

Foreword

By Marta Tibaldi, Ph.D.
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1. Four clinical stories and more than 100 images describe the transformative journey of four women within their experience of Jungian analysis. Ada, Jane, Jo-Jo, and Wendy are Chinese women suffering, not only because of family history and traumatic experiences, but also by belonging to a culture that, as is the case in other parts of the world, tends to devalue the female gender, assigning it a lower value than men: "These four heroines exemplify the struggle of Asian women to be individuated as a human being. Their journey path manifested different important aspects of human individuation."

In the first volume of this rich, theoretical-clinical account, analytical psychologist, Adelina Wong Wei-kwan, who is certified by the International Association of Analytical Psychology (IAAP), gives a detailed description of these four Jungian analytical processes. Through materials produced inside and outside the analytical setting, readers can follow, step-by-step, the life stories of these women in a process of transformation facilitated by the careful imaginal and relational work put

in place by the analyst. In the second volume, the extensive collection of drawings and sandpictures made by the clients in the course of their analysis, shows (in parallel with the verbal text written in the first volume) the building and interweaving of the alliance between the analyst and the clients, and of the clients themselves with the dissociated parts of their psyche, together with the unfolding of the creative and self-curative forces active at the unconscious level. The goal is the construction of a more integrated, more individuated and thus, happier personality: "Their stories show how their creative art and sandpictures helped to contain and to express their deepest desire to live authentically in the midst of their trauma. The imageries that they created indeed are clear evidences of transformative process." It is worth mentioning, in this regard, the importance that the concept of individuation plays in the theoreticalclinical framework of Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology, and that in the book serves as a common thread: individuation is that psychic process which characterizes the development of each individual and, through differentiation from the collective psyche, tends to the full development of each person's truest nature. The stories and images collected in the two volumes bear direct witness to how this process can be facilitated and made conscious by the analytical work. The author's focus on the processing of traumatic experiences is also worth noting, following the lead of Donald Kahlsched, who states that trauma survivors live in two realities at the same time: that of the outside world to which they, in a dissociated manner, adapt and the inner, secret reality of their true nature. This is why it is essential that the analyst, also, develop a binocular vision, one facing the outside world and one facing the inside world as represented in the Figure 1-2A, the sculpture of an unknown

Inuit artist, significantly reported by the author in the second volume of the book. As noted in the four stories of *The Kintsugi Art of Psychic* Restoration: Jungian Imagery Approach of Healing on Four Asian Women traumatic experiences are not only considered at the personal level, but also in reference to a patriarchal culture that imprints further wounds on the female psyche, fragmenting women's personality. Consider, for example, the Chinese notion of filial piety, a theme that Adelina Wong Wei-kwan addresses, explicitly, and whose unconscious effect can be problematic: "This cultural value defines the basic human relations in Chinese society as the Three Principles [regulating the relations between the Emperor and his subjects, parents with children, husbands with wives], which in turn establishes the basic building-blocks of the social order as envisioned by Confucius, elaborated by subsequent scholars and sages, and codified into legal framework for the nation." A careful analysis of this notion, often sedimented quite unconsciously in the psyche, allows the author to problematize a cultural view of interpersonal relationships that is often a harbinger of contradictions and unacknowledged emotional difficulties. The task of analysis is to bring out, give images and words to these various psychic elements, placing them within the different contexts of reference, in order to recompose a more truthful and functional self-image. The decision to publish drawings and sand-pictures produced by the clients during the analytical process testifies to the importance given in Jungian circles, and by the author, to these spontaneous productions, involving the direct manifestations of the unconscious psyche in dialogue with the conscious point of view, with unexpected, transformative effects: a process that places individual life in a horizon of meaning broader than the conscious level, toward

the construction of what Jung calls the realization of the Self. Let me remind you, in this context, that for Carl Gustav Jung the analytical approach to the unconscious psyche cannot be simply reductive - that is, it not only focused on what has happened in the past and concerns our personal sphere - but also finalistic, that is, interested in the unconscious lines of tendency toward both unveiling and constructing the meaning of our existence in the here and now of our historical location. This is the approach of the author, who, for example, dealing with Wendy's case, writes that "[...] it focuses on amplifying the client's dreams from the cultural perspective along with the teleo-futuristic exploration for the potential transformative development of our Asian culture."

