



# City of the Snakes

*D.B. Shan*

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For ten years Capac Raimi has ruled the City. Created by the first Cardinal to continue his legacy, Capac cannot be killed.

Then Capac disappears. His trusted lieutenant, Ford Tasso, suspects the mysterious *villacs*, ancient and powerful Incan priests. To Ford, only one man has the cunning to outwit such adversaries-Al Jeery, who has taken the guise of his father, the terrifying assassin Paucar Wami.

Al has no love for Capac and no wish to tangle with the *villacs*. Until Ford promises him the one thing he truly craves-retribution against the man who killed those he loved most and destroyed his life. Lured into the twisted, nightmarish world of the Incan priests, Al will learn more about the City than he ever imagined, and be offered more power than he ever desired.

But in the City, everything comes at a cost...

## City of the Snakes Details

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Author : D.B. Shan

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# From Reader Review City of the Snakes for online ebook

## Nicola Mansfield says

Reason for Reading: Next and last in the series.

Starting ten years after the events of the first two books we meet up with Capac Raimi again whom we last really saw in Book One, though he was referred to in Book Two. We see that his rule as Cardinal has not gone as smoothly as he had hoped but this is in fact his own doing as he wants to put his plans into action and slowly watch them unfold since he has eternity to fill. But what he hadn't counted on was the power the rival gangs were gaining and that has him worried. Also though he has started to see and have encounters with people from his past who are dead and that can only mean the mysterious blind Incan priests are up to something. When Capac disappears, his second in charge hires professional killer Al Jeery to find him and this leads to the realization that the Ancient priests have been secretly plotting to take back the City for themselves for years.

Darren Shan has brought all the aspects from books 1 & 2 together in this conclusion to the series in an explosive showdown between the gangs, the Cardinal's mafioso and the powerful Incan priests. The plot is fast-paced and keeps its energy throughout. Just as expected from the previous books this is a dark, gritty, violent urban fantasy. All threads are pulled together and story arcs run to conclusion many in unexpected endings. I was a bit disappointed that Capac's part was limited to the opening and closing sections, with Al Jeery being the protagonist throughout the main portion of the novel. But that's just because I was fascinated with his character in book one; this story needed to be told the way it was. There is a huge revelation for Jeery which is a big shocker and a very disturbing one as we thought we knew all there was to know about serial killer Paucar Wami.

I'm not usually a big fan of urban fantasy or the level of violence that comes with type of story but Darren Shan is a favourite author and he truly has come out with a tour de force for his first series written to an adult audience. I was so looking forward to reading this last book and my expectations were more than met. I definitely plan on re-reading the series someday in the future where I can read the books altogether in a row as I think it will be an even more intense experience when I don't have to wait a year between books. If you can handle mafioso style violence, I definitely recommend this urban fantasy trilogy. The Incan mythology gives it a unique flavour especially when combined with a mafia-type organization and mysterious powers that control certain peoples lives, I should say deaths.

As a P.S., in Shan's dedications he says good-bye to his previous pen names "Darren O'Shaughnessy" his real name I believe, which he wrote under in his early days and "D.B. Shan" the name he wrote under for his two famous YA series. At this point we can expect all Shan's future books to be written under "Darren Shan" which also includes this adult series and two new YA novels published this year.

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## Kevin says

**Rating: 4.5 Stars, Spectacular**

Gahhh! It's over! -Cries-

At least there's more Darren Shan to read!

Anyways, I really REALLY enjoyed this. It brought everything in the story to a concise end, explained a ton, got WAYYY darker, felt epic and climatic as a conclusion should, and brought all the great elements of the first two books into it!

