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DEPT. OF REAL ESTATE
By

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BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

* * *

In the Matter of the Accusation of

COAST TO COAST LENDING GROUP, INC., and ROGER WEEGER HERRICK, individually and as designated officer of Coast to Coast Lending Group, Inc.,

Respondents.

No. H-42224-LA

ACCUSATION

The Complainant, Ruth Corral, a Supervising Special Investigator for the Department of Real Estate ("Department" or "DRE") of the State of California, for cause of Accusation against COAST TO COAST LENDING GROUP, INC. ("CTCLG"), and ROGER WEEGER HERRICK ("HERRICK"), individually and as designated officer of Coast to Coast Lending Group, Inc. (collectively "Respondents"), alleges as follows:

- 1. The Complainant, Ruth Corral, acting in her official capacity as a Supervising Special Investigator, makes this Accusation against Respondents.
- 2. All references to the "Code" are to the California Business and Professions Code and all references to "Regulations" are to Title 10, Chapter 6, California Code of Regulations.

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ACCUSATION

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LICENSE HISTORY

- 3. Respondent CTCLG has been licensed by the DRE as a real estate corporation ("REC"), License ID 01484165, from on or about April 21, 2006, through the present, with CTCLG's license scheduled to expire on January 10, 2026, unless renewed. CTCLG is licensed through HERRICK's real estate broker ("REB") license and HERRICK is the designated officer ("D.O.") of CTCLG. CTCLG has a mortgage loan originator license ("MLO") endorsement from the Department, and is licensed through the Nationwide Multistate Licensing System & Registry ("NMLS"), NMLS No. 11882. According to Department records to date, CTCLG employs four (4) licensed real estate salespersons ("RES"). CTCLG has no branch offices. The fictitious business name "Coast to Coast Realty Group" is currently active and licensed to CTCLG by the DRE.
- 4. Respondent HERRICK has been licensed by the DRE as a REB, License ID 00949075, from on or about July 6, 1988, through the present, with HERRICK's license scheduled to expire on July 5, 2024, unless renewed. HERRICK was previously licensed as a real estate salesperson ("RES"), from on or about January 29, 1987 to on or about July 5, 1988. HERRICK has a MLO license endorsement from the DRE, and is licensed through the NMLS, NMLS No. 301693. In addition to being the D.O. of CTCLG, HERRICK is the D.O. of C2C Lending Group Inc., REC License ID 02066736. HERRICK currently maintains no active fictitious business names.

ACTIVITIES REQUIRING A REAL ESTATE LICENSE

5. At all times mentioned herein, in the Counties of Humboldt, Los Angeles, and Orange, in California, Respondents engaged in the performance of activities requiring a real estate license pursuant to Code Section 10130, and acted and ordered, caused, authorized or participated in licensed activities within the meaning of Code Section 10131.

FACTS DISCOVERED BY DRE

6. Complainant is informed and believes and on such information and belief alleges that from in or around April 2019 through the present, CTCLG and HERRICK engaged in a course

of conduct of inducing C.W. and his wife M.W.¹ to hire CTCLG and HERRICK as their broker to originate loans totaling \$373,000 on a commercial property owned by C.W. and M.W., and to enter into a "lease-to-buy" arrangement on the commercial property with Cal Hwy 101, Inc. ("CH101"), with an additional agreement—purportedly signed by C.W. and M.W., but on information and belief C.W.'s and M.W.'s signatures were forged by HERRICK— to obtain a \$100,000 loan to make improvements on the property in order for CH101 to engage in cannabis manufacturing on the property, while engaging in a further course of conduct of misrepresenting to, and concealing from C.W. and M.W. that HERRICK was the chief executive officer, secretary, and chief financial officer of "CH101." CH101 also failed to pay rent, provide an accounting of the \$100,000 intended for improvements, and to repay the \$100,000 loan as agreed.

