

STOCHASTIC PARTIAL DIFFERENTIAL EQUATIONS

His homely face was long and narrow, as though pulled into that shape by the weight of his responsibilities. In other circumstances, however, his generous mouth might have shaped an appealing smile; and his green eyes had in them the compassion of someone who himself had known great loss. Using all his powers of concentration, which were formidable, Junior sought to silence the phantom Chicane. At first, the voice steadily faded, but soon it grew louder again, and more insistent. Now, here on this sunny ridge in Oregon, miles from any train and farther still from any nuns, Junior applied this artistic insight to his own situation, overcame his squeamishness, and regained some momentum of his own. He approached his fallen wife, stood over her, and stared down into her fixed eyes as he said, "Naomi". Her lifelong optimism, her buoyancy, which she had miraculously sustained through so many difficult years, would never survive this. She would no longer be a rock of hope for him and Edom. Their future was despair, undiluted and unrelenting. Max hung up. The Ansaphone made a series of small robot-mouse noises and then fell silent. "Pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie, pie," Barty repeated in the same tone of self-satisfied delight that he used when announcing "Barty potty." In the city again, he stopped long enough to donate the raincoat to a homeless man who didn't notice the few odd stains. This pathetic hobo happily accepted the fine coat, donned it-and then cursed his benefactor, spat at him, and threatened him with a claw hammer. An hour later, when Barty decided he wanted a soda, he switched off the book and asked Angel if she would like something to drink..twenty-eight pounds. Typically, seven to eight pounds of this is the fetus. The placenta and the amniotic fluid weigh three pounds. The remaining eighteen are due to water retention and fat stores. He paused, giving them a chance to ask the obvious question-and then smiled at their reticence..She didn't have an appetite, anyway. Joey was too much on her mind. The safe birth of a healthy child was a blessing, but it wasn't compensation for her loss. Although by nature resistant to depression, she now had a darkness in her heart that would not relent before a thousand dawns or ten thousand. If a mere nurse had insisted that she eat, Agnes would not have been persuaded, but she couldn't hold out against the insistent importuning of one special seamstress..No hesitation preceded Grace's response. "That's very generous of you, Paul. And I, for one, accept. Is this the house where you lived with your Perri?" In the faraway, at the limits of night and fog, the dog bit off his bark in expectation.. "Wish I could describe his face. Frosty the Snowman was never that white. The surveillance van is parked right there, two spaces south of the vending machines--". FOLLOWING A SECOND NIGHT at the Sleepie Tyme Inne, waking at dawn, Junior felt rested, refreshed-and in control of his bowels..She was not going to be as forthright with Barty as she had insisted that Joshua Nunn be with her, in part because she was too shaken to risk forthrightness..Few people will spend the greater part of their youth in school, struggling to obtain the education required for a medical specialty, unless they have a passion to heal. Franklin Chan was a healer, whose passion was the preservation of vision, and Agnes could see that his anguish, while a pale reflection of hers, was real and deeply felt..Anyway, traumatic as it had been, the shooting was not the worst thing that happened to him that year.. "Your mother's an artist. Besides, you wouldn't want to put poor Mrs. Ornwall out of a job, would you?" He suspected the blame lay with his exceptional sensitivity to violence, death, and loss. Previously it manifested as an explosive emptying of the stomach, this time as a purging of lower realms.. "Quick, very quick," he warned, helping Grace through the fire framed window and onto the roof of the porch.. "That's just ... an old joke," she heard herself saying, as from a distance. "You didn't really walk between the drops?" During those spells when she was too shaky to draw, she stood at the window, gazing at the storied city..The night was in flight, however, and he had a lot to do before it swooped straight into morning..In Losen's service was a man who called himself Hound, because, as he said, he had a nose for witchery. His employment was to sniff Losen's food and drink and garments and women, anything that might be used by enemy wizards against him; and also to inspect his warships. A ship is a fragile thing in a dangerous element, vulnerable to spells and hexes. As soon as Hound came aboard the new galley he scented something. "Well, well," he said, "who's this?" He walked to the helm and put his hand on it. "This is clever," he said. "But who is it? A newcomer, I think." He sniffed appreciatively. "Very clever," he said..She wasn't listening closely to him. Numb. She felt as though she were half anesthetized. She was looking past him, at nothing, and his Voice seemed