

JUDGE ~~WILLIAM~~ ^{GIPP:} Now I can remember too, you know, back in those days when many of the Indian people had little herds of cattle. And I used to go with my father--I had a pony--and we would ride and we would go to our ~~neighbors~~ neighbors. We had several neighbors that were not too far away! And I can remember how well off the Indian was in those days. ~~I suppose that this might be some of the information that you might want as to how I saw the Indian then as of now.~~

~~BOB: Ya, I would like to....~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ I saw the Indian then as a very proud people and particularly the men folks. They were very highly regarded. They were warriors; they were highly respected much more so than the women folks. It was not unusual to go to an Indian home and you could very well see the minute you went into the home that the man was very dominant and what he said was law in the home, ~~you know~~, Not particularly in the house, but I mean as far as family affairs were concerned. Usually the women had control of the home. [Then, as years went along, because we had conceded to the government and were placed on reservations.... ~~Now I could go back and tell you that~~ As a youngster, too, I remember we could not leave the reservation without a permit! We were prisoners of war; we were under the War Department! There was no Bureau of Indian Affairs, then, see. You had to have a permit to leave the reservation. You had to get that from what we then called the agent, and since we were under the War Department, all of our agents were either ex- or former army men. Some of them were still in the army and all they did was discard their uniform and put on civilian clothes and they came in here as what we called agents. We now call them superintendents, see. And your permit to leave the reservation had to tell where you were going, when you were leaving, where you were going and when you were coming back. You carried this with you in case you were caught ~~off~~ off the reservation and the police would approach you and want to see your permit, see. [As recently as 1924, the Indian by an Act of Congress was made a citizen of ~~this~~ ^{this} United States. Prior to that we could not vote; we

could not enter into contract with people or anything of this nature!

Everything had to be ~~be~~ verbal, you know? 'Course, most everything was ~~away~~ at that time.

But, getting back to the Indian home, then I saw a change! When you'd go to these Indian homes, you know, you could, as I said, very well see that the male was very dominant and he not only demanded a lot of respect, but he was ~~was~~ proud that he was head of his home. Then, having conceded to the government and ^[been] placed on reservations, ~~and when we conceded to the government,~~ the government agreed to do certain things for us. One of 'em ^{was} that they would support us; they would give us rations! 'Cause they had already killed off the buffalo. ~~This was one~~ way of conquering us! They had tried every means and they finally decided that the best way to conquer the Indian with the least bloodshed, I ~~despise~~ 'spose--I hope they had that in mind--was to slaughter the buffalo! Buffalo was our only source of livelihood and so they instigated then buffalo hunts. That's where Buffalo Bill got his name. There were people who would come out from the East with their high-powered rifles and he'd take them on buffalo hunts and they'd go out and they'd slaughter them by the hundreds! And left the carcasses on the prairie to rot! And when there was no more buffalo, then the Indian almost had to concede; he was lost. So we then were placed on reservations and had agreed then to this type of life. The Indian, then, the male, seemed to have lost his respect. Now-ow he was living on something that was ~~doled~~ ^{doled} out to him by the government! Not only that, but the government also told him when he could move and when he couldn't! They told him where he could live and where he couldn't live. Even as recently as 10, 15 years ago, if an Indian got a check ^[from] the government because he had some land that was leased out or he had sold some land, he could not spend it the way he wanted to.

~~BOB: ON?~~

JUDGE WILLIAM: (It was ~~doled~~ ^{doled} out to him as so much per month to ~~maintain~~ ^{sustain} him, see? And if he wanted to buy a horse or a wagon or whatever it be, he had to get a special permit from the agent! This permitted him to buy

