

Sir Gawain And The Green Knight Reference

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is one of the most renowned works of Middle English literature, captivating readers with its rich storytelling, poetic craftsmanship, and profound themes. This medieval chivalric romance, written in the late 14th century, explores notions of honor, bravery, temptation, and human imperfection. Its enduring popularity stems from its intricate narrative structure, vivid imagery, and moral complexity, making it a vital piece for understanding medieval culture and literary traditions.

Overview of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Historical and Literary Context

Composed around 1375-1400, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is believed to have been authored by an anonymous poet often referred to as the Gawain Poet or the Pearl Poet. It belongs to the alliterative revival of Middle English poetry and is part of the larger tradition of chivalric romance. The poem reflects medieval societal values, including loyalty, faith, and the importance of reputation.

Plot Summary

The story begins during a New Year's feast at King Arthur's court, where a mysterious, supernatural Green Knight appears. He challenges any knight to strike him with his axe, on the condition that the Green Knight will return the blow a year and a day later. Sir Gawain, Arthur's nephew, accepts the challenge and beheads the Green Knight, who surprisingly survives and reminds Gawain to meet him at the same spot in a year to receive a return blow.

As the year progresses, Gawain embarks on a journey to find the Green Chapel and fulfill his promise. Along the way, he encounters a castle where he is hosted by a lord and his wife. During his stay, Gawain faces tests of honesty and virtue, especially regarding a magical girdle (belt) that the lady offers him, promising to protect him from harm. Gawain accepts the girdle but later conceals it from his host, leading to a moral dilemma.

Ultimately, Gawain meets the Green Knight, who reveals himself as a supernatural being testing Gawain's integrity. The blow he receives is only a nick, meant to symbolize Gawain's human imperfection and his failure to be entirely honest. Gawain's humility and acknowledgment of his faults are central to the poem's moral message.

The Major Themes of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Chivalry and Honor

- **Code of Chivalry:** The poem explores the ideals of knighthood, including bravery, courtesy, and loyalty.
- **Reputation:** Gawain's concern for his honor drives much of his actions, emphasizing societal expectations of knights.
- **Test of Virtue:** The challenges Gawain faces serve as moral tests, illustrating the importance of integrity over superficial appearances.

Temptation and Human Fallibility

- **The Lady's Temptation:** The lady of the castle tests Gawain's chastity and honesty, symbolizing worldly temptations.
- **The Girdle:** Represents human vulnerability and the desire to protect oneself, highlighting the tension between moral duty and self-interest.
- **Gawain's Response:** His concealment of the girdle signifies human weakness and the complexity of moral choices.

Nature and the Supernatural

- **The Green Knight:** Embodies the mysterious and the supernatural, connected to nature and the otherworldly.
- **Symbolism of the Color Green:** Often associated with nature, growth, and renewal, but also with envy and the uncanny.
- **Magical Elements:** The enchanted girdle and the Green Knight's supernatural resilience emphasize the poem's mystical atmosphere.

Mortality and Humanity

- **Acceptance of Mortality:** Gawain's acknowledgment of his imperfections reflects a realistic view of human nature.
- **Moral Growth:** The story advocates humility and self-awareness as virtues essential to moral development.

Symbolism and Literary Devices

Key Symbols

- **The Green Girdle:** Symbolizes human vulnerability, pride, and the temptation to avoid moral failure.
- **The Green Knight:** Represents nature, the supernatural, and the moral testing of humanity.
- **The Color Green:** Associated with fertility, renewal, but also envy and unnaturalness.
- **The Pentangle:** Gawain's shield bears a pentangle, symbolizing truth, fidelity, and the interconnectedness of virtues.

Poetic and Literary Techniques

- **Alliteration:** The poem's use of alliterative verse enhances its musical quality and emphasizes key themes.
- **Symbolism:** As outlined above, symbols deepen the moral and spiritual messages.
- **Frame Narrative:** The story is framed by the New Year's feast, connecting the tale to themes of renewal and moral reflection.

Legacy and Cultural Impact

Influence on Literature

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight has influenced countless works of literature, inspiring adaptations, reinterpretations, and scholarly analysis. Its exploration of morality, human weakness, and redemption remains relevant across ages.

