

Media Kit:

Because She Was Called
from Broken to Bold, Book 2

A Novel of the Early Church

Elaine Ricker Kelly

Affirming Christian Historical fiction released April 16, 2024

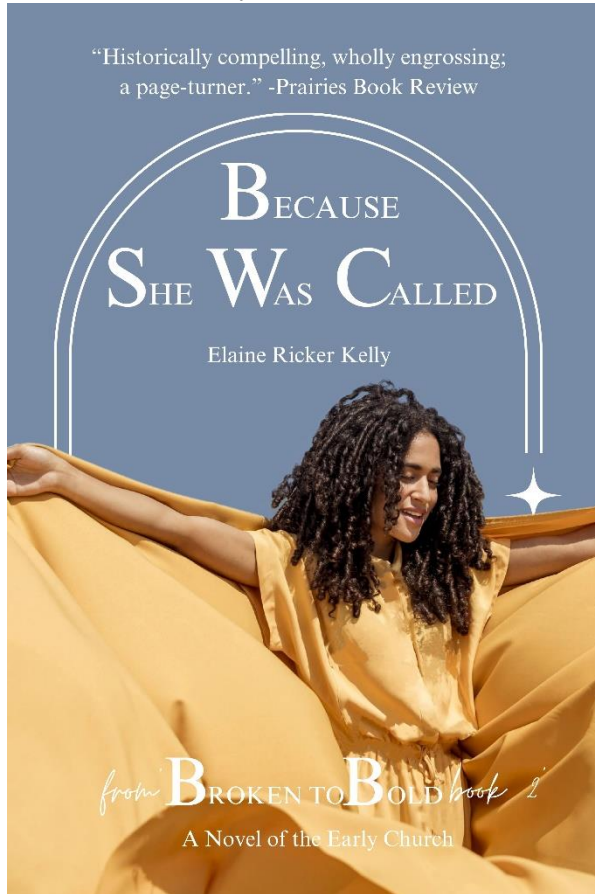
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Info Sheet for Retailers:

Because She Was Called: from Broken to Bold, Book 2,
A Novel of the Early Church

by Elaine Ricker Kelly



After legalists kill Stephen, followers of The Way scatter. Susannah takes off to Caesarea and lands in the arms of a deacon. But will he limit her freedoms? Will romance pull her away from obeying God's call? Torn by grief and anger, where will Joanna turn for shelter? Will she testify before powerful men? Will loyalty to Jesus cost her the loss of her son?

This is a Christian egalitarian and LGBTQ+ affirming fiction. If you are a spiritual wanderer or ex-vangelical, take a sip of fresh, living water with this story of how the early church overcame divisions and changed the world.

While this novel continues character development from *Forgotten Followers From Broken to Bold, Book 1*, each can be read as a stand-alone book.

“Historically compelling, wholly engrossing; a page-turner.... A remarkable tale affirming Christian egalitarianism that will captivate, provoke, and inspire readers on an unforgettable journey through the origins of Christianity.” -Prairies Book Review

FICTION

Ancient Historical Romance, Religious Fiction
Christian Women's Issues, Gender & Sexuality
223 pages, B/W, 6x9 inches

Order from Amazon after April 16, 2024
<https://www.amazon.com/Because-She-Was-Called-Broken-ebook/dp/B0CWXXSWMP>

Retailer Discounts directly from author

Paperback

ISBN 978-1-7388233-2-1
Retail List Price US\$14.99 (approx. C\$20)

eBook

ISBN 978-1-7388233-3-8
Retail List Price US\$5.99 (approx. C\$8)

Elaine Ricker Kelly is passionate about writing to empower women at home, church, and society. Called in the past to be an investment and insurance advisor, she is now called to write about how the Bible advocates for equality for all people.

Elaine R Kelly lives in Grimsby, Ontario, and worships in the mainline Protestant Christian tradition. She and her husband have three adult daughters. She and her husband enjoy hiking with their dog, tennis, pickleball, music, history, and culture.

