



YULIYA

FORGOTTEN SONGS OF
JULIA WEISSBERG RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

SARAH MOULTON FAUX | SOPRANO
KONSTANTIN SOUKHOVETSKI | PIANO

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JULIA WEISSBERG RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

1. Song (Песня), Three Romances, Op. 1, No. 1 4:07
2. Alone, I Start My Journey (Выхожу один я на дорогу), Three Romances, Op. 1, No. 2 4:59
3. Life Is Yet Ahead of Me (Жизнь еще передо мною), Three Romances, Op. 1, No. 3 1:28
4. I Don't Know Where I Came From (Weiß nicht, woher ich kommen bin), Rautendelein, Op. 3, No. 1 3:21
5. Where? I Sat at the Feast (Wohin? Ich saß beim Mahl), Rautendelein, Op. 3, No. 2 4:49
6. I Comb My Locks in the Moonlight (Im hellen Monde käm' ich mein Haar), Rautendelein, Op. 3, No. 3 2:18
7. Gulnara's Song (Песня Гюльнaры), Op. 32 3:22
8. The Sky Above (Le ciel est au dessus le toit), Deux Chansons, Op. 2, No. 1 3:16
9. Autumn's Song (Chanson d'automne), Deux Chansons, Op. 2, No. 2 2:10
10. Moon Fairy Tale (Mondmärchen), Op. 8 3:45
11. Spring's Song (Песня Весны), Op. 11 2:39
12. Chinese Song (Китайская песня), From Chinese Poetry, Op. 7, No. 1 1:57
13. Scarlet Rose (Алая роза), From Chinese Poetry, Op. 7, No. 2 4:00
14. Moonlit Stairs (Лестница при лунном свете), From Chinese Poetry, Op. 7, No. 3 4:51
15. Drunk with Love (Опьяненная любовью), From Chinese Poetry, Op. 7, No. 4 3:14



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Russian Diction and Vocal Preparation: Dmitriy Glivinsky

Piano Technician: Ken Sebesky

Recorded May 29-30, 2023, at the Concert Hall,

Dorothy Young Center for the Arts, Drew University, Madison, NJ



ABOUT THE ALBUM

This recording with Azica records marks the first modern-day capture of the music of Julia Lazarevna Weissberg Rimsky-Korsakov (1878-1942). During her lifetime, Julia ascended the heights of cultural life in Russia's "Silver Age", only to be relegated to subsequent obscurity. Born to a prominent Jewish family in Orenburg, Julia graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory where she was a student of composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and ultimately married his son, musicologist Andrey. A prominent composer, critic, and public figure, Julia was particularly celebrated for her art songs, symphonic poems, and children's operas. Her works, known for their harmonic ingenuity, were widely published and performed during her lifetime both in Russia and Germany. She died in 1942 during the Nazi siege of Leningrad.

Soprano Sarah Moulton Faux, an Opera America and American Prize winner, first saw mention of Julia Weissberg's work while researching the songs of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Intrigued, Sarah began a two-year research project into Weissberg's catalogue with the assistance of musicologist Dr. Olga Panteleeva. Together, they found a treasure trove of Weissberg's published manuscripts in the Russian State Library in Moscow. Fifteen songs for voice and piano comprise this album, featuring Sarah Moulton Faux and internationally acclaimed pianist and composer Konstantin Soukhovetski. Seven-time Grammy winner for Classical Music Producer of the Year Judith Sherman is the lead producer and sound engineer.

A portrait of Sarah Moulton Faux, a blonde woman with blue eyes and red lipstick, wearing a dark blue velvet dress. She is smiling and has her right hand raised to her hair. The background is a solid light brown color.

