

The mortal instruments the city of ashes

Unveiling the Shadowy Depths: A Deep Dive into "The Mortal Instruments: City of Ashes" Welcome, fellow bookworms and enthusiasts of the supernatural! Today, we're diving headfirst into Cassandra Clare's captivating world of "The Mortal Instruments: City of Ashes," exploring not just the plot, but the emotional tapestry, the characters' motivations, and the societal implications woven into this thrilling novel. This isn't just a book review; it's an exploration of how this young adult fantasy masterpiece continues to resonate with readers today. [A World of Shadows and Secrets Unveiled](#) "City of Ashes" introduces us to a world teetering on the brink of war, where the mundane collides with the extraordinary. The city itself, a backdrop of ancient secrets and looming threats, is a character in its own right. Clare masterfully uses imagery and evocative descriptions to paint a vibrant picture of New York, but with a twist – a hidden layer of Shadowhunters, faeries, and demons. This layered reality is what makes the story so engaging and keeps readers hooked.

Exploring the Character Dynamics

The core of the story lies in the relationships between characters, particularly between Clary and Jace. Their evolving dynamic, from suspicion and mistrust to burgeoning love and loyalty, forms the heart of the narrative. Clary's journey from a normal teenager to a Shadowhunter shapes our understanding of personal growth and self-discovery.

Thematic Exploration: Power, Responsibility, and Sacrifice

This book isn't just about thrilling action sequences; it delves deep into themes of power, responsibility, and sacrifice. Each character grapples with these concepts, forcing readers to contemplate their own moral compass in the face of extraordinary circumstances. For instance, the Shadowhunters' unwavering commitment to protecting humanity highlights the importance of selfless action.

Societal Implications: Prejudice and Acceptance

The novel also touches upon the complex issue of prejudice and discrimination. The treatment of Downworlders – faeries, vampires, and demons – mirrors real-world societal challenges. The Shadowhunters themselves aren't always free from prejudices, leading to internal conflict and questioning of their own ideals. This exploration of societal biases is a key strength of the narrative.

An Analysis of the Plot Mechanics

The plot of "City of Ashes" is intricately woven, with secrets and betrayals revealing themselves gradually. A detailed look at the plot structure reveals a masterful blend of suspense and foreshadowing. Clare uses red herrings and subtle clues to maintain reader engagement and anticipation.

Practical Applications: Drawing Lessons for Writers

While this analysis is purely literary, we can also learn valuable insights for our own writing. One key takeaway is the importance of creating a compelling world. "City of Ashes" offers a rich tapestry of details that bring the world to life, creating a powerful emotional connection with the reader.

Practical Example: Creating a Vivid Atmosphere

The vivid descriptions of New York, now layered with the existence of Shadowhunters, are a prime example. This combination of familiar and fantastical is essential for pulling readers into a new reality.

Key Benefits of Reading "City of Ashes" (and related works)

- **Enhanced Imagination:** Immersing yourself in a world filled with mythical creatures and supernatural events sparks creativity and imagination. Readers actively engage with the world, visualizing characters and settings.
- **Improved Empathy:** Through the characters' struggles and triumphs, readers develop greater empathy for different perspectives and learn to navigate complex moral dilemmas.
- **Expanding Literary Horizons:** This novel and the series expose readers to various themes and genres, fostering a broader understanding of literature and storytelling.
- **Stronger Emotional Connection:** The characters' journeys, from fear to courage, resonate with readers on a deep emotional level, promoting a richer connection to the text.

Expert-Level FAQs

1. **What is the significance of the Mortal Cup in the novel?** The Mortal Cup, a powerful artifact, symbolizes the delicate balance between the human and supernatural worlds. Its presence and its subsequent influence demonstrate the potential consequences of power misuse.

2. **How does Clare's portrayal of relationships contribute to the story's depth?** Clare's depiction of complicated relationships, particularly between Clary and Jace, adds layers of realism and complexity to the supernatural setting. It makes the characters more relatable and their struggles more resonant.

3. **What are the key parallels between the Shadowhunter world and modern society?** The struggles within the Shadowhunter community, including prejudice, class distinctions, and ethical dilemmas, serve as a mirror to challenges prevalent in modern society, allowing readers to reflect on their own lives and experiences.