to be coming to her through several layers of surgical masks, though he now wore none at all.. "AND I DRINK CHAMPAGNE ALL DAY," said Miss Cheese, pronouncing it "cham-pay-non". Eye to eye with Tom, Celestina herself did some clear-seeing. "You're special, too, in lots of obvious ways. But like Angel, you're special in some secret way ... aren't you?" WALLY HAD NOT gone home with Death, but they had definitely been at the dance together..Based on the evidence, perhaps Sklent never laughed, regardless of how clever the joke. He scowled fiercely at the paintings in the brochure, returned it to Junior, and snarled, "Shoot the bitch." "All right," Agnes said, and as she voiced her acceptance, she was shivered by a sudden fear for which she couldn't at once identify a cause..He summoned enough courage to approach the nightstand. His hand trembled. He half expected the quarter to be illusory; to disappear between his pinching fingers, but it was real..When Agnes groaned, one of the shadows spread its wings, moved closer, to the right side of the bed, and resolved into a nurse. Agnes's vision had cleared. The nurse was a pretty young woman with black hair and indigo eyes..Delighted to be dating someone who lived neck-deep in culture especially after two months with Tammy Bean, the money maiden. Junior was surprised that he didn't score with Frieda on the first date. He was usually irresistible even to women who weren't sluts..Friday morning, Junior resigned his position as a physical therapist at the rehabilitation hospital. He expected to be able to live well off interest and dividends for the rest of his life, because his tastes were modest..be entombed in one of those memorial walls, well above ground level, where nothing was likely to seep into them..Three equally modest rooms

opened off this lounge. Two housed complete dental units, and the third provided cramped office space shared by the receptionist and the doctor..deodar cedars with layers of drooping branches surrounded the place, and usually they seemed sheltering, but now they loomed, ominous..For a while he enjoyed being challenged to figure the number of seconds elapsed since a particular historical event. Given the date, he did the calculations in his head, providing a correct answer in as little as twenty seconds, rarely taking more than a minute..He left by the back door, to avoid the aftermath seeping across the foyer floor. Fog enveloped him, cool and refreshing.. "This momentous day," Thomas Vanadium said quietly, stiff gazing into the grave, "seems full of terrible endings. But like every day, it's actually full of nothing but beginnings."..Startled, he braked to a halt. Agnes didn't say anything until Joey had taken three or four deep..Sometimes Angel seemed troubled by what she'd been told about her grandfather, and at those moments she appeared downcast, somber. But she was just three, after all, too young to grasp the permanence of death. She would probably not have been surprised if Harrison White had walked through the door in a little while, during *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* or *The Lucy Show*..Continuing to avert his eyes from the battered face and the two tone eyelids, Junior found the keys in an exterior pocket of the sports jacket. The credentials were tucked in an interior pocket: a single-fold leather holder containing the shiny badge and a photo ID..From his early adolescence, Edom was drawn to gardening, taking special pleasure in the cultivation of hybrid roses. He'd been only sixteen when one of his blooms earned first place in a flower show. When his father learned about the competition, he regarded Edom's pursuit of the prize as a grievous sin of pride. The punishment left Edom bedridden for three days, and when he came downstairs at last, he discovered that his father had torn out all the rose bushes..Whether making love or killing, he was never guided by bigotry. A private little joke with himself. But true..In the kitchen, Barty sat at the table, and Paul's heart pinched at the sight of the boy in padded eyepatches..As punctilious as you might expect any good accountant to be, Bartholomew Prosser didn't delay long enough to make it necessary for Junior to ring the bell twice. The porch light came on..The following morning, he canceled his German lessons. It was an impossible language. The words were enormously long..pending storm gathered as if called forth by a curse cooked up from eye of newt, toe of frog, wool of bat, and tongue of dog..The Worry Bear carries worries in his pockets. Under his Panama hat and in two gold lockets. Carries worries on his back and under his arms. Nevertheless, dear old Worry Bear has his charms..After just twenty-one days, the boy's adaptation to blindness was amazing but clearly the gathered audience stood in anticipation of something more remarkable than his unhalting progress and unerring sense of direction.."I was raised to understand it," said Celestina, and when she looked across the room, she saw that her words had moved her mother..The corroded casement-operating mechanism began to give way, as did the hinges, and the window sagged outward..On the day that Vanadium attended the graveside service for Seraphim and subsequently stopped at Naomi's grave to needle Cain, he had suspected that Phimie didn't die in a traffic accident, as claimed, but he hadn't for a moment thought that the wife killer was in any way connected. Now, finding this gallery brochure in the nightstand drawer seemed to be one more bit of circumstantial proof of Cain's guilt..He prepared his knives and guns. Blades and bullets. Fortune favors the bold, the self-improved, the self-evolved, the focused.."By law, adoption records are sealed and so closely guarded that you'd have an easier time acquiring a complete roster of the CIA's deep cover agents worldwide than finding this one baby."