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**Black Orchid in the White House Garden:
Assailing Michelle Obama
By T. S. Aschenge
BlackCommentator.com Guest Commentator**

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*"The slave woman is at the mercy of the fathers, sons, or brothers
of her master!"*

-Fredrick Douglass

Where and When She Enters

Politics is the hyper-actualization of the zeitgeist of American life and culture. It speaks to the very soul of the nation from its own particular vantage point garishly poised in the mirror and boldly facing the physic crucible fronting scene and script of all that the nation collectively has been, and all that it has allowed itself the capacity to become. It is the narrative of the nation's soul crystallized in campaign combat.

During the Bullwhip Days, as a most enticing however lurid habitual rendezvous played out in the quiet of the early wee hours of the morning. Set in the deafening hush tones of a stark ritual play staged all throughout the American heartland no matter how near or far, in county after county. Often it was, that when a female slave

was to be found quite awhile away from her labors, this fact alone was enough to incite titillating cross-cultural gossip throughout the week. Who was this Black victim Mammy or one of Mammy and Master's children? Was this Sapphire, or Jezebel? Not a hyper-sensitive moment was to be squandered seeking to resolve this latest bewildering community obsession, *"Just what was Bubba doing in the basement?"*

This was so because a Black woman was the legal property of her master and therefore could never legally be raped. For nearly a quarter of a millennium, Black woman's bodies were wholly at the mercy of their White master. As absurd as it may seem, this fact continues to guide and mold the social and political discourse of this nation. It is one of the most accursed legacies in the intergenerational transmission of this nation's recurring racial conflict. Today, the Black Jezebel has come to the forefront as one of the grand archetypes of the New Mythology that forcefully guide, mold, and define this society through its cultural production. However, she remains a tragic symptom rendered forever mum and unattended, sheltering a wound left festering and a child left hidden in the basement. We all know that it is there but once again, *"We really not supposed to talk about it!"*

After slavery, White men cowardly came to project the frequent Jack the Ripper-like attention that they had once wantonly displayed towards Black women's bodies, onto the Black man. From this moment on, the maniacal specter of the Black male rapist fiendishly on the prowl for the chastity of pure White women, became the lurid and forced political a priori for the First Evil Birth of Jim Crow. This malicious deafening lie, and its crude female counterparts delivered in the stereotypes of Mammy, Sapphire, Jezebel, and their filthy naked unruly '*Picaninny*' children proved remarkably efficient propagandized upon an entire vulnerable and newly freed Black community, during the immediate aftermath of one of the most egregious seasons of man's inhumanity to man. Sadly enough, these horribly negative images projected solely out of the pathology of Bubba's own bitter neurosis in defeat of the war, would help to solicit an additional century of an even viler form of racist bloodlust. No longer a valued commodity, like a horse, a nightstand, or a toilet, the premium upon Black life in this country would diminish precipitously, and the hundred-year struggle over this forged blood-drenched resolve came to redefine an entire society; for better or worse.

Nonetheless, emerging from out of the bitter wrath of life-long captivity you tell me, just what man would ignore the anxious immediate search for his extended family, only to act out solely to express some queer phantom fiendish lust for the wife of his oppressor? There have often been times in the life of this nation, when simply to be born a Black man, meant to be born with a gun pointed directly your head. Most likely, it was a shot gun, leaving little possibility of finding the bullet. The Black woman today, largely remains an enigma beyond the culture outside of her community, and often her intellect and strength illicit widespread fear of retribution. The truth, now deeply secreted back of the hidden resolve of tens of thousands of ruthless carnivals of blood-soaked rope and fire, pogroms sentencing Black flesh to the gruesome funeral pyre, is actually much simpler than that. More often than not, Whitefolk as always simply wanted to steal Colored-folk's land. America is the great land grab of the second rise of Europe.

These two lingering projections boldly thrust out of the psychopathic racist personality, left at bay in the midst of the nation once again endeavoring to remake itself more than a century and a quarter ago, continue to mold and guide the unreconciled narrative of race in America. They are the twin pillars and the Mother Archetypes in the haunted lexicon of race and politics, and they are the macabre source of the very voices that Bubba thinks he keeps hearing in his head; extant

today in the Campaign of 2008. Now that Barrack Obama has been linked to an angry Black man and stripped of his church, it was no stretch for Bubba to go after his wife Michelle.

