

# HARK AND THE NOT-SO-HEAVENLY CHOIR

*by Ann W. Yeager*



**CHRISTIAN**PUBLISHERS

# **Hark and the Not-So-Heavenly Choir**

A Children's Christmas Musical

by Ann W. Yeager

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(In order of appearance)*

**ANGEL CHOIR**

Children of assorted ages.

**HARMONIUS**

Director of the angel choir. A bit pompous.

**HARK**

A young angel with a reputation for being mischevious.

**ANGEL 1**

A member of the angel choir.

**SPLENDORIUS**

An archangel.

**CHARLIE**

An average child (boy or girl).

**BRIAN**

Member of the children's choir.

**MATTHEW**

Member of the children's choir.

**MELISSA**

Member of the children's choir with a large ego.

**MRS. OWENS**

Choir director.

**SARAH**

Member of the children's choir.

**READERS 1-6**

Members of the children's choir who help Hark tell the story.  
(The members named above may be used, plus one more.)

**EXTRAS**

## *PRODUCTION NOTES*

Although the players' lines are written for specific gender, the characters may be either male or female. In the case of Charlie, an extra line of dialog is provided for explanatory purposes if the character is female. Actual children's names may be substituted for the names given if desired. Unless working with a large group of children, the angel choir that appears in Scene 1 may be made up of the same children who comprise the earthly choir. In the final scene when Hark reads the story, the number of children who share in the reading is at the director's discretion. If more readers are desired, the sections may be divided as many times as necessary.

After Hark is on earth, Splendorius is only heard from Off-stage and not seen, as though he is still up in heaven. Position a microphone Off-stage so his voice is easily heard.

Sets may be as simple or elaborate as desired. If space permits, the staging area may be split to accommodate two scenes at a time. Simple diagrams showing possible layouts are provided. In Scene 3, a ladder or small platform may be used to suggest Hark's descent from heaven. Clouds made from poster board or other material might be attached to the sides to enhance the effect. A poster or cut-out frame suggesting a store window may be used and should show a sign saying "Shop Early for Christmas." A list of required props by scene is provided.

Costumes should be as simple as possible. Choir robes, matching shirts, or any other device to suggest uniformity may be used for the angel choir. Except for the final scene, the children in the choir may wear street clothes. Typical costumes for angels, shepherds, etc., should be used for Scene 6. Melissa should wear an angel costume.

Christmas carols may be played between scenes if desired.

***PROPS*****Scene 1**

Single sheets of paper that appear to be handwritten music  
Music stand and folder of music for Harmonius  
A box for collecting the music

**Scene 2**

Stacks of papers  
Brightly colored file folder containing several sheets of paper

**Scene 3**

Shopping bag  
Basketball

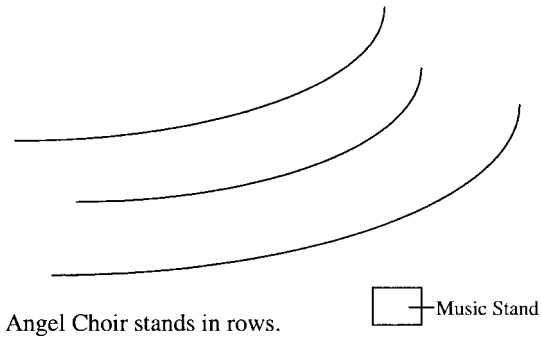
**Scene 4**

Music books for the choir  
Music stand for Mrs. Owens

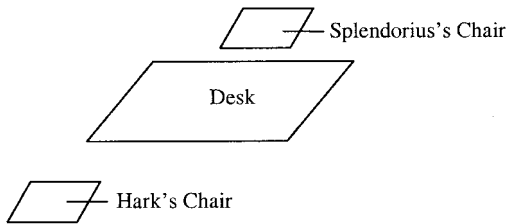
**Scene 6**

A book for Hark to read from (actual lines may be printed  
inside  
for reading)  
A foil-covered box with a large bow on a removable lid  
Music stand

