



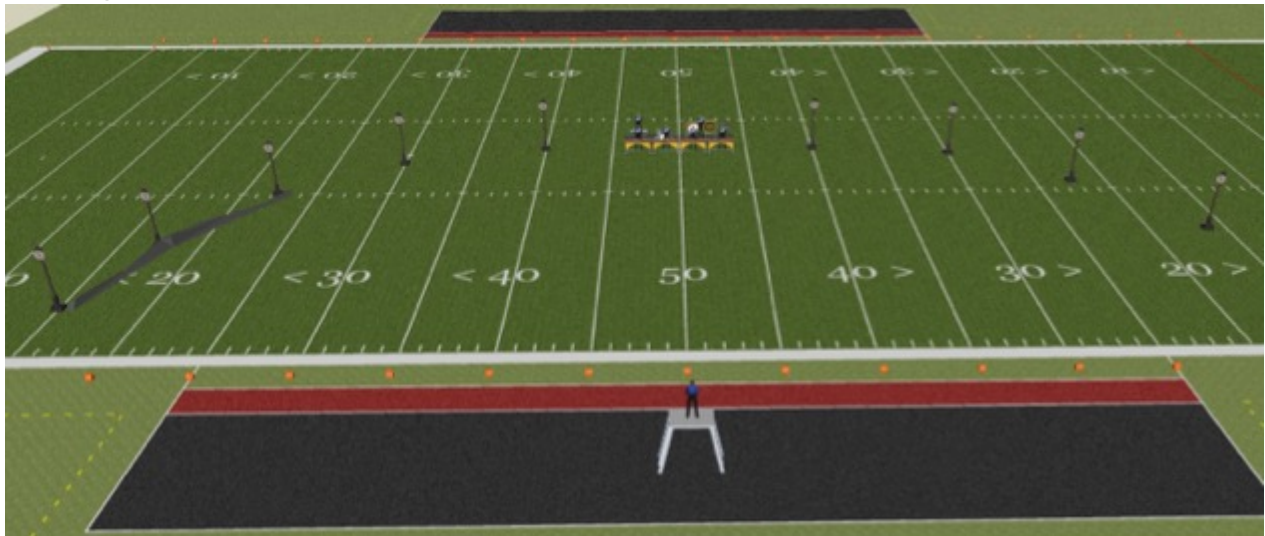
### **The Witching Hour**

Fannin Musical Productions

*The Witching Hour* references the folk belief that in the dead of night witches and other supernatural forces are at their most active and dangerous. We normally sleep through this frightening time of day... but what if we had the misfortune to be awake? As the clock strikes 3, the guard portrays the evil forces which menace the musicians for the remainder of the program. Can they avoid being ensnared till the stroke of 4 arrives to save them? *The Witching Hour* is a fun, engrossing program that will have your audience leaning forward, fascinated to see what comes next.

First performed by the 2017 Christian County Colonel Band, Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

## Set Design



*The Witching Hour* takes place on a simple stage, defined a series of grandfather clock props. The clocks are deliberately asymmetric to draw the eye from left to right, suggesting the flow of the show visually and chronologically. Although the original performing unit chose a backfield pit placement for this program, all effects would work equally well with a traditional, front ensemble placement.

The grandfather clock props light up when the clocks strike at the beginning and end to add another layer of visual interest to the program. The exact number of clock can be customized to suit your groups size and budget.





The other major prop is a large black silk which begins the show along the outer perimeter defined by the clock props on Side A. In the beginning, when the clock strikes 3, the guard emerges from hiding beneath the rolled silk one at a time and makes their way out onto the main stage area. Large-scale silk available through [Band Shoppe](#).

In the final movement, as the clock strikes 4, the cloth is run across the field, hiding the entire group momentarily. The musicians are left behind, none the worse for their misadventure, but the guard moves with the cloth as it leaves the stage signaling that the threat from these 'witches' has passed.





