

VOL 3 AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY WITH A HISTORICAL NOTE AND AN ACCOUNT OF TH

Animal instinct told Junior that the business with the quarter in the diner and now these quarters in his living room were related to his failure to find Bartholomew, Seraphim White's bastard child. He couldn't logically explain the connection; but as Zedd teaches, animal instinct is the only unalloyed truth we will ever know..By "all of that," he meant the groceries that she and Joey often sent along with the pies, the occasional mortgage payment they made for someone down on his luck, and the other quiet philanthropies..They introduced themselves as Knacker, Hisscus, and Nork, but Junior didn't bother to associate names with faces, partly because the men were so alike in appearance and manner that their own mothers might have had difficulty figuring out which of them to blame for never calling. Besides, he was still tired from his recent ramble through the hospital-and unnerved by the thought of some baleful-eyed Bartholomew prowling the world in search of him..Switching on the lights as he went, Junior sought the source of the serenade. He carried the 9-mm pistol, which would have been useless against a spirit visitor; but his extensive reading about ghosts hadn't convinced him that they were real. His faith in the effectiveness of bullets and pewter candlesticks, for that matter-remained undiminished..And as he grew, the boy seemed content with his own company and that of his mother and his uncles. Yet Agnes worried that no children his age lived in their neighborhood. She thought he would be happier if he had a playmate or two..Barty paced off the downstairs hallway to the kitchen, thinking about Dr. Jekyll and the hideous Mr. Hyde..She sat on the end of the table, where Barty had sat, now at eye level with the standing physician..He considered himself to be a thoroughly useless man, taking up space in a world to which he contributed nothing, but he did have a talent for baking. He could take any recipe, even one from a world-class pastry chef, and improve upon it..From the bathroom, Junior gathered an electric razor and toiletries. He added these to the suitcases.. "If he gets back within the next hour, better ring me at his place so I can scoot." AFTER THE ENCOUNTER with the quarter-spitting vending machines, Junior wanted to kill another Bartholomew, any Bartholomew, even if he had to drive to some far suburb like Terra Linda to do it, even if he had to drive farther and stay overnight in a Holiday ay Inn an eat steam-table food off a buffet crawling with other diners' cold germs and garnished with their loose hairs..Later, when the seven of them were gathered at the dinner table, the adults raised glasses of Chardonnay, the children raised tumblers of Pepsi, and Maria gave the toast. "To Bartholomew, the image of his father, who was the kindest man I've ever known. To my Bonita and my Francesca, who brighten every day. To Edom and Jacob, from who ... from whom I've learned so much that has made me think about the fragility of life and made me realize how precious is every day. And to Agnes, my dearest friend, who has given me, oh, so much, including all these words. God bless us, every one."..Incredibly, the thief left behind the most valuable items: the collection of hardcover first editions of Caesar Zedd's complete body of work. The box stood open, its contents having been explored in haste, but not a single volume was missing..Shivering, Junior slammed the trunk lid and warily surveyed the lonely landscape. Black pines spread bristled arms through the charry night, and the moon cast down a jaundiced light that seemed to obscure more than it illuminated..Round one hit Ichabod in the left thigh, because Junior fired while bringing the weapon up from his side, but the next two were solid torso scores. This was not bad for an amateur, even if the distance to target was nearly short enough to define their encounter as hand-to-hand combat, and Junior decided that if the deformation of his left foot hadn't prevented him from fighting in Vietnam, he would have acquitted himself exceptionally well in the war..This humble house wasn't where you expected to hear an elaborate custom doorbell-or even any doorbell at all, since knuckles on wood were the cheapest announcement of a visitor..She leaned against the apartment door for a long moment, holding on to the doorknob and to the thumb-turn of the second deadbolt, as though she were convinced that if she let go, she would float off the floor like a cloud-stuffed child..If the directory proved to be of no help, Junior would proceed next to the registry office at the county courthouse, to review the records of births going back to the turn of the century if necessary. Bartholomew, of course, might not have been born in the county, might have moved here as a child or an adult. If he owned property, he'd show up on the register of deeds. Whether a landowner or not, if he did his civic duty every two years, he would appear on the voter rolls.. "Because of a certain awareness you've had since childhood," Celestina said, recalling what