Mary Turner's Ghosts

Hair-braided chestnut,

coiled like a lyncher's rope,

Eyes--fagots,

Lips--old scars, or the first red blisters,

Breath--the last sweet scent of cane,

And her slim body, white as the

ash

of black flesh after flame.

-Jean Toomer

A young fragile 20 year old deeply religious woman in the spring of 1918, Mary Turner could never have imagined the truly inconceivable act of blood thirsty barbarism that would casually steal her husband's life. Now, eight months pregnant and grieving in bitter painful agony, who could have imagined that a fate far more sinister and cruel was about to visit her and her unborn child as well?

Shortly after Hayes Turner was swept up and lynched in yet another wave of Jim Crow's favorite pastime in Brooks County Georgia. Whence maniacal White mobs would run rampant in a bizarre lawless bloodlust, as if on some kind of vampirish prowl for Black flesh, Mary publicly voiced her pain crying out loud: "*They gonna pay for what they did!*" Oddly enough, her comments alone immediately solicited a rather bizarre reaction. Instantly, riding high upon its notoriety as one of the most racist institutions the nation, the Atlanta newspaper published her comments within hours. They were scored across it pages like a screaming bulletin board characterizing her aggrieved remarks as surly "*disrespectful*", as if Mary had actually said something quite odious and truly threatening to the well being of the entire county. Even after the senseless murder of her husband, what she said in the midst of her misery somehow made the White community feel as if she was simply not "Proud to be an American"; therefore she was "*Ungrateful*" Bubba would write, and this alone would be enough to solicit a large White mob to arrive at her home in order to lynch her.

Fatigued, distraught, of course heavy with child and in utter fear for their lives, Mary hid overnight but was tracked down by the following morning. For the simple act of natural human anguish Mary Turner while eight months pregnant with child was dragged to a stream and hung upside down from a tree. Gasoline was poured all over her and set ablaze as her clothes were literally burned upon her withering body. Suddenly a man stepped forward brandishing a large fishing knife and cut the baby directly out of Mary's stomach. The poor child gave out a cry as it fell to the ground, and another man came forward and smashed the baby's skull with the heavy heel of his boot. Mary's body was then pummeled with bullets and the stifling jeers of the crowd could be heard for miles in the distance. More than one hundred White men, women, and children all joyously watched this ghoulish unimaginable crime, their

collective faces seemingly contorted in a rather bizarre look of overwhelming sexual glee. Over the course of the next two weeks, more than a dozen innocent Black people would also lose their lives in the mist of this senseless rampage. Ultimately, more than 500 Black families would flee to the north. However, not one individual was ever convicted or even accused of any crime for these serial murders. Not one member of the mob was ever reported to have ever received even a moment of counseling for their madness. Life for them would continue on as normal without skipping a beat. This is what Fredrick Douglass meant when he said that "*The struggle for freedom in America is a struggle to free Black men's bodies and White men's minds!*" and what Justice Harlan argued against in his dissent of Plessey vs. Ferguson. It is a legacy born in the psychopathic mind of Jim Crow.

For centuries, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and American Slavery implanted a venal prison plantation sex trade upon American soil, and this did not at all exist in an historical vacuum. It was but the latest salvo in the legendary clash of two completely contradictory cultural worldviews; one born of fire and the other born of ice. The variant seeds of two different cultures are nor more diametrically in contradistinction to one another than that of the African and the European worlds. The Black woman is the central line of demarcation or line in the sand if you will, of these two cultures. Space does not here afford us the luxury to sufficiently elaborate upon the full implications of these latent facts. However, a more critical view of the forced image of the Black woman in American society does bare our greater scrutiny.

