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The Bride Special

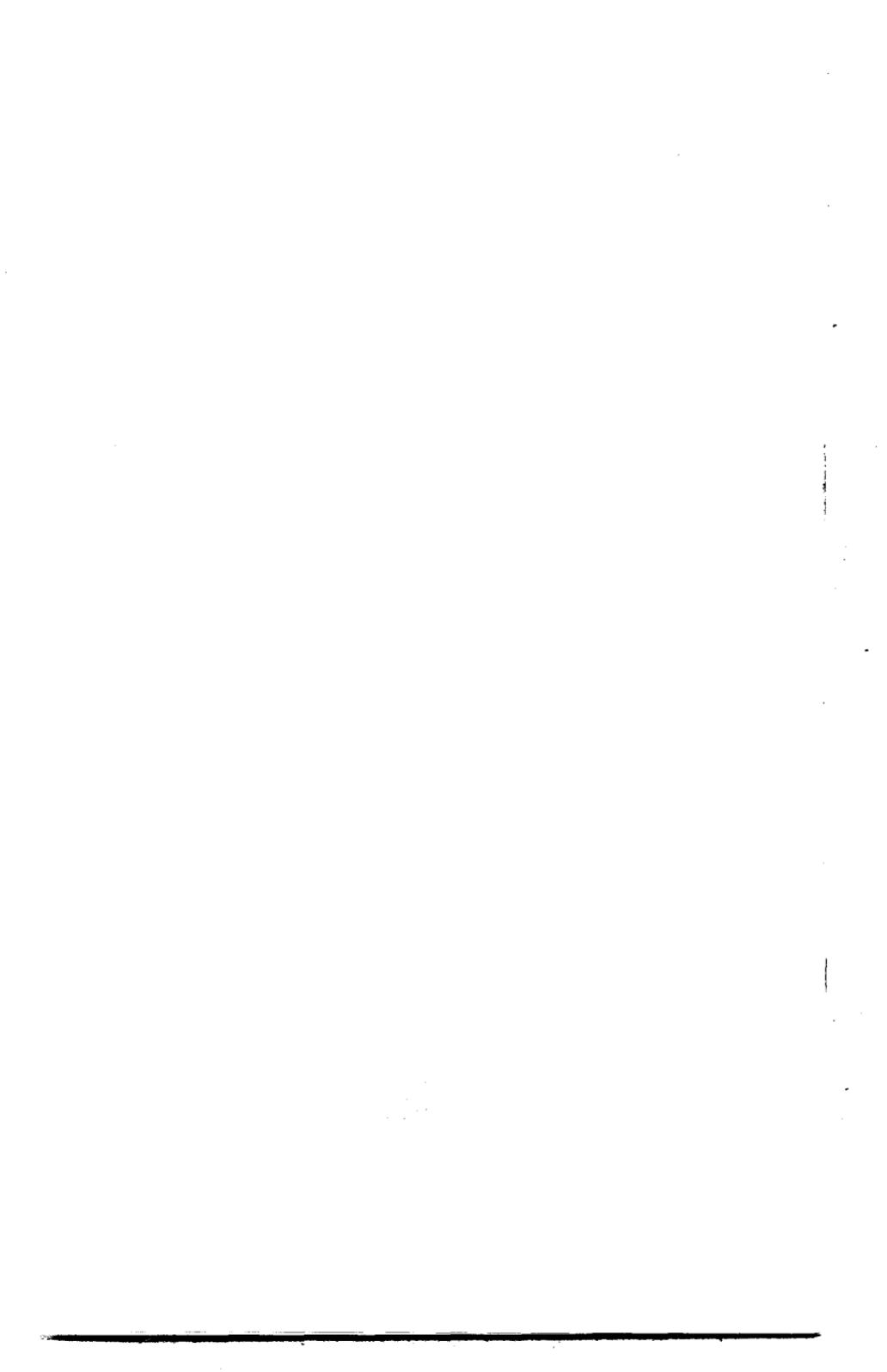
A
Dramatic Sketch

in One Act

By

Lincoln J. Carter





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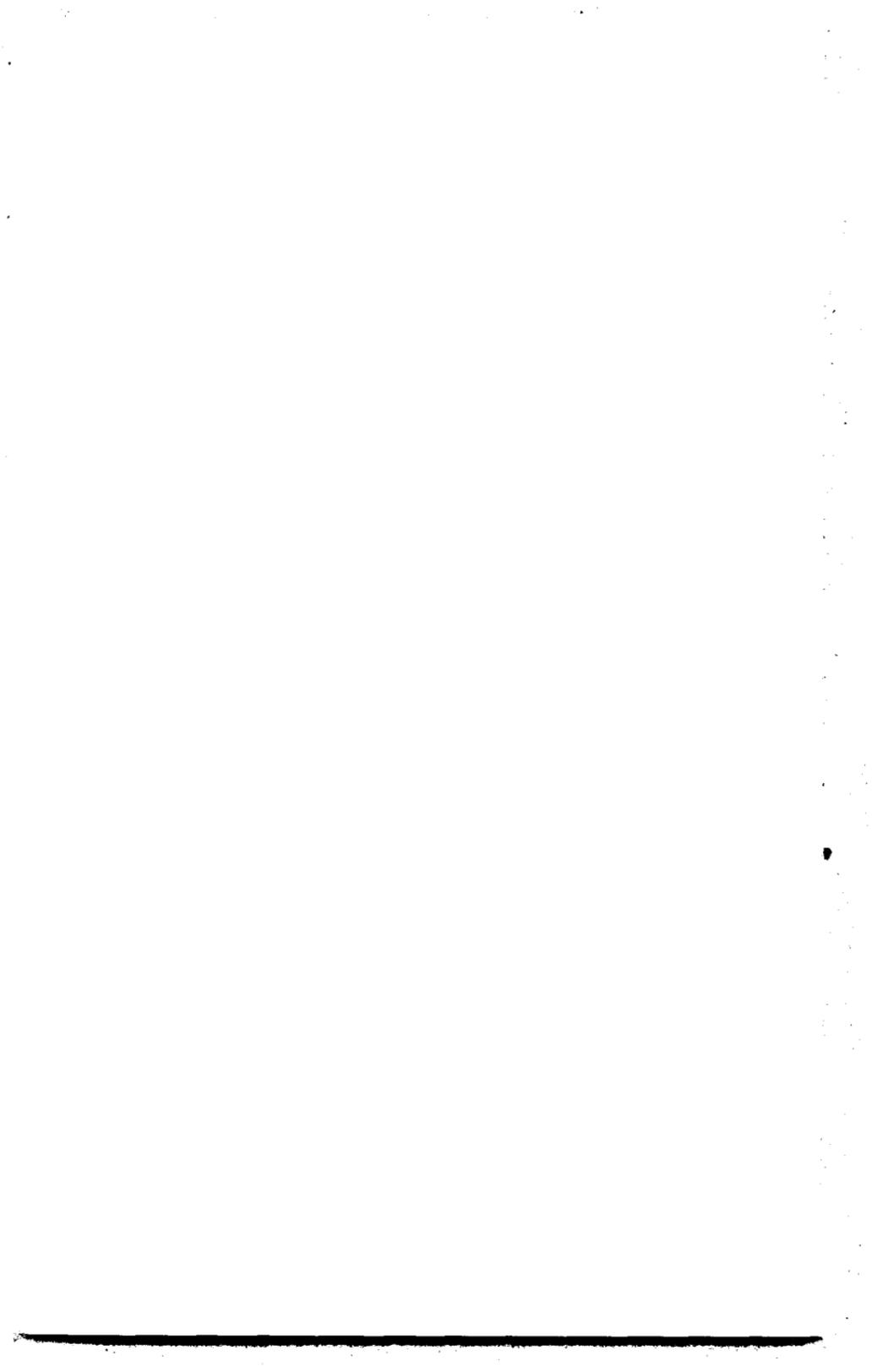
THE BRIDE SPECIAL

C A S T

GRACE VANDALE A girl of ideals
MRS. VANDALE Her mother, with one aim
KEY BRUCE The Mayor
BUNNY BURNES His best man
JOHN VANDALE A railroad magnate
GERALD MORGAN An heir to many millions
SIR ARTHUR BIDDINGTON. . . . The mother's choice

TIME—Present

PLACE—Nebraska



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SCENE I.—*Depot of the Eastern Nebraska R. R. at Vandale, Nebraska. A new city in the height of its boom.*

[*Enter JOHN VANDALE and GERALD, with traveling bags.*]

JOHN. We are a few minutes early. I told them to have the special train ready at three. Do you wish to wire your father where you will be?

GERALD. [*Dressed in extreme of fashion.*] No, I told the Governor I was going to rough it out West. He won't worry! Besides, the Street is keeping him busy nowadays.

