

Devil May or May Not Hide

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Abstract

In this article, we investigate the nature of sin in human beings. This search leads us to look into the human soul and the inclination towards evil. To explore the drives behind evil deeds, three short stories, namely “Young Goodman Brown”, “The Demon Lover”, and “Hunters in the Snow” are analysed through the understanding of psychoanalysis with the help of Freudian and Jungian theories. The reflections of their Unconscious can be seen in the journeys of the main characters, which enables us to detect the fact that “evil” resides in every person no matter which era they belong to.

Keywords: Comparative analysis, Unconscious, Evil, Psychoanalysis, Freud, Jung

Saklı Şeytan

Özet

Bu makalede, insanın günahlarının doğasını incelemekteyiz. Bu inceleme bizi insan ruhunun ve insanın kötüye olan eğiliminin derinliklerine götürür. Kötü eylemlerin arkasında yatan dürtüleri bulmak için, “Young Goodman Brown”, “The Demon Lover” ve “Hunters in the Snow” adlı kısa öyküler Freud ve Jung’un teorilerinin yardımıyla, psikanaliz yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Hikayelerin baş karakterlerinin yaptıkları yolculuklar boyunca bilinç dışı yansımaları görülmektedir. Bu yansımalar bizi kötülüğün, hangi çağda yaşamış olursa olsun her insanın içinde var olduğu sonucuna ulaştırır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Karşılaştırmalı analiz, Bilinçdışı, Kötülük, Psikanaliz, Freud, Jung

DEVIL MAY OR MAY NOT HIDE

Through a psychoanalytical analysis, this article purports to display a possible common denominator among the three short stories, namely “The Young Goodman Brown”, “The Demon Lover” and “Hunters in the Snow.” These short stories were written in different timelines but still claims that the protagonists of them are seduced by the sweet seduction of the sins offered by the society whether they are aware of it or not.

Devil and Man

If there is night, there must be day. If there is death, there must be life. If there is love, there must be hatred. If there is man, there must be woman. Above all, if there is God, there must be devil. Juxtapositions define the world. Only through these connections can man perceive his surroundings. Only the oppositions might bring a counter signifier that could forge any signified. Without God, Devil is unmatched. Without Devil, God’s presence is too abstract. On the other hand, while talking about these oppositions, most of the time people might tend to associate devil with man while they never associate God with him. Even uttering such a possibility is counted as one of the biggest sins: polytheism. When we look at the Genesis, we see that God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and then let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (NASB) Genesis 1:25-26. Therefore, while God’s closeness to humankind is out of inquiry, one often finds that humans are equated with the devil. The concept of devil has undergone a tremendous change. One of the first versions of Devil in the western tradition is the Greek god Hades who ruled the underworld -the realm of death and darkness. Norse god Loki – the trickster god- on the other hand, acts in a malicious way, which connotes to evil qualities. Another Greek god, with his devilish depiction is Pan - the god of Shepherd The meaning of Pan is actually Pasture and Pan passed the goat’s legs and cloven hooves to Christian Devil. Finally, today’s image of Devil owes much to artists than the Holy Bible. That is to say, Devil’s image has been reshaped and re-forged by many different stories, movies and even song clips that as a result Devil has become a shapeshifter. In some portrayals he/she is a fallen epic hero like in John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, or a highly capable deceiver like in Wolfgang Goethe’s *Faust* or a tremendously seductive version in *Bedazzled* by Elizabeth Hurley. In this article, however, our intention is to take a deep journey among the three selected short stories to find the very reasons and traces of the characters to confirm that devil lies in each of the characters naturally. ‘To be the devil or not’ is the real problem, nothing more.

What Is the Role of The Unconscious Psyche of The Man in Committing Sin?

To understand the tendency of man towards sin, one must know the psyche of the man. This can be accomplished through psychoanalysis, which studies human mind in depth. Sigmund Freud, in his prominent work *The Ego and the Id* explains the structure of human psyche displaying the ideas such as Ego, Superego, and Id. According to him, the unconscious is a model of repressed feelings, desires, and drives (edt. Smith, 2010: 3949). Id is the part that holds the unconscious, and it must be in balance with Ego and Superego. For an individual to function properly the id must be altered by the effect of the outer world. Whereas the id includes passions; the ego stands for reason and common sense (3959). Freud asserts that Superego consists of the things belonging to the higher nature of man as it is mentioned in the quotation below:

As a child grows up, the role of father is carried on by teachers and others in authority; their injunctions and prohibitions remain powerful in the ego ideal and continue, in the form of conscience, to exercise the moral censorship... Social feelings rest on identifications with other people, on the basis of having the same ego ideal (edt. Smith, 2010: 3949).