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Consignment available through the author

Press Release

New Novel of the Early Church Endorses Equality for All

Writer reaches out to Marginalized in new Historical Fiction

HAMILTON, Ontario - April 9, 2024 - It may seem contradictory that a Christian novel portrays the early church adopting women, men, eunuchs, and LGBTQ+ as equals in the family of faith. Some Christian fiction readers may turn away from themes that do not fit with traditional church views. If you are a spiritual wanderer, ex-vangelical, or feeling sidelined by religion, find fresh hope in this new release by Elaine Ricker Kelly.

"Historically compelling, wholly engrossing; a page-turner....A remarkable tale affirming Christian egalitarianism that will captivate, provoke, and inspire readers on an unforgettable journey through the origins of Christianity." – Prairies Book Review

"My plan was to re-tell the Gospel stories from a female viewpoint in *Forgotten Followers From Broken to Bold Book 1* and show how these women became apostles in *Because She Was Called: From Broken to Bold Book 2*. As I researched equality for women, I soon realized equality for some and not others is not equality at all," said Kelly, a retired financial advisor.

While *Because She Was Called* is Book 2 of her series, it can be read as a stand-alone. Set in early Acts, it demonstrates the early church breaking barriers based on ethnicity, gender, or orientation. Susannah is pulled between romance and her call to preach. Joanna is torn by grief and fighting to keep both her son and her faith. Kelly represents LGBTQ+ in fiction to honour the diversity God has created.

This novel took time to write, as Kelly explored scholarship on apparently misogynistic or homophobic Bible passages. Kelly put some of her research onto 104 flashcards showing diverse views and calls it *The Sword: A Fun Way to Engage in Healthy Debate on What the Bible Says About a Woman's Role* (on Amazon).

Because She Was Called: From Broken to Bold, Book 2, A Novel of the Early Church, will be released on Amazon on April 16, 2024. The ebook is US\$5.99; the paperback is US\$14.99.

Elaine R. Kelly and her husband live near Hamilton, Ontario, and have three adult daughters. She and her husband worship at an affirming church and enjoy hiking with their small dog, appreciating the Niagara escarpment, playing tennis, pickleball, and music.

Website: www.elainekelly.ca

Editorial Review: Prairies Book Review

Historically compelling, wholly engrossing; a page-turner.

Set in AD 35-37, Kelly's latest novel is a fascinating blend of historical accuracy, raw emotion, and spiritual enlightenment. After Stephen's murder, Susannah finds refuge in Caesarea and struggles with matters of love versus her obedience to God. Meanwhile, Joanna must test her faith amidst grief and potential loss as she petitions the emperor for protection.

As the narrative unfolds, readers are drawn into a world where faith, courage, and resilience intersect, shaping the destinies of the characters and influencing the course of early Christian history. Through a blend of historical accuracy and creative storytelling, Kelly brings to life the experiences of her characters, including Susannah, Joanna, Mara of Clopas, Clopas, Maria among others, shedding light on their struggles, triumphs, and unwavering faith. Themes of empowerment, redemption, and the transformative nature of belief infuse the narrative, providing modern readers with a poignant reflection on faith and identity.

A remarkable tale affirming Christian egalitarianism that will captivate, provoke, and inspire readers on an unforgettable journey through the origins of Christianity.

<https://theprairiesbookreview.com/?p=18683>

Excerpts from Because She Was Called

200-word Excerpt

"We cannot let this trouble get worse. If we send a brother or sister away without doing anything, they will think our words are meaningless," said James. "If we don't put our faith into action, they won't believe our words."

"But I need time to pray and meditate! We all do! Jesus always took time to pray before preaching to the crowds," said Jamie.

"Yes, we need time to pray as Jesus did. And time to spread God's word. Maybe that's why we didn't even notice the problem," said Andrew.

"We cannot neglect the teaching ministry to wait on tables," said Matthew.

"The community is growing so fast. Maybe we can no longer do it all ourselves," said Nathanael.

"Our community's growth is not a problem; it's a blessing!" said Maria.

"Maybe we can institute an arrangement where some of the new members focus on the serving ministry, while those who knew Jesus focus on preaching and baptizing," said Salome.

"We want the food distributed fairly. I propose organizing a system to ensure that happens," said Barnabas.

"Great idea, Barnabas!" said Thomas.

Salome looked at Maria, who smiled with understanding as Thomas continued.