2. With regard to the book's title, Adelina Wong Wei-kwan has chosen, significantly, to use the Japanese term *Kintsugi*, which indicates the refined art of repairing broken pottery with gold. It is a beautiful image and a powerful clinical metaphor: the objective of the analysis in general, but certainly the one pursued and highlighted in the book, is not to repair the traumatic and dissociated psyche by returning it to its original form in the most invisible way possible, but to proceed in a direction that increases the value of those experiences, precisely, thanks to the precious gold of consciousness that unites the different fragments by embellishing the fractures. It is a dialectical process between analyst and patient through a spiral movement that invests the entire analytical field. Read, for example, what the author writes about the analytical journey she, herself, made with the women: "I had the privilege to accompany these four women, as a therapist, on their journey to integrate their shadowy parts and to reclaim the wholeness of their womanhood. [...] It is like the

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art work of Kintsugi as they mended their fragmented pieces to re-create a new psychic consciousness from their past." Kintsugi is significantly an evocative image, also, of what we expect from the analytical procedure: the clients' awareness and acceptance of "being in pieces" and their need to put them back together in a way that does not deny the initial breakdown, but creates a new form of those pieces, preserving, enhancing and valorizing with the alchemical gold of fulfillment, the memory of the past and its scars. This is to emphasize an approach to psychic suffering and traumatic experiences that does not want to make them invisible with blind optimism, but transforms the traumatic wounds imprinted in the body-mind by building a new reality directly on them. It is clear, then, every process of individuation is born and grows from our entire history, along a continuous path of birth, death and rebirth.

3. Last but not least, I would like to emphasize the author's transcultural sensitivity, in which she skillfully combines Eastern and Western thought in her work and writing. This ability has certainly sprouted from her multicultural identity: a citizen of Hong Kong, but as far as analytical practice is concerned, her thought undoubtedly fertilized by the encounter with Jungian thought, thanks to the training programs promoted by the International Association of Analytical Psychology (IAAP), an Association founded in 1955 by a group of psychoanalysts aimed at disseminating the work of the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung globally. This goal is achieved through the IAAP Developing Groups, established over the past 25 years in different parts of the world. IAAP policy foresees that each Developing Group has a Liaison Person who is requested to help, sustain, advise and support the

group and trainees, providing activities such as individual and group supervision, workshops and seminars on Jungian topics, reading groups, groups on specific Jungian techniques etc. I had the privilege to be appointed as the IAAP Liaison Person of the Hong Kong Institute of Analytical Psychology in 2010 and at that time I personally met and worked with Adelina Wong Wei-kwan during her Jungian training. In the six years I held office, in addition to her exquisite hospitality, I was able to appreciate her intellectual curiosity, critical reading skills, and sensitivity to her clients and their suffering, together with the ability to accompany them along their path of self-knowledge, transformation and individuation from a personal, cultural and collective perspective: qualities that are all brilliantly reflected in the two volumes of this book. To give a final example of the richness of this work, consider now, what the author notes about the symbolism of archetypal images: I think, immediately, of the labyrinth in Jo Jo's story, and equally, the peacock in Ada's experience, which condense the personal, collective and cultural dimension of the human confrontation with death and dying, embodying, at the same time, material and spiritual elements, pointing to a rebirth that concerns everyone, including the analyst: "These archetypal symbolisms [...] revealed the potential treasures hidden in Jo Jo's psyche for further individuation in life. [...] Besides the personal level, these archetypal symbols are also consoling signposts for me and my clients to know where one is along the grieving passage of bereavement. Likewise, the liberating quality of death that shone through Jo Jo's process offered consolation to me during the period of social unrest and the Covid pandemic." For all these reasons, and for the many others that could be listed, I am certain that reading *The Kintsugi Art of Psychic Restoration*:

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Jungian Imagery Approach of Healing on Four Asian Women by Adelina Wong Wei-kwan will be of help and inspiration to Oriental women in their personal and cultural path to individuation. It will, equally, be a valuable cross-cultural resource for all those who enjoy confronting the transformative power of Jungian analysis and deep images.

