



Exploring & Sharing the Narratives of Female Intensive Care Nurses & their Experiences of COVID-19

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www.reddit.com/r/painting/comments/fzc6vx/my_mom_is_a_nurse_working_through_this_pandemic/



Overview

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A healthcare worker helps a colleague put on PPE- taken by ICU nurse Emily Gilhespy/ PA www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-55915171

Research Aims

What's Your Story?



To explore the COVID 19 narratives of female ICU nurses considering affects on wellbeing & relationship with their role.

To design, implement & review creative writing tasks with ICU nurses to allow them to enact & have dialogue with their own experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic.



'Theatre is the art of looking at ourselves.'

Augusto Boal (2005). *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. London: Routledge. p.15

Research Aim 3:

To co-create a dramatic representation of the ICU Nurse's identity and their lived experiences of working during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

Why female ICU Nurses

Pappa et al's systematic review (2020) found that *'being female and a nurse have both emerged as associated with a higher prevalence of depression and anxiety compared to other healthcare workers'* (p906).

Regenold and Vindrola-Padros (2021) suggest that *'Gender has been replaced by job title, but the same gendered expectations are re-inscribed in job descriptions and influence the valuation, support, and power given to different roles.'* (p13).

Methodology

Interview Study

- 8 ICU Nurse's who worked in ICU with COVID-19 patients between March 2020 and January 2021 in the UK
- from 8 different hospitals including university & district hospitals.
- experience ranged from 2 to 20 years in critical care & their position & band of nursing ranged from newly qualified to band 7



Photographs by Emily Gilhespy- ITU Nurse
www.nursingtimes.net/news/coronavirus/icu-nurse-captures-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-workforce-06-09-2020/

Methodology

*Theoretical
Framework*



Banksy (2020) *Game Changer*. [Wall Muriel] Southampton General Hospital. Photograph: <https://sbutterfly.files.wordpress.com/2021/04/game-changer-02.jpg>

FINDINGS

Themes	Sub Themes
Experiences	Workload, The change in the ICU environment, The experience of nursing duties during COVID-19
The physical impact on ICU Nurses	Fatigue and PPE, Contracting COVID-19
Emotional Experiences and Responses	Compassion Fatigue, Moral distress & Moral injury, Powerlessness, Effects of the emotional experiences on ICU Nurses
Roles and identity as an ICU Nurse	ICU Nurses role, Nurse's pay, Societal Appreciation and Understanding
Female ICU Nurse Health and Wellbeing	Menopause and Periods, Pregnancy and Maternity Leave, Motherhood and Caring Responsibilities, Emotional Care
Personal circumstances	Personal Loss, Supporting family through injury, illness & education, Returning to ICU nursing or moving to a different hospital, The experience of a newly qualified nurse
Support offered to ICU Nurses during the pandemic	Importance of the Team, Nurse Experience Overlooked, ICU Nurse Wellbeing Support Measures
The impact of sharing pandemic narratives	

Compassion Fatigue: The Emotional Experience of Female ICU Nurses During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Impact of Covid-19

- On the nature of work
 - The role and duties
 - Workload
 - The environment
- The physical being
 - Fatigue
 - PPE
 - Contracting COVID-19
- On emotional wellbeing
 - Moral distress & injury
 - Powerlessness
 - Emotional care
- On work satisfaction
 - The emotional experience
 - Pay
 - Societal appreciation & understanding

