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HERR STEINHARDT'S NEMESIS

BY J. MACLAREN COBBAN.

CHAPTER I—Continued.

"Ah," he said to me, "so you've come to try and enlighten our Hottentots about a thing or two in this world and the next. Well, you can only do your best, you know; we'll try to make you comfortable and back you up. Come all the way from London today, I suppose—have you got yourself fixed up yet in the village?—what some author chap—Matthew or Mark Summat or other—calls a Lancashire Hell-hole. Well, we're not quite so bad as that yet here, but we're getting to it. But it can't be helped, you know; we've gone forward and we must go forward, as the rabbit said when he let 't' weasel get him into a hole. Yes, 'Hell-hole'; but it should be a useful change for you; it may give you an idea when you want to describe to your congregation the real—"

"Jim, lad," interrupted his sister, "you're forgetting yourself!"

"Oh! Oh!—ah, well, I can remember, you know, when all round about here was as sweet and pretty a place—I was born back o' t' White Moss" (indicating that locality over his shoulder), "Topleton way."

Thus the full, quaint and careless stream of his talk flowed on, meandering about a person and another, this subject and that. He seemed a well of curious and fearsome Lancashire lore—lore of the days when spinning and weaving were done in the cottage homes of remote hamlets and homesteads, when Lancashire energy applied itself to useful work and not to useless toil, when its fabrics were made to be worn and not merely to be sold—the days when the steam engine was not yet with its all-devouring, all-enslaving machinery.

We had talked thus for about an hour—or, rather, listened to Mr. Birley talk—when he paused and looked round, but she did not, his chair for some time.

"What's got 'Manu'?" he said, addressing his sister. "Is he stuck till midnight in his laboratory again? Doesn't seem as if that smoke was to come off tonight. In Paul's house now it used to be 'Smoke where you please'—drawing room or anywhere. Poor Paul!"

I was astonished and alarmed to see Miss Lacroix rise hurriedly, and glide without a word from the room. Mrs. Steinhardt made as if she would follow her, but she did not. She sank back in her chair with a sigh.

"Jim! Jim!" she exclaimed, reproachfully. "Why will you say things, when you know the poor girl cannot bear allusions to it?"

"Ah," said Birley, humbly. "Poor lass!—Her father," he explained, turning to me, "has never come back from London. Poor Paul!" He was visibly affected.

"He had to go to the law courts there," said Mrs. Steinhardt, "more than a year ago, about some dreadful business of the chemical works—he was my husband's partner."

"Hildersheimer v. Lacroix and Steinhardt" (Frank turned on the music stool to correct his uncle's pronunciation.) "Well," said he, "that's all right; any way that was the case. May be—turning again to me—"you remember it in the papers. It was about the infringement of a chemical patent 'Manu' had put them up to in his eternal laboratory."

"Nay, uncle," interrupted Frank, flushing up. "It wasn't father's fault more than anyone else's."

"Ay, lad," said Birley, "of course you know all about it. But you're right to stand up for your father. However, Paul, as the chief of the firm, went up to London to fight the case; he fought and lost to the tune of 20,000 pounds damages—which, I suppose, drove him mad, poor fellow, for he's never come back—made away with himself, very likely, or, somehow, got made away with."

"But, surely," interrupted Frank again, "it could hardly be the damages did it, uncle? You remember he went to Paris after the trial about some pattern business for the print works, and then got back to London again."

"Ay, lad—out 20,000 pounds damages can make a man feel very queer all the way to Paris and back. At any rate, poor Paul's gone—lost in the great London wilderness."

"It is a very extraordinary affair," said I. "But I don't remember seeing anything of it in the papers."

"It got into the papers, though," said Birley, "to some extent—not much. We didn't want a noise about a private, painful thing like that."

"But," said I, wondering, "I suppose inquiries were made high and low?"

"They made inquiries high and low," said Birley; "they laid detectives on, and everything, but nothing came of it. Did there, Frank?"

"No," said Frank—"nothing at all."

"Did you try to trace him out of London?" I asked. "I suppose they did," said Birley.

"Yes—oh yes," said Frank. "I wondered that Birley should keep using the word 'they.' Had he borne no share in the investigation himself? I had my thought answered at once."