Good reading.

Foreword

By Wat Wai-ho, Ph.D.
California Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
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CPSP Diplomate
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I have known Ms. Adelina Wong Wei-kwan for more than 30 years. Her strong inquisitive spirit with a passion for the well-being of her patients prompts her pursuit of a deeper and more holistic therapeutic approach. Ms. Wong began in Marriage and Family Therapy, and eventually drawn to Jungian psychoanalysis as her main therapeutic orientation, a rare and highly demanding therapeutic direction. Her professional qualifications reflect her wide range of therapeutic repertoire: Approved Supervisor in Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), Teaching Member of Sandplay Therapist (ISST), Jungian Analyst (IAAP), Fellow and Supervisor of Hong Kong Professional Councilor Association (HKPCA), Ignatian Spiritual Director (U of Creighton), and also a Physical Therapist (former member of APTA).

Adelina's strong case-handling abilities, combined with her sensitivity as a woman, have allowed her to encounter countless instances of emotional wounds that women suffer in the context of marriage and

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family especially in the Asian cultural milieu where extended family network is often the foundation of the social community. Through her rich clinical experiences, she has come to understand the unique position and vulnerability of women within the Asian family structure, as well as the childhood scars and shadows often imposed upon them by a patriarchal society. She skillfully integrates this cultural dimension with the delicate task of transforming marital and familial wounds into blessings. Using Jung's theories and techniques to work on the dreams, imageries and expressive art materials, she explores the unconscious crises and opportunities rooted in clients' family histories, at times even taps into spiritual resources, resulting in a profoundly unique therapeutic pathway for individuation.

As in various mental issues, it is easy to explain therapeutic theories, but sharing the practical application and clinical insights of these theories are often far more challenging. In the therapeutic process, female clients often have specific concerns and sensitivities that need to be addressed and often not easily depicted. These are compounded by cultural influences and the collective unconscious, making it a particularly complicated and delicate therapeutic integration. Based on her four-decades of clinical experience, Ms. Wong has a paradigm of documenting the clinical cases of Asian women who often utilize imaginary than verbal expression. This volume highlights four cases which reflects the deep inner struggles and emotional scars that countless Asian women face. This work broadens our clinical perspectives and offers valuable, effective therapeutic approaches. I highly recommend this volume for any serious clinicians in mental profession in Asia or those who likes to have an in-

depth understanding of clinical dynamic of femininity in Asian culture. This volume is a feast of clinical hermeneutic of non-verbal expressive materials and undoubtedly a book not to be missed!

Chapter One

Ada's Story: Recovering the Feminine Core of a Survivor of Early Trauma¹

This story is about a middle aged woman who persisted to search for her inner truth even to a point that she doubted her former self-belief and identity. It was in this liminal state that she rose up to be in touch with the Being again and looked at herself relatively as a beloved creature of the Creator in Christianity. The interface between Ada's sense of self (self-consciousness) and her religious faith is the realm where transformation of personality took place.

I. The Psychological History

Ada, a 36 years-old woman, came to me because she attended the growth group that I had facilitated 5 years before. The experience had been positive and helped her to regain her energy to finish her paper for graduation. This formal experience fostered trust in her heart to me, so she remembered me in the time of her present crisis.

In the first session, Ada walked slowly into my office room. At first she talked in a high pitched nasal tone and as she told me her story, her voice became fuller. I reckoned that she was settling more with me in the room. She felt disappointed and angry with her authority figure, the male pastor in the church, where she worked in the church administration and felt rejected and unfairly treated. She had interpersonal conflict with colleagues. Her strong negative emotions had affected her work. She decided to resign from her post, feeling very angry, disappointed, rejected and expelled. After the resignation, she said that she had experienced an inner emptiness and frequent anxiety attacks which disturbed her sleep. Ada puzzled why the negative emotions were so powerful that they paralyzed her from functioning properly, and caused her to withdraw. Her puzzlement and lack of control over herself brought her to therapy.