- 7. As described in further detail below, CTCLG originated two loans totaling \$373,000 on the commercial property owned by C.W. and M.W., and expected to receive and/or did receive commissions totaling \$24,000.
- 8. Complainant is informed and believes and on such information and belief alleges that CTCLG and HERRICK engaged in a long-term, extended course of conduct of failing to provide or disclose material facts to C.W. and M.W. in order to induce them to take actions against their interests, and in the interests of HERRICK to financially benefit HERRICK as both the broker for CTCLG and as the CEO of CH101.
- 9. Complainant is also informed and believes and on such information and belief alleges that CTCLG's and HERRICK's long-term, extended course of conduct of failing to provide or disclose material facts to C.W. and M.W. was in furtherance of Respondents' plan to avoid accountability for violations of the Real Estate Law.
- 10. Complainant is also informed and believes and on such information and belief alleges that HERRICK prepared and provided all real estate and loan related documents and agreements to C.W. and M.W. related to the transactions alleged, with the exception of a Notice to Perform and Cancellation of Contract.

¹ Initials are used in place of individuals' full names to protect their privacy. Documents containing individuals' full names will be provided during the discovery phase of this case to Respondents and/or their attorney(s), after service of a timely and proper request for discovery on Complainant's counsel.

- 11. As a result of Respondents' extended course of conduct involving concealment and suppression of material facts, the DRE could not, with due diligence, have discovered sufficient material facts regarding whether Respondents had complied with the Real Estate Law until on or about July 23, 2021 at the earliest, when Patricia Atwood ("Atwood"), of S.A.F.E. Planners, Inc. ("SAFE"), a professional fiduciary acting under power of attorney for C.W., submitted a complaint on behalf of C.W. with the DRE.
- 12. Moreover, as will be shown below, from on or about April 25, 2019 to the present, CTCLG and HERRICK have acted as real estate broker and agent for C.W. and M.W., engaging in licensed activities within the meaning of Code sections 10131(d), (b), and (a) on behalf of C.W. and M.W.: soliciting lenders for or negotiating loans or performing services for borrowers or lenders or note owners in connection with loans secured directly or collaterally by liens on real property; leasing or renting, offering to lease or rent, or collecting rents from real property for others, and other property management activities; and selling or offering to sell, buying or offering to buy, or soliciting prospective sellers or buyers of, or negotiating the purchase or sale of real property.
- 13. Through CTCLG's and HERRICK's real estate activities on behalf of C.W. and M.W., CTCLG and HERRICK created a fiduciary relationship with C.W. and M.W.
- 14. In or about April 2019, HERRICK approached C.W. regarding the renting and purchasing of C.W.'s commercial building located at 23 5th Street, Eureka, California ("the Property"). HERRICK, as the REB for CTCLG, initiated, encouraged, and brokered two loans for C.W. and M.W., totaling \$373,000, secured by the Property: the first loan was for \$273,000 ("First Loan"), and the second loan was for \$100,000 ("Second Loan"). At the time that HERRICK originated the loans for C.W. and M.W., and at all times following, Respondents did not disclose that HERRICK was the chief executive officer, secretary, and chief financial officer of Cal Hwy 101, Inc. ("CH101"). Nor did Respondents disclose that real estate salesperson Harrison Richard Kaufman ("Kaufman"), License ID 01473313, who signed agreements with C.W. and M.W. as a Director of CH101 on behalf of CH101, was a business associate of HERRICK's and was employed under HERRICK's REB license from June 25, 2019 to October 5, 2020. C.W. and M.W.

entered into a two-year "lease-to-buy" agreement with CH101, in which CH101 became the lessee of the Property, and CH101 also agreed to purchase the Property.

