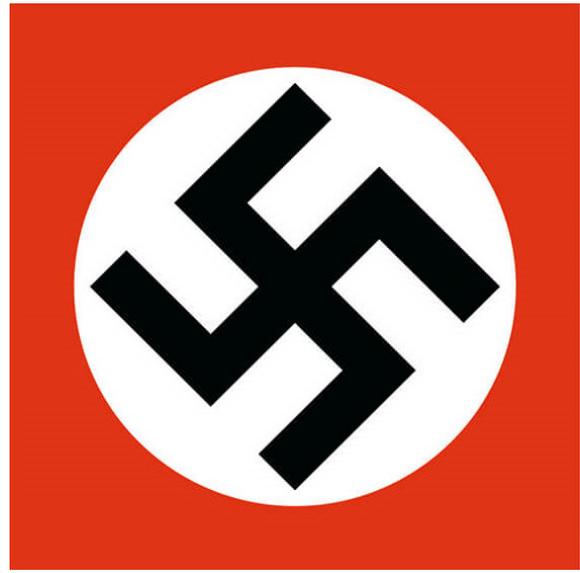


The Man in the
High Castle



A series of out world as it might have been

A Viewing log by Pauline Pope

Q2 English LK

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I. Pre-Viewing

1. Personal information

How often do I watch movies? (Time per week)

I try to watch new movies as often as I can because you can learn a lot from it. Sometimes, my family and I watch movies together, for example on Friday evenings or during Christmas time. Rarely, I watch movies in cinema because it's expensive and I prefer being alone while watching a movie. Usually, I watch movies alone (maybe once a week) because it's hard to arrange in a group of friends or with family.

What are my sources? (E.g. public television, streaming, YouTube...)

In the past, I often watched movies on public television, for example on Friday evenings or on VHS tapes but the quality is not that good. That's why my mother threw them away some years ago. Today, my family owns streaming servers like Amazon Prime Video or Netflix and I'm allowed to watch movies where and when ever I want to. I always look for new movies while watching trailers on YouTube and place them in my watch list, so I can watch them later. I also have a lot of DVD's but I don't use them that often because it's much easier to watch them on a streaming servers.

What is my favourite genre?

I'm really open minded about different genres (It belongs to my mood) but there are some that I prefer. For example, I like suspense packed genres like horror or science-fiction (Sometimes I stop watching when the story is boring). Stories based on real events address me because it's more exciting knowing that a story happened in real life. Most movies and series I watch are produced in English. I watch them in original language because the translation often changes the meaning and emotions of a scene. Mostly, I don't like movies based on a book that I already read because I'm always disappointed. I wouldn't say that books are always better than movies but while reading I always visualize the characters and scenes. Because movies often replace scenes or cut them out, I don't like knowing the story particularly before watching it.

What is my favourite film and why?

I know a lot of good movies. My favourite movie is called "Life of Pi". The movie is based on a novel by Yann Martel (I also read the book). A boy named Pi Patel grows up in a zoo that his father owns in Pondyicherry, India. When his family wants to emigrate to Canada with the animals, the freighter gets caught in a terrible storm (I won't tell more because I don't want to spoiler). Firstly, I thought that it's a boring story but while watching I understood that there's a hidden meaning behind it and after second watching the scenes in the movie suddenly had a completely different meaning. I love this kind of plot twist because it changes the complete story. Also, the movie gives a possible answer for the question "Is there a God?" I often think about this kind of question because there's no wright answer. However, I like it when movies have a deeper meaning and give me food for thought. I would always recommend this movie!

Do I have a favourite actor/actress?

I like recognizing an actress or actor that I know while watching a movie or series but often I connect them with another movie and that makes it difficult for me to see the same person as a different character, especially if the character changes from bad to good.

Johnny Depp is an example for an actor who succeeded the change between characters in different movies. I was really excited that he took the role of Gellert Grindelwald in the sequel of the Harry Potter movies because I knew him from movies like “Pirates of the Caribbean” or “Alice in Wonderland”. I appreciate that every of his characters looks and acts so different.

Another actor that I like is Eddie Murphy because I know him from different movies since I was a little kid. He’s such a good actor because of his humour. His quick way of speaking makes his voice so special and awards his characters their unique personalities.

