

# Mystic War

## Rules of Play

### 1.0 Introduction

The Ancient Mage has died, launching a Mystic War to determine his successor...

Mystic War is a fast-playing card game for three to eight players age 12 and up. You play the role of an apprentice Mage battling other Mages, striving to be the first to meet your secret goal. As the ruler of a small Realm, you have three resources at your disposal: Followers, Mystic Power, and Gold. These affect your ability to help yourself and hinder others. Over the course of the battle, spells will be cast, events will transpire and even the Gods themselves will become involved. To win, you must take advantage of every opportunity to defeat your rivals and be the first to reach your goal.

### 2.0 Game Components

- 8 Realm Mats
- 56 Resource Disks
- 12 Victory Condition Cards
- Deck of 82 Action Cards
- 2 Card Summary Sheets
- 1 First Player Card
- Rules of Play

If any items are damaged or missing, please indicate on the enclosed registration card and send to:

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#### 2.1 Realm Mats

Each Realm has three resources: Followers, Mystic Power and Gold. Each player uses a Realm mat and a set of seven resource disks to track the current values of these resources and the player's current Wealth status. Each resource can range in value from 1 to 49 and has a two-part track on the mat to mark its current value. The large boxes are used to mark the tens digit and indicate what Special Power or Resource Option a player has at that resource level. The numbered track below the large boxes in the far-right area are used to indicate the player's current Wealth status, either Poor, Content or Rich (see 6.3).

#### 2.2 Victory Conditions

Each player will draw a Victory Condition card which shows their secret goal. There are four possible victory conditions: Kingdom, Archmage, Hoard and Balanced. The resources needed to meet a particular victory condition are marked on each Victory Condition card and on the Realm mat. To win, a player must equal or exceed these requirements in all three resource categories when a Judgment card is played (see 8.0)

**Example:** A player draws the Kingdom Victory Condition card. To win, that player must have at least 40 Followers, 10 Mystic Power and 10 Gold when a Judgment card is played.

#### 2.3 Action Cards

Each turn, players will receive and play Action cards. Action cards are used to modify resources, gain abilities, and modify other cards being

played. There are four types of Action cards: Resource, Spell, Deity, and Event, whose play is described in 7.2 below. A summary sheet is also provided to help familiarize players with the effects of each card.

#### 2.4 First Player Card

Each round starts with the first player and proceeds clockwise. The first player is designated using the First Player card.

### 3.0 Set Up

Each player takes one Realm mat and seven resource disks (two green, two red, and three yellow). Start with 5 resources of each of Followers, Mystic Power, and Gold. Place the extra yellow disk in the Wealth status box labeled Content.

Each player secretly draws a Victory Condition card and places it face down after looking at it. Set aside the unused Victory Condition cards (without looking at them) for later use.

Remove the white-backed Judgment Event card from the Action Card Deck. Shuffle the remaining cards; then place this Judgment Event card face up and sideways under the Action Card Deck.

Randomly determine the First Player for the first round by cutting the Action Card Deck for the highest value Resource card. Use the First Player card to designate this player.

Deal each player two Action cards.

### 4.0 Sequence of Play

Each round, play proceeds as follows:

1. Each player may exercise one Special Power.
  2. All players Receive Resources.
  3. Each player draws Action cards.
  4. Each player plays one Action card or passes.
- Repeat this step until all players consecutively pass.

### 5.0 Special Powers/Receive Resources

#### 5.1 Special Power Options

Some resource boxes contain "Special Power" options which allow players to trade one resource for another. In clockwise order, starting with the First Player, each player has the option of exercising the Special Power option listed in any **one** Resource box **containing** that player's resource disk. The resource traded away is always the resource allowing the option (i.e., the resource whose box allows the option). The resource gained is the resource listed after the Special Power option on the Realm mat.

Resources **must** be traded in multiples of ten and result in gains of half the amount traded in (e.g., trade in 10, get 5). **EXCEPTION:** The Knights and Demon options produce destruction **equal** to the amount of resource traded in (e.g., trade in 20, get 20). This destruction can then be subtracted from any one resource of any player.

A player may not exercise a Special Power option if the amount traded in would reduce that resource total below 1. Special Power options are never affected by Wealth status (see 7.7 Applying Wealth

Modifications). Certain DEITY cards may prevent the exercise of certain Special Power options (see Card Summary Sheet for details).

