

EN INJECTIONS ISOTONIQUES SOUS CUTANIES AU PAVILLON DES DIBLES DE L

"July 14, 1960, in Guatemala City, Guatemala, a fire in a mental hospital-two hundred twenty-five dead.".."Don't worry," Celestina told him, "after what we've seen this past week, we're still with you."..According to the newspapers, the police also credited him with the murders of Naomi, Victoria Bressler, and Ned Gnathic (whom they had connected to Celestina). He was wanted, too, for the attempted murder of Dr. Walter Lipscomb (evidently Ichabod), for the attempted murder of Grace White, and for assault with intent to kill Celestina White and her daughter, Angel, and for the assault on Lenora Kickmule (whose foxtail-bedecked Pontiac he had stolen in Eugene, Oregon)..They laughed and held hands. For the first time since Phimie's panicked phone call from Oregon, Celestina felt that everything would eventually be all right again..Thereafter, he was repelled at the prospect of kissing her, and their relationship fell apart.."We have dams, though," said Jacob, gesturing with his fork. "The Johnstown Flood, 1889. Pennsylvania, sure, but it could happen here. And that was a one, let me tell you. The South Fork Dam broke. Wall of water seventy feet high totally destroyed the city. Your tornado killed almost seven hundred, but my dam killed two thousand two hundred and nine. Ninety-nine entire families were swept from the earth. Ninety-eight children lost both parents."..Rena laughed. "Oh, but true! And not just a garden. I'm a field of flowers!" She let go of her skirt, which shimmered like cascades of falling petals. "So tonight will be a famous night, Celestina."..Finally: "A trial lawyer, whether specializing in criminal or civil matters, is like an actor, Mr. Cain. He must believe deeply in his role, in the truth of his portrayal, if he's to be convincing. I always believe in the innocence of my clients in order to achieve the best possible settlement for them."..The Beatles began singing the number-one song, "I Feel Fine," as Junior turned off the county highway and followed the lake road northeast around the oil-black water. They had two titles in the American top five. In disgust, he switched off the radio..Agnes delighted in their conversations. Barty was far ahead of the language learning curve for his age, but he was still a child, and his observations were filled with innocence and charm. "You mean your cold is like in your nose but not in your feet?"..He also concluded arrangements to open an account for Gammoner in a Grand Cayman Island bank and one for Pinchbeck in Switzerland..Instead, he encountered an elderly woman getting out of a red Pontiac with a fox tail tied to the radio antenna. A quick glance around confirmed that they were unobserved, so he clubbed her on the back of the head with the butt of his 9-mm pistol.."It's chilly and foggy and late, and there might be villains afoot at this hour," he intoned with mock gravity. "The two of you are Lipscomb women now, or soon will be, and Lipscomb women never go unescorted through the dangerous urban night."..As kinky and thrilling as it had been to make love to the girl while playing the recorded rough draft of a new sermon that she had been transcribing for her father, Junior could now recall nothing of what the reverend had said, only the tone and the timbre of his voice. Whether instinct, nervous irritation, or merely the sherry should be blamed, he was troubled by the thought that there was something significant about the content of that tape..WEDNESDAY, fully two days after delivering honey-raisin pear pies with Agnes, Edom worked up the nerve to visit Jacob..When he noticed a blonde staring at him from a nearby booth, he smiled and winked at her. Although she was not attractive enough to meet his standards, there was no reason to be impolite.."I thought so," Angel said, dubiousity squinching her face. "Mrs. Ornwall made me cheese."..IN NEED OF OIL, the hand crank squeaked, but the tall halves of the casement window parted and opened outward into the alleyway..Celestina had wanted to go to Oregon for the service, but Tom, Max Bellini, the Spruce Hills police, and Wally Lipscomb-to whom, by Sunday, she'd begun talking almost hourly on the telephone-all advised strenuously against making the trip. A man as crazed and as reckless as Enoch Cain, expecting to find her at the funeral home or the cemetery, might not be deterred by a police guard, no matter what its size..The nurse led the way, while the orderly pushed the gurney from behind Barty's head..pending storm gathered as if called forth by a curse cooked up from eye of newt, toe of frog, wool of bat, and tongue of dog..Junior discovered more tears than could have been found in ten thousand onions. His wife and his unborn baby. He had been willing to sacrifice his beloved Naomi, but maybe he would have found