227-word excerpt

“Rome trains men to dominate. When they patrol the borders, they feel entitled to a reward after a battle. Rome permits men to take their pleasures from defeated peoples.” Persis sounded bitter.

“Even here in the city, far from border conquests, Rome encourages soldiers to satisfy their need for dominance by taking either a young boy or a woman,” said Aquila.

“When I was still a young slave, they told me that men had the right to satisfy lust with a boy as long as the men were the proactive ones.” Narcissus had been a freedman for some time, but it seemed to be a fresh memory.

“When I was a soldier, they told me women and boys existed for our benefit. They mocked me if I did not practice dominance and make others submit to whatever I wanted,” said Griffin, Longinus’s companion. “Roman temples offer male and female prostitutes,” said Nereus.

“Not only prostitutes. With enough coins, Romans can take a permanent slave,” said Philologus. “Noblemen—even married men—keep a boy or girl on hand for their intimate needs.”

“Even the emperor does,” whispered Griffin. “When Tiberius was on the island of Capri, he commanded young boys to dance naked before him.”

“You are free now from that kind of immorality.” Longinus placed his hand on his companion’s knee. “We are faithful to one another.”

215-word Excerpt

Susannah took a deep breath. “...Don’t you see all the Roman homes with a woman head of the house?”

“Perhaps it is you who have been spending too much time with the Romans. We don’t imitate pagans. Rome permits women to be free of guardianship and manage a household as a temporary measure because so many men have been killed in battle. Widows are simply covering the gap until their sons are of age.”

“What if they have no sons? What then?” Susannah’s face went bright pink. She swiped at the tears on her cheek “Is having sons all you think about?”

“Of course not! You are getting overexcited. What does it matter to you whether or not women manage their homes. Men are obviously in charge of the world. I can see you are sensitive about this.”

“I am not!”

“Look, you’re caught up in some kind of female hysteria. When you cool off, you’ll see you’re taking offense for no reason. I will report to the apostles that you have been teaching men and women—Palestinians, no less. They will say which of us is right.” Philip appeared calm and confident.

Susannah let out a groan. “I’m going out for a walk. I hope you’re gone when I get back.” The door slammed.

Author Photo and Bio:

50-word Bio:

Elaine Ricker Kelly is an award-winning author bringing healing and hope to the marginalized. She empowers women by writing about women in the Bible and history. She has a research-based approach and empathetic tone from her 30 years as a financial advisor. She and her husband have three grown daughters and live near Hamilton, Ontario, and enjoy hiking.

www.elainekelly.ca



135-word Bio:

Elaine Ricker Kelly HBA MBA uses her experiences as a financial advisor and business owner to empower women at home, church and society and to show how the Bible advocates for equality for all. She was an investment and insurance advisor for twenty-plus years and has three grown daughters. *Forgotten Followers from Broken to Bold* is the Silver EVVY award-winning spiritual fiction offering healing from trauma and hope for those who feel forgotten, sidelined, or silenced. *Because She Was Called* shows one woman healing through grief and another pulled between romance and following God's call. *The Sword* provides 104 flashcards showing the rationale for diverse views on gender roles. Elaine R. Kelly and her husband live near Hamilton, Ontario, and have hiked the 900 km Bruce Trail and enjoy nature, tennis, pickleball, music, history and culture.

240-word Bio:

Elaine Ricker Kelly HBA MBA writes to bring healing and hope to those sidelined or silenced by the church. In various seasons of her life, she has been called as a businesswoman, a volunteer, a friend, a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, and a grandmother. As a Christian, when Kelly saw the church was speaking against equality, Elaine felt it was important to show how the Bible empowers women and endorses equality for all. As a financial advisor, Elaine knew that Jesus engaged women as financial advisors. As a mother of three daughters, Elaine wanted Christians to know that Jesus equipped women as disciples and empowered women to speak and lead.

Forgotten Followers from Broken to Bold features Mara, the wife of Clopas, recovering from abuse and Joanna, a financial patron of Jesus, grappling with racism. *Because She Was Called: from Broken to Bold, Book 2*, features Joanna, torn by grief, and Susannah, pulled between romance and following her call to preach. *The Sword: a fun way to engage in healthy debate on what the Bible says about a woman's role* is a nonfiction with 104 flashcards for hands-on discussion starters. Elaine R Kelly Author also writes blogs on biblical equality, church history, and women leaders. She and her husband live near Hamilton, Ontario, Canada and worship in the mainline Protestant Christian tradition. They enjoy hiking with their small dog, nature, tennis, pickleball, music, history, and culture.