## COLOR GUARD CONCEPT SKETCH



ONE-PIECE  
BODY SUIT  
WITH MESH  
PANELS &  
OPTIONAL  
HOOD

CLOCK FACE & HAND  
APPLIQUE ALONG  
WITH MESH PANELS  
CONNECT TO  
FLAGS, PROPS, &  
SHOW CONCEPT

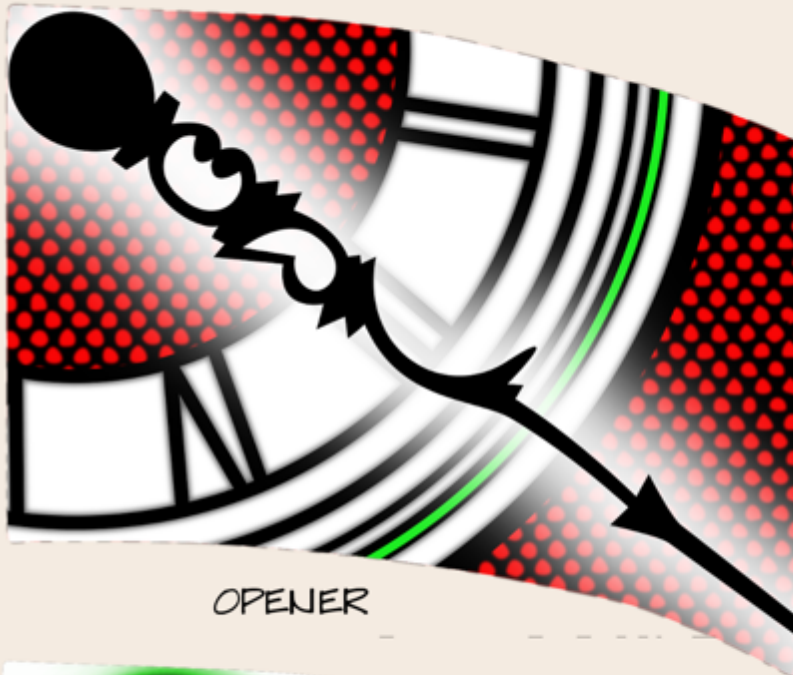
**FMP**  
FANNIN MUSICAL  
PRODUCTIONS

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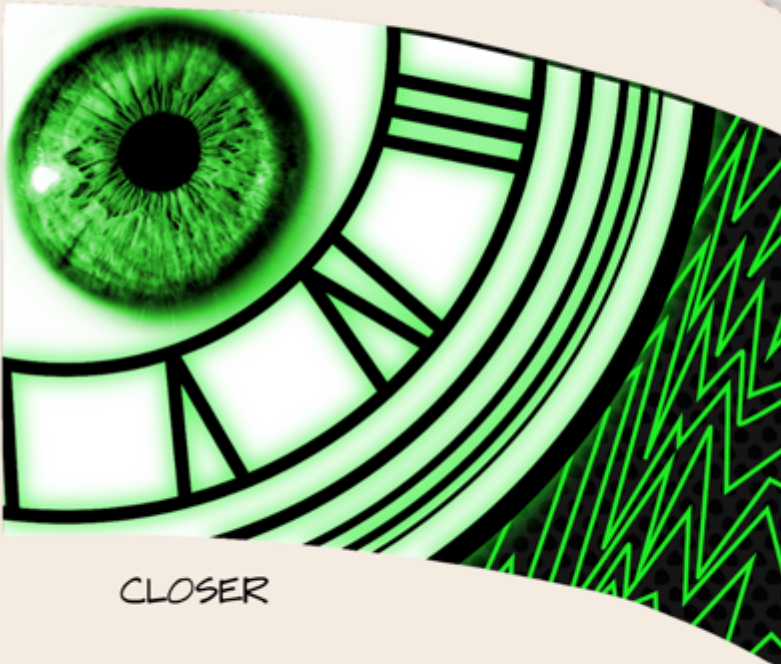
**BAND SHOPPE**



# FLAG CONCEPTS



OPENER



CLOSER



OPENER &  
CLOSER UNIFIED  
BY PALETTE &  
CLOCK IMAGERY,  
CONNECT TO  
EACH OTHER,  
COSTUMES, &  
PROPS--OPENER  
STRIKES 3,  
CLOSER  
REACHES 4

BALLAD IS  
SIMPLE, SOLID  
LIME GREEN,  
SWING FLAG TO  
COMPLEMENT  
'SOUL STEALING'  
EFFECT



POWERED BY

**BAND SHOPPE**



The guard design for *The Witching Hour* continues the imagery of clocks and establishes an aggressive, red, black, and green color palette. Optional hoods for the color guard add to the sense of supernatural menace. For the ballad, an oversized, neon green swing flag matches the 'soul theft' effect of that movement. Costuming and flags available through [Band Shoppe](#).