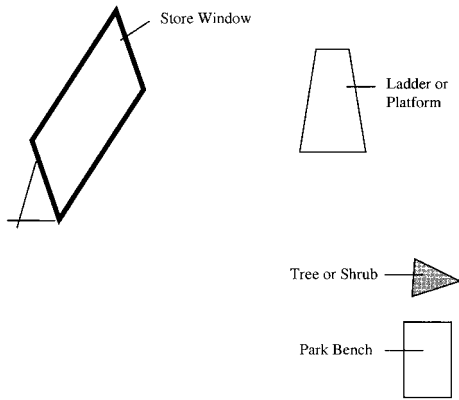
**SCENE 1**



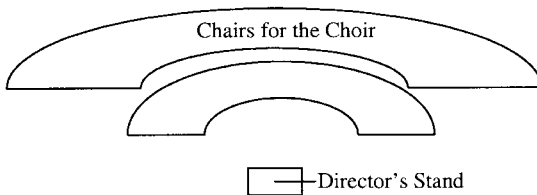
**SCENE 2**



**SCENES 3 & 5**  
(Remove ladder for Scene 5.)



**SCENES 4 & 6**



**SONGS**

*(In order of appearance)*

1. **“Come and Sing”** — *Angel Choir*
2. **“How Different from That Special Night”** — *Hark*
3. **“Good News”** — *Melissa, Angels, Shepherds*
4. **“Good News” (Reprise)** — *Shepherds*
5. **“Presents for Me”** — *Brian, Choir*
6. **“Allelu! Allelu! Lift up Your Voice”** — *Choir*

## SCENE 1

## Angel choir rehearsal

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*(ANGEL CHOIR members enter and stand in a group, holding their music. HARMONIUS is in front with her music stand.)*

**HARMONIUS:** All right, choir, let's go through this one more time and then we'll stop for today. Is everyone ready? Good. Let's begin.

**SONG:** "Come and Sing"

**ANGEL CHOIR:** *(Singing)* Come and sing to God on high.  
Lift your voices to the sky.  
He is worthy to be praised,  
Let our hearts in joy be raised.  
To our Lord and gracious King,  
Alleluia let us sing!  
Alleluia to our Lord and King!

**HARMONIUS:** Very good. Thank you, choir. I'll see all of you tomorrow at the same time. Hark, will you please put the music away?

**HARK:** Yes, ma'am. *(Begins taking up music.)*

**HARMONIUS:** Oh, Hark, I almost forgot. I need to see you for a few moments when you've finished. *(HARMONIUS begins to organize a music folder on her director's stand.)*

**ANGEL 1:** *(Aside to HARK)* What did you do this time, Hark?

**HARK:** *(Indignant)* I haven't done anything! I don't know what she wants.

**ANGEL 1:** Well, it must be something important. Harmonius doesn't usually waste time talking to us. See you later, Hark.

**HARK:** *(Puts stack of music in a box/container.)* Everything is picked up, ma'am.

1 HARMONIUS: *(Clears throat.)* Ahem. Hark, I've been very  
 2 pleased with your behavior these past few centuries.  
 3 You have been helpful to me, and your singing has  
 4 improved greatly. I know you have been working hard,  
 5 so I have recommended you to Splendorius for a  
 6 special assignment.

7 HARK: Who me? You recommended me?

8 HARMONIUS: Yes, Hark. Don't look so surprised. I do say  
 9 a good word about you younger angels once in a while  
 10 — only when it's deserved, however. Splendorius wants  
 11 you to come to his office.

12 HARK: *(Horrorified)* Go to Splendorius's office? Now? I can't  
 13 ... I mean ... me go now?

14 HARMONIUS: Yes, yes, I mean now. Whatever is the  
 15 matter?

16 HARK: It's just that I've never been up that high before. His  
 17 office is almost at the very top of heaven!

18 HARMONIUS: Oh, pish tosh! Do you expect him to come  
 19 looking for you?

20 HARK: Of course not!

21 HARMONIUS: Then move along. You should never keep  
 22 Splendorius waiting. *(HARK, looking very nervous, picks*  
 23 *up the box and exits. HARMONIUS picks up her folder and*  
 24 *music stand and follows.)*

25

## 26 SCENE 2

### 27 Splendorius's office

28

29 *(SPLENDORIUS enters and sits at his desk, which is piled*  
 30 *with papers. HARK approaches timidly.)*

31 HARK: Excuse me, sir?

32 SPLENDORIUS: Yes, what is it?

33 HARK: I'm Hark. Harmonius said that you wanted to see  
 34 me.

35 SPLENDORIUS: Oh yes ... Hark. Let me find that file.

1           *(Looks through papers on desk and finally retrieves a file*  
2           *folder.) You may sit down. (Indicates chair.)*

3     **HARK:** Thank you, sir.

