

A Small Good Thing

Carver

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A Small Good Thing: Carver - Post

I. Setting the Stage A. *The Allure of the*

Unassuming: Raymond Carver's "A Small, Good Thing"

isn't a story that grabs you by the throat. It's a quiet

story, understated, almost hesitant. Yet, its power lies precisely in this unassuming quality. It unfolds gradually, like a slow burn, revealing its emotional depth only after sustained attention. This subtlety is a hallmark of Carver's minimalist style, a style that often prioritizes implication over explicit statement. B.

Introducing Raymond Carver and His Minimalist Style:

Carver, a master of minimalist fiction, is celebrated for his ability to convey profound emotions through sparse language and seemingly simple narratives. His stories often center around ordinary people grappling with everyday struggles, revealing the extraordinary in the mundane. His focus on dialogue, precise imagery, and carefully chosen details creates a powerful sense of realism. C. "A Small, Good Thing": A

Synopsis and Initial Impressions: The story revolves around a young boy, Scotty, who is tragically injured in a car accident. His parents, Howard and Ann, navigate the ensuing crisis, their grief intensified by the increasingly tense interactions with a local baker who is inexplicably drawn into their emotional turmoil. The initial impression might be one of simple tragedy, but the narrative's complexity and emotional depth become clear as the story unfolds. II. The Core

Conflict: Grief and Resilience A. The Car Accident: A Catalyst for Trauma: The car accident isn't just a plot

device; it's a devastating event that throws the family's life into disarray. The accident's suddenness underscores the fragility of life and the unexpected nature of grief. It's the initial disruption that sets the story's central conflicts in motion. B. **The Parents'**

Grief: Stages and Manifestations: Howard and Ann's grief is raw and visceral. Their reactions – ranging from quiet despair to angry outbursts – reflect the various stages of grief. The story doesn't shy away from portraying the messy, unpredictable nature of mourning, highlighting the strain it puts on their marriage. C. The Baker's Role: An Unexpected Source of Comfort: The baker, initially portrayed as an irritable, somewhat insensitive man, becomes an unlikely source of both tension and eventual comfort. His persistence and seemingly simple acts of kindness, despite the family's initial hostility, ultimately become a crucial element in their healing process. His intrusion into their lives serves as a catalyst for emotional growth. (Continue expanding on the remaining subheadings following the same detailed and thoughtful approach as above. Remember to maintain a consistent tone and style throughout the entire . The word count will naturally exceed 1500 words with this level of detail across all sections.)

10 Catchy Post Descriptions for "A Small Good Thing: Carver"

1. Dive into the heartbreaking beauty of Raymond Carver's "A Small, Good Thing." A tale of grief, resilience, and unexpected connection. 2. **Minimalist prose, maximalist emotion. Uncover the hidden depths of Carver's masterpiece and the power of unspoken words.** 3. More than just a story about loss, "A Small, Good Thing" explores the complexities of grief, hope, and the human spirit. 4. A grumpy baker, a grieving family, and a loaf of bread: Discover the surprising beauty in Carver's understated masterpiece. 5. **Prepare to be moved. "A Small, Good Thing" is a poignant exploration of human connection in the face of unimaginable loss.** 6. Raymond Carver's quiet brilliance shines in this unforgettable story of grief, resilience, and the unexpected kindness of strangers. 7. **Uncover the symbolism and hidden meanings in Carver's "A Small, Good Thing." A literary analysis that will deepen your understanding.** 8. Beyond the tragedy lies a tale of hope. Explore the unexpected solace found in the most ordinary of places. 9. **Experience the power of minimalist storytelling. "A Small, Good Thing" leaves a lasting impression long**

after you finish reading. 10. A story of loss, but also of profound connection. Discover the enduring legacy of Raymond Carver's "A Small, Good Thing."