a horse not to exceed so much. So that's why some people wonder why we have such a close sense of value! And this is one of the things that bothered me so much through the years. First of all, our Indian way of life is just the opposite of the White! See, the White man is out to accumulate just as much as he can and the more he can accumulate the higher his status becomes. The Indian was the other way. The more he could ~~buy~~ give was a status! And we had a communal way of life when the buffalo was here. If you were a young warrior and you were in camp and you didn't go on the buffalo hunt that day, that didn't mean that your family didn't eat. Everybody ate! It was ~~all~~ shared, see. Now that the buffalo isn't here, now it's nickels and dimes. It does create a problem for us because we have people that are constantly moving in with relatives where one of the family is working and the first thing you know, the working family cannot support two families. Then this becomes a problem, but slowly we're ~~beginning~~ ^{beginning} to come out of that now. I've seen a great change in even the last 10 years where a lot of our people are puttin' their foot down now and sayin' "Look, my first obligation is to my wife and ~~my~~ my children; not to my cousin and his family! Or ~~my~~ friends or ~~my~~ relatives!" But years ago, that was not unusual for the Indian to take in everybody! That's how so many people have the wrong impression that the Indian was hostile or that he was warlike and this is not true! Our Indian people had been in contact with the White ~~man~~ as far back as the 17th Century and the White man who first came here was welcome. And without the help of the Indian he could not have survived! Somebody once said--the Indian was complaining about society and the treatment of the government, the way the government has treated us--so somebody spoke up and he said, "Well, when the pilgrims landed, how come you welcomed them and you helped them?" And this one Indian said, "Well," he said, "we did, but we didn't think they was gonna stay so damn long!"

BOB: ~~I've heard other things about the mission schools.~~ I was almost reluctant to ask about ~~them~~ ^{the mission schools} because ~~I know~~ some people remember bad

experiences, ~~about those schools!~~

JUDGE ~~WILLIAM~~^{Gipp:} No, I tell it just like it is!

BOB: ~~Ya, god!~~ I hope you do! Did they force you kids to go to those to schools? ~~Even~~ ^{if} your parents didn't want you to go, did you have to go to those schools?

JUDGE ~~WILLIAM~~^{Gipp:} You had to go to school! That was the law or the regulation or whatever it be, and either you went to school from your home, ^{if} you lived close enough, you could go to school from your home to school and if you didn't, then they'd arrest you and put you in school just like they do today! They still do the same thing; it's compulsory!

BOB: Did you stay overnight there? ~~then?~~ ~~Did they let you...~~

JUDGE WILLIAM: ~~Oh, ya, no, no!~~ ^{Ya,} you had big dormitories! Ya, see we lived about four miles west of Fort Yates at the foot of the big hills out here. There was one year that we rode horseback to school. Now that was a problem. We used to have hard winters in those days and then we had to rent a barn in town. My dad had a load o' hay delivered in so the horses would ~~have to~~ be in the barn all day, and after school we'd get out ^{and} we'd have to ride home. Then, of course, when it's 20 below zero, you know, that three and a half miles could be pretty rough for youngsters! →

~~BOB: Ya.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ So that was one of the reasons why we were put in the boarding school 'cause we could stay there all week! See they had big dormitories, big mess hall, they had dormitories and probably--I don't know--50, 60, in a dormitory. They had two dormitories on the boy's side and I think they had two on the girl's side, too. Big boys never slept with the little boys and big girls never, you know? They were segregated as to age. ←

~~BOB: Oh, ya.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ See, ^{which} was good! The same way in the building we had what you call ^a playroom. It was in the basement. The big boys had a playroom and the little boys had a playroom.

~~BOB: Oh.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ But what got me was.... ~~I mean~~ When you think back, ~~now~~, I 'spose, I don't know, they had our parents' consent. Now I doubt that they did! We were all compelled to go to church; it was usually the Catholic Church. We were right in front o' the Catholic Church here and whether you were Catholic or not, I guess, you had to go to church anyway. They figured it didn't hurt you. And then, of course, we were denied the right to talk our Indian language. Now they're teaching it! ~~Because~~ Because so

