













FRONTISPIECE.



MEMORY.

Fage 14

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## MEMORY.

## BY MRS. CAMERON,

Author of "The History of Margaret Whyte,"
"The Two Lambs," &c. &c.

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## MEMORY.

I AM nearly arrived at the end of my pilgrimage; I am drawing to the close of a long life. The pleasures of the world have no more power to deceive me, and I have seen the emptiness of its cares and pursuits. Many infirmities compass me about, and oblige me to spend great part of my time upon my sofa.

Here, among other occupations of my leisure hours, I have lately employed myself in re-

viewing many periods of my early life, and considering the reports which Memory gives me And one principal of them. reason for doing this has been to benefit my younger friends. I am desirous to shew them, from my own experience, that though sin at the present moment may be fair and engaging, yet in the end it will appear in its native deformity: and I earnestly intreat them, in the actions of early life, to have a continual view to the recollections of advanced age.

There is still, however, another and more important end for which it becomes us to

recal the principles and motives which have governed our past conduct; it is that we may carry them to the foot of the cross, to be washed in the blood of that Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. For even the best among us have need to acknowledge that our trespasses are grown up unto the heavens; even the most pure of our actions have need of an atonement. What then shall we say of our secret iniquities, which are more in number than the hairs of our heads? For my own part, I acknowledge, O Lord, that, in myself, I am lost and undone, and that my hope to confidence in any thing good I may have been enabled to do; but that, laying my mouth in the dust, I acknowledge that I deserve to be cast out of the sight of my God for ever, and that my only hope of salvation rests upon the merits of Christ my Saviour.

And now, having stated my views on this point, I hope I may not be mistaken, when, for the benefit of my young friends, I relate to them various actions of my early life; some of which I remember with pleasure, and some with

pain.—Of my early life, I repeat, because I am anxious to lead these young ones to feel that the trials of childhood and early youth correspond to the trials of maturer age. Is it of importance that the man should do well?—is it of none that the child should act aright? Do we value the fruit, and yet disregard the blossom?

And now, let me introduce you to my old-fashioned sitting-room up stairs, which I seldom leave, except to go to church, or to pay a few visits of friendship and good-will, and sometimes, when the sun shines, to walk under a row of elm trees, well inhabited by rooks, which runs round the church-yard. This church-yard I see from my window, and a church, with a spire, in the middle of it.

My room is wainscoted with oak; and over the fire-place hangs my mother's picture. On one side of it is that of my son Charles, who died when he was sixteen—and a noble boy he was—his yellow hair curls round his face; and on the other side, answering to the picture of my son, is that of my two little girls, who died of the small-pox, between the age of four and five. Their names were Emma

and Sophia, and they are drawn holding each other by the hand.

Below my mother is the picture of my husband in his gown and cassock and wig—he died in the very house where I am now living.

I often look at these valued pictures, and think where the dear persons they represent now are: for I believe they all died in faith, according to their several capacities, and are at rest in their Saviour's bosom.——But I forget myself; I was describing my room.

At the upper end of it there

is a cabinet containing stuffed birds, and other curiosities which my father brought from the South Seas. I have a sofa on one side of the fire-place; and on the other is my easy chair, which I have had placed in such a situation that I can see from it the church rising above the elm trees. And I have a small table before me, where my Bible, and Prayer-Book, and my port-folio, and my pen and ink, and my spectacles, and my knitting, are usually laid, ready to furnish me with employment, more or less interesting, as best suits the time of day and my bodily infirmities: though I am often

obliged to give up all employment except that of my thoughts, and rest myself entirely on my sofa. I am very old, and wear a black hood over my cap, and have always dressed in black since my husband's death.

Perhaps you may like to know that I have two companions who rarely ever forsake me, and who, contrary to their usual character, live together on very good terms. I mean a tortoise-shell cat and a yellowand-white spaniel. They are both great favourites with my grandchildren when they come to see me.

And now, to make it more agreeable, you may imagine I have two or three of my grand-children sitting on little stools at my feet, and listening to the very same infantine recital which I am about to give to you.