## Opener Effects

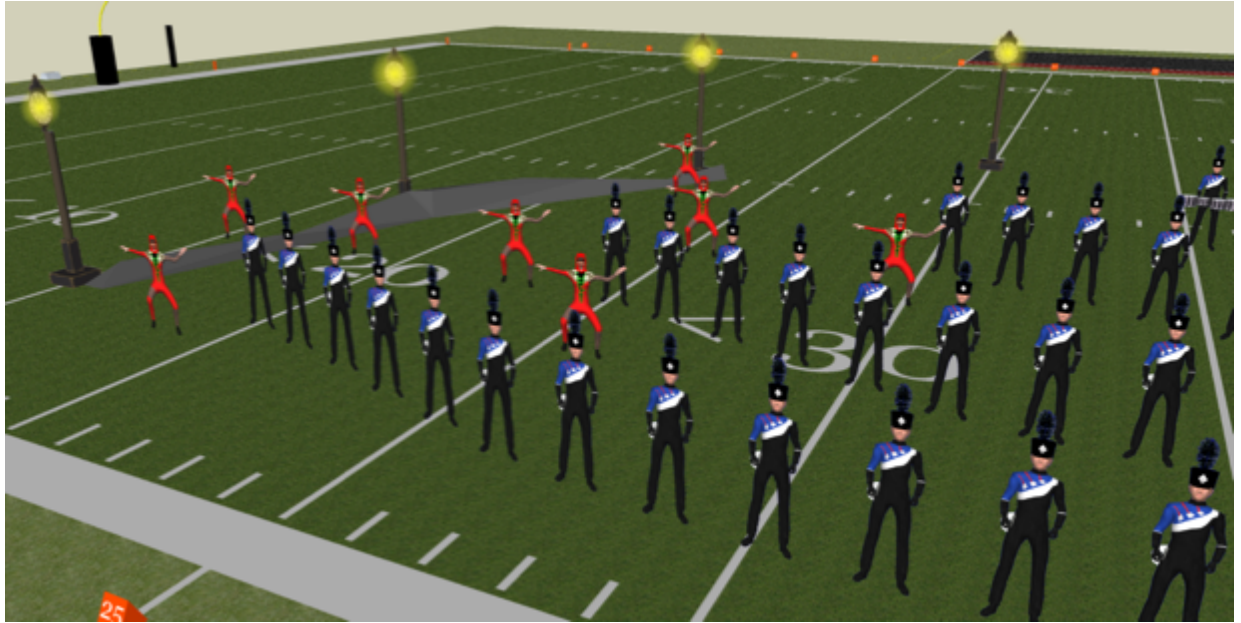


When the show opens, the guard is nowhere to be seen, hidden in the rolled up, giant, black silk on Side A. The band has spread the field in a random pattern and are engaged in 'tick tock,' clock hand inspired bodywork to compliment what the pit is performing backfield.

As the music begins to develop, the musicians arrive at long curvilinear paths which connect to the black silk, drawing the eye in that direction. As the clock strikes 3, announcing the coming of the 'witching hour,' body choreography brings the eye to Side A and the clock props light up sequentially... everything draws the eye in the desired direction.







As the drumline enters, the guard begins to emerge one at a time, hoods pulled down for an added layer of creepiness. At this point, they are not spinning and will make their way towards flags as the music develops.

