

The Inheritor

# The Inheritor

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Adilynn McGregor is a young, single woman who loves spending money and having a good time. She thinks nothing about her job of inheriting money and possessions, but what happens when she inherits more than she bargained for?



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# The Inheritor : Chapter 1

Few people do what I do. Few people could handle the situation I put myself in time after time. Few people even know about this job; which is what keeps it in business. To do what I do you have to be strong, persistent, and have a certain charm.

You think you want to know what I do? You think it sounds like fun?

I guarantee you, once I tell you; you will all look at me differently, as if I am a sick, disturbed person. But that's not how I see it; I see it as me lifting an unnecessary burden off of someone.

I am The Inheritor. Are you wondering what that is? Would you like me to tell you?

It's pretty simple really, but it takes a lot of planning. You have to have an uncanny ability to make people want to please you.

I go to places, nursing homes usually. I visit for a few weeks; observe. I find out who has family, who doesn't. Who's sane, who isn't, who's lonely. Then, I begin talking to these people. This is where you might find it hard to continue. Older people love to tell their life stories, their unaccomplished dreams, the things they'd like to do over. For a normal person, sitting there in a plastic white chair for hours, listening to these people go on, getting to really *know* them would make you too weak for this job. Not me, the secret is to pay close attention to the facts. Remember their kids names, their loved ones long gone, their hometown, but forget the emotional side of all these things. I'll excuse myself to go to the restroom every once in awhile to jot these things down; they later get translated into my binder where everything is organized. Then I review the facts until they are stuck in me.

Of course you have to act caring; bring them their favourite flowers or read to them. Play a game of cards with them, remember their birthday. These things make them feel loved.

Love. People are so easily fooled to believe it is so simple, to believe it even exists. To love and be loved is everyone's goal. Not mine, my goal is to take care of number one, me.

Taking care of me doesn't always prove to be so easy, I like nice things and I hate most jobs. I love socializing and I have an addiction to shopping. I need money to spend freely on things and I don't want to work too hard for it.

This is how I became The Inheritor.

Are you still confused on what I do? Honestly, how do you not get it?

To put it bluntly, I "befriend" people that are close to death, rich people. I get them to sign me onto their will. I inherit their money, land, belongings, etc.

Wrong? Maybe, but think about it, what are *they* really going to do with the money when they are gone? Exactly. Nothing. And if their family doesn't care enough to see them, at least I made them happy in their last stage of life, right?

## Chapter 2

"And then," she paused dramatically, whipping an invisible tear from her eye, "it was too late! I tried to revive Muffin, but she was gone. I've never forgotten that." Lucy sighed and looked at me to make sure I had been listening.

I sniffed and worked up a tear, "Oh Lucy, how horrid!" I gushed.

I hugged her and then said that I had to go to work. I looked sad to go and she waved me out with her handkerchief.

Out of the automatic doors of the nursing home I breathed in the fresh air and then found my way to my bright yellow corvette. I hit the automatic start button so that the car would be warmed up and I could turn on the air conditioner.

It was a warm summer day and there was a slight breeze. I had on dark skinny jeans and a black sweater. I shed the sweater the moment I was in the car so that I was down to a silver tank top. I pulled my long brown hair into a pony tail and dug in my glove compartment for my jewelry and makeup. I pulled out a long, over dramatic, black beaded necklace and added some black eyeliner to my eyes. I snapped my mirror shut and pulled out of the parking lot.

Within five minutes I was across the street at Panera Bread. I sat down at a table in the corner and pulled out my binder labeled "History".

And that was it; I looked like an everyday college student. Working on my history homework and sipping a latte. But I pulled open the binder and scanned down the table of contents in the front.

I was working with two different people currently; Lucy and Devlin. They were both in different homes and both lonely. Also, they were wealthy. At least a million a piece was my guess.

I flipped through my past clients nonchalantly.

Oliver. Lydia. Samson. Tyrone. All these people had left me some, if not all of their inheritance.

Damian. Susan. Mary. Ben. Markus. These people had left their money to charities, or a distant relative.

I was counting on Lucy and Devlin's money. It would change the odds in my favour as far as how many people were leaving me money.