Modern Adaptations

- **Literature:** Modern retellings and critical editions continue to explore its themes and symbolism.
- **Film and Theater:** Adaptations such as the 2021 film *The Green Knight* reimagine the story with contemporary sensibilities.
- **Art and Popular Culture:** The poem's vivid imagery and moral questions inspire artists, writers, and game designers.

Scholarly Significance

Academics study *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* for its poetic artistry, cultural insights, and philosophical depth. It offers a window into medieval values and the universal human condition.

Conclusion

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight remains a timeless masterpiece that weaves together adventure,

moral inquiry, and poetic elegance. Its portrayal of a noble knight's journey toward self-awareness and humility resonates beyond its medieval setting, offering enduring lessons on integrity, human vulnerability, and the pursuit of virtue. Whether approached as a story of chivalry or a profound meditation on human nature, the poem continues to captivate and inspire audiences worldwide.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: An Epic Tale of Honor, Nature, and Humanity

Introduction

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight stands as one of the most captivating and enduring pieces of medieval literature. Often classified as a chivalric romance, this anonymous Middle English poem, dating from the late 14th century, masterfully blends themes of honor, temptation, mortality, and the natural world. Its rich symbolism, vivid imagery, and complex characterizations continue to resonate with readers and scholars alike, making it a quintessential example of medieval storytelling and moral exploration.

In this in-depth review, we will dissect the poem's structure, themes, characters, and its significance within both historical and literary contexts. Whether you're a seasoned scholar, a student of medieval literature, or an enthusiastic reader, this comprehensive analysis aims to illuminate the enduring allure of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.

Historical Context and Origins

The Medieval Landscape

Written during the late Middle Ages, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight reflects the cultural and societal values of medieval England. The period was characterized by a burgeoning interest in chivalry, courtly love, and religious morality, all of which are woven intricately into the narrative fabric of the poem.

Authorship and Manuscripts

The poem exists in a single surviving manuscript known as the Cotton Nero A.x., housed in the British Library. The author remains anonymous, but the work is often attributed to a poet from the West Midlands, possibly associated with the court of King Richard II. Its language, dialect, and poetic structure reveal much about the scribal culture of the time.

Literary Structure and Style

Form and Composition

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is composed in a distinctive alliterative verse form, characteristic of Middle English poetry. The poem consists of approximately 2,530 lines, divided into several sections that follow a loose narrative arc:

- The New Year's Feast and the challenge
- Gawain's journey to the Green Chapel
- The tests of morality and virtue
- The conclusion and moral reflection

Poetic Devices and Symbolism

The poem employs a range of poetic devices, including:

- Alliteration: The repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words, creating rhythm and emphasis.
- Symbolism: Rich imagery such as the green sash, the pentangle, and the wilderness symbolize various moral and spiritual themes.
- Irony: Situational and verbal irony underscore the complexities of Gawain's character and the story's moral lessons.

Major Themes and Motifs

Honor and Chivalry

At its core, the poem explores the ideals of knighthood—valor, loyalty, courtesy, and moral integrity. Gawain's actions are scrutinized against these standards, raising questions about the true meaning of honor.

Nature and the Supernatural

The Green Knight himself embodies nature's wild, unpredictable aspect, contrasting with the ordered, civilized courtly world. The motif of the natural world underscores the tension between human civility and primal instinct.

Mortality and Human Frailty

Gawain's journey is as much spiritual as it is physical, confronting the inevitability of death and the imperfections inherent in human nature.

Temptation and Moral Testing

Throughout his quest, Gawain faces temptations designed to test his virtue?most notably in his encounter with Lady Bertilak and the concealment of the girdle.

Character Analysis

Sir Gawain

Gawain is depicted as the quintessential knight?brave, courteous, and committed to the chivalric code. His internal struggles and ultimate humility make him a deeply human figure. His acceptance of the green sash, despite knowing it could betray him, exemplifies human weakness and the complexity of moral choice.

The Green Knight

A supernatural figure, the Green Knight embodies the natural world and its mysteries. His challenge is both a test of courage and a mirror reflecting Gawain?s virtues and flaws. The Green Knight?s true identity as Lord Bertilak adds layers of deception and moral ambiguity.