In all three stories, it is observed that the characters exist in different kinds of social systems representing authority. In *Young Goodman Brown*, the major controlling power is given through religion namely Puritanism¹. In *Demon Lover*, the institution of marriage and social norms of English society are dominant powers. In *Hunters in the Snow*, though less effective, the rules of society and marriage are still existent besides basic human responsibilities like valuing human life and caring for a fellow human being. When all these concepts of institutions are corrupted by the characters, in other words, the superego is destroyed and id emerges, there comes chaos. Unleashed from the unconscious, their hidden desires and drives take control and the characters tend to act immorally and commit sins.

¹Puritanism, a religious reform movement in the late 16th and 17th centuries that sought to “purify” the Church of England of remnants of the Roman Catholic “popery” that the Puritans claimed had been retained after the religious settlement reached early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Puritans became noted in the 17th century for a spirit of moral and religious earnestness that informed their whole way of life, and they sought through church reform to make their lifestyle the pattern for the whole nation.

Why These Three Short-Stories?

Despite the fact that the three short stories' timeline and environment are different from one another, they have a common understanding of the preliminary and high modern mind. The characters tend to vindicate wrong actions to get rid of the burden brought by their conscience with the influence of this understanding. Earlier in the history of literature, Devil is ascribed to be a deviating power for people to give in to evil and commit sin. Later on, around the late 19th century, humanity itself undertakes the role of Devil, hence evil is embodied in people, regardless of their gender.

In "Young Goodman Brown", written in the early 19th century, Devil is the ultimate image that represents evil on Earth. This idea is transmitted to the reader through the effective speech and call of Devil himself saying: "Evil is the nature of mankind. Evil must be your only happiness" (Hawthorne, 2012: 7).

When Kathleen finds the mysterious letter and faces her past and fears in "The Demon Lover", which is a Post- Second World War story, it is observed that the concept of Devil has been converted due to the zeitgeist accordingly. The traumas of the great wars, which have afflicted humanity, show themselves as nightmares and psychosis, which become highly visible in her, as well.

With the "Devil Figure" losing its glamour, the centuries of ongoing aesthetic representation of evil begins to alter in need of new strategies. The determinant of this process has been stripping evil of its physical qualities and its rooting in humans' inner world. Evidently, as a 21st century story, "Hunters in the Snow" indicates that evil and apathy has settled so deeply in the heart of humans that they have become the Devil itself rather than be its victims.

INTRODUCTION

Freud said that civilization is necessary for the survival of the species, but the pressure to conform makes it hard for individuals to be happy. Human nature consists of deep instinctual impulses and therefore some evils deeds can never be totally eradicated. He maintained that all art was the result of the sublimation of libidinous urges; he was also dismissive of religious teachings, saying that they were merely created to help people cope with the tensions of civilisation. (Freud the Key Ideas, 2010: Intro XV)

In these lines above, one can understand that man is stuck amid a social pressure while trying to exist or prove himself as a conformist individual. In other words, there are some pre-determined unwritten codes that define the roles of the man within the society to place him as 'an ordinary man' to endure in the society. Such codes in any society – though it may change from society to society- demarcates the personal boundaries and rights of the individuals

relying on some universal ethical, moral, religious and conventional cyphers. To illustrate the codes that are mentioned, some examples can be drawn out from the short stories. To begin with, one example from the “Young Good Man Brown” is that there are some religious cyphers. In the story, we have a couple that represent the widely accepted religious values embedded in Puritan denomination even with the meanings of their names which will be discussed in detail later in the article. Another example can be given from “The Demon Lover.” A woman who has been left by an enigmatic so-called lover finds herself in a situation whereby the reader is in between to decide whether the things occur around her are real or just interpretations through her wishful dreams. Mrs. Drover has been waiting for a mysterious lover to whom she has been engaged without any hope to see him ever again. Nevertheless, in a patriarchal society that she lives in, a woman, who has been engaged but left by a man, is biasedly seen as guilty or infidel. Therefore, ‘the secret’ or ‘the demon’ lover shatters her psychology and causes her to experience some hallucinations and schizophrenic disorders. In “Hunters in the Snow”, the readers may detect a deteriorated society where all the wicked acts reveal themselves pragmatic and useful as Machiavelli stated, “The ends justify the means.”

