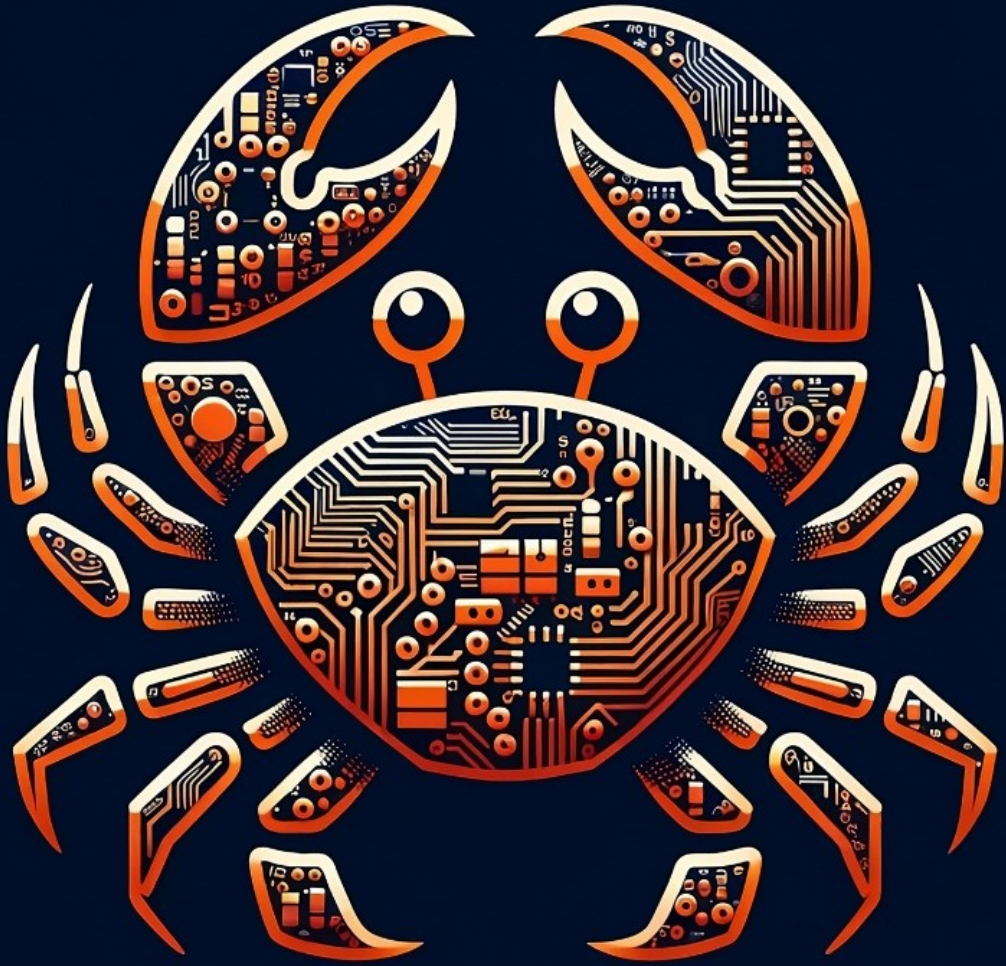


Rust Under the Hood

A deep dive into Rust internals and generated assembly



Sandeep Ahluwalia • Deepa Ahluwalia

Rust Under the Hood

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<https://eventhelix.com>

Rust Under the Hood

- Memory layout of enums, struct, vectors, strings, and arrays
- Pattern matching internals
- How smart pointers manage memory
- Tail call optimization and recursion
- Dynamic dispatch and vtables
- Functional programming is a zero-cost abstraction
- How closures capture the environment
- How `async/await` desugars into futures and state machines

Memory layout of **Number**

```
pub enum Number {  
    Integer(i64),  
    Float(f64),  
    Complex { real: f64, imaginary: f64 },  
}
```

Byte offset	Integer	Float	Complex
0	Discriminator (0)	Discriminator (1)	Discriminator (2)
8	i64	f64	f64
16			f64

double: Example of pattern matching

```
pub fn double(num: Number) -> Number {
    match num {
        Number::Integer(n) => Number::Integer(n + n),
        Number::Float(n) => Number::Float(n + n),
        Number::Complex { real, imaginary } => Number::Complex {
            real: real + real,
            imaginary: imaginary + imaginary,
        },
    }
}
```

Flow chart of generated assembly of double

The caller passes the following :

- Address where Number
- Address of num should be returned

double (Number, num)

Extract the discriminator from input address offset 0

discriminator == 0

True - Number::Integer

Load rcx from the input address at offset 8

Add rcx to itself

Store rcx to the return address offset 8

Store discriminator to the return address offset 0

discriminator == 1

True - Number::Float

Load xmm0 from the input address at offset 8

Add xmm0 to itself

Store xmm0 to the return address offset 8

Store discriminator to the return address offset 0

False - Number::Complex

Vector load real (offset 8) and imaginary (offset 16) into xmm0

Vector add xmm0 contents to itself:
• real + real
• imaginary + imaginary

Vector store xmm0 to the real (offset 8) and imaginary (offset 16) of the return address

Store discriminator to the return address offset 0

Return

```
pub fn double(num: Number) -> Number {
    match num {
        Number::Integer(n) => Number::Integer(n + n),
        Number::Float(n) => Number::Float(n + n),
        Number::Complex { real, imaginary } => Number::Complex {
            real: real + real,
            imaginary: imaginary + imaginary,
        },
    }
}
```

```
use std::rc::Rc;
use std::sync::Arc;

#[derive(Copy, Clone)]
pub struct Complex {
    real: f64,
    imaginary: f64,
}


impl Complex {
    // Passing smart pointers
    pub fn magnitude_self_box(self: Box<Self>) -> f64 {
        (self.real.powf(2.0) + self.imaginary.powf(2.0)).sqrt()
    }

    pub fn magnitude_self_arc(self: Arc<Self>) -> f64 {
        (self.real.powf(2.0) + self.imaginary.powf(2.0)).sqrt()
    }
}
```


Passing **self** as **Box** and **Arc**


Assembly flowchart for `magnitude_self_box`


```
pub fn magnitude_self_box(self: Box<Self>) -> f64 {  
    (self.real.powf(2.0) + self.imaginary.powf(2.0)).sqrt()  
}
```

The  `Box` is owned by the function. When the function returns, the `Box` is going out of scope, so it releases the `Box` pointed memory.


 Vector fetch `self.real` and `self.imaginary` from memory into `xmm0`

 Square `self.real` and `self.imaginary` by performing vector multiplications in `xmm0`

 Add the two squares together and store the result in `xmm1`

 Calculate the square root of `xmm1` and store the result in `xmm0`

  Call `__rust_dealloc` to free the memory

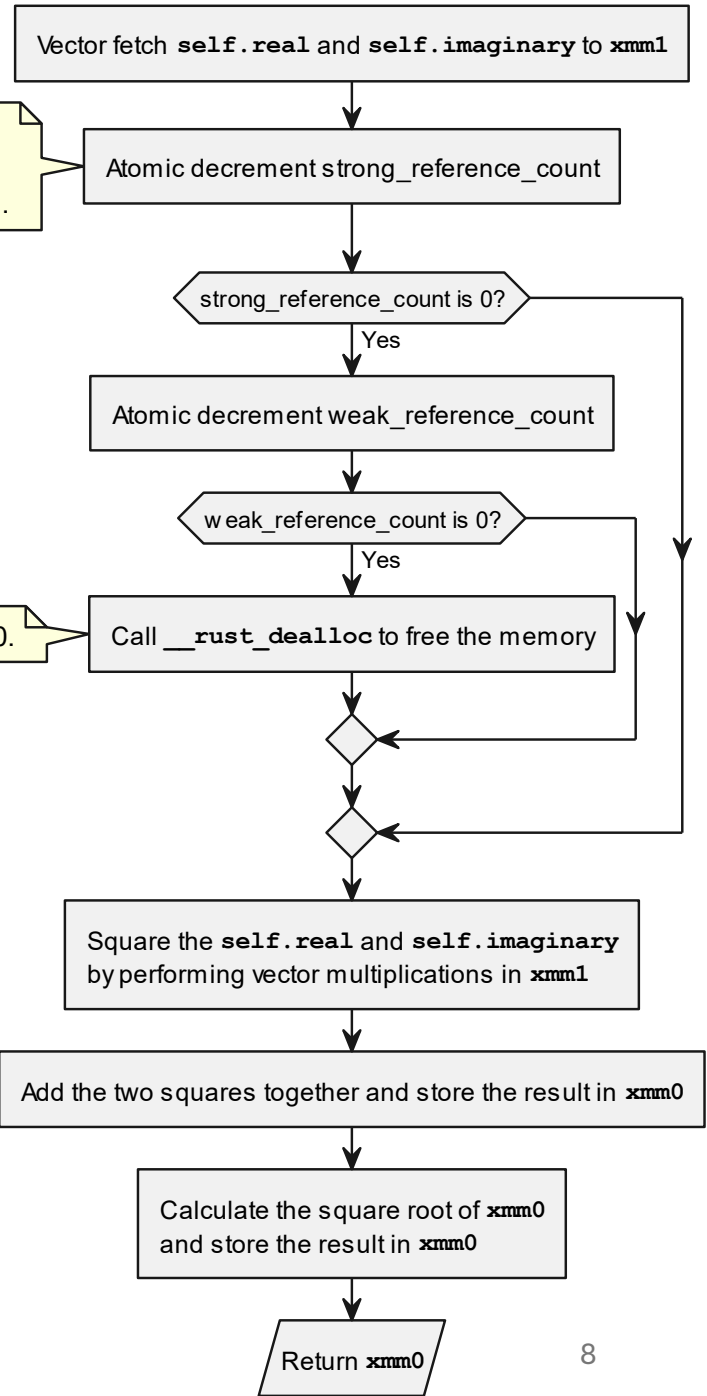
 Return `xmm0`

Assembly flowchart for `magnitude_self_arc`

```
pub fn magnitude_self_arc(self: Arc<Self>) -> f64 {  
    (self.real.powf(2.0) + self.imaginary.powf(2.0)).sqrt()  
}
```

This method owns the `Arc` smart pointer that is going out of scope when the function returns. `Arc` needs to decrement the shared reference count to find if the pointed object should be freed.