Jennifer Lawrence is also a famous actress. I know her from movies like “The Hunger Games” where she played Katniss Everdeen. I like her because I also read the books before watching the movies and she looked and acted exactly like I imagined her character. I believe that actors who understand their character always play better than actors who don’t because it isn’t just about saying a phrase and don’t mean it.

Reasons for my choice (Why did I pick this one?)

I chose the series “The Man in the High Castle” because I already watched the first season together with my mum when it first came out on Amazon Prime Video some years ago and I liked it a lot. I can’t remember the whole story particularly but I still know that the story is very thrilling. Also, I prefer dealing with a series because I think that it’s easier to present. In my opinion, series are designed more calm than movies because there’s more time for scenes that would have been cut out in a movie. For example, longer scenes in which a character doesn’t talk at all. I think that especially those kinds of scenes make series normally better than movies because there is more time to meet and understand a character.

I picked the first episode of season one called “The New World” because it’s a dystopian alternate history series. That’s why it’s hard to present another episode that takes place in the middle of the story because the storyline would be hard to understand for people who didn’t watch the series. I also liked a lot of the scenes in episode one because they are pretty emotional.

II. While-Viewing

1. Content

1.1 Plot summary

The Man in the High Castle is an American dystopian alternate history web television series by the video-on-demand provider Amazon Prime Video. It was created by Frank Spotnitz but the story is based on Philip K. Dick's same named novel from 1962. From 2015 to 2019, Amazon released four seasons of ten episodes before the series was cancelled in 2019.

In a parallel universe, Germany and Japan won the Second World War in 1947 and divided the United States into the Greater Nazi Reich in the east, with New York City as their regional capital, and the Japanese Pacific States in the west, with San Francisco as the capital. These territories are separated by a neutral zone that encompasses the Rocky Mountains (Picture 1).



(Picture 1)

The first episode called “The New World” starts in 1962. Adolf Hitler is still alive but he is expected to die soon so that there are internal power struggles for the succession among the Nazis. Parts of the German leadership also want to end the Cold War with the Japanese and eliminate the Empire with a military strike. Meanwhile, in the areas controlled by the Germans, a resistance group is operating, in whose circles films are circulating. Those are supposed to come from a man called “The Man in the High Castle” and seem to show a completely different reality in which Japan and Germany were defeated.

In this time, the young woman Juliana Crain (Alexa Davalos) comes into contact with the resistance in Japanese-occupied San Francisco when her half-sister Trudy (Conor Leslie) is killed by the government. Before Trudy's death, Juliana received a film role from her with a newsreel called “The Grasshopper Lies Heavy”. The film takes place in an alternate story in which the Allies won the war and defeated Germany and Japan. It belongs to the film series from the "Man in the High Castle". Juliana believes that the newsreel reflects some sort of alternate reality and is part of a greater truth about the world as it should be. Her boyfriend Frank Frink (Rupert Evans), who keeps his Jewish ancestry a secret out of fear of the Nazis, doesn't believe her and wants her to go to the police. Juliana finds out that Trudy wanted to give the tape to a contact person in the neutral zone. In Canon City, Juliana meets Joe Blake (Luke Kleintank) who is a member of the resistance group and waited for Trudy but there is something strange going on with him.

The story of the characters develops between politics, espionage, persecution, resistance, love and the two opposing surveillance states Japan and the Germany. Also, it is unclear where the tapes come from and what they mean.

1.2 Two stills

I chose the scene where Juliana watches the film role with the newsreel for the first time. Because she cannot believe what she is seeing, Juliana watches the tape over and over again. In the picture (Picture 2), she is sitting on the floor of her apartment. Her eyes are filled with tears and she is looking at the pictures that are being produced onto the wall.

The photo stayed in my mind because the scene is so emotional and shows best how the people suffered from the Nazis and how much they wished for it to end. Also, I like the colours in this picture because it is kind of aesthetic how the light comes out of the projector and lights the room and Juliana's face. Maybe it is a metaphor for the hope that the film roles bring to the people.