YOUNG GOODMAN BROWN

Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story Young Goodman Brown written in 1835 is a story which enables us to psychoanalyse the characters according to Freudian and Jungian theories. As the story is set in Puritan England, it is embroidered with several religious elements. The connotation of Puritanism can mostly be seen in the names of the characters. To illustrate, the names of Young Goodman Brown and Faith instantly remind Puritan concepts such as innocence, purity and piety. However, this seemingly pious couple have tendency to sin in their Unconscious which they try to repress. It is significant that Young Goodman Brown cannot resist to the temptation of going to the 'forest' despite Faith's efforts to stop him from doing so. Ignoring Faith and following his deepest and darkest desires, Young Goodman Brown sets off on his journey to the forest accompanied by the devil representing his ‘descend into The Unconscious’ (Predmore, 1977: 250). Throughout his journey, the people he encounters with all symbolise a repressed inclination towards 'evil'. His first fellow-traveller is the devil himself who already knows about the sins of Young Goodman Brown's ancestors. Upon these accusations, Goodman Brown defends his roots saying "We are a people of prayer, and good works to boot, and abide no such wickedness" (Hawthorne, 2012: 2). The reason for such a fierce defence is that his ancestors symbolise ‘the wise old man’ archetype representing wisdom, guidance, kindness and the person of

knowledge. This is the first time Goodman Brown faces the existence of evil and sin in his world. As he continues his journey, he encounters with many other people going to The Sabbath, a gathering in the heart of the forest, where they plan to enact their rite of baptism by the devil. Seemingly pure and religious people's attending this rite is really disappointing for Young Goodman Brown, who finds himself in the wicked and terrifying atmosphere. Goody Cloyse, for instance, is one of them, who can be interpreted as 'the caregiver', helping other people, supporting them and having saint-like qualities as she is his 'catechism' teacher. The utmost point of his devastation is, nevertheless, his wife's attendance to this unholy communion. With her 'pink ribbons', young wife Faith stands for 'The innocent' archetype - naive, pure, romantic and full of holiness. Although Young Goodman Brown himself attends the ritual as it is seen in the lines of his delirium "Come witch, come wizard, come Indian powwow, come devil himself, and here comes Goodman Brown. You may as well fear him as he fear you" (Hawthorne, 2012: 5), he cannot face with his own evil side, which is repressed. Instead, he puts the blame on other people around him, including his 'Faith'. He says;

My Faith is gone... There is no good on earth; and sin is but a name.
Come devil: for to thee is this world given (Hawthorne, 2012: 6).

This also reminds us 'Freudian slip'², which is said to be the unwilling occurrence of a wish or desire in The Unconscious. He complains about the downfall of her wife, whereas he might also be revealing his own weakness and imperfection of his belief. Michael Tritt asserts that to avoid his 'guilt-consciousness and the related moral anxiety, Brown projects³ his guilt onto the people around him' (Tritt, 1986: 114).

As we are given some hints at the beginning of the story that all these might be a dream, the end of the story also leads us to the same idea. Overwhelmed by the devil's saying "Evil is the nature of mankind. Evil must be your only happiness", Young Goodman Brown seemingly turns to Heaven and wakes up from his terrifying dream. However, whether this waking is real or not is disputable as he is not the same person any more at the end of the story. In both

²Slip of the tongue: The introduction inadvertently of a wrong word or phrase, irrelevant to the rest of the sentence, or changing radically its meaning, contrary to the conscious intention of the speaker, but interpreted by psychoanalysts as the expression of a repressed wish.