Free memory as the reference count has dropped to 0.



Rust **struct** memory layout

```
pub struct MyStruct {  
    a: u8,  
    b: u64,  
    c: i8,  
    d: i64,  
    e: i32,  
}
```

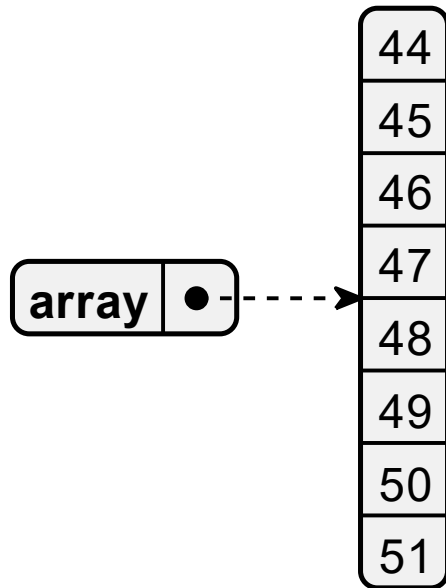
00	b	u64
08	d	i64
16	e	i32
20	a	u8
21	c	i8
22		2-byte padding

C-compatible Rust **struct** memory layout

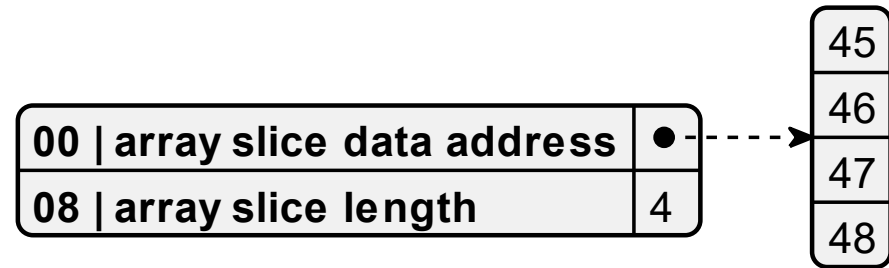
```
#[repr(C)]  
pub struct MyStruct {  
    a: u8,  
    b: u64,  
    c: i8,  
    d: i64,  
    e: i32,  
}
```

00	a	u8
01		7-byte padding
08	b	u64
16	c	i8
17		7-byte padding
24	d	i64
32	e	i32

Array



Array slice



Array Slice Example

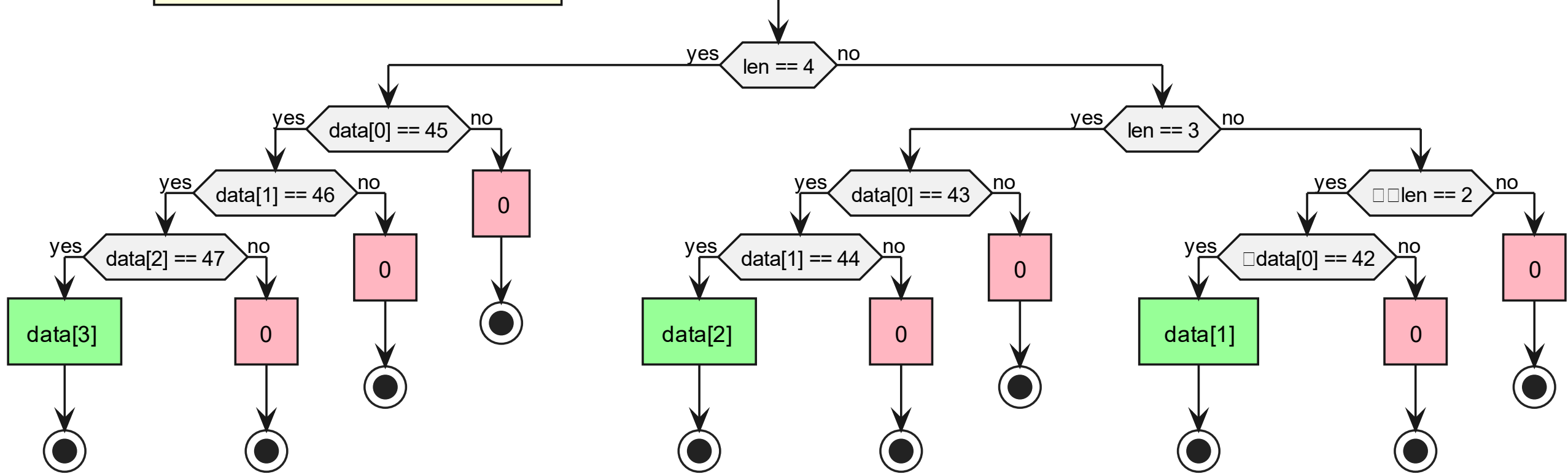
```
pub fn process_array_slice(input: &[i32]) -> i32 {
    match input {
        [42, a] => *a,
        [43, 44, a] => *a,
        [45, 46, 47, a] => *a,
        [..] => 0,
    }
}
```

Assembly flowchart for `process_array_slice`

```
pub fn process_array_slice(input: &[i32]) -> i32 {  
    match input {  
        [42, a] => *a,  
        [43, 44, a] => *a,  
        [45, 46, 47, a] => *a,  
        [...] => 0,  
    }  
}
```

The slice data pointer and length are passed via separate registers.

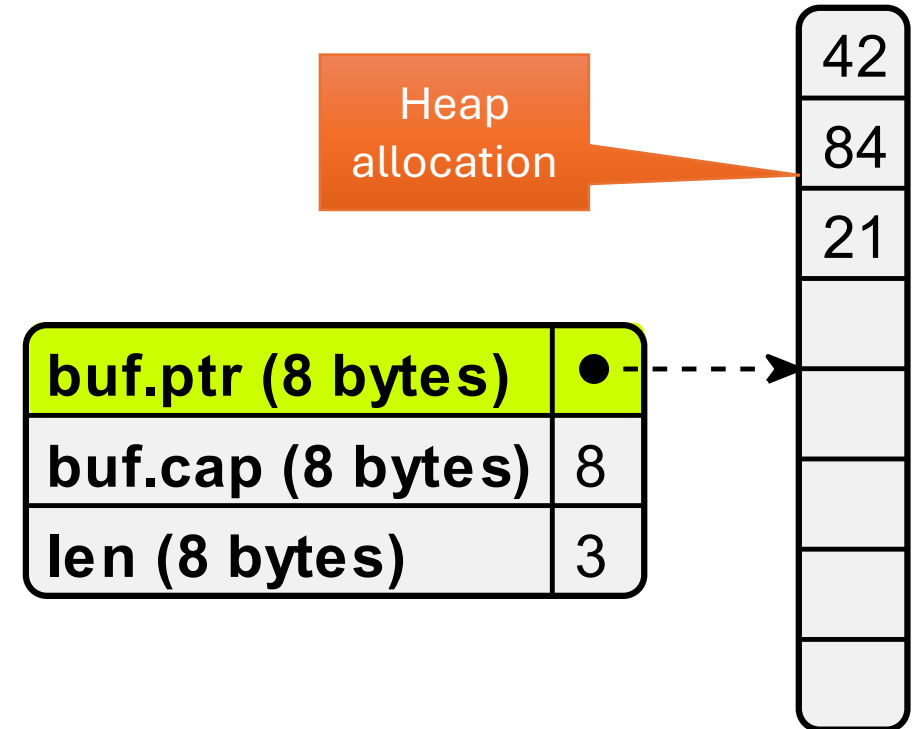
`process_array_slice (data, len)`



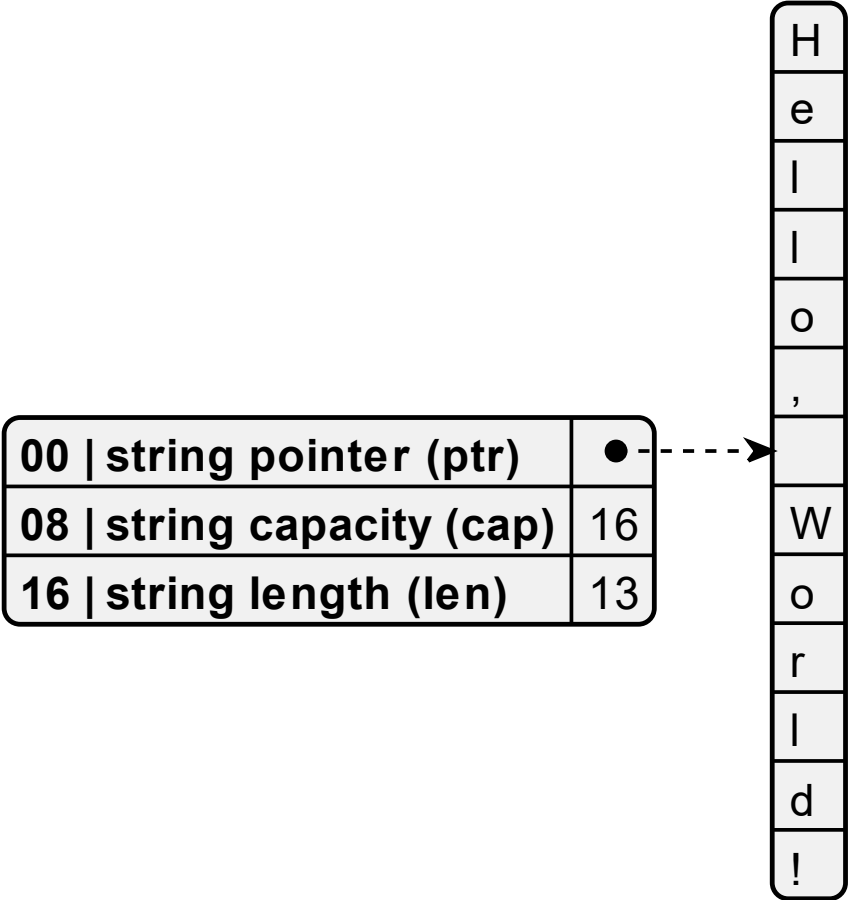
Vec layout

```
pub struct Vec<T, A: Allocator = Global> {  
    // Data pointer and capacity  
    buf: RawVec<T, A>,  
    // Length of the vector  
    len: usize,  
}
```