SARAH MOULTON FAUX | SOPRANO

Sarah Moulton Faux is "a winsome beauty with a voice to match" (BerkshireFineArts.com) lauded for her "full, silvery soprano" (Opera News), "mesmerizing" performances (Brooklyn Spectator), and "pure intonation and excellent articulation" (NewYorkClassicalReview.com) in repertoire ranging from opera's most famous heroines to contemporary works. She is the Winner of the American Prize for her debut album *Where Should This Music Be? Songs of Lola Williams* released by New World Records: "Sarah Moulton Faux is stunning; her devotion to this music shines through every syllable...a glorious disc." (Fanfare Magazine). An ardent champion of new work, Sarah is an Opera America National Opera Trustee Recognition Award Winner for her work as Co-President of the Board of Directors of American Opera Projects (AOP), a leading opera development company. She made her Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) debut in AOP's production of *The Climate Opera Project* and has also performed as a soloist at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. She is a graduate of Barnard College, Columbia University in East Asian & Middle Eastern Studies (magna cum laude/departmental honors) and holds a M.M. in Voice Performance & Pedagogy from Westminster Choir College.



KONSTANTIN SOUKHOVETSKI | PIANO

The winner of 17 awards from prestigious international piano competitions, Konstantin has performed to critical acclaim at leading venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Wigmore Hall (London), and the Louvre (Paris). Konstantin is regularly heard in recitals and with orchestras in the United States and Europe. A singular artistic voice of his generation, Konstantin often collaborates across the performing arts with dance, film, and chamber music projects. As a librettist, Konstantin was commissioned to write a chamber opera, *Her New Home*, by Garth Newel Music Center, in collaboration with composer Polina Nazaykinskaya. Konstantin's work as a composer includes a transcription of R. Strauss' *Four Last Songs*, and *The Pride Suite* for solo piano, commissioned by the ProtoStar Group. His first orchestral work - *Once Upon The Spring*, premiered in 2024. Konstantin's *Postcard from The Edge* for solo violin has been recorded by renowned violinist Elmira Darvarova. Konstantin, Director of Education and Community Engagement at Grand Piano Series in Naples, FL, is on the extension faculty of his alma mater, The Juilliard School. Born in Moscow to a family of artists, he studied at the Moscow Central Special Music School, where he double-majored in piano and composition.



YULIYA

FORGOTTEN SONGS OF
JULIA WEISSBERG RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

NOTES AND TRANSLATIONS

NOTES ON THE ALBUM

BY SARAH MOULTON FAUX

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY DR. KIRSTEN SANTOS RUTSCHMAN

The woman born as Yuliya [Julia, Julie] Lazarevna Weissberg [Weisberg, Veysberg] used many names throughout her life. During much of her student period, she was known as Julia Landau or Weissberg-Landau, reflecting a first, short-lived marriage. In Germany, she was Julia Kreutzer, by virtue of her second marriage to a fellow student from the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Her third, lasting marriage officially made her a Rimsky-Korsakov [Rimskaya Korsakova]. Nevertheless, she consistently published her work under the German spelling of her birth name, Julie Weissberg. Had she published as Rimsky-Korsakov, signaling her membership in a prominent musical family, would her legacy be any more familiar today?

I first saw Julia Weissberg's name during Covid lockdown, when I was practicing and researching the songs of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. One line in a source (exactly which source, I can no longer remember) read, "and his daughter-in-law, composer Julie Weissberg." Having a long held interest in supporting the work of women composers, this one line piqued my interest. Who was Julie Weissberg...and, most importantly for me, did she write for soprano? The research that followed was challenging, but what I ultimately learned about her life and her importance in the musical milieu of her time was more than I could have imagined.

In the 1920s, composer Julia Weissberg was a force to be reckoned with. A graduate of the prestigious St. Petersburg Conservatory, she also trained in Leipzig and Berlin, honing a late Romantic style she brought back with her to Russia. During the golden age of the Soviet avant garde, her works sounded in the great concert halls of Leningrad and Moscow, and abroad in Germany. Fellow Russian composer Mikhail Gnesin praised her "versatile giftedness" and hailed her as "the first professional female composer in the history of Russian musical art of the 20th century." Similarly, the prominent critic Leonid Sabaneyev deemed her "a master in the full sense of the word." She was a respected composer of music in great demand, with ensemble leaders clamoring for more. So why has her name all but disappeared from public consciousness? Why are her songs not as familiar to us as the works of Clara Schumann and Alma Mahler?

Formative Studies

Born in Orenburg in southwest Russia in December 1878, Julia Weissberg spent most of her life in the musically rich city of St. Petersburg. She entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory around age 17, although her path was anything but conventional. She started as a vocal student but withdrew at the end of the academic year due to a laryngeal disease. A few years later, she returned to study composition with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and instrumentation with Alexander Glazunov.