the cost too high if he had known that he was also sacrificing his first-conceived child. This was too much. He was bereft..The fully evolved man never has to rely on the gods of fortune, Zedd tells us, because he makes his luck with such reliability that he can spit in the faces of the gods with impunity..He woke at noon, eyes gummed shut with the effluence of sleep. He felt lousy, but he was in control of himself-and strong enough to fetch his suitcase, which he'd been unable to carry upon arrival..Google didn't realize that he was an object of disgust. He wiggled his eyebrows in what he evidently assumed to be an expression of male camaraderie, and he nudged Junior with one elbow.."See this?" He placed the pepper shaker in front of her on the room-service table and held the salt shaker concealed in his hand..Junior strove to appear properly mortified. "Thought I heard something. Searched the apartment."..Now, Obadiah produced a pack of playing cards as though from a secret pocket in an invisible coat. "Like to see a little something?"..Writing came with reading, and in a notebook, he began to make entries about points of interest in the stories that he enjoyed. His Diary of a Book Reader, as he titled it, fascinated Agnes, who read it with his permission; these notes to himself were enthusiastic, earnest, and charming-but literally month by month, Agnes noticed that they grew less naive, more complex, more contemplative..He raised one hand to halt the genteel debate. "The whole reason I stopped here first, before taking you folks on to my place, is so I wouldn't have to bring your suitcases back after Agnes won you over. This is where you'll be happiest, though you're always welcome if she tries to work you to death."..As luck would have it," the nun said, "Dr. Lipscomb was in the when it happened. He'd just delivered another baby under.They had a few days for quiet celebration of this astonishing recovery of his sight, and in that time, she never tired of watching him read to her. He didn't think she even listened closely. It was the fact of him made whole that lifted her spirits so high as they were now, not any

writer's words nor any story ever written..The ship of night floated over the city and cast down nets of darkness, gathering millions of lights like luminous fishes in its black toils..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.. "All under here's worked out long since" Licky said. And Otter had begun to be aware of the strange country under his feet: empty shafts and rooms of dark air in the dark earth, a vertical labyrinth, the deepest pits filled with unmoving water. "Never was much silver, and the watermetal's long gone. Listen, young'un, do you even know what cinnabar is?" "He knew how you felt about having too much life insurance. So he didn't disclose it to you." In her arms she held Bartholomew. The infant was not heavily bundled, for the weather was unseasonably mild..Ten months later, he finally wore her down. She accepted his proposal, and they set a date for the wedding..The city was less than seven miles on a side, only forty-six square miles, but Junior was nevertheless faced with a daunting task. Hundreds of thousands of people resided within the city limits..Magusson considered the assaults on Victoria and on Vanadium to be hideous crimes, of course, but he also viewed them as affronts to his own dignity and reputation. He expected a felonious client, rewarded with four and a quarter million instead of jail time, to be grateful and thereafter to walk a straight line..If he hadn't been such a rational, stable, no-nonsense person all of his life, Junior might have thought he was losing his mind..Tuesday morning, while he showered with a swimming cockroach that was as exuberant as a golden retriever in the motel's lukewarm water, Junior vowed never to kill again. Except in self-defense.. "It seems it was his own idea, your majesty."..Shortly after six o'clock, Saturday morning, she stirred from a fretful dream and saw Barty sitting up in bed, reading..Delighted to be dating someone who lived neck-deep in culture especially after two months with Tammy Bean, the money maiden. Junior was surprised that he didn't score with Frieda on the first date. He was usually irresistible even to women who weren't sluts..Through miles of worry, natural beauty, imagined omens, and the iron-red sands of Mars, they drove at last to Franklin Chan's offices in Newport Beach..He was no longer in his scrubs, but wore gray wool slacks and a blue cashmere sweater over a white shirt. Face somber, he looked less like an obstetrician engaged in the business of life than like a professor of philosophy forever pondering the inevitability of death.. "Tame him or bury him," said Losen, and turned to more important matters.. "You're all right, we've got you now." His soft yet reverberant voice was so unearthly that his words seemed to convey an assurance more profound and more comforting than their surface meaning..Barty, didn't watch much television. He'd been up late enough to see Red Skelton only a few times, but that comedian always drew gales of laughter from him..Dr. Chan's manner remained professional, providing the strength that Agnes required, but his pain was evident when his gentle voice softened further: "These tumors are so advanced, we won't know until surgery if the malignancy has spread. We may already be too late. And if we aren't too late, we'll have only a small window of opportunity. A small window. Eight days would entail too much risk."