4. **What literary devices does Clare use to build suspense?** Clare effectively employs foreshadowing, mysterious elements, and a carefully paced narrative to keep the reader in suspense. These narrative techniques create anticipation and keep the story moving forward.

5. **How does the "City of Ashes" build upon the foundations laid in previous installments of the series?** "City of Ashes" not only stands on its own as a compelling novel but also expertly sets the stage for the continuation of Clary and Jace's intertwined journeys, furthering the overall narrative arc of the series.

Concluding Remarks "The Mortal Instruments: City of Ashes" is more than just a fantasy novel; it's a potent exploration of human emotion and societal interactions within a unique and compelling framework. Its blend of captivating plotlines, intriguing characters, and profound themes makes it a truly unforgettable reading experience. Whether you're a seasoned reader or just starting your fantasy journey, this novel promises to leave a lasting impression. Continue exploring the world of Shadowhunters, and let the intricate tapestry of its story weave itself into your understanding of the human condition.

The Mortal Instruments: City of Ashes - A Deeper Dive into Shadowhunter Secrets and Dangerous Alliances

Cassandra Clare's *The Mortal Instruments* series is a global phenomenon, and the second installment, *City of Ashes*, is where the stakes truly begin to skyrocket. If *City of Bones* introduced us to the dazzling, dangerous world of Shadowhunters, then *City of Ashes* plunges us headfirst into its intricate politics, forbidden desires, and the ever-present threat of darkness. This isn't just a sequel; it's a vital expansion of the narrative, weaving a more complex tapestry of ancient prophecies, family secrets, and the agonizing choices our young heroes must make. For those new to the Shadowhunter universe, imagine a hidden society of half-

angelic warriors dedicated to protecting the human world from demons. They live amongst us, unseen, wielding enchanted weapons and possessing a unique connection to the angel Raziel. This is the world Clary Fray, a seemingly ordinary teenager, stumbles into when she witnesses a murder no one else can see. What follows is a whirlwind of discovery, revealing her own latent Shadowhunter heritage and drawing her into a war with forces she never knew existed. **City of Ashes** picks up immediately after the dramatic revelations of the first book. Clary is grappling with the newfound knowledge of her lineage and the devastating truth about her mother, Jocelyn. Valentine Morgenstern, the enigmatic and terrifying antagonist, remains a looming shadow, more powerful and determined than ever to achieve his destructive goals. The City of Ashes, in this context, isn't just a title; it's a promise of the destruction that Valentine seeks to unleash, a grim foreshadowing of what's to come.

The Evolution of Clary Fray: From Ordinary to Extraordinary

One of the most compelling aspects of **City of Ashes** is the undeniable growth of Clary. While she began **City of Bones** as a relatable, somewhat overwhelmed protagonist, here she's forced to confront her destiny head-on. She's no longer just reacting; she's actively trying to understand her powers and her place in this new world. Her journey is one of self-discovery, marked by frustration, fear, and moments of surprising courage. Clary's developing abilities, particularly her innate talent for creating new runes, become a crucial plot point. These aren't the standard runes taught at the Shadowhunter Academy; they are born from her unique heritage, a blend of human emotion and angelic power. This makes her both a valuable asset and a dangerous anomaly, a fact not lost on Valentine and the Clave (the governing body of the Shadowhunters). Her fight isn't just against demons; it's also a fight for acceptance and understanding within a world that can be as rigid as it is magical.

Jace Herondale: The Brooding Hero's Internal Conflict

Jace Wayland, the effortlessly cool and devastatingly skilled Shadowhunter, remains a central figure, and **City of Ashes** delves deeper into his complex psyche. Haunted by his past and the manipulative influence of Valentine, Jace struggles with his own morality and his burgeoning feelings for Clary. The forbidden nature of their relationship, stemming from the revelation of their potential siblinghood, adds a layer of intense emotional turmoil. His loyalty is constantly tested. He's torn between his ingrained respect for the Clave, his desperate attempts to prove himself to his father figure, the all-powerful Valentine, and his growing affection for Clary. This internal conflict makes Jace more than just a typical heroic archetype; he's a character wrestling with demons both literal and metaphorical. His journey in **City of Ashes** is about grappling with his identity and the heavy burden of his lineage, making him one of the most compelling characters in the series.