- 15. CTCLG received commissions of \$17,500 for the First Loan and \$6,500 for the Second Loan. C.W. and M.W. owned the property free and clear without encumbrances prior being approached by HERRICK.
 - 16. On or about April 25, 2019, C.W. and M.W. executed the following:
 - a. A Mortgage Loan Origination Agreement with CTCLG that contained the following provisions:
 - (1) "We are acting as an independent contractor and not as your agent";
 - (2) "The lenders whose loan products we distribute generally provide their loan products to us at a wholesale rate. The retail price we offer you your interest rate, total points and fees will include our compensation. In some cases, we may be paid all of our compensation by either you or the lender"; and
 - b. A Uniform Residential Loan Application for the First Loan in the amount of \$273,000, with a fixed interest rate of 10%, payable over 24 months, with HERRICK listed as the originator.
- 17. According to the Final Borrower's Statement for the First Loan, with a settlement date of May 31, 2019, CTCLG was paid \$17,500 as a commission on the First Loan. A total of \$39,689.37 in debits for various charges was deducted from the First Loan amount of \$273,000, with a balance of \$233,310.63 to be paid to C.W. and M.W.
- 18. On or about June 5, 2019, C.W. and M.W. executed a Mortgage Loan Disclosure Statement ("MLDS") regarding the First Loan, in the amount of \$273,000, showing CTCLG as the broker acting as a mortgage broker, showing total fees, costs, and expenses for the loan in the amount of \$37,708.39, including CTCLG's origination fee of \$17,500. However, this MLDS was not signed by CTCLG or a representative.
 - 19. Also on or about June 5, 2019, C.W. and M.W. executed the following:
 - a. A lease agreement with CH101, titled Standard Industrial/Commercial

 Single-Tenant Lease Net" ("Lease Agreement"), which in paragraph 1.11 attached and

incorporated an Option to Purchase and an Amendment to Lease and Purchase Agreement, understood by the parties to be a "lease-to-buy" agreement. CH101 ("Lessee") was to lease the Property from C.W. and M.W. ("Lessor") for two years, during the period from July 10, 2019 to July 10, 2021, with monthly rent of \$6,000, payable on the 10th day of each month. No rent was required for the first four months, and the first rental payment of \$6,000 was due on November 10, 2019. The parties agreed that the premises were leased for cannabis manufacturing and non-store front retail and microbusinesses. Kaufman signed the Lease Agreement on behalf of CH101.

- (1) Paragraph 39 of the Lease Agreement provides in part:
 Options. If Lessee is granted an Option, as defined below, then the following provisions shall apply:
- 39.1 Definition. "Option" shall mean . . . (c) the right to purchase, the right of first offer to purchase or the right of first refusal to purchase the Premises or other property of Lessor.
- b. An Amendment to Lease ("Amendment") with CH101, which stated, "Lessor agrees to credit to the purchase price \$5000.00 per month of the rent collected. This will be a credit to the down payment or the purchase price upon execution of the purchase option." Kaufman signed the Amendment on behalf of CH101.
- c. A Note, also referred to as a promissory note, for the First Loan, in the amount of \$273,000, secured by the Property, with a fixed annual interest rate of 10%, listing the Borrower as C.W. and M.W. and the Lender as PENSCO Trust Company, LLC, Custodian FBO K.B., IRA as to a 52.98% interest, and D.E., Trustee of the D.E. Revocable Living Trust Dated May 19, 2011, as to a 47.62% interest, and a maturity date of July 1, 2021. Paragraph 15 of the Note contains a Usury Exemption stating, "This loan was arranged by Coast to Coast Lending Group Inc., licensed by the Department of Real Estate, a California Broker with License No. 01484165 and is thus exempt from usury laws pursuant to Section 1 of Article 15 of the California Constitution."