³ Projection: ... by the psychoanalysts, the attributing unconsciously to other people, usually as a defence against unpleasant feelings in ourselves, such as a feeling of *guilt*, or *inferiority feeling*, of thoughts, feelings, and acts towards us, by means of which we justify ourselves in our own eyes.

cases, he experiences the sweet temptation of sin which he has repressed himself and also by the force of social and religious norms of the community. The atmosphere and Young Goodman Brown's gloomy and insecure state prove the fact that whatever humankind does or how hard they try, they cannot get rid of the inherent evil nature of them.

THE DEMON LOVER

Elizabeth Bowen's short story "The Demon Lover", written in 1945, is alike the story "Young Goodman Brown" as it shows us a person who goes through a journey revealing inner conflicts of humankind. The psychology of Mrs. Drover is shown us through many depictions as in the following quotation,

It was late August; it had been a steamy, showery day: At the moment, the trees down the pavement glittered in an escape of humid yellow afternoon sun. Against the next batch of clouds, already piling up ink-dark, broken chimneys and parapets stood out. (Bowen, 1983: 81)

The time is the end of summer and the words 'steamy' and 'showery' connote heaviness and distress. Also, the 'clouds', 'ink-dark' and 'broken' make the reader uneasy, reminding of all the gloom and desolation of London caused by the war. Like the state of London and her war-torn house with 'dead air' inside, Kathleen's inner world is reflected in a dark and damaged way. Her journey to her shut-up house to get some belongings is actually a journey to her Unconscious to face her repressed emotions.

The trigger to unveil her feelings is the letter she finds in the shut-up house which is a representation of her Unconscious. This letter is supposedly written by her Demon Lover; however, it is signed K, which is significant as it is her own initial letter. At this point, there are some possibilities which include her being in a dream, or her being neurotic or her being in danger by the pursuit of her Demon Lover.

Since the name of the lover is not mentioned, the letter signed by 'K.' leads us to suspect that the letter is actually a product of Kathleen's mind. The fact that her continuous telling us that the caretaker has not been in the house supports the idea that the letter is in her mind, not existing in reality. The act of constant 'repetition' is a significant sign of 'neurosis', which is a result of strong repressed feelings and desires. Other indicators of her neurosis can be detected in her moves, such as looking over her shoulder in fear of being watched and counting the strokes of the clock obsessively in an uneasy way. Furthermore, she has a flicker to the left of her mouth which is another distinctive sign of her neurotic state of mind. All these elements invoke a

feeling that cannot be identified as Freud focuses on in his work “The “Uncanny”,

... for this uncanny is in reality nothing new or foreign but something familiar and old - established in the mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression. This reference to the factor of repression enables us furthermore, to understand Schelling's definition of the uncanny as something which ought to have been kept concealed but which has nevertheless come to light (Freud, 2003: 13).

It is vital to mention The Demon Lover Ballad tradition, which has inspired various writers like Elizabeth Bowen. In this tradition, the lover generally sails away leaving the fiancée behind who gets married to another man after waiting for a long time. Although the sailor is presumed to be dead, the woman's breaking her promise is still seen as unfaithfulness creating a vengeful demon lover. The woman starts to feel guilty of getting married without the exact knowledge of her lover's death (Barry, 1904: 238). To move on with her life, she must ignore the fact that she does not fulfil her promise thus she becomes a sinful woman. As a result, she represses this guilt assuming her lover dead and prefers not to think about him until she is forced to do so with the emergence of the letter. This combination of guilt and fear is also another example of The Uncanny which is also defined by Freud as in this quotation, “...it is no matter for surprise that the primitive fear of the dead is still so strong within us and always ready to come to the surface at any opportunity (Freud, 2003: 14).

To have a better understanding of Kathleen's sin, it is vital to explore the progress of her relationship with her lover. She cannot even remember her lover's face; his face is just a blurry image in her mind. She is not certain how they felt at that time or why they promised each other to get married. The only thing she can clearly remember about him is the pain on her palm left by the breast button of his uniform as we can see in the line “That cut of the button on the palm of her hand was, principally, what she was to carry away.” (Bowen, 1983: 3). Although he does not give an impression of a compassionate lover, she is drawn to him enough to make a promise of marriage, which brings us to the conclusion that she is tempted by the dark side of his passion. As Bowen says in these lines clearly “She could not have plighted a more sinister troth” (Bowen, 1983: 3). Kathleen becomes a sinister character. According to Freudian thinking, this letter may only be in her dream. Nevertheless, its function is to remind her of her past.