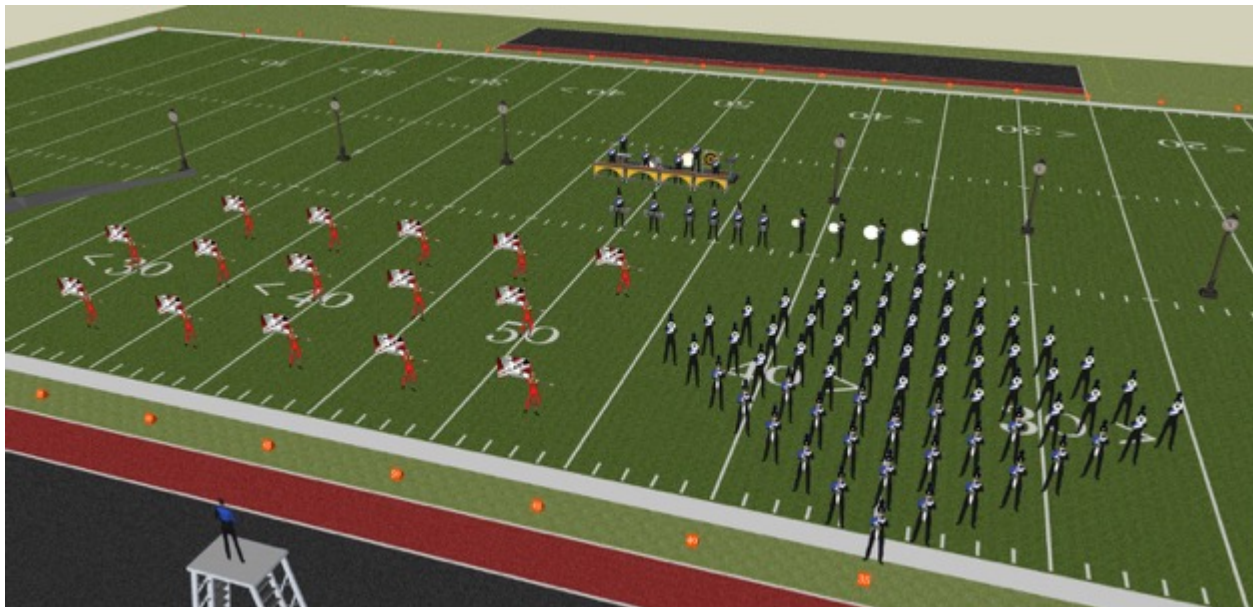






As the hornline begins to layer in and more typical drill begins, the guard begins to introduce the first silk. Ideally, they would have the hoods over their heads for the first bit of flag work, removing them at the first hit. If this is too limiting on guard work, however, they could be taken off as each individual begins to spin.

From here, the drill evolves to the first impact of the show's main musical motif.





By the first hit, the guard has pulled down their hoods in order to spin the first big, unison phrases of the show.

Later in the opener, two feature moments allow further story development: while the group plays, a featured guard member inside the form seems to ‘possess’ and ‘control’ them by dictating their body movements. First, in the woodwinds...







...and then in the brass. This effect is expressed through bodywork which is choreographed so that the musicians can play while they perform it.

After several more passage of musical development, the Opener builds into its final arrival point which takes the theme of 'possession' by the guard from small groups, to full ensemble. In a combined form, the entire hornline mimics the body work of a featured guard member center stage. Ideally, the same lower body is part of the flag work performed by the rest of the guard as well.



