

Diwali



What Is Diwali?

Diwali is an important religious celebration that is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, Jain and some Buddhists. It is known as the 'Festival of Lights' and marks the beginning of a new year in some parts of the world.



Find out more by
clicking here.



Rama and Sita

During the festival, Hindus celebrate the legend of the return of Rama and Sita.

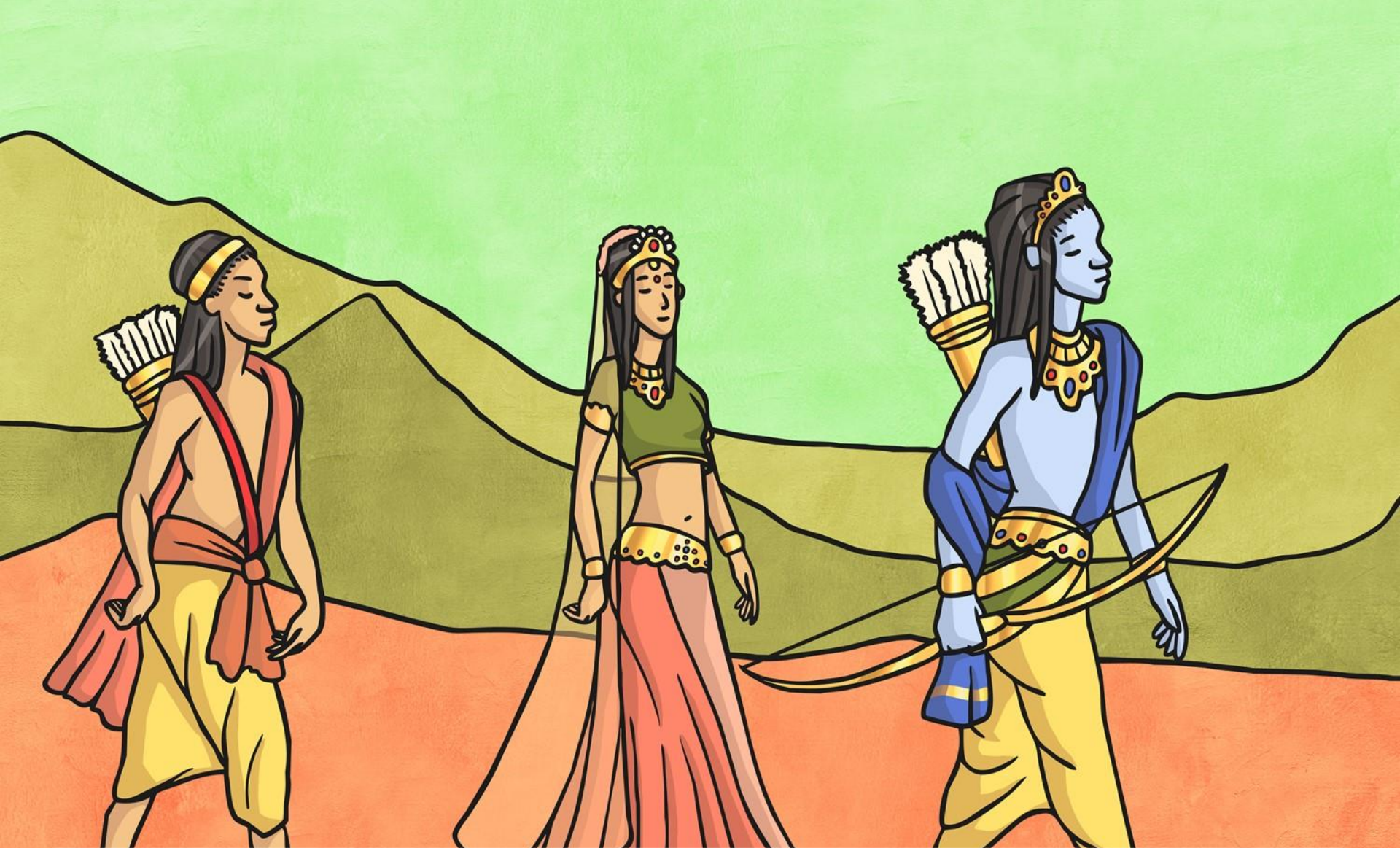




The Story of
Rama and Sita



Once upon a time, there lived a great warrior, Prince Rama, and he had a beautiful wife named Sita.



One day, Rama and Sita were banished from their home by the King. Rama's brother, Lakshma, joined them in **exile**. This means they were not allowed to live in their own kingdom.