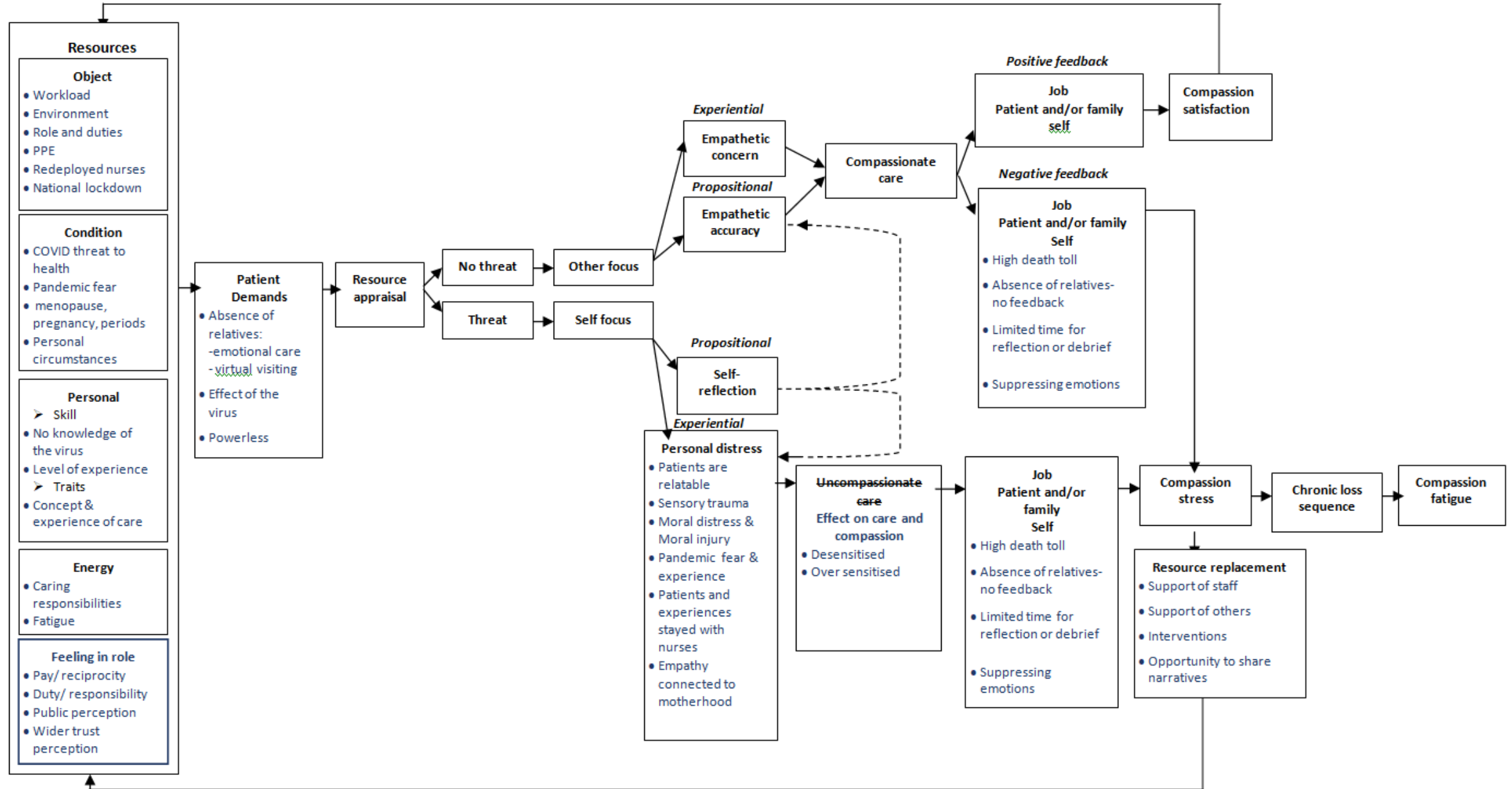
Factors Affecting the Experience

- Menopause and periods
- Pregnancy and maternity leave
- Caring roles and responsibilities
- Personal loss
- Supporting family through injury illness & education
- Returning to ICU Nursing
- Familiarity with the environment
- Level of experience
- Relationship with role