..Everything was proceeding precisely as Junior had envisioned in the instant when Naomi had first discovered the rotten section of railing and had nearly fallen without assistance. The entire plan had come to him, wholly formed, in a blink, and during the following two circuits of the observation deck, he had mulled it over, seeking flaws but finding none..This colored person's grave, however, was uphill of Naomi's. Over time, as the body decomposed up there, its juices would mix with the soil. When rain saturated the ground, subsurface drainage would carry those juices steadily downslope, until they seeped into Naomi's grave 'let mingled with her remains. This seemed highly inappropriate to Junior..Junior assumed the dead girl had come from a family of stature in the Negro community, which would explain the stonecarver's accelerated service. Vanadium, according to his own words, was a friend of the family; consequently, the father was most likely a police officer..As always, curious about how others lived-or, in this case, bad lived-Junior explored the house, poking in drawers and closets. For a widower, Bartholomew Prosser was neat and well-organized..At the sight of her photograph, she felt herself flush. She hoped none of the pedestrians passing between her and the gallery would look from the photo to her face and recognize her. What had she been..Airborne, Phimie complained of ringing in her ears, which might have been related to the flight. She also suffered an episode of double vision and, in the airport after landing, a nosebleed, which appeared to be related to her previous symptoms.."And," Joshua cautioned, "you better prepare for a long day. I'm pretty sure Dr. Chan will want to consult with an oncologist."..Atop the dead woman, Vanadium's leather ID holder ignited. The identification card would bum, but the badge was not likely to melt. The police would also identify the revolver..She didn't have experience with guns, but having seen him trying to press cartridges into the magazine, she knew how to load. She inserted one round. Then a second. Enough..Too much clatter, drawing attention. No leisure for romance now, no chance for a two-sister score. just kill Celestina, kill Bartholomew, and go, go.."Yes. In syrup form. It's a good item for your home medicine chest, in case your child ever swallows poison and you need to purge it from him quickly."..A music tradition was deeply rooted in the Negro community. No similar tradition in magic existed..What good was she to anybody, what good could she ever hope to be, if she couldn't even save her little sister?.This was the same woman who had been stripping the second bed when Celestina arrived earlier. Now she was here to remake the first..Returning his attention to his own shoes, Jacob said, "So ... what am I supposed to do about this?"..But when the lore-books of a wizard came into a warlord's hands he was likely to treat them with caution, locking them away to keep them harmless or giving them to a wizard in his hire to do with as he wished. In the margins of the spells and word lists and in the endpapers of these

books of lore a wizard or his prentice might record a plague, a famine, a raid, a change of masters, along with the spells worked in such events and their success or unsuccess. Such random records reveal a clear moment here and there, though all between those moments is darkness. They are like glimpses of a lighted ship far out at sea, in darkness, in the rain..Eventually, when he had gone through the entire directory, if he'd had no success, he would phone each red-checked listing and ask for Bartholomew. A few hundred calls, no doubt. Some would involve long-distance charges, but he could afford the toll..Junior said nothing. He was still upset with Naomi for hiding the pregnancy from him, but he was delighted that the baby would have been his. Now Vanadium couldn't claim that Naomi's infidelity and the resultant bastard had been the motive for murder..Thus armored, he at last arrived in the city of Sacramento, an hour before dawn. Sacramento, which means "sacrament" in Italian and in Spanish, calls itself the Camellia Capital of the World, and holds a ten-day camellia festival in early March-already advertised on billboards now in mid-January. The camellia, shrub and flower, is named for G. J. Camellus, a Jesuit missionary who