Lady Bertilak

The lady represents temptation and the testing of Gawain?s virtue. Her interactions with Gawain serve as a moral crucible, challenging notions of desire, loyalty, and integrity.

Key Episodes and Their Significance

The Challenge at Camelot

The Green Knight?s arrival at King Arthur?s court introduces the central conflict. His challenge?allowing a knight to strike him in exchange for a return blow after a year?embodies the themes of bravery and the acceptance of consequence.

Gawain?s Journey to the Green Chapel

This arduous trek symbolizes the spiritual journey of self-discovery. Encounters along the way, from the lord?s castle to the wilderness, serve as tests of Gawain?s resolve.

The Testing at the Castle: The Three Exchanges

The exchange of gifts between Gawain and Lord Bertilak tests Gawain?s honesty. The gifts

symbolize moral virtues and vices, emphasizing the importance of truthfulness and humility.

The Confrontation and Gawain's Reflection

The climax at the Green Chapel reveals Gawain's human imperfections. His confession and remorse highlight the poem's moral message—that perfection is unattainable, but integrity is vital.

Symbols and Their Interpretations

| Symbol | Interpretation | Significance |

|-----|-----|-----|

- | The Green Sash | Survival, temptation, human vulnerability | Represents Gawain's attempt to preserve life at the expense of honesty |
- | The Pentangle | Virtue, truth, and the five senses | Embodies Gawain's moral virtues and divine grace |
- | The Green Knight | Nature, the supernatural, and moral testing | Challenges human hubris and moral integrity |
- | The Wilderness | Chaos, spiritual testing | A space where societal norms are suspended, revealing true character |

Critical Reception and Legacy

Medieval and Modern Perspectives

Initially, the poem was celebrated for its poetic craftsmanship and moral depth. Modern critics appreciate its nuanced exploration of human morality, its rich symbolism, and its innovative narrative structure.

Influence on Literature

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight has influenced countless works, inspiring adaptations in poetry, theater, film, and art. Its themes of honor, temptation, and human fallibility continue to be relevant today.

Why Read Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Today?

A Reflection of Human Nature

The poem's exploration of human weakness and virtue offers timeless insights into morality and self-awareness.

Literary Innovation

Its blend of myth, allegory, and realism exemplifies medieval literary artistry and continues to inspire writers and scholars.

Cultural Significance

As a window into medieval values and worldview, the poem enriches our understanding of history and human experience.

Conclusion

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is more than just a medieval romance; it is a profound meditation on the complexities of human morality, the power of nature, and the importance of humility. Its enduring appeal lies in its layered symbolism, vivid storytelling, and universal themes that transcend time and culture.

Whether approached as a moral allegory, a work of poetic artistry, or a reflection of medieval society, the poem remains a vital piece of literary heritage. For modern readers seeking to explore the intricate dance between virtue and human frailty, Sir Gawain's journey provides a compelling and thought-provoking experience—an epic that continues to challenge and inspire well beyond its medieval origins.

QuestionAnswer What is the main plot of 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight'? The poem tells the story of Sir Gawain, who accepts a challenge from the mysterious Green Knight, leading to a series of tests of courage, honor, and integrity over a year-long quest. What does the Green Knight symbolize in the poem? The Green Knight often symbolizes nature, rebirth, and the testing of moral virtue, serving as a challenger and a mirror to Sir Gawain's character. How does the theme of chivalry influence the story? Chivalry is central to the poem, as Sir Gawain's actions reflect the values of honor, loyalty, and humility, which are challenged and examined throughout his journey. What is the significance of the green color in the poem? The green color symbolizes nature, fertility, and the supernatural, emphasizing the mystical elements of the story and the connection between the natural and spiritual worlds. How does 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight' explore the concept of identity? The poem explores identity through Gawain's internal struggles, his sense of self, and the masks he wears, ultimately questioning what truly defines a person's character. Why is the poem considered a masterpiece of Middle English literature? Because of its rich symbolism, intricate

structure, moral complexity, and mastery of poetic form, making it a quintessential example of medieval storytelling and allegory. What role does the theme of temptation play in the story? Temptation appears when Gawain faces tests of honesty and virtue, particularly in his interactions with Lady Bertilak, highlighting human fallibility and moral integrity. How has 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight' influenced modern adaptations and interpretations? The poem has inspired numerous adaptations in literature, film, and art, often exploring themes of heroism, morality, and the supernatural, reflecting its enduring relevance and appeal.