Then I flipped to the next section of my binder; this was where I kept all the official papers. House deeds, car deeds, will's. It all stayed with me. I flipped over my phone and called Mel Foster.

"Hello? I am calling about my house I have for sale currently, are there any offers? Oh, that's great!"

I went on chatting it up with Samantha, my current real estate agent. She was selling the house that Lydia had left me. A huge Victorian one, it was pretty but not big enough for me to consider living in.

Samantha had an offer for five hundred thousand, and I told her to take it. It was less than I wanted, but the house had been on the market for too long now.

I sighed; it had been an uneventful morning. I visited Lucy and Devlin and now had just sold a house.

I opened my brilliant yellow laptop and connected to the internet. I brought up all the local nursing homes and scanned them, I needed a new client.

After calling a couple different places under the false tense that I was looking for a place for my mother, I found out a few things, enough to get me headed towards "Heartwood Home's" with a glint of hope.

## Chapter 3

I pulled into Heartwood Home's and was unimpressed by the place. It was like all other nursing homes I'd been too; cheerful but dull. Enough to convince me that I had made the right decision by keeping my pill with me at all times, so if the time came, I could die painlessly and not have to suffer the horrors of a home.

The grass was unnaturally green and a chain link fence surrounded the whole building. It was a brick, one story and in the back were bright tulips and plastic benches. A tennis court was being occupied by two old men and a nurse wheeled around a smoker while talking animatedly on her phone.

I walked in the automatic doors and waited patiently for the nurse at the front desk to buzz me in. I walked in, pasted on my best fake smile, and told her I had a great aunt here.

She let me through with only the words that visiting hours ended at four. I glanced at my watch; I had a little over two hours.

I walked through the recreational room without stopping. The people that hung out in those rooms, I had found, usually weren't close enough to death. Also, the fact that they were social was something I didn't want to deal with. It usually meant they had family and they felt that interacting with modern people was good. I was looking for someone special. I wanted to find someone that kept to themselves and was lonely. I wanted someone with a certain air that said they felt they were better; materialistically if nothing else.

So I walked down the halls purposefully, I passed rooms that were empty and glanced into rooms that weren't. I had to have good judgment, because to walk into a room meant that you would be there for a few hours probably. People loved to talk.

At the end of the third hall I was walking down, I found her. She was sitting in an office chair staring out the window. Her room was near empty, but it was only hers, she didn't share it. The few possessions she did have were evidence that she had a decent life.

On her nightstand was a white porcelain jewelry box with purple jewels on the outside. She had a blue and gold painted teapot that looked very fragile right next to it.

There was one wooden shelf on the wall in which she had five different dolls. Each one must have cost her a pretty penny and were, I would find out, from five different continents.

So, taking a deep breath I walked up to the door and knocked quietly on it in three quick taps. She didn't turn her head, she simply said, "What do you want?"

I smiled and walked in, "Hello, I'm Adilynn McGregor. I was wondering if you'd like to visit."

"Go away," came her husky voice.

I walked closer and touched her shoulder, she visibly flinched, "Ma'm are you sure?"

"You're all the same, I won't tell you."

Now I was confused and I made sure it was evident in my voice, "I don't understand, I just want to talk,"

Now she turned around and I gasped slightly at her.

Her face had scars crisscrossed on it, her hair was bright red and her right eye was red while her left was blue. But the scars on her face were what got to me, perfectly crossed, like someone had really taken the time to do it perfectly.

"You still don't understand?" she asked gravely.

## Chapter 4

By now I wasn't sure I wanted to stay, but something in me wouldn't let me move. I noticed a ring on every one of her fingers and locked my jaw in determination.

"I...I wasn't aware of your situation M'am. I'm sorry, but I really would just like to chat,"

She sighed, "You won't leave me alone, even now?"

I smiled and shrugged my shoulders innocently. She patted her bed and I sat on it facing her.

Seconds turned into minutes and minutes turned into an hour before she finally spoke, "You said you wanted to talk,"

I was taken aback, I didn't want to do the talking, I wanted to do the listening but I took in a breath and said, "Tell me about yourself,"

"My names Carol, I am 88 years old, and I live here in this hell hole."

"What was your life like before this?" I asked.

She stared at me for a long while and said, "Probably a lot like yours,"

This lady was really starting to bug me, I had never met anyone like her, "And how do you think my life is Carol?" I asked, not bothering to call her "ma'm" anymore.