Then at last, often after a long interval, some fresh experience recalls the lost memory of the other event and at the same time reveals the source of the dream. We are thus driven to admit that in the dream we

knew and remembered something which was beyond the reach of our waking memory (Freud, 2010: 45).

Two scenarios are possible considering the ending of the story. If her coming 'eye to eye' with the taxi driver is literal, she is indeed taken hostage by her vengeful demon lover because of her sins. In this case, the reason why she starts to scream is the fear of this merciless man taking her into the deserted streets. However, when this ending is analysed through Lacanian way of reading, it is a self-recognition as according to him, this kind of scene represents the character's facing himself/herself as 'Eye' and 'I' are pronounced the same (Selden, 2017: 158). From this perspective, her screams can be a result of facing her dark sinful side.

HUNTERS IN THE SNOW

Tobias Wolff's short story, written in 1982, shows the corruption of society and its ultimate destructive effects on modern man. In this story, the focus is not only on one man's sin, but on all three characters' sins. They are the true examples of Modern man who is lost and who has also lost all the virtues. The story starts with a journey into the snow-covered countryside where Tub, Kenny and Frank go hunting. Although they are friends, throughout the story they act like children, humiliate, threaten and mock one another. In Jung's *Man and His Symbols*, he tells the story of four friends who similarly set out for a journey that is interpreted by Jung as such; "This drive (a long drive through deserted snow-covered country) and the desolate country is symbolic of the long and wearisome search for self-development" (Jung, 1964: 301). Even though Tub, Kenny and Frank take some steps towards self-realisation, there is no real self-development in this journey. Tub, for instance, who has been mocked constantly because of his weight, finally confesses his eating disorders instead of lying about his diet. Frank on the other hand, finds the courage to admit his immoral affair with a young girl to Tub instead of hiding it as a secret. And finally, Kenny, as a mischievous man, suffers from a gunshot as a penance.

The concept of friendship is highly corrupted in the story which is a frequently seen element in Modern literature. As Jung asserts in his *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* "The man whom we can with justice call 'modern' is solitary" (Jung, 1933: 227). This solitary can be observed under the pretence of friendship of these three modern men. Thus, Kenny and Frank's constant humiliation and ignorance of Tub results in the violent act of Tub's shooting Kenny. Kenny's pointless use of his gun by first shooting a dog without blinking an eye and then by pointing the gun at Tub saying "I hate you" cause

Tub to lose his control. Considering the irresponsible act of delaying to take Kenny to hospital will most probably make Tub a killer in the end. Therefore, this lack of friendship virtue drives these two men into the unspeakable sin of killing a friend. Another example of distorted friendship is seen clearly between Tub and Frank. Although Frank hides his secret affair with the young babysitter from Tub, he confesses it towards the end of the story while Kenny is about to die. When Frank, as a married man, confesses this affair with the juvenile girl, Roxanne, Tub reacts in a shocked way at first which makes Frank try to justify his relationship giving an absurd example. He reminds Tub of Shakespeare's Juliet, a character from centuries ago, who is thirteen years old, while Roxanne is fifteen. He continues his efforts to depict her as a mature woman:

"Tub, this so-called babysitter, this so-called fifteen-year-old has more in her little finger than most of us have in our entire bodies. I can tell you this little lady is something special."

Tub nodded. "I know the kids like her."

"She's opened up whole worlds to me that I never knew were there."

Overwhelmed by the loneliness and need to be accepted as a friend, Tub tolerates his friend and without considering the ethical sides of such a disgusting relationship, Tub tries to conform Frank and find an excuse for such behaviour.

Their so-called brotherhood is an ephemeral and non-durable sovereignty as they left Kenny in the back of the truck to die. This situation clearly shows the 1980's attitude, a self-centred world tends to justify any sin or immoral act to keep on going. Also, in Jung's modern man is portrayed as someone who only has a 'present-day consciousness' having lost all the connections and values of the past; hence, becoming '*unhistorical*' (Jung, 1933: 228). Frank's manipulating the example of Juliet, one of the most famous characters in the history of literature, and Tub and Frank's forgetting their injured friend in the back of the truck show the '*unhistorical*' state of them. However, the real indicator of them being '*unhistorical*' is their lack of human ethics.