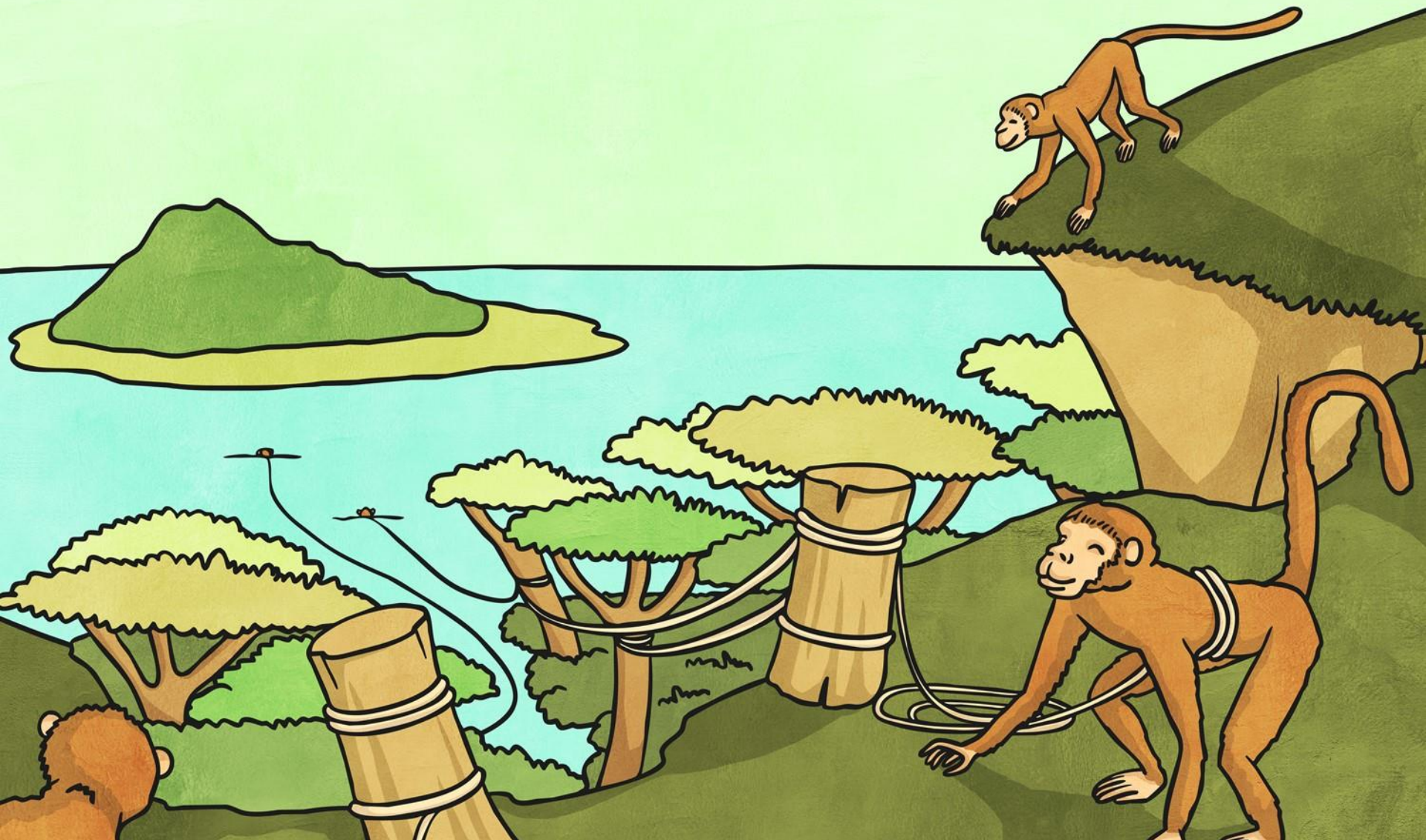
Living nearby was a terrible demon king, Ravana. He had ten heads and twenty arms, and was feared throughout the land.



One day, Ravana kidnapped Sita and took her away in his chariot. Clever Sita left a trail of her jewellery for Rama to follow.



Rama and Lakshma followed the trail of glittering jewellery until they met the monkey king, Hanuman, who became their friend and agreed to help find Sita. Messages were sent to all the monkeys in the world who set out to find Sita.



After a very long search, Hanuman found Sita imprisoned on an island. The army of monkeys couldn't reach the island, so they began to build a bridge. Soon, all the animals of the world, large and small, had come to help.

When the bridge was built, they rushed across it and fought a mighty battle.