"You want everything that you don't need. You hate working or doing anything really. Life's a party, no one can touch you."

"Well...I wouldn't say..."

"Save it for someone who gives a shit," she replied.

"Carol, honestly, I came here to talk to you and be friendly,"

"No you didn't honey, quit lying. If you insist on being here at least save the BS, I read people too well for that, it's what I do..Or did,"

I sucked in a breath, "Well, what did you do exactly?"

"I made a lot of money, that's what I did,"

I smiled in spite of myself, "And how did you do that Carol?"

"Shady things, different things, but it paid off, mind you."

"How much did it pay off?"

Now she smiled, "A beach house, a mansion, three classic cars, every clothing item I'd ever need, enough money to buy a small country and a good looking husband."

"Then why are you here?" I asked, genuinely curious.

She glanced at the clock, "Visiting hours are over honey."

## Chapter 5

I left the nursing home without as much as a glance at the receptionist at the front desk. I walked slowly to my car and laid my head on the steering wheel. Never before had I met someone as strange as Carol. Yet, I was undeniably attracted to her attitude and the amount of possessions she listed off.

*But her face...*

Maybe she was in an accident? Maybe a dog attacked her? But the scars were so....perfect.

I shivered even though it was eighty two degrees outside. I started up my car and turned the heat on. I needed a distraction.

Fifteen minutes later I pulled into the parking lot of Crave. It was still early so not many people were there, but I actually preferred it that way.

I walked into Crave and was immediately distracted from my worries. I saw Elle and Terri and walked right up to them.

"Hey girl, how's it going?" Elle asked, hugging me.

I sighed for dramatic effect, "It's going good. How about for you?"

"Ah-mazing" she practically screeched in my ear.

I glanced down to her finger and saw a huge diamond, "Oh my Gosh! You're getting *married*?!"

She nodded excitedly and jumped up and down.

"That's what I said," Terri laughed.

"Seriously Elle? With who? That's so awesome, I'm so happy for you. Oh. My. Gosh."

She got a little teary and said, "This perfect guy I met on a cruise. He has tons of money and lives in a huge house on the beach. I am in love for sure this time."

I nodded like I believed her and I hugged her again. I rolled my eyes at Terri and she smirked. This was Elle's third marriage and she was only twenty-two.

"So Ady, how's work?" she asked me.

I sipped at my glass of water and said, "Oh, you know. Same old stuff, I'm working on a new project this week actually,"

"Oh, exciting," Terri said sarcastically.

And that was the thing about all my friends; they didn't know what I did. When asked, I said I worked for a real estate agency. They just basically knew that I was wealthy, and they didn't care about how I got it.

"What about the guys department?" Terri asked.

Elle looked at me wide eyed, her blonde hair sparkling under the dim lighting, "Yeah Ady! We never see you with a man,"

I laughed, "Well I'm just busy is all. And they tie you down really,"

"Not at all!" Elle gushed, "In fact, my fianc $\bar{e}$ 's brother I think you might enjoy,"

"No thank you," I said politely.

Terri shook her head but Elle wouldn't give in, "One date? Please! You'll like him, I promise."

"Have you ever met him?" I asked.

Elle hesitated, "Well, no, but I know he has a lot of money, and I mean *a lot*. He does something really cool too; I just forgot what it was..."

I laughed, "One date then," I said.

Elle's promise of perfection isn't what persuaded me though; the thought of a rich boyfriend did me in.

As the night wore on I talked and danced with two of my closest friends, Elle even made the call to set me and Tyler up.

And isn't it weird how innocent things like that can turn your life around?

## Chapter 6

I woke up early the next morning so that I could prepare myself for the day ahead.

I planned on visiting Carol for a few hours, then coming home and changing for my date with Tyler.

With this in mind, I stared into my closet for what seemed like hours trying to find something appropriate to wear to the nursing home.

Outfits, colours, modesty, all these things played a big part in how these people perceived you.

Appearance was a big part of the world.

I finally settled on a knee length sundress. It was strapless and all white. I slipped on a pair of flats and pulled my hair up. I didn't apply any makeup though; I simply washed my tan face and headed out the door.