Furthermore, the scene where Juliana and Joe meet each other raised my interest because they meet when Joe pays for Juliana and she scolds him for paying. After that, Joe follows her outside with a couple of orange sodas. It is strange that they both waited for each other but do not know it. Nevertheless, the picture (Picture 3) shows how familiar the conversation between the two is. I like the picture even if I criticise the propaganda posters on the wall behind them. It shows how different this parallel universe is and how normal it is for Juliana and Joe.



(Picture 2)



(Picture 3)

1.3 Poem

I rewrote the intro of the series because there is already a connection between the lyrics and the series. The song "Edelweiss" by Bill Lee and Charmian Carr was transformed into an anthem of dystopia. The song of freedom became one of despair. I changed the lyrics for the scene where Juliana sits in the bus because she is very quiet in this scene. I thought about that she maybe realises in this scene how terrible this universe is and she wants the America others told her about back.

America

America, America

Every morning you greet me

Big and wide, safe and bright

That's what everyone told me

Why have these two oppressed you?

Should this be our future?

America, America

Are these two staying forever?

America, America

Every morning you greet me

Big and wide, safe and bright

That's what the others told me

Did you forget about the past?

These two just want to kill you

America, America

I want you back forever

1.4 Five memorable quotes

1. "Everyone has a job, everyone knows the part they play keeping our country strong and safe" – Film Narrator (1:30)
2. "(Aikido) is not about harming your opponent. It does not attack. It defends." – Nakamura (10:40)
3. "They won the war and they think that modern art is degenerate" – Frank Frink (15:15)
4. "They believe there's a spirit in things bringing good or bad luck" – SS Officer Scausch (29:40)
5. "Darkness pay attention" – Kotomichi (30:40)

I wouldn't say that I like all of these quotes but all of them stayed in my mind (I don't know why). I chose them because there's maybe a hidden meaning behind them that could change the entire scene after thinking about it. All of them are strong opinions that are not reputable for everyone.

2. Characters

2.1 Diary entry

Dear Diary,

Trudy is dead. I was there when she died but wasn't able to do something. Or was I? I don't know because everything went so quick! I met her on my way home in a small street near my house. Earlier today, I already met her in town. I went shopping for mom. She acted strange, was emotional when I talked to her. Trudy told me that she searched for me but I thought she only did because we didn't see us in a while. I was wrong! Now I know that she knew she was in danger. She told me that she won't stay long and I shouldn't tell mom. She felt guilty about being away for so long. We talked about her new job out of town. She didn't tell me what kind of job and wanted to explain later but I will never know it, I guess. Was she in danger because of this job? What did she know? Also, she said that she found "the reason for everything" and I need to be careful... What does that mean? Am I in danger, too? When I saw her again on my way home, she gave me a tape. She was in a hurry and didn't answer my questions. When asked her about what she gave me, she just said "A way out" but I don't know what she meant. Then, she ran away and I watched after her. A car stopped and some men in uniforms ran after her. I heard a shot. In my head, I already knew that she was killed but I looked around the corner to see what happened. Six men, four of them in uniforms, stood in a circle around someone lying on the street. One of the two men in dark clothes turned the body around with his feet. I saw Trudy's face and started crying. Quickly, I went home like Trudy told me. Now, I'm sitting here and don't know what to do. What should I do with this tape? It has to be important. Otherwise, Trudy wouldn't have been killed for it! Should I watch it? Yes, that's what Trudy wants me to do! I will find out about everything like my sister did. I need answers!

- J.C.

2.2 Letter

Dear Mom,

Sorry for not telling you personally but I'm in a hurry. I had no time to talk to you in person about it but I have to go on a journey for some time. I also don't know how long it will take me to be back but don't be worried. The things that I bought for you today will last for some days. Otherwise, Frank is home. You can call him if there's a problem and he will help you. I love you!

See you in a while,

- J.C.