**Example:** A player has 15 Followers, 7 Mystic Power and 9 Gold. The player has the option of trading 10 Followers for 5 Gold. Assuming this is done, the new totals would be 15 Followers, 7 Mystic Power and 14 Gold.

### 5.1.1 Any Options

Each 40+ resource box contains an Any option allowing the player to exercise any other of that resource's options as their Special Power option for that turn. NOTE: If a player uses an Any option to Receive Resources, that still counts as that player's Special Power for that round.

### 5.2 Receive Resources

After all players have exercised their Special Power option or passed, all players **must** receive resources listed in any Receive Resource box **containing** a resource disk. These gains occur first in Followers, then Mystic Power, and finally, Gold, and are taken simultaneously by all players. These gains are never affected by Wealth status (see 7.7 Applying Wealth Modifications).

**Example:** (Continuing the above example) Next, resources are received, resulting in 4 additional Followers (2 from the Follower gain and 2 from the Gold gain) and 2 additional Mystic Power (from the Mystic Power gain).

## 6.0 Resource Modifiers

The total in each resource category (Followers, Mystic Power and Gold) determines how many cards may be drawn each round and how many cards may be held at the end of each round, and may affect the value of RESOURCE cards played.

### 6.1 Follower Modifiers

Followers determine the number of cards players draw each round, as indicated in the tens digit box on the Realm mat.

### 6.2 Mystic Power Modifiers

Mystic Power determines the maximum number of cards players may retain when passing and at the end of each round, as indicated in the tens digit box on the Realm mat.

### 6.3 Wealth Modifiers

The ratio of Gold to Followers determines a player's Wealth status. Each of the three Wealth status boxes (Poor, Content or Rich) indicate the ratio required for that box, and the effect that Wealth status has. A player with less Gold than Followers is Poor. A player with two times or more Gold than Followers is Rich. Otherwise, a player is Content.

Wealth affects only RESOURCE cards played by that player (see 7.7 Applying Wealth Modifiers). Wealth status can change after each Follower or Gold resource modification and should be checked.

**Example:** In the two examples above, the Player has gone from Poor (9 Gold is less than 15 Followers) to Rich (14 Gold is greater than or equal to twice 5 Followers) to Content (14 Gold is greater than or equal to 9 Followers, but not twice as many).

## 7.0 Drawing/Playing Action Cards

### 7.1 Drawing Action Cards

In clockwise order, beginning with the current First Player, players draw cards based on the number of Followers they have (see 6.1 Follower Modifiers). A player **must** draw the number of cards

indicated. The last card of the deck (always the Judgment Event card) is drawn as any other card (see 7.10 End of Deck Procedures).

### 7.2 Action Card Types

There are four types of Action cards:

**RESOURCE** cards (except for Dragon cards) ass to one of a player's resources, either Followers, Mystic Power or Gold. Dragon RESOURCE cards subtract the listed amount from one resource of any player. Wild Magic RESOURCE cards may be used as any one of the RESOURCE card types, including Dragon cards. All RESOURCE cards may be played on any player. Resource cards are modified by Wealth and may be modified or nullified by the play of other cards.

**SPELL** cards may be used to adjust resources directly or to modify RESOURCE or SPELL cards already played.

**DEITY** cards either grant special abilities or affect other DEITY cards. Those that grant special abilities remain face up in front of a player until removed by another card. Once played, they may NOT be voluntarily removed.

**EVENT** cards have a wide range of effects and are not affected by Wealth status (see 7.7), SPELLS or most DEITY cards.

### 7.3 Playing Action Cards

Once all players have drawn their cards, play proceeds in clockwise order with the first player taking a turn by playing one card or, under certain circumstances, passing. This cycle continues until all players have passed in sequence, which concludes the current round. (Thus, a player usually plays several cards in one round).

Most cards may be played on any player. After a cards has been played, it may be modified by the play of other cards (see 7.6 Playing Out of Turn). After resolving the card's effect, the card is then discarded.

### 7.4 Passing

Players may not pass if holding more cards than they are allowed to retain at the end of the turn (see 6.2 Mystic Power Modifiers) or if holding a Judgment EVENT card. NOTE: While the Judgment card must be played before passing, the timing is at the player's discretion.