JOHN. I should think so. The King of Wall Street—still, you're his only son and—

GERALD. Oh, he knows I'm able to take care of myself in any wild region; besides I'm fully armed. [*Shows a gold plated toy of a pistol.*]

JOHN. [*Smiles.*] Yes, I see. Well, you're safe with me anywhere. People out here know John Vandale is not a man to fool with. My word is law in this town.

GERALD. Except on election day. This fellow Key Bruce carried everything his way yesterday at the election. He's Mayor now and—

JOHN. Bah! I'll show him yet. Besides, it was all Grace, my daughter, she did it. She elected him; she carried everything by storm. Wonderful girl—that, wonderful; she's a born ruler. She takes after me, a born ruler. You'll find out when she is your wife. Damn me, you'll find out. But of course when once she is your wife she'll get over all that.

GERALD. But she don't seem to want to be my wife. She's—

JOHN. Leave that to me. We'll get her away from here and she'll soon come to her senses. It's time they had that train made up. I'll go see the dispatcher and remember, not a word to anyone. If she knew what we were planning, mules and oxen couldn't get her down here to the depot. So, not a word to anyone. They are all her friends—so mum is the word. [*Exit L. U. E.*]

[*Enter BUNNY—up-to-date cowboy—dressed up.*]

BUNNY. Good day, Mr. Morgan. How did you sleep last night? [*Grins.*]

GERALD. I didn't sleep at all last night. I never heard such—

BUNNY. Ha, ha! Yes, it was a loud evening. Last wet night of the town, ye know. Red hot election, triumph of the people and the reform party, victory of morality over vice, death of the grafters, rout of the bosses, victorious birth of a new idea in Municipal Government, equality, freedom, a fair deal for all, election of an incorruptible Mayor by a land slide of all the decent votes of men and women. Yes, it was some event to celebrate.

GERALD. But suppose Mr. Vandale moves his railroad from the town!

BUNNY. Pooh, for his old railroad! We'll build another by popular subscription, ha, ha! But, he won't do that; his daughter is with us. It was she did the trick; first she won over Key Bruce, the boy wonder, the most popular man in seven states. The rest was easy and today they wed! Say, what a couple they will make. Next it will be Mr. and Mrs. Governor and then Mr. and Mrs. President. You'll see. Come early to the wedding, and say, tell old Vandale to smile and come over to our side, ha, ha, ha! [*Exit R. I. E.*]

[*Enter MRS. VANDALE and SIR ARTHUR, R. III E.*]

MRS. VANDALE. I am surprised, Mr. Morgan, that you would be seen talking to that rough, common fellow; a cowboy, I believe.

GERALD. Mrs. Vandale, he did the talking; I only listened.

MRS. VANDALE. What did he say?

GERALD. He invited me to the wedding!

MRS. VANDALE. Huh, his impudence, wedding! My daughter wed this Key Bruce—never!

SIR ARTHUR. Only over my dead body, don't cher know.

MRS. VANDALE. There! You hear what Sir Arthur Biddington says—'only over his dead body.' Shall such a disgraceful act be performed! Oh, dear, these American girls—they are so willful, but we will show Grace a thing or two. Is the train ready?

GERALD. Mr. Vandale has gone to see about it.

MRS. VANDALE. Thank Heaven—here on the Road, at least, our word is law. What a relief to leave this Wild Western place.

SIR ARTHUR. But will she come?

MRS. VANDALE. No, of course not, if she knows what we are up to, but once in her father's special car on her father's railroad, and I think she will consider a little our wishes.

GERALD. Yes, we will show her the indisputable power of wealth—of great wealth, of many millions.

MRS. VANDALE. [*Smiling at Sir Arthur.*] Combined with considerable wealth already ours, a noble title—

[*Enter VANDALE.*]

JOHN. Oh, you're all here! Well, everything is ready. The servants are aboard with the baggage and we must get on the train down below. If we did so here, it would create comment, and be sure to reach her and rouse her suspicions.

MRS. VANDALE. Have you sent her word yet?

JOHN. Yes, just hurried Allen off with it. You must all be out of sight in the car when the train backs up here to the depot. I will do the rest. Come! [*Exit John and Gerald* L. U. E.]

MRS. VANDALE. Ah, Sir Arthur, when we are once safely at home in your castle, how gloriously peaceful it will be. [*Exits with Sir Arthur* L. III E.]

[*Enter BUNNY, backing on. Speaking off* R. I E.]

