



unicorn



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UNICORN is published quarterly by the students of Loyola College. Subscriptions are \$4 for one year.

Artists are encouraged to send their poems, fiction, and artwork for consideration. All submissions must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and all are eligible for yearly prizes. Line drawings are actively sought, shorter fiction is preferred, and no more than five poems per submission. We ask that you also include a brief, biographical note.

Send all correspondence to:

The Editors
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UNICORN would like to thank everyone who entered poems in the recent Haiku Contest.

The first place prize of \$15 goes to Mark Bocchetti for "Banana." Tied for second place (\$10) were Carol Gesser's "Tonight" and Vince Ercolano's "His Pajama-ed Mind." Janice Hogan (Winter's End"), Bob Frezza ("Morning Cherry Twigs"), and Mark Bocchetti ("Squares") must be honorably mentioned.

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The Squint Makes the Man

There is a man in my neighborhood.
He squints a lot. He's in paper.

Lately, his wife has been helping him drive.
She calls the stops and starts, the kids in the road,
and he swings over the wheel
and pedals brake and accelerator
and sees mostly through her.

I should think:
"This is the height of the marriage contract"
but one day they are going to get killed.
Yet how can you expect
a bond-and-mimeo man
to worry about metaphysics?

I will die of a bad hot dog
and they'll go on to ninety-eight.

---Mike Reis

A Map of the Human Terrain

A map of the
human terrain:
soft circle,
hard triangle,
red lines to
outline your nearness,
black dots to
proclaim your distance.
There is barely
time to read
the map;
little time
to explore
how your bumps
fill my hollows.
No time to
decipher the legend
beneath the map of the
human terrain.

---Ruth Silbey Palombo

Armadillos

We are armadillos, all.
Each with our soft underbellies
hard on the outside
always on guard lest we
be exposed and eaten alive.
Your hide consists of
intellectual prowess,
his of cocky bravado,
hers of martyrdom and sadness.
I hide behind French toast
and a cheerful countenance,
afraid and a coward.
My anger turns inward
as my stomach eats itself
not as a gourmet
but a cannibal.

---Ruth Silbey Palombo

Artism

surrender from pocket
of fist
keyed up fingers
with the pitch
a sharp drop in the ball
but the knuckles ride out on over
the left field fence
the stain of hand & bat.
a paper bag
skids across the infield
t.v. scans a few thousand waving hands
like fowl in the roosts
the bleachers flutter.
hoyt & dutch leonard had a gift
a surprise wrinkle
to that knuckle ball
but this lad got caught
in a full stop.
---guy r. beining

Odyssey from the Seventeenth Floor

---John E. Gitter

Hacker stepped into the elevator. He nodded his good-mornings and turned to face the door. Number seventeen had already been pushed, so he relaxed into the unnatural silence required of elevator participants. They hummed smoothly and slowly upwards.

"Hear about Jennings?" a conspiratorial voice behind him asked. Herbert Jennings was Randolph Hacker's boss, so he turned around to see who was speaking. And who the man was speaking to.

Two men stood behind him. Although Hacker had been riding this same elevator for over four years, and although he had a nodding acquaintance with these two men, and although they worked for the same firm, and although he occasionally made small talk with them, he didn't know their names. Nor did he really care. We all have our own niche, he was fond of saying. Or thinking--he wasn't sure that he'd actually ever said that to anyone.

He looked at them. With no one else in the elevator, they must've been talking to him. "What about Mr. Jennings?" he asked.

They both started to speak at the same time, but the taller of the two quickly fell silent. At least we know who has seniority, thought Hacker.

"Didn't you read the paper this morning?" the shorter man asked. He was fish-lipped and half bald, with horn-rimmed glasses. Hacker decided he really didn't like his looks.

"Too depressing in the mornings," Hacker shrugged. "What about Jennings?"

"He's dead," blurted the taller man. Fish-lips withered him into silence with a look, then continued as if nothing had been said, "He's dead." He waited with the smug satisfaction of one who's first with the news. Come to me, his look said. Hacker came.

"He's my boss," Hacker began, confused. "What...?"

"Our boss too," said Tall.

Hacker joined Fish-lips in ignoring him. "Jumped from his office window. Yesterday morning. First thing," said Fish-lips.