Her education was interrupted a second time during the turbulent anti-tsarist revolutionary period of 1905. Weissberg and a hundred fellow student demonstrators were expelled, in part for helping organize a production of Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *Kaschei the Immortal* against the wishes of Conservatory leadership. The composer himself was removed from his professorship due to his support of the students. Rimsky-Korsakov was allowed to return to his post by year's end. Not so with Julie, however; in 1907, she moved to Germany and continued her studies.

Making a (Female) Name for Herself

Between 1907 and 1912, Yulia Weissberg lived in Leipzig and then Berlin, where she studied composition with Engelbert Humperdinck and Max Reger at the Akademie der Künste. During this time, she wrote mostly large-scale symphonic works in late romantic Austro-German style. Some of her more experimental vocal writing explored symbolism in the vein of Debussy. She began to make a name for herself as a composer, and her works were performed across Berlin. In addition, she championed contemporary Russian music: together with her husband, pianist Leonid Kreutzer, she regularly hosted gatherings to discuss new manuscripts and recordings at her home.

Upon the premiere of her first and only symphony in Berlin in 1912, one forward-looking critic declared it "belongs to those few works of female composers that will spark interest in the future." However, like many female composers before her, Weissberg faced obstacles specific to her gender. In its mildest form, she could find the humor in these slights; she reported being amused when, one after another, famous German musicians kept asking her, "'Who orchestrated that symphony so well for you?' They could conceive of female writers, but the possibility for a woman to orchestrate her compositions herself seemed to them something unthinkable!"

Even friends weren't immune to displays of artistic misogyny. Weissberg once commented on an exchange with the violinist Alexander Schmuller, who lived in Weissberg's household in Berlin and had an inside view of her creative process. Schmuller was known to disparage "feminine talents," and while he genuinely considered Weissberg to be "talented in the area of composition," he had difficulty reconciling her work with her gender. Finally, one day, he asked, "Listen, Yuliya Lazarevna, can you switch to the male sex?!"

Less amusingly, her output was at times summarily dismissed as the work of a mere woman, such as the gendered attack leveled by another German critic: "What about Julia Weissberg's four-movement symphony? I don't want to be gallant with ladies, even if they confuse home and profession. Let's call it diligent work." The work of her woman's hand could be "diligent," but was by definition unable to rise to the level of a man's work.

Return to St. Petersburg

By 1912, Weissberg — whose marriage to Kreutzer was ending — wanted to return to St. Petersburg, but she could not simply pick up and move. As a divorcée with an unfinished education, she did not possess right-of-residency in the Russian capital. Thus, she completed her final chapter with the St. Petersburg Conservatory as a correspondence student. Diploma officially in hand, she returned to the city where she spent the remaining three decades of her life.

Shortly after re-establishing herself in St. Petersburg, Weissberg married the musicologist A.N. Rimsky-Korsakov, son of the famous composer who had been her composition instructor (though the marriage took place in 1913, five years after the death of the elder Rimsky-Korsakov).

In St. Petersburg, as in Berlin, Weissberg continued to champion modern Russian music. Together with her husband, she co-founded the first scholarly music journal in the Russian language, *Contemporary Music* (*Muzikal'nīy sovremennik*). She also developed "Evenings of Contemporary Russian Music," a series of lecture-recitals featuring a wide-ranging spectrum of modern music.

By this time, Weissberg was also recognized for her contributions to the field. The composer Viacheslav Gavrilovich Karatigin

includes Weissberg as the sole female composer in his 1914 article "The Most Recent Trends in Russian Music," in which he praises her "great sincerity of poetic feeling" and "excellent harmonic inventiveness."

A Woman's Sphere: Space to Create

Although the marriage was happy, the extended Rimsky-Korsakov family did not welcome Weissberg; and when famine conditions reigned in the years following the 1917 Russian Revolution, they did little to help her and her two young sons (b. 1908 and 1915) survive difficult conditions.