"I wasn't able to go to London myself," said Birley; "I was laid up with a broken leg; and when I got better, I didn't think it was any use my going. There was an end of Paul—that was certain; for he wasn't the man to knock under like, and get lost just."

In a little while Miss Lacroix returned, with apology for her withdrawal.

"I had a little of headache," said she.

I now saw more clearly the encroachments which grief, and what I cannot describe by other words than "anxious waiting," had made on a young life which, would, unoppressed, I was sure, have been so full of spirit and mirth. I longed there and then with an earnest desire that I might do something to brighten her life, to remove the weight of uncertainty and grief which burdened it, and preyed upon it.

But I had little further opportunity for talk with her that night. In a few minutes Mr. Steinhardt returned. We heard then what were the casualties resulting from the falling of the bell tower. A horse had been killed, as, also, had been a sow with her litter, and two pigs had been so injured that the butcher had to be summoned. We were now invited into the smoking room; but Mr. Birley rose, and said he must be going; he would smoke his pipe on the way home "wi' t' parson."

"Parson smokes, I suppose?" said he, laying his hand on my shoulder.

So he and I departed together. The valley was asleep under a white pall of fog; but the weird tongues of flame still flickered on the slope and ridge behind and beyond us (from cove ovens, my companion explained), and the tall chimneys dreamily and intermittently smoked. The great chimney of the chemical works, however, emitted not so much smoke as a thin pinkish vapor, which stole away imperceptibly over the neighborhood to poison all green things, and to filter through the cracks and crevices of doors and windows, to trouble sleepers with lethargy and headache.

"By George!" exclaimed my companion. "He'll get fined again some day. Paul used to be always at him about it. Poor Paul!"

So ended my first evening in Timperley—a memorable evening for me. I had made the acquaintance of one whom I have reason now to call as dear a friend as I have ever known, and as good a man as fortune has ever neglected, and of another who is now the dearest of all earth's creatures to me.

CHAPTER II.

I frequently looked in upon the ladies at Timperley Hall, and took a four-o'clock cup of tea with them (not, however, to the neglect of other, if less pleasant, parochial visitations). During these visits we talked without that constraint which somehow Mr. Steinhardt's presence imposed upon us. Miss Lacroix and I agreed in our opinions concerning the ruthlessness with which Lancashire pushed on its industrial revolution (sometimes even ourselves) by the warmth with which we would discuss the outrage done to man and nature.

One afternoon we talked thus. It was well on in springtime; the stream was running full and all nature, in spite of drawbacks, was striving to look green. I told them how that morning I had stood by the little plank bridge just below Timperley Hall, looking across at the dreadfully lumbered little peninsula on which the ruined spinning mill stood, when there turned up at my elbow an old man whom I knew by sight as an ex-handloom weaver.

"A fine brook, that, parson," he said.

"Yes," said I, suiting my reply to what I thought his personality; "what a pity no trout seem to know of it!"

"Ah, but," said he, sadly, "there were none for money; though there's been none for money, a trout! Awfey anything to live in that, bout gettin' cured first, like a red herrin' or a sallymander! There was a lad drowned like as it might be this spring, and he were never found till like as it might be next back end, down there in that mud; he were not gone at all, but he were cured thro' and thro'; black, mon, black!"

"This I told; and then I continued: 'Drowning, they say, is an easy death; but to drown in such a stream as that seems horribly repulsive. I fancy no one would care to commit suicide in it.'"

I perceived my stupid blunder as soon as I had spoken; I had not thought that what I said could be taken as "allusive" to the disappearance of Mr. Lacroix.

"Excuse me," said Miss Lacroix, rising hurriedly. "I do not feel very well. Do not come, Mrs. Steinhardt; I shall get better by myself."

I of course made apology to Mrs. Steinhardt for my stupidity.

"Yes," said she; "you see she can't bear any kind of allusion to her father's end. She told me soon after she came here (she couldn't, you know, go on living in that big house up there all by herself)—she told me a strange dream she had once or twice when her father was missing—the strangest thing, but I scolded her so, she has never said another word to me about it. Still I fancy she thinks a great deal about her father, though she does not say much; they were rare and fond o' one another."