"But that can't be," Hacker countered. "I saw him last night just before I left--there must be some mistake."

Fish-lips and Tall exchanged superior smiles. "So don't believe us; don't believe the newspapers. Suit yourself--we don't care," Fish-lips said, closing his eyes and leaning back against

the elevator wall.

Hacker shook his head and turned back around.

The elevator stopped on five. The doors opened.

Mr. Jennings entered and looked at them. "Morning, Brandt; Carlson; Hacker." Mr. Jennings nodded briefly at each of them as he spoke his name, then turned to the front, facing the door after they'd each repeated their good-mornings. Hacker turned to look at the two behind him. They smiled in unison. "What did we tell you?" Fish-lips whispered. Tall giggled quietly.

Confused, Hacker turned back and stared at the back of Mr. Jennings' head. Needs a haircut, Hacker thought. Not good for the company president to set a bad ex....

Hacker stopped as Mr. Jennings announced to no one in particular: "I think I'll get off here," and stepped through the closed door. The elevator hadn't stopped. Hacker stared for a moment at the empty space in front of him, then turned around once more.

"Did you see that? Mr. Jennings? Right through the... how...?"

Fish-lips looked at him disdainfully. "You must've had a rough night--we told you; Jennings is dead."

The elevator jerked to a halt. The doors hissed open and the three got out, Fish-lips and Tall heading down the corridor to the left. "Doesn't seem to hear very well," Tall was saying as they walked away.

Hacker walked slowly to the right. Preoccupied, he walked past the receptionist without acknowledging her.

"Such a shame," she said as he passed, "about poor Mr. Jennings."

Hacker stopped, turned, and looked at her, seeing her for the first time. She was either crying or had just finished lately. "What did you say?" he asked, his brown eyes staring into her red ones. "What was that?"

"Oh, didn't you hear? Mr. Jennings died yesterday. Right here...in his office. I saw..." she began to snuffle into her handkerchief, "...he...he fell out the window."

"Don't be silly--I just saw him in the elevator." As soon as it was out of his mouth, Hacker regretted saying it.

The receptionist looked at him as if he were a child that refused to believe the news of his dog's death. "Oh, no," she sniffed. "He's dead all right. In fact, Mr. Harpes is here from Central Headquarters to take over until they can appoint a new president for the division. He's in Mr....he's in the office now," she said, pointing at the door. With that, she began crying again.

Hacker was about to walk to his desk and write the events of the morning off to a rather poor practical joke, when the buzzer sounded on the receptionist's intercom. "If that's Hacker," Jennings' voice boomed, "send him in here. In five minutes." The box clicked off.

"Yes, sir, Mr. Jennings," she replied to the box. She looked up at Hacker. "You heard?"

Hacker glared at her. "Yeah, I heard. Funny jokes you people are pulling this morning. Tell Mr. Jennings I'll be there in five minutes."

She studied him, puzzled. "That's not very funny, Mr. Hacker. You know Mr. Jennings is dead."

"Jesus, don't you know when to quit?" Hacker almost spat, as he wheeled and stormed down the corridor to his office.

Safely inside his office, Hacker slammed his attache case onto the desk and dropped into a swivel chair. He drummed his fingertips nervously on the desktop. Bitch, he thought.

Before he had a chance to consider who would dream up such a bizarre joke, Jim Beech walked in from the office next door, a steaming cup of coffee in each hand. He offered one to Hacker. Hacker accepted.

"Saw you coming in. Take a break. Looks like we won't get much work done today, so why be in a big hurry to start?"

Hacker sipped at the coffee, watching Beech's eyes. "Why not?"

Beech looked surprised. "You mean you haven't..." He stopped and sat on the edge of the desk. "Old Man Jennings--he got knocked off yesterday morning. Where've you been, Randy?"

Hacker jumped from his chair, banging into the desk and spilling the coffee. "Enough!" he shouted, startling Beech up from the corner of the desk. "It's not funny anymore. It never was funny. Get the hell out of here!"

Beech looked at him quizzically and backed to the door as the intercom buzzed. The receptionist's voice trickled out: "Mr. Hacker--Mr. Jennings will see you now."

