## Hand and Ring

Memomber leaping the fence and stumb

"Very well; now tell me how could Miss

"Did Miss Dare see me jump the lence?"
"She did." "And yet was in Professor Darlings observatory, a mile or so away?"

"I think," said Mansell, "that instead of my colling you how she could have seen this from Mrs. Clemmens house, you should tell me how she could have seen if from Professor Darling's observatory."

"That is easy enough. She was looking through a telescope."

"When you was towning from Mrs."

"When you were turning from Mrs. Clemmons' door, Miss Dure, was looking in that very direction through a telescope."

"I - I would like to believe that story, said the primor, with suppressed emotion."

"I would like to believe that story, said the primor, with suppressed emotion."

What ?" urged the detective, eatmly. Make a new man of me." "Well, then, call up your memories of the way your aunt's house is situated. Re-call the hour, and acknowledge that, if Miss Pare was with her, she must have been in

There is no doubt about that " Now, how many windows has the disc Ing-Foom 9

How streated of

" It is on the same as the door," "There is none, then, which looks down to that place where you leaped the fence?"

" How account for her weeing that Hitle incident, then, of your stumbling?"

"She might have come to the door, stopped out, and so seen me."

"Humph! I see you have an answer for everything."

Craik Mansell was silent.

A look of admiration slowly spread itself ever the detective's face.

"We must probe the matter a little deeper," said he.

"If she had been standing there you could not have turned round without seeing her?

"Now, did you see her standing there?"

" You you turned round go

" Wise Pare says so." The prisoner struck his forehead with his

And it is so," he orient "Fell me more that Miss Dare save.

"She saw you harry over the hog, stop at the entrance of the wood, take a look at your watch, and plunge with renewed speed "It is see It is see And, to have seen that, she must have had the aid of a tele-

She says you had your pants turned up at the ankles, and corried your coat on your

left wim. Left arm gri

"Yes."
"I think I had it on my eight."
"It was on the arm toward her, she december. If she was in the observatory, it was your left side that she saw.

" Yes, yes; but the court was over the other arm. I remember using my left hand in cauting over the tonce when I came up

Kurtory and chagein. " If the cost was on the arm toward her, the hot of its being on

the right " exclusion Mr. Mannell, with an air of sudden relief. "I recalled now that I changed it from one arm to the other after I vanified the fence. It was just at the moment I torned to come back to the side does, and, as she does not present to have soon me till after fleft the door, of company the court was as she says, on my late

turned Mr. Cryce, with an eir of easy con-fidence. " that what do you mean when you say that you changed it at the moment lide's you go at once to the distagroom

door from the swimp?"

"No. I had yone for the front door on my former risk, and was going to it this time; but when I got to the corner of the house I saw the trains coming into the gate, and not wishing to mounter any one, turned round and came back to the dining room door." Lain. And it was then you heard \_\_\_\_"

"What I heard," completed the prisoner, Mr. Mansell," said the other, "are you not sufficiently convinced by this time that Miss Dore was not with Mes. Chammens, but in the abservatory of Professor Parling's brings, to tell me what that was ?

Answer me a question and I will copty.

have eccupied?

"It can. Not two hours ago I tried the experiment myself, using the same telescope and kneeling in the same place where she did. I found I could not only trace the spot whose you parent, but could defect quite reality every movement of my man Hickory, whom I had previously placed there to be through the matters, I should Yet the prisoner healthtest.

prenunct the liever, white false total if f could see as much with my nated eve from not, and my sight is very good."
"Frangh," said Mansoll: "hard as it is to explain, I must believe Miss Dave was

or Then you will toll me what you heard?" " Yes f for in it may be the key to this investory, though how, I cannot see, and death is you can. I am all the more south to do it, to pursued, "because I can now indirectant how she came to think me shifty and thinking so, conducted herself as the case done from the beginning of my

quel abortione Then adminished by the Angle of the mismor's diook that he was freading on dangerious ground, he quickly mided. "that she will explain all that here well amore day,

Critik Manisolt dropped his head and his trait animal irrespect his actual to be the more than the following the man and with my annt just before the murder, I espetately had reasons for thinking she was, for I heard my annt address her distinctly and be asset.

"You did so Mr. tryings interest in the latter he was playing on his knew became

thicones.