Related keywords: Arthurian legend, medieval romance, chivalry, green knight, Camelot, quest, honor, testing, knightly virtue, medieval literature

simon armitage sir gawain pdf

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The phrase 'simon armitage sir gawain pdf' encapsulates a fascinating intersection of contemporary poetic interpretation and medieval literature. Simon Armitage, a renowned British poet and playwright, has notably engaged with Sir Gawain and the Green Knight—one of the most celebrated works of Middle English literature—by creating modern adaptations, critical analyses, and educational resources. The availability of a 'pdf' version of Armitage's work or commentary on Sir Gawain allows students, scholars, and poetry enthusiasts to access and explore this complex piece in a convenient digital format. This article delves into the significance of Simon Armitage's engagement with Sir Gawain, explores the content and context of his adaptations or commentaries, and discusses the broader importance of accessing such materials in PDF form for study and appreciation.

Understanding Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

The Origins and Significance of the Poem

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is a 14th-century Middle English chivalric romance that has captivated readers for centuries. It tells the story of Sir Gawain, a knight of King Arthur's court, who accepts a challenge from a mysterious Green Knight. The poem explores themes of honor, temptation, mortality, and human fallibility, encapsulating the ideals and contradictions of medieval knighthood.

Key aspects include:

- The Green Knight's challenge and Gawain's acceptance
- The testing of Gawain's virtue through the famous pentangle symbol
- The role of the castle and the supernatural elements
- The moral and philosophical questions posed by the story

This literary masterpiece is renowned for its rich symbolism, intricate structure, and exploration of ethical dilemmas.

Why Sir Gawain Continues to Influence Modern Literature

Despite being over six centuries old, Sir Gawain remains relevant today because:

- It examines universal themes such as integrity and human weakness
- Its narrative complexity offers rich material for literary analysis
- It exemplifies medieval poetic techniques like alliteration and rhyme

Modern adaptations and interpretations serve to bridge the gap between medieval and contemporary audiences, making the themes accessible and engaging.

Simon Armitage's Engagement with Sir Gawain

Background of Simon Armitage

Simon Armitage, born in 1963 in West Yorkshire, is a distinguished poet, playwright, and academic. His work is characterized by its accessibility, wit, and keen insight into human nature. Over the years, Armitage has contributed significantly to modern poetry through collections, radio programmes, and educational resources.

He is also known for his interest in traditional storytelling and historical texts, which he often reimagines or adapts for contemporary audiences.

Armitage's Interpretation of Sir Gawain

Armitage's engagement with Sir Gawain and the Green Knight manifests in several ways:

- Poetic adaptations: Creating modern poetic retellings that retain the core themes and moral questions
- Critical commentary: Providing analyses and contextual insights into the original poem
- Educational resources: Developing accessible guides and PDFs for students and teachers

One notable project is his 'Gawain' poem, which offers a contemporary voice to the legendary figure, exploring his virtues and flaws in a modern idiom.

The Significance of a 'Sir Gawain PDF' by Simon Armitage

A PDF resource authored by Armitage or featuring his insights on Sir Gawain holds particular value because:

- It provides a portable, easily accessible form of scholarly or poetic material
- It combines Armitage's modern poetic sensibility with traditional themes
- It often includes annotations, commentary, and contextual background to enhance understanding

Such PDFs are invaluable for students, educators, and poetry enthusiasts seeking a comprehensive view of Armitage's perspective on Sir Gawain.