Hacker glared at Beech. Beech shook his head condescendingly. "Never thought you would've taken it this way. I didn't think you even liked the guy. It's a shame he's dead, but..."

"You jerk," Hacker shouted, throwing his coffee cup at Beech. "You goddam jerk!"

Beech ducked, and the cup shattered against the corridor wall. He retreated down the hall, glancing occasionally back over his shoulder.

Hacker ran his fingers through his hair and straightened his tie. He took a deep breath. Well, he thought, Beech was right in one thing--I don't especially like Jennings, but this is too much. He adjusted his suitcoat and walked down the hall towards Jennings' office. He paused at the receptionist's desk. "Go right in," she snuffed into her handkerchief, not looking up. "He's waiting for you."

Hacker took a deep breath and opened the door. Jennings was sitting motionless at his desk. As Hacker approached, Jennings stood up abruptly and frowned at him. He held up his hand, palm out. Learned that from Dave Garroway, Hacker thought.

"I'll get right to the point, Hacker. Your performance since I've been president has been slipshod, to say the least. I would've fired you long ago, but personnel was against it for some ungodly reason. Personally, I think you must've had a friend over there for Consolidated to keep you this long, but whoever it was isn't there anymore. My last recommendation that you be fired was accepted this morning. Get your things together and get out."

Jennings snapped his mouth shut, folded his hands behind him, and abruptly turned his back on Hacker in dismissal. He stood at the window and watched the traffic seventeen stories below. The window was open, Hacker noticed.

Randolph Hacker's brain reeled. No, he thought. No more. Not after all that's happened already this morning. "Mr. Jennings," he began, but Jennings whirled to glare imperiously at him.

"None of your wheedling and whining, Hacker. Take it like a man. You've been leeching off Consolidated for years; now it's over. Just admit you've been caught and save us both an uncomfortable scene. Pack your things and just leave quietly. And don't try to take any company property or I'll have the F.B.I. on you so fast it'll make your head swim."

But Hacker's head was already swimming. Dead men don't fire people. Especially when they aren't dead. And fired? What's going on--I work hard, he thought.

"Mr. Jennings, what's going on here? Three times this morning people told me you were dead. Now you say I'm fired. What's happening around here? And what's with the F.B.I.? Is this a joke or what? Am I going nuts?" He moved toward Jennings' desk. "Tell me," he pleaded.

Jennings backed quickly away, his eyes suddenly wide. "Stay away from me! You stay away from me, you maniac. I told them about you but they wouldn't listen. I warned them that you'd go off the deep end one day, but Oh, no! they wouldn't believe me. Get away! Marie!" he shouted. "Call security!"

Hacker came around the side of the desk and grabbed Jennings by the lapel. "Tell me!" he shouted into Jennings' white face. "What the hell is going on around here?"

Jennings knocked his hand away and backed to the window. "I know what you're trying to do--you're trying to kill me! Help! Marie! Call the police! Call..."

With his next step backwards Jennings lost his balance. The receptionist opened the door in time to scream "Murderer!" as Jennings tumbled backwards out the window and down the seventeen stories. Still screaming, Marie slammed the door shut.

Hacker stood, numb. He resisted the urge to go to the window and look. He stood for a moment, too confused to move, then ran his fingers slowly through his hair and straightened his tie. He walked stiffly out of the office.

Marie looked up at him as he closed the door softly behind him. She was still crying, but said nothing. "Poor Mr. Jennings," she finally snuffled into her handkerchief.

Hacker walked slowly to the elevator and pushed the button. As the doors opened, three security guards rushed out, knocking him aside. They hurried to the receptionist's desk. The elevator door slid quietly closed as Hacker stared at them, dazed.

He continued staring blankly as Marie talked with the guards crowded around her desk. Suddenly she jumped to her feet and pointed at him.

"There!" she shouted. "That's him!"

