

Breaking the Silence

How to Build Influence as a Tech Writer

Jacob Moses | Host of The Not-Boring Tech Writer | Tech Writer at Rainmaker Digital

Who's the Ginger? (My name is Jacob, thank you.)



- Tech Comm. graduate from the University of North Texas
- Host of The Not-Boring Tech Writer podcast
- Technical Writer at Rainmaker Digital





- THE -
NOT - B  RING
- TECH WRITER -

INFLUENCE

**CREATE
CONTENT**

Tom Johnson's *I'd Rather Be Writing*

**I'd Rather Be Writing**
exploring technical writing trends and innovations

Adobe FrameMaker (2015 release)
Smoother import of Word files [Free Trial](#)

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[Review of Andrew Etter's ebook on Modern Technical Writing](#)

Jul 26, 2016 · [api-doc](#), [book-reviews](#), [podcasts](#)

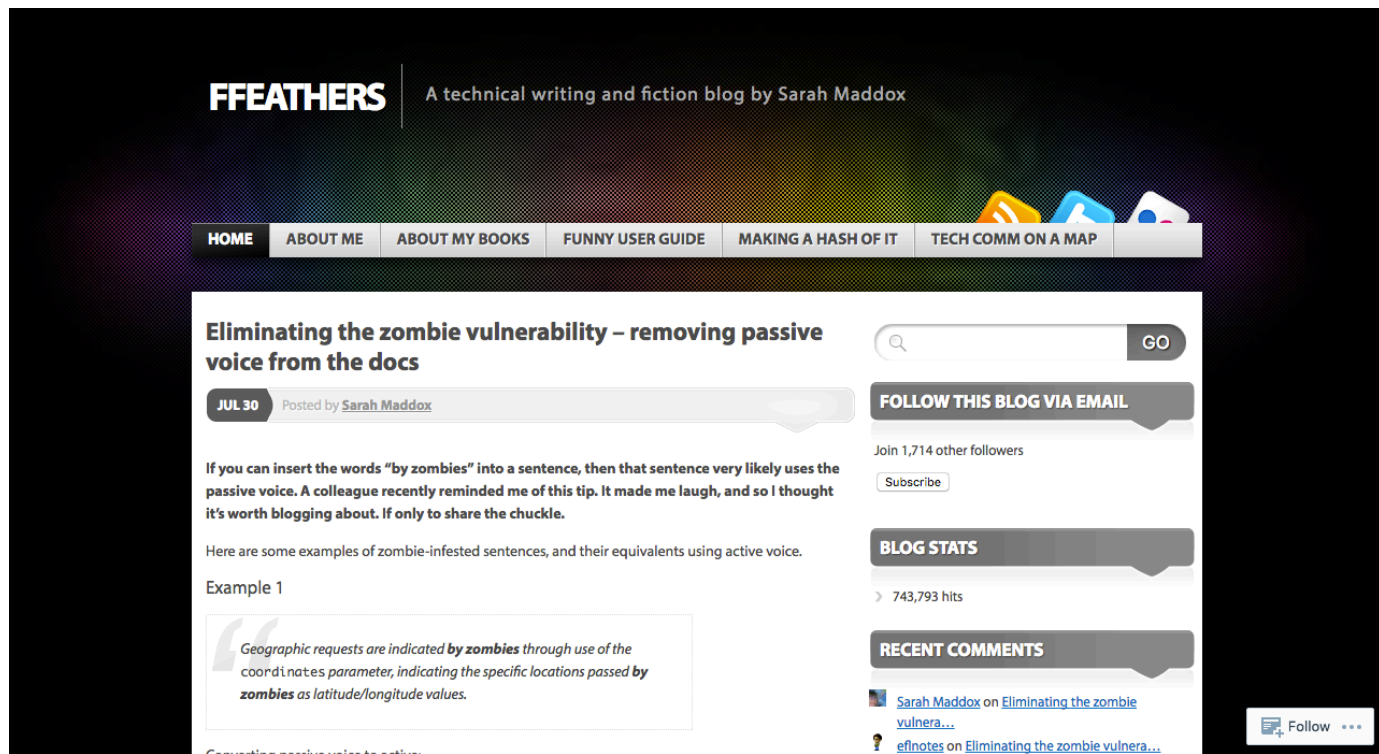
In "Modern Technical Writing: An Introduction to Software Documentation," which is an e-book you can read on your Kindle, Andrew Etter argues for a model of technical writing that involves lightweight markup languages (like AsciiDoc and Markdown), static site generators (such as Sphinx), distributed version control systems (like Git or Bitbucket), constantly iterating/updating doc content on your website based on analytics, and more. Etter's book resonated with me because it articulates so many of the principles I've felt about how documentation should be.