#### FAVORITE THINGS:

- Love that there was all-out war
- Love the questioning of evil and free-will and destiny
- LOVE the Incas being eradicated
- Love the ending itself, the epilogue
- Loved having both POV's
- Loved Ama and Al's romance

#### MINOR ISSUES:

- There were a few quotes that actually copied from The Mortal Instruments and Harry Potter. Only like 2 in total though, but it was just a tad odd.
- The whole government and location and racism and all was weird, it was just very confusing at the end and I wasn't sure what was all happening, I also forgot stuff from the prior books so that's part of it
- Kind of was confused at the whole Ayumarcian creation thingy, the Incas should've been explained more, it was a little weird, but I did think it was interesting.
- Found one typo lol.
- Dragged a little bit

OVERALL, it was a PHENOMENAL ending to a PHENOMENAL series

P.S. Loved the title, Huck Finn references, revelations, and character development. Only thing was, it was similar to Shan's other conclusions, his conclusions usually have a good few things similar but are still TOTALLY unique so it's fine!

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#### **Drew Budds says**

loved this book so much from beginning to the end. a really good read and i hope darran shan continues writing adult books as good as this

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#### **Linda Cummings says**

He's done it again! I've read every Darren Shan/Dash book I can get my hands on and have never been disappointed.

Mr. Shan's writing skills keep you in the story. Like you're actually with the characters. His imagination and creativity are astounding!

Unique story!

Totally intriguing!

Completely satisfying!

I can't wait to read more from him.

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## **Brittany says**

**How I Came To Read This Book:** I first read Darren Shan's 'Procession of the Dead' several years ago when I got an Advance Reader Copy from a publisher. I've since promoted the book and read the series, which ends here.

**The Plot:** It's ten years since the converging storylines of Capac Raimi and Al Jeery met at the end of the second book in the series, Hell's Horizon. Raimi is still instated as an uncertain head of affairs in the city, while Jeery is still in disguise as Paucar Wami, continually on the hunt for the man who ruined his life, Bill Casey. When Raimi goes AWOL, Jeery/Wami is hired to seek him out in exchange for the goods on Casey, who indeed is still alive as Jeery suspected. Before he can get too far into the investigation however, a murder that takes him back a decade ago embroils Jeery once again in the plans of the Incan priests that have a secret hold on the city. As the story progresses, Jeery must choose between his no mercy alterna persona and that of his humanity as he comes to grips with the final battle that may destroy the city once and for all.

**The Good & The Bad:** I've lent and recommended Procession of the Dead to scads of people, despite the fact the general consensus is the ending is a little disappointing compared to the thrilling pace of the rest of the book. I've been hesitant to recommend the first sequel because while in POTD, it was easy to suspend your disbelief and look for a rational explanation to the plot, by the end, all bets are off as you debate whether what's happening is reality or a product of the mythology that plays heavily into the series. The third book makes me continually hesitant to recommend it as it's the most laden with mythology, much of which overtakes the bouts of page-turning action, character development, and overall flow. At times it feels like Shan is breaking the 'show not tell' rule as pages are bogged down with exposition, particularly towards what should have been a climactic end. Also the books being released so far apart made it hard to remember the relevance of some characters in this widespread cast, although Shan does an admirable job of continually reminding you of what each character did in the past.

That being said, there still were lots of interesting page-turning bits and mysteries, and I was grateful to be brought fully in the fold of understanding just what was going on. Shan is a unique writer with a gritty, gruesome style unlike anything else I've read, and this book is certainly the most disturbing of them all. It was nice to go back to the city although I could have done with less Jeery and more Raimi, and the action was certainly pulse-pounding throughout. Still, I can't shake the feeling that the final entry in The City series felt kind of like Season 6 of Lost - you get the explanations you've been looking for, but at the expense of seeing the man behind the curtain and being a bit underwhelmed.

**The Bottom Line:** The City trilogy is possibly best enjoyed as a single series rather than spread out, but the gritty noir feel of the first book is unmatched by what transpires in the latter two.

**Anything Memorable?:** Nope

**50-Book Challenge?:** Book #43 in 2010

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## **Ryan says**

My favorite moment in Batman comics is when he descends from above, out of the darkness into the panel, crushing some criminal beneath him. Dangerous, right?

In fact, Batman is the most dangerous person in Gotham City, even though he never kills.

In *City of the Snakes*, Shan has a character, Al Jeery AKA Paucar Wami, who is supposed to be the most dangerous assassin in "The City," and of course in the world as well.

