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Untitled

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WORK ENVIRONMENT

EMILY OLSON

Nancy, from two offices down, peeks her head in one afternoon. She launches into an unprompted speech about how she listens to movie soundtracks when she works. The whole office knows this because we hear movie soundtracks when she works.

But today she clarifies—she says it's "because it makes everything feel epic." She smiles as she says it. She's a new hire, in the new style. She's a project manager, and this means her job is only to make sure I do mine.

When I work, it's with headphones and a Youtube video titled "10 hours of gentle rain." Because rain is the real deal. It doesn't fuck around, doesn't try to impose emotions or confuse reality. It's not inefficient; it doesn't even think about that.

Rain, unlike jazz, doesn't advertise its originality. Unlike acoustic coffeehouse beats, rain doesn't need hipster approval. And unlike movie soundtracks, unlike Nancy, rain doesn't make money by adding to the noise.

Nancy is only gone for a few minutes before I pause the rain, turn my chair, and look out at the sun, wishing that something could be done.

UNTITLED

JULIA NGYUEN