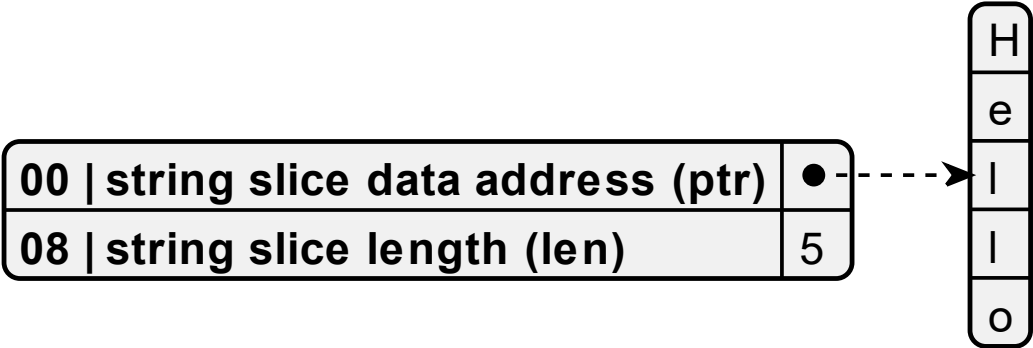
```
struct RawVec<T> {  
    // Points to the heap address that  
    // stores the vector data  
    ptr: NonNull<T>,  
    // Capacity of the vector  
    cap: usize,  
    _marker: PhantomData<T>,  
}
```



String layout



String slice layout



Functional programming in Rust is a 0-cost abstraction

```
type GenFunction<T> = fn(T) -> T;

fn apply_array<T: Copy, const N: usize>(
    input: &[T],
    functions: &[GenFunction<T>; N],
) -> Vec<T> {
    input
        .iter()
        .map(|&item| functions.iter().fold(item, |acc, &f| f(acc)))
        .collect()
}
```

```

type Num = i16;
const ARRAY_SIZE: usize = 1024;

fn add_one(n: Num) -> Num { n + 1 }
fn multiply_by_two(n: Num) -> Num { n * 2 }

const FUNCTIONS_3: [GenFunction<Num>; 3] =
    [multiply_by_two, add_one, multiply_by_two];

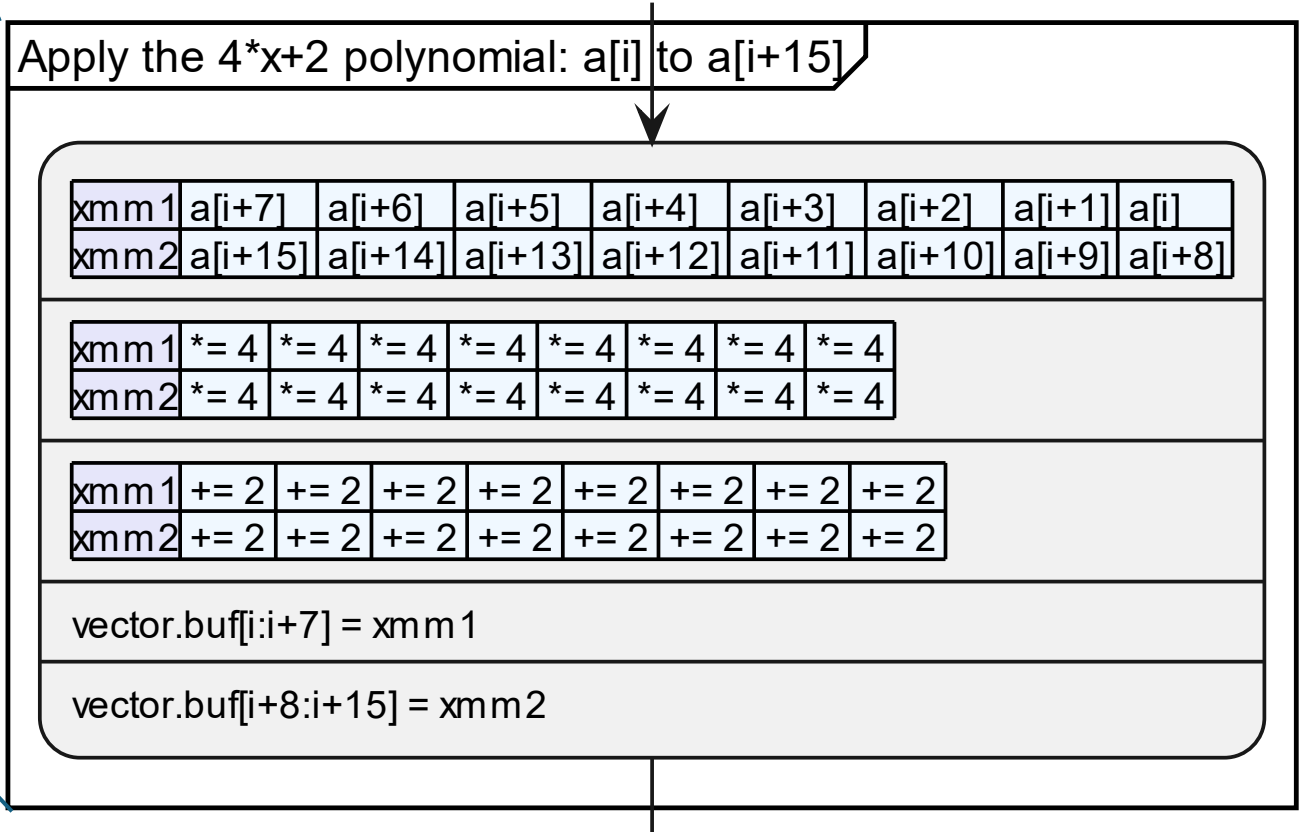
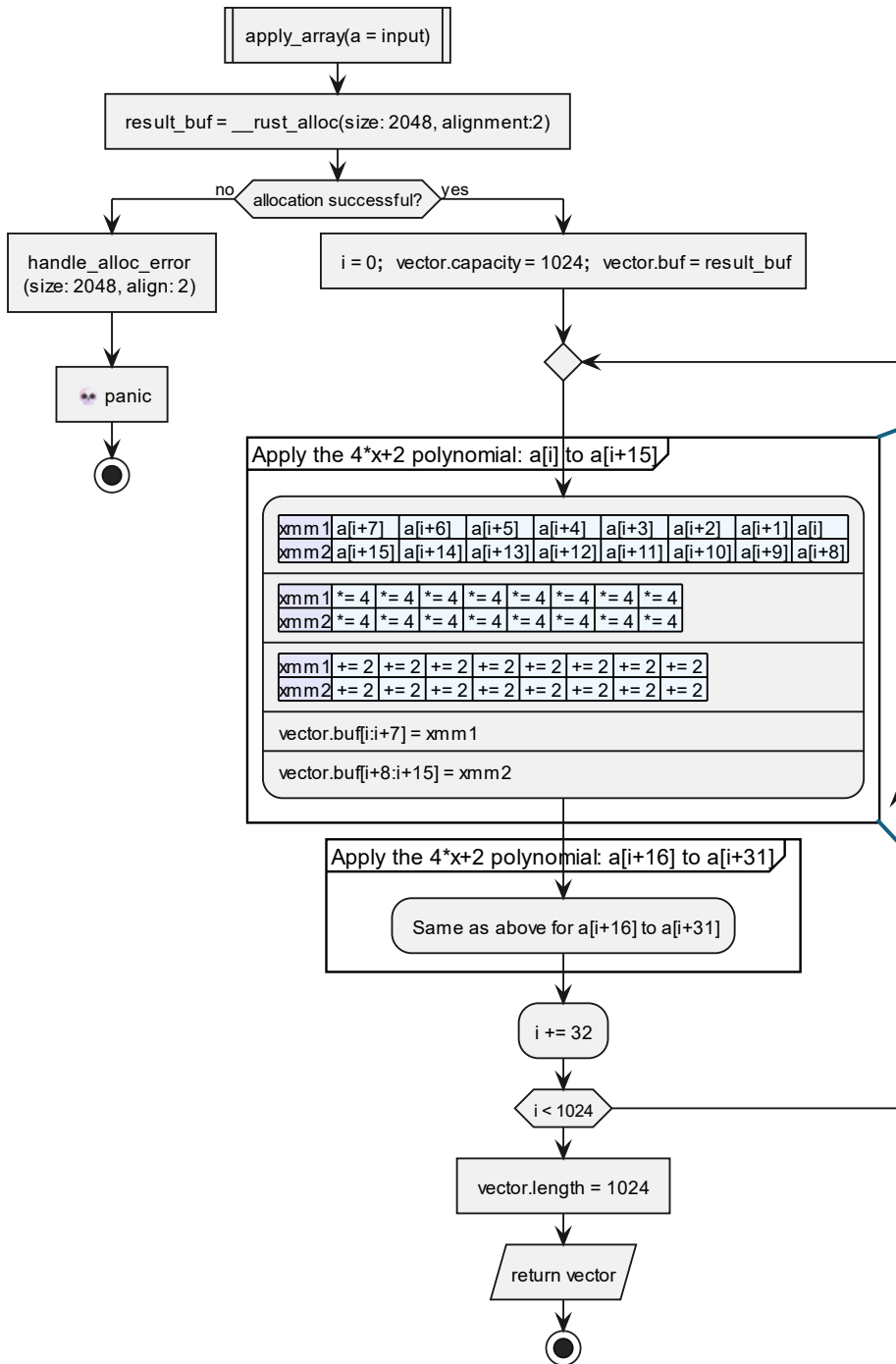
pub fn apply_array(input: &[Num; ARRAY_SIZE]) -> Vec<Num> {
    apply_functions(input, &FUNCTIONS_3)
}