Through ready-made excuses, they come clean with their sins and let their inner devil get the control over them. Leaving Kenny to die is a very strong example to show why their attitudes are very adaptive and changeable but just to keep their lives going on solely controlled by their ids.

Indeed, he is completely modern only when he has come to the very edge of the world, leaving behind him all that has been discarded and

outgrown, and acknowledging that he stands before a void out of which all things may grow (Jung, 1933: 228).

This void in them is as cold as the endless and snowy path they are wandering around. To be able to survive and continue their journey, they hopelessly turn to each other for support. Even though this support means sharing one another's sins, they ignore the immorality of such deeds. In a way, they become accomplices, rather than friends. According to Freud, getting approval from one's friend is incredibly crucial as he gives examples from his own dreams and comparing his friends in *The Interpretation of Dreams*,

On the one hand we see the group of ideas attached to my friend Otto, who did not understand me, who sided against me, and who made me a present of liqueur with an aroma of amyl. On the other hand, we see—linked to the former group by its very contrast—the group of ideas attached to my friend in Berlin, who did understand me, who would take my side, and to whom I owed so much valuable information, dealing, amongst other things, with the chemistry of the sexual process. (Freud, 2010: 312)

In the light of these lines, the possibility of this journey's being a dream cannot be overlooked as it is embroidered with uncanny elements such as the isolation of the setting, shootings, freezing snowy weather. If it is actually a dream, it must be created in Frank's unconscious to justify his sins. The fact that he is both a hunter and an adulterer in this dream reminds us of the theory of Jung's. In his book *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* he gives a through definition of the "hunter" as below:

The hunter or old magician and the witch correspond to the negative parental imagos in the magic world of unconscious. The hunter first appears in the story as a black raven. He has stolen away the princess and holds her a prisoner. She describes him as "the devil". (Jung and Read: 235)

Even if Frank does not hold this young girl a prisoner, he seduces and defiles her, which is an evil act in itself. However, Frank is not the only sinner in the story as mentioned before. Kenny's killing the dog ruthlessly and trying Tub's patience turns Kenny into a sinner, as well. Tub, who seems to be the most innocent and vulnerable at the beginning, turns out to be a potential murderer.

“Hunters” of this story unexpectedly become hunters of the dog, the girl and the friend.

CONCLUSION

At the end of a thorough analysis of the three short stories, it is observed that decisions take our characters to their journeys in different concepts, but with similar destinations. Young Goodman Brown travels deep into the forest which represents purity and simplicity that turn into evil. Kathleen dares to leave her safe territory and face the horrors of chaotic London and her ghostly shut-up house after war. Hunters, looking for an adventure, go far away from their homes into the wild, barren and vast snowy land. All these journeys, as reflections of the characters’ inner conflicts, show that the void inside them is not only impossible to fill, but also gets deeper and deeper as they face their evil sides.

Inclination towards evil and sin exists in man regardless of time besides place. In 19th century, with the strong effect of Puritanism people stick to the religious rules, thus, the society of that time seemingly is in order and pure. The 20th century English society, trying to heal after the horrible World War, clings to traditional values such as marriage and social morals. Modern man of 21st century attempts to take refuge in the warmth of friendship and love in the absence of the old social codes. However, as Freud says, id takes control, overthrowing superego, when urges become so strong that the balance of the mind is corrupted, which triggers the tendency to commit sin. Assuming these stories are the dreams of the main characters, as some of the clues have already been given in this direction, the result does not change because according to Freud, repressed desires come to the surface in dreams.

Like the constant war between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, man’s internal conflict with his devil shall continue eternally. It is not possible to deny the devil or the devil inside us as Rumi states “[I]f you couldn’t have seen the devil, see yourself.” We have always had our id and the personal devils inside our ids. As we have seen in these three stories, the demon is about what people want to do. Satan is not really far away, but inside. The constant war is the only battle of goodness and evil in us. Therefore, the being of the devil is not a matter of fact but just an extension of our decisions.

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