4     **SPLENDORIUS:** I see that you have been setting a fine  
5           example for the other angels. Harmonius thinks you  
6           might be ready for a special assignment.

7     **HARK:** A special assignment? Me?

8     **SPLENDORIUS:** Yes. When our younger angels are ready,  
9           we like to give them new experiences. It's a way of  
10          learning by doing. How would you like to spend some  
11          time on earth?

12    **HARK:** On earth? I haven't been down there in a long time!

13    **SPLENDORIUS:** I know, Hark, and I think you are going to  
14          be surprised.

15    **HARK:** Why do you say that?

16    **SPLENDORIUS:** Well, things have changed quite a bit since  
17          the last time you were on earth. A lot of people seem  
18          to have forgotten God and all he has done for them.

19    **HARK:** How could they forget God? He made them! He  
20          made the earth and all the plants and animals, and he  
21          even sent his own Son down there to teach them about  
22          love!

23    **SPLENDORIUS:** I know it's hard to believe, Hark, but the  
24          world is a different place now. When you get down  
25          there, you'll see what I mean.

26    **HARK:** What is it you want me to do?

27    **SPLENDORIUS:** I want you to go and spend time with some  
28          children on earth and find out what Christmas means  
29          to them.

30    **HARK:** Why do you want to know that?

31    **SPLENDORIUS:** Well, Christmas isn't what it used to be,  
32          and I think maybe you'll have to help these children.

33    **HARK:** Help them?

34    **SPLENDORIUS:** Yes, help them understand how important  
35          God's gift of his Son is for them.

1     **HARK:** When do you want me to go?

2     **SPLENDORIUS:** I think it should be soon. Let me see ... by  
3             earth's calendar, it is the end of November. Yes, this  
4             would give you plenty of time before Christmas.

5     **HARK:** I'll do my best, sir.

6     **SPLENDORIUS:** Good. I will expect you to report your  
7             progress on a regular basis.

8     **HARK:** How will I do that?

9     **SPLENDORIUS:** Just speak my name. I will hear and  
10            answer you. Now it's time for you to go.

11    **HARK:** *(Gets up to leave.) Thank you, sir. (HARK exits.*  
12            **SPLENDORIUS** *sits back, looks at the file again, smiles,*  
13            *then gets up and exits.)*

14

### 15                             **SCENE 3**

#### 16                             **A city street**

17

18            *(There is a ladder at Center Stage. HARK enters and sits at*  
19            *the top. At Stage Right is a store window decorated for*  
20            *Christmas. Stage Left is a park bench with a small tree or*  
21            *other plants. Sounds of traffic and other noises can plainly*  
22            *be heard. HARK looks around for a minute, shakes his head,*  
23            *and sings.)*

24

25    **SONG:** "How Different from That Special Night"

26    **HARK:** *(Singing)* How different from that special night

27            When all was peaceful, calm and quiet.

28            Is this the place where angels sang,

29            where glory to God over hilltops rang?

30            Look at it now. Can this be earth?

31            The beautiful place of Jesus' birth?

32            What happened to valleys, streams and woods?

33            I just don't think this looks very good.

34

35            Look at all these things with wheels,

1           Noisy with rumbles, roars and squeals.  
 2           People hurrying ev'rywhere.  
 3           They never speak, don't seem to care.  
 4           All of these buildings, no open space,  
 5           I'm not sure that I like this place.  
 6           How different from that special night  
 7           When all was peaceful, calm and quiet.  
 8           But God has a plan; I know that's true,  
 9           So I'll go and do the job that he sent me to do.

10

11           *(HARK climbs down, looks around, and notices the store*  
 12           *window.)*

13   **HARK:** Splendorius! *(Pauses.)* Splendorius, are you there?

14   **SPLENDORIUS:** *(Off-stage)* Yes, Hark, I'm here. What is it?

15   **HARK:** Something is strange here!

16   **SPLENDORIUS:** Strange?