```

The compiler inlines the three functions into a single polynomial

Function	Polynomial	Folded Polynomial
multiply_by_two	$2x$	$2x$
add_one	$x + 1$	$2x + 1$
multiply_by_two	$2x$	$4x + 2$

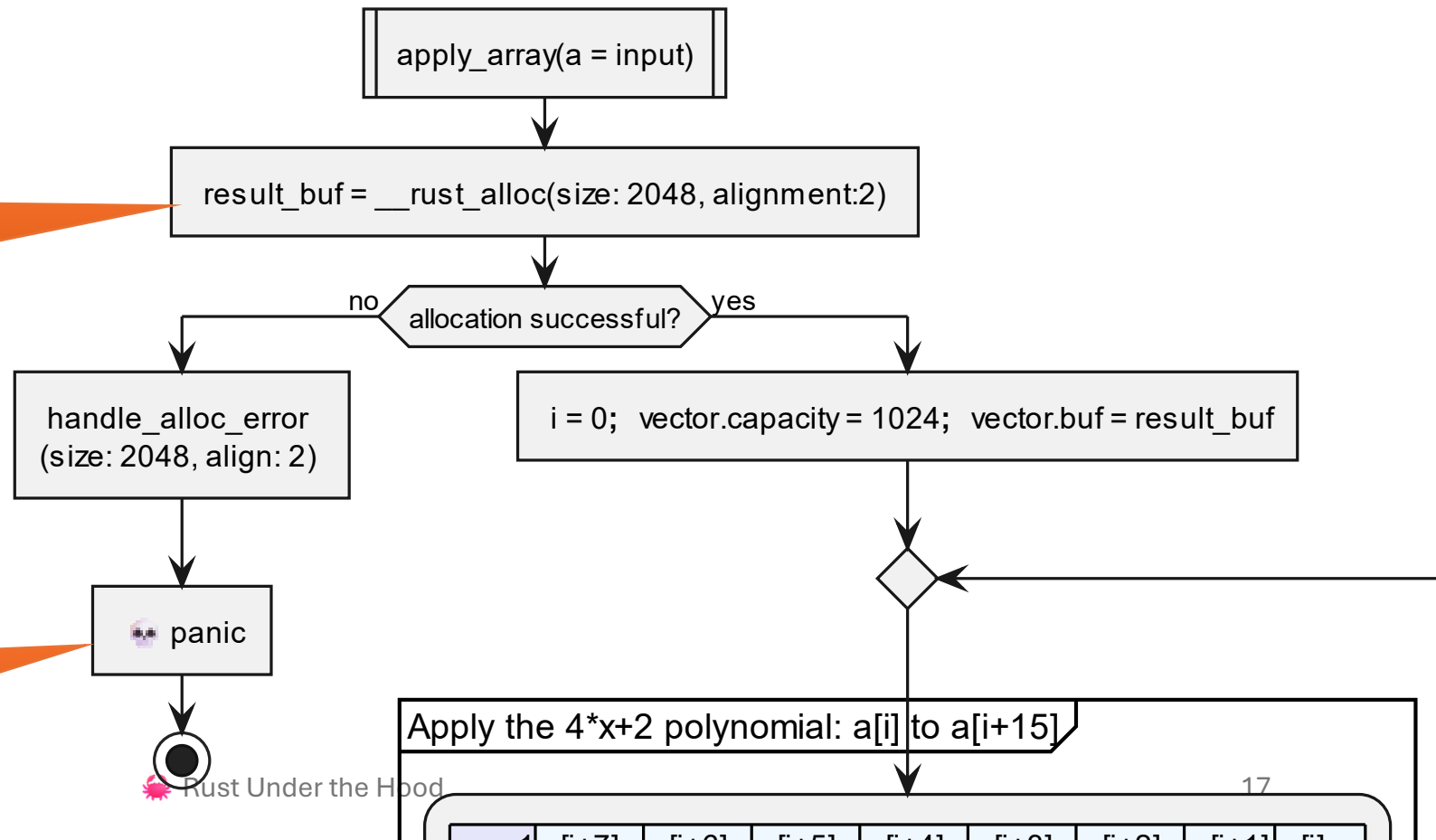
Assembly flowchart of `apply_array`




```
fn apply_array<T: Copy, const N: usize>(input: &[T], functions: &[GenFunction<T>; N]) -> Vec<T>
{
    input
        .iter()
        .map(|&item| functions.iter().fold(item, |acc, &f| f(acc)))
        .collect()
}
```

Heap allocation for returned vector

Function panics if memory allocation for the vector fails



Traits, Vtables and Tail Calls

```
type Num = f64;

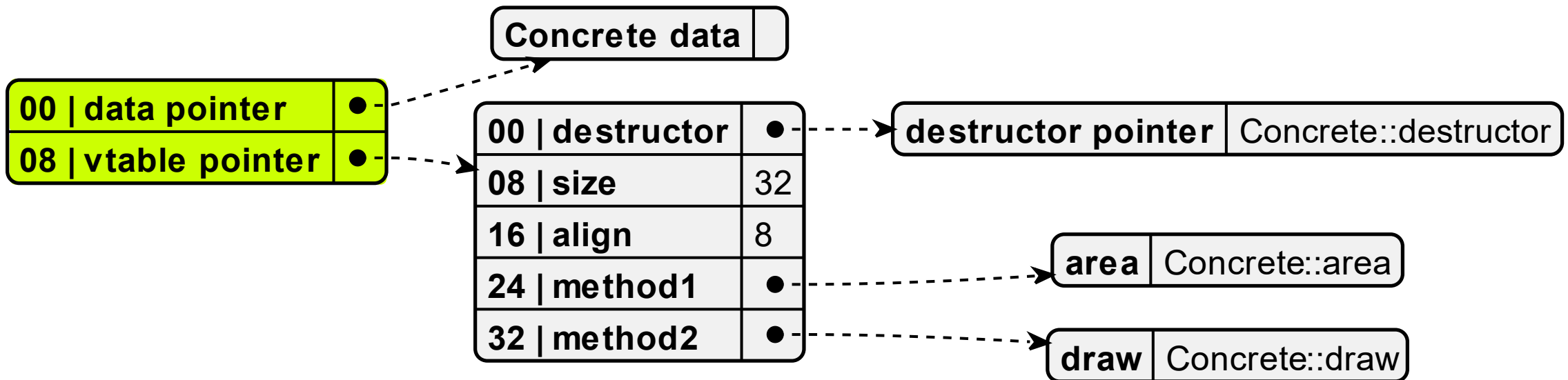
pub trait Shape {
    type T;
    fn area(&self) -> Self::T;
}

pub trait Draw: Shape {
    fn draw(&self);
}

pub fn draw_dynamic(a: &dyn Draw<T = Num>) {
    a.draw();
}

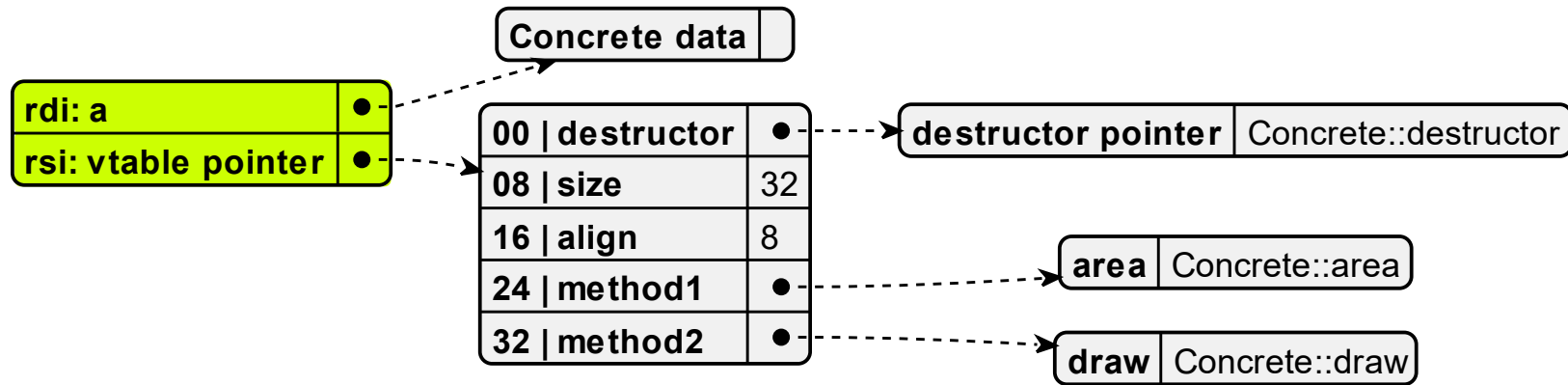
pub fn draw_and_report_area_dynamic(a: &dyn Draw<T = Num>) -> Num {
    a.draw();
    a.area()
}
```

Dynamic dispatch via fat pointers



- Concrete-type methods are referenced via a pointer
- Size, alignment, and destructor are needed for freeing concrete types via the fat-pointer
 - E.g. Box containing a fat pointer is dropped

```
pub fn draw_dynamic(a: &dyn Draw<T = Num>) {
    a.draw();
}
```