I arrived at Heartwood Homes and didn't even bother checking in. The nurses simply smiled and waved me through, like we were old friends. I walked briskly to Carol's room and knocked.

"Is that you?" she asked irritated.

I smiled to myself, "Yes, it is" I said, walking in.

She sighed but scooted over in her chair so I could get by and sit cross legged on her bed.

"What do you want?" she asked, after a few minutes of silence.

I thought about this, "How did you get the scars?"

She lowered her eyes, her feistiness gone. She quietly said, "I can't tell, they're always watching. I promised."

Now I thought she might be crazy. This worried me because I was really counting on the fact that her money was real and not made up like this story seemed to be.

"Oh come on Carol, you can tell me,"

She looked so weak and frail in that moment that I almost felt bad for asking, almost.

She coughed, "If I tell you, then you'll know. I'll have to leave everything for you to deal with, you don't want that,"

"Everything?" I asked.

She sighed, "Well, yes. And you won't even have time to comprehend it all, because after I tell, I'm sure to die,"

Now I was genuinely confused, "Carol, certainly it's not so bad?"

"Oh, but it is, and I've already said too much," she said shivering.

I automatically reached out to pull a blanket over her small shoulders, "Just tell me," I soothed.

She looked into my eyes steadily for a few minutes then said, "Alright, see that jewelry box over there? It has my will in it. When I die, come and get it. It will say who gets what. The dolls up there, they all are from a different continent, the continent names are listed on their right shoe. Take the shoes off and there is a key under each one. They are to my cars and houses. They are all labeled. In the teapot is a letter. Burn it.

Understood?"

I reviewed what she had said, "Yes I do," I said firmly.

"Good, now there is no turning back, and I am sorry Adylinn. You seem like a nice, shallow person,"

I began to protest but she cut me off with five words, "It was cold that morning,"

And with those five words I was plummeted into a life that I didn't want to live in.

## Chapter 7

"It was cold that morning and I was walking on the beach collecting shells. It's what I did every morning those days. It took my mind off things. Mom had left town with another man, I didn't know how long she'd be gone. Dad was long dead from his heart attack. I was their only child and I didn't matter at all to them. I was minding my own business; I didn't know someone else was out there until his arms were around my neck. He said to me, "Carol, you remember me don't you?" and of course I said yes because I did remember him; he was my mom's ex husband...well, one of them, she had four. He was the most recent one and he had been rich. Giving mom everything she wanted until she divorced him. She couldn't afford a lawyer though and was left with nothing from him. This made her angry at him and she'd spend days eating ice cream and ranting about him. I never understood why they split; he treated her better than all the others. But they did and I was seventeen, I hardly cared, I was counting down the days until I could leave that hell hole. I didn't realize it'd be so soon,"

She glanced at me and then continued talking, "He said that I would do exactly as he said or I would die. Dying wasn't an option for me, I was fearless and I had a whole life ahead of me. I simply nodded. He took me behind some bushes. I thought he would rape me. That's what I was prepared for. But that is not what happened.

He threw me in his car and drove me to one of his many houses. It was a huge Victorian mansion and I was dragged to the basement. He locked me in a little room and said he'd be back soon. I waited for hours in that room. I was hungry, thirsty, and had to go to the bathroom, but I couldn't see anything in the darkness. Finally, he came back down with a man and a woman. He said they were going to have a little chat with me. Again, I simply nodded."

I no longer believed this was a fake story, this sounded real to me, and I was terrified, "Carol, you don't have to continue," I began.

"I do though; I told you that, there is no turning back now."

"They explained to me what they wanted me to do and I said no. They wanted me to kill people, be an assassin. I couldn't do it you know? Killing people; I was an innocent seventeen year old girl. I had never even left our little town. They kept asking and I kept saying no. Finally, the man that had come with the woman tied me to a chair. He ordered me to be still while he picked up the chair and placed it against the wall. He taped the chair so that my back was to the wall and I couldn't move. Then he took out a knife,"

"No," I whispered, "Stop, it's not true,"

