

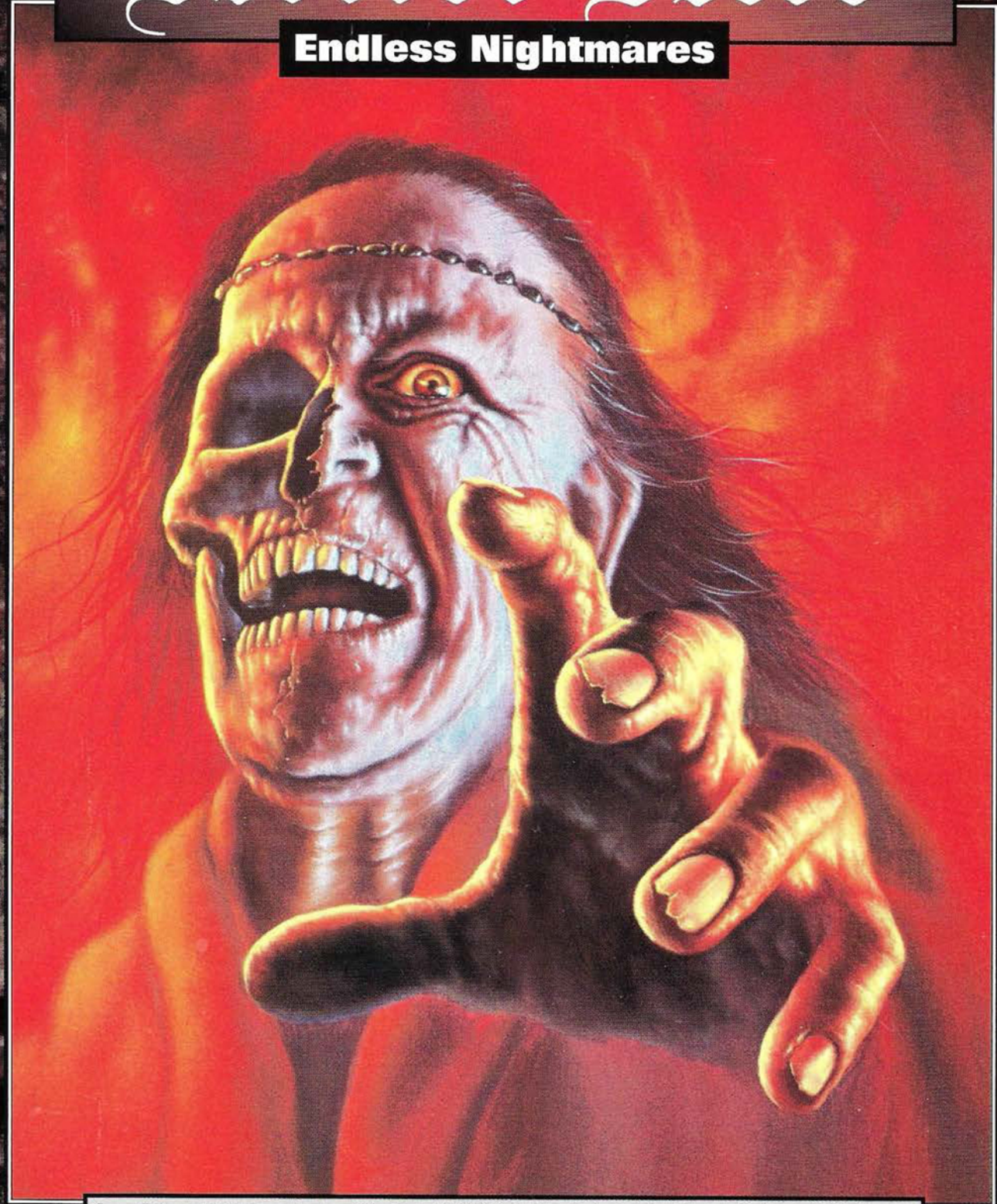


A Genre Book for the HERO System™

Stock #509

# Horror Hero™

**Endless Nightmares**



by Alan Dickerson, Robert O'Neal, John Tucker, & David Utter

# HORROR HERO™

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## AUTHORS' DEDICATION

### *Dave's Dedication:*

To my parents, for being there; my fellow authors for their constant (sometimes even lucid) inspiration; and to the end of the GAME.

### *Al's Dedication:*

To Ronald and Shirley Dickerson — just skip over the weird parts, OK? To Dave (who went to school), Bob (who knows the rules), and John (who's a bloody lunatic.) — for patience and friendship above and beyond, etc. etc.