It became clearer to me that Ada's over-whelming negative feelings erupted from the unconscious in response to the shattering of her idealized image of the church and the male authority figure. The ideal images no longer served as a shelter to protect her ego from the imbalanced relationship to her inner core. Now her ego had to face the hard reality,

Some of the contents of this story are taken from my published paper: Adelina Wong Wei-kwan, "Healing from Abuse: Sandplay Therapy with Concurrent Drawings," *Journal of Sandplay Therapy*, (Published by Sandplay Therapists of America) Vol. 22, No. 1, (2013): pp.85-98.

outside and inside. The shattering of the ideals was a killing that threatened the core of the values with which she upheld her sense of self. Her ego was too weak to stand up to it. Her resignation from the pastoral post was her exit from the physical church group and symbolically was experienced as an exile from her second home. She described herself wandering alone outside like a dog howling and crying without its master and home.

Ada had been married for 10 years and was presently living with her husband. They have no children. She was an educated professional with an attractive appearance. She expressed herself with clarity and precision. She was able to use drawing and metaphor to describe her inner situation, her mood, and relationships.

Ada grew up from a very poor family. From her mother, Ada knew that her father was an addictive gambler; he had disappeared one day because of his bad debt. Ada's mother had attempted suicide after her husband's sudden disappearance. The members from the local protestant church provided help and support during this crisis and prevented her suicide. Mother suffered from the abandonment when Ada was in her early childhood. She had to raise seven children single handedly and faced the hardship bitterly. She managed to sell vegetable in a food stall in the market to earn a living for the whole family. She lacked inner stability and was not able to manage her sudden outburst of emotions. According to Ada, her mother's mood often swung high and low like a yo-yo. When her mother could not control her anger, she would beat Ada with a stick because she made a minor mistake such as forgetting a

key. A moment later, when mother was in better mood and felt guilty for her harsh behavior, she would indulge Ada with goodies. Ada was very sensitive to mother's mood and adapted to the push and pull with mother as part of her daily life.

Her mother took her seven children to the local church where Ada felt was her second home. Her mother was the central figure in Ada's early life to whom she identified. As a child, she regarded herself proudly as her mother's favorite child and acknowledged disappointedly later that she was wrong. Actually, her mother favored the male children and treated the female children as slaves doing house chores. Ada learnt to please her mother to gain a sense of security.

In the initial phase, Ada had lightly mentioned that she experienced the presence of God when she was about four during a church charismatic service and then again when managing the food stall alone for her mother. She did not mention it again until much later in therapy. It might be because she did not know if this was proper to mention in a psychological counseling setting. I shared the same doubt on this aspect too and cautiously dealt with this mysterious factor. After her resignation, Ada routinely went to a chanting prayer group in another Christian community besides her church weekly. These activities seemed to be especially important for her in her present state of depression.

Ada discovered later in adult years that her mother had molested her sexual organ when she was between one and two years of age. The fondling of the sexual organ was not uncommon in the non-educated class Ada grew up in a male-dominated family environment, like most families in the Chinese culture. Her feminine core was severely damaged in the early stages of development. She was not close to other siblings due to their difference in age. During her mid-childhood, Ada was sexually abused by her teenaged brother. Although the father was absent, the images of father, husband and son were held up by Ada's mother as more superior to the female. Men–fathers, brothers, husbands -- enjoy entitlement in the common patriarchal Chinese culture. To Ada, the male image was not only distant and indifferent like her father, but also threatening and abusive like her brothers. She grew up with a feminine image as subordinate helpmate and servant to the male counterparts. Identification with her emotionally unstable mother made the formation of the ego boundaries difficult and the sexual violation by her brother further disturbed the constellation of the feminine core of self in Ada's psychological development.

According to Kalsched's formulation (Kalsched, 1996), the early trauma that Ada experienced in her ambivalent attachment to her mother overwhelmed her psyche. Ada's psychic structure had not been formed in

a coherently enough to withstand the trauma of sexual abuse and maternal neglect by her significant caretaker. Such trauma threatens to annihilate the person. The core portion of Ada's self, which Kalsched terms as soul child, withdrew and was split off or dissociated to be protected in the archetypal self-care system. "These self divisions have survival value because they save a part of the child's innocence and aliveness by splitting it off from the rest of the personality, and preserving it in the unconscious for later possible growth." (Kalsched, 2013, pp.4-14)

One distinctive characteristic of Kalsched's psycho-spiritual approach that differentiates it from other treatment models is his firm belief in the spiritual world with its opposite antinomies: the evil anti-life force and the angel pro-life force and their involvement with the survivor of trauma.