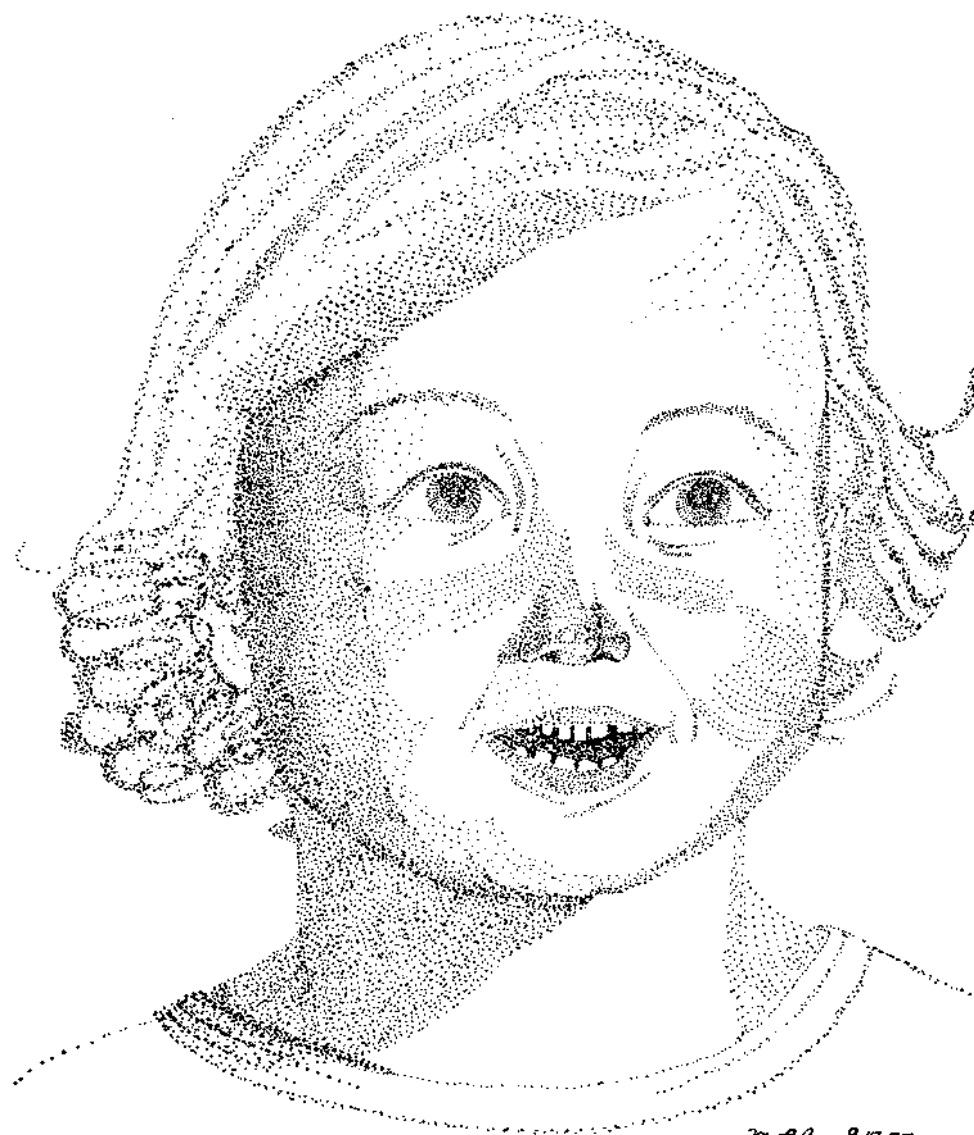
The three guards straightened up and turned warily toward Hacker. "Hold it a minute, Mister," one of them was saying. "Just stay right there." Two were putting their hands on their holsters.

Hacker looked around. No one was present except the security guards and Marie. The elevator dial read "3."

"Don't even move," one of the guards said as they cautiously approached, unholstering their guns.

Hacker shook his head to clear it. Then he looked at the approaching guards and began to laugh.

"Why not me--what have I got to lose?" he said aloud, and laughed again as he turned and stepped through the closed elevator door.



MFB 9-17-77

Katherine's Music Box

Katherine's staying up awfully
late, trying so hard to keep
up with the grownups, sipping
her sour shirley temple, watching
the restaurant platform she's
riding on turning, turning to face
all the sides of the city in turn,
watching the sun set as stars
and the city start shining, hearing
the grownups' piano bar
tinkling away, tinkling away.