That very evening I unexpectedly learned from Miss Lacroix herself what that strange dream was. I was returning by moonlight from the house of a parishioner along that same road which first brought me upon the valley. Passing the pond on my right (which I before mentioned as reflecting the lighted windows of the many storeyed mill), I observed a figure, cloaked and hooded, standing on the margin of the pond under the trees. I paused a minute, while my heart beat with apprehension, and then I passed through a gap in the fence and approached. The figure turned quickly, as if im-

phant at the intrusion, and in the pale moonlight I recognized the face of Miss Lacroix.

"Miss Lacroix!" I exclaimed. "You here!"

"Oh, Mr. Unwin," she began, in evident-tension of feeling, "I could not rest indoors, and so I came down to see Uncle Jacques; I could not remain with him, and so I came out here to look at this, which always fascinates me. 'Look!'"

I stood by her side and looked; this is what I saw: An inverted reflection of the tall chimney of the chemical works which was emitting, as it often did late in the evening, its strange pinkish vapor; this vapor in the reflection looked as if it were slowly rising from the bottom of the pond, and, as its color blended with the tints the water somehow took as the breeze ruffled it this way or that, produced the impression of a slowly simmering cauldron of red, green, and copper-brown flame. This was so wonderfully weird a fancy that I confess I felt my skin creep. I turned my eyes away, and then looked again, and again, but the impression was ever the same.

"It's indeed very strange!" I said.

"Is it not?" said she. "You see it also?"

Mr. Unwin, she went on, turning suddenly to me, and speaking with a vehemence which increased as the words came. "I have wished to tell you. You are a clergyman, and must hear me make my confession; and you will keep it secret to yourself. You have heard, perhaps, that my father—my dear father!—is thought to be dead. Now just a year ago?"

"I have," I said.

"He went to London and to Paris on business, and he never came back. It happened while he was away that I lived all by myself at home. I slept sound that night without dreaming, when suddenly I had a dream. I saw vapor or flame slowly rising just like that—I saw a man plunge into it, and I knew the man was my father—I felt he was. I awoke at once all trembling and did not go to sleep again. That was all my dream."

"Are you sure?" I said, "that you had not heard some one—Mrs. Steinhardt, for instance—suggest that he had been drowned, and then you went and dreamt of the peculiar appearance of this pond?"

"No, no, no!" she protested with rapid vehemence. "Did I not say that I dreamed it the very night on which all trace of him was lost from his hotel in London? Nobody thought then that he was not coming home soon. And I do not think I had noticed this pond then. I have dreamed the same dream several times since, but that may be nothing at all. I shall very likely dream it tonight."

I turned away from the pond, and she followed me. We walked along in silence for some distance.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, at length, "I do long so very much to know what has really happened to my dear father—my poor father!"

"I wish I could help you to find out," I said; "indeed I do. You may be sure I shall think of all you have told me, and I shall try to discover anything more. I have friends in London who may be of use, if I may mention it to them."

"Oh, certainly," she answered. "You are very kind. Bacon's Hotel, Great Queen Street, is where he was last heard of."

At a certain corner where the lane to Timperley Hall diverged from the way through the village, she insisted on parting from me. I let her go with little hesitation, for I knew there was no fear of her being molested.

It may be presumed that while I smoked my post-coal pipe I thought over the strange scene at the pond, and all that Miss Lacroix had said. It was certainly very mysterious, but all the conclusion I could reach concerning it that night was a resolve to go and look at the pond by day.

(To be continued)

Where the House Acted Hostily.

The house does funny things sometimes. It passed a bill the other day establishing a lighthouse on the coast of North Carolina. The second section of the bill provided that the "act approved March 3, 1901, be, and the same is hereby repealed." The act thus wiped off the statute books at one fell swoop was the sundry civil appropriation bill, which appropriated millions and millions of dollars for the expenses of the government. In the senate the bill was amended so as to be less sweeping in its effect.—Washington Post.

Industrial Consumption of Gold.