"To acknowledge that the spiritual world is real, and following trauma it is recruited for defensive purposes—a position I take throughout this book—differs from saying that the angels and demons that haunt or hallow the imagination of trauma survivors are hallucinations or "nothing but" derivatives—artifacts—of a defensive process." (Kalsched, 2013, p.5)

Kalsched believes that there is a Mysterious Being, a larger or deeper self that provides a *ground* for external life, enlivening it with a sense of depth and meaning. Often the early trauma of the psyche serves as a portal for the numinous energy of the Self to be recruited for the unconscious protective activity. The concept of Self suggested by Jung is

central to the process of individuation. The Self represents the One who is impersonal, with the supreme principle of order and wholeness.

"...And in each of us there is another whom we do not know. He speaks to us in dreams and tells us how differently he sees us from the way we see ourselves. When, therefore, we find ourselves in a difficult situation to which there is no solution, he can sometimes kindle a light that radically alters our attitude—the very attitude that led us into the difficult situation." (Jung, CW 10, para. 325)

The "another whom we do not know" is the Self that directs one's individuation. Jung recognized that the numinosity of this Otherness can be mediated through all kinds of media besides religion, such as music, poetry, nature, art, and drama.

Trauma survivors like Ada live in two worlds, one the physical world outside, another one, the little planet of the soul child. Ada knew intuitively that she had a core part personified as an inner child lives within her psyche. This was seen in Ada's self-portrait in Figure 1-1. In Figure 1-2, Ada drew out the conflict between her three parts, the adaptive self, the soul child, and the instinctual part in the left back corner, where they stand separated from the central figures as Jesus, her hero, appears to stand between them and gives them harmony.

Ada's images of God as represented as Patriarchal Trinity Christian God were a benevolent resource from her unconscious and became part of her personality once they were conscious. They are the symbols of wholeness, which compensated her inner emptiness due to the absence of her physical father and enabled her to accomplish a healthier and more balanced state.

"...The unconscious God-image can therefore alter the state of consciousness, just as the latter can modify the God-image once it has become conscious...Psychologically, the utmost importance, because it identifies the Deity with the numinousity of the unconscious..." (Jung, CW 9 II, para. 303)

Ada's great desire to belong by pleasing others reflected her longing for a secure attachment through which she might form a secure base (J. Bowlby, 1989, pp.125-128). This is the deeper Self aspect of her mother complex. It was autonomous and created problem for her adaptive self, ego complex. Whenever her inner child felt threatened, she would act out her mother complex by pleasing others in an un-boundaried way. Then her ego was upset because she had put herself in a vulnerable position. Ada was going back and forth between the two sides of her child-mother complex and had not yet established a third stance between them. When Ada presented herself in the therapy room, the gap between her two parts was so wide that they could not reconcile, leaving Ada feeling depleted in her energy level, a depressive state.

Kalsched proposes a binocular view to see the two worlds of the trauma survivor. He used a sculpture (Figure 1-2A) that was carved by an unknown Inuit artist as an image of his binocular view. The sculpture is a human face with left eye open and right eye closed. The closed eye

focused on the inner world of dreams and the mytho-poetic images of the imagination, while the open eye focused outwardly on the harder edges of material reality. (Kalsched, 2013, p.6) The open eye can see the physical reality in the outer temporal world and also can observe the evidence based on clear research in the relational dyad—both infant-mother and patient/therapist. The closed eye is the inner attention that was shut to the outside, but open to the private world that can be mysteriously felt, but not seen.

Ada is a Christian who grew up in church and took church as her second home. She is grateful to the Christian Trinity God for her inner security. She had quiet time for herself, and would draw the inner image and felt sense as her journal. The drawings that produced from this space were the images from Ada's dream, Ada's image of God and herself, and Ada's perception on her innermost interaction with Self.

