

# EPSILON



HANSEN '76...





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Produced by:

Rob Hansen

51. Bryn-y-Nant

Llanedeyrn

Cardiff

CF3 7PA..

## EDITORIAL

In your hands you hold the small but nifty first fanzine this fan has ever put out and at the moment I'm not sure whether it'll be a one-off or not. If a second issue ever falls through your letter box you'll know it wasn't a one-off.

It was at SILICON I decided to put out a litho 'zine after months of fruitless searching for a second hand duper and what follows is the result of that decision. Originally I envisaged a twenty page 'zine but the end result is a bit less grandiose than first conceived, though hopefully not too cruddy. Since I had decided on litho it would have been idiotic not to put in a higher percentage of artwork than you find in a mimeo 'zine, so I have.

Apart from this editorial(?) the only other items are the conrep and the illustrated vignette and I'd like to say a little about

both. The conrep is based on notes I wrote down immediately after SILICON and all I've done is to expand them which gives it a slightly disjointed effect I didn't bargain for. I've detailed everything as closely as I recalled (meals seemed to stick in my memory with unusual clarity) which should either make it rivetting or tedious. It's for you to decide.

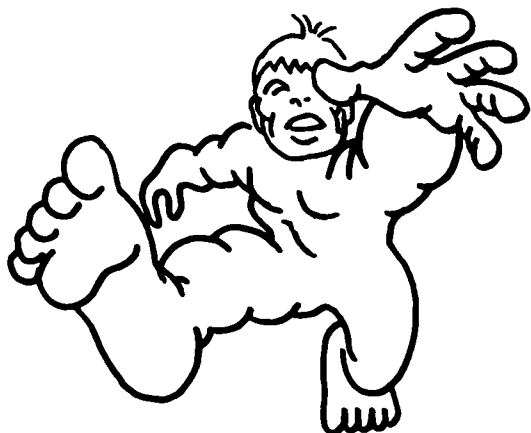
The illustrated vignette is called that because I don't regard it as a comic strip. I've used the comic book technique of substituting pictorial representation for description but the story can still be read on its own without reference to the pictures. I make further distinctions in that no thought or word balloons and no panels are present. In a comic book the text is dialogue for the art but here the art merely illustrates the text. I make no great claims for the story since I see it as no more than a pleasant little tale that lends itself to illustration. Three pages seems about right for this kind of thing but I'd be interested to hear your comments on the basic concept and whether or not you think it could have a future in fanzines.

Finally, why have you received this fanzine at all? Well, either I receive your fanzine at present or would like to receive it; I know you personally; I thought you might appreciate it; or you are me (Hi, Rob.) If you feel moved to comment on EPSILON all Locs will be appreciated and will guarantee a copy of next ish, should it materialise.

Which brings me to the end of this piece and to the end of my first fanzine. It's been an interesting experience and I think I've learned something from it. Anyway whether I have or haven't it's been fun and that's what really counts.

Rob Hansen

15 Sept 1976.....



4.

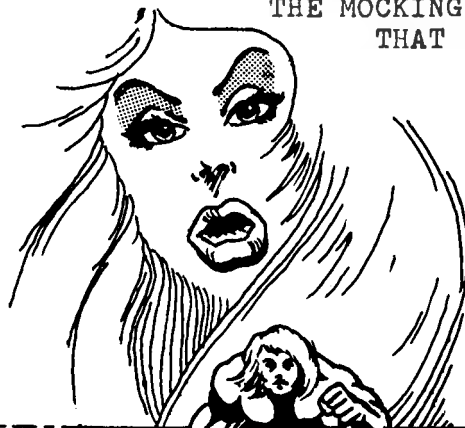
# FACTS OF LIFE

RUNNING, RUNNING, BREATHING FAST, HARD. YOU RUN AS IF THE LEGIONS OF OLD NICK WERE ON YOUR HEELS, FLEEING FROM A GROWING FEAR, A DREAD DEEP WITHIN YOU.

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU STARTED RUNNING, HOW LONG SINCE REALISATION OF YOUR IMPENDING DEATH GRIPPED YOUR HEART IN A COLD AND CLAMMY FIST?