When I was a very little girl, I remember my mother setting me a lesson to learn by heart. It was very easy, and I could have learned it with little trouble; but I was wholly taken up with play, and would not give my mind, in any degree, to my business. I knew that I was wrong in doing so, and I had been taught that, if I lifted up

my heart in prayer, I should be enabled to conquer my sinful idleness: yet my heart felt hard, and I strove not against the evil that I knew was in it.

I remember that my mother was unwell, and that she lay on a sofa. She called to me many times to learn my lesson, but in vain. At last she went out of the room, and walked into the garden, for it was summer, and presently she returned with a very fine bunch of currants upon a leaf; and calling me to her, she said, that, if I would be a good little girl, and learn my lesson in five minutes, she would give me

those currants. I promised her I would, and I sat down again to my book; but, instead of learning my lesson, I employed myself in watching the minute hand of her watch.

When the five minutes were past, she called me to her, and bade me say my lesson. She smiled at me, and spoke very kindly. I could have said part of my lesson: but alas! I remember that I said not one word. After waiting my pleasure for some time, my mother rang the bell, and sent me away.

As my nurse took me out of

the room, I remember seeing my mother remove the currants from the table; and I saw her put her hand to her head, as if it ached, and she looked very grave. I had a feeling of sorrow, which to this day is fresh in my mind.

After that day my mother did not hear my lessons for many months; for she was very ill. The memory of this circumstance is still painful to me.

I remember, in a certain town where I was taken when very young to visit a relation, that there was a large corner shop which we were obliged to pass very frequently; and this shop contained almost every thing that could invite the desires of a little child. In one window were sugar-plums of every form, with fruit and cakes; and in the other were dolls, and coaches, and waggons, and windmills, dogs with coats of fur that barked, wooden birds that whistled in cages, and what not.

But, among all these things, there was a certain fire-place, the form of which is present with me still: it had a spit with a joint of meat roasting, and a kettle hanging to boil, with all other necessary articles. The price of this fire-place I

had enquired, and found it to amount to several shillings. I had been long in the habit of putting by all the pence and sixpences and shillings that were given me in a little box; and with this money I had been taught to buy little useful articles for poor children: and I had planned, when I left home, to purchase materials for a frock for a little girl near my own home who much needed it.

The contents of my box would buy the fire-place, or they would purchase the frock; but they would not do both: and there was a great struggle in my mind whether the fire-

place or the frock should be bought—for my mother generally left me at liberty to spend my money as I chose, though she endeavoured to assist and guide me in making my choice. And in the present instance she perfectly knew the feelings of my mind; indeed, I rarely concealed them from her.

One evening, after my return from a walk, in which I had passed the well-known shop, and taken a most minute survey of the fire-place, I lay down to sleep so full of the desire of it, that I could think of nothing else. The next morning I quite made up my mind to purchase

it, and gave up all intentions of buying the frock.

When I made known my resolution to my mother, she represented to me the transitory nature of the pleasure I was going to purchase at the sacrifice of the comfort and advantage of my little nursling at home. She talked so sweetly to me of the reality of heavenly things, and of the emptiness of earthly things, that, when she was gone, I knelt down and prayed that the thoughts of my heart might be made clean, and that I might be enabled, in the days of my childhood, to live by faith, and not by sight, and be made willing now to give up my own pleasure for the good of a little lamb of my Saviour's flock.

I well remember the struggle of my mind when I first knelt down, and how the image of the fire-place seemed continually to present itself before me, as I tried to think of my little girl at home. But, when I rose from my knees, I thank God that my mind seemed decided upon buying the frock, which I did that very morning, and so put it out of my power to buy the fire-place.

I own that, afterwards, when-

ever I passed the shop, I felt some feeling of regret; but this feeling became less painful every time: and when I returned home, and gave the frock to my little girl, all my regret was turned into joy; and I have never since thought of this circumstance, but with pleasure and thankfulness. And in afterlife the practice of self-denial became easier to me by this little early effort.

It is remarkable, and I never knew whether it was by accident, or whether it was arranged by the kindness of my mother, that a lady sent me, as a present from London, a fire-place, quite as pretty, though not of so expensive a kind, as the one which had cost me so many struggles. This happened about six weeks after my return home.

I had a little brother, a year younger than myself, who went to school. I had often been guilty of quarrelling with him, and had sometimes murmured when nice things had been given to him while I had none. In short, I had often behaved in a very selfish, greedy, and ill-tempered manner towards him.