The industrial consumption of gold in the United States in the calendar year is estimated to have been \$16,667,500, and in the world approximately \$75,000,000. Although the United States led the world last year in the production of gold, our imports of the metal exceeded our exports by the sum of \$12,866,101. The stock of gold in the country, including bullion in the mints, at the close of the fiscal year was estimated at \$1,124,652,818, and the stock of silver coin at \$610,477,025.

Worth of a Compliment.

Most compliments sound something like this: "They say he is a thief, but he never stole anything from me. It may be because I have watched him closely, but so far I have never missed anything." When you feel that your friend deserves praise, why pay tribute to his enemies in praising him?

So Stupid.

"Who was that you just spoke to?" asked the first Chicago woman; "his face was rather familiar to me."

"I believe," said the other, "his name is Jenks—Henry Jenks."

"Oh! to be sure. How stupid of me! He was my first husband."—Philadelphia Record.



The Baby's Nurse.

"Yes," said Mr. Hillier, as he carefully dug around my pearly bed. "Oh, yes! I've seen elephants in India many a time. I was stationed at one point with the English army, you know, where I saw one who used to take care of the children."

"Take care of the children! How could it be? What do you mean?"

"Well, he did, ma'am. It was wonderful what that elephant knew. The first time I made his acquaintance he gave me a blow that I had reason to remember. I was on duty in the yard, and the colonel's little child was playing about; and she kept running too near, I thought, to the elephant's feet. I was afraid he would put his great clumsy feet on her by mistake, so I made up my mind to carry her to a safer place. I stooped to pick her up, and the next thing I knew I had had a knock which sent me flat on the ground. That elephant had hit me with his trunk. One of the servants came along just then and helped me up, and when I told him about it, said he, 'I wonder the old fellow didn't kill you. It isn't safe for anybody to interfere with that baby when he has it in his charge. I have you to know that he is that baby's nurse.'"

"Well, I thought he was just saying it for sport; but, sure enough, after a while the nurse came out with the child fast asleep in her arms, and what did she do but lay it in the elephant's trunk and then he took it to the nursery. And the great fellow stood there for more than an hour, watching that baby, and rocking it gently now and then!"

"He was real good to the other children, too. It used to be his business to take the family out riding. The colonel's lady would come out and mount to her cushioned seat on his back, and then, one by one, the three children would be given to the elephant, and he would hand them up to the mother, and then he would go to the nursery, you know, because he could reach, and knew how to do it. Oh, an elephant is an uncommonly handy nurse when he is trained to the business, and faithful, I tell you. You can trust him every time."—Pansy.

Little Lou.

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"It hurts where pussy scratched it—"

"Don't wash my hands; they're chapped, you know."

"I cut that finger, too—oh! oh!"

"Don't brush my hair!" sobbed little Lou.

"I bumped my head to-day—boo-hoo!"

"Oh, please do stop!—that hurts! dear me!" But—

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Lucetta Elmira

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"What does 'Exit' mean, mamma?" asked little Elsie, having noticed the word painted over a door at the theater.

"I know!" exclaimed her small brother. "It means the entrance out."

Must Have Been a Large Napkin.

Small Bobby was dining at a neighbor's and, holding up a large napkin that had been given him, he asked: "Say, what's this young tablecloth for?"

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Ethel's mother told the grocer to send her a dressed turkey, and when it arrived the little miss said: "Mamma, the turkey isn't dressed at all; it's perfectly nude."

Saved by the Ice.

In the Fishing Gazette W. Howlett tells the following story: Some few years since—I think it was in 1880—I was invited to have a few days' fishing in the lakes at Melton Constable, Norfolk, the seat of the Right Hon. Lord Hastings. My first day's sport was thirty-three good pike, the largest eighteen pounds. Unfortunately, the frost set in very severe and a heavy fall of snow with it. Fishing was out of the question, and skating became the order of the day. Some of the big ponds, several acres in extent, were soon frozen, and the woodmen and laborers were ordered to sweep off the snow so that the visitors might enjoy skating. I was going straight across the park with his lordship's favorite dog following me—a large black "French poodle"—when about half a mile from the ice I suddenly saw about a dozen great red deer—"stags"—galloping toward me. In a moment I grasped the situation, and ran for my life to get on to the ice. I did, and the dog kept close to me. Well, I shall never forget the extraordinary performance when I landed on the great sheet of frozen water. The "stags" were determined not to be balked; they rushed madly after the dog on the ice, and down they went, head over heels, all mixed up in a great heap, and the more they tried to rise the worse mud they got into. I fairly roared with laughter at getting the awfully narrow escape I had had of losing my life, for had these great strong beasts got to me they would have ripped both myself and the dog to ribbons. I have to thank the ice for saving me from death.