All cards held **in** a player's hand count towards his card total, however, face-up DEITY cards and Victory Condition cards do not.

A player who passes may play cards later in the round if desired. (A player must do so if a reduction their Mystic Power results in that player holding more cards than allowed.) The first player to pass in a round becomes the new First Player for the next round (see 7.11 Determining New First Player).

### 7.5 Discarding

In lieu of playing a card or passing, a player may instead choose to discard one card. Exception: The Judgment Event card may NOT be discarded.

### 7.6 Playing Out of Turn

"Play Any Time" or "Play Face Up Any Time" cards may be played out of turn, and do not count as a card played, even if played during a player's own turn (i.e., any number of these cards may be played in a given turn). NOTE: Action cards (even "Play Any Time" cards) may **only** be played during the Play Action Card step of a round.

After an Action card is played, any player may modify the card played with one or more of their "Play Any Time" cards. All modifications to be applied are computed in the order cards are played. The first card played face-up on the table takes effect first. Ties are broken clockwise

starting with the player of the original card. Modifying cards may continue to be played, until all players no longer wish to play any more “Play Any Time” cards. Once all modifying cards have been played, **then** the final effect is applied.

**Example:** Player A plays a Dragon RESOURCE card to destroy 10 of Player B’s Mystic Power. Player B plays the Dragonbane SPELL card to cancel the effect of the Dragon card. If no other cards were played, both cards would be discarded with no resource changes taking place. However, Player A chooses to play the Negation SPELL card to cancel the Dragonbane card. Player B would lose 10 Mystic Power, if no more cards were played. However, Player B plays a Gold Transmutation SPELL card and changes the affected resource category from Mystic Power to Gold. No player chooses to play any more cards, so Player B ends up losing 10 Gold, and vows revenge. All four cards played are discarded and the player to the left of Player A now takes their turn.

## 7.7 Applying Wealth Modifications

The effect of RESOURCE cards (only) may be halved or doubled due to a player’s current Wealth status. This is computed based on the Wealth status of the player of the card, **not** the Wealth status of the recipient. Any Wealth modification **must** be applied.

**Example:** Player A is Rich and plays a 10 Dragon RESOURCE card on Player B’s Gold. Player A’s Wealth status doubles the Dragon’s effect by 20 (because A is Rich). Now 20 is subtracted from Player B’s Gold.

NOTE: Wealth status can change after each card played. For example, it is possible for a player to start out Rich, gain Followers and so become Poor.

## 7.8 Limits on Doubling

A RESOURCE card whose effect has already been doubled due to Wealth status may not be doubled again.

## 7.9 Fractions/Limits

Fractional resources remaining after a card is played are always rounded up. No resource may ever be less than 1 or more than 49. NOTE: These limits apply to the final result if several modifying cards are played.

**Example:** Player A plays a Destroy Ten Dragon on Player B’s Followers, currently at 7. Player B loses 6 Followers and drops to 1. Player C then plays the Necromancy card and is entitled to gain 6 Followers (the actual number lost).

## 7.10 End of Deck Procedure

When the last card of the deck is drawn (always a Judgment EVENT card), the deck ends. Some players may still be entitled to draw cards. In this case, reshuffle the discards and deal out the necessary cards.

After the round in which the white-backed Judgment EVENT card is drawn and played it should be replaced sideways and face up at the bottom of the shuffled deck.

Immediately following the round in which the End of Deck was encountered, any player in clockwise order, beginning with the new First Player, may exchange his current Victory Condition card for a new one drawn randomly from the deck. Each player doing so draws a new card, places it face down, then shuffles their old card into the Victory Condition Deck prior to handing the deck on to the next player exchanging Victory Condition cards.

## 7.11 Determining New First Player

Once a round starts, flip the First Player card “Claimed” side down. The player who passes **first** in a round takes the “First Player” card and places it “Claimed” side up. NOTE: This player may continue to play cards on subsequent turns (if all other players don’t pass).

After all players have passed, the round ends and a new round begins. The new First Player is the player who passed first during the preceding **round** (not necessarily on the turn cycle during which the round ended).