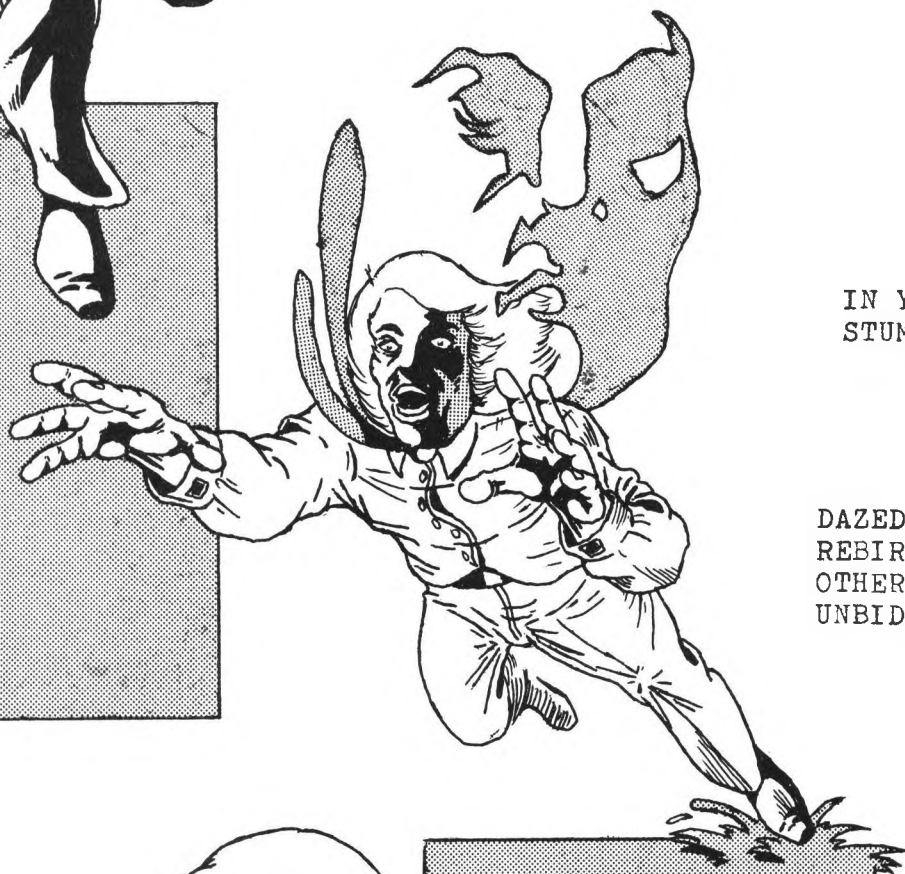


IN YOUR MIND YOU SEE HER RACING TOWARDS YOU, HER HAUNTINGLY FAMILIAR FACE GETTING CLOSER STILL, AND THE MOCKING LAUGH, ALWAYS THAT SAME MOCKING LAUGH.....





YOU RUN FASTER NOW, IF SUCH A THING IS POSSIBLE, AS IF THE FLIGHT WITHOUT WILL WIN YOU THE RACE WITHIN, KEEP YOU FROM THE FEMALE YOU KNOW TO BE THE HERALD OF YOUR FINAL HOUR.



IN YOUR HASTE YOU STUMBLE AND FALL...

DAZED, YOUR CONUSION REBIRTHS THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS AND MEMORIES UNBIDDEN RISE...



"WHY ARN'T THERE ANY GIRL-CHILDREN, MUMMY?"

YOUR MOTHER HAD LAUGHED.

"YOU 'LL KNOW WHEN YOU'RE OLDER."

BUT WEREN'T YOU OLDER NOW?