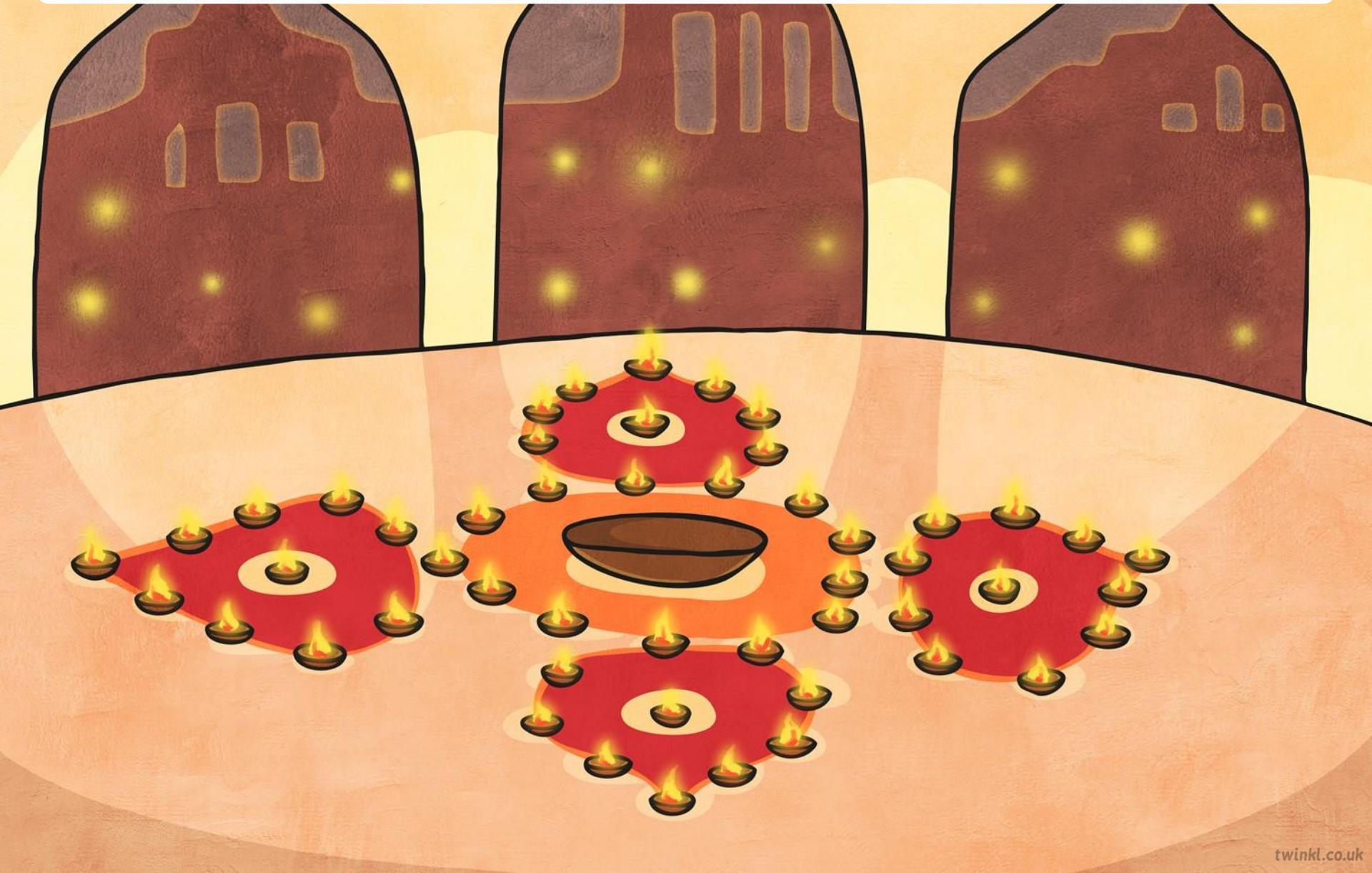


When Rama killed the evil Ravana with a magic arrow, the whole world rejoiced.

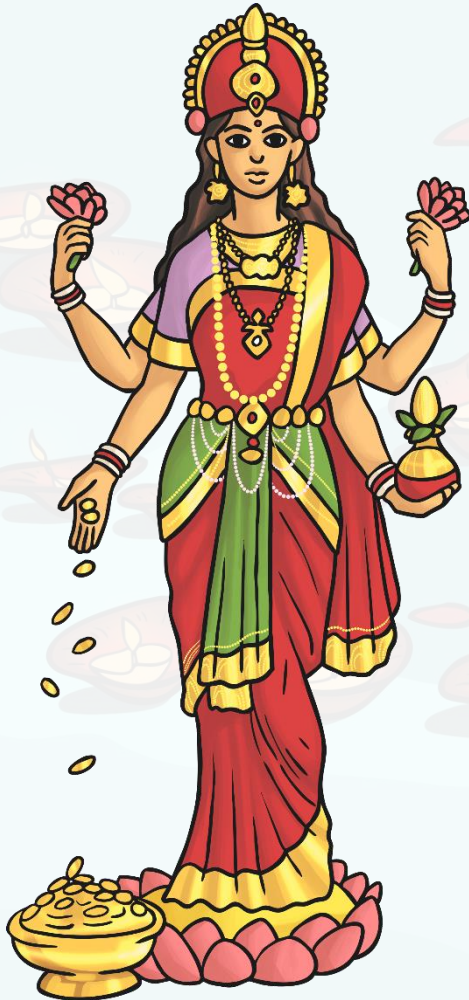


Rama and Sita were reunited and they began their long journey back to their land. Lamps were lit by everybody to help them on their way and welcome them back.

To this day, Diwali is celebrated by people lighting lamps as a way to remember that light triumphs over dark and good over evil.



Lakshmi the Goddess of Wealth



Many Hindus also link Diwali with Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.

Lamps are lit to help Lakshmi find her way into people's homes and doors and windows are left open so that she can find her way in.

Celebrating Diwali

Diwali is a time for celebrating good over evil and happiness.

During this time, people:

- spring clean their homes for the new year;
- wear new clothes;
- exchange presents;
- share special meals with their friends and family;
- enjoy huge firework displays.





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