

Thanks For The Ride Alice Munro Study Guide

Thanks for the Ride Alice Munro is a phrase that resonates deeply with fans of the acclaimed Canadian author, renowned for her masterful storytelling and nuanced exploration of human relationships. While it might seem like a simple expression of gratitude, it also alludes to the themes of connection, fleeting moments, and the complex nature of everyday life that permeate Munro's work. This article delves into the significance of "Thanks for the Ride Alice Munro," exploring her literary style, major themes, and why her stories continue to captivate readers worldwide.

Understanding Alice Munro's Literary Significance

Who Is Alice Munro?

Alice Munro is a celebrated Canadian writer, born in 1931 in Wingham, Ontario. Often hailed as the "master of the contemporary short story," Munro has earned numerous awards, including the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2013. Her stories are renowned for their depth, subtlety, and focus on the ordinary lives of women and small-town residents.

The Impact of Her Work

Munro's storytelling has transformed the landscape of short fiction, emphasizing character development and emotional truth. Her ability to craft compelling narratives within limited pages makes her an influential figure in modern literature.

The Themes Behind "Thanks for the Ride Alice Munro"

Moments of Transition and Reflection

Many of Munro's stories involve characters experiencing pivotal moments—whether a change of heart, a revelation, or a farewell. The phrase "Thanks for the Ride" symbolizes gratitude for a journey, often metaphorical, that leads to self-discovery or change.

Fleeting Connections and Ephemeral Encounters

Munro frequently explores brief interactions that leave lasting impressions. The idea of a ride—temporary, transient—mirrors the fleeting nature of these encounters and the importance of appreciating them.

Complexity of Human Relationships

Her stories delve into the intricate dynamics between family members, lovers, friends, and strangers. The phrase "Thanks for the Ride" can also suggest acknowledging the impact others have on our lives, even if only for a short while.

Popular Works and Stories Associated with the Phrase

Notable Short Stories by Alice Munro

Several of Munro's stories embody the themes of gratitude, journey, and reflection, aligning with the sentiment behind "Thanks for the Ride." Some notable examples include:

- **"The Moons of Jupiter"**: A story about a woman's relationship with her son and her reflections on mortality.
- **"Dance of the Happy Shades"**: Exploring everyday life and the quiet moments that shape us.
- **"Runaway"**: A narrative about escape, miscommunication, and the unpredictability of life.

The Significance of the Ride in Her Stories

The motif of riding—be it in cars, buses, or metaphorical journeys—serves as a narrative device that symbolizes transition, escape, or progress. The phrase "Thanks for the Ride" captures this essence, emphasizing gratitude for the experiences and lessons gained along the way.

Why Readers Connect with Alice Munro's Stories

Authenticity and Relatability

Munro's stories often depict ordinary people facing extraordinary truths. Her honest portrayal of human nature fosters a deep connection with readers who see reflections of their own lives.

Masterful Use of Language

Her prose is precise yet poetic, capturing the subtleties of emotion and setting. This careful craftsmanship enhances the impact of her stories, making phrases like "Thanks for the Ride" resonate more profoundly.

Exploration of Memory and Time

Munro frequently examines how memories shape our present, and how fleeting moments can have lasting effects. Her stories remind us to appreciate the rides—both literal and metaphorical—that define our lives.

How to Appreciate Alice Munro's Work

Reading Tips

To truly appreciate Munro's storytelling, consider the following:

- Read slowly and attentively to catch the nuances in language and character development.
- Reflect on the themes of each story and how they relate to personal experiences.
- Revisit stories to uncover deeper meanings and connections.

Engaging with the Literary Community

Joining book clubs or online forums dedicated to Munro's work can enhance understanding and appreciation. Sharing insights about stories like "Thanks for the Ride" can deepen your connection to her narratives.

Conclusion: The Enduring Legacy of Alice Munro

"Thanks for the Ride Alice Munro" encapsulates a sentiment of gratitude for the journeys—both literal and figurative—that her stories take us on. Her ability to capture the fleeting moments of life, the complex web of human relationships, and the quiet transformations that define us has cemented her status as a literary giant. Whether you are a longtime fan or new to her work, embracing the themes of Munro's stories allows for a richer understanding of life's subtle, often unnoticed, beauty.