2.3 Character profile

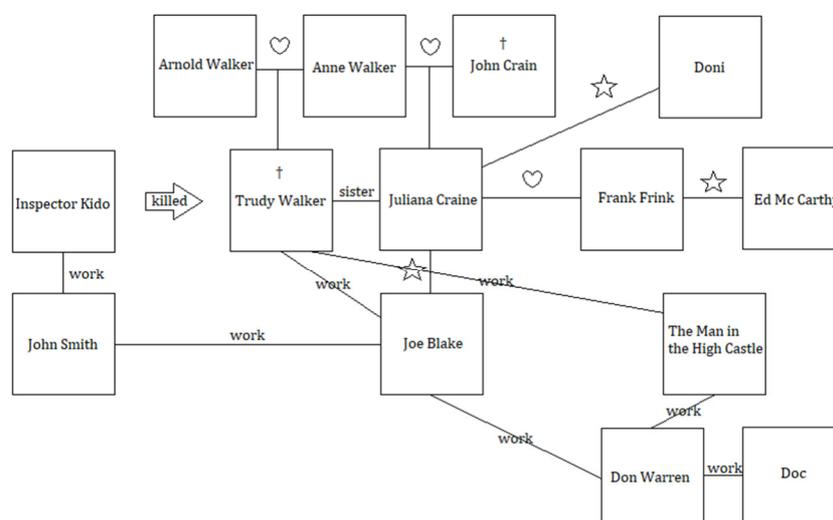
I chose the character Juliana Crain (Alexa Davalos) because you can learn a lot from her in episode one. The others are more mysterious because they don't talk that much or hide their personality. Juliana Crain is one of the main characters of the series. She has long dark brown hair and always wears clothes that match the time of the early 1960's. For example, Juliana always wears an inconspicuous cardigan and a long skirt (Picture 4).



Juliana, sometimes called Jules by her family and friends, is the daughter of Anne Walker and John Crain. Her father was killed by the Chinese. She is also the older half-sister of Trudy Walker and the stepdaughter of Arnold Walker who married her mother after her father died. She is a young American woman who lives in San Francisco, the capital of the Japanese Pacific States in the west of the USA. She is in a relationship with Frank Frink and the two live together in a small apartment in San Francisco. In her free time, she practices Aikido. According to the founder's philosophy, the primary goal in the practice of aikido is to overcome oneself instead of cultivating violence or aggressiveness. Juliana is exceptionally skilled at it, able to take down a man twice her size.

Juliana is an intelligent albeit naive individual. She cares deeply for the people around her, which often leads her into trouble. For example, she cares for her parents because Trudy does not visit them that often. Even if she is in a hurry, Juliana goes shopping for them or visits them at home. She is quite optimistic and, unlike her boyfriend Frank, believes in the tapes and their ability to change life as she knows it. That is why she often acts careless. For example, she impersonates for her half-sister Trudy and travels to the neutral zone and meets a stranger to find answers. In conjunction with her caring nature, Juliana is also trusting people she believes to be good. For example, she immediately trusts Joe Blake, the stranger she met in the neutral zone, just because he paid for her.

2.4 Character map



2.5 Who is my favourite minor character and why?

Doni (Michael Eber) is a young Japanese man who lives in San Francisco. He is in the same aikido class as Juliana and seems to have a crush on her because he asked her for a date in episode one. I like the character because he seems to be a nice guy. Firstly, he appears in the scene where Juliana fights with another guy from the aikido class. Afterwards, he asks her for a date but she tells him about her relationship with Frank. Nevertheless, the two arrange to meet for tea. When the two meet again in another scene, Juliana is in a hurry and cancels the date. I like Doni because he's a real gentleman and isn't upset about it. On the one hand, he is pretty reserved (maybe it's because of his educational background or his culture) but on the other hand, Doni is brave because he asked Juliana for a date. At the end of episode one, Doni appears again when Frank gets arrested. He is injured because his face is bleeding. Even if he is guilty for the arrest of Frank, his bleeding face shows that he did not do it without resistance (That's why I like the character).

3. Working with important themes and motifs

3.1 "The Grasshopper Lies Heavy"

The Grasshopper Lies Heavy is a newsreel and part of the series of related films that show historical events in an alternate story in which the Allies won the war and defeated Germany and Japan. It belongs to the film series from the "Man in the High Castle". For example, the film role that Juliana got from her half-sister Trudy shows the Allies victory in WW II and the Tehran Conference like it happened in real life (Picture 5). For Juliana, those events didn't happen in her universe and she becomes emotional about it because she prefers the alternate story line. It is unclear where the tapes come from (because "The Man in the High Castle" is just a code name) and what they mean exactly. The spreading of those tapes is very dangerous because it is forbidden by the government. In episode one, it becomes clear that they kill everyone who knows about the tapes, like Juliana's half-sister Trudy, because they want to destroy them. The tapes are a symbol for freedom and hope because they show how the world might have been or is in an alternate universe. The secret behind them needs to be solved.