BUNNY. Beer! No, you marble top, you'll get no more beer in this town. That's a truck load of lilies of the valley for the Mayor's bride. [*Exits in Tel. office.*]

[*Enter GRACE and KEY, R. III E.*]

KEY. The Mayor's bride! That sounds like the title to an up-to-date love story, don't it?

GRACE. Founded on truth, the tale of a royal battle bravely fought and gloriously won by an undaunted Knight in spotless armor.

KEY. And of a beautiful Genii who appeared to him a lovely vision and led him from the path of darkness out in the fair field of truth, who taught him his duty and inspired him with strength and wisdom, to fight and win, but the prize for which I struggled, that is not yet within my grasp.

GRACE. You have your arms about it!

KEY. The words have not been spoken, and until they are I fear—I fear—

GRACE. My father. My terrible, terrible daddy, ha, ha! Didn't we beat him and all his minions yesterday; didn't we lay low the mine interests, the irrigation swindle, the oil line sharks, the liquor demons, the railroad Kings—didn't we save for the people, what by divine right belongs to the people?

KEY. True—but he swears—

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GRACE. Yes, that is one of Dad's failings, he does swear.

KEY. No, seriously, he has great power you know, and your mother, oh, your mother!

GRACE. They are a strong team, I'll admit, but don't forget fifteen days ago I became of age. I am a free born American citizen. [*Strikes a pose.*] I vote and I will today at 4 p. m. marry the man I love.

KEY. Ha, ha, ha! My darling, my own. [*Kisses her.*]

[*Enter BUNNY with several telegrams in hand.*]

BUNNY. Ahem! Still receiving election returns? See these, Mr. Mayor, the other side is now begging for terms by wire—they want to know if—

KEY. No business, Bunny, till after today—

BUNNY. That's so! Well, I'll go and put the finishing touches on the decorations. Oh, by the way, read that one anyway. [*Hands Key a telegram. Exits.*]

KEY. [*Reads telegram.*] The Rev. Bert Addington injured in auto accident, will not be able to officiate. The deuce, that's serious, Grace, do you hear, no minister!

GRACE. Not that one, you mean—

KEY. All the others have been fixed by your father; they all refused.

GRACE. The minister we helped with the load of potatoes.

KEY. Sure, but he's five miles out.

GRACE. My auto is in front of the hotel.

KEY. Come, then—

GRACE. No, I've lots to do, besides it's about time to dress. You find some one to go. Cary can drive, let him go. I'll send a wire to Mabel and Annie and meet you at the hotel in a few minutes.

KEY. Well, dear, don't be long. Your father's silence as the ceremony draws near seems ominous.

GRACE. Remember yesterday and never say fail. No one is looking. [*Kisses him.*] Now run along and be a good Mayor.

KEY. Ha, ha! Well, bye-bye, dearest. I'm the happiest man in all the world. [*Exits R. II.*]

GRACE. My, but I'm proud of him! Ha, ha, happiest man. I guess I'm the happiest girl.

JOHN. [*Outside L.*] Grace, Grace, daughter!

GRACE. [*Turns.*] Why, it's father! Yes, dad, what's the matter?

[*End of car backs on stage. JOHN is standing on rear platform.*]

JOHN. Did they tell you at the hotel?

GRACE. Tell me what?

JOHN. I telephoned. They said they would find you. Oh, daughter, your poor mother—

GRACE. Mother—what is it? What has happened?

JOHN. The crossing by the river; we were in the auto, this train was going out and it hit the machine—

GRACE. Mother—she is hurt?

JOHN. Not dangerously, I hope; she is here. [*Points in car.*]

GRACE. [*Runs to steps of car.*] Let me up! Send for a doctor.

JOHN. Yes, at once. Go to her.

[*GRACE enters car, JOHN pulls bell cord and signals engine.*]

JOHN. I didn't think it would be so easy, ha, ha!

[*Enters car as it pulls off stage, noise of engine heard going.*]

[*Enter KEY and BUNNY.*]

BUNNY. But I can't drive a car!

KEY. Well, Grace will send her chauffeur with you, you helpless creature. [*Exits in telegraph office.*]

BUNNY. I can drive any living machine, but those gaso. things get my goat.

KEY. [*Re-enters.*] Say, she's gone on that train!

BUNNY. Who?

KEY. Grace!

BUNNY. Nonsense!

KEY. She's gone, I say, the operator saw her father help her on.

BUNNY. The old man—that looks bad—see 'em go!

KEY. It's a trick; he's got her somehow on his car and they are taking her away.

BUNNY. Hell—

KEY. God, I've lost her!