At times, home life consumed Weissberg's attention so fully that she could not compose at all, especially in the post-revolutionary years. When she did resume writing in 1920, her work came into demand with numerous performances in Leningrad, Moscow and Berlin, as well as more broadly via radio broadcasts.

However, she no longer pursued the larger symphonic works that tended to secure the reputation of (male) European composers. Instead, she focused primarily on music more socially acceptable for women: vocal music in shorter and longer forms, especially art songs and songs for children and youth. In her operas and other vocal works, Weissberg often turned to the work of contemporary female poets and librettists, including Maria Knopnicka (Poland), Paula Dehmel (Germany), Sarajini Naidu (India) and Sophia Parnok (Russia).

During the 1920s and into the 1930s, Soviet musical culture rested upon a foundation of amateur music ensembles and widespread folk music education, which brought with it a need for new repertoire. Her songs for children and young people — including music for pioneers and other youth clubs — were in such demand that nearly all of them were published. Surviving letters also attest to her compositions being in high circulation, and she continually fielded (and responded to) requests for new songs to be written for such-and-such a choir or school.

Finding Middle Ground: Children's Operas

For centuries, composers' reputations were founded on symphonies and operas. What space did that leave for female

composers, who had the talent but not the support — financial, familial, or otherwise — to dedicate their time and energies into writing such works, let alone arranging for their performances? Even male composers who wrote mostly smaller works have often been relegated to second-tier status in the public and scholarly imagination. If the socially acceptable route for Julia Weissberg was to write art songs and children's songs, how could she ever hope to make a larger musical mark? Her answer: operas for children. Stories such as H.C. Anderson's *The Little Mermaid*, Pushkin's *The Dead Princess*, and excerpts from *The Thousand and One Nights* came to life in her operatic settings. She created richly musical worlds to enthrall audiences of children ranging from pre-school through secondary school.

Resurrection

Julia Weissberg was no stranger to adversity, but in 1942, as Nazi forces held the city of Leningrad under siege, she suffered mentally and physically. She died in early March, mere days after the passing of her younger son. Her husband predeceased her in 1940. In the aftermath of the siege, the war, and changing musical tastes, the once-prominent composer sank into almost total obscurity.

A century after the height of Weissberg's fame, she is being rediscovered, along with her over 50 published scores and additional manuscript scores and writings. Russian scholar Marina Moiseevna Mazur has engaged in significant archival research to present Weissberg's life and music in richer detail than has hitherto been available. Susan M. Filler's research guide on four female composers, *Alma Mahler and Her Contemporaries: A Research and Information Guide* (2018), includes 89 annotated entries on Weissberg, alongside sources on African American composer Florence Price and Spanish-Mexican composer María Teresa Prieto Fernández de la Llana. I am indebted to the help of musicologist Dr. Olga Panteleeva. Together we found and examined many of Weissberg's published scores, held in the Russian State Library in Moscow.

For the album *YULIYA: Forgotten Songs of Julia Weissberg Rimsky-Korsakov* I handpicked fifteen of Julia's art songs for voice and piano and worked with renowned pianist and composer Konstantin Soukhovetski, seven-time Grammy winner for Classical Music Producer of the Year Judith Sherman, and two-time Grammy winner Alan Bise of Azica Records.

YULIYA marks a crucial step in bringing the music of Julia Weissberg back to the forefront, where it belongs.

Julia Weissberg with her husband
Andrey Rimsky-Korsakov
c.1920





Sarah and Konstantin recording at
Drew University - May 30, 2023



TRANSLATIONS

YULIYA: Forgotten Songs of Julia Weissberg Rimsky-Korsakov

Three Romances

1. Song - Maria Konopnicka (1842-1910)

Oh, I would go live in freedom,
Like a whirlwind that whistles in the field
Whistling in the field, weaving like a bird
Chases the clouds on a string
Into the fatal distance:
Only my heart is sorry for that cornfield,
Where native bones smolder
And the ears (of corn) ripen peacefully
Only, my heart is sorry

Oh, I would go on a long way,
As the streams go in the spring,
How river waters float – And weave round dances
And shine like steel.

Only, my heart is sorry for that hut,
Where the shaggy oak has grown,
Where the garden sparkles with dew,

Where the meadows ring with a scythe
Only my heart is sorry!