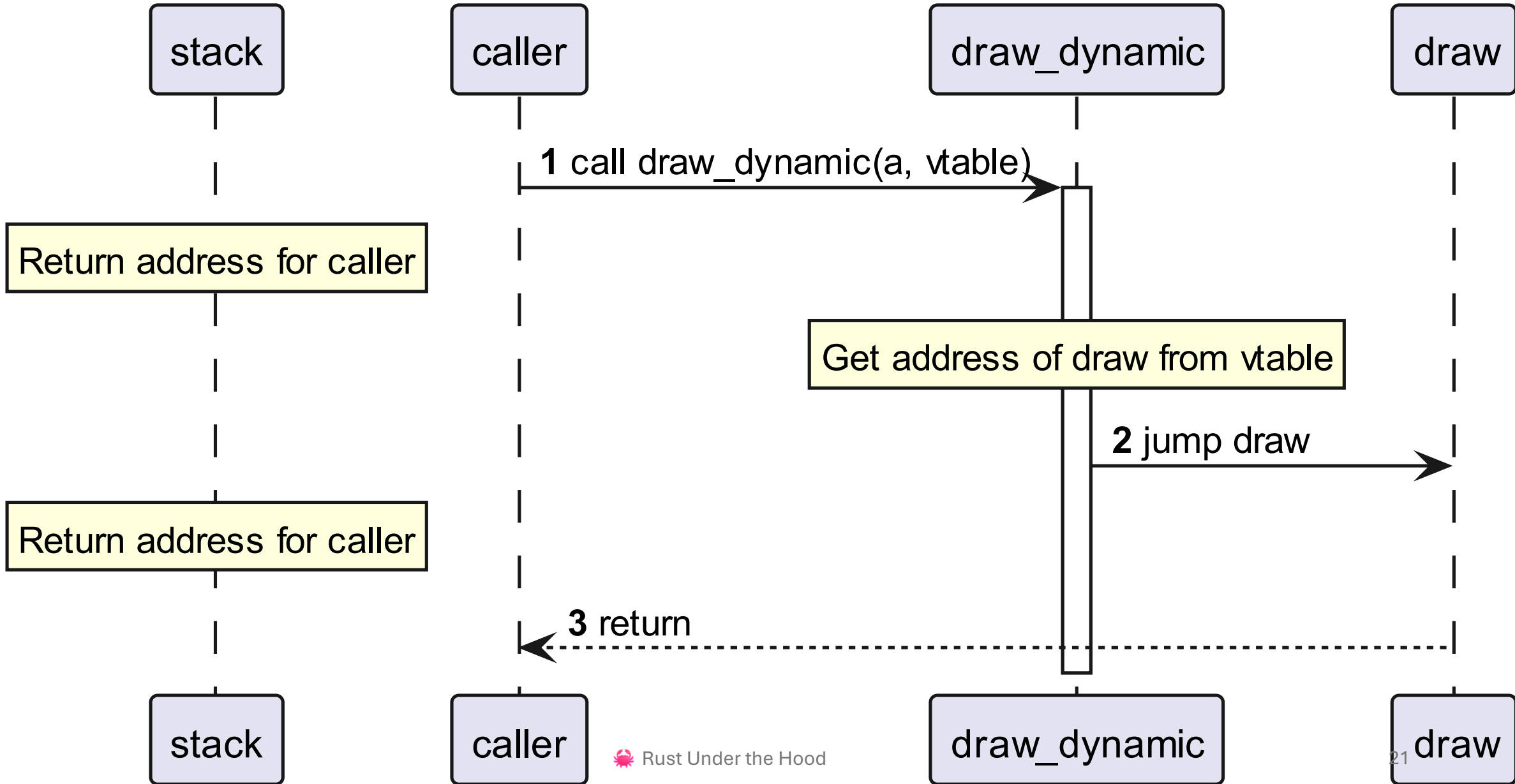


```
example::draw_dynamic:
jmp    qword ptr [rsi + 32] ; ↪ a.draw() is called via vtable
                                ; tail call optimization is applied.
```

Tail call optimization:

- jmp instead of call
- rdi already contains `a`


Jump to draw (tail call optimization)



```
pub fn draw_and_report_area_dynamic(a: &dyn Draw<T = Num>) -> Num {
    a.draw();
    a.area()
}
```

example::draw_and_report_area_dynamic:

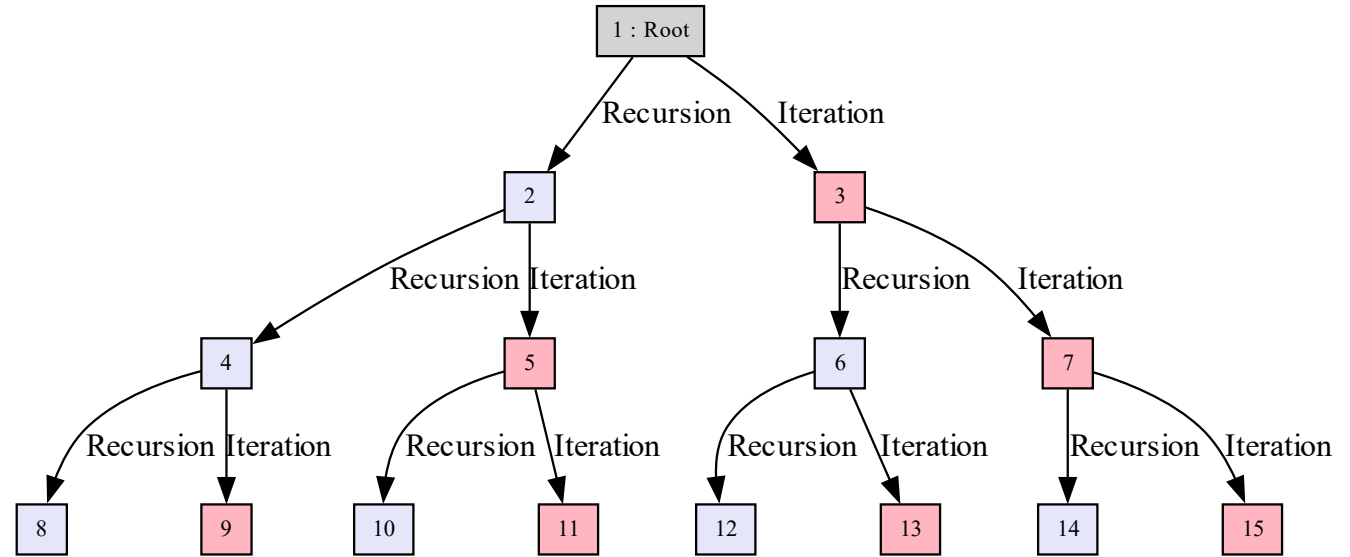
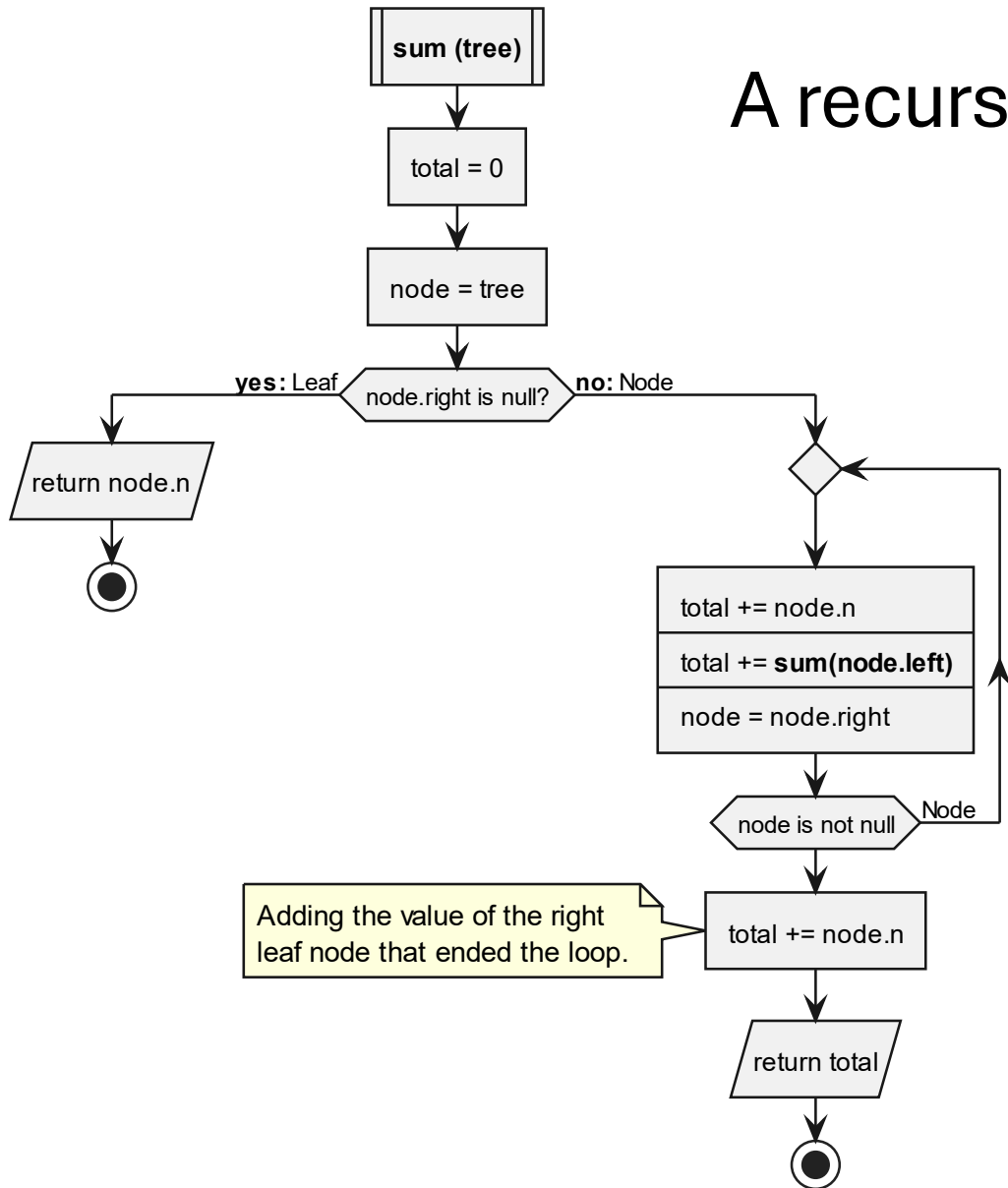
```
push    r14
push    rbx
push    rax

mov     r14, rsi           ; Save the address of the vtable
mov     rbx, rdi          ; Save the address of a
call    qword ptr [rsi + 32] ; a.draw() is called via the vtable
mov     rdi, rbx
mov     rax, r14
add     rsp, 8
pop     rbx
pop     r14
jmp     qword ptr [rax + 24] ;  Tail call optimized a.area() jump
```