THERE WERE SO MANY QUESTIONS

YOU WANTED ANSWERED BUT YOU

NEVER DID FIND WHAT YOU

TRULY SOUGHT AND NOW IT'S

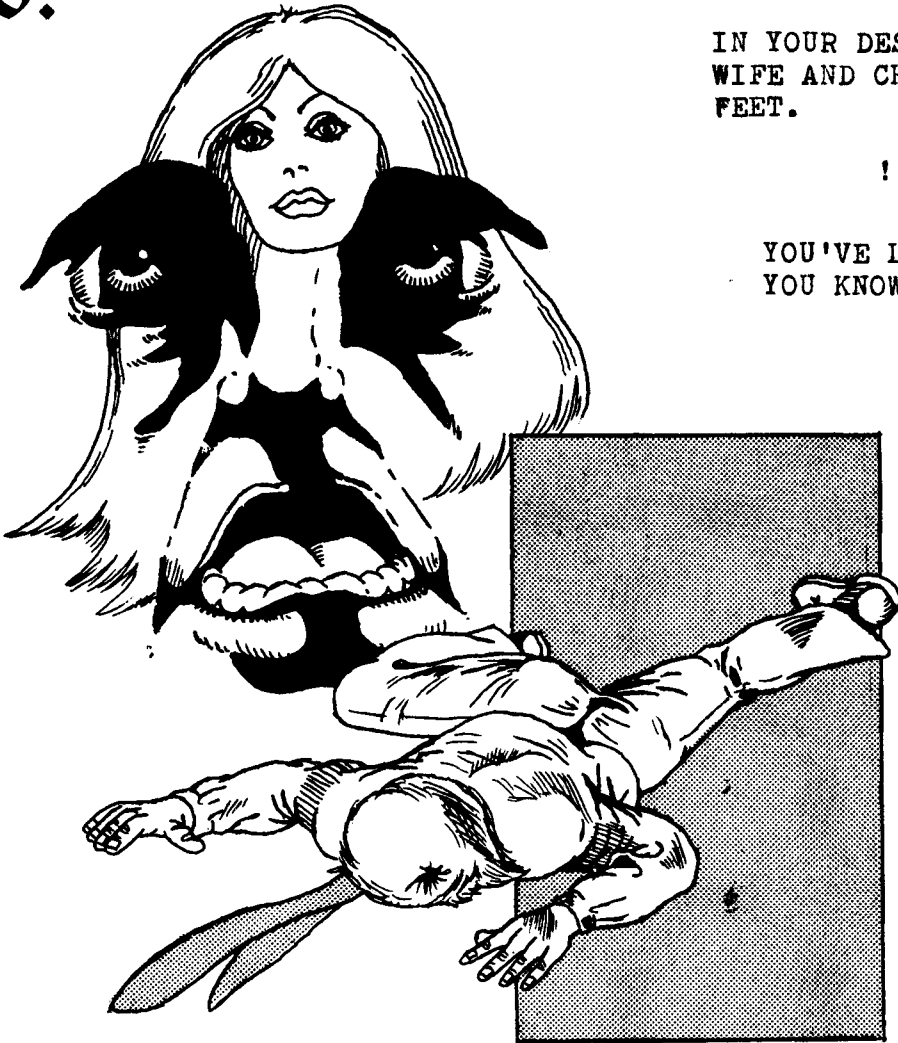
TOO LATE.

6.

IN YOUR DESPAIR YOU SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR  
WIFE AND CHILD AND RISE SHAKILY TO YOUR  
FEET.

!!SHE'S THERE!!

YOU'VE LOST THE RACE WITHIN AND  
YOU KNOW THAT DEATH HAS COME.



ABLE TO RUN NO MORE YOU  
COLLAPSE...

...AND THERE IS SILENCE.

AN INDETERMINATE LENGTH  
OF TIME LATER SHE RISES  
AND LOOKS DOWN AT THE  
EMPTY CLOTHES...