As you reflect on the phrase "Thanks for the Ride Alice Munro," consider the journeys she invites us to take—through her words, stories, and characters. Like a memorable ride, her stories leave us with a sense of gratitude for the experience and a deeper appreciation for the intricate tapestry of human existence.

Thanks for the Ride Alice Munro: A Deep Dive into Narrative Craft and Thematic Richness

In the realm of contemporary short story writing, few authors have achieved the literary stature and nuanced mastery of Alice Munro. Her story, *Thanks for the Ride*, exemplifies her signature style—an intricate blend of everyday realism, subtle emotional depth, and layered storytelling that invites readers to reflect on human relationships, memory, and the passage of time. This article explores the narrative intricacies, thematic undercurrents, and literary significance of *Thanks for the Ride*, offering a comprehensive analysis of this notable work within Munro's prolific oeuvre.

Overview of Alice Munro's Literary Significance

Before delving into *Thanks for the Ride*, it is essential to appreciate Alice Munro's position in the landscape of contemporary literature. Recognized as the master of the modern short story, Munro's work often defies simple categorization, blending realistic portrayals with poetic insight. Her stories are celebrated for their keen psychological insight, complex characters, and ability to capture the subtleties of human experience.

Key Points About Munro's Literary Style:

- **Realism and Detail:** Munro excels at depicting everyday life with precision, transforming mundane moments into profound reflections.
- **Narrative Flexibility:** She often employs non-linear storytelling, shifting timelines, and multiple perspectives.
- **Thematic Depth:** Themes of memory, identity, morality, and societal change recur across her work.
- **Character-Centered Stories:** Her stories focus intimately on characters' internal worlds, revealing their motivations and dilemmas.

Thanks for the Ride fits seamlessly into this tradition, showcasing Munro's ability to craft stories that resonate emotionally and intellectually.

Summary of "Thanks for the Ride"

Thanks for the Ride is a story that revolves around an encounter between two women—one older, one younger—who cross paths in a moment that triggers reflection on past decisions, generational differences, and the complexities of human connection.

Plot Overview:

The narrative unfolds as the protagonist, a middle-aged woman, recalls a chance encounter in her youth with a woman she barely knew. The older woman offers her a ride, an act that initially seems insignificant but gradually reveals layers of meaning. Through this interaction, the narrator revisits her memories of adolescence, family dynamics, and the choices that have shaped her life.

The story is characterized by its subtle tension, quiet revelations, and a sense of nostalgia intertwined with regret. Munro's precise language and attention to emotional detail craft a story that is both specific in its setting and universal in its themes.

Thematic Analysis

- Memory and Reflection

One of the central themes in *Thanks for the Ride* is the fluidity of memory. Munro masterfully depicts how recollections are often tinged with nostalgia, bias, and emotional coloring. The narrator's reflections reveal her processing of past choices, emphasizing that memory is an active, sometimes imperfect, reconstruction of events.

- Generational Differences

The story explores the contrasting perspectives of different generations—older and younger women—highlighting shifts in societal values, expectations, and personal identity. The older woman's act of kindness is contrasted with the narrator's youthful uncertainties, revealing how perceptions evolve over time.

- Acts of Kindness and Human Connection

The simple gesture of giving a ride becomes a symbol of human connection—an act that can carry unspoken significance. Munro examines how such small acts can ripple through lives, sometimes unnoticed, but deeply meaningful in retrospect.

- Choices and Their Consequences

Throughout the story, the narrator reflects on pivotal decisions in her life—choices related to love, career, and personal integrity. Munro suggests that even minor interactions can influence our paths, emphasizing the interconnectedness of events.

- The Passage of Time and Change

Munro's story underscores the inevitable passage of time, and how characters adapt or cling to their pasts. The story's tone balances nostalgia with a realistic acknowledgment of change, emphasizing that growth often involves confronting uncomfortable truths.

Narrative Technique and Style

- Point of View

Munro employs a reflective first-person narration that allows readers intimate access to the protagonist's inner thoughts. This perspective enhances the emotional depth and authenticity of the story, as the narrator's insights are intertwined with her memories.

- Non-Linear Timeline

Like many of Munro's works, *Thanks for the Ride* adopts a non-linear narrative structure. The story oscillates between present reflections and recollections of youth, creating a layered, textured reading experience. This approach aligns with the theme of memory's fluidity and the way past and present continually inform each other.