For tens of thousands of years, the 'Womb' was amply represented as the architectural crucible of African culture. The womb, as the foundation could be viewed as the sacred seed and ordering principle of life. Holding such prestige, pornography could never exist in this type of society, because the Womb could never be shown being publicly defiled. Women naturally carried themselves with a modest elegance, and a man who might seek to violate a woman, would naturally feel the whole weight of the entire community upon him when he sought to strike her. This was a self-fulfilling prophesy in the self defense of a nation. It is only in recent times with slavery and with the full impact of the Second Rise of Europe that this lifestyle has been disrupted. The traditional role of 'Twinlinial' governance in Black male female relations has been the central and most contentious source of European angst for thousands of years. Even though the Black woman as Madonna and Child remains by far the most enduring icon throughout the world, her stereotyped image in American Mythology provides some of the most prominent Archetypes in the collective subconscious of the American mind. If Mary could not be raped, she surly could not be murdered as well. This is one of the most enduring prima facie articles of faith in the history of American law; recently witnessed in the Duke Rape Case (2006) and in the Rape of Tawanna Brawley (1987)' It is the stuff about which legends have been made. In both of these cases, the lawyers defending these Black women were disbarred. Why? Because they had perpetrated a hoax upon the public trust? Or was it because a Black woman still cannot be legally raped by a White man in America? Recently, a police officer from Florida would tell me as much. He related the story to me of an incident that occurred during his first month on the police force. Officer Diop and his partner were called to investigate the rape of a Black woman, when suddenly they were stopped by their supervisor and told not to bother: "*A Black woman cannot be raped!*" they were told. "*They consider it a party!*" Mary was '*thing-a-fied*', stripped of her humanity, mocked like a '*Baby's Momma*', scorned, made into a 'non-person', and then murdered in a ghoulish cleansing ritual during the light of day in a southern town. Her baby, like her limbs were simply trinkets at play, celebrated through collective cognitive dissociation as mere entertainment at the communal barbeque.

Weather it was to be manifest in the violent aftermath of the Nat Turner Rebellion, or even earlier through hard centuries of plantation rape and torture, or in the serial brutal video-taped police beatings of Black citizens that are so sadly commonplace in our world today, or in a concussion bomb launched in the guise of an eviction order that is somehow senselessly dropped upon a household by municipal decree (Philadelphia 1985), or even in the inconceivable community anguish of a loving innocent 92 year old grandmother who is somehow murdered by the very police who should have been earnestly working to protect her life (Atlanta 2006), or in the truly remarkable recurring scenes of an entire city sentenced to a Diaspora and still suffering right before our eyes in woeful national disregard. However it is to be experienced, collective racist trauma ratcheted up in such massive inhumane proportions, appears to exist for Africans in American in order to induce and maintain a fear-repressed collective memory; until their exists nothing more than a Black community that only lives in blackface. No other group in this society is so vehemently solicited to make a complete break with their own indigenous culture; and no other community remains so terribly mocked and scorned. With the exception of the Palestinians, it often appears that no other people on the planet than African Americans are so often told to simply forget their history. Nevertheless, today in America and throughout the world Mary and Hayes Turner, and their baby have not been forgotten. Of course, they must still vie for supremacy over the powerful globalized images of America's Mammy, Sapphire, Jezebel, and their nappy-headed children. Certainly, they are not the source of intellect at CNN or Bubba Fox News, nor sadly even a textbook footnote has appeared to linger for classroom discussion; but in much of the world, they will never be forgotten. They have become a symbol of America's soul.

Jezebel,

The Creature from Madison Ave.

Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

-Revelation 2:20

Today, perhaps the most resilient grand archetype of New American culture is the troubled super-sexualized conniving Black Jezebel, born in Bubba's backyard during the glory adolescent days of Jim Crow Apart-Hate, when Mary Turner was just a child. She is as old as the Vampire Lesstat, and as macabre in her many contortions. She was a throwback to White male oppression during the days of slavery, and often she was the object of the sex trade called '*placage*' and then projected as collateral damage in the pedophilic inter-generational incestuous disregard of the White master for the humanity of his female slave; featured for years at the quadron ball.