There's a trick to associating danger with your character. Some authors go for the plain face/ dangerous soul juxtaposition. Others go for the steely eyes, warm heart juxtaposition. Some authors just throw a series of obstacle villains at their dangerous hero, who then manages to outwit and outfight each opponent. It's only reasonable to conclude that such a person is dangerous.

I can't buy Al Jeery as a dangerous assassin.

For one thing, I think we know too much about Jeery. At no point is he going to be mysterious because he tells the story in the first person. Unlike Batman, he's not even very good at it. Worse, Jeery was the main character in *Hell's Horizon*, and he was an unambitious, somewhat clumsy detective trying to do his best in a difficult situation, and even then not doing such a great job of it. This premise can make for a compelling story, but now we're supposed to buy that Al Jeery has since evolved into an assassin even more dangerous than the Batman?

My suspension of disbelief is straining, and we've only reached the third chapter.

There's a lot to be said for training, even if it's only done as part of a "montage" (think Rocky jogging and lifting trees in the snow), to convince the audience that our hero has indeed changed. I suppose you could say that Shan has made an effort: Jeery has lost his partner and was betrayed. He doesn't know where his betrayer is, so he becomes an assassin, though a relatively "moral" one. There's our motivation/ psychological causation sequence. It seems unlikely to me that if he was transformed by these events that he would just "fall back" on being an assassin.

How about his fitness regimen? At home, Jeery does situps and pushups in his living room. I feel the need to point out that this will give him impressive abs, pecs, and triceps, but there are other muscles. To start, could he at least do some squats and lunges? I've never "descended from above" into a panel like Batman, but I think it takes more than a strong core, pecs, and triceps.

Ultimately, I felt that Shan's strongest work in this series was based around Capac Raimi, the hero of *Procession of the Dead*, and I'd hoped that Shan would return to (only) Raimi's storyline in this concluding volume of "The City" trilogy. Instead, Capac is around for a few pages of hard-boiled crime lord business before he disappears in a morgue (a nice touch, I thought).

Thereafter, Jeery the lurching detective/ assassin investigates.

Unfortunately, Jeery is not much of a detective either. *City of the Snakes* really could have used a caped crusader. Instead, it had Al Jeery.

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## Nick Duijnste says

Pure Epic!

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## Mihir says

Original review over at [Fantasy Book Critic](#)

**OVERVIEW/ANALYSIS:** I was awaiting “City of the Snakes” since the moment I finished “Hell’s Horizon”. I knew that the third book would be taking a time leap and would be featuring characters from both the previous books. After liking the weird but excellent start to the series, I was curious how the author planned to end the series and how would Capac and Jeery interact with each other and what would this mean for the City.

The story opens up ten years after the events of Procession of the Dead and we find that Capac has indeed risen to the top however he’s not been completely able to control his environment. He wonders whether he did the right thing in the climax of Procession of the Dead as things haven’t gone smoothly as per the Cardinal’s predictions. His henchmen have been constantly betraying him and somehow he has started seeing ghosts of past personae. Convinced he’s slowly losing his mind, he turns to Ford Tasso to help him however before he can be of any service, Capac is reunited with a particular person from his past. His besotted entanglement however leads him down a path from where return is nigh impossible. Al Jeery is then contacted by Ford Tasso to locate and retrieve Capac, that however is easier said than done as the usual suspects are the city’s worst kept secret, its Incan priests. As Al slowly makes his way through the twisted lanes of the City, he starts realizing that perhaps Capac was seeing something concrete after all. And the worst nightmare the City has ever faced, the deadly psychopathic assassin Paucar Wami, has returned and perhaps he will want to find out what Al has been up to for the past ten years.