brought it from Asia to Europe in the eighteenth century..Somehow, Vanadium's malevolent spirit was also to blame for Junior's failure to find a new heart mate, in spite of all the women he'd been through. Undoubtedly, when Bartholomew was dead and Vanadium vanquished with him, romance and true love would bloom.. "And after Phimie was gone ... he still hoped to learn the rapist's name, put him in prison. But then something changed his mind ... oh, maybe two years ago. Suddenly, he wanted to let it go, leave judgment to God. He said if the rapist was as twisted as Phimie claimed, then Angel and I might be in danger if we ever learned a name and went to the police. Don't stir a hornet's nest, let sleeping dogs be, and all that. I don't know what changed his mind." The longer they were required to lie low in fear, the more likely Celestina would be to cast caution aside and return to Pacific Heights, Tom knew her well enough to be sure that she was a fighter rather than a runner. Being in hiding frustrated her. Day by day, hour by hour, with no target date for resuming a normal life, she would quickly lose patience. Rubbed raw, her dignity and sense of justice would compel her to act-perhaps more out of emotion than out of reason..he had sat here with a pencil, making shopping lists. Now, instead of a pencil, there was the Italian-made .22 pistol..In adversity lies great opportunity, as Caesar Zedd teaches, and always, of course, there is a bright side even when you aren't able immediately to see it..Jacob was hiding something. Until he had spoken of Josef Krepp, his every response had been formed as a question, which had always been his preferred method of avoidance when conversation involved a subject that made him uncomfortable..Ministering to Perri, Joshua had pulled back her blankets. The fabric of the pale yellow pajama pants couldn't disguise how terribly withered her legs were: two sticks..A cheer went up from family and friends, and Agnes could only imagine what it must feel like to be Barty, both blind and blessed, his heart as rich in courage as in kindness..He said, "There's a whiteness in Barty's right pupil ... which I think indicates a growth. The distortions in his vision are still there, though somewhat different, when he closes his right eye, so that indicates a problem in the left, as well, even though I'm not able to see anything there. Dr. Chan has a full schedule tomorrow, but as a favor to me, he's going to see you before his usual office hours, first thing in the morning. You'll have to start out early." "Yeah," he confirmed, applying a blue crayon to a grinning bunny that was dancing with a squirrel..At home again, in the safety of the family, Barty collapsed in exhaustion from the sustained effort to see with eyes that he didn't possess. Abed for ten days, feverish, afflicted with vertigo and migraine headaches, nauseated, he lost eight pounds before his recovery was complete..Slow deep breathing forgotten, gasping like a drowning swimmer, a sudden sweat dripping from his brow, Junior used one foot to prod the fallen man..Yet his heart slammed hard and heavy against his confining ribs, and fear stippled the nape of his neck..Dr. Chan's manner remained professional, providing the strength that Agnes required, but his pain was evident when his gentle voice softened further: "These tumors are so advanced, we won't know until surgery if the malignancy has spread. We may already be too late. And if we aren't too late, we'll have only a small window of opportunity. A small window. Eight days would entail too much risk." Junior glanced over his shoulder even as Celestina turned and fled. He caught only a glimpse of her disappearing into the inner hallway..To have the best chance of becoming a master mechanic, any young apprentice needs a mentor. The art of total card control cannot be learned entirely from books and experimentation..He was immensely weary, limp. He felt oppressed, as though a great weight were piled on him. Even keeping his eyes open was tiring..Junior had learned implode from a self-help book about how to improve your vocabulary and be well-spoken. At the time, he had thought that this word-among others in the lists he memorized-was one he would never use. Now it was the perfect description of how he felt: as if he were going to implode..To the growing pile of ruin, she added one of Joey's cardigan sweaters, after popping loose one bone button and almost completely detaching a sewn-on patch pocket. A pair of knockabout khaki pants: quickly clip open the seat seam; cut the corner of the wallet pocket, then rip it with both hands; snip loose some stitching and half detach the cuff on the left leg..Frustrated again, she said simply, "Whenever Edom and Jacob talk about these things, I want you to be sure always to keep in mind that life's about living and being happy, not about dying." Across the room, the girl on the window seat showed no awareness of his arrival. She sat sideways to him in the niche, with her back against one wall, knees drawn up, a big sketch pad braced against her thighs, working intently with colored