She sighed, "He took out the knife and he cut along my face. So slowly, and I couldn't even scream. Tears ran down my face as he taunted me. My ex step father and the woman just stood back there looking at us. Watching him ruin my beautiful young face, I was so angry. Vanity kills you know. When he was done he untied me and pushed me towards Vince, my ex step father. He said, "Would you like that man to never hurt you again?" I nodded as I fell to the floor, crying. Then I felt something metal thrust into my hand. A gun. I looked up at Vince and he nodded, "Keep yourself safe, kill him." The man had backed up against the wall and looked terrified, "Vince," he said, "Vince, you can't. We're buddies. And Sue! I love you Sue." But Sue only shrugged and began kissing Vince's neck. That's when it clicked for the other guy that he was being used. I still couldn't do it, couldn't shoot the guy that I hated. Vince stood me up carefully and placed the gun correctly in my hand. He aimed at the man and pushed slightly on my finger. I shot him. I killed that man. I'll never forgive myself. Vince told me that I had done it once, and a couple more wouldn't hurt me. He said he'd pay me a lot of money for each one. And that no one would hire me for anything else because of my scars. This crushed me, I had always wanted to be a model and he knew it. He knew what to say to get me to agree."

## Chapter 8

I sat there. Stunned, I was silent until Carol softly said, "Any questions dear?"

"How many?" I asked, a tear rolling down my cheek.

She paused, "How many what?"

I looked her straight in the eye, "How many people did you kill?"

She didn't even hesitate, "78 people in 60 years."

I closed my eyes and said, "This doesn't mean anything to me; I don't have to put up with this,"

She interrupted me, "Adylinn, when you leave here tonight someone will kill me. They are constantly watching me, making sure I don't blow their cover. Now that I did, I won't live to see tomorrow."

"What will they want from me, I don't understand this?!" I cried.

She patted my back, "They'll take you and force you into secrecy."

"Wait, who's 'they'?" I asked.

"Oh, Vince had two sons. They have taken over his business. They inherited everything. My son should have inherited this but he died unexpectedly after one of my missions went haywire. He has a daughter. She's fourteen now and lives with her mother. I have cut off all contact with her, hoping to save her from this. She's young and naïve and she wouldn't last a day with them. Please, keep her safe."

I bit my lip, "So I can't escape?"

She lightly ran a finger over one of her immaculate scars, "Oh, you can try, but I wouldn't advise it."

I sighed.

"But really, I know this sounds awful but hear me out. The people you get rid of don't mean anything to you.

They are nobodies. You get some of the money. And you will inherit all mine, which is a lot honey, I'll tell you. Worldly possessions may not be everything, but they sure as hell are nice."

I frowned slightly, "So you're putting a price on a life?"

"Not much different than what you do is it?"

"It is *completely* different! And how do you know what I do?!" I fumed.

She laughed, "I can tell what you want. Money. You take it from the old ones don't you? And it isn't much different. You know they are going to die, so you take advantage of what you can get. If I wouldn't have killed those people, Vince would have had someone else do it. I might as well benefit from it."

I didn't look at her, "I have to leave,"

"Goodbye for an eternity honey," she said, patting my arm, "Come here tomorrow and take what's yours."

"And what if I don't?" I challenged.

She sighed regretfully, "They'll force it on you, and you have such a pretty face,"

I shuddered and walked slowly out her door.

I didn't care anything for this murderer I had been talking to for the last few hours; at least, I thought I didn't.

But that didn't stop me from walking up to the front desk and ringing the little bell.

"Yes?" asked a young, red headed nurse.

I looked down and filled my eyes with some false tears, "Carol, my aunt, she's not looking too good. Could you keep an extra eye on her tonight?"

"Well of course!" she smiled.

I blinked, "Thank you so much,"

I walked out into the night and flipped open my phone.

I had a text from Elle, "Bryan's brother, Tyler, is waiting for you. You're forty five minutes late Adi. Call ASAP!"

"Shit" I mumbled. I hit speed dial four and Elle immediately picked up.

"Adilynn, where the he-"

I cut her off, "I was busy at work, and they wouldn't let me leave. Tell him I am headed to the restaurant right now and I am so very sorry."

With that I hung up and jumped in my car. I hit the gas and sped off to Olive Garden, where I should have been long ago. I looked at myself in the rearview mirror and decided it would have to do.

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I smoothed my dress, licked my lips, pasted a fake smile on my face, and walked into the restaurant. I saw him sitting alone almost instantly and gasped aloud.