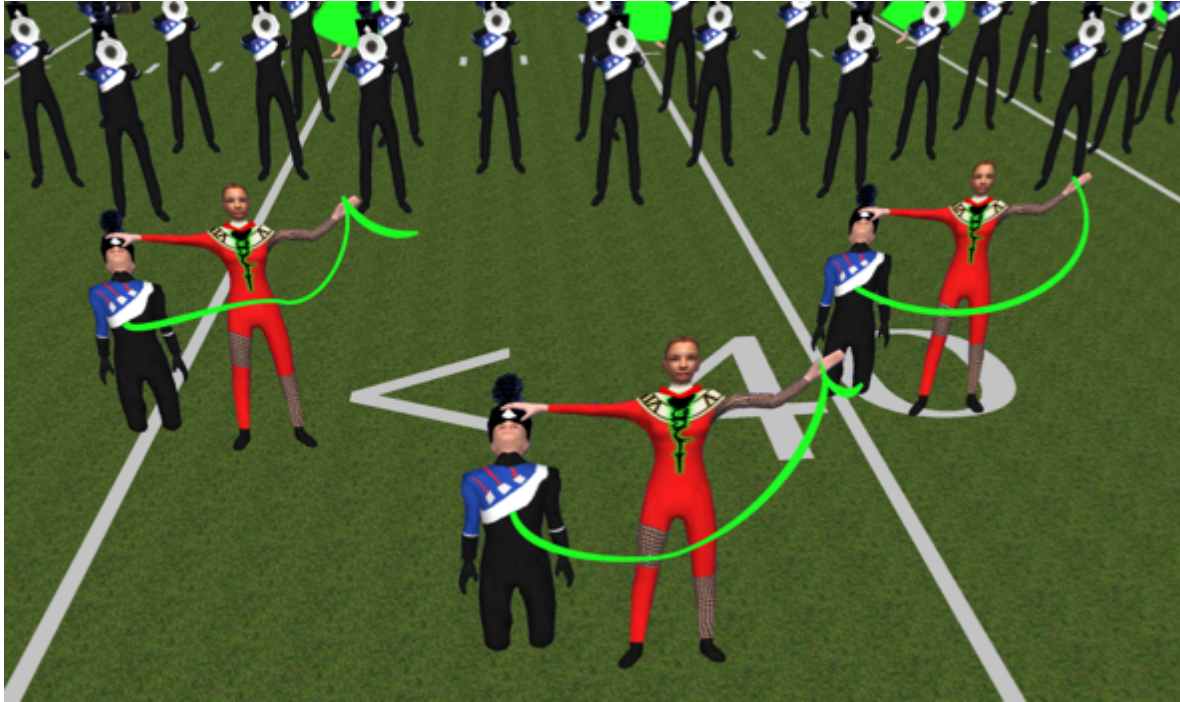


## Ballad Effects



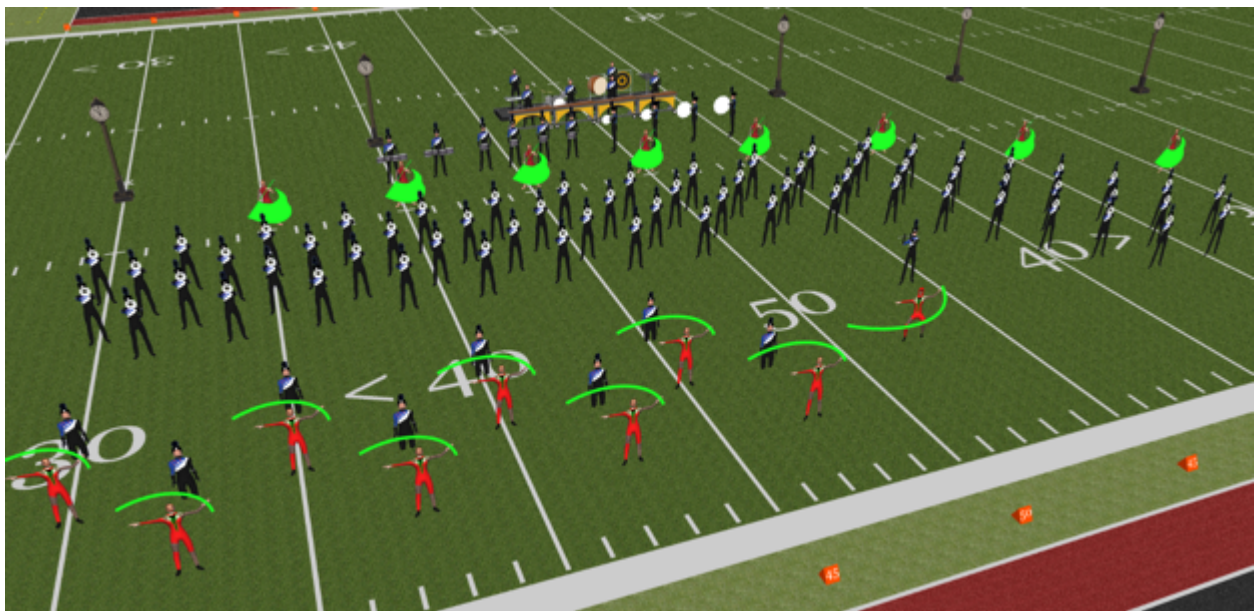
With the focus center stage, the featured guard member ‘calls’ a soloist—sketched here as a flute, but customizable to suit your group’s needs—out of the main ensemble to become the musical focus of the ballad. Meanwhile, the theme continues with several other guard performers ‘calling’ individual hornline members out and dance/act interacting with them as though they were ‘bewitched’ or ‘entranced.’