Today, hyper-sexualized and grossly '*thing-a-fied*', she remains standard fare of the nation's leading cultural production courtesy of Bubba and people like billionaire pornographer Bob Johnson of BET. During the Bullwhip days, she appeared first as the result of the rape of the docile unattractive and defenseless 'Mammy'; although her parentage has always been in question. Directly after slavery, she suddenly shape-shifted in the bitterly contentious politics of the Reconstruction era, back to the deceitful light-skin seductress, along with her equally troubled sister the rebellious and loud mouthed 'Sapphire', who variously has appeared throughout the years. Today they are both woefully manifested in various shades along with a myriad of

incarnations of Mammy as well. Jezebel and Sapphire still exist as supreme archetypes in the primordial cross-cultural narrative production of American life. They exist, extant of a neglected discourse as the aggressive Black seductresses of Hollywood cinema, Television, Cable News and now thanks to Bob Johnson and BET, soon to debut in a Hip Hop video near you. Sadly enough, the active ingredients in cultural suicide no longer require the offense of a White provocateur. Jezebel would gain unique supremacy after Mammy lost her agency as the superior archetype when Black people first gained just a little bit more freedom as a culture. Then and now, fear, anger, and guilt invert back of the reality motivating the political and social docu-drama, as Bubba once more projects his aberrant pathology upon an entire nation of people.

In *Birth of a Nation*, Jezebel arrives on the screen in the winter of 1915 as Lydia, the deceitful conniving vamp who in due course ruins an otherwise good White man's life. She ultimately would not make her debut splash in film until her coveted role in the Blackploitation films of the 1970's, during the very pre-dawn hours of the Second Reconstruction, as the nation was once again remaking its brand. However, first, Hollywood would abide its slow fade to black in preference of the safer stock image of Mammy typified in Hattie McDaniel's 1939 Oscar winning performance as 'Mammy' in *Gone with the Wind*. For five years, starting in 1974 Mammy long-suffering and docile, would continue to survive clinching her fist around her bible as Florida Evans or 'Mamma' in the television sitcom *Good Times*. In 1995 she bemoans the lack of good Black men as Gloria Mathews in *Waiting to Exhale*. She is the beat-down Oprah Winfrey character of Sophia in *The Color Purple* (1985) and Sethe in *Beloved* (1998). However, in the movie 'Crash' (2004) Thandie Newton revises a contemporary Jezebel who ultimately falls in love with the police officer who fondles her in front of her husband, for whom she has suddenly lost respect. In 'Monster's Ball' (2001) Hallie Berry becomes only the first Black woman in more than a century of Hollywood history to win an Academy Award for Best Actress as Leticia Musgrove, the sex starved Jezebel who begs her husband's executioner to please make love to her.

Earlier in the century, Jezebel had actually stuck around after slavery cleverly hidden in the basement, and she was given new life as a queer subconscious prerogative in the stock commercial logos of Madison Ave commerce. She would become the nominal choice for the latest celebrated public offering. Though largely taken for granted, for decades her voluptuous physique scantily clad and often grossly exaggerated fronted logos on an appalling myriad of packaging for an alarmingly vast array of goods in the everyday consumerism of the New Industrial American society. It is where Wall Street discovered very early on that it could relive the past and curry a newfound brand loyalty all at the very same time; arousing dopamine levels by re-inventing the taboo sexual enticement of miscegenation. It is a fact that in the early 20th century the slave market would be reborn in virtual reality as the Black American woman was symbolically being casually fondled once more in lieu of her alleged wanton promiscuity. Jezebel and her 'Picaninnys' were deeply nurtured into the collective unconsciousness of the American mind, in the despicable images of Black people with grossly distorted features like bulging eyes, over-sized lips and buttocks. They were massaged through the palms of the hand in the dollar-ism of everyday American life. The image of a Black woman and her poor nappy-headed children scorned, mocked, and ridiculed, adorned everything from flatware and ashtrays to soda pop well into the second half of the 20th Century.

As a slim thin-lipped octoroon in the psychological thriller 'Slow Burn' (2005) Jolene Blakock is the classic Jezebel, as the seductive hip assistant district attorney Nora Timmer. Her ambiguous racial identity, seductive sexual demeanor, and forged air of