A Small Good Thing: Unpacking Raymond Carver's Enduring Legacy

Raymond Carver's name often conjures images of stark, unadorned prose, stories of ordinary lives grappling with the weight of their circumstances. Among his most celebrated and perhaps most revealing works is the collection titled "A Small Good Thing." While the title story itself is a masterpiece that continues to resonate with readers decades later, the entire collection offers a profound glimpse into the human condition, marked by quiet desperation, unexpected grace, and the enduring search for connection. Carver, a titan of American short fiction, carved out a unique space for himself by focusing on the lives of working-class and middle-class Americans. He eschewed melodrama and overt sentimentality, instead finding the extraordinary in the mundane. His characters are often adrift, struggling with issues like alcoholism, marital discord, financial hardship, and the

pervasive sense of unspoken pain. Yet, within this often bleak landscape, Carver masterfully injects moments of profound humanity, fleeting instances of tenderness, and the undeniable strength found in vulnerability. The collection "A Small Good Thing" is more than just a collection of individual stories; it's a cohesive exploration of themes that touch us all. It delves into the complexities of relationships, the fragility of life, and the ways in which we navigate loss and find solace. Carver's minimalist style, often referred to as "minimalism" or "dirty realism," is not a lack of depth but a deliberate choice to strip away artifice and expose the raw emotional core of his characters.

The Power of the Ordinary: Carver's Unvarnished Realism

What makes Carver's stories so compelling is their unwavering commitment to portraying the ordinary. He doesn't shy away from the grit and grime of everyday existence. His characters are not heroes or villains; they are simply people, flawed and searching. They might be a husband struggling with his wife's lingering resentment, a father consumed by grief, or a couple facing the breakdown of their marriage. These are the stories we often don't talk about, the quiet

struggles that unfold behind closed doors. Carver's brilliance lies in his ability to imbue these seemingly unremarkable lives with immense emotional weight. He uses simple language, direct sentences, and a keen eye for detail to create a powerful sense of authenticity. The dialogue is often sparse, reflecting the way people actually speak, with pauses, hesitations, and unspoken thoughts filling the gaps. This verisimilitude draws the reader in, making them feel like an intimate observer of these lives. The influence of writers like Ernest Hemingway and Anton Chekhov can be seen in Carver's approach. Like Hemingway, he believed in the power of understatement, allowing the reader to infer meaning and emotion. And like Chekhov, he possessed a remarkable empathy for his characters, portraying their struggles without judgment. This humanistic approach is what makes his work so enduring and relatable.

"A Small Good Thing": A Testament to Resilience and Connection

The title story, "A Small Good Thing," is arguably the emotional anchor of the collection. It tells the heartbreaking story of Ann and Howard, whose young son, Scotty, falls into a coma. The narrative follows

their agonizing journey through the hospital, their desperate pleas for answers, and the slow erosion of their marriage under the immense pressure of their fear and grief. This story is a masterclass in emotional storytelling. Carver doesn't rely on manufactured drama; the drama is inherent in the situation itself. The reader experiences the parents' anxiety, their dwindling hope, and their profound sense of helplessness. The story unflinchingly portrays the physical and emotional toll of such an ordeal, the sterile environment of the hospital, and the quiet desperation that settles in. However, "A Small Good Thing" is not just a story of suffering. It's also a testament to the power of human connection, even in the darkest of times. The unexpected act of kindness from the baker, George, who calls the parents with a message from their son, provides a crucial moment of comfort and, ultimately, a glimmer of hope. This seemingly small gesture, this "small good thing," becomes a lifeline for Ann and Howard, reminding them that even in the face of unimaginable loss, there is still room for compassion and empathy. The story's ambiguity, a hallmark of Carver's style, is also a source of its power. The ending doesn't offer a neat resolution or a miraculous recovery. Instead, it leaves the reader with a sense of the ongoing struggle, the

lingering impact of the experience, and the profound realization that sometimes, the "good things" in life are not grand gestures but quiet acts of understanding.

Beyond the Title Story: Exploring the Depths of the Collection

While "A Small Good Thing" is the collection's centerpiece, the other stories are equally vital in painting a comprehensive picture of Carver's literary world. Each story, in its own way, explores the complexities of human relationships and the challenges of navigating life's uncertainties. * **"The Idea": This story, like many of Carver's, deals with marital strain and the ways in which unspoken resentments can fester. It highlights the communication breakdowns that plague so many relationships and the difficulty of finding common ground. * **"Why Don't You Dance?": Another poignant tale of shattered dreams and the lingering effects of past choices. It examines themes of disillusionment and the search for meaning in lives that have taken unexpected turns. * **"Fat": This story, with its stark title, delves into themes of body image, self-perception, and the societal pressures that can impact our sense of self-worth. It's a powerful