many ~~of them that~~ can't talk Indian, see? Like ~~mevmy~~ ^{mēvmy} vocabulary is, as far as Indian is concerned, limited! I can talk just about enough to get by! Now my uncle, Judge ^[Frank] Zahn, talked very fluently because he was an ~~interprete~~ interpreter and he visited a lot with the older Indians and he spoke the English language fluently! So he could interpret it very well; he was an excellent interpreter! The interpreters that we had years ago were French that had come in from the Hudson Bay, and when they'd come then, maybe one or two would stay! They'd marry here! They'd marry into our tribe and we welcomed 'em. Then they would learn the Indian language, see. So then, when it come time to enroll Indians and set up what they call the enrollment system and then they had the allotment system that followed, where they'd give each Indian 160 acres o' land, ~~you know~~, then the Indian names were misinterpreted, see, 'cause everything we say is backwards! In those days the sons were never named after the father, so this was a problem too for the interpreter! He had to.... Your name might be Carlson and your child would be named something else! There was no first names and so some of them don't even have first names--the older people. They might adopt one; the ~~White~~ white people might give him a name. They might call him John, you know, somethin' like that, but his neighbors or these Indian people had a way of referring to him as so and so, see. They used his Indian name, see?

BOB: You didn't have to stay in the boarding school if you didn't want to or if your parents didn't want you to?

JUDGE ^{Gipp:} ~~William~~. Not in my time! I don't think they did at any time as

long as you went to school.

~~BOB: Oh, ya.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: Now I don't think...~~ Let's see; in my time there was a public school here 'cause there was one year, as I said, that we rode to school with a horse, saddlehorse. **B**ut in my mother's time, I don't think there was. So it might have been compulsory at that time. I don't know for sure.

BOB: Where was that school located that you went to?

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: Well, let's see it was about 50, 100 yards east of the Catholic Church.~~ ^{Gipp:} It was right in front of the Catholic Church! We would come out of our building and we'd march up the sidewalk to church. In fact, I might mention that when I went to school there, everything was military 'cause the school system had come under the War Department! ~~And all our Indian agents as they would come and go were either former or were military men~~ So we marched everywhere we went!

~~BOB: Oh?~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ And we had officers, ^{sergeants} ~~sergeants~~, corporals. We walked in military formation everyplace we went. We all wore uniforms and on Sundays we had to wear our dress uniform. It was navy blue with a gold ^{stripe} ~~stripe~~ down the side of the trousers and a gold band around the cuff. We had little garrison caps with little bills on 'em with a gold braid across it and they was the type ^{that} ~~where~~ you didn't need no shirt. It was like the high-ranking navy men wear. ~~You know you clip... They had that stiff collar around here; you don't need no shirt with it?~~

~~BOB: Oh, ya! I know what you mean.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: They had a little hook? A little hook and eye here, you know?~~

~~BOB: Ya.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: You'd hook it and it'd make you raw right here, you know.~~

~~BOB: Ya, I'll bet!~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: Ya~~ And that's what we'd have to wear on Sunday and holidays.

P → We had Company A and Company B; we had two companies. We had three companies; Company A, Company B, Company C, and officers wore stripes on ~~their...~~ ^{of course} I 'spose we had corporals and sergeants and besides that ~~we~~ had what they called a disciplinarian. He was the one who took the hose to you if you done somethin' wrong, you know? And the nuns took care of, of course, the youngsters--the little ones. They took care of the discipline part of them. The Company A had wooden guns that they used for drilling, so we knew the Manual of Arms, you know? And we learned 'em so when I went in the service during World War II, the Manual of Arms came right back to me!

~~BOB:~~ Oh!

P ~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ But the last year I was at the boarding school I was in Company A. I was one of the smallest ones in Company A and we would drill. The only reason we would drill like that was for celebrations. ~~like~~ 'Course, later years, they had Armistice Day--November 11th. Of course that was after World War I, but then we had Memorial Day. That was always a big day, you know?

~~BOB:~~ Ya.

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ So Company A to the boys and Company A to the girls would march in the parade like on Memorial Day. We'd march up to the cemetary and we went through the Manual of Arms and such, you know. So a lot of those that later went in the service, the Manual of Arms came right back to us! It was almost the same. It had changed a little, but not very much!

BOB: What years were ^{did} those when you ^{go} went to school there?

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ ^{Gipp:} I went to school there in 1918, 1919, 1920 and 1921, I believe it was, or '22. I might have went there 'til '22. There was one year when I went to school at the public school; we rode to school.