I remember, one day, my

mother calling me to her; (I was then nine years old, and it was the day on which we expected my little brother home for the Christmas holidays;) and she took me by the hand, and smiling on me in her sweet way, she said, that she hoped she should see a great change in my behaviour towards my brother upon his return, and that in future, instead of quarrelling with him, which was the disgrace of a Christian child, I should treat him with tenderness and affection, and that I should use my influence with him-for he was very fond of me-in leading him to secret prayer, and serious thoughts

and habits: for, she added, that boys at school had not, in general, the advantage of the same careful religious instruction which their sisters enjoyed at home; and she told me that it was a sweet and honourable employment for little children to lead their companions into the ways of eternal life.

My mother's words sunk deep into my heart; at least, as deep as any thing ever sinks into a childish heart: and she continued to remind me, from time to time, of this discourse, reproving me for my neglects, and assisting me by providing me with a retirement, and suggesting to me suitable seasons for withdrawing with my brother. She also taught me to pray for help in this undertaking, and wrote down a short prayer which I might teach my brother, with a few of Dr. Watts's hymns, and verses out of the Bible.

I thankfully remember that I was kinder to my brother during these holidays than I had ever been before, that I was more ready to share my fruit and cakes with him, to give up to him a favourite plaything, and, in short, that I consulted his comfort in every thing far-

more than had ever been my custom before.

In the course of the evening too, the time prescribed by my mother, I generally persuaded him to come up stairs with me into my mother's room, where I taught him the prayer she had written down for me: then we read the verses out of the Bible, and sometimes sung part of a hymn together.

Very often, when we had finished this employment, my mother would come up to us; and drawing us about her, she would tell us stories out of the Bible, and occasionally lead us to talk to her about ourselves, which we did very openly. And my brother confessed to her many little faults into which he had fallen at school, and he promised that he would pray for grace to keep out of them at his return.

Sometimes she took us to the window, and shewed us the stars, and talked to us about our everlasting home that was far beyond them. And, when our attention was wearied, she would sing to us, and play with us, and shew us pictures and other pretty things which she kept in her bureau.

My dear little brother cerc 3 tainly returned to school with many heavenly desires in his heart. I never saw him more: for, within a month afterwards, he caught the measles and died.

I remember my mother afterwards telling me what thankfulness I ought to feel, that I had been enabled to behave towards him in a way so contrary to my natural disposition, and that the last holidays we had spent together had been, as she hoped, a preparation for the dying-bed on which he was laid so soon afterwards: and she concluded with saying, "In all you do, my child, consider the end, and you will not do amiss."

And now I come to a very, very sad remembrance. When I was fourteen, my dear mother, who had always been delicate, fell into very bad health. She could not bear any noise or hurry, and I was ordered to step gently about the house, shut the door quietly, and not even to laugh or talk loud within her hearing. She lay on the sofa almost all the day long.

During the greatest part of this time my aunt and her daughter, who was rather younger than myself, were in the house with us; and, alas! I thought that my mother needed no attention but what my aunt paid to her. I persuaded myself that it could not be expected of me, at my age, to lead so quiet and dull a life as my mother's health made necessary to her: and therefore I took every opportunity of getting out of the room to play with my cousin; and indeed I am ashamed to say, that I was often sent out of the room because I was noisy.

There were a thousand littie kind offices I might have done for my mother, and which I ought to have delighted in doing for so tender a parent: but, unless ordered to do them, they were quite neglected, or most unwillingly performed. I seemed only set upon enjoying myself with my cousin, in a way suitable to my years.

At length my aunt and cousin went away, and my poor mother soon afterwards became so decidedly ill, that no hopes were entertained of her life.

My father's elder brother, who was sent for, communicated the information to me, with a severe rebuke for my unkindness towards my beloved parent. Then indeed I was overwhelmed with shame and remorse: and I hope I did strive to render the last hours of my

honoured parent more comfortable; yet still the memory of my preceding neglect will ever be painful to me.

O that children would think betimes of what they owe to their parents! An hour will come, when every remembrance of neglect to a beloved father and mother, who tenderly reared them from their cradles, and are now for ever hid from them in this world, will sting like a scorpion. How sad to be forced to say, "I could once have comforted and helped a tender parent; I neglected that time: now I would willingly perform the duteous act, and speak in

the voice of kindness and love—but the grave has hid him from me, and I can never honour him again, except in sad remembrance."