Recursion and tail call optimization

```
pub enum Tree<T> {  
    Node(T, Box<Tree<T>>, Box<Tree<T>>),  
    Leaf(T),  
}  
use Tree::{Leaf, Node};  
  
pub fn sum(tree: &Tree<u64>) -> u64 {  
    match tree {  
        Leaf(n) => *n,  
        Node(n, left, right) => *n + sum(left) + sum(right),  
    }  
}
```

A recursive tail call is converted into a loop



```
pub fn sum(tree: &Tree<u64>) -> u64 {  
    match tree {  
        Leaf(n) => *n,  
        Node(n, left, right) => *n + sum(left) + sum(right),  
    }  
}
```


Closures

```
pub fn make_quadratic(a: f64, b: f64, c: f64) -> impl Fn(f64) -> f64 {  
    move |x| a*x*x + b*x + c  
}
```

Closure
memory layout

00	a	5.0
08	b	4.0
16	c	3.0

Assembly of `make_quadratic`

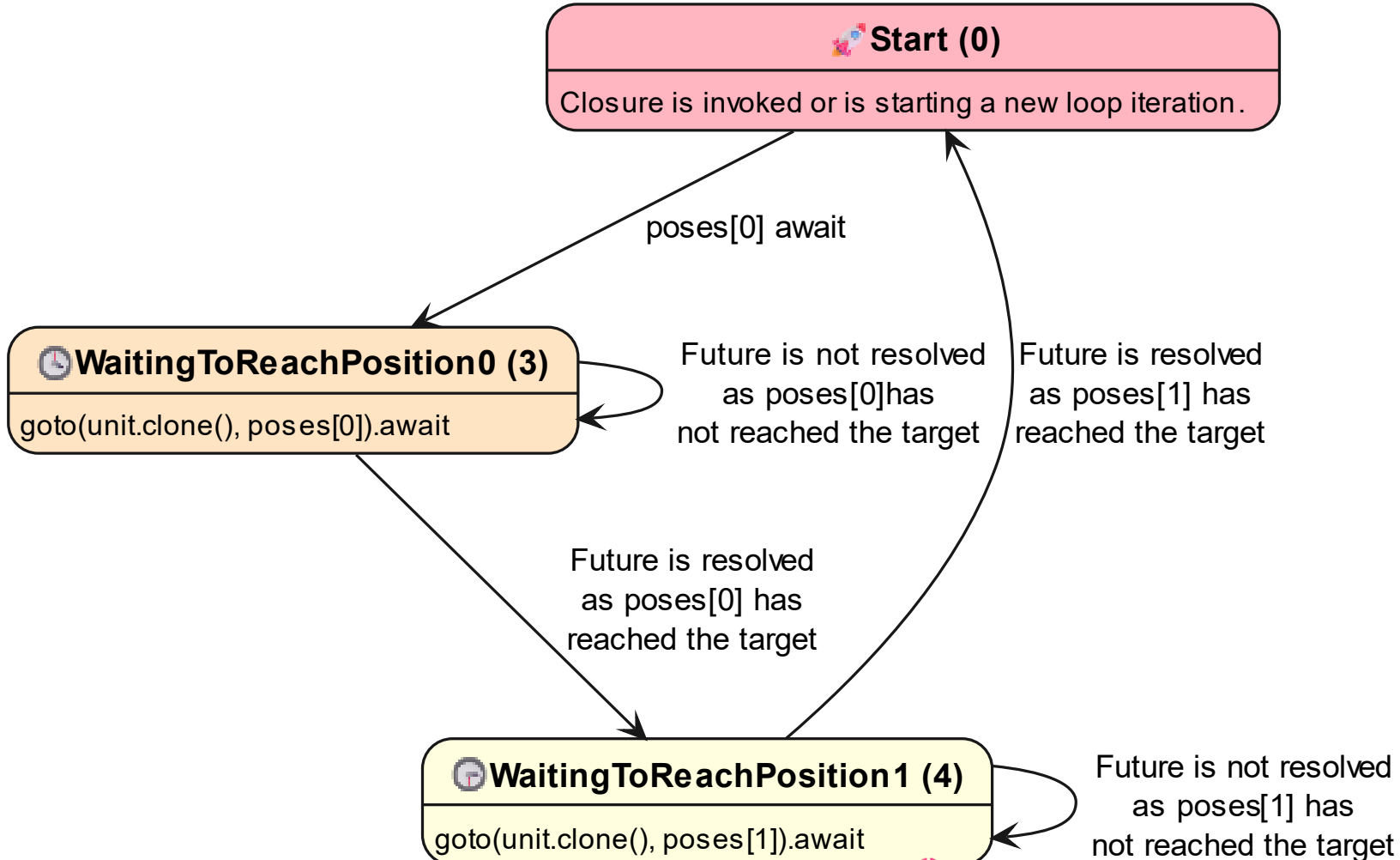
```
example::make_quadratic:  
mov     rax, rdi                ; rax = Address of the closure  
movsd   qword ptr [rdi], xmm0   ; closure.a = a  
movsd   qword ptr [rdi + 8], xmm1 ; closure.b = b  
movsd   qword ptr [rdi + 16], xmm2 ; closure.c = c  
ret                                           ; Return address of closure in rax
```