..In the glamorous cocktail lounge of this elegant hotel, Junior was necessarily forced to use other of Zedd's techniques--and more brandy--to liberate from his subconscious the name of the caller on the Ansaphone. Max. The caller had said, It's Max..The following April, when he proposed to her, she wouldn't have him. "You're sweet, Paul, but I can't let you throw your life away on me. You're this ... this beautiful ship that will sail a long way, to fascinating places, and I'd only be your anchor."..Her name was Victoria Bressler, and she was an attractive blonde. She would never have been serious competition For Naomi, because Naomi had been singularly stunning, but Naomi, after all, was gone..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.. "You'll need time to ... adjust to this," he said. "Perhaps you've got to call family.. .". Although the girl was unable to articulate why she preferred not to have her mother at her side, they all understood the tumult in her heart. She couldn't bear to subject her gentle and proper mother to the shame and embarrassment that she herself felt so keenly and that she imagined would grow intolerably worse in the hours or days ahead, until and even after the birth..Young boys, however, are not moved by scenery, especially not when their hearts are adventuring on Mars..Finished, Joshua excused himself and went down the hall to his office. He was gone perhaps five minutes, and when he returned, he sent Barty off to the waiting room, where the receptionist kept a jar of lemon- and orange-flavored hard candies. "A few of them have your name on 'em, Bartholomew."..A smoldering cigarette, usually dangling aslant from one corner of a hard mouth set in a cynical sneer, was standard issue for tough-guy gumshoes, but Nolly didn't smoke. His failure to develop this bad habit resulted in a less satisfyingly murky atmosphere than the clients of a private dick might expect..Celestina slammed the door, pressed the lock button in the knob, shoved-rocked-muscled the dresser in front of the door, astonished by her own strength, and heard Angel speaking into the phone: "Mommy's moving furniture."..Junior intended to add one stocky ghost to the party. Perhaps on a summer night in years to come, at the edge of the light fall from his Coleman lantern, a fisherman would see a semitransparent Vanadium providing entertainment with an ethereal quarter..He decided to use the tool just three times on each deadbolt before trying the door. The less noise the better. Maybe luck would be with him.. "Do you want me to call and confirm how Vanadium was harassing you up here?" asked Magusson..Edom observed, amazed, as Agnes chatted up their host, going from Mr. Sepharad to Obadiah, from the doorstep to the living room, the pie delivered and accepted, coffee offered and served, the two of them pleased and easy with each other, all in the time that it would have taken Edom himself to get up the nerve to cross the threshold and to think of something interesting to say about the Galveston hurricane of 1900, in which six thousand had died..If he had been any other three-year-old, she would have told a compassionate lie. He was her miracle child, however, her prodigy, and he would know a lie for what it was..So Barty and Tom just happened to be chatting about a quantum physicist they had seen on a television program, a documentary about the uncanny resonance between the belief in a created universe and some