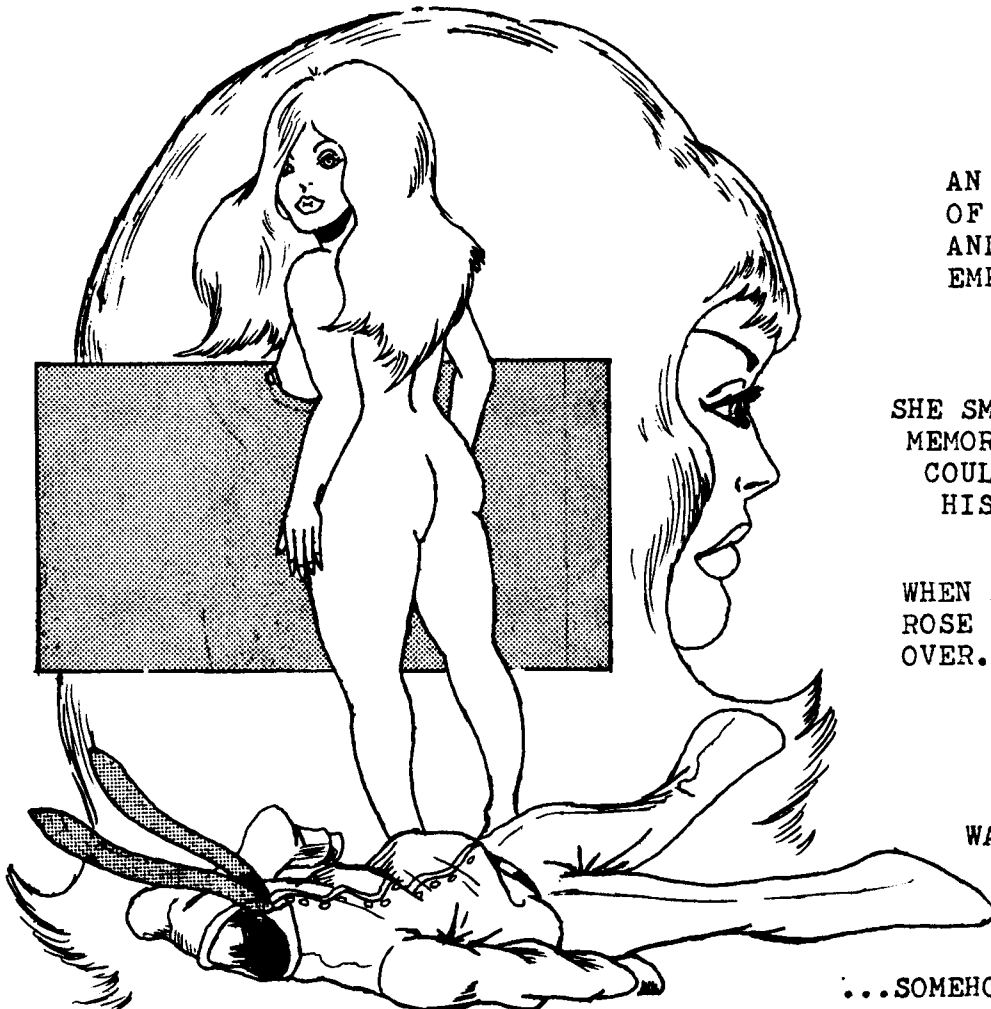
SHE SMILES SADLY AT HIS  
MEMORY, KNOWING HE  
COULD NEVER HAVE WON  
HIS RACE.

WHEN HIS TIME HAD COME SHE  
ROSE FROM WITHIN TO TAKE  
OVER.

WISTFULLY SHE STARES  
OVER THE HORIZON  
TOWARDS THE CITY.

WAS THERE, SHE WONDERS,  
AN EARTH WHERE WOMAN  
WAS BORN OF WOMAN?

...SOMEHOW SHE DIDN'T THINK SO.



# SILICONREP

A Convention diary of sorts...

## Friday...

I travelled to SILICON on the Cardiff to Newcastle train setting out at 7-40 am., and arriving at Newcastle about 2-00 pm., a journey of some six and a half hours. Fortunately I enjoy travelling by train so the trip seemed to pass fairly quickly, helped along by a chap I got into conversation with though it took him a while to realise wasn't really too interested in football.

On Newcastle station was the Royal Station Hotel, site of TYNECON '74 the year before I attended my first con, which gave me a curious feeling I find hard to define. A five minute trip on a local line and I was in Jesmond Road. Confidently I turned left, as advised in the first progress report, and couldn't find the hotel. Not surprising as it's on the right. No wonder Ian Williams failed his driving test.

Inside the Imperial I found Gannetfandom and a few others in the bar. I was warmly greeted and felt great. That initial feeling was to last throughout the con, part of the reason for this being that while other fans see each other fairly often, especially if members of a fan group, I live in what is almost a fannish wilderness so the only time I see other fans is at cons. The Theakston's was off that day but the Newcastle Exhibition was good enough for me not to complain.