17   **HARK:** Yes. There's a window full of toys and clothes and  
 18           fancy decorations.

19   **SPLENDORIUS:** Yes.

20   **HARK:** And there's a sign in the window that says, "Shop  
 21           early for Christmas." What does shopping have to do  
 22           with Christmas?

23   **SPLENDORIUS:** I told you things have changed. You just  
 24           concentrate on the job I sent you to do, and your  
 25           questions will all be answered.

26   **HARK:** Where are the children I'm supposed to meet?

27   **SPLENDORIUS:** Do you see that park across the street?  
 28           Why don't you have a seat on the bench? I think the  
 29           children will find you. *(HARK walks to bench, looks*  
 30           *around, and sits down. Two or three CHILDREN enter*  
 31           *Downstage Left, walk in front of HARK, and exit Upstage*  
 32           *Right. CHARLIE enters Downstage Right carrying a*  
 33           *shopping bag; he/she stops and looks at HARK. Two more*  
 34           *CHILDREN enter Stage Left, wave at CHARLIE, cross, and*  
 35           *exit Upstage Right. CHARLIE moves toward HARK.)*

- 1 CHARLIE: Hey, kid. Are you waiting for someone?
- 2 HARK: Sort of.
- 3 CHARLIE: You're new around here, aren't you? Do you  
4 want to play some ball later? (*Reaches in the bag and*  
5 *pulls out a basketball.*) I have to go to a dumb choir  
6 rehearsal right now, but I'll be back in about an hour.
- 7 HARK: Choir rehearsal? Really? Where?
- 8 CHARLIE: At my church. It's up the street. (*Points Upstage.*)
- 9 HARK: Don't you *want* to go?
- 10 CHARLIE: Are you kidding? My mother makes me go. I'd  
11 rather play basketball.
- 12 HARK: Really? (*Hesitates*) I kind of like to sing.
- 13 CHARLIE: (*Amazed*) Wow, where did you come from?  
14 Another planet?
- 15 HARK: Well ... not exactly.
- 16 CHARLIE: OK, so you like to sing. Want to come with me?  
17 You might change your mind after you meet the rest of  
18 the choir.
- 19 HARK: I guess so. By the way, what's your name?
- 20 CHARLIE: Charlie. (*If female, add the following: It's short for*  
21 *Charlotte.*) What's yours?
- 22 HARK: My friends call me Hark.
- 23 CHARLIE: Hark? I guess that's a nickname, huh?
- 24 HARK: Uh, sure.
- 25 CHARLIE: Well, Hark, let's go meet the choir. We're  
26 learning some songs for a dumb Christmas play, so if  
27 you decide to stay, you'll have to take a part and wear  
28 a costume. What do you want to be?
- 29 HARK: Um-m ... Maybe an angel? (*CHARLIE shakes his head,*  
30 *unbelieving, and they exit.*)

#### SCENE 4

#### Choir/play rehearsal

- 31
- 32
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- 34
- 35 (*MATT and BRIAN enter and stand in front of director's*

- 1           *stand; the others come in when it is their turn to speak.)*
- 2   **MATT:** Do you have your Christmas list made yet?
- 3   **BRIAN:** Yeah, I've been working on it for a month. I figure
- 4           I have so many relatives giving me stuff. I'll get
- 5           anything I ask for.
- 6   **MATT:** I know what you mean. We ought to really rake in
- 7           the presents this year. *(CHARLIE and HARK enter.)*
- 8   **BRIAN:** Hey, Charlie!
- 9   **CHARLIE:** Hey, Brian. Guys, this is Hark. He's new around
- 10          here. What are you doing?
- 11   **MATT:** We're just talking about all the presents we're going
- 12          to get this year.
- 13   **HARK:** Presents? What for?
- 14   **BRIAN:** For Christmas, of course. What's up with this kid,
- 15          Charlie?
- 16   **CHARLIE:** I just think he comes from someplace where
- 17          they do things differently. *(By this time all CHILDREN*
- 18          *have arrived.)* Oh, great, here comes "Miss Perfect."
- 19   **MELISSA:** Hi, Charlie. *(Notices HARK.)* Who are you?
- 20   **CHARLIE:** This is Hark. He's new here, and *(Exaggerating)*
- 21          he likes to sing.
- 22   **MELISSA:** A singer, huh? Well, just so you know, I always
- 23          do the solos here, so don't think you can come in and
- 24          take over.
- 25   **HARK:** *(To CHARLIE)* What is she talking about?
- 26   **CHARLIE:** Just ignore her. She isn't as good as she thinks
- 27          she is. Here comes Mrs. Owens. *(MRS. OWENS enters. To*
- 28          *BRIAN and MATT)* Hey guys, we're going to the park
- 29          after practice to shoot some baskets. Want to come?
- 30   **BRIAN:** Sure. We'll meet you there.
- 31   **MRS. OWENS:** All right, boys and girls, take your seats and
- 32          let's get started. We'll begin with "Good News."
- 33          *(CHILDREN take their time getting to their places, pushing*
- 34          *and poking at each other.)*
- 35   **MELISSA:** Do I get to sing the solo this time?