Contents and Features of Simon Armitage's Sir Gawain PDFs

Typical Components of the PDF Resources

A well-structured PDF on Simon Armitage's Sir Gawain may include:

- Introduction and background: Context about the original poem and Armitage's interest
- Poetic retelling or adaptation: The full text or selected passages presented in modern language
- Annotations and notes: Explanations of symbolism, themes, and stylistic choices
- Critical analysis: Discussions on the poem's moral questions, structure, and relevance
- Discussion questions: Prompts for classroom or personal reflection
- Further reading and resources: References to other adaptations, scholarly articles, and related works

Advantages of Using PDF Resources

PDF documents offer several benefits:

- Portability: Easy to download, store, and share
- Searchability: Text can be searched for specific themes or keywords
- Preservation of formatting: Maintains layout, annotations, and visual elements
- Accessibility: Compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies

This makes PDFs an ideal format for detailed study, especially in academic settings.

Accessing and Using Simon Armitage's Sir Gawain PDFs

Where to Find These Resources

Resources authored by or featuring Simon Armitage on Sir Gawain can be located through:

- Official websites: Armitage's personal or publisher's site
- Educational platforms: University repositories or online course materials
- Poetry and literary archives: Digital libraries specializing in modern adaptations
- Online bookstores and e-book platforms: For paid or free PDFs

It's important to verify the credibility and copyright status of the PDFs to ensure legal and ethical access.

How to Effectively Use These PDFs for Study

To maximize the benefit of these resources:

- Read actively: Annotate and highlight key points
- Cross-reference: Compare Armitage's interpretation with the original text
- Engage critically: Reflect on the differences between medieval and modern perspectives
- Discuss with others: Use discussion questions to deepen understanding
- Supplement with other materials: Explore scholarly articles, videos, and lectures

Conclusion: The Value of Modern Adaptations and Digital Resources

Simon Armitage's engagement with Sir Gawain and the Green Knight exemplifies how contemporary poets can breathe new life into classical texts. The availability of PDFs containing his adaptations, commentaries, or analyses makes these rich literary resources accessible to a broad audience. They serve not only as educational tools but also as bridges connecting medieval themes with modern sensibilities. Whether for academic study, personal exploration, or teaching, these PDFs facilitate a deeper understanding of Sir Gawain's enduring relevance and the innovative ways in which modern poets like Armitage interpret tradition. As digital technology continues to evolve, the accessibility and richness of such resources promise to keep the dialogue between past and present vibrant and ongoing.

Simon Armitage Sir Gawain PDF: An In-Depth Investigation into a Contemporary Interpretation of a

Medieval Classic

The phrase "Simon Armitage Sir Gawain PDF" has increasingly gained prominence within literary circles, academic institutions, and online scholarly communities seeking modern adaptations and analyses of one of the most enduring texts of medieval literature—the Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. This article aims to explore the significance of Simon Armitage's adaptation, its availability in PDF format, and its contributions to contemporary literary discourse.

Introduction: The Enduring Legacy of Sir Gawain

The Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is a cornerstone of medieval English literature, composed in the late 14th century as part of the alliterative revival. Known for its rich symbolism, complex themes, and poetic craftsmanship, the poem has captivated scholars and readers alike for centuries. However, its archaic language and cultural context often pose challenges for modern audiences.

Enter Simon Armitage, a renowned contemporary poet, playwright, and literary scholar, whose engagement with the Gawain manuscript has brought fresh perspectives, accessibility, and scholarly rigor to this medieval masterpiece. His adaptation—whether in the form of a translation, poetic retelling, or critical commentary—has been disseminated widely, often available in PDF format for academic and personal use.

Simon Armitage's Approach to Sir Gawain

Background and Motivation

Simon Armitage's interest in Gawain stems from his broader project of bridging classical literature with contemporary voices. Having established himself as a poet adept at blending tradition with innovation, Armitage sought to:

- Render the poem accessible to modern readers
- Preserve its core themes and poetic beauty
- Foster deeper understanding through scholarly annotation

The Nature of His Adaptation

Armitage's version of Sir Gawain is characterized by:

- Modernized language that retains the poem's rhythmic and alliterative qualities
- Inclusion of critical annotations and footnotes

- A focus on the moral and spiritual dilemmas faced by Gawain
- A reflective, sometimes conversational tone that invites engagement

While not a literal translation, his adaptation functions as an interpretative retelling that emphasizes clarity without sacrificing poetic depth.