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Author of:

- Forgotten Followers from Broken to Bold, a Silver EVVY award-winning historical fiction
- Because She Was Called: from Broken to Bold, Book 2, a Novel of the Early Church empowering women as leaders
- The Sword: a Fun Way to Engage in Healthy Debate on What the Bible says about a Woman's Role
- Walk with Mara on Her Healing Journey: 21 Steps to Emotional Resilience

Located near Hamilton, Ontario.

Available for Remote or face-to-face interviews

Categories:

- Biblical equality
- Gender equality
- Women in the first century
- Christian theology about women's roles

Topics I can discuss:

- Women in the Bible
- Jesus educating, equipping, empowering women
- Jesus extending the family of God to all people
- First-century culture and religion
- Genesis creation story and its impact on women
- Complementarian and Egalitarian perspectives
- Anxiety, worry, self-confidence, healing from trauma
- Research and the writing craft
- Art and theology; fiction and the power of story

Benefits to your Podcast/YouTube Channel

- An informal, conversational tone, with complex concepts in everyday language.
- Content pertinent to those interested in Christianity or deconstructing their faith
- Promoting your finished interview with my website, email list, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook

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Find out more on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/@ERK4Canada

The Local Churchology Podcast: A Conversation with Elaine Kelly

<https://youtu.be/GbqN9BDx6Nw>

Regency History: Elaine Kelly – Author Interview

<https://youtu.be/8YuF2Ehq7cc>

Reluctant Christian Feminist:

Jesus and Women Disciples

<https://youtu.be/Wzz6aSk6T44>

Behind The Story with Elaine Kelly

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gS19QuzEO_Q

Tru316 with Elaine Kelly

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKDMCocGoU>

Feminists of Faith Chat with Elaine

https://youtu.be/aaq-s1ShfYFE?si=mwSUF_kR2wYuiVse

Beacon of Light Podcast with Elaine

<https://www.youtube.com/live/wVDDZ6c8bko?si=gEOJwRetL7AJD6kL>

Media Coverage

The Hamilton Spectator November 26, 2022: [A Christian-based novel addresses inequality and gender roles](#)

News Now January 5, 2023: Author launches [historical fiction empowering women](#)

Suggested Interview Questions

1. Where did you get the idea to write a historical fiction around women in the first century?
2. What motivated you to write this novel?
3. Why put these ideas in a historical fiction?
4. What are the main themes that you explore in your fiction?
5. Why did you choose to include LGBTQ+ characters in the novel?
6. When researching, what stood out about how women were viewed in the first century?
7. Who would enjoy reading this novel?
8. What advice would you give to those who are uncomfortable with changing their views?
9. What are your hopes for this book?
10. What other writing are you doing?

Q & A with the Author

1. Where did you get the idea to write historical fiction about women in the first century?

I have always been interested in exploring the women in the Bible and as I approached retirement from my financial career, I read, studied, and listened to research on them. I found models of strong women of faith, but many of them had either been forgotten or intentionally hidden or slandered. With our own three daughters, I made an effort to empower them, build their self-esteem, encourage them to explore ideas, make their own choices, find their gifts and develop their voices. I have noticed through the years how our culture, workplaces, and churches devalue girls and women. It is important to see yourself represented in biblical stories and fiction allows readers to get to know these women who were eyewitnesses, patrons, disciples and apostles. The first fiction shines the light on women in the Gospels, and the second follows their stories as the early church expands in Acts.