he'd told her in San Francisco.. "Why do you think he's spending his money for all this tricky stuff?" Kathleen wondered, not for the first time..THE SUN ROSE above clouds, above fog, and with the gray day came a silver drizzle. The city was lanced by needles of rain, and filth drained from it, swelling the gutters with a poisonous flood..The report on the tower forced Junior to consider his mortality; fear, hurt, and self-pity roiled in him. His voice trembled with offense: "You do know, Mr. Magusson, what happened to my Naomi was an..To the open casement window, into the men's room. Still seething with rage. Angrily cranking shut the twin panes while lazy tongues of fog licked through the narrowing gap..Hope was the handmaid to Agnes's faith. She always held fast to the belief that the future would be bright, but right now she was hesitant to test that optimism even with a harmless card reading. Yet, as with the fifth place setting, she was reluctant to object..Junior didn't slow as he passed the house, but circled the block and drove by the place again..Amazed, Agnes gaped at her baby. The throat lump that blocked her speech was part pride, part awe, and part fear, though she didn't at once understand why this wonderful precociousness should frighten her..This soiling of Naomi's memory was a sadness so poignant, so terrible, that he wondered if he could endure it. He felt his mouth tremble and go soft, not with the urge to throw up again, but with something like grief if not grief itself. His eyes filled with tears..Perhaps hoping to discover which runaway freight train or exploding factory would smear him across the landscape, Jacob pushed aside his dessert plate and shuffled each deck separately, then shuffled them together until they were well mixed. He stacked them in front of Maria..Agnes was only thirty-nine years old, full of plans and vigor, so

Angel's words seemed premature. Yet in too few years, she would have reason to wonder if perhaps these gifted children foresaw, unconsciously, that she would need the comfort of having witnessed this climb..Neddy talked when Celestina paused for breath, talked over her when she didn't pause, heard only his own mellifluous voice and was pleased to conduct both sides of the conversation, wearing her down as surely as though far more rapidly than the sand-filled winds of Egypt diminished the pharaohs' pyramids. He talked through the first polite "Excuse me" of the tall man who stepped into the open doorway behind him, through the second and third, and then with an abruptness that was as miraculous as any cure at the shrine of Lourdes, he fell silent when the visitor put a hand on his shoulder, eased him gently aside, and entered the apartment..Standing near the foot of the bed in a shapeless blue suit, Vanadium might have been the work of an eccentric artist who had carved a man out of Spam and dressed the meaty sculpture in thrift-shop threads..A knife already lay on the counter nearby. He used it to slice four pats of butter, yellow and creamy, each half an inch thick, off the end of the stick..Standing at graveside, Junior was in a foul mood. He was weary of pretending to be deep in grief..Frequently, people told Agnes that she should find an agent for Barty, as he was wonderfully photogenic; modeling and acting careers, they assured her, were his for the asking. Though her son was indeed a fine-looking lad, Agnes knew he wasn't as exceptionally handsome as many perceived him to be. Rather than his looks, what made Barty so appealing, what made him seem extraordinarily good-looking, were other qualities: an unusual gracefulness for a child, such a physical easiness in every movement and posture that it seemed as though some curious personal relationship with time had allowed him twenty years to become a three-year-old; an unfailingly affable temperament and quick smile that possessed his entire face, including his mesmerizing green blue eyes. Perhaps most affecting of all, his remarkable good health was expressed in the lustrous sheen of his thick hair, in the golden-pink glow of his summer-touched skin, in every physical aspect of him, until there were times when he seemed radiant..Paul recalled the letter he had written to Reverend Harrison White a couple weeks after the death of Joey Lampion. He'd carried it home from the pharmacy on the day that Perri died, to ask for her opinion of it. The letter had never been mailed..Junior released Neddy and, letting him slide down the wall to the floor, returned to the door to lock it. Reaching for the latch, he suddenly expected the door to fly open, revealing Thomas Vanadium, dead and risen. The ghost didn't appear, but Junior was shaken by the mere thought of such a supernatural confrontation in the middle of this crisis..Considering Junior's actions on his last night in Spruce Hills, eleven months ago, he must be cautious now. Without incriminating himself, pretending ignorance, he hoped to learn if his carefully planned scenario, regarding Victoria's death and Vanadium's sudden disappearance, had convinced the authorities-or whether something had gone wrong that might explain the quarter