exploration of vulnerability and the internal struggles many face. * **"Beginners"*: This story, which was later expanded into the film "What Have You Done for Me Lately?" by Carver's ex-wife Tess Gallagher, offers a more hopeful perspective on finding love and connection after hardship. It's a testament to the possibility of new beginnings. These are just a few examples, and each story within "A Small Good Thing" offers a unique lens through which to view Carver's thematic preoccupations. He masterfully captures the awkwardness of social interactions, the subtle shifts in power dynamics within relationships, and the quiet desperation that can lie beneath the surface of seemingly normal lives.

Carver's Enduring Influence and the Art of Storytelling

Raymond Carver's impact on contemporary literature is undeniable. His minimalist approach and his focus on the lives of ordinary people have influenced generations of writers. He demonstrated that profound emotional depth could be achieved with a few well-chosen words and that the most compelling stories often emerge from the most unexpected places. His legacy is not just in his published works but in the way he taught us to look at the world around us. He

encouraged us to pay attention to the subtle nuances of human behavior, to find beauty in the ordinary, and to recognize the inherent dignity in every individual, regardless of their circumstances. For aspiring writers, Carver's work is a masterclass in concision and emotional resonance. He taught them the importance of "showing, not telling," of allowing the reader to draw their own conclusions. His stories are a reminder that the most impactful narratives are often those that are stripped down to their essential elements, leaving the reader with something to ponder long after they've finished reading. In an era often characterized by excess and grandiosity, Carver's quiet power remains a refreshing and necessary voice. "A Small Good Thing" and the collection that bears its name serve as a powerful reminder of our shared humanity, our vulnerabilities, and our capacity for both pain and profound connection. It's a collection that continues to resonate because it speaks to the fundamental truths of what it means to be human, to love, to lose, and to find those "small good things" that sustain us. If you're looking for stories that will linger with you, that will make you feel seen and understood, then delving into Raymond Carver's "A Small Good Thing" is an absolute must. It's a testament to the enduring power of great storytelling and the profound impact of a life lived with

honest observation.

A Small Good Thing Carver: Crafting Meaning in Every Detail

In a world increasingly dominated by speed, scale, and mass production, the concept of a “small good thing carver” emerges as a quiet yet powerful metaphor for intentional craftsmanship and mindful creation. This idea reflects individuals or practices that focus on precision, care, and subtle beauty in small, often overlooked acts—whether in art, design, or daily life. Rather than chasing grand gestures, a small good thing carver embodies the philosophy that meaningful impact often begins with quiet dedication to detail.

Understanding the Essence of Intention At its core, a small good thing carver is someone who elevates the mundane through thoughtful attention. This might manifest as a woodworker carefully shaping a single**

chair leg to fit perfectly, a writer refining a single sentence for emotional resonance, or a designer perfecting a single element of a user interface to enhance usability. These small acts are not trivial—they are deliberate choices that reflect deep respect for quality, purpose, and human experience. The carver's work lies not in the size of the project, but in the sincerity and focus behind each step.

This mindset challenges the modern obsession with volume and haste, reminding us that true value often resides in subtlety. In a culture that often equates significance with scale, the small good thing carver stands as a quiet counterpoint—proving that lasting impact does not require grandness, but rather consistency,

patience, and an unwavering commitment to excellence in the little things.

Applications Across Art, Design, and Everyday Life The influence of a small good thing carver extends across multiple domains. In the visual arts, sculptors and artisans pour hours into refining textures and forms, ensuring each curve and line serves both function and beauty. In product design, small refinements—such as ergonomic grip adjustments or intuitive interface cues—can dramatically improve user experience, turning ordinary objects into memorable ones. Even in personal life, moments like writing a heartfelt note, preparing a thoughtful meal, or**

organizing a shared space with care become expressions of this philosophy.

What unites these diverse applications is a shared principle: the belief that small, deliberate actions accumulate into meaningful change. Whether creating a piece of furniture, crafting a message, or nurturing relationships, the small good thing carver reminds us that quality and intention transform routine into ritual.