Simon Lewis: The Mundane Caught in the Crossfire

No discussion of **City of Ashes** would be complete without acknowledging Simon Lewis. He's the anchor to Clary's past life, the loyal best friend who, despite his complete lack of Shadowhunter abilities, finds himself increasingly entangled in their world. His presence provides a crucial grounded perspective amidst the supernatural chaos. Simon's arc in **City of Ashes** is particularly significant. He's not just a passive observer; he actively tries to protect Clary and understand what's happening to her. His courage in the face of overwhelming danger, even when he's utterly out of his depth, makes him a fan favorite. His journey is a testament to the power of friendship and the idea that bravery comes in many forms, not just wielding a seraph blade.

Valentine Morgenstern: The Antagonist's Ruthless Pursuit

Valentine Morgenstern is a master manipulator, and **City of Ashes** showcases his chilling effectiveness. His obsession with the Mortal Instruments – three ancient artifacts of immense power: the Mortal Sword, the

Mortal Cup, and the Mortal Mirror – drives the plot. He believes these artifacts hold the key to creating a new, purer race of Shadowhunters, and he will stop at nothing to acquire them. His ruthlessness is on full display as he manipulates his own children, Jace and Sebastian, and orchestrates elaborate schemes to achieve his objectives. Valentine represents the ultimate threat, a figure who embodies the corrupting influence of power and a distorted vision of order. His pursuit of the Mortal Instruments is not just about power; it's about reshaping the entire Shadowhunter world in his own twisted image.

The City of Ashes: Themes of Identity, Family, and Forbidden Love

Beyond the thrilling action and supernatural battles, **City of Ashes** explores profound themes that resonate with readers.

The Shadowhunter Hierarchy and the Clave's Intrigues

The intricate political landscape of the Shadowhunter world is further illuminated in **City of Ashes**. The Clave, with its ancient laws and strict hierarchy, plays a significant role. We see the internal struggles and the often-difficult decisions the Council members face. Their adherence to tradition and their suspicion of anything outside the norm create a constant tension for Clary and her allies. The Clave's judgment, often swift and unforgiving, adds another layer of danger to their already perilous situation.

Forbidden Romance and Familial Bonds

The burgeoning romantic tension between Clary and Jace, complicated by the potential for a sibling relationship, is a central focus. This forbidden aspect adds a significant emotional weight to their interactions. Their undeniable chemistry and the genuine care they have for each other create a captivating, albeit agonizing, dynamic. The series masterfully explores the complexities of love, particularly when it clashes with societal expectations and deeply ingrained familial ties. The exploration of toxic family dynamics, embodied by Valentine's twisted manipulation, also serves as a stark contrast to the healthier, albeit complicated, bonds forming between Clary and her found family.

The Power of Runes and Angelic Magic

The lore surrounding runes and angelic magic is expanded upon in **City of Ashes**. We learn more about the different types of runes and their specific purposes. Clary's unique ability to create new runes, a manifestation of her pure angelic blood, is a game-changer. This introduces an element of unpredictable power, making her a vital, yet potentially volatile, force in the fight against Valentine. The visual imagery of these glowing symbols etched onto skin, imbuing the Shadowhunters with their incredible abilities, is a hallmark of Clare's storytelling.

The Mortal Instruments: A Series That Keeps You Hooked

City of Ashes is a masterclass in building suspense and deepening character development. It's a book that seamlessly blends high-octane action with heartfelt emotional moments. The stakes are higher, the secrets are darker, and the alliances are more precarious than ever. For fans of urban fantasy, paranormal romance, and epic tales of good versus evil, **The Mortal Instruments: City of Ashes** is an absolute must-read. It's a critical piece of the puzzle, laying the groundwork for even more explosive revelations and intense confrontations in the subsequent books. Whether you're a seasoned Shadowhunter enthusiast or just dipping your toes into the world of nephilim, this installment promises to leave you breathless and eager to uncover what lies within the remaining cities. The journey through the City of Ashes is a transformative one, not just for the characters, but for the reader, as we become more invested in their fight for survival and their quest for a better world. The

intricate world-building and the compelling characters ensure that **City of Ashes** isn't just a stepping stone; it's a powerful narrative in its own right, leaving an indelible mark on the fantasy landscape. The exploration of betrayal and the fragile nature of trust within the Shadowhunter community adds another layer of complexity that keeps readers engaged. Ultimately, **City of Ashes** solidifies the series' reputation for delivering a thrilling and emotionally resonant reading experience.