2. What motivated you to write this novel?

When I was a student in Western University's business program, women were a minority but there was a cultural and societal trend towards equal rights and representation. The United Nations had declared a [Decade for Women](#) from 1975 to 1985, and it looked like changes would address women's rights, pay equity, and gender violence. Women used their gifts in churches and were becoming ordained as ministers. My own mother frequently was a leader and speaker at events for Christian men and. In the 80s and early 90s, Canada, the UK, and India had their first woman prime minister. As I prepared to retire, I discovered while I had been focussed on the financial industry, women's rights had actually moved backwards. As a Christian, I felt betrayed to find that many of the new restrictions on women originated in the Christian church. I felt an urgent call to write about how the Bible endorses equality, how Jesus equipped women as disciples, engaged them as his financial advisors and empowered women to go out and speak. I have compassion to align with those who are excluded and sidelined by the church, to speak for those who are silenced. I want to show them God still loves them and seeks them.

3. Why put these ideas in historical fiction?

In my financial career, we learned that facts tell, and stories sell. People could think about products, concepts, and strategies, but did not usually act until they felt the idea would provide security or peace of mind or some other benefit. A story that engages the emotions can change not only our thinking but our behaviours. We saw this with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a fiction that dramatically showed the problems of slavery. While theologians and politicians made intellectual arguments, Harriet Beecher Stowe used storytelling to motivate the public toward abolition.

Theologians, scholars, and academics have already written how Jesus lifted up women and explained how the Bible can be interpreted to promote equality. While this scholarship engages the intellect, fiction can make it accessible and relatable. I wanted to put complex ideas into plain language and write a story to engage the emotions and change people's minds about gender equality.

4. What are the main themes that you explore in your fiction?

I explore how the Bible empowers all people to follow their call and use their gifts, regardless of gender. Mary's song of praise prophesies that Jesus will lift up the lowly and pull down the powerful. The church today has done just the reverse, revering the powerful and silencing the lowly.

Forgotten Followers is set in the Gospels and explores universal themes of inequality, abuse, and racism. The female characters are healing from the trauma of authoritarian leaders and submitting silently to mistreatment.

Because She Was Called is set in the early chapters of Acts and shows the women as they obey their call to preach and lead as equals in the home, church, and society. Themes include breaking walls of division, choosing between romance and a call to lead, mutuality in marriage, women in ministry, overcoming grief, publicly testifying about Christ's resurrection, and being forced to choose between your faith and your child.

Susannah, a seamstress, buys flax from Palestinians and when God prompts her to pay them a fair price, they ask about Jesus and Susannah baptizes them into the family of faith. Susannah is pulled between romance and obeying her call to preach. Joanna's grandfather takes guardianship of her son and tells her to choose between her son or her faith. In Rome, I show Persis as a widow and freedwoman leading the Greek-speaking congregation while Prisca and Aquila lead the Jewish-speaking congregation. The laws of Moses said Jews were to stay separate from Gentiles and not eat together, so early followers of The Way could not share the Lord's Supper together. The early church struggled with how to live as one body after Jesus broke the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile, and today we still struggle with separating people and privileges by gender, race, or orientation. I show that in Christ, there is no more difference in privileges for Jew, Greek, Roman or Palestinian, citizen or slave, man, woman or eunuch, straight or gay.

5. Why did you choose to include LGBTQ+ characters in the novel?

As I researched equality for women, I soon realized equality for some and not for others is not equality at all. My plan was to write about how the women who were disciples in Book 1 became apostles in Book 2. The stories in early Acts lead quite naturally to breaking down barriers between people based on ethnicity, gender, or orientation. Historically, a eunuch was treated as gender-ambiguous, neither male nor female, yet the Holy Spirit directed Philip to baptize a eunuch to be adopted into the family of faith. When Peter preaches to an uncircumcised Roman centurion, Cornelius, the Holy Spirit descended on his relatives and friends. After God told Peter not to call unclean that which God has made clean, I portray Longinus, a centurion who asked Jesus to heal his dear companion, and Griffin, baptized as members of the congregation. I wanted to represent the full diversity of society in the first century and today. Representing characters in fiction is a public way to honour God and the diversity God has created.