"This space is "transitional", but not between self and other. Rather, this space is transitional between what James Grotstein (2000) calls the "ineffable subject of the unconscious" and the "phenomenal subject of consciousness." In Jung's language this is the space or axis between the ego and the Self." (Kalsched, 2013, p.9)

At the same time, Ada came to therapy room to make sandpicture in the presence of therapist. This is a space that an infant relates to its maternal figure to establish attachment and its inter-subjectivity. Ada, through sandplaying, was developing another space with the therapist's human otherness, which she had not developed with her inconsistent biological mother. This is the inter-subjectivity space.

With the acceptance of the spiritual world and the Self, we can visualize with our mind's eye a divine space which is the space around the ego-Self axis and holds up the two spaces, the private subjectivity and the inter-subjectivity.

"For every self-other relational moment in psychotherapy, there is also an inner event in sculpting of the soul—in what Jungians often call the ego-Self relationship or the ego-Self axis... Whether we describe this intermediate reality as the "analytic third" (by Ogden) or the paradoxical "potential space" where we are most alive (Winnicott), or as the "transcendent function" (Jung) --The space between our private subjectivity and our inter-subjectivity is crucial for understanding the human condition and also for healing the places where we have found it intolerable and escaped into one world or the other." (Kalsched, 2013, pp.8-9)

These two spaces are inter-active with one another, as Kalsched described. Ada used her hands to guide her to make 39 sandpictures and 152 drawings besides her dreams, which indicate that the ego-Self axis was establishing within her psyche.

Self Portrait of The Four Heroines



Ada



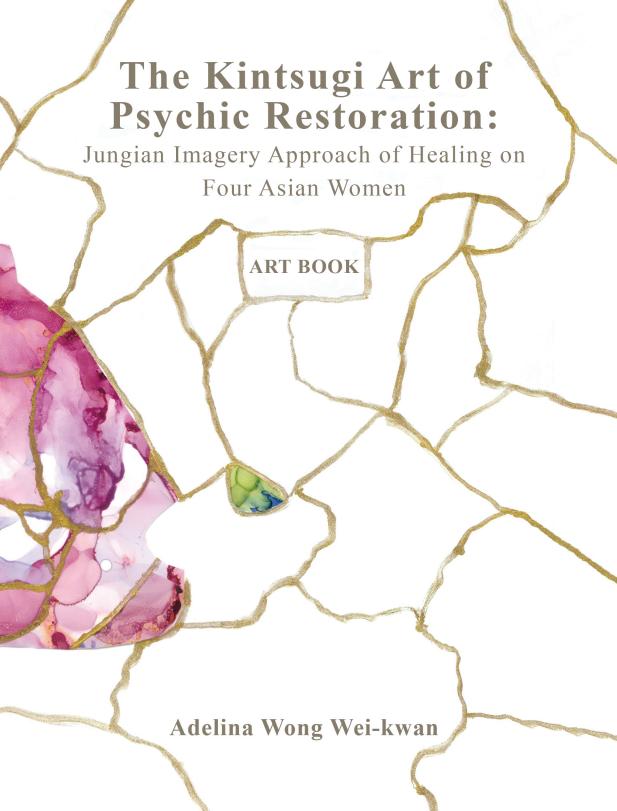
Jane



Jo Jo



Wendy



Chapter One

Ada's Story: Recovering the Feminine Core of a Survivor of Early Trauma



Figure 1-1



Figure 1-2

9 Ada's Story



Figure 1-4



Figure 1-5



Figure 1-2A



Figure 1-3

11 Ada's Story 10



Figure 1-8



Figure 1-9



Figure 1-6



Figure 1-7

Extract From Forewords

"Based on her four-decades of clinical experience, Ms. Wong has a paradigm of documenting the clinical cases of Asian women who often utilize imaginary than verbal expression. This volume highlights four cases which reflects the deep inner struggles and emotional scars that countless Asian women face. This work broadens our clinical perspectives and offers valuable, effective therapeutic approaches. I highly recommend this volume for any serious clinicians in mental profession in Asia or those who likes to have an in-depth understanding of clinical dynamic of femininity in Asian culture. This volume is a feast of clinical hermeneutic of non-verbal expressive materials and undoubtedly a book not to be missed!"

Wat Wai-ho, Ph.D. President of Bethel Bible Seminary

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