"You, It was just as I pushed the dear agar. The words were those; 'You think you are game to marry him. Imagene Darse; but I tell you you never shall, nor while I was it.

here had sought my anne, had pleaded even her for me and failed, thench me as consider. I did not wait to hear more. When I found, then, that by running I make each the train of Mentatth, I run, as a minousciously laid myself open to suspicious. "I see," rearmured the detective;

Not that I respected any evil them. interior are manufic carnestly. I was anly conscious of disappointment and a dedire to ascape from my own thoughts. It was not till next days and

"Yes yes," interrupted Mr. Aryer, abstractedly, "but your anne's words! She saids 'You think you are going to marry him, Imagene Dure; hut you never shall, not while I live.' Yet Imagene Dare was not there, Lot us solve that problem."

" You think you can ?" How ! how !"

The detective did not answer. He was nried in profound thought. Suddenly he "It is, as you say, the key note to the ragedy. It must be solved,"
"There is but one way I can explain it,"

aid he, "My aunt was speaking to her elf. She was deaf and lived alone. Such people often indulge in suffiquizing."
The slap which Mr. Ciryee gave his thigh must have made it tingle for a good half-

dinary measures are not useful at times? You've hit the very explanation. Of course she was speaking to herself. Imagene Dare was in her thoughts, so she addressed Imagene Dare

gene Pare,"
"I wish I had," said the prisoner, Mr. Gryce became exceedingly animated, "Well, that's settled," said he, "And now for the conclusion. She said; 'You think you are going to marry him. Imogene Dare; but you never shall, hot while I live.' Phat shows her mind was running on you." That shows her mind was running on you."

"It shows more than that. It shows that, if Miss Pare was not with her then, she must have been there earlier in the day. For, when I lett my annt the day before, she was in entire ignorance of my attachment to Miss Pare, and the hopes it had led to."

"Say that again," cried Gryce, Mr. Manself repeated himself, adding: "That would account for the ring being found on my sant's divines room floor."

found on my anne's dining room floor—"
"What I want to make sure of is that
your aunt had not been informed of your

wishes as concerned Miss Dare."
"Unless Miss Dare was there in the early norning and told her herself. "There were no neighbors to betray you? " There was n't a neighbor who know and

thing about the matter,

The detective's eye brightened.
"I have received a clue."
"A clue to what," evied Mansell. "You shall hear soon. Knough, that you have given me an idea that may eventually lead to the clearing up of this mystery, if And Miss Dags "

"Is under no charge, and never will be. "And Mr. Orentt?" "Wait," said Mr. Cryos " wait,"

CHAPTER XIA

A LINE SEPTIME Mr. three did not believe that Imogene Dare had visited Mrs. Clemenens before the seault. Consequently the words which the orisoner had overheard must have referred, of to himself, but to some other man s is other words to Mr. Orante

York, it was not easy to measure the im portance of a complision like this. For whilst there would have been nothing peer-Har in this salitary woman, with the thousands in the bank, boasting of hop priver to suparate her norther from the lady of his chater, there was every thing that gaage in regard to Miss Dave and Mr. Oroutt. Nothing but the existence of some unsuspected band between herself and the great lawyer could have accounted for the threat of interference contained in her very imphatic words.

What was that bond? A secret shared hotween them? The knowledge on her part of some fact in Mr. Oronte's past life, which,

Mr. Heyer sat down and seriously asked himself whether there was any known fact, effermstantial or otherwise, which refused to fit into the theory that Mr. Oreuts actually committed this crime with his one For, whereas the most or place chain of dramstantial evi-

dence does not necessarily prove the suspected party to be guilty of a crime, the least break in it is fatal to his conviction.

loginning, therefore, with the earliest incidents of the latal day, he called up, first, the letter which the widow had commenced but never lived to finish. It was addressed to her most intimute friend. Mr. tiryes recalled one of its repressions. "There are so many," wrote she, "to whom my death would be more than welcome." Many means three at least. Hillreth was one, Mansell another, but who was the third to Mr. Cryce, Int one name suggested itself in reply. Sow what was the next fact known? The milkman stopped with his milk; that was at half-past clover, Was if at this time she was interrupted in her letter writing? Mr. Hildreth called, cone lifteen minutes later, she was on the spot to open the dear, Their interview was cheet; it was also sterry, Showing him the door, she goes back to her work, and, bothy deaf, does not notice that he does not have the house as she exexpected ('mer, months her thoughts go on unhinered, and she muters alone and history to herealf, "You think you are going to marry him, Imagene Pure, but I ell you you never shall, not while I live Her edited enforance, then, less in this fact