BOB: Were the teachers all nuns at the school? ~~here?~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ ^{Gipp:} Most of ~~them~~ ^{them} were! There were a few laymen, maybe two or three, that were not nuns and were teachers. They went as high as the seventh grade; you graduated when you were in the seventh grade.

~~BOB:~~ Oh.

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ That was it! Like I say you went to school a half a day and you worked a half a day. Like me now, as a youngster I probably....
 Especially the last two years that I was in school there, I would work a half a day, say, at the carpenter shop and I'd go to school a half a day. That would go on for 30 days. Then when the first of the month come up, I was reassigned. Then maybe I'd be reassigned to the dairy barn and the next 30 I'd be reassigned to the engineers or the shoe shop. See, we had all the shoes; everybody wore the same kind of shoes and they were mended there if they needed half-soling or whatever, you know? ↗

~~BOB: Yes~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ And then maybe the next--you'd be assigned some other place. So it was supposed to teach you how to do things, you know, rather than to--they were not what you call academic. That was not the point, see?

BOB: The idea was to teach ~~some~~ kids some kind of ~~the~~ vocation they could use in the ~~the~~ white world?

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ ^{Gipp:} Ya, a little bit of everything, you know?

~~BOB: Ya.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: Ya, that's right.~~

BOB: Were any of the teachers Indian?

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ ^{Gipp:} No.

~~BOB: No?~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: No.~~

BOB: Did they enforce the rules pretty strictly? I mean if you spoke the Sioux language, would you get a pretty good beating?

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ ^{Gipp:} Oh, yes, definately! Oh, yes, these nuns were very strict! Outside the classroom your nuns were the--they took care of everything in general, you know? And if you disobeyed any of the rules, whether it be speaking Indian or whatever it be, you were punished very severely, ya!

BOB: Were there many children or ~~many~~ parents ~~of the kids~~ who were upset ~~because of these~~ ^{by those} rules?

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ ^{Gipp:} Very much! Ya, very much so. ~~A lot of our boys~~ The children, especially the boys, you know--it was not unusual for the boys to run away! Well, to us it appeared like a prison! It wasn't so bad for me because I lived very close by and many times on weekends my folks would come after me and I'd go home for the weekend; but a lot of 'em never seen their parents 'til ~~the~~ the end of the school year, ^[and] so they'd run away! And if ~~they'd~~ ^{they'd} run away, then the police would catch 'em and bring 'em back and then they'd clip their heads. They had handclippers, you know? ↗

~~BOB: Ya.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: But they'd clip it just like Kojak on TV, you know?~~

~~BOB: Ya.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: They'd clip it like that! They'd clip it right to the skull, you know? Of course, ^{then} wherever you went, you know, in the dining room or church, you had to take your hat off! You could pick out the run-aways, you know? It was a means of....~~ ↗ ~~I don't however which, you know?~~

~~Settin' you up as an example, ~~like~~ you know?~~ ↗

~~BOB: Gee, that sounds pretty tough! I mean you wanna think of a way of ruining somebody's pride that'd be about as good as any!~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: Ya,~~ I know just not too many years ago they had an incident here where a teacher--it was in the lower grades. I don't know maybe second or third grade ^{then} this one little girl was chewing gum and the teacher had warned them that they shouldn't chew gum in school, and she took the little girl then and made her stand up in front of the classroom and stuck the gum on her nose and made her stand there 'til lunchtime. It was a means.... Well, like this clipper, it was a means of ridicule really! That was the word I was lookin' for. And this caused quite a disturbance 'cause I remember ^[it] so well! I was the judge in the court at the time. ~~then~~

~~When the little girl got home, ~~and~~ her nose was red,~~ [;] so her mother asked her about it and she told her mother what happened. So the mother went up to the school and she slapped the teacher! So then the teacher had the mother arrested, ~~and~~ The mother had to come to court on what you call assault

and battery. And I distinctly remember ~~me~~ trying to rule very much in the favor of the mother! It was kind of more or less justified although it was wrong! There was a certain amount of justification there because to take a little youngster like that and just to purely ridicule, you know? They done that to us during World War II in the armed forces when we would do something wrong! It was pure ridicule!

