



# Margaret of the North

*E. Journey*

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A sequel to Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* and its retelling in the BBC miniseries of the same title, *Margaret of the North* returns the focus on Margaret and how she—intelligent, independent-minded, passionate about her own concerns—curbs a niche and an identity for herself within the repressive constraints of Victorian society. Gaskell wrote Margaret Hale as a character blossoming into one who did not fit the mold of the typical Victorian woman. At 19, she is already evidently stronger and more level-headed than her mother. In the BBC series, Margaret exudes a natural self-assurance and a brooding intelligence that butts itself against John Thornton, the virile alpha male who is, nevertheless, vulnerable.

Gaskell's novel has been described as a romance set against a backdrop of occasionally violent strikes as the working class fought for their rights against tyrannical masters. *Margaret of the North* is a Victorian feminist bildungsroman (coming-of-age novel) couched in romance. The romance is not only in the love between John and Margaret but also in the adventure and excitement that Margaret goes through as she discovers herself and fully realizes her womanhood. It is a journey that happens quietly and mostly internally.

The novel has been written so it can be read as a standalone; i.e., without having read Gaskell's book or seen the BBC miniseries. Having said that, it will probably resonate more forcefully for those familiar with the series and/or the book.

## Margaret of the North Details

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Author : E. Journey

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## **From Reader Review Margaret of the North for online ebook**

### **Marcia says**

Terrible!!! I hate the time I lost reading this book. the author changed the personalities and behaviors of the characters. Margaret and John were unrecognized. They were well-resolved for all the moment were unsure about the feelings of others.

Positive point for the passage of the time. View prosperous mill and grown children was very cool.

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### **Indie Kindle Blitz says**

E. Journey's Margaret of the North is an engaging sequel to Elizabeth Gaskell's North and South. The story of Margaret and John's romance from North and South is one that really engages readers and leaves them wanting more. Journey has fulfilled that desire with her book. Readers who enjoyed North and South will find reading this sequel to be a distinct pleasure.

Journey brings a freshness and vitality to Gaskell's characters. Margaret is every bit as compelling a character as she was in Gaskell's work. The romance between Margaret and John is continued in this novel. Their intensely passionate relationship and abiding love are revealed in touching moments described in evocative prose. John's mother, Mrs. Thornton, is deliciously unlikeable. She really does not care for Margaret. She is a bit harsher in this book than in the original, but that serves Journey's story well. Journey clearly loves these characters. They are well-crafted and multi-dimensional in Journey's capable hands.

Journey includes a necessary retelling of events that happened in the original book, to remind readers who may have forgotten, and to orient those who have no experience with the original.

The themes of the novel — the effects on society of industrialization, and the interplay of a Victorian woman's independence with her romantic relationship to a man – are artfully woven around a storyline that furthers the story in North and South quite well. Journey's voice is reminiscent of Gaskell's, and I found the transition between reading Gaskell and reading Journey to be rather seamless. Journey's prose is well written, and her historical details well researched.

I'd recommend this to anyone who enjoyed North and South.

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### **Sue says**

I loved this novel for the most part. I've always loved these characters. I felt they evolved and changed and matured as all of us do. I loved the honeymoon in Paris, the sights, scenes, childhood memories. The reunion with Frederick and his wife was lovely. Mr Thornton relaxes a little. The struggles with Mrs. Thornton are accurate...things change when one's children get married.

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## **Christina (SteepedinBooks) says**

The writing in this story is quite lovely and heartfelt, but I spent most of my reading time waiting for something to happen, for some drama to unfold. There were a few things that added to the plot - family tensions, mostly - but not much in the way of external drama or conflict. Most of the book is just John and Margaret being happy. Over and over again. I'd rate the plot and lack of conflict a 2/5, but the writing style bumps it up a notch for me.

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## **Rich says**

First, a disclosure: I am related to the writer. But I did do my dissertation on married women's reactions to changing social possibilities, a strong theme in this book. So, I do have something to say although I did balk at reading this novel, at first. I don't get much into romances. But I did relent and was surprised to find this novel engaging.