Oh, I would go even across the sea
Disperse silent grief
In the gloom of the hopeless night
I would carry the treasured treasure,
I've borne sorrow
Only my heart is sorry for the eagle,
That clucks loudly in the steppe,
That chases a bird over the forest
Drops young feathers,
Only, my heart is sorry.

2. Alone, I Start My Journey - Mikhail Lermontov (1814-1841)

Alone, I start my journey on the road
Through the fog, the flinty way glittering,
Night quiet, desert heeds to God
And star with star converses.

In the sky solemn but wonderful
The earth sleeps in the radiance of blue.
Why is it so painful and difficult for me, waiting for what?
Do I regret anything?
I don't expect anything from life
And I do not feel sorry for the past at all.
I am looking for freedom and peace
I would like to forget and fall asleep.
But not with that cold dream of the grave.
I would like to fall asleep for ages,
Let my breast be full of dozing fervor
So that when breathing the chest rises quietly,
So that all day and night cherishing my hearing
A sweet voice sing to me about love
And above me the oak evergreen would bend over me and
rustle.

3. Life is Yet Ahead of Me - Apollon Maykov (1821-1897)

Life is yet ahead of me
All in visions and sounds
Like a distant city in the morning
Full of ringing, full of brilliance!
All past misery I remember with delight
Like the steps by which I ascended to a bright goal!

Rautendelein from "Versunkenen Glocke - The Sunken Bell" by Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-1946)

4. I Don't Know Where I Came From

I know not where I came from, nor whither I go
If I'm a woodbirdie gay or a fairy bright,
The flowers that are blooming,
The air with scent perfuming,
Heard ever the story from where they came in glory?
Ah but often I feel a burning: a deep yearning for father and
mother. If 'tis denied, I won't upbraid.
Yet I'm a beautiful, beautiful golden haired elfin maid.

5. Where? I Sat at the Feast

What way? What way? I sat at the feast,
Pixies frisked through the nuptial hall,
They offered me a goblet fine,
Therein was glowing blood, not wine:
That goblet, I must drink it.
And when I had drunk that wedding drink,
I felt my heart with anguish shrink,
I felt the grip of an iron hand,
Then grew my inmost heart one brand.
My poor heart craved for cooling!

On the nuptial board lay a coronet
A silver fish amid corals red.
I drew it to me, that crown I tried:

Now am I the water sprite's bride.
My scorched heart wanted cooling...
There dropped three apples upon my lap,
White, gold, and rosy red:
They were a fatal bridal gift.
I ate the white one, and pale I turned,
I ate the gold one, and riches earned,
At last the rose red apple.
White, pale, and rosy red ate a maiden fair
And she was dead.

Water sprite! Open thy door to me:
The lifeless bride, I bring to thee.
Among the silver fishes, lizards and stone,
In deepness, darkness, cool alone...
Oh woe, thou charred heart!

6. I Comb My Locks in the Moonlight

I comb my locks in the moonlight sheen
And think of him who my love had been.
The bluebells toll in swinging.
Do they toll bliss? Do they toll pain?
Often I think the twain forebodes their ringing.

Now down! Now down 'tis time I speed in water and reed!
I stayed all too long.
Now down, now down.

7. Gulnare's Song from the children's opera "Gulnare" Op.32 (1935) with text by Sophia Parnok (1885-1933) based on a story from Arabian Nights.

Your speech is sweet to the heart,
Such a fire in the eyes of the sweet,
That music burns in your veins
As your hand stretches the strings.
Over Baghdad, night stretched its starry canopy.
Golden throated bird, my bird, Sing!
In the blue shadows of the sycamore tree,
I hear the sonorous stream of the fountain pouring.

Breathe roses, breath strings, echoes the nightingale
And calls young love his sweetheart.
And answering the call pours my song,
How you and I burn with love.

Two Songs – Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)

8. The Sky Above

The sky above the roof so blue, so calm,
A tree above the roof rocks its crown.

The bells under the sky that one sees, sweetly ring.
A bird in the field that one sees, plaintively sings.

My God, my God, life is there, simple and serene,
That peaceful sound comes from the town.