recent discoveries in quantum mechanics and molecular biology. The physicist claimed that a handful of his colleagues, though by no means the majority, believed that with a deepening understanding of the quantum level of reality, there would in time be a surprising rapprochement between science and faith..Allowing one month for the job might be optimistic. On the other hand, he'd had a long time to perfect a strategy..Adoption records would have been kept as secret from Celestina as from everyone else. But perhaps she knew something about the fate of her sister's bastard son that Junior didn't know, a small detail that would seem insignificant to her but that might put him on the right trail at last..The cop had unzipped the top of her jogging suit and pulled up the roomy T-shirt."With this money, you won't have to cut back on the number of pies you give away--and all of that."..surreptitiously with Junior. He was accustomed to being an object of desire. This night, however, the only lady he cared about was San Francisco herself, and he wanted to be alone with her..Over the final refrain of "I'll Be Seeing You" came a man's voice from the foyer, raised quizzically, with perhaps a note of surprise: "Victoria..Junior approached the headstone from behind, circled it, and shone the flashlight on the chiseled facts:..Consequently, he scheduled more time every day with the phone books. He had obtained directories for all nine counties that, with the city itself, comprised the Bay Area.. "No, I don't see it," Chicane repeated. "There's no benefit to a meditation marathon. Twenty minutes is enough, man. Half an hour at the most. You relied on your internal clock, didn't you? ".Shrieking like carrion-eating birds waiting for their wounded dinner to die, the Hackachaks twice drew stern warnings from nurses. They were told to quiet down and respect the patients in neighboring rooms..MONDAY MORNING, far above Joe Lampion's grave, the translucent blue California sky shed a rain of light so pure and clear that the world seemed to have been washed clean of all its stains.. "I'm going to tell you something about your father that might comfort you," he said, "but you can't ask me for more than I'm ready to say right now. It's all a part of what I'll discuss with you in Bright Beach."..What the commodifiers of fantasy count on and exploit is the insuperable imagination of the reader, child or adult, which gives even these dead things life-of a sort, for a while..Junior vigorously scrubbed his corpse-licked cheek with one hand. Then he scrubbed his hand against the musician's raincoat..San Francisco's pre-Christmas cheer had deserted it. The glow and glitter of the season had given way to a mood as dark and ominous as *The Cancer Lurks Unseen, Version 1*..This was better than taking slow deep breaths. Periodically, on the way to Vanadium's house, Junior spat out a string of insults, punctuated by obscenities..When he came to himself, sick and weak from the poison and with an aching skull, he was in a room with brick walls and bricked-up windows. The door had no bars and no visible lock. But when he tried to get to his feet he felt bonds of sorcery holding his body and mind, resilient, clinging, tightening as he moved. He could stand, but could not take a step towards the door. He could not even reach his hand out. It was a horrible sensation, as if his muscles were not his own. He sat down again and tried to hold still. The spellbonds around his chest kept him from breathing deeply, and his mind felt stifled too, as if his thoughts were crowded into a space too small for them..In the dark woods of the dream, still the presence: faceless and silent, radiating a merciless intent..Turning to face his four trailing escorts, all of whom were hunch shouldered and stiff-necked with tension, Barty said, "What's for dinner? ". "Veal fit for kings," said their waiter, delivering the entrees, and one taste confirmed his promise..He jammed the 9-mm pistol under his belt, grabbed Ichabod by the feet, and dragged him quickly toward the door to Apartment 1. Smears of blood brightened the pale limestone floor in the wake of the body..Dr. Lipscomb brought his hands to his face, covering his nose and mouth as earlier they had been covered with a surgical mask, as though he were in danger of drawing in, with his breath, an idea that would forever change him..In spite of the gloom, the boy's miraculous accomplishment was evident: his clothes and hair were dry as though he'd worn a coat and hood..Life was too short to waste it working if you had the means to afford lifelong leisure..Maria looked stricken when she answered the doorbell, for she intuited that a visit, instead of a call, meant the worst.. "I've seen them," Tom assured her. "My dear, you've never smelled anything better than a field full of bacon vines."..Surprisingly, dolls. Quite a few dolls. Apparently the bastard boy was effeminate, a quality he sure as hell hadn't inherited from his father..From the phone, Barty proceeded directly to the refrigerator. He opened the door, got a can of orange soda, and returned without hesitation to his chair at the table..Thus armored, he at last arrived in the city of Sacramento, an hour before dawn. Sacramento, which means "sacrament" in Italian and in Spanish, calls itself the Camellia Capital of the World, and holds a ten-day camellia festival in early March--already advertised on billboards now in mid-January. The camellia, shrub and flower, is named for G. J. Camellus, a Jesuit missionary who brought it from Asia to Europe in the eighteenth century..When she went upstairs at 2:10 in the morning, she found the boy fast asleep in the soft lamplight, Tunnel in the Sky at his side..Alone with Agnes, the physician said, "I want you to take Barty to a specialist in Newport Beach. Franklin Chan. He's a wonderful ophthalmologist and ophthalmological surgeon, and right now we don't have anyone like that here in town."