at the diner..Indeed, Junior suspected that they might be here at Vanadium's urging. The cop would be interested in determining how avaricious the mourning husband would prove to be when presented with the opportunity to turn his wife's cold flesh into cash..In a swirl of London Fog and righteous indignation, Neddy turned his back on Junior and drifted away through the nibbling, nattering crowd..At the conclusion of the ceremony, he relinquished his secondhand sight. He would live in darkness until Easter of 1986, though every minute of the day was brightened by his wife..Murder itself was easy, but the aftermath was more draining than he had anticipated. Although the ultimate liability settlement with the state was certain to leave him financially secure for life, the stress was so great that he wondered, in his darker moments, if the reward would prove to be worth the risk..The artist, six feet four and two hundred fifty pounds, looked markedly more dangerous in person than in his scary publicity photo. Still in his twenties, he had white hair that fell limp and straight to his shoulders. Dead-white skin. His deep-set eyes, as silver-gray as rain with an albino-pink undertone, had a predatory glint as chilling as that in the eyes of a panther. Terrible scars slashed his face, and red hash marks covered his big hands, as though he'd frequently defended himself barehanded against men armed with swords..In the bedroom, as he opened a suitcase on the bed, he saw the quarter. Shiny. Heads-up. On the nightstand..Jacob made more fire sounds as he stripped the clear cellophane off a second new deck of playing cards, then off a third and a fourth..From the devil to the sacred and then beyond, Junior drove north on State Highway 160, which was proudly marked as a scenic route, although in these predawn hours, all lay bleak and black. Following the serpentine course of the Sacramento River, Highway 160 wove past a handful of small, widely separated towns..Finally he switched on the light, and illuminated Neddy at ease, silent in death as never in life: lying on his back, head turned to the right, swollen tongue lolling obscenely..Occasionally he woke in the night and heard himself murmuring the mantra aloud, which apparently he had been repeating ceaselessly in his sleep. "Find the father, kill the son." In April, Junior discovered three Bartholomews. Investigating these targets, prepared to commit homicide, he learned that none had a son named Bartholomew or had ever adopted a child..They would have given him an antinausea medication. It most likely wasn't going to work quickly enough to save him.."You'll need time to ... adjust to this," he said. "Perhaps you've got to call family.. .".He hadn't intended to enter the gallery. No one in his usual circles would attend this show, unless in such a state of chemically altered consciousness that they wouldn't be able to recall the event in the morning, so he wasn't likely to be recognized or remembered. Yet it seemed unwise to risk being identified as a reception attendee if Celestina White's little Bartholomew and maybe the artist herself were murdered later. The police, in their customary paranoia, might suspect a link between this affair and the killings, which would motivate them to seek out and..Phimie must be honored now with laughter instead of with tears, because her life had left Celestina with so many memories of joy and with joy personified in Angel. To fend off tears, she said, "Listen, Clark Kent, we women need our little secrets, our private thoughts. If you can really read my heart this easily, I guess I'm going to have to start wearing lead brassieres."By comparison, the strip club-neon aglow, theater lights twinkling----looked warm, cozy. Welcoming..The kiss was lovely, long and easy, full of restrained passion that boded well for nights to come in the marriage bed..Junior worried, however, that they had noticed him after he

pulled to the curb twice behind them, that they were keeping an eye on him, ready to bolt if he got out of the car, in which case they might all make it inside before he could cut them down..Junior's body betrayed him as before, and also in new ways that terrified and humiliated him, involving every bodily fluid except cerebrospinal. For a while, inside that rocking ambulance, he wished that he were in a gondola upon the waters of the Styx, his misery at an end..With the dead woman's guest on the way, minutes were precious. Attention to detail was essential, however, regardless of how much time was required to properly stage the little tableau that might disguise murder as a domestic accident..That same day, he dared to visit two galleries. Neither of them had a pewter candlestick on display..Reverend White's murder received significant coverage throughout the nation, especially in West Coast papers, because of its perceived racial motivation and because it involved the burning of a parsonage..Uncommon dexterity is essential for anyone who hopes to become a highly skilled card mechanic, but it is not the sole requirement. A capacity to endure grim tedium while engaging in thousands of hours of patient practice