Katherine's tiring, her eyes
are a little bit hard to keep
open but she's doing wonderfully
nevertheless, dropping a brussels
sprout over the side where it
rolls to a stop, Kate doesn't
care, for the restaurant's moving
and no one will know, it's better
to twinkle in time to a world that
is gliding around, around, around,
around, waltzing our Katie to sleep.

---John Ditsky

Banana . . .

Banana, yellow
skin covers creamy, cool white.
Streak of jungle light.

---Mark Bocchetti

Tonight...

Tonight the moon is
So orange that I wonder
Is the sun jealous?

---Carol Gesser

His pajama-ed mind...

His pajama-ed mind
disturbed nothing
except the furniture.

---Vincent Ercolano

Winter's end...

Winter's end
And the silent chimes of catkins
Dancing from a birch tree.

---Janice Hogan

Cherry twigs...

morning cherry twigs
icicles dripping brightly
thin, frozen fingers

---Robert A. Frezza

Squares of green...

Squares of green flowing
down the valley, emeralds
dancing to my fancy.

—Mark Bocchetti

Youth and Aged

Come now, let's take our pill,
 Mr. McDoogle.
My boyfriend's taking me out to lunch.

Oh! Come along now, Mr. McDoogle:
it's time for me to go.

You say it's strange, Mr. McDoogle?
Why?

Big picture in the sky seekers
would question these scattered puzzle pieces.
Those who seek no sense find nothing strange.

We arrange birth -- we arrange death,
 Mr. McDoogle.
It's all perfectly logical.

It's almost noon.
Please hurry, Mr. McDoogle.
I've already taken mine.

---Eugene P. Corrigan, Jr.

Aftermusic

In me there is
A unique vector of forces--
Of moon and death
Of the foot
 sliding
Back
Of speech
 out
 drawing
Breath
Of cymbals still shivering
At the end.

--Michael Salcman

I look out...

I look out the window;
a flock of geese heads south.
As they pass,
the last goose looks back
and winks seductively.
She asks what I do.
I tell her I steal tombstones,
eat axle grease, worship watermelons,
and, oh yeah, write poetry.
I tell her
at birth, I was hermetically sealed
and sent to Pakistan
with a plane load of goldfish.
She asks why I write poetry.
To forget goldfish, axle grease, and tombstones,
I tell her.
Giggling, she says I'm crazy.

---Rick Adang

The Owl in the Moonlight

each month the moon dies
& gets reborn
but yesterday i said
goodbye
to somebody i'll probably
never again see
we shrug
& say life is like that
even stars burn away
but there's
still that short moment
at sunset
when the trees sit dimly
on the horizon
& we wish there was more
we could see
as night snaps shut
like steel jaws
right now
footsteps fill the dark
with soft vagueness
& the moon is
a half closed eye
staring at the
earth's emptiness
with no curiosity

---George Freek



The Oak

So venerable and strong
you swear it holds the sky in place
the weathered oak cannot for long
deny the field the fading leaf
but must instead incline to moon and snow,
prepare to let its present greening go.

Like some things gnarled with age,
its grace is lightly held.
What loveliness will Autumn tell--
What ancient idiom quickens in her mortal leaves?
While the oak declines, who will
Oversee the mountain and the field?

Beauty is knowing not what, but when, to yield.

---R. Bruce Daniels

In the Light

the light filters through
my open window
it has a way of getting
where it wants
to be
moving as deceptively
as the moon
as if it were alive
& hours later it still
swims in swirls
at the feet of the trees
mixing with their
long shadows
as they slowly devour it
assuming an attitude
of serenity
among falling leaves

---George Freek

The Dragon

And if I say
The dragon is eating the sun,
Do not descend upon me
And explain in quiet and sometimes hysterical voices
About the moon
And angles of inclination
And the path of the eclipse
Across the tired face of the earth.

You would have me measure instead of feel,
Sweep away the leaves instead of know them.
I crumble them, wondering with my fingers,
You crush them unseen beneath your step.

There was a time when
The colored thoughts of God could bleed across the sky,
And we weren't here to see it,
And describe it,
And shove its tranquillity into a spectral chart
And choke it screaming with a measurement,
Strangling it with a number.
There it arched when we were not
And here it lies when here we are
And it's the same, but for us.