..Dinner was cooking in the upper of the two ovens. He switched the bottom oven, setting it at warm, and dropped open the door..With the salt and pepper shakers, Tom walked them through the why-I'm-not-sad-about-my-face explanation that he'd given to Angel ten days previously..Through fog-shrouded hills forested with oaks, maples, madrones, and pepperwoods, through magnificent stands of redwoods that towered three hundred feet, he arrived in Weott on the evening of January 3, 1968, where he stayed the night. If Paul had any northernmost goal for this trip, it was the city of Eureka, almost fifty miles farther--and for no reason, other than to eat Humboldt Bay crabs at their origin, because that was one of his and Perri's favorite foods..Also in the drawer was a pistol that he kept for home defense. He stared at it, trying to decide whether to go downstairs and make a sandwich or kill himself..He hurried the length of the diner, pushing past waitresses, checking out all three of the possibilities, but of course, none of them was the dead detective--or anyone else Junior had ever seen before. He was looking for--what?--a ghost, but vengeful ghosts didn't sit down to a meat-loaf lunch in the middle of a hauntin.."Could you undo the spell you put on her? ".St. Mary's social

workers did not arrive with dawn, so Celestina was given the privacy of one of their offices, where the wet face of the morning pressed blurrily at the windows, and where she phoned her parents with the terrible news. From here, too, she arranged with a mortician to collect Phimie's body from the cold-storage locker in the hospital morgue, embalm it, and have it flown home to Oregon..Maria arrived early, expecting to assist with final details in the kitchen. Though honored to be a guest, she wasn't able to stand by with a glass of wine while preparations remained to be made..When at last he spoke, real grief, quiet but profound, softened his voice: "March first, three years ago, my wife and two sons-Danny and Harry, both seven, twins-were coming home from visiting her parents in New York. Shortly after takeoff ... their plane went down." An overflow crowd of mourners had attended the services at St. Thomas's Church, standing shoulder to shoulder at the back of the nave, through the narthex, and across the sidewalk outside, and now everyone appeared to have come to the cemetery, as well..Yet Agnes feared him, for reasons similar to those that might cause a superstitious primitive to tremble in the presence of a witch doctor. Although he was a healer, his dark knowledge of the mysteries of cancer seemed to give him godlike power; his judgment carried the force of fate, and his was the voice of destiny..The house was empty, silent. Hanna worked only days. Nellie Oatis, Perri's companion, was not employed here anymore..They were married in September of that year, much later than even Grace White's wager date. As Grace's guess had been closer than her daughter's, however, Celestina paid with a month of kitchen duty..For Junior, 1968-the Chinese Year of the Monkey--would be the Year of the Plastic Surgeon. He would require extensive dermabrasion to restore the smoothness and tone to his skin, to be as irresistibly kissable as he had been before. While at it, he would need surgery to make subtle changes in his features. Tricky. He didn't want to trade perfection for anonymity. He must take care to ensure that his postsurgery look, when he let his hair grow in and perhaps dyed it, would be as devastating to women as his previous appearance.. "My dad's already armored me," Celestina assured her. "He says art lasts, but critics are the buzzing insects of a single summer day."..Stepping into her digs was like passing through a time machine into another century, traveling in space, as well, to the Europe of Louis XIV. The expansive, high-ceilinged rooms overwhelmed the eye with the rich somber colors and the heavy forms of Baroque art and furniture. Shells, acanthus leaves, volutes, garlands, and scrolls-often gilded decorated the museum-quality antique Bombay chests, chairs, tables, massive mirrors, cabinets, and etageres..In July, she went for a walk on the shore with Paul Damascus, expecting to do a little beachcombing, to watch the comical scurrying crabs. Somewhere between the seashells and the crustaceans, however, he asked her if she could ever love him..A music tradition was deeply rooted in the Negro community. No similar tradition in magic existed..He thought he heard the soft swoosh of knife-edge wings slicing the January air. He dared not look up. More in his throat. The agony. Darkness poured into his head, as if it were blood rising relentlessly from his flooded stomach and esophagus..