For REH, HPL, MWW, JK, JV, BOC

### *Bob's Dedication:*

To my beloved Marylynn, for putting up with my hobby; to the other three for what began as a "small project" — Thanks, guys.

### *John's Dedication:*

To my Dad and Mom (AKA Jack and Margaret), without whom one quarter of this book would not be possible. Nice work, guys; he turned out all right. Looks like there is a little dark side in him after all — luv ya.

To Christine and the rest of our tribe — Maria, Angela, Richard, Annie and the son of my right hand, Benjamin. I love you all. Thanks, Chris, for letting me loose nights when the moon is full.

And to my long-time friends, S.H.E.E.S.H.; Bob O'Neal — acquainted about seventeen years, dude — Don't worry; we'll flatten the hill before we go over it. CONGRATULATIONS, pop. (Hi, Kyle.) Dave Utter. The guy who made it possible to put "eldritch" down on floppy. The next round of Pan-Galactic Gargle Blasters is on me. Alan Dickerson. A coffee czar with an esoteric library and a fantastic imagination — pseudo-vampire with a video yen and a twisted sense of humor I can relate to. It's been good going way back with you. Looks like we made it — Hark! Is that the sound of shekels rolling in?

To my brothers, Sam and Steve, to Greg (Ha! You really do trace your artwork, don't you?) and to Brian K. Davidson, wherever you are.

### *Group Dedication:*

To Monte Cook, for the opportunity; to Bruce Harlick, for working above and beyond and to Ray Greer and Steve Peterson, for listening and for suggestions. It would not have been done without any of you.

# AN INTRODUCTION TO HORROR



*So. You have come.*

*Tonight you will enter the many worlds of Horror Hero. It is I, One-eye, your monocular Host with No Name. I am your tour guide through the horrors of the past century on Earth. I was there. I watched it all happen. I saw eldritch horror unfold in the dark streets of yesteryear...*

**Delaware, 1888:** Both policemen bent over the young woman's body as steam appeared in the cold night air over her mortal wounds. Inspector Graeme looked down the alley, staring off at a point seemingly beyond the horizon. With a sudden turn, Graeme startled Patrolman Johnson and walked to the street.

"He followed her out of the inn, Grover. She was at the back of the group; her friends were in a hurry to get to their homes and none of them saw him stop her. He engaged her in conversation here, pulled her into the alley and killed her near this wall."

"But Inspector, if she was killed here, what happened to the blood? Wouldn't these wounds give off a lot of blood?" Graeme did not answer. A man in a long coat standing across the street had his attention...

*After the turn of the century those awful Pulp magazines told lurid tales of terror which spanned the world. Little did the eager readers of those tales suspect that real horror was occurring across the globe, as the last dark corners of the Earth were probed by "civilized" men...*

**Haiti, 1933:** Exploding with a tremendous sound, the tunnel was closed with several tons of dirt and rock. Patrick Mitchell pulled himself from the ground with tremendous effort; every muscle and bone felt torn or smashed. The stone! What happened to the stone?

Adrenaline took over now. The explosion had not killed him, but losing the stone would be akin to dying. Where was it? His flashlight beam obscured by the cloud of dust, Patrick began to search the ground with his hands frantically.