[Applying Tim Ferriss' 4-hour work week rules to tech comm projects](#)

Jul 20, 2016 · [general](#), [innovation](#), [podcasts](#)

Principles in Tim Ferriss' book The 4-Hour Work Week can be applied to tech comm projects. By focusing on the 20% of tasks that result in 80% of the results, limiting your focus to two mission critical tasks a day, empowering those around you to make decisions, and avoiding distractions from trivial tasks,

Sarah Maddox's *FFEATHERS*

The image is a screenshot of the FFEATHERS blog homepage. The header features the title 'FFEATHERS' in a large, bold, white font, followed by the subtitle 'A technical writing and fiction blog by Sarah Maddox' in a smaller white font. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: 'HOME', 'ABOUT ME', 'ABOUT MY BOOKS', 'FUNNY USER GUIDE', 'MAKING A HASH OF IT', and 'TECH COMM ON A MAP'. The main content area displays a post titled 'Eliminating the zombie vulnerability – removing passive voice from the docs', dated 'JUL 30' and posted by 'Sarah Maddox'. The post text discusses the use of the word 'by zombies' to indicate passive voice and provides examples of converting passive sentences to active voice. A quote box contains a tip about using 'by zombies' to indicate specific locations. The right sidebar includes a search bar, a 'FOLLOW THIS BLOG VIA EMAIL' section with a 'Subscribe' button, 'BLOG STATS' showing '743,793 hits', and 'RECENT COMMENTS' from Sarah Maddox and efinotes. A 'Follow' button is at the bottom right.

FFEATHERS | A technical writing and fiction blog by Sarah Maddox

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Eliminating the zombie vulnerability – removing passive voice from the docs

JUL 30 Posted by Sarah Maddox

If you can insert the words “by zombies” into a sentence, then that sentence very likely uses the passive voice. A colleague recently reminded me of this tip. It made me laugh, and so I thought it’s worth blogging about. If only to share the chuckle.

Here are some examples of zombie-infested sentences, and their equivalents using active voice.

Example 1

“Geographic requests are indicated **by zombies** through use of the coordinates parameter, indicating the specific locations passed **by zombies** as latitude/longitude values.

Converting passive voice to active:

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BLOG STATS

> 743,793 hits

RECENT COMMENTS

Sarah Maddox on [Eliminating the zombie vulnerability...](#)

efinotes on [Eliminating the zombie vulnerability...](#)

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ffeathers.wordpress.com

Three Steps to Build Your Influence

There are three steps to building your influence:

1. Find what to share.
2. Learn how to share it.
3. Choose where to share it.



Find What to Share

Think about your tech comm. skill or passion.

Hard Skills/Passions:

- Single-source authoring
- Writing with a friendly, conversational tone.
- UX Design

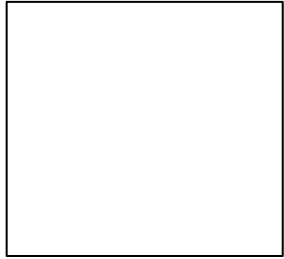
Soft Skills/Passions:

- Building community
- Communication between Docs and Support
- Collaboration

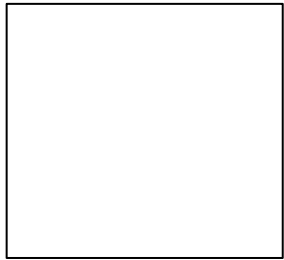




Find What to Share



Learn How to Share it



Choose Where to Share it

Learn How to Share it

How are you going to differentiate yourself from other technical writers?





Brenda Levick onto Hirens Magical Adventures



Lakesha Lowd onto howse



A white built-in storage unit with three open compartments and a wooden interior. The unit is set against a green wall and a dark tiled floor. The compartments are empty, and the wooden interior is visible. The unit has a clean, modern design with white cabinetry and a dark base. The wooden interior of the compartments is a light brown color. The unit is built into the wall, providing a seamless look. The lighting is bright, highlighting the white paint and the wood grain. The overall aesthetic is clean and functional.



kassandra woodard onto awesomeness



A white built-in cabinet with three doors and two open compartments, showing dark interior shelving. The cabinet is set against a light green wall. The open compartments reveal dark, possibly black, interior shelving. The floor is dark wood.



Catrina Gross onto Favs



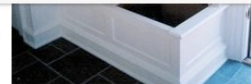
storage. storage. storage. storage.