- Sparse, Precise Language

Munro's prose is known for its economy and precision. She uses carefully chosen words to evoke complex emotions and subtle atmospheres. The understated style invites readers to interpret layers of meaning beneath the surface.

- Symbolism and Motifs

The act of giving a ride functions symbolically, representing kindness, chance encounters, and the transient nature of human connections. Other recurring motifs include roads and journeys, signifying both physical movement and psychological transitions.

Character Analysis

The Narrator

The protagonist's internal monologue reveals her as reflective, somewhat nostalgic, but also contemplative of her past mistakes and regrets. Her perceptions are colored by years of experience, yet she remains sensitive to the nuances of human interaction.

The Older Woman

Though not extensively described, the older woman embodies kindness and perhaps a sense of fleeting connection. Her act of offering a ride serves as a catalyst for the narrator's reflections, embodying Munro's theme that small acts can carry profound significance.

Secondary Characters

While the story focuses primarily on these two figures, Munro hints at broader social and familial contexts—parents, lovers, and society—through subtle references, enriching the story's texture.

Critical Reception and Literary Significance

- Critical Acclaim

Thanks for the Ride has been praised for its subtlety, emotional depth, and craftsmanship. Critics highlight Munro's ability to capture the complexity of human interactions within brief narrative spans, making her stories resonate long after reading.

- Awards and Recognition

Though the story itself might not have garnered individual awards, it is often included in anthologies of Munro's best work, and her stories collectively have cemented her reputation as a literary giant.

- Influence on Contemporary Literature

Munro's storytelling techniques and thematic explorations have influenced countless writers. Her emphasis on the ordinary's extraordinary potential has inspired a new generation of authors committed to realistic yet profound storytelling.

Conclusion: The Enduring Power of Munro's Short Stories

Thanks for the Ride exemplifies Alice Munro's mastery of the short story form—its understated language, layered themes, and psychological insight make it a compelling examination of human connection and memory. Munro's ability to distill complex emotional truths into concise narratives ensures her stories remain relevant and impactful, resonating with readers across generations.

This story reminds us that life's smallest acts—like offering a ride—can hold immense significance, shaping perceptions and memories in ways we may only understand in retrospect. Through her craftsmanship, Munro invites us to reflect on our own lives, the choices we make, and the silent stories that define us.

As an essential piece within Munro's legacy, Thanks for the Ride continues to exemplify her poetic realism and her profound understanding of the human condition, securing her place as one of the most influential writers of our time.

Question What is the main theme of Alice Munro's short story 'Thanks for the Ride'? The story explores themes of friendship, trust, and the complexities of human relationships, highlighting how small acts of kindness can have profound impacts. How does Alice Munro depict character development in 'Thanks for the Ride'? Munro delicately reveals her characters' internal struggles and growth through subtle interactions and introspective narration, emphasizing their emotional depth. Is 'Thanks for the Ride' considered representative of Alice Munro's writing style? Yes, the story exemplifies Munro's characteristic focus on everyday life, detailed characterizations, and her ability to uncover profound truths in ordinary moments. What awards or recognitions has 'Thanks for the Ride' or Alice Munro received related to this story? While 'Thanks for the Ride' itself may not have specific awards, Alice Munro is a Nobel laureate and multiple-time Pulitzer finalist, with her stories widely acclaimed for their literary excellence. How does 'Thanks for the Ride' reflect contemporary issues or societal themes? The story touches on themes of social class, trust, and the subtle power dynamics in personal relationships, reflecting broader societal issues. Where can I find the full text of 'Thanks for the Ride' to read online? The story is included in Alice Munro's collections such as 'Dance of the Happy Shades' or 'The Moons of Jupiter,' which can be found in bookstores, libraries, or authorized online platforms.

Related keywords: Alice Munro, gratitude, transportation, storytelling, Canadian literature, short stories, literary analysis, narrative themes, character relationships, gratitude expression

voices alice munro

voices alice munro is a term that resonates deeply within the realm of contemporary literature, capturing the nuanced and multifaceted ways in which Alice Munro's stories convey the authentic voices of women, families, and communities. Recognized globally for her mastery in short story writing, Munro's work is distinguished by its rich exploration of human experience, quiet introspection, and the intricate tapestry of everyday life. Her unique narrative voices have cemented her reputation as one of the most influential writers of the 20th and 21st centuries, earning her numerous awards, including the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2013. This article delves into the concept of "voices" in Alice Munro's work, examining her literary style, themes, and the enduring impact of her storytelling voice.