is equally important. The finest card mechanics also exhibit complex memory function of a breadth and depth that the average person would find extraordinary..A man with beautiful celadon eyes, his face beaded with jewels of rain, reached through the cut-away door and removed the blanket from Agnes..She devoted half her work time to the neighbors-in-need route that Agnes had established and steadily expanded, the other half to her painting. She was in no rush to mount a new show; anyway, she didn't dare renew contact with the Greenbaum Gallery or with anyone at all from her past life, until the police found Enoch Cain..Round of face and round of body, Vinnie didn't walk like other men; he seemed to bounce lightly along, as if inflated with a mixture of gases that included enough helium to make him buoyant, though not so much that he was in danger of sailing up and away like a birthday balloon. His smooth cheeks and merry eyes left a boyish impression, but he was a good attorney, and shrewd..could spring the new deadbolts as easily as the old. Therefore, on the interior of the front and back doors, Junior added sliding bolts, which couldn't be picked from outside..By the first of November, they moved his mother's bed into the living room, so she could be in the center of things, where always she had been, though they admitted no guests now, only members of their family with its many names..Nolly, telling the story of his day's work, paused as the waiter delivered two orders of the crab-cake appetizer with mustard sauce. "Nolly, Mrs. Wulfstan--enjoy!"..He could recall clearly when he had known that he would marry her: during his first year of college, when he'd returned home for the Christmas break. Away at school, he had missed her every day, and the moment that he saw her again, an abiding tension left him, and he felt at peace for the first time in months.."But I had greater facility with cards than most magicians. I trained with Moses Moon, greatest card mechanic of his generation."..Barty let go of the girl's hand, and although he remained dry, the storm at once found her where she'd been hiding in the silver-black folds of its curtains..The announcement poster seemed enormous, huge, far bigger than she remembered it, crazily-recklessly large. By its very size, it challenged critics to be cruel, dared the fates to celebrate her triumph by shaking the city to ruin right now, in the quake of the century. She wished Helen Greenbaum had opted, instead, for a few lines of type on an index card, taped to the glass..Now that efforts were being made to control the preeclampsia, Dr. Daines had scheduled a series of tests for the following day. He expected to recommend a cesarean section as soon as Phimie's e's blood pressure was reduced and stabilized, but he didn't want to risk this surgery before determining what complications might have resulted from her restricted diet and the compression of her abdomen.."We want the scary one, 'specially if it has spiders, Pixie Lee said squeakily but defiantly..Sometimes he thought he walked for Perri, using the steps she had stored up and never taken, giving expression to her unfulfilled yearning to travel. At other times, he thought he walked for the solitude that allowed him to remember their life in fine detail--or to forget. To find peace--or seek adventure. To gain understanding through contemplation--or to scrub all thought from his mind. To see the world or to be rid of it. Perhaps he hoped that coyotes would stalk him through a bleak twilight or a mountain lion set upon him on a hungry dawn, or a drunk driver run him down..Junior was paying his dinner check and calculating the tip when the pianist launched into "Someone to Watch over Me." Although he'd expected it all evening, he twitched when he recognized the tune..Third, Celestina had a daughter. Not a boy named Bartholomew. Seraphim's baby had been a girl. Named Angel. This confused Junior as much as it stunned him..Nolly shook his head, setting a cotillion of warts and moles adance on his pendulous cheeks. "Ask any adoptee who, as an adult, has tried to team the names of his real parents. Easier to drag a freight train up a mountain by your teeth."..Mocked by the silvery ping-ting-jingle of the maniac detective emptying his ghostly pockets, Junior ran..LEFT HAND ON the banister, right hand with knife tucked close to his side and ready to thrust, Tom Vanadium climbed cautiously but quickly to the upper floor, glancing back twice to be sure that Cain didn't slip in behind him..Of firm but pliable rubber, custom-formed to his disfigured foot, a shoe insert filled the void left by his missing toe. This simple aid ensured that virtually all footwear was comfortable, and by November, Junior walked with no discernible limp..Month by month during Barty's first year, Agnes's belief in his exceptional intelligence was only confirmed by his development. By the end of the second month of life, most babies will smile in response to a smile, and they are able to smile spontaneously in the fourth month. Barty was smiling frequently in his second week. In the third month, many babies laugh out loud, but