Ernest Walters onto The Archives



Les Esparza onto howse



Mattie Wilcox onto **yummy recipes to try**



Debbie Spicer Love this!!



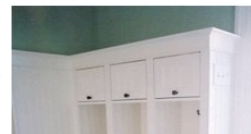
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storage. storage. storage. storage.



Mathilde Dowers onto **My Fav Pins**



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Learn How to Share it

How are you going to differentiate yourself from other technical writers?



Learn How to Share it

Content Tilt:

“Your content tilt is what separates you from everyone else in your market.”

“It’s your unique perspective on your content niche, which creates an opportunity for you to attack, lead and, ultimately, own the category.”

<http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/content-inc/framework-content-tilt/>



Learn How to Share it

How to find your unique perspective:

- Your experiences
- Your associations



Learn How to Share it

Your experiences:

- a strategy that worked well for you
- a story



Learn How to Share it

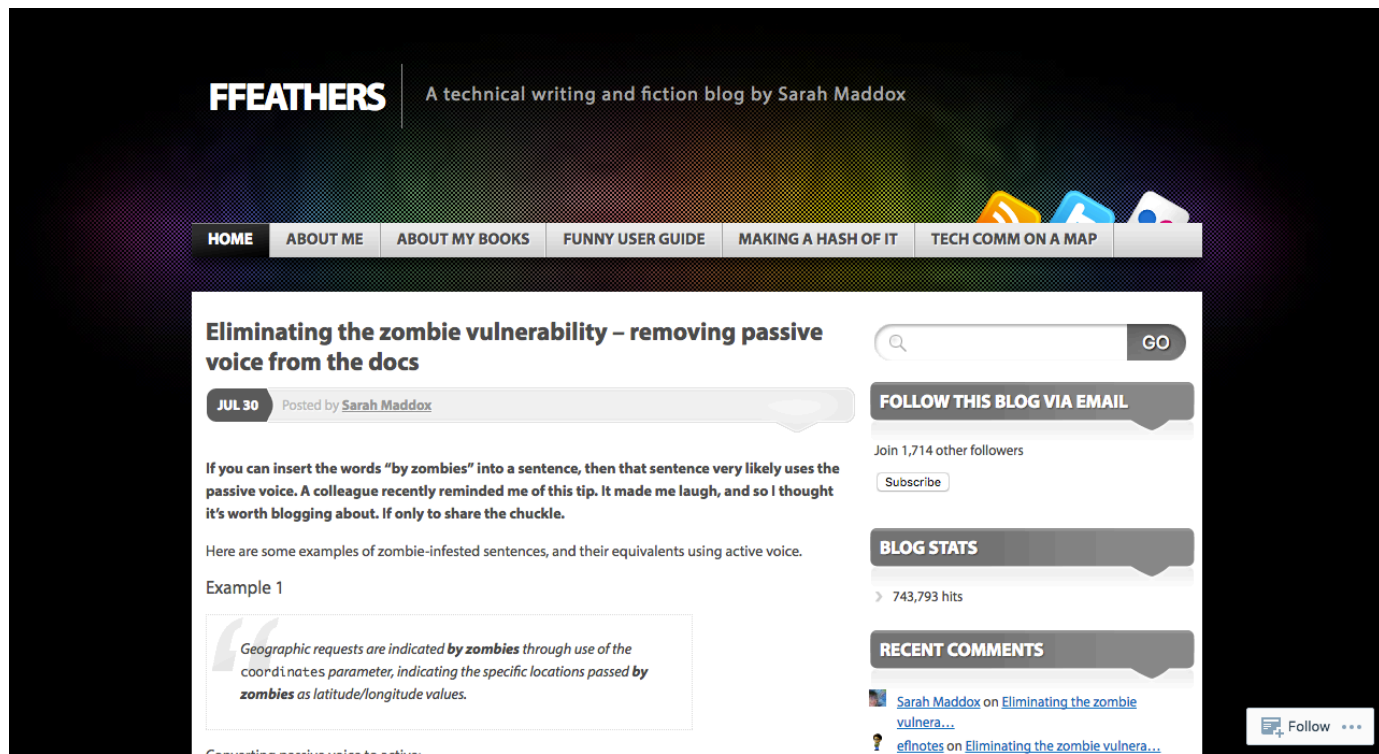
Your associations:

Connections you make that initially seem unrelated on the surface.