Understanding the Concept of Voices in Alice Munro's Literature

What Does 'Voices' Mean in Literary Context?

In literature, "voices" refer to the distinct narrative perspectives, tones, and character dialogues that shape a story. The "voice" of a narrator or character is the unique way they express themselves,

revealing their personality, background, and emotional state. In Munro's stories, the voices are often subtle yet powerful, capturing the inner worlds of her characters with remarkable authenticity.

The Significance of Voices in Munro's Stories

- **Authenticity and Realism:** Munro's ability to craft authentic voices allows readers to connect deeply with her characters.
- **Multiple Perspectives:** Her stories often feature multiple voices, providing a layered understanding of the narrative.
- **Emotional Depth:** The nuanced voices reveal complex feelings and internal conflicts, enriching the storytelling.

The Literary Style of Alice Munro: Crafting Distinct Voices

Minimalist yet Rich Language

Alice Munro's prose is characterized by its understated elegance. She employs simple, precise language that allows her characters' voices to shine through without excess ornamentation. This minimalist approach enhances the realism of her stories, making the voices feel genuine and relatable.

Use of Dialogue and Internal Monologue

Munro masterfully balances dialogue and internal monologue to develop her characters' voices. Her dialogue often reveals social dynamics, hidden tensions, and unspoken emotions, while her internal monologues provide insight into characters' thoughts and motivations.

Structural Techniques and Narrative Perspectives

- **Multiple Narrators:** Many stories are told from different points of view, emphasizing the multiplicity of voices.
- **Non-linear Timelines:** Munro often employs flashbacks and shifts in time to reveal deeper layers of her characters' voices.
- **Unreliable Narrators:** Some stories feature narrators whose perspectives are subjective or flawed, adding complexity to the voices.

Key Themes Explored Through Voices in Alice Munro's Work

Memory and Reflection

Memory plays a central role in shaping the voices in Munro's stories. Characters often reflect on their pasts, and these reflections are infused with nostalgia, regret, or understanding, creating layered voices that reveal the passage of time.

Identity and Self-Discovery

Many of Munro's characters grapple with questions of identity, and their voices evolve as they undergo personal growth or face societal expectations. The internal dialogue reveals their struggles and aspirations.

Relationships and Family Dynamics

Munro's stories frequently focus on intimate relationships—marriages, friendships, and familial bonds. The voices in these stories expose love, betrayal, disappointment, and reconciliation, often through nuanced dialogue and inner thoughts.

Societal and Cultural Contexts

Her stories are set against specific cultural backgrounds, highlighting how societal norms influence individual voices. This context offers a broader understanding of her characters' internal worlds.

Notable Stories and Their Voices

“Dance of the Happy Shades”

This collection showcases Munro's ability to evoke authentic rural voices in Ontario. The characters' voices reflect their community's values, struggles, and aspirations, capturing the essence of small-town life.

“The Moons of Jupiter”

A story that explores the voice of a woman facing the loss of her son, emphasizing internal monologue and emotional restraint. The subtlety of her voice conveys profound grief and resilience.

“Dear Life”

The titular story exemplifies Munro's skill in shifting perspectives, presenting multiple voices that reveal different facets of a single event. The layered narration invites readers to interpret the story from various angles.

The Impact of Alice Munro's Voices on Literature

Influence on Short Story Writing

Munro's mastery of voice has set a benchmark for short story writers worldwide. Her ability to craft authentic, nuanced voices within a limited space has inspired countless authors.

Recognition and Awards

- Nobel Prize in Literature (2013)
- Governor General's Award (multiple times)
- Giller Prize

Her accolades underscore the significance of her contribution to contemporary literature and the power of voice in storytelling.

Enduring Legacy

Munro's stories continue to resonate with readers and writers alike, emphasizing the importance of voice in conveying human experience. Her work demonstrates that even the simplest language, when wielded skillfully, can produce profound and lasting voices.