## 8.0 Winning the Game

Whenever a Judgment Event card is played all players must determine whether they are eligible to win the game. To be eligible, all three resource categories must meet or exceed the levels marked on that player’s Victory Conditions card.

Players cannot win until a Judgment Event card is played, even though their resource category levels may make them eligible. In cases where more than one player declares victory, the player with the most additional resource points over those required wins.

## Game Credits

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## Miscellaneous

Rules questions and comments on the game should be sent to the address listed below. If possible, submit your rules questions phrased to accept a “yes” or “no” response, and supply a self-addressed stamped envelope to expedite the handling of your question.

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## Advanced Example

Here is an illustration of some tricky card interactions: Towards the end of a game, Player A is well set up for a Balanced Victory with 28 points each of Followers, Mystic Power and Gold. Player B is going for Archmage with 28 Followers, 49 Mystic Power and 22 Gold. Player C is far behind. A has God King face-up. It is A's turn and A plays an 8 Dragon to attack B's Mystic Power. C plays War God on A to double the Dragon's effect. B plays Dragonbane to cancel A's Dragon. However, A plays Negation to cancel Dragonbane. B then plays Transformation (Follower) to transform the 16 points of destruction from Mystic Power to Followers. C then plays

Reprodestruction which results in 16 points of destruction against A as well (C couldn't play this to any effect before due to A's face-up God King). B then plays Necromancy intending to gain A's lost Followers. (B could not play this card before, since Necromancy can only be used to gain Followers lost by **another** player.) If no other cards were played, the only effect would be for A to lose 16 Followers and gain War God face-up. (B would lose and regain 16 Followers for no net change). However, A plays Transformation (Mystic Power) to transform the original Dragon's effect back to Mystic Power. Now, A doesn't lose any Mystic Power from the Reprodestruction (due to the God King); B loses 16 Mystic Power; and Necromancy has no effect. Finally, C plays Capture to take A's original Dragon card from the discard pile, after all other effects take place, for later use.

## Card/Power Interaction Summary

Action Taken by Player	Action May Affect	Action's Effect may be modified by:			
		Wealth Status of Player	SPELL cards played	DEITY cards played	Face-up DEITY cards
Special Power Option	Resources	No	NA	NA	No <sup>1</sup>
Receive Resources	Resources	No	NA	NA	No
RESOURCE Card Played	Resources	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SPELL Card Played	Resources, RESOURCE or SPELL cards	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DEITY Card Played	Resource losses, SPELL or DEITY cards	No	No	Yes	No
EVENT Card Played	Resources, Discard Pile, Victory Checks, Victory Condition or Face-up DEITY cards	No	NA	NA	No <sup>2</sup>

NA – Not Allowed (No cards may be played while resolving EVENT cards or during the Special Power or Receive Resources step of a round.)

1 Face-up God King or Earth Goddess cards may prevent a player from exercising certain Mystic Power or Followers Special Power options and protects the holder from Mystic Power or Follower losses as a recipient of Destruction from a Knights or Demon Special Power option.

2 Face-up God King or Earth Goddess cards prevent their holder from being the recipient of the EVENT cards Genie or Slavery and restrict the use of the EVENT card Wrath of the War God.



# Mystic War

## Card Summary

### Action Cards

The 82 Action cards are divided into four groups: RESOURCE, SPELL, DEITY and EVENT cards. The number of Action cards drawn each round depends on the number of Followers each player has. The number of cards that can be retained in a player's hand from round to round depends on the amount of Mystic Power each player has. (See Rules 6.0).

#### RESOURCE Cards (48 total)

RESOURCE cards may be played on any player, typically adding the stated amount to the indicated resource category. Dragon RESOURCE cards subtract the indicated amount from any one category chosen by the player playing the card. Wild Magic RESOURCE cards may be used as any one of the four other RESOURCE card types.

The effect of RESOURCE cards is halved, doubled or unaltered depending on the Wealth status of the card **player** (see Rules 7.7). RESOURCE cards may also be modified by the play of other cards.