The Mortal Instruments: The City of Ashes — A Symbol of Fragile Power and Enduring Legacy In the tapestry of myth, symbolism, and urban legend, few images resonate as powerfully as *The Mortal Instruments: The City of Ashes*. This evocative name conjures a place where decay intertwines with purpose, where energy is both born and consumed in the shadow of impermanence. Though not a physical city in the conventional sense, it stands as a profound metaphor and cultural touchstone, representing the delicate balance between creation and destruction, ambition and consequence. This symbolic city emerges from layered narratives that blend historical memory with speculative imagination. Its essence lies in the concept of mortal instruments—tools, forces, and structures shaped not by divine permanence but by human hands and fleeting will. The City of Ashes embodies the idea that all grand ambitions, no matter how towering, are ultimately subject to time's erosion. Yet within that fragility lies a deeper truth: even in ruin, meaning persists. The ashes themselves become not just relics of loss but vessels of memory, carrying the weight of what once was and inviting reflection on what must be rebuilt.

At the heart of this symbolism is the notion of transformation. The city is not dead—it evolves, shaped by the interplay of fire and silence, ambition and collapse. Its streets whisper of battles fought, innovations born, and dreams shattered. In this way, *The Mortal Instruments* represent the instruments of human will—technology, governance, art—each wielded with both hope and hubris. They remind us that power, when unmoored from wisdom, becomes a force of its own destruction, yet when guided by awareness, it can forge enduring legacies. The city's ash is not an end, but a transition—a reminder that creation and decay are two sides of the same coin. The applications of this concept extend far beyond abstract philosophy. In literature, film, and architecture, the City of Ashes inspires narratives of fallen empires and rebirth, urging audiences to confront the consequences of progress. Urban planners and environmental thinkers draw from its imagery to advocate for sustainable design—structures meant to endure not by resisting change, but by embracing adaptability. The city's ethos encourages a shift from permanence as dominance to resilience as wisdom, where every instrument—be technological, social, or ecological—is designed with awareness of its lifecycle.

Benefits arise not from avoiding decay, but from understanding it. The *Mortal Instruments* model teaches humility and foresight: innovation must be tempered with responsibility, growth must honor limits, and memory must anchor identity. In a world grappling with climate crisis, political upheaval, and digital ephemera, this framework offers a vital lens. It challenges us to build not just for the present, but for the generations who will inherit what remains. The city's ashes become a call to stewardship—guardianship of both what is built and what must be allowed to fade. Looking to the future, *The Mortal Instruments: The City of Ashes* points toward a new paradigm of coexistence between humanity and the environments it shapes. As cities evolve into complex ecosystems of people, nature, and technology, the symbol reminds us that true resilience comes not from resisting change, but from designing with it. Smart cities may harness data and AI, but their longevity depends on integrating human values—equity, connection, and sustainability—into their very foundations. The city's enduring legacy lies in its invitation: to shape instruments of power not as fleeting monuments, but as living, learning parts of a greater whole. In the quiet glow of its ashes, *The Mortal Instruments* endure—not as ruins, but as wisdom in motion. They remind us that every moment, every structure, every dream is part of an ongoing story. And in that story, the city of ashes does not mourn what is lost—it honors the fire that made it rise, and inspires what will rise next.

The Mortal Instruments: City of Ashes - A Deep Dive into Shadowhunter Lore and Teenage Angst

Cassandra Clare's second installment in *The Mortal Instruments* series, *City of Ashes*, plunges readers deeper into the intricate and often perilous world of Shadowhunters, demons, and forbidden love. Following the explosive revelations of *City of Bones*, this novel navigates the turbulent aftermath, solidifying its place as a cornerstone of urban fantasy literature and a beloved entry for fans of the series. Beyond the surface-level supernatural thrills, *City of Ashes* offers a complex exploration of identity, loyalty, and the agonizing choices that define young adulthood, all set against a backdrop of escalating threats to the Shadowhunter world.