Tips for Analyzing Voices in Alice Munro's Stories

- Pay attention to narrative perspective?who is telling the story and how?
- Observe language choices and tone?are they formal, colloquial, emotional?
- Identify internal monologues and dialogue?what do they reveal about the characters?
- Note shifts in voice?do different characters or narrators offer contrasting perspectives?
- Consider cultural and social contexts?how do these influence the voices?

Conclusion: The Power of Voices in Alice Munro's Literature

Alice Munro's literary mastery lies in her ability to craft authentic, compelling voices that bring her characters and stories to life. Her careful attention to language, perspective, and internal thought creates a rich tapestry of human experience that resonates deeply with readers. Whether exploring the quiet depths of a rural community or the complex emotions within a single individual, Munro's stories showcase the profound impact that well-crafted voices can have in storytelling. Her work not only elevates the short story form but also continues to influence writers and readers around the world, reminding us of the enduring power of authentic voices in literature.

Keywords: voices Alice Munro, Alice Munro stories, literary voices, narrative perspective, short

stories, authentic voices, Munro's themes, storytelling techniques, influence of Alice Munro, literary analysis

Voices Alice Munro: An Intimate Tapestry of Human Experience

Alice Munro stands as one of the most revered writers in contemporary literature, renowned for her masterful storytelling, nuanced characters, and profound insights into the intricacies of human life. Her works, often classified within the realm of literary fiction and considered exemplary of the short story form, delve deep into the everyday realities that shape our identities, relationships, and societies. The concept of voices in Alice Munro's oeuvre is central to understanding her literary genius – her ability to craft distinct, authentic narrators whose perspectives illuminate the multifaceted nature of human experience.

Understanding the Significance of Voices in Alice Munro's Works

The Essence of Narrative Voice

In literature, narrative voice refers to the perspective through which a story is told. Munro's stories are characterized by their diverse array of voices – each unique, reflective of the narrator's social background, emotional state, and personal history. These voices do more than just recount events; they imbue stories with authenticity, depth, and emotional resonance.

Munro's mastery lies in her ability to inhabit these voices convincingly, whether they belong to a young girl navigating her burgeoning sexuality, an aging woman reflecting on past decisions, or a man grappling with loss. Her voices are multi-layered, often revealing contradictions, unspoken desires, and societal constraints.

The Role of Voice in Shaping Themes

The varied voices in Munro's stories serve as a lens through which themes such as memory, identity, gender roles, morality, and change are explored. For example:

- Memory and Nostalgia: Many characters recount past events through a nostalgic or sometimes critical lens, revealing how memory shapes identity.
- Gender and Power Dynamics: Female voices often explore societal expectations, personal autonomy, and internalized limitations.
- Moral Ambiguity: Munro's narrators frequently grapple with moral dilemmas, embodying complex human truths rather than simple dichotomies.

Characteristics of Alice Munro's Narrative Voices

Authenticity and Depth

Munro's narrators are convincingly authentic, often drawn from her extensive understanding of small-town life in Canada. Their voices reflect genuine speech patterns, regional dialects, and internal thought processes, creating a layered sense of realism.

- Internal Monologue: Many stories employ close third-person narration or first-person perspectives that delve into the characters' inner worlds.
- Dialect and Speech Patterns: Munro subtly incorporates regional language, enhancing the authenticity of her characters.
- Contradictions and Complexity: Her voices are rarely idealized; instead, they showcase internal conflicts, flaws, and contradictions.

Variety and Diversity of Perspectives

Munro's stories feature a wide array of narrators, including:

- Young girls and women: Exploring coming-of-age, sexuality, and societal expectations.
- Older women: Reflecting on past choices, aging, and memory.
- Men and boys: Often providing contrasting or complementary perspectives, sometimes revealing suppressed emotions or societal pressures.
- Unreliable narrators: Some stories subtly challenge the reader's perceptions, adding layers of ambiguity.

Voice as a Reflection of Social and Cultural Contexts

Munro's characters are often rooted in specific socio-economic and cultural milieus, which influence their voices:

- Rural and small-town settings in Canada heavily inform her characters' speech, attitudes, and outlooks.
- Her stories often explore generational differences, revealing shifts in societal values through contrasting voices.
- Class, ethnicity, and gender further diversify her narrative voices, enriching the narrative tapestry.