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- d. A Deed of Trust assigning the Property to the Lender of the First Loan.
- 20. On or about June 7, 2019, Fidelity National Title Company of California, the escrow company for the transaction, issued a check made payable to C.W. and M.W. for the First Loan in the amount of \$233,208.84.
- 21. On or about July 3, 2019, Kaufman on behalf of CH101 executed a Standard Offer, Agreement and Escrow Instructions for Purchase of Real Estate (Non-Residential) ("Purchase Agreement") for the Property, which C.W. and M.W. accepted. Paragraph 26 of the Purchase Agreement states, in part: "The agreement is the purchase agreement of the option to purchase agreement dated 7/5/2019." In the Purchase Agreement, CH101 agreed to purchase the Property from C.W. and M.W. for \$1,090,000.
- 22. On or about July 10, 2019, C.W. and M.W. executed a Right of First Offer to Purchase, Standard Lease Addendum, with CH101 ("Lessee"), which provided in part that "during the lease term and any extensions thereof . . . Lessee shall have a right of First Offer to purchase the Premises. Lessee's right of First Offer shall be deemed to be an 'Option' as defined in paragraph 39"
- 23. On or about July 12, 2019, C.W. and M.W. purportedly executed the following documents related to the Second Loan, however, Complainant is informed and believes and on such information and belief alleges that C.W. and M.W. cannot recall having signed any documents to obligate themselves to a Second Loan in the amount of \$100,000, based in part on information that HERRICK admitted forging the papers for C.W. and M.W.:
 - a. A Real Estate Agency Disclosure advising C.W. and M.W. of the fiduciary duties of the mortgage broker, CTCLG;
 - b. A Mortgage Loan Origination Agreement with CTCLG, with CTCLG and HERRICK listed as originators, which contained the following provisions:
 - (1) "We are acting as an independent contractor and not as your agent";
 - (2) "The lenders whose loan products we distribute generally provide their loan products to us at a wholesale rate. The retail price we offer you your

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interest rate, total points and fees – will include our compensation. In some cases, we may be paid all of our compensation by either you or the lender"; and

- c. A Uniform Residential Loan Application for the Property in the amount of \$100,000, with a fixed interest rate of 10.5%, a term of 24 months, a monthly payment \$875, and a maturity date of August 1, 2021. HERRICK is listed as the originator on this loan application;
- d. An MLDS signed by C.W. and M.W., but not signed by CTCLG or HERRICK, regarding the proposed loan of \$100,000, showing CTCLG as the broker acting as a mortgage broker, showing total fees, costs, and expenses for the loan in the amount of \$11,056.09, including CTCLG's origination fee of \$6,500;
- e. A Loan Agreement for the Property, referencing the Note for \$100,000 with a maturity date of August 1, 2021, and listing the lender as D.E., Trustee of the D.E. Revocable Living Trust Dated May 19, 2011;
- f. A Note, also referred to as a promissory note, for the Second Loan, in the amount of \$100,000, secured by the Property, with a fixed interest rate of 10.5% and monthly payments of \$875, listing the Borrower as C.W. and M.W. and the Lender as D.E., Trustee of the D.E. Revocable Living Trust Dated May 19, 2011, and a maturity date of August 1, 2021. Paragraph 15 of the Note contains a Usury Exemption stating, "This loan was arranged by Coast to Coast Lending Group Inc., licensed by the Department of Real Estate, a California Broker with License No. 01484165 and is thus exempt from usury laws pursuant to Section 1 of Article 15 of the California Constitution."
- 24. The Second Loan for \$100,000 was designated for building repairs in an undated document titled "23 5th Street Improvement Agreement" ("Improvement Agreement"), executed by C.W. and M.W. (collectively "Landlord") and Kaufman on behalf of CH101 ("Lessee"). The Improvement Agreement stated that Landlord agrees to obtain a \$100,000 gross loan secured as a second trust deed on the property. Landlord agreed to place the net proceeds from the loan in a separate account to be used for property upgrades to achieve "cannabis compliance" and other improvements necessary for CH101's business. The separate account required Landlord to approve

any and all expenses. Checks would be drawn from this account and all monies were to be accounted for by both Landlord and Lessee on a monthly basis. HERRICK received an ATM/debit card with C.W. name on it but such card gave HERRICK direct access to the loan proceeds.