This book is the last book in the trilogy and therefore it does bring into play all the characters which have been introduced so far. This is a good move on the author’s part as it further raises the scales. There is a theme of redemption which plays out between the pages and all characters have to face it. The plot of the book is coalesced a bit from the first two as in the first we had a crusade of one person to rise to the top and in the second there is the search for the missing person. This book manages to combine both these elements and gives the reader something new and familiar at the same time. The plot manages to recreate the intensity of the previous books while giving the characters a push in a newer direction. Both the POV characters are charismatic ones and while Capac does get a smaller role of sorts, he does manage to convey his growth as a character and a crime lord. The real scene stealer is Al Jeery who has spent the last ten years trying to live up a legend so he can find the man who has led him to become the very thing he despises. Al’s growth is very vividly described and the events of this book further test his mettle.

The prose does not disappoint in this one after the excellent turns in the previous books as the author vividly shows the city, its Incan priests and the strange world wherein they inhabit. The book has a strong climax and manages to tie up all the threads which have been introduced so far. I felt this was rather excellent because as a reader I got complete closure from the story. The author also has been brutal with all of his characters as many meet their ends and those who are left alive are worse for wear. Lastly I think the way the author ends the story is rather a mystical one, one can draw inferences from it about what might have

happened and all possibilities stand true. The bittersweet nature of the ending does justice to this dark tale and this ending is one which cannot be predicted as well.

Drawbacks were few but present, namely that Capac gets a reduced role. While from a plot point-of-view it is justified, the reader would have definitely benefitted from seeing more of his grey nature. The ending to the story while action-packed ends with a literal bang and perhaps some readers might have liked to read a few more details about it. The book does do its best to keep the tension and intrigue throughout its pages however the weirdness sometimes does overwhelm it.

**CONCLUSION:** A powerful ending to a dark saga, the characters of the City are not ones which the reader will easily forget. City of the Snakes is a good book to end out a trilogy and it remains to be seen what readers down the line will make of it when they read all the three books together. I for one, enjoyed this gritty, weird urban fantasy story about power, corruption and the redemption of one's soul. A must read for all readers of the previous books and for those who like their stories dark & with a slice of Noir.

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## **Donna says**

I like this trilogy because it's trying for something different than the usual genre fare, but I don't think this conclusion lived up to its potential.

It's ten years after the events of the first two books, and Capac Raimi is barely holding the City together when the ghosts of his past start distracting him from the problems of his present. Al Jeery haunts the streets in the guise of his legendary father, searching for the man who ruined his life. Then Capac disappears. Al agrees to find him in exchange for his shot at revenge, even though the case threatens to lead Al right into the hands of the scheming villacs, the blind priests who have spent centuries trying to claim control of the City.

The first book reads more like a thriller in a unique setting, the fantasy elements start light and at first the reader wonders if they may mostly be delusions. The second book takes place during the first one, so even though Al's mystery was satisfying, the big-picture aspects of the City were old news.

This third book mostly continues Al's journey, leaving Capac as the nearly untouchable Cardinal he became rather than the original series protagonist that we cared about. I guess I was expecting the two main characters of each previous book really work together (or at least share time), so watching Al try to rein in Paucar Wami while getting led around by the villacs felt like more of the same.

The mythology that proved the only drag on the first two books was even heavier here. The characters spent too much time getting lectured on it, especially during what should have been the most exciting part of the novel.

I was interested in the City and its inhabitants and the people ruthless enough to succeed in it. But secretive priests who we mostly saw when they'd mysteriously appear and act cryptic never hooked me as a concept. There's a point near the end where one character tells them it was a mistake to think he'd give a damn about them. That line made me smile, because that's kind of how I felt about them too.

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## **Dan says**

Ten years after, Procession of the Dead and Hell's Horizon, our two leading men are emanating their fathers. Capac Raimi is the new Cardinal, early in his eternal rule of the city. Al Jeery has taken the guise of his father, Pacar Waimi the legendary murderer, only Al only kills those who "deserve" it.

When Capac goes missing, Al is sent to investigate his disappearance. It looks like the villacs, the blind Inca priests are behind it but if so what is their plan? And why do long dead people get appearing in the City?