## Chapter 9

If perfection had a face, it would be Tyler Henderson's.

If perfection had a body, it too, would belong to Tyler.

I saw him, sitting all alone, dressed in all black with a shiny black object, soon to be identified as his cell phone, in his hands.

I know it sounds stupid and childish but I actually screamed a little under my breath when I first saw him.

I had to hand it to Elle; she may have really done it this time.

I stood from a distance to observe him so that when I got up close I wouldn't be as incoherent.

He had on black shiny shoes, dark washed jeans that were pre washed and had that expensive worn look, a black turtleneck and curly black hair. It was a little long, maybe to his neck, and looked totally natural. His eyes were a dark grey and he had muscles, but only slightly.

I self consciously smoothed my dress and walked over.

He immediately stood up and pulled out my chair for me, "You must be Adylinn?" he inquired.

I blushed, "Yes I am. And you are Tyler?"

He nodded.

"I am so so so sorry I was late. I didn't realize, and work held me up..."

He politely held up a hand to stop me from going further, "It is quite all right Miss Ady. I trust we will have a fine time right now and forget the past?"

I stared into his eyes, maybe it was because I was all shaken up by his looks and Carol's confession, but I swore I saw a flash of darkness in his eyes. I blinked quickly and looked at his smile and perfectly white teeth, I mumbled, "Mhm sounds lovely," and continued to stare.

He chuckled slightly and snapped his fingers. A waitress practically ran over to him. She stood very close to him, smoothed her apron and said, "May I help you?"

He smiled in a way that almost fainted the poor girl, "Why yes you can. I have already ordered, but this lovely lady has not." He nodded towards me.

Again, I blushed as I ordered the Chicken Parmesan and an iced tea. While we were waiting for our food I decided to attempt to speak, "So, Tyler, what do you do for a living?"

He leaned slightly forward to give me his undivided attention, "My brother and I own a little business," he said.

"What business? Maybe I've heard of it?"

He laughed silently, "No, I'm sure you haven't. It's very small and we don't get much business. We work mainly with the extremely wealthy; we do insurance type work you could say."

I nodded and he looked at me, "What do you do Adylinn?"

"Me? Oh, I...I'm a real estate agent."

"I see I see," he said intently.

I struggled to change the subject, "How did you and your brother start your business?"

"Our father did, when he died it became ours. It's a nice one; I think you'd like to visit the office sometime,"

"The office?" I asked, because, really, who wants to visit someone's job?

He smiled, "It's on the beach, very nice."

He was a tad arrogant, I noted. But then I mentally slapped myself. *He was perfect, I was making up excuses. I had waited too long for a guy, now a decent one comes and I'm criticizing him within the first hour? Get a grip Ady!*

"Well then, I'm sure I'd love it," I gushed.

Our food came and we ate. It was a nice meal and we made small talk as we ate. Only once did his phone vibrate from within his pocket. He reached for it mechanically and glanced at the screen. He held up his index finger to me, indicating me to hold on, and flipped it open.

"Hello? Bryan, how did it go? Any news?" Tyler fired questions at his brother.

I heard a few mumbles and a satisfied laugh from Tyler's mouth before he said, "Yeah I'm with her now. Well of course she doesn't! Listen, I got to let you go. I'll be home later. Bye then."

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He hung up and picked back up his fork. He glanced at me and said, "Bryan called. Standard stuff." I nodded nonchalantly. But panic struck me. What did Bryan say to him? What did they say about me? I hoped he liked me.

Within the next hour his phone rang constantly. He politely ignored most of them. I felt jealous that no one had called me and excused myself to make an "important call"

I called Terri and told her about how perfect Tyler was. Elle was with Bryan tonight so I didn't want to call her. Terri seemed preoccupied though, probably by ER, her all time favourite drama that I absolutely hated with a passion. I sighed and flipped my phone shut. I slowly walked back to the table and sat back down across from Tyler.

He dropped me off at my home a half hour later. He didn't kiss me, or try anything. This, I assumed was out of politeness, but I still couldn't help being a bit upset. He was so beautiful. I wanted to kiss him.

I sighed and walked inside. I collapsed onto my bed, exhausted by the day, and fell asleep.

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