vulnerability are the tools that she uses artfully to entice the men around her into a deadly web of greed and deceit in the middle of a mayoral campaign. She has a reputation for using her 'street creds' wisely and now, claiming that she has been raped by a Black man that she recently seduced, it is her schizophrenic quest for identity cloaked in her inviting sexual promiscuity that super-charges her irresistible allure. In the end, as Jackie Longbrough she emerges the victor however alone in the world, after political scandal and murder have completely enveloped the men in her midst. Together Whitney Houston and Michele Lamar Richards create a unique composite of Jezebel, in the popular 1992 movie 'The Bodyguard'. Houston is Jezebel as Rachel Marron, the successful slim sultry Black superstar pop singer; and Richards is Nikki, her older less successful sister. Nikki is the more voluptuous light-skinned sister, Jezebel's alter ego who appears to be of mixed racial lineage. On stage, in her silver futuristic diva costume, Rachel throws off her cape and performs a powerfully seductive vamp that instantly whips the crowd into a nympholeptic frenzy. "*We're gonna get looooooose!*" she croons. Until, suddenly she is snatched off the stage and almost stripped of her clothes. Kevin Costner as Frank Farmer is the handsome White former secret service man who is reluctantly assigned to protect her. The plot revolves around the sinister efforts of a stalker who seeks to kill the pop icon, and Farmer is at first reluctant to take the job in order it seems to 'save Jezebel from herself'; until that is, Rachel seduces him. "*You didn't have to fuck everybody!*" [At the party] he tells her at one point, and Farmer realizes that he's got quite a bit on his hands. Finally, Farmer takes Rachel and her family away from her high profile promiscuous lifestyle on vacation to his father's house on a lake. It is here that the sinister plot to kill Rachel Marron is finally unraveled. As Nikki attempts to seduce Farmer, she reveals her deep seated envy for her own sister's success, admitting that she is the one who hired a hit man to kill her in the first place. Nikki balks at his rejection of her saying: "*Why have just one sister, when you can have us both?*" In the end, Nikki is killed, and even though she has tried to fire the hit man, he continues the contract as the titillating allure of his promiscuous prey is far too enticing to abandon.

While Jezebel was coming of age neatly packaged and efficiently massaged into the minds of people around the world, her children were gracefully allowed to travel with her. These were the 'Picaninnys', images of filthy and unruly nappy-headed Black children. They were usually portrayed with ragged clothes, often half naked and being chased and frequently eaten by alligators and other beasts of the wild. One could easily assume that Jezebel was such a whore that she was an unfit mother as well, and this was the image of the Black woman that would become globalized for more than a century. Picaninnys would become the greatest source of product branding that the world had ever known, and their tales of delinquency and mischief would become the narrative source of children's stories for generations to come.

In a nation that still remains vastly segregated on a grassroots level, Jezebel, and the occasionally dismissive outburst of 'Sapphire' remain the most powerful images that many Americans have ever seen of the Black woman; and it is of no fault of the Black woman herself that these forces have be arrayed against her. However, in the Black community, even after the enormous impact of patriarchal Christianity, which often seems to have rendered many African people spiritually mum and culturally suicidal, the Black woman is still revered beyond the cultural lockbox of Euro-centric society. She remains in fact the celebrated 'rock' and foundation of the entire community, and she is known by many attributes.

She is Eve in the primordial garden; but not just as the source of original sin. She is also variously known as The Grande Inquisitor, facing down the serpent that seems to

respond to what she has only been told to believe: "*That's not true. Who told you that? You surly shall not die!*" (Genesis 3: 1-5). Yet, even before that enduring exchange, she was Asset (Isis) Queen of the Nile and Mother of Civilization. She is Maat, symbol of justice, righteousness, and spiritual probity, with attributes that are far too numerous to mention. She is the mythical figure of Baset, reckoned in the primordial image of the premiere Cat Woman, who leads the charge in celebrated unification of the Upper and the Lower lands of Ancient KMT; the first and sadly one of the last great High Civilizations that the world has ever known. She is Queen Hatshepsut, the great pharaoh who fights to restore the cultural order torn apart by greed, and war. She is the Black Madonna with Child, known throughout the world as the legendary figure of the nurturing sprit of the feminine energy of the Universe. Every Black woman carries the potential of all of these attributes and more. It is for this reason that she is variously mocked, envied, and adored, and at the same time she is so often variously feared. She is the torch bearer, like Queen Nzinga leading her people into war, and like Armanita, known as Harriet Tubman, the Great Black Mosses leading her people out of slavery. She is Ida B. Wells and Cynthia McKinney facing down the mobs that seek to lynch her; and speaking Truth to Power in order to tell the nation what it really needs to hear. In the Black community we know exactly who Michelle Obama is, because we readily recognize all of the natural attributes that she exudes. She is an example of what makes us 'Proud to be American', because we have always known that: 'A Nation Can Rise No Higher Than Its Woman!', because it is the woman that is the first teacher of the child.