that a county and bountiful woman had of commute munifested, as she supposed, a wish to marry from the property. The treather of number, used necessarily referring to the lawyer. Unt this is not the only point into which It is recommy to inquire. To believe the chantle guilty of this cetting takes the society and of that oritical moment when the clock stood at through Bildreth was as that france was on the lettoken portlegs ( ... Manuell was on the cliping room door of Importer Dave Latine her televenne, &

done there, but the tream house lone of high and walk the one the in high voice of the widow entert in words. What do all three da, then: Mr. Hildreck counter

the within these in noise, which so the three in, then the the tramp shutter away through the frank and the frank and the frank and the frank and the fine the weeds. And imagene Daye? She has intered has color of the frank and the fine and the fine force of the thing in these various ethe frank away thing consecutions in these various ethermous? The Krepything is reconclude.

What happens as fare minutes later? Machilleman opens the frank does as a specific the research of the fine and the first opens the first of the first opens the fi

Now, is there anything in all this that is contradictory? No; there is only comething left out. There has been no mention made of the ring—the ring which was ofther in Craite Mansell's or Imogene Dare's possession, and which was found on the dining-room floor within ten minutes after the assault took place. Unimportant as it seemed, the discovery of this ring on the floor, taken with the exclanations of the widow, make a break in the chair that is fatal to Mr. Gryce's theory. Fet does it? Was there any way in which Oroute could have come into possession of it before Imogene? and could it have been that he blow? Mr. Gryce beat all his energies to inquire.

inquire.
First, where was the ring? Evidently in Mr. Manaell's coat-pocket. Imagene had left it there. But Manaell did not know it was there. It accordingly slipped out; but when? Not in the lane, er, at best, on the dinning-room doorstep. Was it when Manaell's coat was flung from the left, the ring would Was it when Mansell's coat was llung from the right arm to the left; the ring would have flown in the direction of the gate and fallen, perhaps, directly on the walls in front of the house. If it had, its presence in the dinning-room seemed to show it had been carried there by Mrs Orouti, since he was the next person who went into the house.

who went into the house.

Int did it fall there? He sent for Byrd, and could gain no information. Then he went to the District Attorney. With a gloomy contraction of the brow, Mr. Ferris and;

"Yes, I remember his look and appear "Yes, I remember his look and appearance very well. He stepped briskly, as he slways did, and carried his head.— Wait! You think Mr. Orentt committed this crime; that he left us standing on the court house steps and crossed the street to Mrs. Clemmens' house with the deliberate intention of killing her. Had he had any such infernal design in his breast he would not have been likely to have stormed as he did to nick un semething stopped as he did to pick up something which he saw lying on the walk in front of

Mrs. Clemmens' honse.
"Yes, I remember it now distinctly. was just as he entered the gate. A man meditating a murder of this sort would not be likely to notice a pin lying in his path, much less pause to pick it up."

"How it it were a diamond ring?"

"A diamond ring?"

"A diamond ring?"

"Mr. Ferris," said the detective, gravely,
"you have just supplied a very important
link in the chain of evidence against Mr.
Oreutt. The question is, how could the
diamond ring which Miss Dare is believed
to have dropped into Mr. Mansell's coat
pocket have been carried into Mrs. Clemmens' house without the successor of either mens' house without the agency of either herself or Mr. Mansell? I think you have just shown." And is a few brief sentences he explained the situation to Mr. Ferris. How do you account for the widow having used an exclamation which seems to eignify it was on the hand which she saw lifted against her life?"

"By the fact that it was on that hand."
"Do you think that probable if the hand was Mr. Orentt's?

Perfectly so. " And how came it to be on the floor Mr. Oreutt put it on his finger?"
"The ring made for Miss Dare's third finger was too large for Mr. Oreutt's little finger, and so slipped off when he dropped the stick of wood from his hand,"

"And he left it lying where it fell?"