1 MRS. OWENS: *(With a big sigh)* OK, Melissa. We'll start at  
 2 the beginning. Shepherds, remember what we did last  
 3 week? *(CHILD next to HARK shows him something in the*  
 4 *music and whispers in his ear.)* Let's sing.

5

6

7 SONG: "Good News"

8 MELISSA: *(Singing)* Don't be afraid, I come with good news,  
 9 An event so exciting there's no time to lose.  
 10 God's Son, the Messiah, is born today;  
 11 In Bethlehem's manger, a child in the hay.

12 ANGELS: *(Singing)* Good news, good news, coming from  
 13 above,  
 14 The One you've been waiting for, God's gift of love.

15 SHEPHERDS: *(Singing)* Do you believe it? Can this be a  
 16 dream?  
 17 Angels from heav'n, were they real as they seemed?  
 18 Let's go down to Bethlehem, see if it's true.  
 19 God's Son, yes, a Savior for me and for you.  
 20 Good news, good news, coming from above.  
 21 The One we've been waiting for, God's gift of love!

22

23 MRS. OWENS: Pretty good, choir, but shepherds, I think  
 24 you can do better. *(Goes over to HARK.)* I don't think  
 25 we've met, have we?

26 CHARLIE: This is Hark. He's new.

27 MRS. OWENS: Hello, Hark. You've got a good, strong  
 28 singing voice. *(MELISSA reacts by "flouncing" and looking*  
 29 *offended.)*

30 HARK: Thank you.

31 MRS. OWENS: Would you like to be in our Christmas  
 32 program?

33 HARK: Well, I do like to sing. I guess I could learn the  
 34 songs.

35 MRS. OWENS: Good. We'll be glad to have you. *(CHARLIE*



1 CHARLIE: And it's candy canes and cookies that my mom  
2 bakes every year, and relatives coming to visit, and  
3 Christmas dinner.

4 MATT: But mainly it's presents.

5 BRIAN: Lots of presents! (*He sings. As he sings, the girls join*  
6 *the group.*)

7

8 SONG: "Presents for Me"

9 BRIAN: (*Singing*) Hang up the stockings and put up the  
10 tree,

11 Christmas is coming and there ought to be

12 Plenty of space to stash presents for me,

13 A place for the gifts that are coming, you see.

14 CHOIR: (*Singing*) Refrain

15 Presents for me, yes, presents for me.

16 We've been good as gold. We deserve them, don't we?

17 Oh, Christmas is coming, the annual spree,

18 The best time of year 'cause there's presents for me!

19 BOYS: Footballs and rockets

20 GIRLS: And bright colored jewelry,

21 BOYS: Books and some games

22 GIRLS: And a teddy bear (*Spoken*) cuddly.

23 CHOIR: Hurry up, Santa! Oh, Mom and Dad, can't you see?

24 I just want my share of presents for me.

25

26 Refrain

27 Presents for me, yes, presents for me.

28 We've been good as gold. We deserve them, don't we?

29 Oh, Christmas is coming, the annual spree,

30 The best time of year 'cause there's presents for me.

31 The best time of year 'cause there's presents for me!

32 HARK: (*Bewildered*) And that's all Christmas means to you?

33 CHARLIE: Of course not, Hark. We all know about

34 Bethlehem and the stable and that it's Jesus' birthday,

35 but we like the presents and candy and stuff better.