After my dear mother's death I was placed at school, under the care of a lady whose piety and wisdom fitted her well to supply the place of my beloved mother. In her family I remained as parlour-boarder till I was eighteen; at which time the offer was made me of residing either in the family of my aunt, of whom I have before spoken, or in that of my father's elder brother, who lived on his estate very near this town.

My governess would have induced me to accept my uncle's invitation in preference to that of my aunt; but the earnest persuasions of my cousin, and the hope of finding in her an agreeable companion, decided me upon choosing my aunt's house for my residence.

On this occasion, I remember, with deep regret, that I thought myself wiser than my kind adviser, and paid little or no deference to her opinion, though I ought to have paid the greatest, because she was well acquainted with the characters of my uncle and aunt, and with the circumstances attending their respec-

tive situations; she had also an intimate knowledge of my disposition and taste, and was well aware of the kind of temptation I ought to have shunned most diligently.

To my aunt's house at Bath then I went. I met with an affectionate reception, and was not a little pleased with the new scenes and the new habits of life to which I was introduced.

My aunt allowed her daughter and myself more liberty than is good for the best disposed young people. We lavished much valuable time and money, which might have been far better spent, in a very unprofitable manner; and the strict habits in which I had been brought up were gradually giving way to the thoughtless customs of the society into which I was introduced.

I spent the greater part of the morning with my cousin in the parades and the pumproom, and the evenings were concluded in public; and though I continued to read my Bible and pray in a morning and evening, yet my heart became daily less interested in the sacred employment, and my thoughts and affections daily more absorbed in the objects immediately surrounding me: while still the lifeless form of religion I kept up satisfied my lukewarm heart that all was right.

The novelty of all I saw, with the pleasure of being gaily and fashionably dressed, was at first sufficiently interesting: but in a little while these things became insipid, and yielded their place to a feeling perfectly new to me, and that was the love of admiration; and I began to be pleased with vain and unmeaning compliments, and was much gratified by being followed, whenever I went into public, by

strangers lately introduced to me, whose outward appearance and manners had certainly much to recommend them. As to the rest, I knew but little of the world, and therefore suspected no evil, though I could not help acknowledging to myself that these flatterers often betrayed habits and opinions quite opposite to those which I had been taught to consider as really excellent.

This was a period of my life that I remember with great pain. How vain and unprofitable was the discourse that passed between myself and my cousin in our retired hours! when, blessed with privileges far superior to those she had possessed, I might have been leading her to the knowledge of better things. I was, on the contrary, influenced by her in every thing I did, laughed at what amused her, entered into her views, and followed her pursuits.—Oh! mispent days! Oh! folly, which I shall ever deplore! Oh! sad and painful recollection!

It was thus that I was spending my time, when my eldest uncle arrived at Bath, or, I might rather say, was providentially brought there by a fit of illness, for which his physi-

cians had ordered the medicinal waters of that place.

My uncle had now an opportunity of becoming acquainted with my character and my present habits—an opportunity which he did not lose; and in the course of a few weeks he saw more into my real state than my aunt had done in several months. Yet I desire to speak with respect and reverence of my dear aunt: she was very kind to me, and I might have repaid her kindness in a far better way than I ever attempted to do.

My uncle was not only aware

that I was going on generally ill with respect to the best things, but he saw that I was in danger of falling into habits, and forming acquaintance and connexions, very injurious to my worldly prospects and expectations. My uncle ventured to impart his fears on this last head to my aunt, and she immediately agreed with him in the propriety of removing me from the scene of danger, and acceded to his plan of taking me back with him-at the same time expressing her determination not to oppose my wishes on the subject; and she left the task of persuasion to him.

It did not seem very likely that my uncle would prevail with me; but he was satisfied that he was in the way of duty, and he did not despair of accomplishing the undertaking.

The following Sunday evening, after hearing an impressive sermon in the Abbey church, he took my arm, as was his custom, on account of his infirmities, when he walked with me, and led me to the south parade, his favourite resort.