The first two books were gangster books with a hint of magic and fantasy stuff. Here though the book spends more time with the fantastic as the villacs spend more time at the forefront at the story. I wasn't too keen of the book getting more fantastical as the first books worked because the fantasy stuff was only a small but important part of them. I also felt the magic stuff was more weird than enjoyable. And bringing back dead characters is never good storytelling-it lessens their original death and shows the author didn't know what to do without them.

Then there's the treatment of the two lead characters. At first it appears like Capac is going to be the lead character and narrator but within a few chapters he disappears and it's the last we see of him until the end of the book. It's a shame that a character who leads a whole book is shoved into the background for the finale.

Despite the fact Al Jeery takes the lead here, if anything he is even more badly served. The idea of him becoming his insane murderous father is ridiculous given his character in the previous book. Indeed the personality doesn't really feel like it's changed in the narration so it makes the transformation all the more odd. His personality seems to go through dramatic change after dramatic change in this book- the Bill Casey storyline is shoved into the plot which otherwise has nothing to do with it too, meaning the character's ongoing storyline becomes a fairly minor event.

Don't get me wrong, this is my no means an awful book. It has a lot of the good things it's predecessors had- the great gangster feel, lots of treacherous characters and real brutality but it is a weaker book. I felt like there was little more to tell in regards to Capac and Al and this book would have been far better focusing on a new lead character.

A disappointing end to the trilogy.

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## **Dana Salman says**

I just ended up having to force myself to finish this. I really stopped caring about this book; I mean when I finished I didn't feel as though I gained anything out of this trilogy - the characters weren't likable or worth remembering, the story didn't leave an impact, I don't feel like I would've missed anything if I'd never read these books, and in all honestly I am kind of sick of having images of nudity, sex, and bodily torture stuffed into my brain. I gave the first book four stars because I honestly did get pulled in by it - couldn't put it down. It wasn't the sort of book I would've imagined ever liking but I did. The second book, however, lost me the moment I realized I wouldn't even be catching a glimpse of Capac Raimi, the protagonist of the first book. Not that there's anything wrong with Al Jeery, just that he's the sort of protagonist who's only really there to fill in the role of protagonist - he had no substance to him. He was mechanical. He switches from being the honorable soldier to merciless, emotionless killer between books 2 and 3 in a way that makes me think of an

on/off switch. 'This is how I used to be - this is who I am now.' No matter what happened to him, whether it was good or bad, I felt detached from him completely.

Capac, on the other hand, had a story that worked for him and that kept my eyes to the page; no memories of who he was, conflicting ideas about who to trust and what his own feelings towards murder are, and I liked it better when details concerning the Incan priests were kept ambiguous - it added a more mysterious flavor that complemented the setting.

I really only got back into *City of the Snakes* when Capac came back, in like the very last few chapters. Besides Capac, the only other interesting character was the Cardinal, one of the only reasons why I didn't write off book 2 completely. Paucar Wami also helped a little in giving the books some high points, but that's disregarding the fact that he is a complete and utter *psycho* and I really was hoping someone would just kill the guy and have done with it.

Overall, I'm a hundred percent sure that it would've been enough just to write *Procession of the Dead* as a single book. There really wouldn't have been much of a loss without the other two, either to the story or to me as a reader. In fact I dislike this book so much I'll be dumping it along with *Hell's Horizon* at a second-hand bookshop as soon as I possibly can - I need that space on my bookshelf for books with more depth and meaning. And in future I really hope Darren Shan sticks strictly to the children's/young adult's genre. He's much better at that.