BUNNY. Wire ahead.

KEY. It's his road—his train—his engine—what's the use?

BUNNY. I have it—we'll catch them.

KEY. The auto—no—roads are rotten.

BUNNY. See that live engine on the switch? [*Draws gun.*]
See this? Come!

KEY. Bunny, you're a brick. [*They exit.*]

END OF SCENE.

[*Picture drop falls and motion picture shows them holding up engineer of engine; they force him to get on and climb up into the engine, which pulls out in chase.*]

NEXT PICTURE: Shows train going fast.

NEXT PICTURE: Shows engine going fast, BUNNY pointing pistol at engineer, KEY climbing out on foot-board.

NEXT PICTURE: Shows engine going fast. KEY out on cow-catcher, looking ahead and urging speed.

SCENE II.

[*As picture drop goes up private car occupies full stage, from R. to L., as seen from side of track—in the center of car a portion of its side is removed or transparent so the interior may be seen by the audience, the drawing room of the car; through the windows at the back of this open section rapidly passing country may be seen, overhead above the roof of car the smoke is passing back and in front of car on the floor is a rapidly moving ground row, all of which gives the impression or effect that the train is moving at forty miles an hour. As this scene opens, MRS. VANDALE, GERALD and SIR ARTHUR are discovered in the drawing room of car. They are trying to console and pacify GRACE, who is in a rage at the trick which has been played upon her and is protesting against being kidnapped or taken from her lover.*]

GRACE. And you, mother, to consent to such a trick, such a falsehood, oh, I'm ashamed of you!

GERALD. But, Miss Vandale, remember—

GRACE. Don't talk to me—it's part of your plan—

MRS. VANDALE. Grace, it's for your own good—

GRACE. I'll marry him if I wait twenty years.

SIR ARTHUR. Oh, I say—if—if—you—

GRACE. How dare you speak to me! [*Stamps foot.*]

[*Enter JOHN, door L.*]

JOHN. Now, daughter, listen to—

GRACE. Oh, you, you, I'm ashamed to call you father. You were beaten in a fair fight and then you resort to this despicable trick! Oh, I—I—don't speak to me, I hate you all! [*Stamps foot and exits R. door.*]

JOHN. Leave her to cry it out. She'll be all right soon.

MRS. VANDALE. Yes, a little reflection will do wonders.

[*JOHN pours out drinks.*]

NOTE: During the above dialogue the car has been gradually crossing over stage till at the last speech the center or open portion of car disappears out entrance L., and only the rear ten feet and the observation platform is on stage; this portion continues to move to L. until later only the rear platform is in view. As the car passes to L. it reveals the panoramas at back, all moving past at different speeds. These are painted to represent passing landscape. The first one, and the fastest, represents the foreground, the second, the middle distance, and the third distance; these panoramas are arranged to run around endless grooves or tracks, and together with other effects give an appearance to the car of rapid movement. A motion picture of passing landscape may also be used. At this point GRACE is seen to appear out of door of car on to rear platform. She is weeping and wiping her eyes. She suddenly looks R. as if down track at rear of train and starts in surprise, then jumps with joy, waves her handkerchief, turns and locks the door behind her, then turns and joyfully greets KEY who now enters on the cow-catcher of a locomotive from R. This is a practical working engine, its wheels revolving very fast, steam and smoke belching from it. KEY calls to GRACE; she answers and nods her head. The effect desired here is that the car is moving ahead at say forty miles an hour and the engine at forty-five, hence it slowly overtakes the car. It creeps up to it, till the cowcatcher of engine touches the rear platform of car, when KEY reaches up and taking the willing GRACE in his arms lifts her over the railing of the platform down onto the cow-catcher at his side; he then signals to BUNNY, who is seen at the engine cab window and BUNNY orders engineer

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to slow down; at this the engine is slowly drawn back to R. and the car passes out of sight L., while KEY and GRACE joyfully embrace on the cow-catcher.

NOTE: *The situation of a person on a racing engine overtaking a rapidly moving train and rescuing another person from its rear platform is new and novel and is the situation protected by this copyright.*

SCENE III.

[Depot—same as Scene 1.]

[*Engine backing across stage to R., stops with cow-catcher a little R. of center. A crowd of people are cheering, led by BUNNY, a minister is pushed up on to cow-catcher, who starts to perform a marriage ceremony as the CURTAIN falls.*]

THE END.

[The panoramas in perspective moving at different speeds used in this effect are patented by Lincoln J. Carter, in the U. S. and England.]

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