JUDGE ~~William~~ ^{Giff} Many of our Indian people are living better now than they ever did before! We're slowly getting away from the little huts and outside toilets, you know? So I 'spose that ~~that~~ would be the biggest advancement, ~~and~~ ^[is] the best that I've seen whereby our federal government now is beginning to recognize the tribe--the tribal council who represents the tribe ^{for} its proposals and trying to better the Indian way of life. ~~You know making~~

^R-We have a lot of programs going here; Headstart, ~~DEO, and~~ ^{DEO, and} Capitolgram and all these. I'm not acquainted with 'em too well, but they are employing a lot of our Indian people, ~~you know?~~ And we have our ~~little~~ library; we have our ^{little} college set up down here! So all these things, I think, are very beneficial. It's ~~not only~~ putting our male back into his respective status as the head of the house. ~~and~~ Prior to this, either it was welfare or else only the wife was working 'cause most of the jobs were more of a domestic type ^{like} at the dormitories we have matrons, at the hospital we have ~~all~~ a 99 [%] ~~percent~~ female staff, and the schools and our janitors and the cooks at the school, you know? Things like this, ~~and~~ We still have dormitories here where the kids stay for ^{the} nine months. They feed them; they have a big mess hall. So with these new programs now it's making jobs that are more suitable for males. Of course we have had some male cooks down here, but most of the time it's female. ^{But,} getting back to the male losing his status in the home, I can remember ¹⁰ ~~ten~~ years ago it was not unusual for a wife and husband to come into my office, in the judge's office, and the wife would do all the talkin'! She'd be complaining about whatever it be, you know, whatever the subject and she would be the dominant one! And then

once in ~~an~~awhile she'd look around to her husband and ~~she'd~~ she'd say, "Ain't that right, John?" And he'd says, "Ya." But it wasn't him that was leading, carrying the ball; she was carrying it, ~~she~~? And I think this was very degrading. 'Course the federal government helped to degrade us and be-little us, you know, and that's about what they did, I think. 'Course, this is only my opinion from what I can remember back as a youngster up until the present day. Now we're getting to the point ^{like} with these jobs, as I said a minute ago, ^{where} the husband is working now and he's beginning to feel that he had a little respect for himself, ~~you know?~~

~~BOB: Or that he has a role too now; that he isn't lost more or less.~~

R ~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ Then they wonder why we have alcoholism and why we have this and why we have that! When you don't have any respect for yourself, I don't know how you can expect otherwise, you know? I've noticed in the past year ~~st~~ ^{my wife} used to work at the dormi ^{tory} as a matron. She reti-
red about a year ago. ~~Incidentally she's not here today; she went and~~
~~stayed with the daughter out on the ranch 'cause her husband had to be~~
~~away on a convention down at Denver. So we always used to be invited to~~
~~the prom at our school here each graduation.~~ Through the years you can
just see the advancement in ^{the} ~~these~~ children, you know? It's not unusual to
go to a prom now, and you see all the boys ⁱⁿ ~~and~~ suits, white shirts, neckties,
[and] the girls in formals, ~~and you~~ their hair all done by beauty operators and
just a regular--like anyone else. And years ago--~~then~~ ~~now~~ [a youngster if]
~~put~~ ^{put} a necktie on, they ^{'d} run you out o' town! They laugh you out o'
town, you know? ~~My~~ ^{All} we cared about was having a good pair of boots
and a good hat! We didn't care about what kind of shirt or pants we had;
that was immaterial! Now, another thing that I've noticed is that a lot of
our Indian people are driving nice cars. They're saving up and making down
payments and keeping the payments up so that ~~when~~ they don't get the
car taken away from them, you know, which used to be pretty much of a fad
here!

BOB: Well, that's a problem with a lot of people wherever they live!

JUDGE ~~WILLIAM~~ ^{Gipp:} Yes, yes! I think ~~you~~ ^{myself} you know I find ~~myself~~ being a little bit more critical of the Indian because I want to see him do good ~~to~~ [and] succeed, you know? And many times I will have people make almost the same statement you did ~~that~~ ^{that} we are criticizing because we Indians did this or we did that ~~and~~ ^{-- and [because]} we are critical somebody might speak up and say, "Well, the White people do that!" So I always say, "Well, let 'em go ahead and do it!"