The PDF Format: Accessibility and Usage

Why PDFs Matter in Literary Scholarship

Portable Document Format (PDF) files have become a staple in academic and literary communities for their:

- Consistent formatting across devices
- Ease of distribution and sharing
- Capability to include high-quality images, annotations, and hyperlinks

Availability of Simon Armitage Sir Gawain PDF

A search for "Simon Armitage Sir Gawain PDF" reveals a variety of resources, including:

- Official publications and editions published by reputable academic presses
- University course materials and lecture notes
- Critical essays and annotated versions uploaded by scholars and students

It is important to note that some PDFs are freely accessible, while others may require institutional access or purchase. As with all scholarly materials, verifying the legitimacy and copyright status of downloadable PDFs is essential.

Legal and Ethical Considerations

- Copyright Status: Many editions of Armitage's work are protected by copyright. Users should ensure they access PDFs legally, through authorized sources or open-access repositories.
- Academic Use: Many educational institutions provide students with access to PDF copies through university libraries or course platforms.
- Personal Use: Personal study and research are generally permissible, but redistribution or commercial use without permission may violate copyright law.

Critical Analysis of Simon Armitage's Sir Gawain

Themes and Interpretations

Armitage's adaptation emphasizes several key themes:

- Honor and Chivalry: The moral compass guiding Gawain's actions
- Temptation and Human Fallibility: Gawain's moral testing in the Green Chapel
- Nature and the Supernatural: The Green Knight's otherworldly presence and symbolism
- Identity and Self-Perception: Gawain's internal struggle and growth

His poetic retelling often draws attention to the psychological complexity of Gawain, making the story more relatable to modern readers.

Scholarly Reception

Academic reviews of Armitage's Gawain highlight:

- Its accessibility for students new to medieval literature
- Its poetic fidelity and innovative language choices
- Its capacity to spark discussion on moral and ethical issues
- The value of its critical annotations in scholarly contexts

Some critics commend how Armitage's voice revitalizes the narrative, while others debate whether it remains faithful to the original tone and themes.

Implications for Modern Literary Studies

Bridging Past and Present

Armitage's Sir Gawain PDF exemplifies how modern poets and scholars can reinterpret classical texts, making them relevant and engaging. It serves as a model for:

- Cross-temporal literary dialogue
- Pedagogical approaches that combine traditional texts with contemporary language
- Digital dissemination of scholarly work for wider accessibility

Educational Applications

In academic settings, PDF editions of Armitage's Sir Gawain are used for:

- Literature courses exploring medieval poetry
- Comparative studies between original and modern interpretations
- Critical essays and research projects

The PDF format facilitates annotation, highlighting, and note-taking, enhancing the learning experience.

Conclusion: The Significance of Simon Armitage's Sir Gawain PDF in Contemporary Literature

The keyword "Simon Armitage Sir Gawain PDF" encapsulates a crucial intersection between medieval literary heritage and contemporary poetic innovation. Armitage's adaptation, widely accessible in PDF format, demonstrates the power of modern reinterpretation to breathe new life into timeless stories.

Through its accessible language, scholarly annotations, and poetic craftsmanship, Armitage's Sir Gawain serves as a vital resource for students, educators, and literary enthusiasts seeking to understand the enduring themes of honor, morality, and identity. Its digital availability underscores the importance of open access and digital literacy in today's scholarly landscape.

As the digital age continues to evolve, so too does the potential for classic works like Sir Gawain and the Green Knight to reach new audiences, foster critical engagement, and inspire future adaptations. Simon Armitage's contribution exemplifies this ongoing dialogue between past and present, tradition and innovation.

In summary:

- The "Simon Armitage Sir Gawain PDF" is a valuable resource that offers a modern, accessible interpretation of a medieval classic.
- Its availability in PDF format enhances accessibility for both academic and personal use.
- Armitage's poetic and interpretative approach revitalizes the themes of honor, morality, and identity for contemporary audiences.
- Its critical and pedagogical value continues to influence the study of medieval literature in the digital age.

For anyone interested in exploring Gawain through a modern lens, seeking Armitage's adaptation in PDF form is a worthwhile endeavor—one that bridges centuries of literary tradition and opens new

pathways for understanding one of England's greatest poetic works.

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