Go alone,
And feel a world through thick rubber gloves,
And grind at it with your blindness,
And try to break dreams with your numbers.

But my sea steals the land behind you
And my dragon feasts on the sun.

---Stephen Palumbi

Passion

Let me caress you
like a hungry serpent,
devour you
like a greedy crocodile,
with octopus tentacles pull you
down deep into my waters--
and when we're through,
we'll be two front-yard flamingoes
staring at each other
with coy intensity.

---Mike Schultz

Arms

Six black pills
And a tumbler of fire--
And I drifted drowsing
Into the arms of the dead one
I had loved long ago...
But no, the arms, the arms,
Once so beautiful, so good,
Were bone,
White bone,
Only bone.

---Henry Hubert Hutto

September Morning

Fall as it is exactly imagined and described
blue with no clouds, hint of haze sharpening
the hue, leaves burnishing but not yet browning.

At the bus stop with two small boys
she stands holding the dog
the bus stops
the girls in their herringbone skirts
and white knee socks bound out of both doors
lighting cigarettes for their half block walk to school.

She pauses, backs off
the bus looks crowded
Should she wait for another?
She pats them, hoists them up
She says to the bus driver,
as if he listens,
"They get off at Northern Parkway."

The red light lingers
Then the bus roars off
They're sitting side by side
right behind the driver
They smile and wave
They're gone: It's a quarter to eight.

---Margo Shermeta



CONTRIBUTORS

RICK ADANG *tells us he's from Columbia City, Indiana. Hoosier ever guess?*
GINNY BAIRD *is an art student at Loyola who's been shanghaied by Notre Dame.*
MARY BARBERA--*mother, student, career woman--we think we'll keep her.*
GUY R. BEINING *hails from the left field bleachers of Ebbets Field. His life is a prolonged seventh inning stretch.*
MARK BOCCHETTI *dabbles in Uruguayan politics.*
EUGENE P. CORRIGAN, JR. *has an intercom link-up to the ZEITGEIST.*
R. BRUCE DANIELS *teaches English at Gilman. Zounds.*
JOHN DITSKY *rotates his manuscripts seasonally.*
VINCENT ERCOLANO *is a gentleman and a teacher.*
GEORGE FREEK *comes from Carbondale, Illinois, where they make mechanical pencils and rubber noses.*
BOB FREZZA *graduated from Loyola last year.*
CAROL GESSER *says she's losing her happy mind but is no worse for wear.*
JOHN E. GITTER *writes in an elevator. He bears no resemblance to Claude Raines whatsoever.*
JANICE HOGAN *hangs out at Loyola and writes poems.*
HENRY HUBERT HUTTO *writes us often. He lives in Austin, Texas, but revises in Corpus Christi.*
KEN KACHNOWICH *took the picture of the old man.*
STEPHEN PALUMBI *wears rubber gloves when he writes poems about the rift between the analytical and intuitive minds (cf. Henri Bergson).*
RUTH SILBEY PALOMBO, *no relation to Stephen above, is a friend of Linda Pastan.*
MIKE REIS *is the editor-in-chief of UNICORN. When we goof off, he beats us with a rusty bike chain.*
MICHAEL SALCMAN, M.D. *uses cymbals as symbols.*
MIKE SCHULTZ, *an editor of this magazine, worked with disadvantaged youth this summer. Mike studies German but don't tell.*
MARGO SHERMETA *is still waiting for that bus to come back with her kids.*
KATHERINE WOOD, *who took the picture of the gazebo and the picture at the end, was a winner in last year's High School Writing Contest.*

Editor-in-chief: Mike Reis

Associate Editors: Vicki Aversa
D. R. Belz
Bob Farmer
Mike Schultz

Art Editor: Ginny Baird

Staff: Rafael Alvarez
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Mary Barbera
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JoAnna Cinelli
Kim Emmerich
Sally Fitzpatrick
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Debbi Gambrill
Carol Gesser
James Gurley
Gloria Kendall
Vickie Kendzierski
Muffin McCoy
Katie McGrath
Cindy Moran
Tom Serro
David Steinberg
Jennifer Swartley
Arleen Talley
Tom Welshko

Adviser: Dr. Phillip McCaffrey

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