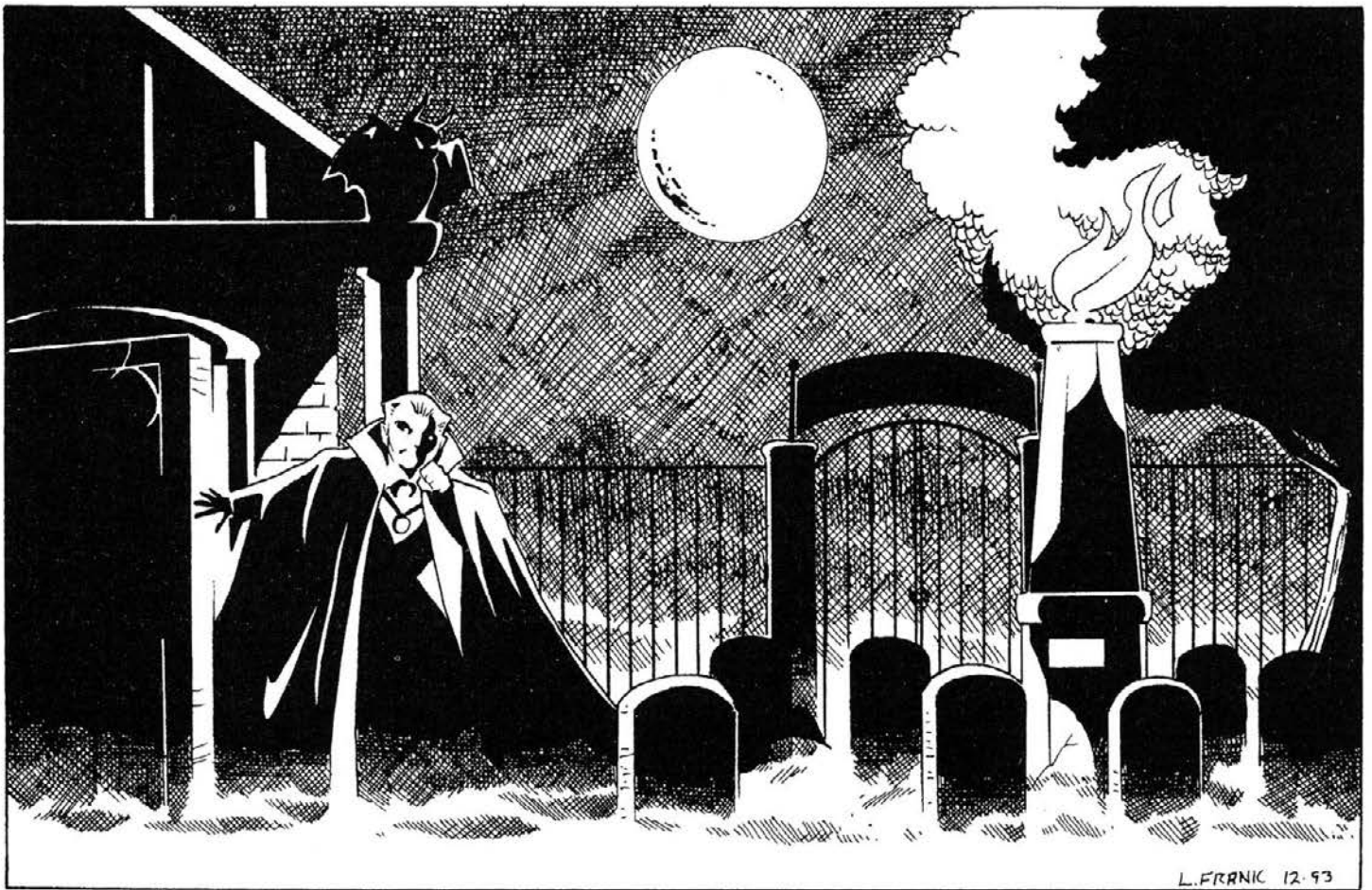
Then he heard The Sound. No mistake, falling rock does not make That Sound. Patrick slowly aimed the flashlight down the tunnel opening to the west. It was coming. Patrick turned to the southeast passage and started running. "When the Ictaxlian finds the stone," Patrick thought, "it will never stop until it finds me..."

*And so it went, until the thermonuclear forces of Chaos rent the sorcerous fabric already stretched to the breaking point by would-be world conquerors. A new enemy surfaced after the war — Science. You will never hear about it now, but for a while your little world fell prey to the children of the atom and the cold grip of intelligences from beyond....*

**Ohio, 1956:** The helicopter was still ten feet off the ground when General Nebula leaped out. In seconds he was in position at the mouth of the cave and waiting for the others to catch up. "You're sure this is where the kids went?" he hissed, and the field team assured him it was. No need to ask, really — he could smell a Robot lair a mile away. "Let's go!"

Forty feet inside the rough stone gave way to polished metal, and the hum of machinery could be heard. Twenty feet after that the tunnel opened up into a cavernous chamber. Alien technology lined the walls, and a dark gray saucer hovered over a gaping pit in the floor. All around the room human slaves — teenagers — toiled at the machines. Suddenly a reverberating clang came from the tunnel behind the General, and a hatch opened up on the saucer. Darn it! It was a trap!

From within the saucer a mechanical voice intoned, "Welcome human-leader-called-Nebula. Throw down your primitive weapons and surrender."



"Never, you lousy alien! You'll never get us!"

"Scanning threat. ..'Us', General?"

Boy, the team was quiet. Nebula turned and his awful suspicion was confirmed. Glassy eyes, slack face, guns pointed at him — they'd been brain-changed, all right. This was going to be tougher than he thought...