~~BOB: Ya.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: But let's not do that! You know?~~

~~BOB: Sure that's the way to look at it.~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ You know, it hurts me to see an Indian on the street in Bismarck or Mandan panhandleing! Every once in awhile we do! He may not bother you, but if he sees ~~me~~ ^{me} comin', you know, and either knows me or he recognizes me as an Indian, he'll hook me up for a quarter or a half, you know? It bothers me very much; but when I see a white man do it, it don't bother me at all, ~~and~~ [I remember a fella ^[who] used to live in Solen. He used to run a grocery store then; I knew him very well. He turned his grocery store over to his boy and then he moved to Bismarck ^{and he worked for} ~~and he worked for~~ [a clothing store]. ~~Sharks.~~

~~BOB: Oh, the clothes store there?~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM: Ya, but when Sharks used to have the store or, no, it was Evans used to have the store on Broadway right next to Pennys, next to the CP, right in there and he worked for them.~~ They used to have big display windows, ~~when~~ and the glass doors and I went in there to buy ties or something and he waited on me. And I knew him for quite awhile; he lived on a reservation practically all his life, but he was a non-Indian. And as I was leaving he followed me to the door and we stood in the doorway. I was dressed; I had a suit on and tie and everything! And we stood in the doorway and we were standing there talking and two Indian girls walked by. They were dressed real nice, and hair all done up nice and presentable. Any man would have admired 'em. ~~and~~ ^{there goes} He said to me, "Now ~~myself~~ two nice appearing girls!" You see, he was trying to tell me something, right? You

read between the lines. He was telling me that you don't see this very much, ~~seen~~ in his opinion, ~~see~~ But it's awfully hard for the Indian people here to get ahead. Salaries are not the best. Of course, they're fairly good now, but some years ago you needed every nickel you could get to survive, ~~you know?~~ So clothing and maintaining the home, repair or anything of this nature was almost out, you know? You almost had to use every cent you got to put food on the table, ~~you know?~~

BOB: How was life here during the 1930's? ~~I've heard some of the older white people I've talked to that they didn't have enough to eat and I wonder if it was that bad there, how it was here?~~

^{Gipp:}
JUDGE WILLIAM: Oh, you couldn't buy a job for love of... People just had to live--barely existed! Finally they did come out with these programs, the WPA and so on and then they come out with the CCC Program and even then.... I worked for the government here in the early '30s for ^{\$1.27} ~~a dollar and twenty seven cents~~ a day! Now, of course, things were cheaper then; but even then that was the very minimum wage, ^{\$1.27} But that's all you could get! I worked for the Bureau for ^{\$1.27} ~~a dollar and twenty seven cents~~ a day! Now I can remember, too, that we lived on a lot o' wild game, ~~you know?~~ ~~We had the storekeepers where they--there was no money!~~ We had the storekeepers where they would break a box o' shells and they'd sell one or six or whatever you wanted, you know, at five cents a piece! See, shells were worth about a dollar a box then and they'd come 25 in a box ^{til} these shotgun shells. So like I might go uptown; I was short of meat and I'd buy--I'd have maybe 15 ~~cents~~ cents--three shells. You made 'em count, too! ↗

~~BOB: Ya, I was going to say!~~

~~JUDGE WILLIAM:~~ You didn't shoot 'em up in the air just for the fun of it, you know? There was no turkey shoots and shootin' clay pigeons in those days! Then you'd go out and try and hope you'd get a jackrabbit, see? And I can remember following a jackrabbit for miles ^{til} ~~til~~ I got him, ~~you know,~~ 'til you got a good shot ~~used~~ that you was sure it was gonna count, you know, ^A And that's how we survived! Ya, even the non-Indian had a hard time

in those days with not only the drought, the Depression, ~~you know?~~ You'd proposition some farmer or rancher, you know, to work for your board and ^[and] room he wouldn't even take you then! He'd say, "No, I got six kids to support. I can't even keep food on the table for them!"

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