(Picture 5)

4. Working with words

4.1 Glossary

English	German
Obergruppenführer (Senior Group Leader)	Obergruppenführer
albeit	obgleich
resistance	Widerstand
inconspicuous	unauffällig
to impersonate so.	sich als jmd. ausgeben
to award so. sth.	jmd. etw. verleihen
to visualize sth.	sich ein Bild von etw. machen
food for thought	Denkanstoß
regardless	trotzdem
cliff-hanging	spannungsgeladen
double life	Doppelleben
arresting	fesselnd
reputable	angesehen
injured	verletzt
to last	reichen
sorrows	Sorgen
reputable	angesehen
unimaginable	unvorstellbar
alternate history	Alternativweltgeschichte
decrepit	heruntergekommen
to spread out	sich ausbreiten
National Socialism	Nationalsozialismus
unprecedented	Noch nie dagewesen
implementation	Umsetzung

4.2 Definition

Obergruppenführer (German: "senior group leader") was one of the Third Reich's paramilitary ranks, first created in 1932 as a rank of the Sturmabteilung (SA), and adopted by the Schutzstaffel (SS) later. Until April 1942, it was the highest commissioned SS rank, inferior only to the Reichsführer-SS.

Resistance means "refusal to comply with or accept something." An individual person or a group of people can put up resistance against something they disagree with or don't want to participate in.

Food of thought is something that should be thought about or considered carefully.

A **double life** is a life of a person who leads two different lives that are kept separate from each other, usually because one of them involves secret or illegal activities.

Alternate history is a genre of speculative fiction consisting of stories in which one or more historical events occur differently.

5. Cinematic devices

In the last scene of the episode, the director makes use of different stylistic devices, for example camera range, camera work, camera movement, lightning effects, point of view or music.

The scene starts with Juliana walking out of the diner to wait outside. After a moment, Joe follows her with a couple of orange sodas. The two start a conversation and Juliana introduces herself as Trudy again. They covertly establish that neither is the contact the other is waiting for. Meanwhile, Frank is beaten and arrested and Doni watches. Randall is also arrested. Tagomi consults the I-Ching and seems to be disturbed by what he is shown. Joe checks his watch and excuses himself to make a quick phone call from a phone booth. Obergruppenführer Smith answers the phone. He asks Joe about his cover and wants to tell Joe's father about. That is how the episode ends. In this scene are so many different camera ranges. When Juliana walks out the diner, the camera range is an extreme long shot that films from a considerable distance wide angle and Juliana and Joe in a wider context. So, you can also see the name of the diner on the shield above the door or the propaganda posters on the house wall. A medium close shot follows that shows Juliana and the appearing Joe from head to waist. The movement goes from left to right to show Joe coming out of the diner with the sodas in his hands. The following conversation is divided into different camera ranges. In the beginning, the camera only shows the person talking in a close shot and films the person's face and shoulders. Because the camera also films the sun, the lightning in the scene is not that good and you cannot see particular facial expressions of the characters. Nevertheless, the sinking sun makes the light shine orange like the sodas that the two are drinking and makes the scene seem like it is a summer evening. The camera films in a low shot, which is why the scene looks like it's been secretly supervised. All others are eye-level shots. Frank's arrest is also represented in different ways. For example, there's a long shot that shows the police men standing in front of Frank's and Juliana's apartment and close-ups of Frank and Inspector Kido. These are full screen shots of them emphasizing facial expressions. Also, the lightning in this part of scene is darker because it takes place in the evening between decrepit apartment houses. That is why the atmosphere is more depressing. Randall's arrest is presented equally but the camera movement is more active because it happens in public on the street where many people are walking around. There are more close shots of Tagomi to show his face and hand movements and his emotions when he looks at the I-Ching and finds out something that makes him emotional. Moving the camera gradually further away from him seems to let him be more distant and ends this part of scene. For the conversation between Joe and Smith, the director also zooms in to show how private the conversation is. The scene ends with a close-up of Joe to clarify the meaning of his last words.