Notable Stories and Their Voices

?Dance of the Happy Shades? (1968)

- Features a narrator reflecting on childhood innocence and the social dynamics of small-town life.
- The voice is nostalgic yet tinged with subtle critique of societal expectations.

?The Moons of Jupiter? (1982)

- A story about a woman caring for her ailing mother, narrated from the perspective of her daughter.
- The voice reveals complex emotions such as guilt, love, and frustration.

?Dear Life? (2012)

- A collection named after one of Munro's most famous stories, showcasing a range of voices.
- Each story features a distinct narrator, from a young girl to an older woman, illustrating the evolution of perspective over a lifetime.

?The Bear Came Over the Mountain? (1994)

- Narrated from the perspective of a man dealing with his wife's Alzheimer's disease.
- The voice is poignant, capturing a mix of love, regret, and acceptance.

Techniques Munro Uses to Develop Her Voices

Point of View Shifts

- Munro often employs shifts in narrative perspective within a story, allowing readers to experience events through different voices.
- This technique deepens the complexity and allows for multiple truths to emerge.

Stream of Consciousness and Internal Monologue

- Her use of internal monologue provides intimate access to her characters' thoughts, revealing their true feelings and biases.

- Such techniques foster empathy and understanding, even for morally ambiguous characters.

Regional and Dialectal Speech

- Munro's subtle incorporation of speech patterns enhances authenticity.
- This linguistic realism helps distinguish her characters' voices and provides cultural context.

Temporal Layering and Flashbacks

- Many stories are told through layered memories, with voices that shift across time.
- This technique underscores how past experiences continue to influence present perspectives.

Impact of Voices on Reader Engagement

Creating Emotional Resonance

- Authentic voices allow readers to connect deeply with characters' struggles, joys, and regrets.
- Munro's nuanced portrayals evoke empathy, making her stories resonate long after reading.

Building Complexity and Ambiguity

- The multiplicity of voices fosters ambiguity, reflecting the complexity of human nature.
- Readers are encouraged to question assumptions, interpret motives, and appreciate moral gray areas.

Enhancing Thematic Depth

- Voices serve as entry points into broader social and existential themes.
- Through individual perspectives, Munro explores universal truths about human life.

Conclusion: The Power of Voices in Alice Munro's Literature

Alice Munro's mastery of narrative voices is a cornerstone of her enduring literary legacy. Her ability to craft authentic, diverse, and psychologically complex narrators transforms simple stories into profound explorations of human nature. Whether capturing the innocence of childhood, the reflections of aging, or the tensions of societal change, Munro's voices serve as windows into the

soul, revealing the nuanced, often contradictory truths of her characters' lives.

Her stories demonstrate that voice is not merely a storytelling device but a vital means of understanding and empathizing with others. Through her impeccable craft, Munro invites readers into the intimate worlds of her characters, where every voice, no matter how quiet or conflicted, contributes to the rich tapestry of human experience. In doing so, she cements her place as one of the most influential and compassionate storytellers of our time.

Question What is the significance of 'Voices' in Alice Munro's writing style? 'Voices' in Alice Munro's work refers to the nuanced inner perspectives and diverse character narratives that bring depth and authenticity to her stories, highlighting the complexity of human experience. How does Alice Munro explore themes of identity and memory in 'Voices'? In her stories, Munro uses multiple voices and shifting perspectives to delve into how personal identity is shaped by memory, relationships, and past experiences, creating layered and emotionally resonant narratives. Are there specific stories in Alice Munro's collection that exemplify the concept of 'Voices'? Yes, stories like 'The Moons of Jupiter' and 'Too Much Happiness' showcase multiple narrative voices and perspectives, illustrating Munro's mastery in capturing the complexity of human consciousness. How has Alice Munro's use of 'Voices' influenced contemporary short story writing? Munro's innovative use of multiple voices and subtle narrative shifts has inspired many contemporary writers to experiment with perspective and voice, enriching the form of the modern short story. What critical analyses exist regarding the use of 'Voices' in Alice Munro's storytelling? Literary critics often analyze Munro's 'voices' as a device that reveals characters' inner worlds and societal contexts, emphasizing her skill in portraying complex, multi-dimensional characters through diverse narrative perspectives.

Related keywords: Alice Munro, voices, short stories, Canadian author, literary analysis, narrative style, storytelling, character development, fiction, literary voices

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