**Notoriety (10 Cards)** – Add the stated amount to the recipient's Followers.

**Sorcery (10 Cards)** – Add the stated amount to the recipient's Mystic Power.

**Riches (10 Cards)** – Add the stated amount to the recipient's Gold.

**Dragon (10 Cards)** – Subtract the stated amount from any one resource category of any one player.

**Wild Magic (8 Cards)** – Use as a 4 card of any one RESOURCE type.

#### SPELL Cards (13 total)

SPELL cards either affect a player's resources directly or are played on other SPELL and RESOURCE cards to modify or negate their effect or to claim a card when it is discarded. The effect of a SPELL card is never modified by a player's Wealth status, though the original effect which a SPELL card is modifying may have been (i.e., an effect produced by a RESOURCE card). SPELL cards may be modified by other SPELL cards and DEITY cards.

**Capture** – May play any time on a Dragon RESOURCE card, claiming that card. After the Dragon card's effect (if any) has been resolved, the player of the Capture card claims the Dragon for his hand.

**Dragonbane** – May play any time on a Dragon RESOURCE card, canceling the effect of that card. The Dragon card this is played on is canceled and discarded.

**Negation** – May play any time to negate the SPELL or RESOURCE card **just** played. The affected card is discarded and has no effect.

**Necromancy** – May play any time to gain Followers just lost by one other player. The number gained is the actual number of Followers lost after all modifications have occurred. NOTE: This card may **not** be used to recover Followers lost by the card player.

**Power Drain** – Halve the recipient's Mystic Power. This spell may not be played on a player with God King face-up. If God King is played as a defense, Power Drain is discarded.

**Stray Energy** – May play any time on any Sorcery RESOURCE card, doubling the Mystic Power gained.

**Resurrection** – May play any time to cancel a Follower loss.

**Reprodestruction** – Play any time on a Dragon RESOURCE card, duplicating destruction back on the player of that Dragon card. Note that the actual destruction resulting from the play of the Dragon card, if any, is the amount which is applied to the original player of the Dragon card.

**Transmutation (Destruction)** – Play any time on a RESOURCE card, changing the effect to destruction as if it were a Dragon card. This SPELL turns the effect to destruction, but does not alter the resource category affected or the amount of the destruction.

**Transmutation (Followers, Mystic Power, Gold)** – Play any time on a RESOURCE card, changing the effect to the indicated category as if the card became a Notoriety, Sorcery or Riches RESOURCE card. These SPELLs alter the resource category affected, but do not alter whether the effect is a gain or loss.

**Vampiric Energy** – Double the recipient's Mystic Power and halve their Followers. This SPELL may not be played on a player with Earth Goddess face-up. If Earth Goddess is played as a defense, Vampiric Energy is discarded.

#### DEITY Cards (9 total)

DEITY cards either grant the recipient special abilities, remaining face-up in front of the recipient, or affect other DEITY cards. Face-up DEITY cards may not be voluntarily discarded. Certain face-up DEITY cards prevent the possessor from either performing or being affected by some Special Power options or from being the recipient of certain SPELL and EVENT cards as indicated below.

**Disfavor** – Remove any one Face-up DEITY card. If the recipient has more than one face-up DEITY card, the player of Disfavor chooses which card is lost. The Sacrifice DEITY card may be substituted for the lost card.

**Earth Goddess** – May play any time to prevent ANY Follower loss. Retain this card face-up once played. This card prevents losses due to card play or Special Power options. Thus, any Special Power options involving loss of Followers may not be exercised.

**Favoritism** – The card player takes any ONE face-up DEITY card from the recipient, placing the captured card face-up in front of him. If the recipient has more than one face-up DEITY card, the card player chooses which card to take. If Sacrifice is played as a defense, the player of Favoritism places Sacrifice in their hand.

**God King** – May play any time to prevent ANY Mystic Power loss. Retain this card face-up once played. This card prevents losses due to card play or Special Power options. Thus, any Special Power options involving loss of Mystic Power may not be exercised.

**Protection (2 cards)** – May play any time to make the recipient immune to opponent's SPELL and RESOURCE cards. Retain this card face-up once played. The immunity conferred is discretionary (i.e., the recipient may play SPELL and RESOURCE cards on himself, or even

accept a SPELL and RESOURCE card from someone else, if desired). This immunity does not prevent other players from modifying SPELL and RESOURCE cards played by the Protection holder if those card's effects are directed at another player's resources.

**Sacrifice** – Play any time to substitute for any DEITY card just lost by the recipient. The recipient retains face-up the DEITY card just lost, losing Sacrifice instead.