"He probably did not notice its loss. He ides, what one could be suppose a diamond ring he had never seen before, and which he had had on his finger but an instant, would offer in a case like this?" You reason close," said the District

Attorney ; " too close," "If our surmises are correct," Gryce re-marked, "it was a grim moment for the lawyer when, seeme in his immunity from suspicion, he saw Miss Dare come upon the

Mr. Ferris shook his head with a gloomy air, but did not respond. " Miss Dare tells me," the detective resumed, "that his first act upon their meeting again at his house was to offer himself to her in marriage. Now you, or any one else, would say this was to show he did not mis-

trust her, but I say it was to find out if she mistrusted him."

Still Mr. Forris remained silent. "The same reasoning will apply to what followed," continued Mr. Gryce, "You with his taking the case of Mansell and doing all he could to seeme his acquittal. But you will find it easier to do so when I tell you that his only hope of winning her for his wife lay in the gratitude he might awaken in her if he succeeded in saving his

" Von are making him out a great villain," marmured Mr. Ferris, bitterly, "And was not that the language of his own countenance as he lay dying?" inquired

the detective. Mr. Forris could not say no. "And now for the motive of this hideous erime for k suppose your ingenuity has discovered one before this." "If will be found in his love for Miss

"His love for Miss Daye? What had this plain and homespun Mrs. Clemmens to do with his love for Miss Dare?"

" She was an interference, er How ?" " Ale, that, sir, is the question,"

"So then you do not know?" The District Attorney drew himself up. et the tippee," said he, "the charge which he s been made against this eminent man de me ads the very strongest proof in order to medantiate it. You must prove that her

death was absolutely necessary to the sucwill only awaken distrust in the minds of all who hear it. The famo of a man like Mr. Oreutt is not to be destroyed by a passhe word of delirium, or a specious display of scoumstantial evidence such as you evolve from the presence of the ring on the scene

"I know it," allowed Mr. Gryce, "and that is why I have asked for a week.

CHAPTER XLIE

CONSTLEASTONS

Mr. Cryce was perfectly aware that the tesk before him was a difficult one. Sum-mentog his two subordinates, he laid the "Do either of you know whether Mr.

Orentt's name has ever been associated with any private seandal, the knowledge of which might have given Mrs. Clemmens power over him ?" "I do not think he was that kind of a man," said byrd, "I have heard nothing

said in any way derogatory to his private character. Though a bachelor, he showed no disposition to marry, and until Miss Dare appeared on the scene was not known to be even attentive to one of her sex." "He was sweet on a certain Miss Pratt,"

"He was sweet on a certain Miss Pratt," remarked Hickory. "But nothing came of it. She did not hold his fancy. Some folke declare she was so disappointed she left town. I remember overhearing some easy how hard Mrs. Clemmens was on the Pratt girl."

"When did Mrs. Clemmens come to this town?" asked Gryce.
"Fifteen years ago," replied Byrd.

" And Scoutt first put in his app

"I have heard that it was in this court he pleaded his first case. Don't you know more about it, Hickory?"

"Yes; Mr. Ferris told me this morning that Orentt had not opened a law-book when he came to this town. That he was a country schoolmaster in some uncivilized district out West."

"Hoys," cried Mr. Gryce, "the secret we want to know is of long standing. I will tell you why I think so. For ten years Mrs. Clemmens has been known to put money in the bank regularly every week. She got that money in payment of her silence concerning a past he desired to keep secret."

"But they have been here fifteen years and she has only received money for ten."
"She has only put money in the bank for ten. I do not suppose he was wealthy at the outset of his career."

"You advise us, then, to see what we can make out of his early life out West."
"Yes; and I will see what I can make out of how."

out of here."

And, dismissing the two young men, Mr. Gryce proceeded to the house of Mr. Orcutt, where he entered upon an examination of such papers and documents as were open to his inspection, in the hope of discovering some allusion to the deceased lawyer's early history. But he was not successful. He paid a visit to Miss Firman, as being the only person who professed to have had any acquaintance with Mrs. Clemmens before she came to Sibley.

CHAPTER XLIII.

MRS. PIRMAN. "Mies Firman, I believe? I am Mr. Gryce," the genial voice went on, "Per-

haps the name is not familiar?"
"I never heard it before." "You are wrelative of the Mrs. Clemmens who was so foully murdered in Sibley, are you not? You must, therefore, be in a state of great anxiety to know who her murderer was. Now, I am in that same state, madam; we are, therefore, in sy

pathy, you see."
"You say I must be anxious to know who my consin's murderer was. Has Craik Mansell, then, been acquitted?" "A verdict has not been given."