- Transitioned from Support to Documentation
- Your interests outside of technical communication



Sarah Maddox's *FFEATHERS*

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Eliminating the zombie vulnerability – removing passive voice from the docs

JUL 30 Posted by [Sarah Maddox](#)

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Converting passive voice to active:

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Sarah Maddox's *FFEATHERS*

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JUL 30

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Example 1

*Geographic requests are indicated **by zombies** through use of the coordinates parameter, indicating the specific locations passed **by zombies** as latitude/longitude values.*

Converting passive voice to active:

You can use the coordinates parameter to indicate geographic requests, passing the specific locations as latitude/longitude values.

<https://ffeathers.wordpress.com/2016/07/30/eliminating-the-zombie-vulnerability-removing-passive-voice-from-the-docs/>

**TRUST YOUR
ASSOCIATIONS**

Learn How to Share it

Anne Lammot in *Bird by Bird*:

“Take the attitude that what you are thinking is valuable stuff, and then be naïve enough to get it all down on paper.”

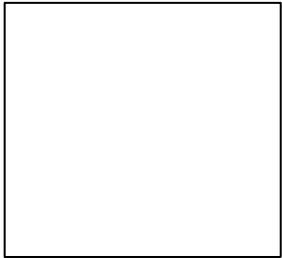




Find What to Share



Learn How to Share it



Choose Where to Share it

Choose Where to Share it

Find the best medium to share your content.

- Blog
- Podcast
- Email newsletter



Choose Where to Share it

Blog:

- Wordpress.com
- Medium
- The Rainmaker Platform

You don't waste precious time setting up your site, when you could be creating content.



Choose Where to Share it

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- Your site is free (excluding your domain).
- Quick onboarding.
- Automatic security updates.

[Wordpress.com](https://wordpress.com)



Choose Where to Share it

Medium:

- The platform is free.
- Quick onboarding.
- Automatic updates.

Two options:

- Create a profile
- Create a publication


[Medium.com](https://medium.com)



Profile: <https://medium.com/@jacobscottmoses>

Jacob Moses

Technical Writer at Rainmaker Digital and Host of The Not-Boring Tech Writer podcast.

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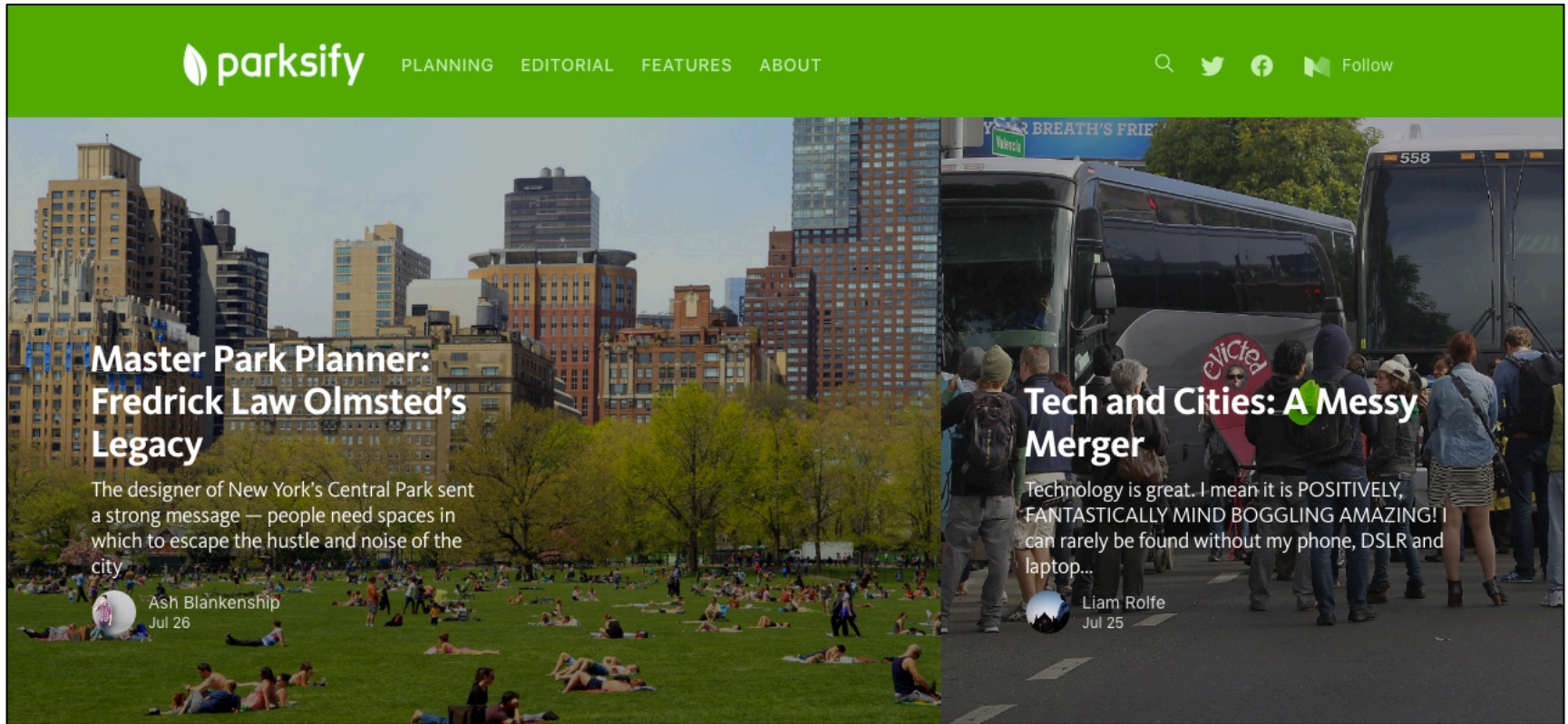