He Was Absent-Minded.

They were quite late in returning from the French cooks' ball, and the car going south on Broadway was crowded with the tired dancers. At the next corner the car stopped and a blond young man got on, who, as he entered the car, at once attracted the gaze even of the sleepy dancers. He advanced to the center and held on to a strap with one hand. In the other he carried an enormous hat, unmistakably feminine, as attested by yards of blue chiffon and waving ostrich plumes.

He was serenely unconscious of his burden until, the conductor asking for his fare, he reached for his pocket with his hand that he thought was disengaged. He then discovered the hat. His look of bewilderment brought forth audible smiles from his fellow passengers. Then he remembered. Fiddling up the creation in blue, and gazing fondly but lightly into its mysterious depths of millinery, he muttered:

"Lovely girl! How forgetful of me!"

And making a sign to the conductor, says the New York Mail and Express, stepped hurriedly from the car.

It is better to say one word that counts than two that don't say anything.

Wonderful Dollie.

Talking dolls are curious surprises in these days. One never knows what they are going to say. It is said that more than 70,000 dolls which are manufactured at Sonnenberg, Thuringia, have been sent to America to be charged with the phonograph. A story of a speaking doll is told by a friend of Ed-

Carnegie, the Messenger Boy.

Andrew Carnegie tells of the time when he was a messenger boy and lets other boys into the secret of his success. He says: "My only dread was that I should come to be dismissed because I did not know the city; for it is necessary that a messenger boy should know all the firms and addresses of men who are in the habit of receiving telegrams. But I was a stranger in Pittsburgh. However, I made up my mind that I would learn to repeat successively each business house in the principal street and was soon able to shut my eyes and begin at one side of Wood street and call every firm successively to the top, then pass to the other side and call every firm to the bottom. Before long I was able to do this with business streets generally. My mind was then at rest upon that point."

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son's, in New York, which points out that these new toys may act as moral teachers to the young. Edison's friend had a little daughter, 4 years old, who, in spite of scoldings and punishments, could not be cured of the habit of telling stories.

The father brought home a specially charged doll as a present for the little girl. The child played with the doll for a day without noticing anything different in it from other dolls; on the morning of the second day, however, the doll made its voice heard. The little girl gave her mother an untruthful answer to a question which was put to her, whereupon the doll, which was in her arms at that moment, said solemnly: "Little girls must never tell lies; never, never tell lies." The little one stared at the doll and laid it down on the carpet. Since that time she cannot be persuaded to touch her plaything; but the timely warning has cured her more effectively of her bad habit than any whipping or scolding could do.

About Polar Bears.

The polar bear displays an amount of intelligence in its quest for seals outdone only by the cunning of man. As the hunters are partly clothed in seal-skin, it is quite natural that the bears should take them for seals, and are often, through this mistake, caught without much effort on the part of the hunter. If the supposed seal is on open snow the bear lays flat down in the snow, pushing himself along, while his front paws cover his black muzzle, which is the only part of him not matching the snow. Just as he thinks he is close enough to pounce upon his prey the hunter ends his existence by a well-aimed shot.