"What do you want with me?"
"Well," said he, "I will tell you. You believe Craik Mansell to be innocent?" " I do," she returned. " Very well ; so do I. "Let me shake hands with you," was her abrupt remark.

"We are fortunately not in a court of law, and so can talk freely together. Why on think Mansell innocent?"

"Why do you think him innocent?"
"I have talked with him. I have talked with Miss Dare. And I was present when Mr. Orontt breathed his last,' "What has that to do with it? You did not know Mr. Orcutt then?" he inquired. "I had not that honor."

"You have never, then, visited your sonsin in Sibley? "Yes, I was there once, and he came while I was there, but that did not give me

in acquaintance with him."
"He was reserved, then, in his manners, ancommunicative, possibly remorse?" Mr. Gryce drew a deep breath. This well seemed to be destitute of even a drop of

Why do you ask about Orentt? Has his death affected Mansell's prospects? " That is what I want to find out. Where with them ; but if that envelope should con-3id Mrs. Clemmons first make the acquainttain, not a piece of blank paper, or even the once of Mr. Orostty" " I always supposed she saw him first in

This well was certainly very dry. " She came from Nebraska, and so did he; new, why may they not have known such other there?"

"I did not know that he came from Sebraska, Mr. Gryce drew another deep breath and let down his bucket again. "I thought your cousin spent her child-hood in Toledo?"

" She did, sir." "How came she to go to Nebraska then?"
"Weff, she was left, an orphan and had to look out for herself. A situation in some way opened to her in Nebraska, and she went there to take it."

" A situation at what ?" " As waitress in some hotel." " Humph! And was she still a waitress when she married ov

" The subject was so painful we never dis-"Why painful?"
"She lost her husband so soon."

"But you can tell me the name of the town in which this hotel was, can you not?" " It was called Swanson then." Swanson! This was something to learn, but not much, "You have not told me,"

said he, "why you believe Craik Mansell to be innocent?" "Well," replied she, "I believe Craik Mansell to be innocent because he is the son of his mother. ('raik has his mother's forehead and eyes, and no one will ever make me believe he has not her good principles

"I coincide with you madam." "I hope the jury will." Miss Firman was called from the room, and Mr. Gryce found himself left for a few moments alone. His thoughts were far from cheerful, for he saw a long and techons line of inquiry opening before him is the West, which, if if the not root in believe, promised to ex-bans, not rook a week, but possibly many months, before extrains of any kind could be obtained a bleste he heard a voice raised from some unknown quarter near by, saying in strange tones he was positive did

not proceed from Miss Firman: Was it Clemmons or was it Orentt? Clemmons or Oroutt? I cannot remember." A deer stond agar at his back. Ho was choice to lay his hand on the knob when Miss Firman returned.

"Oh, I beg you," she entreated. "That my mother's room and she is not at all "She has just uttered a cry," said

"Why, she is asleep," protested Miss Fir-"I am positive she spoke but an instant ago; I can even tell you the words she

"She said : 'Was it Clemmens or was it Drentt? Clemmens or Orentt? I cannot "Poor ma! She was dreaming. Come into the other room and I will explain."
"Ma has not been quite right in her mind since tire day I told her of the murder, and

loften detect her murmuring words similar to those you have just heard." "Are you sure?"
"What do you mean?"
"I mean," returned the detective, dryly,
"that I believe your mother does not know what she is talking about when she links the name of Mr. Oreutt with that of your cousin who was murdered. They belong together; Mr. Oreutt was her murderer."

was connect for Mansell. very notice due connect his name with Mrs. Clemmens?"

"She knows he was her boarder, and that he was the first one to discover she had been murdered."

been murdered."

"That is not enough. Cannot your mother have some memories connected with his name of which you are ignorant?"

"No, sir; we have lived together in this house for twenty-five years. Ma could not have known any thing about him or Mary Ann which I did not."

"I grant the mental confusion," said he.
"Was there never a time when she could have received some confidence from Mrs.