This novel is more than just a romance. It also tries to further develop some of the complexity of Gaskell's original novel. Margaret is more independent and rebellious than we would expect of a Victorian woman, ignoring some of the social restrictions on women of that time, challenging authority when she sees injustice. including Thornton's initial disregard for the rights of his workers. It may even be argued that she uses her sexual power on him to lead him to change some of his views and the actions he takes toward his workers. You can see in her actions to improve the lot of workers that Margaret continues to leave the sealed off world of feminine domesticity to engage in the masculine public world through philanthropy. .

The tender, sensitive, loving side of Thornton is also shown throughout the novel not only in his encounters with Margaret. His caring for his workers develops further. This softening or blurring of roles for both Margaret and Thornton has led them into a new way of meeting each other, more as persons than rigid role players.

Thornton's world also increases and becomes more open, and the author shows this using the benefit of her art training: The lead characters visit Paris to witness the great upheavals of the reconstruction of the city, adding the element of historical artistic developments to upheavals caused by industrialization. In describing Paris and the lively Parisian cafes, she brings her understanding of the birth of modernism in art to demonstrate not only Thornton's admitting that "careless ease" has a purpose but also that rapid changes are clearly taking place in other cities.

Margaret of the North: a romance, yes. But a romance situated in changing times, in changing social and sexual roles, in social and artistic upheavals.

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## **Susan Frances says**

Author E. Journey strives to create a sequel to Elizabeth Gaskell's novel North and South in the vane of authors who have attempted to write a sequel to Margaret Mitchell's Gone with the Wind. Similarly to authors who have continued the relationship between Scarlet O'Hara and Rhett Butler after he walks out of Tara, Journey's book Margaret of the North provides subsequent chapters to Margaret Hale and John Thornton's story.

The narration focuses on the experiences of Victorian Age maiden Margaret Hale, who matures through the pages discovering her womanhood and independence as owner of a factory at Marlborough Mills, and the growing affection John Thornton develops for Margaret. The themes of the novel show the evolving stages of a budding romance and the effects industrialization had on society fostering the impetus to make labor laws that emerged during the Industrial Revolution. Journey's prose has a lyrical flow and her historical details are well researched portraying a voice reminiscent of Gaskell and other authors of the Victorian Age.

Though Journey writes a novel that pays homage to Gaskell's style and storytelling accoutrements, the book drags and the reader continually waits for something to happen. The read is very sedate as Margaret does not experience any real threats, dangers or conflicts enveloping the story in an autobiographical voice. She leads a safe life that few people might be able to identify with or relate to. There are no riveting dynamics in Margaret and John's relationship which would propel the story forward. The intimacy between the characters is superficial and doesn't reel the reader into the story. Oddly, the story's greatest asset is that it is a polished read, and its greatest liability is that it is too polished for fans of historical literature and romance. The action is static lacking urgency in the characters' movements and motivating readers to turn to the next page.

This is not a quick read. The pace is slow and there are excessive details as Journey notes every nuance of each day as though dissecting each part of Margaret's daily routines. In respect to Journey, she keeps Gaskell's voicing consistent and the characters' bonds consistent. There are no surprises in the read, not even incorporating characters who can contrast the paragons Margaret Hale and John Thornton.

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## Sevinar says

Note: THIS REVIEW IS FROM MY BLOG AND IS BASED ONLY ON THE VERY FIRST 7500 WORDS. IT IS HERE BY REQUEST TO HELP PEOPLE UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS NOVEL IS REALLY ABOUT AND THIS OBNOXIOUS CAPITAL LETTERING IS SO NO ONE OVERLOOKS THIS FACT.