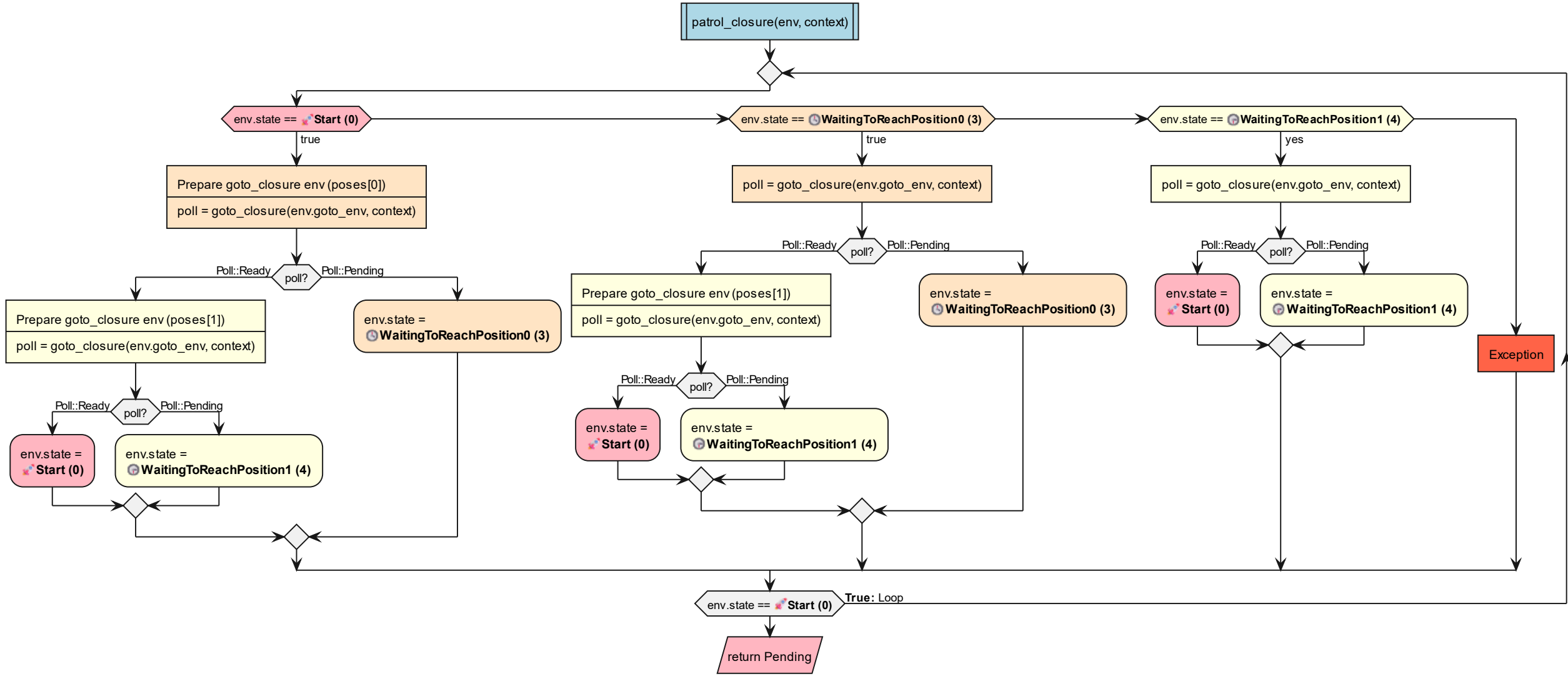
An infinite loop with async/await

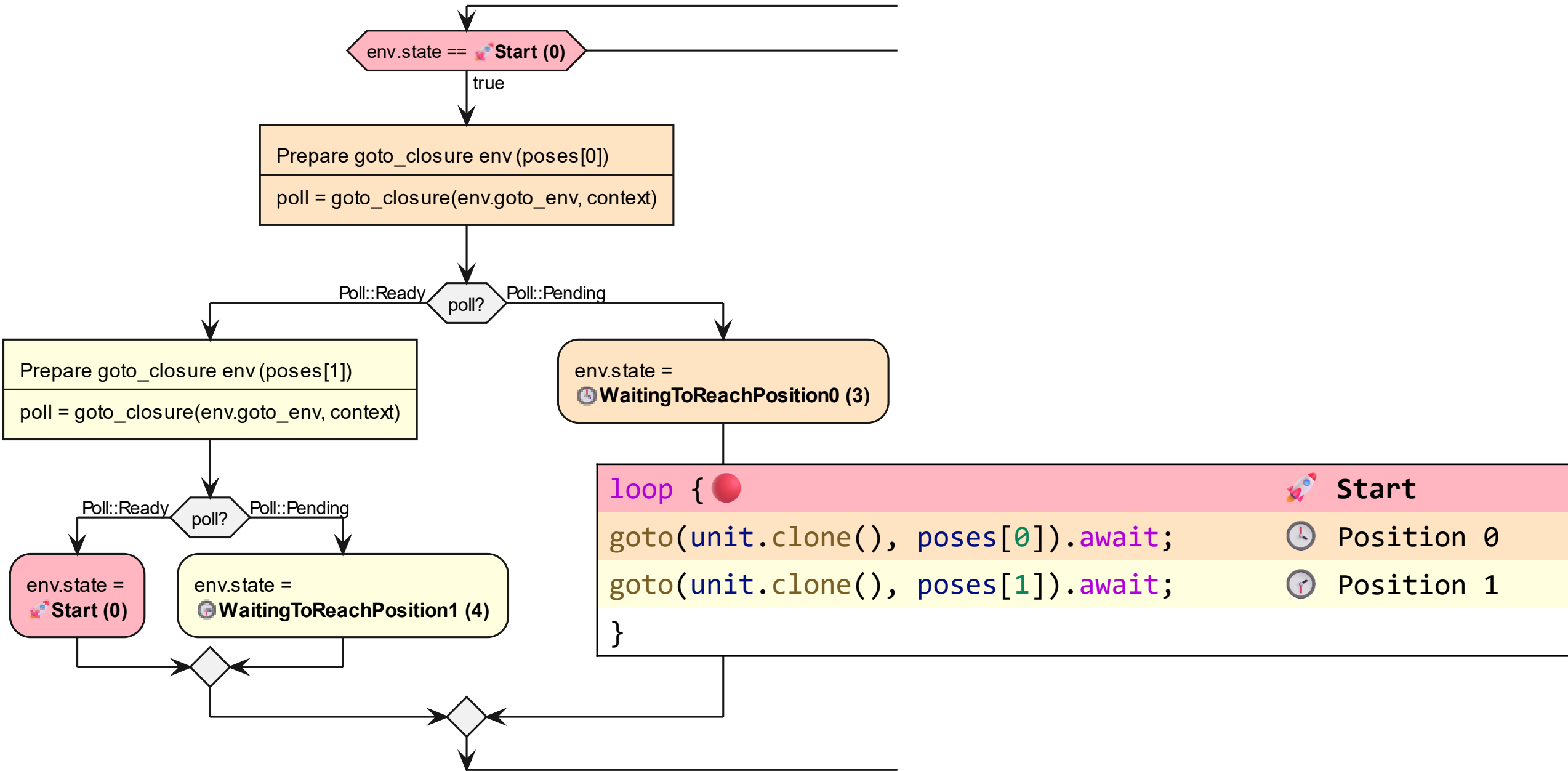
```
async fn patrol(unit: UnitRef, poses: [i32; 2]) {  
    loop {  
        goto(unit.clone(), poses[0]).await;  
        goto(unit.clone(), poses[1]).await;  
    }  
}
```

Async state machine

```
async fn patrol(unit: UnitRef, poses: [i32; 2]) {  
    loop {  
        goto(unit.clone(), poses[0]).await;  
        goto(unit.clone(), poses[1]).await;  
    }  
}
```