Though above fifty years are passed since that day, yet the memory of it is still as fresh as if it were yesterday. "I am going home on Tuesday," said my uncle, after we had taken one turn in silence, "and I should much like to persuade you to return with me, and so would my wife. Should you like to pay us a visit? We are old people—but we would try to make you happy."

Since I had seen more of my uncle, I had become much attached to him; yet I felt by no means disposed at that time to exchange my residence at Bath for his quiet abode. He knew my feelings, and appeared to take no notice of the confused manner in which I answered him. "This is an interesting

town," said he, "and its situation very beautiful," he added, pointing to the lovely woody hill before us, scattered over with many white cottages, which seemed to present sweet retreats; "but it is a place replete with danger."

I made no reply.

"Do you find it very easy, my dear child," said he, "in this gay scene, to bear in mind that you are a stranger and pilgrim upon earth? Are you not tempted to walk by sight and not by faith? In short, tell me candidly, are you not in some danger here of forgetting for

what purpose you came into the world?"

I answered, "Are there not dangers, Sir, in every place?"

"Certainly," replied my uncle; "but all places are not alike dangerous to all persons. Remember, my child, my beloved child, the end of all earthly things; and waste not the little season of preparation for eternity which life allows you, in laying the foundation of bitter regrets."

He perceived that he had drawn my attention, and he thus proceeded:—" Your fa-

ther and mother sought for grace from Him who is willing to give it—far more willing than we are to receive it—and they were enabled to resist deceitful pleasures. They crowned their lives—now are they numbered with the saints; and they who counted their lives madness, where are they?"

Thus for some time he proceeded to talk to me, while a thousand convictions flashed on my mind: and when he paused for a few minutes, I turned to him with tears, and said to him, "What, dear uncle, do you wish me to leave Bath for ever?"

"No, not for ever," he replied, smiling: "but I see that you are in a very dangerous situation, and I wish you to pause, to look round you, and consider what you are doing. Remember, that perhaps eternity may hang upon the present moment."

"And must I leave all my friends?" I said again.

"If you really have any friends," he answered, "who deserve that name, fear not that they will forget you in a few weeks."

I made no reply; and my

uncle thus concluded the discourse:—"I do not wish to press you, my child, to a hasty decision; only promise me, that this very evening you will retire by yourself, and pray earnestly to be guided to make a wise choice." So saying, he led me home, where my aunt and cousin were waiting tea for us.

The habit of secret earnest prayer had, alas! been much laid aside, and it was with unwillingness that I set about the duty. But, as soon as I could, I did withdraw into my own room; and it is sufficient to say, that, after a conflict of

mind which was at the time very painful, I was enabled before the morning-light to decide upon returning with my uncle for a few weeks, the time I then prescribed to myself. remember with feelings of grateful acknowledgment to Him from whom every good thought proceeds, that I was enabled thus to decide upon suffering affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season. Yet I was not at that moment in a state of mind clearly to see how far my habits were really in opposition to my duty: but I saw and felt the advantage of being for awhile removed to a

distance from scenes which I found so fascinating.

The following Tuesday I parted with my aunt and cousin, the latter of whom I never saw again. When we had ascended the hills above Bath, and I looked back on that beloved city for the last time, I felt as if I was taking leave of all earthly happiness: vet even at that moment, a consciousness that I was in the path of duty shed a sweetness on my mind which I at this moment remember. There is a joy unspeakable in the ways of God, even when we are walking in the path of self-denial.

Not more than three weeks had passed away after our return, when my uncle's disease returned with such violence, that his death was hourly expected. I could not therefore at such a moment leave him. We spent three months in this state of suspense; at the close of which time he departed to his eternal rest.

I had not witnessed the dying bed of a Christian without benefit; and I am thankful to remember, that I decided upon remaining with the widow of my revered uncle, and discharging towards her the duties of a daughter. I cannot speak of this as, in all respects, a happy period of my life; yet it is sweet to remember: for in this season of discipline (for so I must consider it) I was prepared for the discharge of the active duties to which I was soon to be called.

My aunt lived, perhaps, too much in solitude; and long habits, together with declining health, disabled her from entering with activity into those useful employments for the good of others, the lively discharge of which so often dries up the mourner's tears.