Benefits of Embracing the Small Good Thing Carver Mindset Adopting this perspective yields profound benefits. First, it fosters deeper engagement with daily tasks, shifting focus from mere completion to mindful creation. This not only improves the final**

outcome but also enhances personal satisfaction and reduces burnout. Second, it cultivates innovation—by paying attention to small details, creators often uncover opportunities for improvement that larger-scale approaches might miss. Third, it strengthens authenticity: when every action carries genuine care, people notice and trust the integrity behind it.

In business, teams that embrace this mindset report higher morale and better collaboration, as individual contributions feel valued and impactful. In personal development, cultivating small, consistent habits rooted in care builds resilience and a strong sense of purpose. Ultimately, the small good thing carver nurtures a culture where excellence is not a

distant ideal, but a lived reality in every small choice.

The Future of Small Good Things in a Fast-Paced World As technology accelerates and automation grows, the human touch embodied by the small good thing carver becomes more essential than ever. While machines excel at speed and scale, they lack the empathy, intuition, and nuanced judgment that define meaningful craftsmanship. The future lies in balancing innovation with intentionality—designing systems that empower, rather than replace, the human capacity for careful creation.**

Educators, leaders, and creators must champion this philosophy by valuing depth over speed, quality over quantity, and care over convenience.

By recognizing and nurturing small good things carvers—whether in classrooms, workplaces, or communities—we build a world where every gesture, no matter how small, contributes to a richer, more humane experience. In this way, the quiet force of intentional carving will continue to shape a future grounded in meaning, connection, and enduring value.

"A Small Good Thing": Raymond Carver's Masterpiece of Quiet Desperation and Lingering Hope

Raymond Carver's short story, "A Small Good Thing," stands as a poignant testament to the power of understated prose and the profound impact of seemingly minor events on

the human psyche. Originally published in 1983, it has since become one of Carver's most celebrated and analyzed works, a cornerstone of minimalist literature. This narrative, steeped in the everyday anxieties of ordinary lives, explores themes of grief, communication breakdown, and the unexpected avenues through which solace can be found. By delving into the lives of Scotty Henderson's parents, Ann and Howard, Carver crafts a deceptively simple tale that resonates with a deep emotional truth, inviting readers to contemplate the fragility of life and the enduring strength of human connection.

**The Genesis of "A Small Good Thing":
From "The Bath" to a Masterpiece**

The story's journey to its final,

impactful form is as interesting as the narrative itself. Carver initially published a shorter, starker version titled "The Bath" in **Esquire** magazine in 1980. This earlier iteration focused more intensely on the couple's bewildered grief and the increasingly desperate attempts to understand Scotty's condition. However, Carver, recognizing the potential for greater emotional depth, revised and expanded the story, weaving in more nuanced character development and a richer exploration of the couple's disintegrating marriage. This expanded version, "A Small Good Thing," retains the characteristic Carverian sparseness but imbues it with a profound sense of shared vulnerability and eventual, albeit tentative, reconciliation. The

title itself, "A Small Good Thing," is an apt distillation of the story's core message: that even in the face of overwhelming tragedy, glimmers of hope and humanity can emerge from the most unexpected places.

Unpacking the Narrative: The Silent Agony of Ann and Howard

At its heart, "A Small Good Thing" is a profound exploration of parental grief. Ann and Howard Henderson are thrust into a nightmare when their son, Scotty, falls ill with a high fever after a birthday party. The initial urgency of the situation quickly gives way to a gnawing dread as Scotty slips into a coma. Carver masterfully portrays their escalating panic, not through histrionics, but through their increasingly fractured communication.

The Erosion of Connection: A Marriage Under Siege

The strain of Scotty's illness exposes the fault lines in Ann and Howard's marriage. Ann, consumed by guilt and anxiety, withdraws into herself, her world shrinking to the hospital room and the relentless ticking of the clock. Howard, initially more pragmatic, finds himself increasingly alienated by Ann's inability to articulate her pain and his own difficulty in offering genuine comfort. Their phone calls become terse, strained exchanges, laden with unspoken accusations and a growing chasm of misunderstanding. The surreal experience of receiving a wrong number call from a baker, who innocently discusses his birthday cakes, serves as a stark contrast to

their grim reality, highlighting their isolation and the absurdity of their situation. This breakdown in communication is a hallmark of Carver's work, reflecting the difficulties ordinary people face in expressing their deepest emotions and connecting with each other, especially under duress.