- 25. The Improvement Agreement also stated that Landlord would pay interest payments for the improvement loan for the first three months and Lessee would pay the interest payments as they become due after the first three months until the loan term was completed. Thereafter Lessee would pay the interest payments for the improvement loan until it was paid off in full. The Agreement also stated that in the event CH101 did not execute the purchase agreement to buy the Property, the \$100,000 loan secured by the property would be due and payable to the Landlord for reimbursement of the improvements.
- According to the Final Borrower's Statement for the Second Loan, with a settlement date of July 15, 2019, CTCLG was paid \$6,500 as a commission on the Second Loan. A total of \$10,659.09 in debits for various charges was deducted from the Second Loan amount of \$100,000, with a balance of \$89,340.91 to be paid to C.W. and M.W.
- 27. On or about July 15, 2019, Fidelity National Title Company of California, the escrow company for the transaction, issued a check made payable to C.W. and M.W. for the Second Loan in the amount of \$89,340.91.
- 28. On or about November 10, 2019, the first rent payment was due from CH101, however, C.W. and M.W. did not receive a rent payment from CH101 for November 2019 or for any other month during the term of the lease or at any time thereafter.
- 29. On or about January 16, 2020, C.W. and M.W. executed and sent the following documents to CTCLG and HERRICK:
 - a. A Notice to Buyer to Perform the July 3, 2019 Purchase Agreement; and
 - b. Cancellation of Contract, Release of Deposit and Cancellation of Escrow regarding the July 3, 2019 Purchase Agreement.
- 30. On or about January 11, 2021, during a phone conversation between a representative of SAFE and HERRICK, HERRICK denied having any affiliation with CH101.

31. On or about August 26, 2021, during a phone conversation between a representative of SAFE and Kaufman, Kaufman stated he had nothing to do with the Property and nothing to do with CH101, "that is all Roger."

VIOLATIONS OF THE REAL ESTATE LAW – CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINE

32. In the course of the activities described above in Paragraph 5, and based on the facts discovered by the DRE, as alleged in Paragraphs 6 through 31 above, Respondents acted in violation of the Code and Regulations as follows.

First Cause of Accusation: Fraudulent Breach of Fiduciary Duties through Concealment

- 33. The Complainant realleges and incorporates by reference all of the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 32 above, with the same force and effect as though fully set forth herein.
- 34. At all relevant times herein, while acting as real estate broker and agent of C.W. and M.W., CTCLG and HERRICK owed C.W. and M.W. fiduciary duties, including, but not limited to the following: duty of reasonable care and skill; duty of good faith; duty of loyalty; duty of diligence; duty to avoid conflicts of interest; duty of fullest disclosure of all material facts affecting C.W.'s and M.W.'s rights and interest; duty not to use or deal with C.W.'s and M.W.'s properties and trust funds for any other purpose unconnected with the Lease Agreement and Improvement Agreement; and duty to manage C.W.'s and M.W.'s properties, trust funds, and loan proceeds solely in the interest of C.W. and M.W.
- 35. In the course of the activities described above in Paragraph 5, and based on the facts discovered by the DRE, as alleged in Paragraphs 6 through 31 above, CTCLG's and HERRICK's acts and/or omissions constitute fraudulent breaches of their fiduciary duties, and constitute cause for the suspension or revocation of CTCLG's and HERRICK's real estate licenses and license rights under the provisions of Code sections 10177(d) and/or 10177(g).

Second Cause of Accusation: Code Sections 10176(a), 10176(i), 10177(j), and 10177(d) and/or 10177(g) – Fraud or Dishonest Dealing

36. The Complainant realleges and incorporates by reference all of the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 35 above, with the same force and effect as though fully set forth herein.