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.. "It's just that you never know what anyone's hand has been up to recently," Jacob explained. "That respectable banker down the street might have thirty dismembered women buried in his backyard. The nice church-going lady next door might be sleeping in the same bed with the rotting corpse of a lover who tried to jilt her, and for a hobby she makes jewelry from the finger bones of preschool children she's tortured and murdered."..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..She tried to tell him that he was going to make it, that he would be with her for a long time, that the universe was not so cruel as to take him at thirty with all their lives ahead of them, but the truth was here to see, and she could not lie to him..His in-laws' chances of receiving compensation for their pain and suffering over Naomi's death were seriously compromised if her husband did not hold the state or county responsible. In this, as in nothing previously, they felt the need to stand united as a family..Smiling, pulling the blanket more tightly around herself, she said, "You look after your old mom, don't you?".. "If I had a wife, she wouldn't feel too lucky. I'm not of the persuasion that wants a wife, dear."..Smiling again, speaking in a voice hardly louder than a whisper, he said, "Got a wedding date to keep."..He'd been a godsend to Celestina, because his love of children and a new sense of fun that he'd discovered in himself were showered on Angel. He was Uncle Wally. Waddling Wally, Wobbly Wally, Wally Walrus, Wally Werewolf. Wally Wit Duh Funny Accents. Wiggle Eared Wally. Whistling Wally. Wrangler Wally. He was Good Golly Wally the Friend of All Polliwogs. Angel adored him, adored him, and he could have loved her no more if she had been one of the sons that he had lost. Overwhelmed by her classes, her waitressing job, her painting, Celestina could always count on Wally to step in to share the child rearing. He wasn't merely Angel's honorary uncle, but her father in all senses except the legal and biological; he wasn't just her doctor, but a guardian angel who fretted over her mildest fever and worried about all the ways the world could wound a child..If he woke, however, and saw her sitting vigil, Barty would understand how terrible his condition might be..Beyond the window, Barty failed to do any of the things that Agnes expected of a boy not fully enough part of the day to share its rain: He didn't flicker like an image on a static-peppered TV screen; he didn't shimmer like a phantom figure in Sahara heat or blur like a reflection in a steam-clouded mirror.."All right," Agnes said, and as she voiced her acceptance, she was shivered by a sudden fear for which she couldn't at once identify a cause..The musician's eyes met Junior's for an instant, widening with surprise. Obviously he knew that Gammoner was a lie. So he must be aware of Junior's real identity..At the head of the line, Paul waved a red handkerchief out of the window of the station

wagon..Tuesday, January 9, having cashed out a number of investments during the past ten days, Junior made a wire transfer of one and a half million dollars to the Gammoner account in the Grand Cayman bank..The various flavors of canned soda were always racked in the same order, allowing Barty to select what he wanted without error. He got orange for Angel, root beer for himself, and closed the refrigerator.."Take care he doesn't turn your belt on you with a spell!" said his uncle..The old man assumed the solemn and knowing expression of one guarding mysteries, a sphinx without headdress and mane. "If I told you, dear lady, it wouldn't be magic anymore. Merely a trick..".Number three on the charts was "Mr. Lonely," by Bobby Vinton, an American talent from Canonsburg, Pennsylvania. Junior sang along..As she turned away from him and continued along the hall toward the kitchen, Agnes said, "They'll be as good as new when she's mended them..".Like a spring-loaded novelty snake erupting from a can, Junior exploded up from the chair, nearly knocking it over..By air from San Francisco south to Orange County Airport, then farther south along the coast by rental car, one week in the wake of Paul Damascus and his three charges, following directions provided by Paul, Tom Vanadium brought Wally Lipscomb to the Lampion house.."What wound? Junior wanted to ask, but he recognized bait when he heard it, and he did not bite..Chan nodded. "Considering the advanced stage of Bartholomew's malignancies, he should have complained earlier than he did."

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