6. When researching, what stood out about how women were viewed in the first century?

I came into the research thinking women were second-class in the first century. I learned that they actually had some rights: the right to own property or business in the absence of a male relative, so I show Mary Magdalene inheriting a business. The Gospels portray her as a patron of Jesus and a woman of wealth. Other traditions show she had the status to appear before Emperor Tiberius to testify about Jesus. It took two women's testimonies to equal one man's, so I portray Joanna, another wealthy patron of Jesus, joining Mary Magdalene before the emperor and convincing him that Jesus rose. Class differences at that time and today impact a woman's level of education, freedom and protection. Women of the time could be free of a male guardian if they had three or more children, and so I show Jesus's mother free of guardianship, leading the congregation in prayer and Holy Communion. Women who were commoners had the right separate and so I show Zebedee remaining in his fishing boat as his wife, Salome, follows Jesus from Galilee to Golgotha. In the first century, it opposed modesty customs for a man to touch a woman, and since we know Peter's wife travelled with him, I show her baptizing the women while Peter baptizes only men. Women and men were expected to marry and have children, but in the early church, many of them were vowing celibacy to focus on God, so I show Philip's sister, Mariamne, making a vow of virginity.

7. Who would enjoy reading this novel?

Both novels are written for readers who have questions or doubts about God, Christianity, or the church. The novels brings God's healing love to those who have been sidelined or silenced by the church. Anyone who is deconstructing their beliefs, has left the church or considers themselves an ex-vangelical would enjoy the way the novel demonstrates God's love for all people. While it is a fiction, it would also be enjoyed by non-fiction readers of books on religion and gender, women's issues, egalitarianism, and feminist theology.

My retelling of the Gospels in *Forgotten Followers* will empower those who have not really noticed the women of the Gospels before, bringing healing and hope through these female models of faith. In *Because She Was Called*, Joanna is torn by grief, feels called to testify boldly, and then risks losing her son. Susannah struggles with the pull between romance and her call to preach, highlighting the theme of mutuality in marriage. LGBTQ+ people will be affirmed and empowered reading about the LGBTQ+ characters who become full members of God's family.

8. What advice would you give to people who are uncomfortable with changing their views?

We need to have a respectful, open conversation with those of different views so that we can work together for the good of everyone. My fiction shines the light on women in the Bible who have been hidden or slandered, and my hope is that these women can be held up as models for today's churches. *Forgotten Followers* shows women in the Gospels who were eyewitnesses, disciples, patrons, and apostles. *Because She Was Called* is based on the events recorded in Acts 2-11 and shows the culture and context of the time. There is now a lot of excellent material available in books and podcasts to explore Christian egalitarianism and affirming views of the Bible. Taste and see that the Lord is good and provides refuge for those who seek God.

9. What are your hopes for this book?

I hope to reach as many people as possible with a healing message that Jesus opposes inequality in his teaching and example. I dream of a time when Christians will lead instead of lagging in the movement toward equality regardless of gender, race, orientation, ability, or any other characteristic.

10. What other writing are you doing?

I have already mapped out a plot for Book 3 of *From Broken to Bold*, taking place in the timeline of Acts. I am also in the process of writing a 40-session devotional based on the harmony of the Gospels called *What to Do When You Feel Forgotten*. In February 2023, I published *The Sword*, a book of 104 flashcards with various understandings of biblical passages supporting healthy debate on what the Bible says about a woman's role.

Sample Article

Affirming and Christian?

If you are feeling sidelined by religion, you may be empowered by a new release that *Prairies Book Review* calls “Historically compelling, wholly engrossing; a page-turner.”



After legalists kill Stephen, Susannah takes off to Caesarea and lands in the arms of a deacon. But will romance pull her away from obeying God's call? Torn by grief and anger, will Joanna lose her faith or her son?

“My plan was to re-tell the Gospel stories from a female viewpoint in *Forgotten Followers From Broken to Bold, Book 1* and show women in the timeline of Acts in *Because She Was Called: From Broken to Bold Book 2*. As I researched equality for women, I realized equality for some and not others is not equality at all.” Elaine Kelly, a retired financial advisor, did not readily find other affirming Christian fiction, so she designed a fish rainbow for her back cover. Her novel includes LGBTQ+ characters and demonstrates how the early church broke barriers between people. While *Because She Was Called* is Book 2 of her fiction series, it can be read as a stand-alone.

Kelly has also written a non-fiction: *The Sword: A Fun Way to Engage in Healthy Debate on What the Bible Says About a Woman's Role*, available on Amazon with the ebook US\$4.99 (C\$7) and the paperback US\$8.99 (C\$12).

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