The elders teach us that "The first Book of Life was written by a woman - '*Maat*'. But, she was only writing down what was being told to her by a man - '*Djehuti*'. She was the first Chief Justice, and the Hall of Justice was in the Center of the Sun!" Today, the African American community is increasingly guided by the principles of '*Sankofa*' ('Go back and fetch it'), and something we call: '*I-U-Raysha*', and although I will admit that this crude effort to deliver the most accurate pronunciation of this latest Mother Principle does little diligence to its proper spelling, know that this is the governing 'female' principle that denotes 'Healing on a Spiritual Level; brought forth to us by our greatest living cultural alchemist Dr. Marimba Ani, as the actual first principle of the contemporary Reparations Movement. The European world has never really been able to truly synthesize the unique complexity of the African Cultural Worldview. The Modern World has only been introduced to Black American Femininity through the psychopathic lens of Bubba in his backyard.

While he has worked aggressively to paint into the public mind a rather demeaning view of the African Village, where men, women, and children seem to simply gather in primitive ritual half-naked with the Black women's breast fully exposed, a few thoughts inverted back of this perceptual reality do come to mind. Notice that these women appear to be in the healthy habit of breast-feeding their children, boosting their natural immunity from disease for the rest of their lives. Their breasts have simply not been 'sexually objectified' in their society, and no man you will notice has ever attempted to rape them. This would be completely unthinkable. In the European Cultural Worldview, the female is highly objectified and hyper-sexualized. The European world calls this walk with Creation - '*His-story*'. He immediately *disses* half of his family, half of his aid along the journey. Africans knew nothing of this estranged Cultural Worldview until relatively recent times.

Long before the Democratic primaries were over Karl Rove, the architect of the presidency of Bush the Younger and the Neo Cons gathered their focus groups for the purpose of discovering just how to attack Barrack Obama in the general election. It should come of no surprise that right out of the box they are explicit in their intentions

to make Michelle Obama what they call 'Fair Game'. Perhaps Bubba reasoned that if he could get away with the unprecedented treatment of a congresswoman like Cynthia McKinney, even a Black potential First Lady is game as well. Perhaps it is because that even in the year 2008, many people still believe that a Black woman cannot be legally raped in America. Why else would Duke University have the audacity to hold a sex party one year after the verdict in that case? If America is to truly emerge into a post racial society, it shall not arrive here without a measure of honest reconciliation with its past, and reconciling a brutal barbaric past appears not likely what many Americans are ready to do.

In 'Freedomland' (2006) Julianne Moore plays Brenda Martin, a pale White neurotic single mother who incites racial tensions in a Black New Jersey neighborhood after she accidentally kills her own child, only to immediately claim that he has been abducted. Think Susan Smith in 1994 who claimed that African Americans carjacked her and kidnapped her child. Samuel L. Jackson plays Lorenzo, the Black policeman with relatives and street credits in the Black community that quickly becomes the subject of maddening White rage from the police officers (including Brenda's brother) in the neighboring White community; now thrown into wanton bloodlust at the thought of a fiendish Black man. The plot races towards a terrifying racial conflagration as the Black community is instantly locked down until at last Brenda tells Lorenzo the truth. All of her life Brenda it seems has been an outcast in her family, and she seems to truly derive love and comfort working in a daycare center in the Black community. These are the people that she has come to love. Yet, at one point, one of her coworkers tells her: "You, stay away from my child!" Ultimately, she reveals to Lorenzo the love affair that she had with a Black man who was with her the night that her son passed away. Gradually she seems to fall in love with Lorenzo and in the end she admits to he that the told this lie because with all the misery and pain that the Black community has seen, she really just felt that they could deal with her pain as well. This is a symbol of a community far too often made the political dumping grounds for the nation's ills.

BlackCommentator.com Guest Commentator, T. S. Aschenge, is an Artist, often called a Renaissance Man. He is culinary artist, a painter, a freelance writer, and a novelist who lives and works in Atlanta. His blog is called '[If Neal Street Could Talk!](#)' Click [here](#) to contact T.S. Aschenge.

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