What have you done? Oh you who are there weeping without
end, Say, what have you done, you who are there, with your youth?

9. Autumn's Song

The long sobs of the violins in fall
Wound my heart with a languorous monotone.
All suffocating and pale when sounds the hour
I remember the days long past and I weep.
I set off on the rough wind that carries me here and there
Like a leaf which has died.

10. Moon Fairy Tale – from "Das liebe Nest – The dear Nest" (1922) by Paula Dehmel (1862-1918)

The moon's daughter, Mirlamein, came into the warm world,
She came out of her father's house on a white bat.
Mirlama, Mirlamein, go to sleep.

In her hands, pale and delicate, she held the ivory flute;
She blew – it sounded so bright and sweet,
As if an angel wanted to comfort us.
Mirlama, Mirlamein, go to sleep.

Glowworm puts out the little lamp, flies tired into his house of
leaves, The pigeons coo kuruh in their sleep,
My child closes his eyes too.
Mirlama, Mirlamein, go to sleep.

The flute fades away.
Mirlamein's veil blows from the heather stone,

She waves to the white bat and flies home to the silent moon.
Mirlama, Mirlamein, go to sleep.

11. Spring's Song – Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949)

How shall I feed thee, Beloved?
On golden red honey and fruit.
How shall I please thee, Beloved?
With the voice of the cymbal and lute.

How shall I garland thy tresses?
With pearls from the jessamine close.
How shall I perfume thy fingers?
With the soul of the keora and rose.

How shall I deck thee, o Dearest?
In hues of the peacock and dove.
How shall I woo thee, o Dearest?
With the delicate silence of love.

From Chinese Poetry

12. Chinese Song – from the "Book of Odes" (11th-7th c. BC)

Green is my outer garment,
Yellow is my undergarment:
Among spring's ornaments,
I'm sorry for the fall.

Green is my outer garment,
Yellow is my undergarment.

Who, sees me smile
Do you know my heartache?

13. Scarlet Rose - Li Bai (1140-1210)

I sat mourning by the window
Bending over, embroidering a silk pillow.
An unexpected prick,
Blood flowed on the white embroidered rose
And she became a red rose.

I thought of you, who are far away at war!
And I thought of how you shed your blood too
And hot tears fell from my eyes and I cried a long, long time.

Listen, I heard a horse's hoofbeat.
I jumped up! It is he!
Then I feel that it hurts,
That is why my heart was beating so hard.

And I again, I sat mourning embroidering
And embroidered tears into the silk pillow.
They shimmered like wonderful pearls
Around the red, red rose.

14. Moonlit Stairs - Li Bai

Made of jade, climbs the stairs,
Dew wetted in the full moon, it shimmers;
On all levels lies lovely splendor.

The empress in a sluggish robe strides up the steps,
And the dew sparkling wets the unstained silks.

She strides to the pavilion where the moonlight weaves,
Blinded she remains standing on the threshold.

Her hand gently pulls the beaded curtain down,
The lovely crystals trickling like a waterfall
Through which the sun shines.

The empress listens to the trickling.
And gazes long full of melancholy at the autumnal moon,
That shimmers through the pearls.

15. Drunk with Love - Li Bai

In the garden of the palace the wind caresses the lotus flower
with a soft breath. The king lies comfortably stretched out in
colorful silk cushions on the terrace. In front of him, Sichy
dances sparkling, like the stars, beautiful, like beauty itself.
Hover, and hover, and smile, smile, wonderful to look at!
Until a sweet-desiring fatigue sinks into their limbs, their hips
no longer sway, Their little feet rest.
And languidly she leans against the jade edge of the
gleaming, royal bed. The lovely Sichy, languishing, she leans
there.

*Translations By Sarah Moulton Faux and
Konstantin Soukhovetski*





SPECIAL THANKS

Dedicated to the bold and inspiring women who guided my path – my godmother Muffie Murray, my friend Kitty Kempner, and my beloved mother Deborah Moulton.

- *Sarah Moulton Faux*

In loving memory of my mother, (also) Yulia, whose creativity, zest for life, and artistry brought a touch of magic into the lives of those who knew her. This one is for you, mom.

- *Konstantin Soukhovetski*

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