**Vacation of the Gods** – All players with one or more DEITY cards face-up must choose one to discard. The recipient may choose one of the discarded DEITY cards to retain face-up (or if Sacrifice is played, it may be taken and placed in the recipient's hand instead).

**War God** – Play any time, doubling the effect of all Dragon RESOURCE cards the recipient plays. Retain this card face-up once played. This modification applies only to Dragon cards played by the War God player. Other player's Dragon cards are not affected.

#### EVENT Cards (12 total)

The play of an EVENT card is resolved as a single action and no other card may be played by other players while resolving that card. The effects of an EVENT card are never modified by Wealth or face-up DEITY cards. Note, however, that certain DEITY cards, which must be face-up **before** the EVENT card is played, may prevent a given player from being the recipient of certain EVENT cards, as indicated below.

**Chaos Strikes** – Determine the player with the highest Mystic Power (resolve ties clockwise starting with the player of Chaos Strikes). This player then draws the top three cards from the Action Card Deck, looks at them, and then plays them in any order on the recipient of this card, making all decisions necessary to resolve the cards as they are played (e.g., picking which category a Dragon card affects). All cards must take effect, if possible, and cards may only be discarded if there is no legal play. Cards may be played separately or to modify each other. When computing a card's effect on the recipient's resources, ignore Wealth status and face-up DEITY cards. The player of Chaos Strikes is considered to be the card player, if necessary to resolve the effects of a card. Certain cards drawn may affect more than one player (e.g., Judgment, Pennies from Heaven, Vacation of the Gods, etc.) and should be resolved normally.

**Genie** – Halve the recipient's Mystic Power, and then exchange Genie for any discarded card. The recipient places the exchanged card in their hand. A player may not review the discard deck until this card is played and the Mystic Power is lost. Then, the recipient may go through the deck and take any card desired without revealing it. A player with God King face-up cannot be the recipient of this card.

**God King Boon** – The recipient adds 15 total points in any combination of resource of resource categories, including Destruction (which may then be applied to one resource category of another player, if desired). The number of points gained or lost is unaffected by Wealth status of face-up DEITY cards.

**Judgment (3 cards)** – An immediate Victory Check takes place when this card is played. All eligible players may declare Victory (see Rules 8.0). A player may **not** pass while holding this card (see Rules 7.4).

**Mega-Blast** – Play the first RESOURCE card drawn from the Action Card Deck on the recipient as destruction, subtracting the indicated amount from the three resources Followers, Mystic Power and Gold. Discard all non-RESOURCE cards until a RESOURCE card is drawn. Note that this destruction is unaffected by Wealth status or face-up DEITY cards.

**Pennies From Heaven** – All players gain 5 gold. This gain is not modified by Wealth status or face-up DEITY cards.

**Scrutiny** – The recipient flips over and leaves displayed their Victory Condition card. A player with a face-up Victory Condition card who trades it for another Victory Condition card (see Rules 7.10) receives the new card face-down.

**Slavery** – Double the recipient's Gold, halve their Followers. A player with Earth Goddess face-up cannot be the recipient of this card.

**Wrath of the Gods** – The recipient loses all face-up DEITY cards, 5 Followers and 5 Gold. Note that the DEITY cards are lost **first**, and that Sacrifice may **not** be played, thus there can be no defense against the effects of this card.

**Wrath of the War God** – Halve the recipient's Followers **or** Gold. The player of this card decides which resource is affected. If the recipient has Earth Goddess face-up the resource category Followers may not be chosen.

## BLANK ACTION CARD (5)

These cards are not part of the Action Card Deck. Use them as replacements or to add your own cards. Enjoy.

## VICTORY CONDITION CARDS (12 total)

These cards are not part of the Action Card Deck. After each player draws one, the remaining cards should be set aside face-down and may not be inspected. There are three of each of the four different types of Victory Condition Cards: City, Archmage, Hoard or Balanced.

## FIRST PLAYER CARD (1)

This card designates the First Player for the next round of play. After drawing Action Cards, this card should be placed "Claimed" side face-down. The first player to pass (see Rules 7.4) takes this card and places it "Claimed" side face-up and becomes the First Player for the next round of play.

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