Title: Margaret of the North

Author: EJourney

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Margaret-of-the...>

Characters:

5/5

Erm okay, before I review this, I'd just like to admit to the world that I have a subscription to Netflix and well, you know how Netflix stalks your preferences? Well apparently I have a preference category on my main page called Romantic British Period Pieces. Just getting that out there. That doesn't leave this blog. Uhm. Carrying on... In the first 7500 words of this novel, we're only introduced to a few choice characters but a bunch of others are mentioned. Most of this novel is going to take place in the heads of the characters, as is proper for this sort of writing. And a proper sort of writing it is! You're going to be fed the thoughts, the worries, the agonizings and the joys of the characters. This novel is written in third person, not first. So we get to understand a whole bunch of things that other characters are completely ignorant about. Mmm, dramatic irony. Makes me giggle inside. Our characters themselves are pretty classic. Erm. Perhaps literally. This is a sequel to North and South by Elizabeth Gaskell, which I have never read. So I am rating this book off of its own merits. When you read the novel, you understand immediately that these characters all have back stories that are more in-depth elsewhere, but you're not left confused and abandoned. You can read this

as a standalone. I should know. In the first 7500 words, we're introduced to our two main characters-- Margaret and John-- and we know they have a thang for each other because the characters' head voices, or rather, the author's exposition, tells us. And we get enough of the backstory to understand that these characters aren't hashed hormonal, ignorant 13 year olds on steroids. These are real characters we can respect and understand. This is a true guilty pleasure novel, something that is very rare in these times when we get novels with characters screwing in the first ten pages just because the dude thinks she's "hot" or the girl thinks he's "cute." I'd like to think humans have more substance when I READ, even if I know I am just kidding myself, and this novel does that for me. John and Margaret are real, mature people who have faced real sorrow or difficult situations and have had to fight through the murk. Are they totally hot for each other? Yes. But they understand that there are other aspects of life besides screwing. In fact, this isn't even about screwing. This is an old fashioned romance, where love is the objective and the characters will have to fight obstacles set against the goal.

Setting:

5/5

You know, I am from the United States. And I am always surprised at how prominent the trains are in England. No matter WHAT the time period is. Like seriously. Every single novel placed in England, it goes like this: "I got on the train to go to the one place where I caught the next train to the other place so I could board the other train to go to my final destination but before then, I think I'll stop to do the something and then I'm going to come back and catch the train when I'm ready." Trains! Don't mind me, I'm only super jelli. A super jelli bitter young lady over here. Anyway most of the first 7500 words does take place on TRAINS, but we don't really notice or care because the author is busy telling us more about the characters and telling us about how they end up meeting (or uh, re-meeting) in the novel. It's all very well-crafted.

Plot:

5/5

Okay. Just open a sample of this thing and you will taste the delicious writing voice that has been so scarce as of late. The author's voice hearkens back to the classics, as is proper for this novel-- a sequel of an older novel. Sucker for a period piece? Well this is written as all period pieces should be written. Jane Eyre comes to mind when I read the first 7500 words of Margaret of the North. The voice of the author, I mean. Haven't read Jane Eyre? Go read it. Or get run over by a... a TRAIN! Yeah. I said it. Anyway the voice of the novel is very polished and refined, and if it were socially acceptable I would probably try to lick the time period out of the novel. But seeing as how I am reading it on my laptop, I thought I'd spare myself the embarrassment of having to clean up my own slobber. At least if it's in paper, you can always say it was RAINING that day. Yes, I think of these things. What I am trying to impart here, is that Margaret of the North is written eloquently and you really feel that the thoughts and feelings of these characters are genuine. The tone of the novel is not forced, but comes naturally. It is evident that the author understands her characters and took a great deal of time getting to know them before committing their story to paper. The plot is obvious but expected in a period piece. Margaret is in love with some dude who is above her station, and he has google eyes for her too. But the dude's ma is all "Wut u on, boi? u doin' da crack? u caught da siknezz, foo!? Don' maek me break out da gun, boi. Gurl ain't no good." Of course she doesn't say this out loud in the first 7500 words and she wouldn't say it QUITE like that, but you know this plot. We all know this plot. We like this plot. And the novel has such a charm to it. The best part of this novel, no doubt, is how it was written. The introspection evident in the exposition is delicious and we know this is going to the places we want it to go.