Jacob Moses
Dec 10, 2014 · 2 min read

Why You Should Stop Setting Goals



Publication: <https://parksify.com/>



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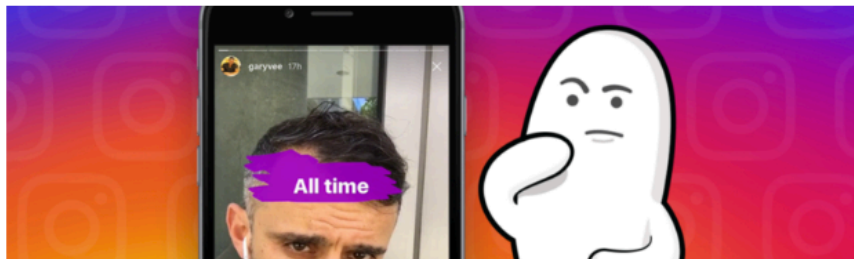
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Lauren Parker



Why Don't Your Friends Like You?

Alex Balk



Poem: Nobody Cares About Skeeter

Joanna C. Valente

Not just a game

When it comes to protecting gay athletes, the sports world still has a way to go.



Lust, guilt, and double standards — a gay guide to sport.

Gareth Johnson



The 'Gay Jesse Owens'

Cyd Zeigler

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- Built on the WordPress framework.
- Advanced content tools – podcasting, Learning Management System (LMS) courses, membership sites, built-in email marketing service.
- \$125/month

Choose Where to Share it

Find the best medium to share your content.

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Podcast:

Three tools:

- Microphone
- Recording and editing software
- Place to host podcast



Choose Where to Share it

Microphone:

- Built-in microphone
- [Blue Snowball Mic](#) (\$49.00)
- [Blue Yeti Mic](#) (\$128.94)



Choose Where to Share it

Recording and Editing Software:

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- [Audacity](#) (free for Mac and PC users)
- [Skype](#)
 - Paired with [Call Recorder](#)



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Place to Host the Podcast:

- [SoundCloud](#)
- [Buzzsprout](#)
- [PodBean](#)



Choose Where to Share it

Find the best medium to share your content.

- Blog
- Podcast
- Email newsletter



Choose Where to Share it

Email Newsletter:

- [MailChimp](#) (free up to 2,000 subscribers and/or 12,000 emails a month).
- [TinyLetter](#)



**MAKE YOUR PLATFORM
YOUR COLLEAGUES
PLATFORM.**

Choose Where to Share it

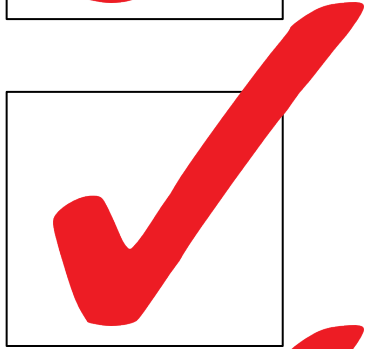
Find Your Colleagues:

- [Write the Docs Meetups](#)
- [Write the Docs Slack Channel](#)
- [Write the Docs Hashtag](#)
- [Tech Comm Hashtag](#)

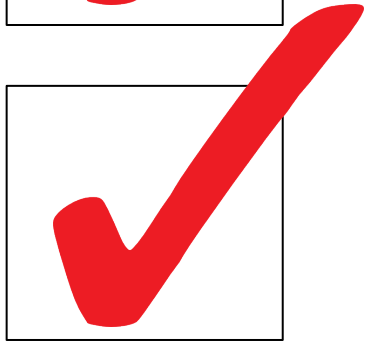




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Contact Me



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