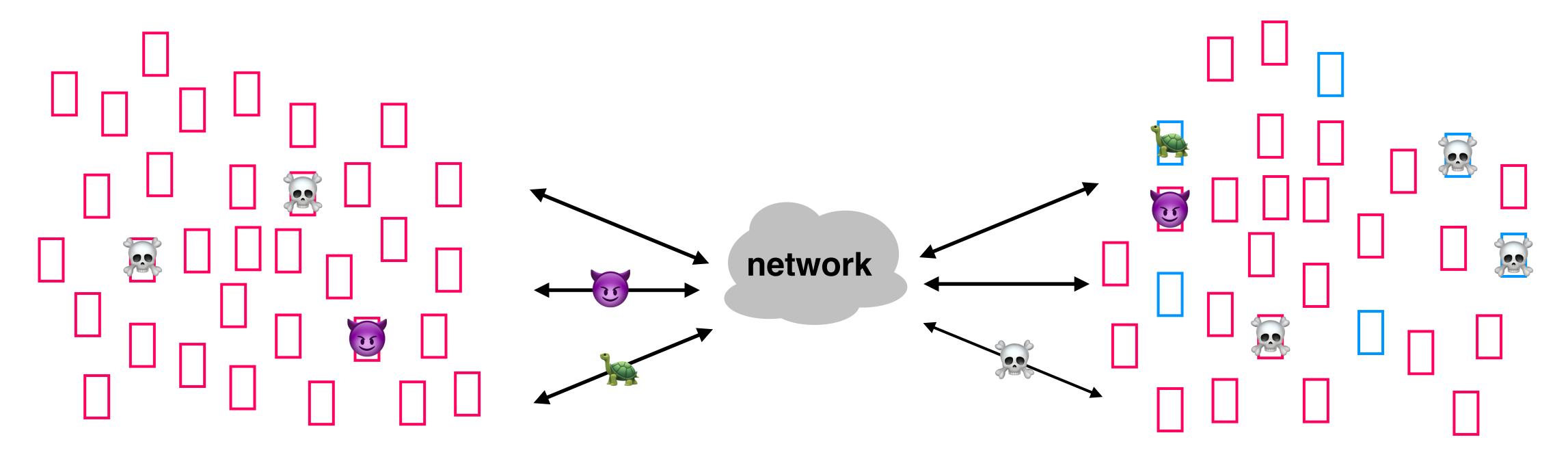
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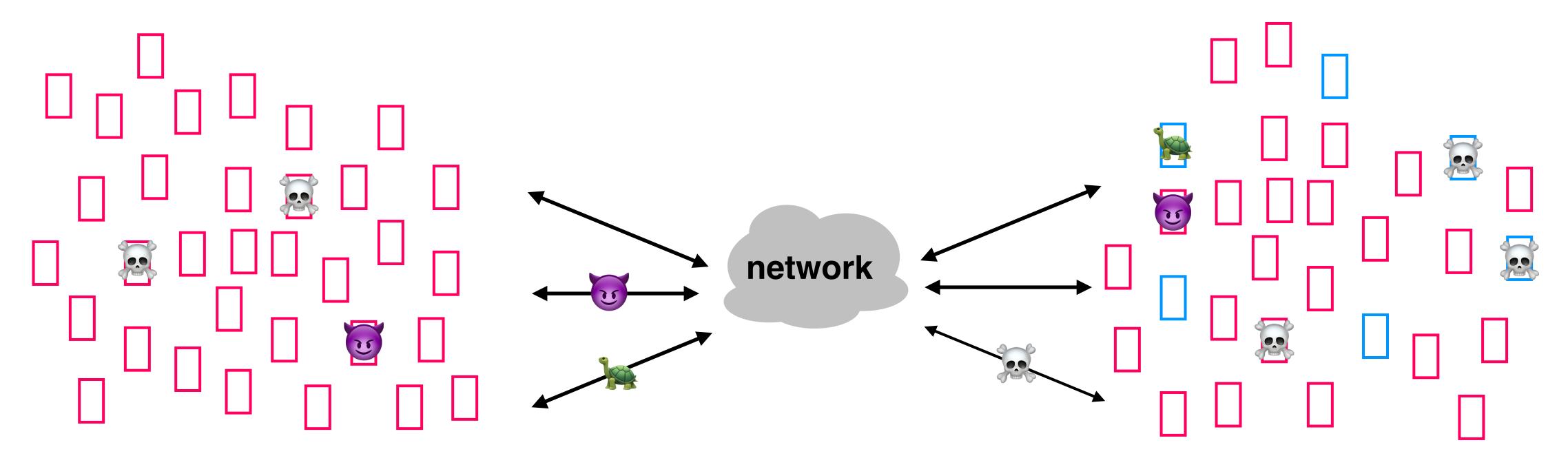
performance: how do we define our performance requirements, and know if our system is meeting them? what do we do if performance is subpar ()?

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security: how does our system cope in the face of targeted attacks (****)?

performance: how do we define our performance requirements, and know if our system is meeting them? what do we do if performance is subpar ()?

who is impacted by our design and implementation choices? who makes those choices?

has all of the class material, due dates, deadlines, etc.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
feb 3 LEC 1: Modularity, Abstraction, and the Impact of Systems	feb 4 REC 1: We Did Nothing Wrong	feb 5 LEC 2: Naming	feb 6 REC 2: DNS Assignment Available: Hands-on DNS	feb 7 TUT 1: Intro to 6.1800 Communication
First day of classes				

has all of the class material, due dates, deadlines, etc.

Canvas

for submitting assignments and seeing your grades, and the occasional class-wide (or section-wide) announcement. everything on Canvas will be linked from the class website

we've already sent out one announcement about a scheduling form — please fill it out today if you haven't already!

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one way to **enforce modularity** is with a **client/server model**, where the two modules reside on different machines and communicate with RPCs; network/server failures are still an issue

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next lecture: naming, which allows modules to communicate

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after that: operating systems, which enforce modularity on a single machine