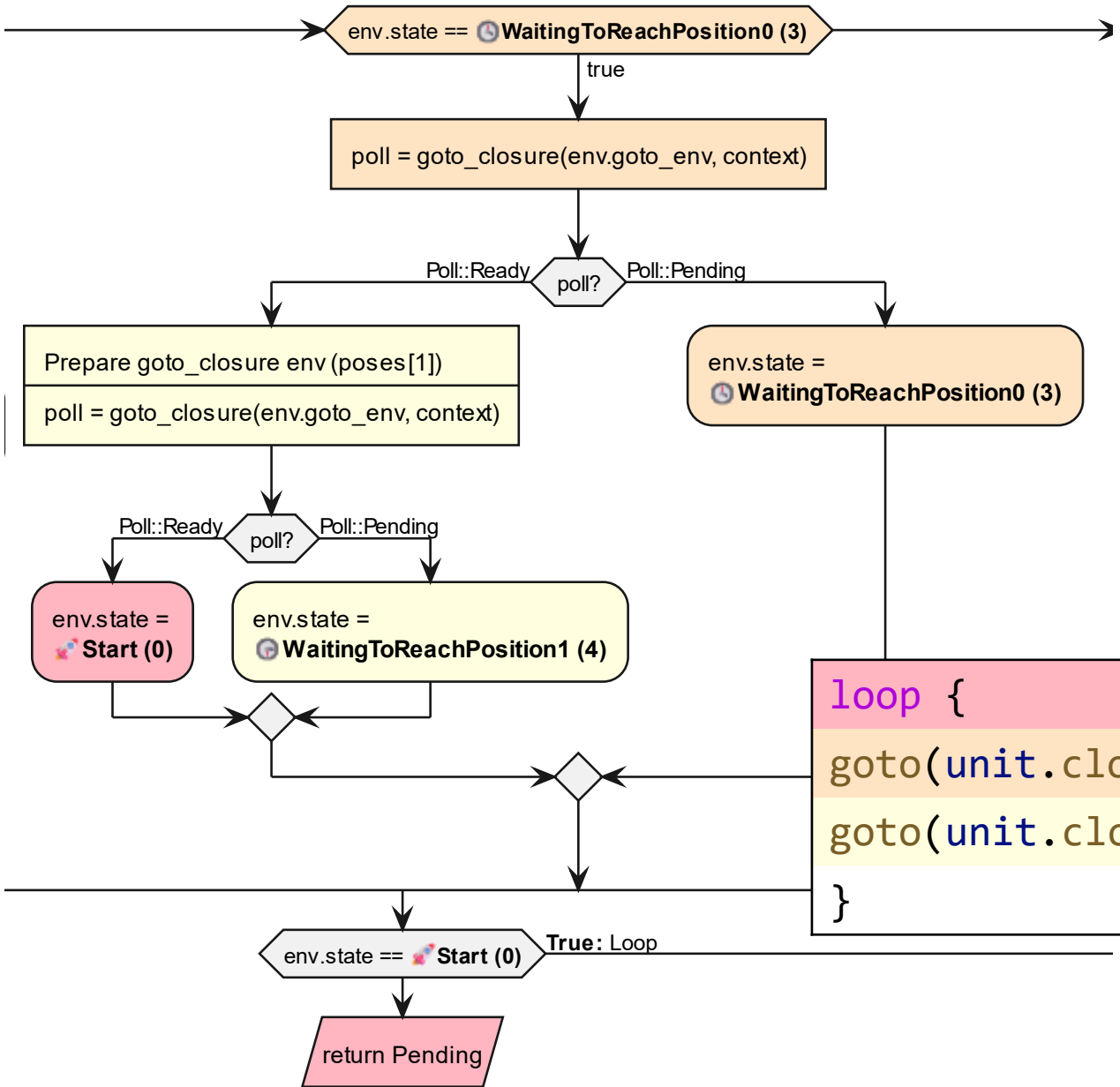




```

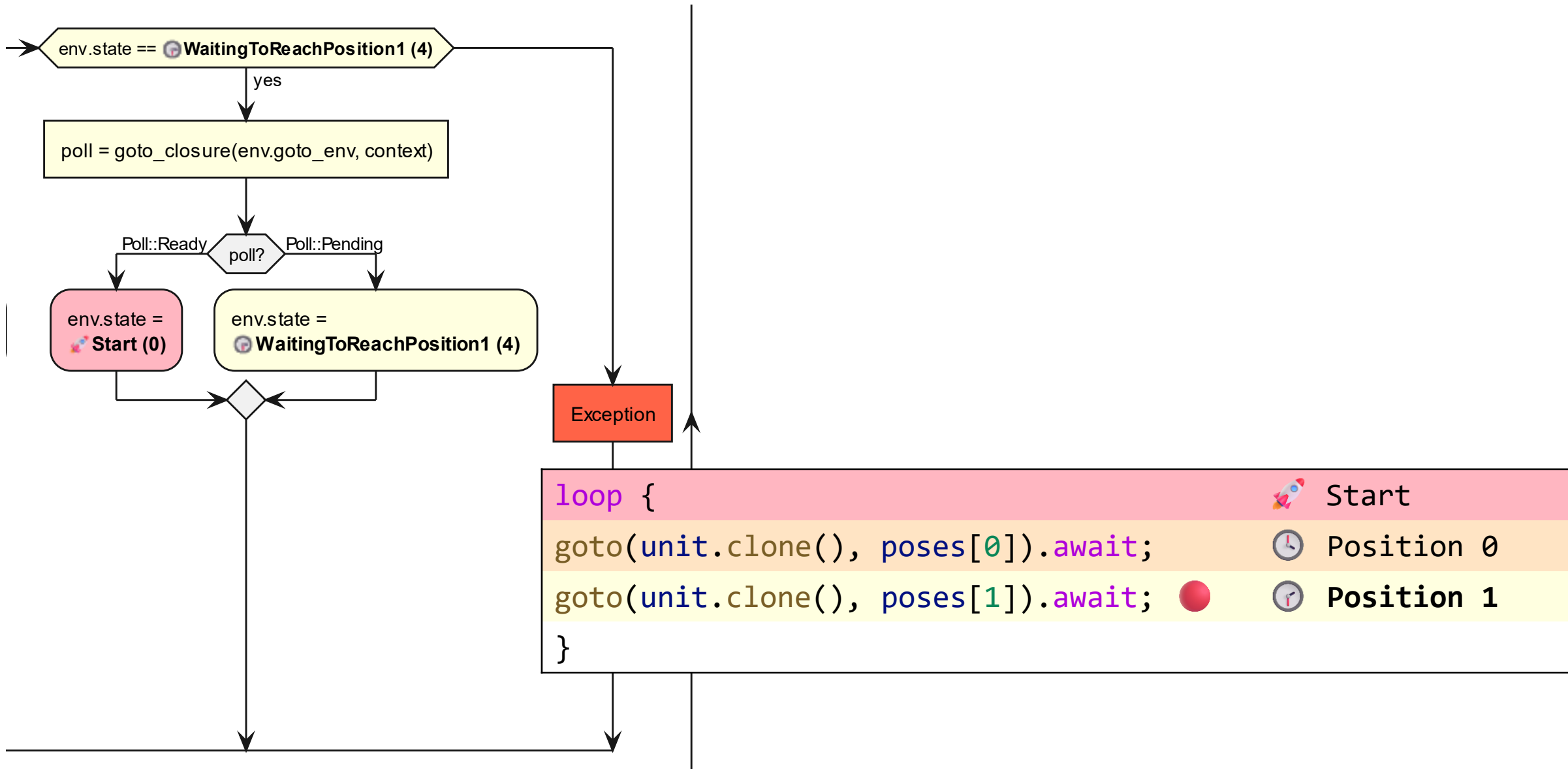
loop {
  goto(unit.clone(), poses[0]).await;
  goto(unit.clone(), poses[1]).await;
}

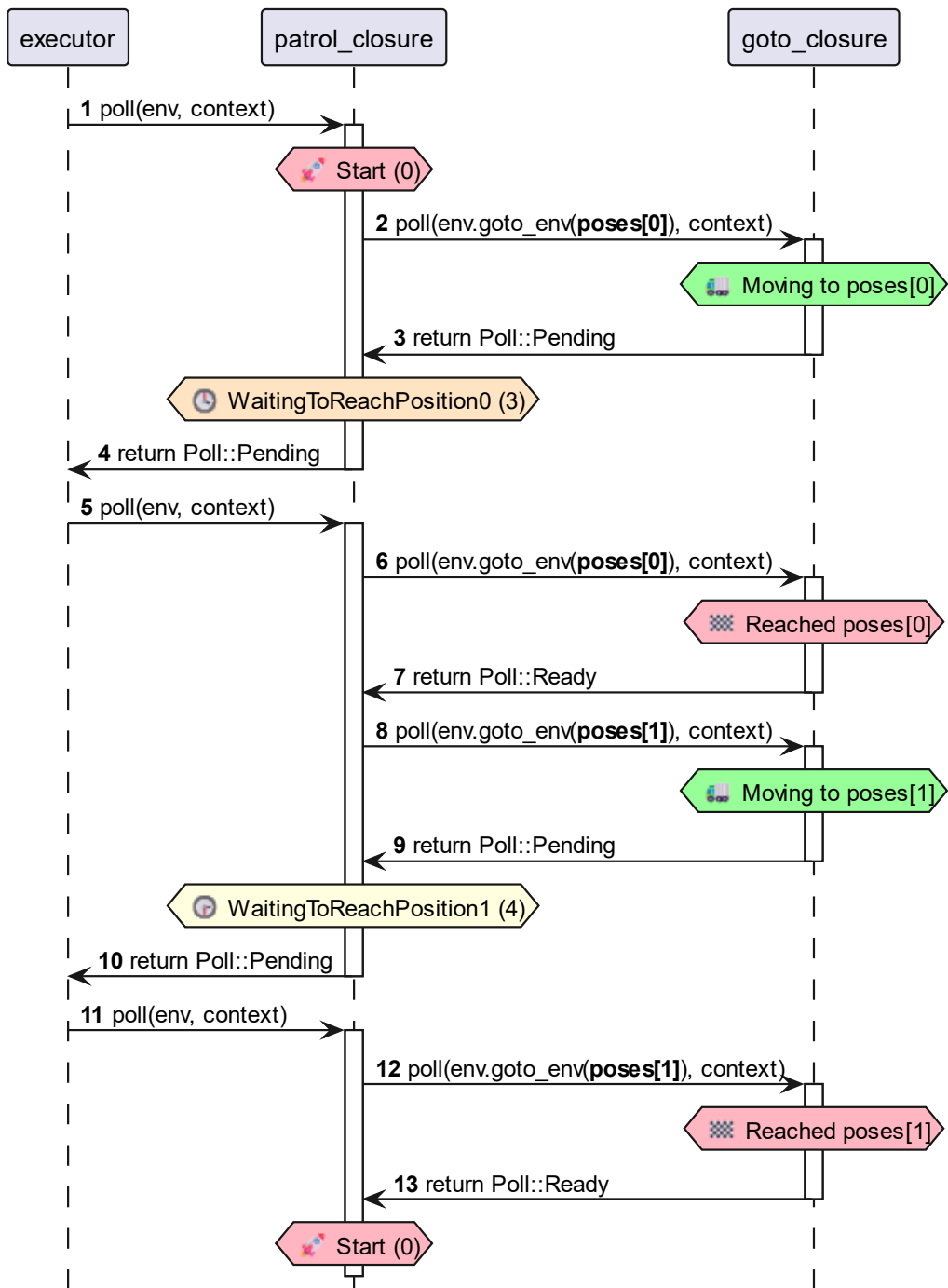
```



```

loop {
  🚀 Start
  goto(unit.clone(), poses[0]).await; ⌚ Position 0
  goto(unit.clone(), poses[1]).await; ⌚ Position 1
}
  
```





Async executor polling

```

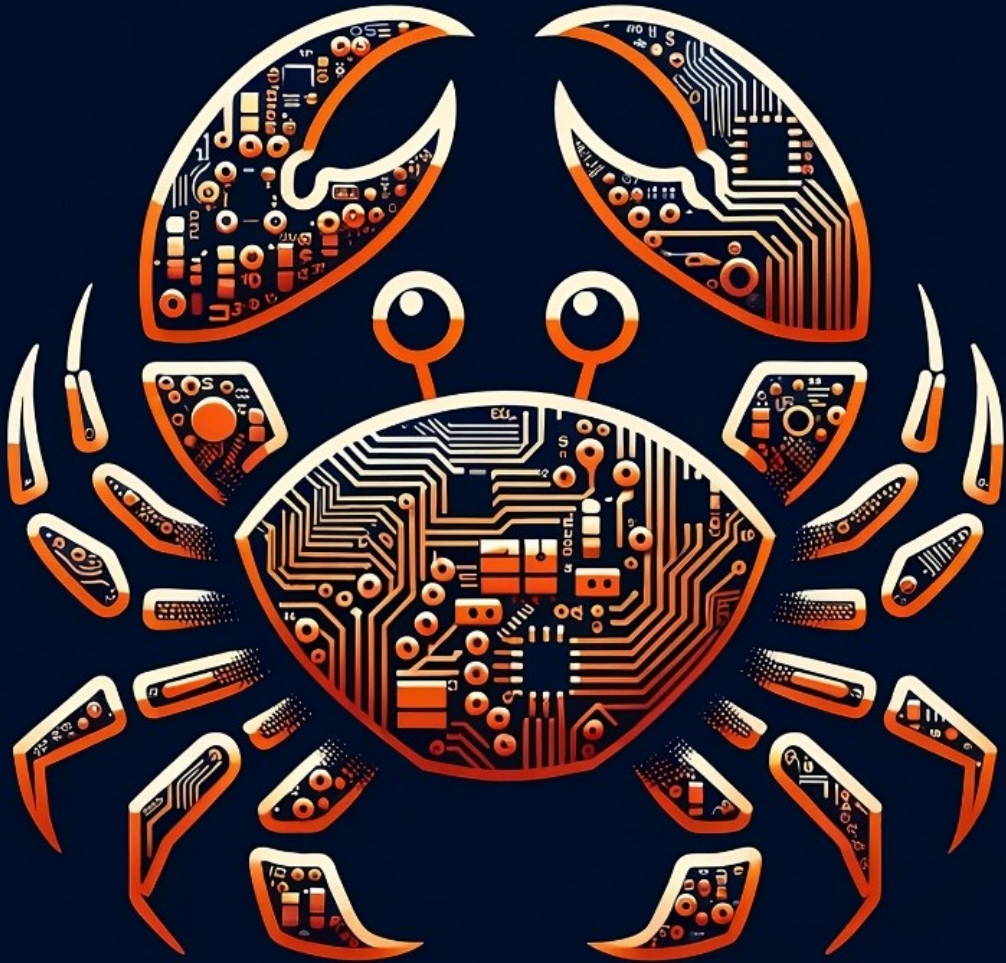
async fn patrol(unit: UnitRef, poses: [i32; 2]) {
    loop {
        goto(unit.clone(), poses[0]).await;
        goto(unit.clone(), poses[1]).await;
    }
}
  
```


We covered

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Thank You

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