- 1 **MATT:** Hey, I've got to go. *(To BRIAN)* Are you coming?
- 2 **BRIAN:** Sure. *(To CHARLIE and HARK)* We'll see you later,
- 3 **OK?** *(They exit Stage Right. The GIRLS exit Stage Left,*
- 4 *whispering to each other.)*
- 5 **CHARLIE:** Right. *(To HARK)* You know, I'd rather play a
- 6 little basketball than go look at some catalog ... oh,
- 7 darn! I left my basketball at the church. Wait here and
- 8 I'll be right back.
- 9 **HARK:** OK. *(CHARLIE runs off and HARK continues.)*
- 10 Splendorius? Are you there?
- 11 **SPLENDORIUS:** *(Off-Stage)* What is it, Hark?
- 12 **HARK:** Something is really wrong here. Did you hear what
- 13 those children were saying? You were right,
- 14 Splendorius. They've forgotten the most important
- 15 thing about Christmas. What are we going to do?
- 16 **SPLENDORIUS:** The question is, what are *you* going to do?
- 17 **HARK:** I don't know. I have to find some way to show them
- 18 that they're thinking about Christmas the wrong way.
- 19 How will I ever do it?
- 20 **SPLENDORIUS:** Hark, aren't *you* forgetting something?
- 21 Where do we go when we need help?
- 22 **HARK:** *(Smiles.)* We go to God, of course. Thank you,
- 23 Splendorius.
- 24 **SPLENDORIUS:** You're welcome, Hark.
- 25 **HARK:** *(Looks up to heaven.)* Dear God, I need your help. I
- 26 have to find a way to tell these children what Jesus'
- 27 birthday means to them, and how important it is.
- 28 Please show me the way. Thank you. *(HARK exits.)*

## 30 SCENE 6

31 The choir room two weeks later

- 32
- 33 *(All of the CHOIR members, costumed for the play, are standing*
- 34 *Downstage, talking about what they are getting for Christmas.)*
- 35 **MELISSA:** *(In angel costume, fussing with halo.)* I can't keep

1           this halo on. Does it look OK?

2   **MATT:** Yeah, yeah, it's fine.

3   **MELISSA:** (*Sarcastic*) Well, thanks a lot. (*Then to CHARLIE*)

4           Hey, Charlie, where's the great singer?

5   **CHARLIE:** I don't know. I guess he's just late.

6   **MELISSA:** Maybe he's jealous because I get to sing the solo.

7           Maybe he isn't coming.

8   **CHARLIE:** Don't worry. He'll be here. (*HARK enters carrying*

9           *a gift box wrapped in foil with a large bow on the top [the*

10           *lid of the box should be removable] and a book [the story he*

11           *tells]).*

12   **CHARLIE:** See, I told you. Hey, Hark, what's in the box?

13           Did you get an early present, or is it for someone else?

14   **HARK:** It's for someone else — someone very special. Do

15           you want to hear about it?

16   **BRIAN:** (*Grumbling*) Great, just what I always wanted to

17           hear — a love story.

18   **CHARLIE:** Stop being so goofy. Hark wouldn't tell us some

19           dumb love story, would you, Hark?

20   **HARK:** Well, in a way, I guess it *is* a love story. Want to sit

21           down? (*CHILDREN move to chairs and sit, but with an*

22           *"attitude."* *HARK puts down the box, pulls a chair away from*

23           *the semi-circle, and sits. During the story, MRS. OWENS*

24           *enters and stands to the side, listening.*) **A long, long time**

25           **ago, God was looking over the universe — the planets**

26           **and moons and stars — and he was paying special**

27           **attention to earth. Now earth was one of God's favorite**

28           **places because he had done some of his best work**

29           **there. It was a beautiful place, with forests and jungles**

30           **full of strange and wonderful creatures, and there were**

31           **quiet lakes and dancing streams and deep, mysterious**

32           **oceans with rolling waves and sandy beaches. (*To the***

33           ***other CHILDREN*) Why don't you help me with the**

34           **story? We can take turns reading. (*He hands the book to***

35           ***the next CHILD.*)**



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HARK AND THE NOT-SO-HEAVENLY CHOIR  
by Ann W. Yeager.*

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