*But you protest — That is ancient history, and of little concern to me. Where is the horror now? That, my young friends, is a question you will regret the answer to...*

**Somewhere in America, 1992:** Blake scoffed. "There's no way that that's *the* bullet. If your theory is true then they would have recovered it."

The Texan only shrugged. "This ain't the one they picked up off Connally's stretcher. Our people got there first. Just watch."

The two mannequins in the convertible had photographs taped to their heads, which the Texan explained was necessary. He loaded the bolt-action rifle and pointed it at the car.

"You going to aim that thing?"

"Nope. Don't need to." Barnes pulled the trigger and plaster flew off the dummies. "Take a gander at that there."

Sure enough, there were seven wounds. The magic bullet had hit the Connally dummy twice and the other dummy five times, changing direction three times. Blake picked it out of the car door and found it to be in pristine condition. Suddenly the room seemed very cold. He was holding in his hand the bullet that killed Kennedy.

His reverie was interrupted by a strangled cry from the Texan. Three swarthy men in suits stood in the corner of the

gallery and Barnes was on the floor. The air rippled around the three figures and Blake swore in disgust.

"Wereboars. Damn." Their disguises gone, Blake saw three hairy monsters gnashing their tusks and growling, "Our masters want their property back, human. They also want you dead. Let us begin, shall we?"

*But you do not seek real horrors such as I have witnessed. You seek to create horror through the art of Aleanumerology, the magic of dice. So be it. I, too, have studied this art and trust my counsel will enlighten you. I will provide guidance, admonitions, warnings and the odd word to the wise. But first, a final caution — with this book you will enter regions of Hero System roleplaying you only dreamed could exist. From the gas-lit streets of historic America to the neon jungles of today, Horror Hero strips away the veneer of normality and exposes the terror within!*

*Here you will find information enabling you to run exciting scenarios of horror in any Hero System campaign. If your heroes are fighters or thinkers, if your genre is the Roaring Twenties or the saucer haunted Fifties, if your players want to face a different threat, or if you just need to throw something nasty and evil at their bare throats, you hold in your hands the book you need. But beware! Your campaign may never be the same again!*

*Or you may wish to start a new all-horror campaign. Included here is information on four distinct horror genres spanning the century, dozens of monsters researched from sources across the globe and beyond, organizations plotting agendas that spell doom for humanity, new package deals*

enabling players to recreate their favorite *Horror Hero*, background notes for each era, new wrinkles on magic and powers, more scenarios than you can sprinkle holy water at, and much, much more!

In *Horror Hero*, the research has been done for you, and the monsters lie in wait. All you need to do is add your unsuspecting players; a sinister laugh is optional. And remember:

**IF YOU CAN'T BE A HERO,  
RUN FOR IT!**

## WHAT'S INSIDE

Here is a brief summary of what is included in *Horror Hero* and how it is organized.

### GENRE BOOK

The first half of *Horror Hero* explains how the GM and players can use the *Hero System* for horror roleplaying. First of all is an overview section, describing the horror genre and its components. Next is the rules section (Defining The Genre), where we describe how to use the *Hero System* rules (and some new rules) to create horror roleplaying. This includes rules for magic and psychic abilities in *Horror Hero*. The fourth section describes how to create settings for *Horror Hero*, and how to use *Horror Hero* in existing settings. The Characters section describes in detail how to create and play *Horror Hero* characters in a variety of settings. The Stories section describes how to GM *Horror Hero*; it includes guidelines on creating and running scenarios, campaign rationales, and more. Finally, the Sourcebook section provides some examples of magic systems, spells and items for *Horror Hero*.

### CAMPAIGN BOOK

The second half of *Horror Hero* contains three different campaign settings, each designed to simulate a different type of horror. Each era contains a brief Player's guide describing the setting and containing information on skills and technology that are currently available. Next is a GM's guide that explains how to set and run a campaign during the time frame. Then a campaign setting for the era is presented. Each campaign details an organization indicative of the era, with the organization history, current activities, sample magic and NPCs, monsters and lairs. Then a PC organization with sample PCs is presented. Finally, each era contains a ready to run scenario. These are presented in the most appropriate era, but can (and should) be used in any campaign.

The campaign settings are The Shadow of The Civil War (gothic/eldritch horror in historic America), Beating It To A Pulp (world-spanning adventure horror in the pulp era), and The Awful Truth (urban legend and paranoid horror in today's world).

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

*Horror Hero* is a combination genre and campaign book designed for use with the *Hero System* rules. It contains material describing ways of creating and running horror-themed role playing games. *Horror Hero* does not contain the rules needed to play the game; creating characters, using skills and conducting combat are described in the *Hero System Rulesbook*, available separately.