During the whole scene, there is the same unknown classic music playing in the background. It sounds tragic. Even if the conversation between Juliana and Joe is not, the plot twist at the end arouses the feeling that Joe was maybe lying to Juliana because of his double life.

III. Post-Viewing

1. Working with the film (or a particular scene)

1.1 Newspaper article

In the evening of the 6th of May, 1962, the young supporter of the residence Trudy Walker, 18, was shot by policemen on the streets of San Francisco, Japanese Pacific States. She wanted to escape from them because the young criminal had some illegal subjects about her. The policemen had no other chance to stop her than to shoot the dangerous woman. Hereupon, the family was probed and polled by the police. While her parents were arrested, her half-sister Juliana Crain is still missing. The government is searching for her because she is maybe involved in the illegal machinations of Mrs Walker. The police ask for help of the society to find the suspect woman as quick as possible. If you know her or something about her missing please contact the nearest police department.

1.2 Review

“A series of out world as it might have been”. “The New World” is an emotional, cliff-hanging episode that arouses my interest for more of it. I want to know how the story of the characters goes on because there are so many surprises like Joe’s double life that came up in the last minutes. Who would have thought about a plot twist like this in the end of the first episode, even if it was clear from the beginning that the story develops between politics, espionage, persecution, resistance, love and the two opposing surveillance states Japan and the Germany? I’m excited because there are much more open questions that need to be solved.

I love the way the show looks. It’s stunning to watch the characters in a completely different location, even if the story takes place in the USA. The San Francisco scenes in the Japanese occupied territories look so different than in real life, like the Chinatown look that spreads out over the whole city. It looks absolutely foreign but at the same time it still looks like San Francisco because of familiar monuments like the Golden Gate Bridge. The whole setting, for example the scenes in New York City, fit into the time of the early 1960’s. Also, the characters look like they were pulled out of this time. For example, the uniforms of the policemen look so realistic. The best things about a successful alternate history are the details because there are different ways to watch a movie or series. The first watching is always about understanding the context but while second watching there are so many hidden allusions. For example, all those propaganda posters were used in Second World War to control the society. Canon City is a great example of what life might be like in a neutral zone between two racially-driven empires because the director shows exactly how hard it is to get in when Joe wanted to pass the border. One of the biggest challenges of filmmaking is to make sure that the alternate world feels believable.

All in all, this alternate storyline is so arresting because the story is unimaginable in today’s world. For me, it is hard to believe that the world shown could have been ours when the history would have been different. In my opinion, the producers succeed this challenge.

2. The series as such

2.1 How the series was received at the time and what impact it had on the film industry

- Succeed with the challenge of alternate history
- Unimaginable in today's world
- Arouses interest for the topic "National Socialism and his consequences"
- Controversial because of the use of forbidden symbols
- Unprecedented idea
- Great implementation of the book

3. General

3.1 Comment

While creating the viewing log, I learned a lot about the making of a series and facts about the series "The Man in the High Castle" itself. Some years ago, when I watched the series for the first time, I didn't focus on the details. This time, I noticed so many things that helped me to understand the context more. Also, I refreshed my knowledge about the National Socialism and his consequences and I think that all this new information are quiet helpful. Normally, I don't like historical movies or series but I learned that everything new deserves a chance. I mean, the topic is so important and it's true that more people needs to understand that something like this is never allowed to happen again. So, in the making of the viewing log, I broadened my horizon.

Also, I was really happy with the selection of tasks because I was allowed to choose the ones that fit my Viewing log best. Working with a movie or series is fun because I never occupied with a task for such a long time and I also think that the topic is pretty interesting for young people. I like working creative. That's why I chose a lot of creative tasks for my Viewing log because it is easier for me to write my ideas and feelings down than working with a certain task type. Often, I knew exactly what task to do for a certain scene because they just fit. So, the collection of tasks was pretty well chosen.

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Text

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Pictures

Cover

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Picture 1

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Picture 2/ Picture 3

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Picture 4

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Picture 5

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