Grammar/Spelling:

5/5

Nothing to say.

Punctuation:

5/5

I think there was like, one place where I wanted a comma. But it was in dialogue, so 1. doesn't count and 2. was trivial anyway.

Structure:

5/5

I guess I sort of covered this in the plot area up there. Sometimes I do that. Really though, the pacing and the structure of both the individual sentences and the paragraphs was phenomenal. The words are so fluid in your fingers, you hardly notice going to the next sentence.

Potential Beyond 7500 Words:

5/5

Yes. Let me clarify though. If you want to read a novel written as a classic, if you're a sucker for REAL period pieces, then go read this. If you want hot tub sex scenes and hot bathroom sex, please look elsewhere. If you want a deep, introspective, maybe even complex adventure of real life issues intercepting relationships, read this novel. If you want the one and only focus to be the characters slobbering over each other, look elsewhere. This novel is written in a tone that is rarely ever seen in our own time. It is a treat. Say what you will about how cliché the characters are, this is a period piece and as such, we don't give a shit. We want THESE characters doing their THANG, in THIS time period. And that's what we get. You're not going to go on some profound Journey of New Thoughts, Ideas and Philosophies. You're going to revisit a writing style that has almost been torn from the current writings of our world.

Other Author Contacts:

Blog: <http://margaretofnorth.wordpress.c...>

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## **Diana Donnelly says**

This was a Goodreads win. Believe this was a sequel and if that is so my rating perhaps isn't fair. I thought the book was very well written but for me it tended to drag. It's an historical romance which takes place in England.

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## **Kristin says**

When I first received this Goodreads Giveaway, I was concerned at reading the back cover: "Your guilty pleasure. An enduring romance." I thought maybe I had stumbled upon erotica or something. The dedication perpetuated that concern: "...we find it not only in longing, aching gestures and smoldering eyes;..." Thankfully, the book is not that way at all, but it is way over the top when it comes to gushy prose and description. I am not the right audience for this book. I love Jane Austen and her ability to tell a story with wit and charm. This book addresses the same time period, but is too full of smoldering looks, nestling into shoulders, gazing across the room, dewey eyes, etc., etc. There is also too much describing people's thoughts rather than having their actions or dialogue tell the story. It also jumps around a lot, especially in the beginning, which I found confusing. I read the first few chapters and then skipped to the end, finding the narrative to be much the same at the end as at the beginning. I wanted to like the book because of the kind note sent by the author along with the giveaway, but I found reading it to be more of a chore than an

enjoyment.

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## **Tina says**

### **Closure**

Selected this version of a possible ending to the book *North and South*. It followed the excellent BBC mini series with Richard Armitage and was a satisfying happily ever after ending to the story for those that want to imagine more.

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## **David Gregory Lloyd says**

The romantic classics follow a rather simple recipe. Man and woman meet. There is immediately an underlying attraction, but before they can act upon it, events lead them astray and they grow to despise each other, even more so because of the sexual tension which haunts them. But, in the end, it is true love which conquers all and our hero and heroine join together in a passionate embrace, ensuring us that they will live happily ever after.

There is something smugly satisfying in reading such a happy ending. It doesn't really matter if we really believe that they will live together happily ever after. For a moment, we collectively share a leap of faith, believing that all is possible, if only we find the right person.

Such endings have satisfied people for a long time - centuries, in fact. But lately, readers seem to want more. They want to know what happens next. Do Darcy and Elizabeth marry? Do their passion and newly found intimacy stand the test of time?

And this is where the sequels fit in. Not sequels written by the original authors. They have long since left this world. But sequels written by new authors.

In most cases, the new authors try to maintain the colour and texture of the original work. Where they decide to take us, regarding the progression of the plot, is another matter. Much of this depends on their own view of the world. Do they believe that love will continue to conquer all, despite the mundane trials and tribulations of daily life? Or do they believe that passion and intimacy will slowly fade away.