The Haunting Presence of the Unseen: The Baker and the Unanswered Questions

The recurring phone calls from the baker, Mr. Henderson, initially serve as a source of irritation and confusion for Ann and Howard. The baker, oblivious to their tragedy, continues to talk about the birthday cake he baked for a boy named Scotty Henderson. This seemingly trivial detail becomes a

haunting echo of their loss, a constant reminder of the life their son should be living. The repeated wrong number calls, a recurring motif in Carver's stories, amplify their distress and contribute to the story's pervasive sense of unease. The baker's innocent questions about the cake, and his eventual realization of the tragic circumstances, become a catalyst for a different kind of interaction, one that moves beyond the couple's internal struggles.

The Turning Point: Confrontation and a Glimmer of Understanding

As Scotty's condition remains critical, Ann and Howard's desperation reaches a fever pitch. Ann, driven by a primal need to understand and perhaps blame, decides to confront the baker.

This confrontation, however, doesn't unfold as a scene of angry accusations. Instead, it becomes an unexpected encounter filled with a quiet, raw humanity.

The Baker's Revelation: A Shared Humanity in the Face of Tragedy

Mr. Henderson, upon learning of the Hendersons' plight, reveals a depth of empathy that surprises them. He speaks of his own son, who died young, and the lingering grief he carries. This shared experience of loss, though different in its specifics, creates an immediate bond between the baker and the grieving parents. He understands their pain in a way that neither of them, in their isolated agony, can fully grasp. The baker's simple act of offering them coffee and

the remnants of a birthday cake becomes a profound gesture of comfort and solidarity. It's a moment where the transactional nature of their previous interactions dissolves, replaced by genuine human connection.

The Symbolic "Small Good Thing": Hope in the Ordinary

The baker's wife, who joins them, also offers a quiet presence of understanding. The act of sharing the cake, even though it's a symbol of the birthday they've lost, becomes a ritual of shared experience. The lingering sweetness of the cake, the warmth of the coffee, the quiet understanding in the eyes of the baker and his wife - these are the "small good things" that emerge from the crucible of their

suffering. They are not grand pronouncements or miraculous cures, but the quiet reassurance that they are not alone in their grief. This is the essence of Carver's minimalism; he finds profound meaning in the ordinary, the overlooked, the seemingly insignificant moments that can offer solace.

Carver's Minimalism: The Art of What's Left Unsaid

Raymond Carver is renowned for his minimalist style, often referred to as "Kmart realism" or "dirty realism." "A Small Good Thing" is a prime example of this aesthetic. Carver strips away elaborate descriptions and overt emotional declarations, relying instead on stark dialogue, simple sentence structures, and the power of

implication.

The Power of Silence and Subtext

In "A Small Good Thing," the unspoken is as significant as the spoken. The silences between Ann and Howard speak volumes about their emotional distance. Their clipped sentences reveal their inability to articulate their fears and anxieties. The reader is left to infer their inner turmoil, to fill in the emotional gaps. This deliberate ambiguity forces the reader to actively engage with the text, to become a participant in deciphering the characters' emotional landscapes. This is a key element of Carver's literary genius, drawing the reader into the quiet desperation and the nascent hope that permeates the story.

Everyday Language, Profound Meaning

Carver's use of everyday language, the unadorned vernacular of ordinary people, is crucial to the story's authenticity. He avoids poetic flourishes or grand pronouncements, opting instead for the language that people actually use when they are struggling. This grounding in reality makes the emotional impact all the more potent. The seemingly mundane details - the birthday cake, the wrong number calls, the hospital corridor - are imbued with a profound symbolic weight, reflecting the characters' internal states and the broader human condition. The story's exploration of the mundane is what allows its profound truths to shine through.

Themes and Enduring Relevance

"A Small Good Thing" continues to resonate with readers because it tackles universal human experiences with unflinching honesty.

Grief, Loss, and the Search for Meaning

The story is a profound meditation on grief and loss. It portrays how tragedy can shatter lives and relationships, leaving individuals feeling isolated and adrift. Yet, it also offers a glimmer of hope, suggesting that even in the darkest of times, human connection and acts of kindness can provide solace and a path forward. The story's examination of grief is not about overcoming it, but about learning to live with it, finding ways to carry its

weight.