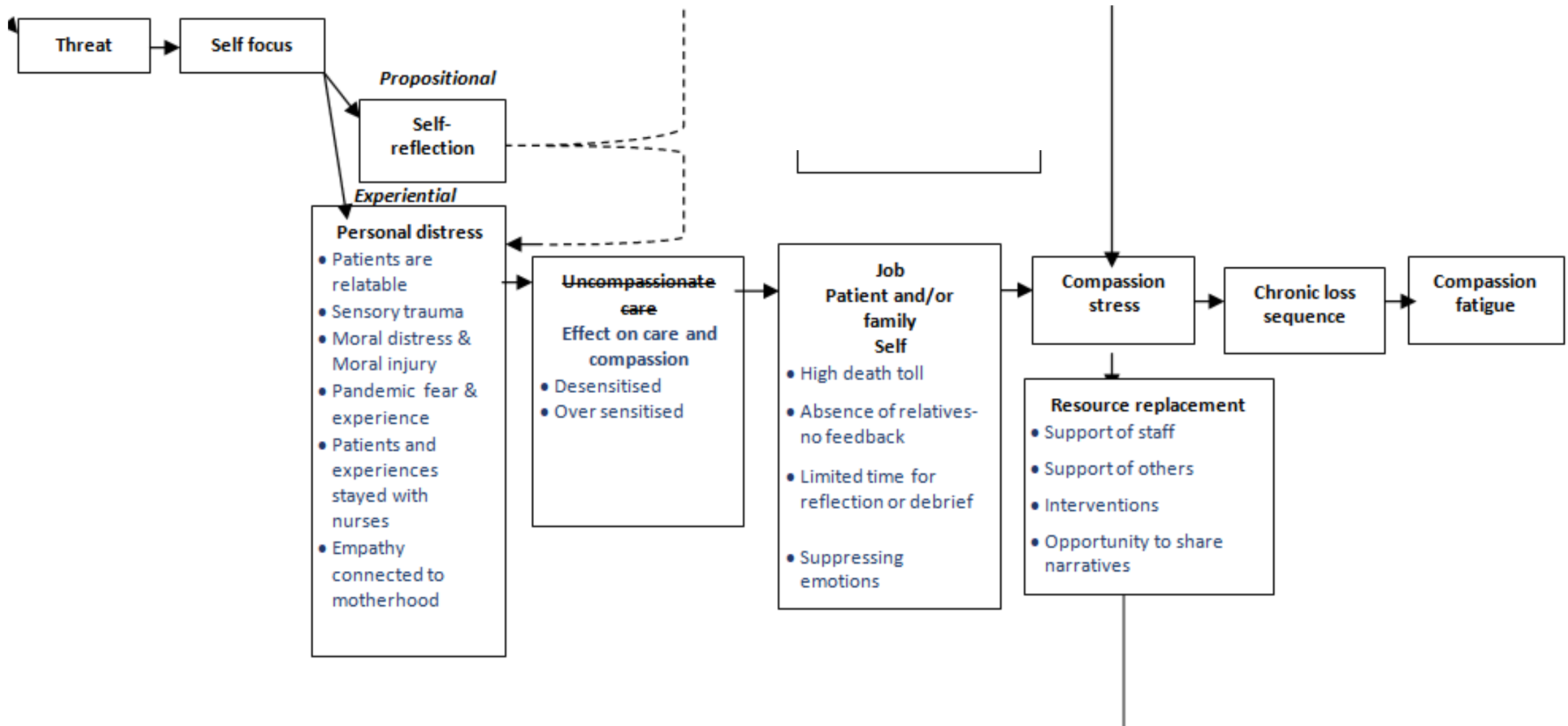
Mediating Factors

- The support of the team
- The support of others
- Interventions to provide support
- Capacity to share stories

The female ICU nurse's COVID-19 experience overlaid onto Coezee and Laschinger's (2018) Compassion Fatigue Model.



The female ICU nurse's COVID-19 experience overlaid onto Coezee and Laschinger's (2018) Compassion Fatigue Model.



Emotional Care



- Witnessing the effects of COVID-19 on patients
- The Absence of Patient Relatives
- Profound Emotional Experiences
- Suppressing Emotions
- Emotional Care

In this April 28, 2020, file photo a nurse practitioner Capri Reese talks to a patient and holds her hand while a doctor administers an IV at Roseland Community Hospital in Chicago. (Ashlee Rezin Garcia/Chicago Sun-Times via AP, File) (Ashlee Rezin Garcia, Ashlee Rezin Garcia/Sun-Times)

Witnessing the effects of COVID-19 on patients

'giving them injections, washing them, turning them after they have been soiled. Their skin's sore, they've got pressure sores on their face where they've been prone and, you know, when you see them like that, and you know full well that they're going to die anyway.' AoC01



Absence of patient relatives



'And when we decided to withdraw care and her Mum and Dad were on FaceTime to her... Listening to her Mum and Dad, was possibly one of the worst things... It was like primal crying, their child is going and they can't even be there. And denying them that opportunity was horrific. And I was really angry and. And I was... And I held onto that anger. And I, I didn't know how to get rid of it.' AoC07

Profound Emotional Experiences

'I will never forget... One patient that broken many... of us. She was she was a colleague. She, she worked in a different hospital... And then she came to us with COVID. She was very young.' AoC04



An intensive care nurse treats a patient who is on a ventilator. Credit: Emily Gilhespy

Suppressing Emotions



'Like I remember actually crying and trying to pretend that I wasn't crying while I was talking to this family and holding up the phone to the ear of this man so his daughter could tell him that she loves him on the phone, and I was crying and just trying to not, because you're not meant to get in the way, you're not meant to be unprofessional or whatever.' AoC08

Emotional Care



'I think emotionally women just deal with things so much differently and we take on board all the people's emotions as well. And I know that I do that and you know. I, I, I know I take on other peoples hurt and feel other peoples physical pain when they're seeing somebody die. So my experience as a woman has, has absolutely been different in, in, not just that sense as well, but in physical sense.' AoC07

Romelia Navarro (right) is comforted by nurse Michele Younkin as she weeps while sitting at the bedside of her dying husband, Antonio, in St. Jude Medical Center's Covid-19 unit in Fullerton, Calif., in July

Discussion:

Contributions to the
*Compassion Fatigue
Model* (Coetzee and Laschinger, 2018)

- Covid-19 posed a threat to nurses leading to Compassion Fatigue
- Gender, Care & Professionalism
- Empathetic Care & Motherhood
- Caring Responsibilities



'Compassion' 2021 from the 'Being a Nurse' collection. Artwork by Bob Williams.
<https://www.robertwilliamsart.co.uk/product/compassion-5/>

Conclusion

A gendered understanding requires an understanding of a duty of care and how that is defined embodied & performed in and outside of the role and thus relates to the identity of the ICU nurse as a contributing factor to their emotional experience of delivering care.



Jill Kirk and Karen Colbeck-Rowe, nurses working on the King's Mill Hospital Critical Care unit taken by Holly Beacroft, nurse. www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/news/2021/january-2021/candid-photograph-showing-the-pain-and-grief-of-working-in-critical-care-goes-viral/

Future of the Research

Further investigation and analysis of the impact of emotional care and emotional experiences of the pandemic in connection to the gendered experience, moral injury and cumulative grief.

Other themes: Understanding and appreciating the ICU Nurses role- reflected perceptions of the role.

Sharing narratives- reclaiming power

Methods: Creative writing workshops



Thank you, I welcome your thoughts & questions.

For more information about the future
creative workshops please get in touch:



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