We recommend that you read all the way through *Horror Hero*, of course. However, we do have some specific recommendations about reading this book.

### IF YOU HAVE NEVER PLAYED HERO SYSTEM GAMES BEFORE

As explained, this book will help you create exciting *Horror* role playing games using the *Hero System*, but it won't teach you how to actually play them. If you don't already have the *Hero System Rule Book*, you should buy a copy right away. Once you have the *Hero System Rulesbook*, you should familiarize yourself with the following sections: Character Creation, Character Skills, and the Combat rules (you and your players will find scenarios run smoother if you practice the combat system for an hour or so before you commence the campaign). After you have mastered these areas, read the rest of the *Hero System* book.

The Game Master (GM) should read the entire *Horror Hero* book, paying particular attention to Defining The Rules. The GM must then select which campaign to run (or create a brand new campaign, which requires a lot more work). We recommend that novice GMs begin by using a sample scenario from one of the campaigns; this is the easiest way to get started.

Players should read all of the Genre portion on *Horror Hero*, paying particular attention to the Characters section. Additionally, the players should read the Player's Guide section of the campaign that the GM has chosen to run (but no further!). The players can use the sample heroes included with the campaign, or they can construct their own characters. If the players are constructing their own characters, the GM must provide the campaign ground rules for the players (see Defining The Rules).

### IF YOU HAVE PLAYED HERO SYSTEM GAMES BEFORE

The material in *Horror Hero* may be added to an existing *Hero System* campaign or it may be used as the basis of an all-new campaign. The GM who wants to add horror scenarios to an existing campaign can ignore most of the Campaign section, but the creatures, NPCs and scenarios may be useful for almost any campaign with a little modification. If you want to start up a *Horror Hero* campaign using one of the campaigns included in the book, then of course you should read through that entire section of the Campaign book as well as the entire Genre book. Players should read the Player's Guide to that campaign, as well as the Characters section of the Genre book.

All roleplayers know how deflating it is when a player knows all about a villain's weaknesses because he read the rulesbook or scenario; this situation is magnified in a horror game. The definitions of horror and terror are, after all, fear of the *unknown*. Players should never read the scenarios, organization and monster entries or the descriptions of enchanted items. If they do, the GM is justified in charging experience points for appropriate knowledge skills if the players use that information during a game!

### A FINAL NOTE FROM THE AUTHORS

Tales of horror are the oldest known to man. From Cro-Magnon cave drawings to the sophisticated movies of today, horror has explored the emotion of fear, the dread of painful death and the fear that an individual has no control over his own destiny.

Horror can occur in any roleplaying game, because it is based solely on an emotion that has always been with us. The fiends of the night are reflections of ourselves, and our triumph over them are victories over the darkness in our souls.

This is why horror roleplaying is such fun and so satisfying. Those who cannot identify with costumed superheroes or muscle-bound barbarians can still connect with the ordinary mortal who thrusts back the darkness, if only for a little while. Horror is the roleplaying equivalent of a whistle in the dark, or a nervous laugh — the authors hope that you have as much fun exploring it as we had creating it.





# Horror Hero

Endless Nightmares™

*Be Afraid.  
Be Very Afraid.*

Add a new dimension of spine-tingling terror to your Hero System roleplaying with *Horror Hero: Endless Nightmares*, the new Hero System genre book! *Horror Hero* is packed with new rules, new characters, new magic systems, new monsters, and several terrifying campaign backgrounds. Plus, there are complete rules for adding, creating and GMing horror stories in any Hero System game. Absolutely the best book on roleplaying horror for any game system!

## INSIDE, YOU'LL FIND:

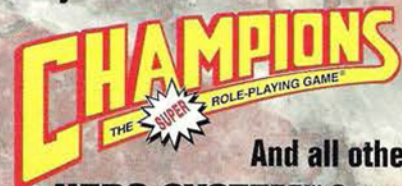
- Horror Magic
- Psychic Powers
- New Rules for Stress and Degradation
- Revised Spirit Rules
- Three Complete Campaign Settings!

Everything you need to start experiencing those spine-tingling chills-down-your-back is inside. Finally, the definitive book for simulating Horror roleplaying for the *Hero System* is here! Don't miss it.

To play Horror Hero, the player must already own the *Hero System Rulesbook™* or *Champions®*.



Playable with



And all other  
HERO SYSTEM™ Games

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