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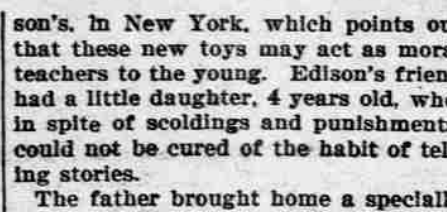
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In the Fishing Gazette W. Howlett tells the following story: Some few years since—I think it was in 1880—I was invited to have a few days' fishing in the lakes at Melton Constable, Norfolk, the seat of the Right Hon. Lord Hastings. My first day's sport was thirty-three good pike, the largest eighteen pounds. Unfortunately, the frost set in very severe and a heavy fall of snow with it. Fishing was out of the question, and skating became the order of the day. Some of the big ponds, several acres in extent, were soon frozen, and the woodmen and laborers were ordered to sweep off the snow so that the visitors might enjoy skating. I was going straight across the park with his lordship's favorite dog following me—a large black "French poodle"—when about half a mile from the ice I suddenly saw about a dozen great red deer—"stags"—galloping toward me. In a moment I grasped the situation, and ran for my life to get on to the ice. I did, and the dog kept close to me. Well, I shall never forget the extraordinary performance when I landed on the great sheet of frozen water. The "stags" were determined not to be balked; they rushed madly after the dog on the ice, and down they went, head over heels, all mixed up in a great heap, and the more they tried to rise the worse mud they got into. I fairly roared with laughter at getting the awfully narrow escape I had had of losing my life, for had these great strong beasts got to me they would have ripped both myself and the dog to ribbons. I have to thank the ice for saving me from death.

He Was Absent-Minded.

They were quite late in returning from the French cooks' ball, and the car going south on Broadway was crowded with the tired dancers. At the next corner the car stopped and a blond young man got on, who, as he entered the car, at once attracted the gaze even of the sleepy dancers. He advanced to the center and held on to a strap with one hand. In the other he carried an enormous hat, unmistakably feminine, as attested by yards of blue chiffon and waving ostrich plumes.

He was serenely unconscious of his burden until, the conductor asking for his fare, he reached for his pocket with his hand that he thought was disengaged. He then discovered the hat. His look of bewilderment brought forth audible smiles from his fellow passengers. Then he remembered. Fiddling up the creation in blue, and gazing fondly but lightly into its mysterious depths of millinery, he muttered:

"Lovely girl! How forgetful of me!"

And making a sign to the conductor, says the New York Mail and Express, stepped hurriedly from the car.

It is better to say one word that counts than two that don't say anything.

Wonderful Dollie.

Talking dolls are curious surprises in these days. One never knows what they are going to say. It is said that more than 70,000 dolls which are manufactured at Sonnenberg, Thuringia, have been sent to America to be charged with the phonograph. A story of a speaking doll is told by a friend of Ed-

Carnegie, the Messenger Boy.

Andrew Carnegie tells of the time when he was a messenger boy and lets other boys into the secret of his success. He says: "My only dread was that I should come to be dismissed because I did not know the city; for it is necessary that a messenger boy should know all the firms and addresses of men who are in the habit of receiving telegrams. But I was a stranger in Pittsburgh. However, I made up my mind that I would learn to repeat successively each business house in the principal street and was soon able to shut my eyes and begin at one side of Wood street and call every firm successively to the top, then pass to the other side and call every firm to the bottom. Before long I was able to do this with business streets generally. My mind was then at rest upon that point."

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son's, in New York, which points out that these new toys may act as moral teachers to the young. Edison's friend had a little daughter, 4 years old, who, in spite of scoldings and punishments, could not be cured of the habit of telling stories.

The father brought home a specially charged doll as a present for the little girl. The child played with the doll for a day without noticing anything different in it from other dolls; on the morning of the second day, however, the doll made its voice heard. The little girl gave her mother an untruthful answer to a question which was put to her, whereupon the doll, which was in her arms at that moment, said solemnly: "Little girls must never tell lies; never, never tell lies." The little one stared at the doll and laid it down on the carpet. Since that time she cannot be persuaded to touch her plaything; but the timely warning has cured her more effectively of her bad habit than any whipping or scolding could do.

About Polar Bears.

The polar bear displays an amount of intelligence in its quest for seals outdone only by the cunning of man. As the hunters are partly clothed in seal-skin, it is quite natural that the bears should take them for seals, and are often, through this mistake, caught without much effort on the part of the hunter. If the supposed seal is on open snow the bear lays flat down in the snow, pushing himself along, while his front paws cover his black muzzle, which is the only part of him not matching the snow. Just as he thinks he is close enough to pounce upon his prey the hunter ends his existence by a well-aimed shot.

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