By the evening there were some forty odd fans present and about thirty of us, including Bob and Sadie Shaw, went to the Bangla Desh restaurant, holy place of the Gannets, where curry and all manner of unpronouncable dishes were ordered by all. All that is except your intrepid reporter, gentle reader, who stuck to chicken and chips despite the urging of certain Gannets. Fans seemed to think my tastes in food were strange but while curry is probably the food of the future I'll stick to what I know and love. Later I heard Greg Pickersgill suggest a curry banquet for future cons. Not for me, Greg ol' flower, not for me. This curry expedition was also memorable for it being the first time I've pissed in a flying saucer. If

you want that last comment explained then ask the Gannets.

Back at the hotel we got down to the serious business of consuming alcoholic fluids and a number of games of bar billiards ensued. The bar billiards table was constantly occupied during the con, the rules having circulated by word of mouth, and if games hadn't taken so long we might have had a competition at that instead of tele-tennis. I was knocked out in my first game, by the way.

At the end of the evening Rob Jackson was to be seen rather dazedly, if happily, wandering round with Alan Isaacson's denim stetson on....sideways, as Alan later informed me.

The night ended with me retiring to my room followed by Pauls Ryan and Dillon, artists both, who crashed on the floor of my room that night.

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The only thing that spoiled that first night was an incident involving a parody of Greg's 'zine, STOP BREAKING DOWN. The 'parody', STOP PUKING UP, was given to the bar staff to hand out, which was unfortunate. It was filled with particularly 'floral' language and a mundane who got hold of a copy was heard to comment that ours must be a dirty books con. This is the kind of PR we can do without. No one has admitted responsibility for the thing but Greg has said that if he finds out who it was they will become a non-person.

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Saturday...

When the Pauls had left I went down and breakfasted with Dave Cockfield. We were soon joined by Bob and Sadie Shaw. I didn't drink enough Friday night to get drunk but enough to suffer dehydration so together with Ian Williams and Dave Hutchinson I traipsed down to a local shop pointed out by Brian Rouse. Ian and I had a pint of milk in, wonder of wonders, a plastic bottle. The damn things had near-indestructable tops and it took a lot of effort to tear them off. Ian found the task too much so I opened his as well.

After dinner (chicken and chips, needless to say), where I lunched with Dave Cockfield and Harry and Irene Bell, was the fanzine panel which consisted of Rob Jackson, Greg Pickersgill, Mike Meara, and Ian Williams. The Doc Savage film which should have followed was cancelled because the bulb in the projector was bugged. Of course we had to sit in our seats for half an hour waiting for a replacement before we realised there wasn't one. Leaving Dave Cockfield still staring at the empty screen Alan Isaacson, Dave Hutchinson, and yours truly went in search of food. I ended up with a pasty and two guvere cheese, or cheese polonies as I prefer to call them. Wandering around eating a cheese polony in much the same fashion as you'd eat a bar of chocolate seemed to be cause for amusement to some fans. Strange people.

In the evening the North East Western Society turned up, in spurs and stetsons and packing colts, for frenchy fries and beans. Greg seemed quite taken with the idea and thought it was great to walk around dressed as a cowboy. Can you imagine the ructions in Britfandom if ever this headline appeared?:

"PICKERSGILL GAFIATES TO JOIN WESTERN SOCIETY."

Since this group had taken over the downstairs we had an upstairs room party, complete with punch, and I spent a fair time jawing with Greg who was completely different from what I might have expected from my (limited) fanzine reading.

In the evening the Theakston's Old Peculiar was on so I went on that but the mixture of Theakston's and Exhibition had a strange effect. I recall Irene Bell asking me if I was alright and noticing that the bar was swaying in a rather peculiar fashion. Eventually I was led to my room by Irene and Brian Rouse and no sooner had they left than I was sick. Wisely, I resolved to stick to Exhibition for the rest of the con.

Sunday...

I awoke feeling rather fragile and realised with a shock that I hadn't washed my mouth out before getting into bed. Fortunately any hangover I have finds its way to my stomach rather than my head so I was able to face the morning with equanimity.