The Shadowhunter Chronicles: Expanding the Universe

City of Ashes significantly expands the lore established in its predecessor, providing a more nuanced understanding of the Shadowhunter community and its ancient history. The intricate web of runes, the hierarchy of the Clave, and the clandestine operations of the Silent Brothers are all brought into sharper focus. We gain a deeper appreciation for the burden carried by these demon-slaying warriors, tasked with protecting the mundane world from the creatures that lurk just beyond our perception. The introduction of new factions and the exploration of existing ones, like the Circle and their misguided ideology, add layers of political intrigue and moral ambiguity, making the Shadowhunter universe feel more lived-in and complex. Fans of the broader Shadowhunter Chronicles will recognize the seeds of future stories and character developments being sown here.

Clary Fray's Awakening: From Mundane to Powerful

At the heart of *City of Ashes* lies Clary Fray's continued, and often reluctant, journey into her destiny as a Shadowhunter. No longer a bewildered observer, Clary grapples with the newfound power surging within her, a power inextricably linked to her lineage and the mysterious abilities of her mother. This internal struggle is a significant thematic element. She wrestles with the implications of her heritage, particularly her connection to the villainous Valentine Morgenstern. The novel explores the devastating impact of discovering that those closest to you may not be who you thought, forcing Clary to question her own identity and her place within the Shadowhunter world. Her emotional arc is marked by a potent blend of fear, determination, and an burgeoning sense of responsibility. The raw emotional vulnerability of Clary makes her a relatable protagonist for many young adult readers, navigating their own uncertainties about who they are and where they belong.

Jace Wayland: The Brooding Warrior's Inner Turmoil

Jace Herondale, the golden boy of the Shadowhunter world, faces his own set of demons in *City of Ashes*. His bravado and self-assuredness begin to crack under the weight of his father's manipulative influence and his own burgeoning, and forbidden, feelings for Clary. The forbidden romance between Jace and Clary is a central driving force of the narrative, presenting a powerful obstacle that tests their resolve and their understanding of the Shadowhunter laws. Jace's internal conflict – the clash between his duty as a Shadowhunter, his loyalty to his adopted father, and his undeniable attraction to Clary – creates a compelling character study. His brooding nature, while a hallmark of his appeal, is rooted in a deep-seated fear of loss and a desperate search for belonging. The complex relationship between Jace and his father, Valentine, is explored with chilling detail, highlighting the psychological manipulation and the lasting scars it leaves. This exploration of damaged father-son relationships is a recurring theme in young adult literature.

The Villains: Valentine Morgenstern's Escalating Threat

Valentine Morgenstern is not just a passive antagonist; he is a force of nature, a charismatic and utterly ruthless individual driven by a twisted vision of Shadowhunter supremacy. In **City of Ashes**, his machinations become more overt and his threat more immediate. His pursuit of the Mortal Instruments, particularly the powerful Mortal Sword, drives much of the plot. Valentine's ability to manipulate others, including his own children, showcases his chilling intellect and his unwavering belief in his own righteousness. The novel delves into the historical context of his rebellion, providing a glimpse into the ideological schisms that have plagued the Shadowhunter world for centuries. His presence looms large, a constant source of danger and moral compromise for the protagonists. The portrayal of Valentine as a complex, albeit evil, antagonist elevates the stakes and offers a compelling study of fanaticism.

The Love Triangle: A Source of Tension and Heartbreak

While the central romance is between Jace and Clary, the presence of Simon Lewis, Clary's loyal best friend and increasingly aware of the supernatural world, introduces a classic love triangle dynamic. Simon's unrequited feelings for Clary, coupled with his growing involvement in the Shadowhunter world and his own burgeoning vampiric nature, add another layer of emotional complexity. This triangular relationship creates significant tension and heartbreak, forcing characters to confront difficult choices and the consequences of their desires. The exploration of these romantic entanglements, while a staple of young adult fiction, is handled with a maturity that resonates with readers. The emotional stakes are raised as Simon navigates his feelings and his changing identity.

Themes of Identity and Belonging

City of Ashes is a profound exploration of identity. Clary questions her heritage and her capacity for good or evil, while Jace grapples with his identity as both a son and a warrior, entangled in a web of familial betrayal. Simon's transformation into a vampire further complicates his sense of self. The novel emphasizes that identity is not solely defined by blood or lineage, but by the choices one makes and the people one chooses to protect. The search for belonging is another prominent theme. Clary, an outsider to the Shadowhunter world, desperately seeks acceptance, while Jace, despite his elite status, feels a profound sense of isolation. The bonds of friendship and found family become increasingly important as the characters navigate their shared challenges. This exploration of self-discovery and the importance of connection is a powerful draw for the target audience.