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## **Cameron Moseley says**

A theme in the book is murder, this is a theme in the book because as the story progresses the main character Al Jeery "becomes" his dad Paucar Wami and starts killing all of the people who deserved to be killed (killers, lunatics, criminals, thugs, etc.). The moral in the story is never be someone that you are not, this is the moral because as the story goes on Al learns that becoming his dad has started destroying everything around him and everyone he cared about was disappearing or getting killed. The story takes place in the crumby and bad Eastern part of town in Brooklyn, New York, where there is many gangs and a lot of other bad people. I can connect this book to the movie "Funny Movie" 1-6 because *Scream* is taking out the teens one-by-one until one is left. I can connect Paucar Wami to Freddy Kruger because they both kill people that live in the city, a difference between the two is that Freddy kills the innocent people while Paucar only kills the guilty. Paucar Wami is cold-hearted guy who is afraid of and very well known in the city for all of his murders. I can also connect Paucar Wami to Michael Myers because both are very well know for the murders and crimes that they have convicted and they have never been caught doing them, they are just very well known for what they do. The main idea of the book is that a man named Al Jeery turns into his father and kills all that have done terrible things to his city, he also goes to find Bill Coesy, the man who ruined his life. Another theme in the book is disaster, this is a theme in the book because in the middle of the book many things start to happen that appear as disasters for Paucar, these disasters include of losing the city's "Cardinal", many people getting killed, and many more stressful things that happen to Paucar as the storyline develops and progresses. The "Cardinal" is the person that runs the city, basically Capac is taken by the "Ayumaricans" (ghost sprits) and it is Paucar's job to find Capac, but he is side-tracked by everything going on in his life takes him away from the job of finding the missing and immortal cardinal.

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## **Christine says**

I can sum up the way I felt about this book in three words: I'm quite disappointed.

Well, maybe not *that* disappointed, but I was, more or less, really disappointed. You see, the first book, *Procession of the Dead*, is a favorite of mine, and the main character, Capac Raimi, was a protagonist that I was somehow able to empathize with. I loved him. Sadly, I wasn't able to find the next two books anywhere, so imagine my thrill and excitement when I saw the third book just sitting there, on sale and waiting for the lucky person who'll buy it.

I, unfortunately, haven't read the second book yet. So obviously, I was a bit disoriented with what's going on, asking myself who the heck is this Al guy, who's this, who's that, etcetera, etcetera. I prodded on however, thinking that I'll eventually get used to not reading the point of view of m'boy Capac. And I did get used to it. But I didn't like Al Jeery like I did Capac. (I liked his dad though, sometimes. Such sick humour!)

Yes, he was a good protagonist. Better than Capac, especially. But the main reason I fell in love with the first book was because of Capac's progress--from a man who was practically gazing starry eyed at the center of the city to a cold and calculating bastard. I have this thing with exploring about the human psyche, watching how it changes, exploring the darkness, which is why I loved Capac. He was a perfect example. Al Jeery on the other hand was, uh, how do I call it--a bit soft for me. And he's supposedly a dangerous assassin. Imagine that.

Sure, there were still times that I loved the book, times when I was shocked, times when I admired Al. But if you had read my review of the first book, you'd know that I really didn't like this one as much as it. (No 'Holy Crap', no anything. Not even at all speechless--I'm practically writing a novel now. I didn't feel anything at all, reading this.)

And the one thing I was most disappointed off--plot holes. There were so many things that weren't really explained.

Oh well.

On the bright side though, I've practically said it in every review I've done in Shan's book, but I really, really love his way of writing. Honestly, it's not that delicate, but it really heightens my imagination, it does. He is such a good storyteller. And though there were a few gritty times in the book--Bill Casey's revelation about his sister and the Coya's scene, I still liked it. Darren Shan is, and will seemingly still be in the near future, my favorite author.

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## **Ahmad Sharabiani says**

## **Mahtab says**

Why did the ending make me cry !!!!!?

Omg I loved reading this book & the whole trilogy !!

I'm glad I finally did it , cause I got these books about 4-5 months ago , but I'd never gotten the chance to read them. Now I'm really happy that I did , and now I know it was worth it !

The first thing that amused me while reading this one , was that some parts were from Al's point of view , and some were from Capac's. And surprisingly that wasn't disturbing , cause I used to think this method could be disturbing & unappreciated by a reader , but to me , it wasn't in this case !

Actually now I think it was the best thing that could be done, since the first two books had two different point of views , the last one would've had to be from Omniscient point of view or something that would fit it and I think this "mixed" point of view fits it best !

I loved the ending , it both put a smile on my face and made me cry ( I don't know if they were happy tears or sad ones )

I enjoyed reading these books so much that I'm definitely gonna read them again in the future :)

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