Communication Breakdowns and the Hope for Connection

The breakdown in communication between Ann and Howard is a central theme, reflecting the difficulties many couples face in navigating stressful situations. The story highlights how a lack of open and honest communication can exacerbate pain and create distance. The eventual, tentative connection forged with the baker offers a powerful counterpoint, demonstrating the transformative potential of empathy and shared vulnerability. The story's exploration of connection, even with strangers, offers a powerful commentary on the human need for belonging.

The Unforeseen Moments of Grace

Carver's title, "A Small Good Thing," is a reminder that grace can appear in unexpected forms. It is not always a dramatic intervention, but often a quiet moment of understanding, a shared cup of coffee, a sympathetic ear. The story suggests that these "small good things" are crucial for navigating the adversities of life. They are the anchors that prevent us from being completely submerged by despair. This understated approach to hope is what makes the story so profoundly moving and enduring. In conclusion, Raymond Carver's "A Small Good Thing" is a masterclass in short fiction. Through its spare prose, its richly drawn characters, and its profound exploration of universal

themes, the story offers a raw and honest portrayal of human suffering, resilience, and the enduring power of connection. It is a testament to Carver's ability to find the extraordinary within the ordinary, leaving readers with a lingering sense of both the fragility of life and the quiet strength of the human spirit. The story's enduring appeal lies in its unflinching gaze at life's difficult realities, coupled with its subtle yet powerful message of hope found in the most unexpected places. The "small good thing" may be simple, but its impact is immeasurable.

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As technology continues to shape education, digital books will remain an integral part of modern learning

environments. The ability to download A Small Good Thing Carver reflects an adaptive approach to education that prioritizes accessibility, efficiency, and learner empowerment. Digital literacy is now a critical skill.

In conclusion, the ability to download A Small Good Thing Carver encapsulates the core benefits of digital education. Through accessibility, portability, interactivity, and ethical engagement with resources, learners gain powerful tools for academic success, professional growth, and personal development. Digital access ensures that knowledge remains dynamic, inclusive, and relevant in an increasingly digital world.

Questions & Answers About a small good thing carver

N o	Question	Answer
1	What is the central theme of Raymond Carver's 'A Small, Good Thing'?	The story explores themes of grief, loss, connection, and the unexpected ways people can offer comfort and support to one another in times of profound sorrow.
2	Who are the main characters in 'A Small, Good Thing'?	The primary characters are Scotty's parents, Ann and Howard, and the baker, a kind stranger who plays a crucial role in their healing process.
3	What event triggers the central conflict in the story?	The sudden and unexplained coma of their young son, Scotty, is the event that throws Ann and Howard's lives into turmoil and drives the narrative.
4	How does Ann's grief manifest in the story?	Ann's grief is intense and almost all-consuming. She becomes increasingly agitated, sleep-deprived, and desperate for answers, often lashing out due to her immense pain.

5	What is the significance of the baker's role in 'A Small, Good Thing'?	The baker, despite initially appearing gruff, embodies quiet understanding and empathy. He offers the grieving parents a space to share their pain and a moment of solace, acting as a catalyst for their eventual reconciliation.
6	What does the 'small, good thing' of the title refer to?	The 'small, good thing' refers to the unexpected kindness and shared humanity that emerge between Ann, Howard, and the baker, offering a glimmer of hope and connection amidst their tragedy.
7	How does Carver's minimalist style contribute to the story's impact?	Carver's sparse prose and focus on everyday language amplify the raw emotion and underlying tension. The unspoken and the subtle become powerful, allowing the reader to connect deeply with the characters' suffering and eventual relief.
8	What is the overall message or takeaway from 'A Small, Good Thing'?	The story suggests that even in the darkest of times, human connection and simple acts of kindness can provide profound comfort and help us navigate overwhelming loss.

small hand-carved automotive art, handmade car decorations, tiny car figurines craft, small car carving details, artisan car carvings, custom miniature car art,

small-scale car figurine carving, precision car carving
designs, small good thing carving mastery,
handcrafted car accessories

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A Small Good Thing Carver eBooks promote thoughtful consumption of information.

A Small Good Thing Carver eBooks promote thoughtful consumption of information.

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