The only amusements my

aunt provided for me, were reading to myself, and walking in the long chesnut avenue which led to the house, which was well peopled by rooks. A tender Father suits our day to our strength; the weather is tempered to the shorn lamb: and at that time I was in a state of mind to make a good use of my solitude. I was led to look beyond earthly to heavenly things, and to seek for the fulfilment of those promises of peace and joy, which we possess not, because we do not desire them, or desiring, do not patiently wait for them. Sometimes indeed I wished for habits of life and society more suited to my years, and was not without temptations to repine; yet the general feelings of my heart were satisfied that it was good to submit to the will of God. I had seen so much of the evil of my own heart, that I was deeply convinced of my inability to choose what is good for myself, and desirous to have my will conformed to his, and grieved when it was not so; and I believed that, when it was good for me, my trials would be removed.

And now I have arrived at the close of the history of my early days: for, shortly after this period, my late beloved husband was settled in this town; and not many months after his introduction into my aunt's family, I became his wife.

Memory is not silent respecting the long and chequered period which passed between the day of my marriage and that trying hour which has separated him from me till we meet again at the morning of the resurrection.

But I forbear to relate to my young friends what memory has to tell me respecting that part of my life, as less interesting and less improving to them than its narration of early days.

Yet, my children, before I take my leave of you, I am desirous that you should learn one more lesson from my little tale: it is, that those things only are really grievous to remember, which are offensive to God. Sin is the only source of painful recollection. Though we may have carried our sins to the foot of a Saviour's cross, and have a good hope that, through grace, they are washed away, yet we can never think of them but with pain. Sin is ugly, very ugly, when the mask is thrown aside which at the present moment it often wears. That which is displeasing to God, can never be otherwise than

hateful to us, when we are enabled to view it aright. Thus the remembrance of sin in ourselves or others is very bitter; but it is not so with other remembrances. They may have somewhat of sadness; but time will mingle sweetness with that sorrow.

I can look upon those pictures I have described to you; I can call to mind my little darling fair ones lisping and smiling; I can look at the very chair, through the frame of which, in the room where I am now sitting, I have seen them peep at each other and laugh with baby laughter—then kiss

and run away—then begin the well known game again, as well pleased as if it was quite new. I can call to mind their little dimpled hands joined together in infant prayer, their rosy cheeks gradually fading away to the palor of fatal disease, and their bright blue eyes closed in death.

I can recal to my mind my Charles: I can remember him buoyant with spirits, full of life and activity among his school-fellows, first in his plays, and first in his studies, generous and good-natured; yet in the midst of all his gaiety, ever mindful of his secret prayer, of his Bible, and his eternal inheritance, du-

tiful, respectful, and affectionate to his parents.

Such was my Charles, when a consumption quickly cut short his days. I watched him on his bed of languishing, where he patiently exchanged for pain and sickness the sports and studies of his age, and willingly resigned every hope of worldly distinction for the prospect of early admission to celestial glory; and cheerfully sat himself down in the sinner's place, waiting for exaltation in due time, through His merits who bore the cross for him.

I can think of the beloved

guide and companion of my life, who has but lately entered into rest. Not a day passes, but Memory talks to me of these beloved ones. Sometimes I own that tears will trickle down my furrowed cheek as I think of them—but they are tears that have no bitterness.

Believe me, my young ones, and forgive me, if I repeat it more than once, it is sin, and sin only, that gives the sting to sorrow.

Fair young creatures, fresh out of your Creator's hand, whose natural stain of guilt has been cleansed by your Saviour's blood, whose natural corruption the Spirit of God stands ready to subdue within you, why, instead of delighting yourselves in purifying a fallen nature, do you seek to pollute it yet more? Satan sees how fair your prospects are, how blooming are your hopes, and he resolves upon your destruction. He casts the baits of sin in your way; and, when he sees that you are caught, he smiles with all the malice of hell, while angels weep over you.

My children, however fair the appearance which sin may now assume, it will shew you its ugly form when it has succeeded in deceiving you. What is now tempting you as present, what you are now eagerly pursuing as future, will look very very different when it is past.

Pause awhile, and consider what your views and feelings will be some time hence. The present and the future may deceive us, but the past rarely does. Sometimes, then, ask Memory what she has to tell you respecting the past, and she will often give you a lesson of wisdom for the future.

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