Barty's first laugh came in his sixth week..From the corn soup to the baked ham to the plum pudding, he did not speak of his dry walk in wet weather..She wouldn't answer him, but he was as convinced by her silence as he would have been by a blurted confession--or by a denial, for that matter. Her wild eyes convinced him, too, and her trembling mouth. Naomi had come back to be with him, and it could be argued that Seraphim had returned in a sense, too, for this girl was the flesh of Seraphim's flesh, born out of her death..One of the paramedics had stooped beside him to press a cool hand against the nape of his neck. Now this man said urgently, "Kenny!..Fully clothed, she lay atop the bedspread. She intended to listen to a little classical music before brushing her teeth...The dining room again, but this time he remembered how he

had gotten here: by way of the living room..The restaurant wasn't fancy. A coffee shop. Aromatic bacon sizzling, eggs frying. The warm cinnamony smell of fresh pastries, the bracing scent of strong coffee. Clean, bright surroundings..Though Celestina was still holding Angel, Wally kissed her, and again it was lovely, though shorter than before, and Angel said, "That's a messy kiss."..He couldn't see into the next aisle through the gaps between rows of books, because the shelves had solid backs..Sitting up in bed, he passed a little time reading favorite, marked passages in Zedd's *You Are the World*. The book presented a brilliant argument that selfishness was the most misunderstood, moral, rational, and courageous of all human motivations..Although first-rate, the surgical team wasn't able to reattach the badly torn extremity. Tissue damage was too extensive to permit delicate bone, nerve, and blood-vessel repair..Polio, largely an affliction of younger children, had stricken her two weeks before her fifteenth birthday. Thirty years ago..The paramedic put aside the needle, having used it, and grabbed the paddles of a.."So do I, honey. Oh, Lord, so do I." She kissed his forehead. "Listen, kiddo, in spite of their stories and all their funny ways, your uncles are good men.".."So where he threw the quarter," Barty said, as Angel listened intently and nodded her head, "wasn't really into Gunsmoke, 'cause that's not a place, it's just a show. See, maybe he threw it into a place where I'm not blind, or into a place where he doesn't have that messed-up face, or a place where for some reason you never came here today. There's more places than anybody could ever count, even me, and I can count pretty good. That's what you feel, right-all the ways things are?"..Aware that his tension was building intolerably, Junior decided that he needed Scamp more than he dreaded her. He spent the remainder of Wednesday, until dawn Thursday, with the indefatigable redhead, whose bedroom contained a vast collection of scented massage oils in sufficient volume to fragrantly lubricate half the rolling stock of every railroad company doing business west of the Mississippi..If such a small quantity of crushed ice, taken in a single swallow, might cause..Tom stared down into the oceanic depths of the city, through the reefs of buildings, to the lamp-fish cars schooling through the great trenches.."Good heavens, Vinnie, I know that," she assured him as she lifted Barty-hardly bigger than a bag of sugar-from the bassinet. She settled with the baby into a rocking chair..She always had a generous heart. After disease whittled Perri's flesh, leaving her so frail, her great heart, undiminished by her suffering, seemed bigger than the body that contained it..Tom plucked the quarter off the glass, folded it into his right fist, and then at once opened his hand, which was now empty..He shouldered past two counter waitresses, past the short-order cook who was working eggs and burgers and bacon on the open griddle and grill. Whatever expression wrenched Junior's face, it must have been intimidating, for without protest but with walleied alarm, the employees squeezed aside to let him pass.."I didn't know it myself till I realized I was right in your neighborhood. I assumed your mother and Angel would be here, and I hoped you might be. If I'm intruding-".During the night, he had awakened, seen her in the chair, and covered her with a blanket..WITH BRIGHT BEACH under assault by one miserable flu and by an uncountable variety of common colds, business was brisk this Monday at Damascus Pharmacy..interminably against the ignition plate before, at last, he was able to insert it. "Should be a boy, because then you'll always have a man around the house."..One apartment to the right, one to the left. Junior went to the right, to Apartment 1, where he'd seen the lights come on behind the curtained windows..More than once, a passing nurse stopped to check on him and to advise him not to exhaust himself.."For the love of God," Junior pleaded, "can't you please give me something for the pain?"