Being too late for breakfast I trolled down to the shop with Alan Isaacson and bought a bottle of orangeade. The previous night Alan had been taking the piss of my accent and at one stage, under the affluence of incohol no doubt, I remember having my hands around his throat and shaking his head violently, but today, despite persistent provocation, I maintained an air of unconcerned distain.

The highlight of the programme that morning, in fact the only programme item, was the chaos game played in the hotels small pool. According to the programme sheet the only rule was that whoever had the ball was the opposing team. The pool was overlooked by a naked male statue and certain comparisons were made with a part of Ian Williams anatomy. Later it was discovered that the sculptor had modelled the part in question on his 4-year old son. During the game Ian Williams had a disconcerting habit of climbing out of the pool with the ball and throwing himself in after the fashion of a kamikaze pilot.

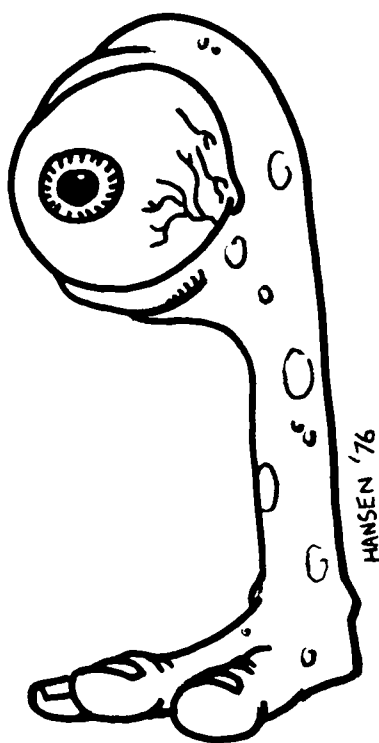
For dinner myself, Alan Isaacson and Brian Rouse piled into Dave Hutchinson's car and went in search of a chinese restaurant. I hoped we'd find one that served chicken and chips.

Since everywhere we tried was shut we ended up playing Tank Trap in the city centre and getting odds and sods from a paki shop. The food was smuggled into the hotel and we feasted in Alan's room. I discovered I liked Red Leicester cheese.

In the afternoon there was a panel with Eddie Jones, Rog Peyton and Bob Shaw followed by a break for drinks and the Doc Savage film.

For tea that evening I went to the local chinese with Messrs. Williams, Hutchinson, Isaacson and Rouse, and feasted on a tomato omelette.

That evening I watched the first game of Dungeons and Dragons I'd ever seen and found it....odd. While showing Greg some of my artwork Rog Peyton and Eddie and



Marsha Jones happened along and after looking through my work Rog decided there was a cartoon of mine he'd like to use as a con badge. Unfortunately the cartoon in question was an affectionate lampoon of my national flag and while I'm not a Welsh nationalist I couldn't let the dragon be taken out of the context of the flag. My chance for fannish fame blown by pride. As it happens I'd earlier suggested to Greg, who is also Welsh-born, that since there isn't a Welsh sf group perhaps Welsh fans ought to have a badge of their own. Naturally the cartoon in question was obvious choice for the badge and I've already promised Greg one when I get around to producing them.

The remnants of the bread and cheese was brought from Alan Isaacsons room by Rob Jackson and a loaves and fishes act commenced. Shortly after Kev Williams (another Welshman) got out his guitar and I proved that though Welsh I can't sing.

For me the day finished talking long into the night with Rog Peyton, Greg Pickersgill, Rob Jackson and Dave Bridges.

#### Monday...

Time to go and I found myself saying the most inane things for some reason and Harry Bell commented that I was the shy quiet type after the fashion of Roy Kettle. I'll take his word for it.

At 1-45., I left for home.

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So what was my verdict on SILICON? Of the three cons I've attended (the others being SEACON and MANCON) it was the one I enjoyed the most. It seems to me that small fannish cons like this are more important to fandom than the Eastercon. It's a lot easier to get to know other fans and you find out what other folk are like. For instance Bob and Sadie Shaw had the room opposite mine and Sadie took the trouble to apologise to me for the loudness of the radio coming from their room. The cleaners had turned it on and she thought it might have woken me, which it hadn't. Nice people.

A really enjoyable con. I've already booked for SILICON 2, have you?

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A BIRDSONG PUBLICATION

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