In "Margaret of the North", a sequel to Elizabeth Gaskell's "North and South", E. Journey chooses the first course. Throughout the sequel, the passion and intimacy between Margaret and John not only show no signs of fading, but appear to grow in intensity. But, whereas this may pay homage to our romantic desires, it does not make for the best reading. Much of the strength of the original story was in the conflict between Margaret and John which leads to their realization of their love for each other in the end. Our expectancy, as to where this conflict may lead us, makes for compelling reading. But in the sequel, things are a little too perfect, and although the repetitive text informing us of their love for each other may be reassuring, it leaves no room for expectation, and makes for very slow reading at times.

Another source for conflict in the original story was the goings on at the mill. Would the mill keep on running, would the workers strike, would the owners of the mill understand the needs of the workers better.



These concerns were not only an integral part of the evolving plot, but also had a significant effect upon the relationship between Margaret and John. However, this compelling conflict is lost in the sequel. Margaret has received a sizable inheritance and John no longer needs to worry about how to finance the reopening of the mill. Margaret also has the means now by which to finance her progressive ideas about improving workers' conditions, something which John fully supports. The only real remaining source of conflict is Margaret's relationship with John's mother. John's mother cannot find it in her heart to accept or like Margaret. However, except for the sadness that this causes in Margaret's heart, it has no significant effect on John and Margaret's relationship, nor on other things which take place.

While the sequel is fairly well written, I found that the method of telling the story through the eyes, and more specifically - through the minds of the characters, left me somewhat detached. Reflections ran on for a little too long and I found too much of the text repetitive. And without elements of conflict, the characters seemed too one dimensional, at times. I also found that too much effort was invested in retelling many of the events that took part in the first book, as if only in this way could we truly understand what was transpiring. I would have preferred that the understanding of events in the original to be more subtly presented.

As you may have guessed - although I consider myself a romantic by nature - I am also a pessimist as to how long romance can last. If you do not share such pessimism, you may see many of the things I have written about quite differently in your own reading of the book.

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### **Deba says**

This seems to be a continuation of "North and South" by Elizabeth Gaskell. E Journey does bring a harvested extension and vitality to the characters. I found the transition between reading Gaskell and reading E Journey to be a rather interesting follow-up. Margaret is a compelling a character as she was in Gaskell's book "North and South". Tis a compelling story of love, honor, fear, pain and the strength of the characters we read about in that book are carried into this book. This book kept me enticed by the characters so deftly portrayed by this writer. I enjoyed this poignant story, although it is rife with spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. I think E Journey has a way with words and expressing simple thoughts and ideas, I just wish that they would proof read there work. It could make the most mundane circumstances sound charming and poetic. This story has all of the things that I love so much about a good historical novel. It has romance - about a young Victorian woman, who has an intense love affair with her husband. Nice. It incorporates modernity and industrialization and struggles with the age-old complexities of human relationships in a harsh bustling Northern city. I enjoyed the book as a whole. Margaret is every bit as compelling a character, and I am glad I got to read about her. I was given this book for my honest review, and honestly I thought that it was a great read. Thank you for sharing your work E Journey.

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### **Kat says**

Second time I read this book.

Of course, I am a big fan of both the novel and the mini-series - so much, that the novel set the inspiration for my master's thesis.

First and foremost, I originally and now started reading this book to get more of Margaret and John. When it

comes to their love, their passion, and the way they simply belong together, this book is beyond perfect. On more than one occasion, I read with a big smile on my face, and a sigh every other minute. The author created a truly swoon-worthy Mr. Thornton.

I admired the author for her well-conducted research on the topic. Since I am currently up-to-date with everything industrial North in the 1840s and 1850s, I could really appreciate the detail the author put into her story. I might even admit that once or twice I felt inspired by her writings.

On the other hand, there was the fact that the story continues the absolutely wonderful BBC mini-series, which, however, has differences to the novel. Coming from the novel's perspective, I felt Margaret too forceful and involved in the modernization of the mill and improvement of the conditions for the workers. Gaskell's Thornton only suggests changes, discusses them with the workers for their necessity, and either gets them started via trial period, or not. An essential point of "North and South" is that Thornton appreciates the workers' independence and doesn't force his experiments on them. - This, of course, cannot exactly be concluded from the mini-series.