This serves as preparation for the big visual effect of the ballad: just before the major musical impact, the 'enchanters' reach down and pull long ribbons from hidden pouches in the 'bewitched' hornline members jackets as though 'stealing their souls.' Meanwhile, the remaining guard has transitioned to huge swing flags in the same color which are revealed right on the impact.

The 'bewitchers' spin & dance with the stolen 'souls' while the remaining guard match them tonally with the swing flags.







...as the ballad transitions out, the central guard soloist 'calls' another musical soloist out of the ensemble, dancing with a 'soul' while the rest of the guard transitions to new equipment.



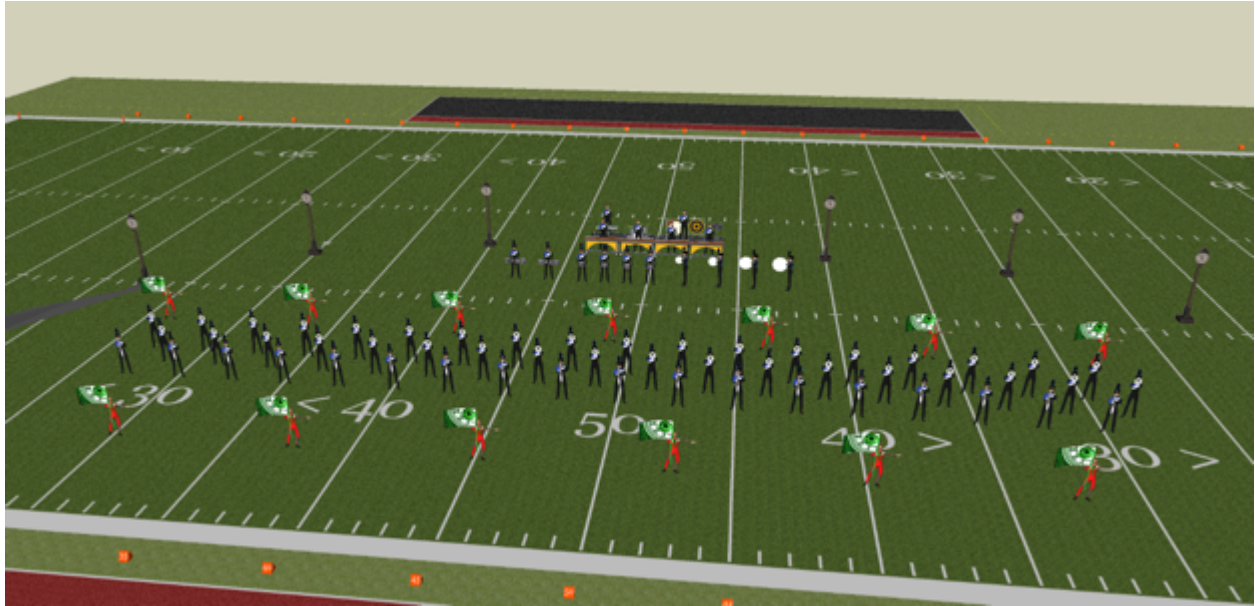
## Closer Effects



The main conceptual idea of the Closer is that various parts of the hornline have now been bewitched and fallen under the guard's spell. Small groups enter musically and move in a very heavy, stylized marching style while being 'lead' by a guard member who introduces the Closer silk. First, the low brass...

...and then the drumline fall under the spell.





Eventually, the entire ensemble having been bewitched, the horn form is surrounded by the guard on full silk for quick, contrary motion drill in a long, horizontal form. This, of course, sets us up for the final conceptual moment of the program: the clock striking 4 and the end of the 'witching hour.'

During one of the last rests of the Closer proper, the clock props light up again from Side B to Side A, drawing the eye in that direction.







The hornline re-enters on the last impact chord of the show and plays as the gigantic silk is run across the ensemble. The guard reacts with horror, not spinning but role playing, and when the silk has passed they are gone [having escaped underneath it] leaving only the musicians on the field.

After a brief pause, the hornline looks around, relieved that the 'witches' are gone, and the ballad soloist returns for a final, pretty outro. All eyes are drawn to the soloist, on far Side B, near where the silk has come to rest with the guard beneath.







...and then, a final twist: a masked guard member runs out and grabs the flute soloist, dragging them under the silk with the guard as the 4 chimes sound.

***Fin.***

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