" Mary Ann, Mary Ann!" came in queru you had not told me; Emily would be a ter one to know your secret. just at that momen

That sounds as if your surmise is true," she dryly observed.
"Let us make an experiment," said he The old lady lay as before in a condition between sleeping and waking. Mr. Gryce at once withdrew out of sight. Miss Firman, surprised, and possibly curious, took her stand at the foot of the bed. "Was it Clemmens or was it Orcutt? I wish somebody would tell me," said the old

Instantly Mr. Gryce, with his soft tread, drew near to the old lady's side, and, leaning over her, murmured gently I think it was Oreutt.

Instantly the old lady breathed a deep she, "and I thought you always called her

Miss Firman stared at Gryce. "Did she say it was Mrs. Orcutt?"
"She said—" But here the old lady opened her eyes, and, seeing her daughter standing at the foot of her bed, turned away with a peevish air, and restlessly pushed

her hand under the pillow. Mr. Gryce at once bent nearer? "Nhe said-" he suggested, with care ful gentleness.
But the old lady made no answer. Her

hand seemed to have touched some object for which she was seeking, and she was evi dently oblivious to all else.
"It is useless," said she; "she is awake now, and you won't hear anything more;

And she drew the reluctant detective back again into the other room. Why did your mother put her hand under her pillow," he asked. "I don't know, unless it was to see if her big envelope was there.

"Her big envelope ! "Yes, Since she took to her bed she has kept a paper in a big envelope under her pillow."

"No, sir. Why should I? It might easily be a piece of blank paper. My mother is not herself, as I have said before." "I should like a peep at the contents of that envelope," he declared.

"Wouldn't you open it if she we dead ?" " Will it be very different then from what

" My mother would know it if I took them away." " Put another envelope in the place of this one, with a piece of paper folded up in

" It would be a trick." "I know it ; but Craik Mansell can be saved even by a trick." "Craik Mansell? What has he got to do with the papers under my mother's "I cannot say that he has anything to do

letters of your father, but such a document, ay, as a certificate of marriage -'A certificate of marriage?' "Yes, between Mrs. Clemmens and Mr. "Mary Ann the wife of Mr. Oreutt! Oh,

that is impossible !" exclaimed the agitated 'Less improbable things than that have been found to be true in this topsy-turvy world," said he. "Do you really think so!" she asked and went with sudden impetuosity to her mother's room. Mr. Gryce's smile took on an aspect of triumph.
"I have it," she murmured, taking out a

packet from under her apron and tearing it pen with tembling fingers. A number of closely written sheets fell

CHAPTER XLIV. THE WIDOW CLEMMENS. "Well, and what have you to say?" It was Mr. Ferris who spoke. The week

which Mr. Gryce had demanded for his in-quiries had fully clapsed, and the three etectives stood before him ready with their "Sir." said Gryce, "our opinions have not been changed by the discoveries which we have made. It was Mr. Oreatt who killed Mrs. Clemmens, and for the reason

" His wife?" "Yes, sir; and she has been so for Byrd. " He was a poor school-master, and

"And was it a real marriage ! "There's a record of it," said Hickory.
"And did he never acknowledge it?" "Not openly," answered Byrd, "The commonies of the woman seemed to revolt him after he was married to her, and when in a month or so he received the summons east, which opened up for him the career of start afresh. He told her his prospects had changed, and with them his tastes and confrements: that he could not and would stipend, according to his income and success. She went to Sibley, where she set up her own little house-keeping arrangements under his very eye. More than that, she prevailed upon him to visit her daily, and even to take a meal at her house. She would stand any thing but a rival. He knew this, and prefarred crime to the loss of the

woman he loved."

"You speak very knowingly," said Mr.
Forpis. "May I ask where you received rour information?"

It was Mr. Gryce who answered.
"From letters." And he pulled out before the District Attorney a pile of old letters in the widow's well-known handwriting. "Where did you find these ?" asked Mr.

"Where did you find these?" asked Mr. Ferris.

"Well," said Mr. Gryce, "I found them in rather a curious place. They were in the keeping of old Mrs. Firman, Miss Firman's mother. Mrs. Clemmens, or, rather, Mrs. Oreutt, got frightened some two years ago at the disappearance of her marriage certificate from the place where she had always kept it hidden, and, thinking that Mr. Oreutt was planning to throw her off, she resolved to provide herself with a confidente capable of standing by her in case she wished to assert her rights. She chose old

# CASTORIA

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