There are other points throughout this story that stand in (confusing) contradiction to Gaskell's novel, so that the reader must constantly remind themselves of events in the mini-series - though, actually, I wasn't always sure whether events really were only taken from the mini-series, or if left-out scenes were from the novel.

Possibly the only point I had a really hard time accepting - and as a non-native speaker of English at that - was the language used. While I enjoyed the writing style in general, I couldn't help feeling that there were too many modern words involved, and too little words and phrases that made it feel like a continued 1855. The frequent use of "anyway" was my breaking point.

I think that the author did a wonderful job at capturing the characters. Especially sequences narrated through Hannah Thornton's eyes left me really impressed, in particular her unrelenting dislike of Margaret, which is absolutely honest and truthful, but something I could never have kept up.

Furthermore, I enjoyed the enlarged world created, involving Frederick and Spain and (even though it was very long and detailed) Paris. I liked the progress of the story over several years, trying to give events their proper appreciation by not lining them without breaks. However, and I feel bad to find something I don't like in everything I did like, sometimes it felt like the focus on one event was too strict, and the life surrounding this event was missing.

Finally, I think that the novel ended too early. Not only because I enjoyed it so much that I wouldn't have minded another hundred pages, but also because the last several pages were, in fact, rushed. There were new characters, new romances, more travelling, but they lacked detail which I expected since they were mentioned. Too much happened in too little time, especially compared to the details earlier in the book. I would have loved to read more about Catherine, admittedly perhaps a little less doctor Harley would have done, and especially seeing the process of Margaret realizing her second pregnancy would have been interesting. It came too suddenly.

On the one hand, I was surprised at the final scene. On the other hand, it was perfect!

Idea and Realization: 4 Stars

Writing Style: 3 Stars

General Rating: 3 Stars

Personal Rating: 4 Stars

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## **Rhee says**

### **Not sure**

I enjoyed this book. It took me longer to read than books normally 2x as long. I'm not sure if it was because of the discourse (no spoilers), the writing style, or what. It seemed perhaps longer than it should have been. I think tho that Margaret was perhaps more true in some weird way to the original North and South, same with Hannah Thornton, not sure about John, alas.

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## **Xenia says**

This is the fourth sequel to Elizabeth Gaskell's North & South that I read. I enjoyed it very much which surprised me. My most favorite thing about the book is the love between John Thornton and Margaret Hale which is constant. It never faltered, not even once. That aspect, I think, is very important to the story and honors Elizabeth Gaskell. Anything less would have ruined the book for me and I probably would not have finished it. Unlike many romance novels of today the hero and heroine get into huge misunderstandings throughout the book and run away from one another. Even denying their love for each other at times. It was nice to see that is not the case in this book.

The character of Mrs Thornton,(John's mother) is, I think, written closer to the Hannah Thornton of the book that Elizabeth Gaskell wrote. In the BBC miniseries Mrs Thornton while strict and stiff does seem just a tad softer than the Hannah Thornton in the book. I do wish though that in Margaret of The North that Hannah Thornton did not remain so mean spirited for so long still after John married Margaret. She was just awful and I could not like her at all. I also was a bit appalled at her initial reaction to John and Margaret's first child. No matter who the mother is Elise was her grandchild and the first one at that.

I loved the passion between John and Margaret and it was great that the author included that aspect of their relationship. It was also very tastefully done. All of the scenes of quiet moments that John and Margaret spent together, in their bedroom, in the conservatory, in Paris and in Cadiz were so lovely. I always pictured John Thornton as an extremely passionate man who knows how to show his love to Margaret.

This book is very well written, but there are a few words in it that I had to look up. It is great learning new words but when it comes to reading books for pleasure I usually warn authors against using words that most people do not know or use in every day life. Just keep it simple.

All in all this is a very good book and I am glad that I read it.

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