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- 37. As a result of CTCLG and HERRICK having created and established a real estate agency relationship with C.W. and M.W., CTCLG and HERRICK owed fiduciary duties to C.W. and M.W., and by virtue of C.W. and M.W. having placed confidence in the fidelity and integrity of CTCLG and HERRICK in entrusting CTCLG and HERRICK to originate C.W.'s and M.W.'s loans, negotiate a Lease Agreement, Improvement Agreement, and Purchase Agreement, and amendments and addendums, with CH101, a confidential relationship existed at all times herein mentioned between C.W. and M.W. and CTCLG and HERRICK.
- 38. Complainant is informed and believes and on such information and belief alleges that, despite having voluntarily accepted the trust and confidence reposed in them by C.W. and M.W. with regard to the loans, Lease Agreement, Improvement Agreement, and Purchase Agreement, and in violation of this relationship of trust and confidence, CTCLG and HERRICK abused the trust and confidence of C.W. and M.W.
- 39. Complainant is informed and believes and on such information and belief alleges that CTCLG and HERRICK did the acts herein alleged with the intent to deceive and defraud C.W. and M.W., and CTCLG and HERRICK employed the aforementioned devices of withholding information in order to conceal fraud and dishonest dealing from C.W. and M.W., and to avoid accountability for violations of the Real Estate Law.
- 40. CTCLG and HERRICK did these acts with the intent to induce reliance by C.W. and M.W. in the continuing fidelity of CTCLG and HERRICK as C.W.'s and M.W.'s real estate broker, agent, and fiduciary.
- 41. Complainant is informed and believes and on such information and belief alleges that C.W. and M.W. in fact placed confidence and reliance in CTCLG and HERRICK. C.W. and M.W. reasonably relied on CTCLG and HERRICK in light of the fiduciary relationship created by CTCLG and HERRICK.
- 42. In the course of the activities described above in Paragraph 5, and based on the facts discovered by the DRE, as alleged in Paragraphs 6 through 31 above, CTCLG's and HERRICK's acts and/or omissions were in violation of Code sections 10176(a) (substantial misrepresentation), 10176(i) (fraud or dishonest dealing), 10177(j) (fraud or dishonest

dealing), and 10177(d) (willful disregard of real estate laws) and/or 10177(g) (negligence), and constitute cause for the suspension or revocation of CTCLG's and HERRICK's real estate licenses and license rights under the provisions of Code sections 10176(a), 10176(i), 10177(j), and 10177(d) and/or 10177(g).

<u>Third Cause of Accusation: Code Sections 10166.05(c), 10166.051(b), 10176(g) and 10240 –</u> <u>Failure to Provide Timely and Complete Disclosure Statement Signed by Broker</u>

- 43. The Complainant realleges and incorporates by reference all of the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 42 above, with the same force and effect as though fully set forth herein.
- 44. Respondents' acts and/or omissions in failing to timely provide documents that correctly disclosed to the borrower all broker compensation related to the First and Second Loan transactions, and an MLDS personally signed by the broker related to the First and Second Loan transactions, as described above in paragraphs 18 and 23(d) are in violation of Code sections 10166.05(c), 10166.051(b), 10176(g) and 10240, and constitute cause to suspend or revoke the real estate licenses and license rights of Respondents CTCLG and HERRICK pursuant to Code sections 10176(g), and 10177(d) and/or 10177(g).
- 45. Respondents' acts and/or omissions in violation of **Code sections 10166.05(c)** and **10166.051(b)** constitute cause for the suspension or revocation of the MLO license endorsements of Respondents CTCLG and HERRICK pursuant to **Code section 10166.051(b)** by establishing Respondents' failure to demonstrate such financial responsibility, character and general fitness as to command the confidence of the community and to warrant a determination that as mortgage loan originators Respondents will operate honestly, fairly, and efficiently within the purposes of Article 2.1 of the Real Estate Law.

Fourth Cause of Accusation: Code Sections 10166.05(c), 10166.051(b), 10177(q), and Civil Code Section 2923.1

- 46. The Complainant realleges and incorporates by reference all of the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 45 above, with the same force and effect as though fully set forth herein.
- 47. Respondents' acts and/or omissions in providing a form titled "Mortgage Loan Origination Agreement," signed by the borrower, in which CTCLG and HERRICK stated, "We are

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ACCUSATION

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1	WHEREFORE, Complainant prays that a hearing be conducted on the allegations of
2	this Accusation and that upon proof thereof, a decision be rendered imposing disciplinary action
3	against all the licenses, license rights, and mortgage loan originator endorsements of Respondents
4	COAST TO COAST LENDING GROUP, INC. and ROGER WEEGER HERRICK under the Real
5	Estate Law, for the costs of investigation and enforcement as permitted by law, and for such other
6	and further relief as may be proper under other applicable provisions of law.
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8	Dated at Sacramento, California this 31st day of May, 2022.
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11	Ruth Corral
12	Supervising Special Investigator
13	cc: COAST TO COAST LENDING GROUP, INC.
14	ROGER WEEGER HERRICK Ruth Corral
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ACCUSATION