pencils..Other rooms were furnished as sparsely as those in a monastery. Indeed, the dining room contained nothing whatsoever..Designed by Linda Lockowitz Text set in Adobe Jenson First edition ACBGIKJHFDB.Sometimes Celestina marveled at how intimately and inextricably the tendrils of tragedy and joy were intertwined in the vine of life. Sorrow was often the root of future joy, and joy could be the seed of sorrow yet to come. The layered patterns in the vine were so complex, so enrapturing in their lush detail and so fearsome in their wild inevitability, that she could fill uncountable canvases, through many lifetimes as an artist, striving to capture the enigmatic nature of existence, in all its beauty dark and bright, and in the end merely suggest the palest shadow of its mystery..Two high-quality deadbolt

locks. Sufficient protection against the average intruder, but inadequate to keep out a self-improved man with channeled anger. Holding the pistol, fully extending his right arm in execution style, the gunman approached the fallen minister. Maybe he would get lucky, and an airliner would fall out of the sky right now, right here, obliterating him in an instant. "Nicholas Deed." On her tongue, the name was as bitter as a dissolving aspirin. Now, twenty-four hours later, when Sparky answered his telephone and heard Tom Vanadium, he said, "You looking for a little company? I've got another bottle of Merlot where the last one came from." He woke several times that night, instantly alert for a ghostly serenade, but he heard no otherworldly crooning. The quarter, silvery. Under the patriot's neck, the date: 1965. Coincidentally, the year that Naomi had been killed. The year that Tom had first met Cain. The year that all this had begun. An affecting but difficult-to-define note in Dr. Lipscomb's voice brought Celestina slowly out of the office chair, to her feet. Perhaps it was wonder. Or fear. Or reverence. Perhaps all three. On January 3, 1968, Paul was fewer than 250 miles from Spruce Hills, Oregon. He wasn't aware of that town's proximity, however, and he didn't, at the time, have it as his destination. Koko skidded to a halt, perplexed, looked left, looked right, floppy ears lifted slightly to catch any sound of Mistress Mary. Slow breaths, and then she pointed at the windshield. "The hospital's that way." The moon shimmered, and the stars blurred-but only briefly, for her devotion to this boy was a fiery furnace that tempered the steel of her spine and brought a drying heat to her eyes. Without Franklin Chan's full approval but with his complete understanding, Agnes took Barty home. On Monday, they would return to Hoag Hospital, where Barty would receive surgery on Tuesday. An unfortunately bumpy ride for the deceased: along the hallway, through the foyer, across the entry threshold, down the porch steps, across a lawn dappled with pine shadows and yellow moonlight, to the graveled driveway. No complaints. If they were suspicious of him, they showed no obvious alarm. The three went inside in no particular rush, and judging by their demeanor, Junior decided that they hadn't spotted him, after all. According to his wristwatch, the time was 9:05 in the morning on this momentous day. At her touch, she felt a tension go out of the doctor. His hands slipped from his face, and he turned to her, shuddering not with fear but with what might have been relief. At the mention of her son's name, Agnes stiffened. There were numerous ways for Deed to have learned the baby's name, yet it seemed wrong for him to know it, wrong to use it, the name of this child he had nearly orphaned, had almost killed. If the nun and the nurse could know the loathing that Celestina had felt earlier, they would never allow her here in the creche, never trust her with this newborn..and half rotten. She tore it. With the small scissors, she opened the shoulder seam from the inside. "Maybe he could if he was able to lift it, but I couldn't throw a pig or an Oreo or anything else into any other place. It's just not something I know how to do." Although, by unspoken agreement, they avoided any talk of loss and death, the mood remained grim. Angel sat in thoughtful silence, pushing her food around her plate rather than eating it. Her demeanor intrigued Tom, and he noticed that it worried her mother, who put a different interpretation on it than he did. If Junior had not been such a rational man, schooled in logic and reason by the books of Caesar Zedd, he might have snapped there in the street, before the photograph of Seraphim, might have begun to shake and sob and babble until he wound up in a psychiatric ward. But although his trembling knees felt no more supportive than aspic, they didn't dissolve under him. He couldn't breathe for a minute, and his vision darkened at the periphery, and the noise of passing traffic suddenly sounded like the agonized shrieks of people tortured beyond endurance, but he held fast to his wits long enough to realize that the name under the photo, which served as the centerpiece of a poster, read Celestina White in four-inch letters, not Seraphim. "Well, as years