Pacing and Plot Progression

City of Ashes masterfully balances intricate world-building with a propulsive plot. Clare skillfully interweaves moments of quiet introspection and character development with heart-pounding action sequences and devastating revelations. The pacing is relentless, with each chapter propelling the narrative forward and leaving the reader eager for more. The introduction of new magical elements, the escalating conflict with Valentine, and the personal struggles of the characters all contribute to a sense of urgency and high stakes. The plot twists are well-executed, often catching readers by surprise and adding significant depth to the overarching narrative. The way the story unfolds keeps readers engaged, making it a page-turner.

Legacy and Impact of City of Ashes

City of Ashes cemented **The Mortal Instruments** as a dominant force in young adult urban fantasy. Its success not only paved the way for subsequent books in the series but also contributed to the broader popularity of the genre. The rich tapestry of Shadowhunter lore, the compelling characters, and the exploration of universal themes resonated with a global audience, leading to adaptations in film and television.

The series' exploration of complex moralities and the blurring lines between good and evil continues to be a subject of discussion among fans and literary critics. The enduring appeal of characters like Clary, Jace, and Simon speaks to their well-crafted complexities and the relatable struggles they face. The ongoing popularity of the Shadowhunter universe, with its spin-off series and extensive fan base, is a testament to the strong foundation laid by books like **City of Ashes**.

SEO Keywords and Related Terms:

Mortal Instruments, City of Ashes, Cassandra Clare, Shadowhunters, Clary Fray, Jace Wayland, Valentine Morgenstern, Simon Lewis, Shadowhunter lore, urban fantasy, young adult fiction, forbidden romance, demon hunting, Mortal Sword, Clave, Silent Brothers, Downworlders, vampires, angels, parabatai, demons, teenage angst, identity, belonging, supernatural, fantasy series, book review, plot analysis, character development.

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Questions & Answers About the mortal instruments the city of ashes

No	Question	Answer
1	What is the significance of the City of Ashes in the Mortal Instruments series?	The City of Ashes is actually a city, not a metaphorical concept. It's the ancient, ruined city built by the first Shadowhunters, and it holds immense power and secrets crucial to understanding the Shadowhunter world and their history.
2	Who is Valentine Morgenstern, and what are his goals in 'City of Ashes'?	Valentine Morgenstern is the primary antagonist, a powerful and fanatical Shadowhunter who believes the Nephilim are superior to Downworlders. His main goal in this book is to gather the Mortal Instruments to create a new army and reshape the world according to his extreme views.
3	What new relationships or romantic developments occur between the main characters in 'City of Ashes'?	'City of Ashes' deepens the complexities of the relationships, particularly the burgeoning romance between Clary and Jace, which is complicated by their potential familial ties. Simon also navigates his feelings for Clary and his transformation into a vampire.
4	How does Clary's role and power evolve in 'City of Ashes'?	Clary discovers and begins to understand her latent angelic abilities. She realizes she's more than just a mundane girl caught in the Shadowhunter world and starts to actively use her powers, becoming a vital asset in the fight against Valentine.
5	What is the significance of the Infernal Devices in 'City of Ashes'?	The Infernal Devices (Cupid's Bow, Steele, and Mirror) are the three Mortal Instruments. Valentine is desperately trying to acquire them to gain ultimate power, and the Shadowhunters must prevent him from succeeding.
6	What challenges do the Shadowhunters face from Valentine's forces in 'City of Ashes'?	Valentine commands a powerful army, including rogue Shadowhunters, demons, and corrupted Downworlders. He uses them to launch attacks on the Shadowhunter Institute and target key figures, creating widespread chaos and danger.

The Mortal Instruments city of ashes fantasy, The Mortal Instruments city of ashes lore, city of ashes mortal instruments worldbuilding, The Mortal Instruments city of ashes fantasy series, city of ashes mortal instruments mythology, mortal instruments city of ashes dark fantasy, The Mortal Instruments city of ashes narrative, city of ashes fantasy novel series, mortal instruments city of ashes epic saga, dark fantasy city of ashes mortal instruments

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