..Yet he brooded even at breakfast, in spite of the consolation of clotted cream and berries, raisin scones and cinnamon butter. In better worlds, wiser Tom Vanadiums chose different tactics that resulted in less misery than this, in a far swifter conveyance of Enoch Cain to the halls of justice. But he was none of those Tom Vanadiums. He was only this Tom, flawed "land struggling, and he couldn't take comfort in the fact that elsewhere he had proved to be a better man..Suddenly remembering the doctor's assurance to Neddy that they would be out of this building by week's end, Celestina said, "But we've nowhere to go."..He hadn't learned much from the call other than that they hadn't found Vanadium in his Studebaker at the bottom of Quarry Lake..As Obadiah lowered himself into a well-worn armchair, he said to Edom, "Son, don't I know you from somewhere?"..Better still, he was able to have the girl to the accompaniment of her father's voice, which was even kinkier than doing her in the parsonage. When Junior rang the bell, Seraphim had been in her room, listening to a tape of a sermon her father was composing. The good reverend usually dictated a first draft, which his daughter then transcribed. For three hours, Junior went at her mercilessly, to the rhythms of her father's voice. The reverend's "presence" was deliciously perverse and stimulating to his sense of erotic invention. When Junior was finished, there was nothing sexual that Seraphim could ever do with a man that she had not learned from him..Later in the month, from Sparky Vox, Junior learned the building had a four-pipe, fan-coil heating system serving discrete ductwork for each apartment. Voices couldn't carry from residence to residence in the heating-cooling system, because no apartments shared ducting. Throughout the spring, summer, and autumn of 1967, Junior met new women, bedded a few, and had no doubt that each of his conquests experienced with him something she had never known before. Yet he still suffered from an emptiness in the heart..At the end of the famous sermon, Celestina's father had wished to all well-meaning people that into their lives should fall a rain of benign effects from the kind and selfless actions of countless Bartholomews whom they would never meet. And he assures those who are selfish or envious or lacking in compassion, or who in fact commit acts of great evil, that their deeds will return to them, magnified beyond imagining, for they are at war with the purpose of life. If the spirit of Bartholomew cannot enter their hearts and change them, then it will find them and mete out the terrible judgment they deserve..Celestina was maneuvered aside as the surgical team began resuscitation procedures. Stunned, she backed away from the table until she encountered a wall. In southern California, as dawn of this new momentous day looms..His mother, gently pushing Tom to the prime view point at the head of the stairs, seemed unconcerned about her child's venture into the storm..Maria's hand tamed, the card turned, and another knave of spades revolved into view, snapped against the table.."I never saw a Moor--never saw the Sea--Yet know I how

the Heather looks--And what a Billow be."" Junior was starving, but he didn't trust his bowels enough to risk dinner in a restaurant. The affliction seemed to have passed, but it might recur when he had food in his system again..He was in the kitchen at 11:20, spreading frosting on a large chocolate sheet cake while the reverend expertly frosted a coconut-layer job..Paul realized that the kitchen had fallen silent, that the women had turned to the two children and now stood as motionless as figures in a waxworks tableau..Junior took two steps toward him, sighting the gun on his face. "Why should I be afraid of a stumbling blind boy no bigger than a midget?".The air was cool but not yet cold. A faint breeze smelled of the sea beyond the hill..playing cards, Agnes fixated on Deed's blond bangs, which curled across his broad brow..Into her fevered mind came an image of a milk-glass infant, as translucent as Joey at the back door of the ambulance. Fearing that this vision meant her child would be stillborn, she said, My baby, but no sound escaped her..Ten months later, he finally wore her down. She accepted his proposal, and they set a date for the wedding.."Sure they do," said Wally as he unlocked the two deadbolts. "But you gotta be twenty-one years old to get a license for one.".In the present, long after the execution of Josef Krepp, half a block ahead, lay the Lipscomb house. Beyond it, the Lampion place.."I'm no hero," Paul insisted. "I just got your mom out of there in the process of saving myself.".The striking resemblance between this artist and Seraphim, as well as the facts in the biographical sketch under the photo, argued that the two were sisters..Maria's belief in the efficacy of this ritual was not as strong as her faith in the Church, but nearly so. As she leaned over the votive glass, watching the final fragment dissolve into ashes, she felt a terrible weight lifting from her..If he woke, however, and saw her sitting vigil, Barty would understand how terrible his condition might be..Or as her father often said, happily mocking his own rhetorical eloquence: "Brighten the comer where you are, and you will light the world."

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