pass, they're going to be a financial burden, if nothing else, so I'm glad I've got a little surprise for you." Turning in Celestina's lap, Angel said, "Smell," and held the index finger of her right hand under her mother's nose. She removed a temporary cap from the second bicuspid on the lower left side and replaced it with the porcelain cap that had been delivered by the lab that morning. The two women stared at each other, and at last Celestina said, "Good Lord, what's happening here?" Angel, as if in God's own hands, stared with round-eyed wonder at the physician. Eventually, dinner over, cleanup finished, when Maria and the uncles had gone, Agnes and Barty faced the stairs together. She followed, holding his cane, which he said he preferred not to use in the house, prepared to catch him if he stumbled. Deciduous black oaks lined the street. All were leafless at this time of year, gnarled limbs clawing at the moon. "Here we are," said the driver, braking to a stop at the curb in front of the gallery. "Oh, that's me, all right. I'm on the FBI's most-wanted list for criminal pie jostling." The lawyer's eyes appeared as round as his face. "Aggie, please don't tell me you've started to share Jacob's ... enthusiasms?" She looked around the room. "He's invisible like the Cheshire cat?" "His whole world is as real as ours, but we can't see it, and people in his world can't see us. There're millions and millions of worlds all here in the same place and invisible to one another, where we keep getting chance after chance to live a good life and do the right thing." The two men detached and rolled up the pleated green skirt that hung from the rectangular frame of the graveyard winch on which the casket was suspended. Green, rather than black, because Naomi loved nature: Junior had been thoughtful about the details of the service. Simon Magusson-capable of representing the devil himself for the proper fee, but also capable of genuine remorse-visited Vanadium in the hospital, soon after learning that the detective had awakened from a coma. The attorney shared the conviction that Cain was the guilty party, and that he'd also murdered his wife. This was not a ghost. This was not a walking dead man. This was something else, but until he knew what it was, who it was, the only person he could possibly look for was Vanadium. The dining table could accommodate six, and Agnes instructed Maria to set two places on each of the long sides, leaving the ends unused. "It'll be cozier if we all sit across from one another." Like the chicken egg. As weary as she was, Agnes could not at once puzzle out the meaning of those four words. Then: "Oh. He's in an incubator." Serving a formal dinner was Agnes's way of declaring-to herself more than to anyone else in attendance-that the time had come for her to get on with life for Bartholomew's sake, but also for her own. In his mind, he carried a blueprint of the

house more precisely drawn than anything that might have been prepared by an architect. He knew the place to the inch, and he adjusted his pace and all his mental calculations every month to compensate for his steady growth. So many paces from here to there. Every turn and every peculiarity of the floor plan committed indelibly to memory. A journey like this was a complicated mathematical problem, but being a math prodigy, he moved through his home almost as easily as when he had enjoyed sight..Robert Heinlein saved her. Over hot dogs and chips, she read to Barty from Red Planet, beginning at the top of page 104. He had previously shared enough of the story with Agnes so that she felt connected to the narrative, and soon she was sufficiently involved with the tale that she was better able to conceal her anguish..He tried to lean back as he dropped, with the hope that he would fall under her, providing cushion if they met with sidewalk instead of lawn..With a shiver, Kathleen said, "We'd like to know more about why we did the things we did for you. Why the quarters? Why the song?".Junior had no idea who the driver of the Buick might be, but he hated the tall lanky son of a bitch because he figured the guy was humping Celestina, who would never have humped anyone but Junior if she had met him first, because like her sister, like all women, she would find him irresistible. He felt that he had a prior claim on her because of his relationship to the family; he was the father of her sister's bastard boy, after all, which made him their blood by shared--progeny..KATHLEEN IN THE candlelight, her ginger eyes a glimmer with images of the amber flame. Icy martinis, extra olives in a shallow white dish. Beyond the tableside window, the legendary bay glimmered, too, darker and colder than Kathleen's eyes, and not a fraction as deep..The toast now came to Celestina. "To Phimie, who will be with me in memory every hour of every day for the rest of my life, until she is with me again for real. And to ... to this most momentous day.".But the boy played no tricks against his father. He took his beatings in silence and learned to hide his gift.

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