

MORAL VALUES IN JODI PICOULT'S NOVEL *MY SISTER'S KEEPER*

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Abstract

This study deals with a study of moral values in Jodi Picoult's Novel *My Sister's Keeper*, published in 2004. Moral values are human actions in carrying out their life activities. It is raised through the characters in the novel. The purpose of this study is to find out the elements of moral values contained in the novel. The elements are basic moral principles and moral personality attitudes. The theory used to analyze this topic was put forward by Suseno. The qualitative research method is used in this study. It is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the forms of written words. After doing the research, it is found that two elements of moral values are found in the novel, they are basic moral principles and moral personality attitudes. Basic moral principles cover good attitude and justice. These basic moral principles can be portrayed through the character, *Anna*. Furthermore, moral personality attitudes include willingness to take responsibility and moral courage. These personality attitudes are also presented when *Anna* wants to defend her rights.

Keywords: Moral Values, Good Attitude, Justice, Responsibility, Moral courage

1. Introduction

Literature is the class of writings in which imaginative expression, aesthetic form, universality of ideas, and permanence are characteristic features, as fiction, poetry, romance and drama (Webster, 1974). Literature has an important role in human life. It has given much of entertainment, inspiration, motivation, information, and etc. For many people, literature is as media to delivering messages to the other people. Welleck and Warren (1976: 197) states that literature is the mirror of human life that portrays human feeling, thought, imagination and perception which can be viewed based on personal judgment. Literature has a product called literature and one of the genres discussed in literary works is prose. There are several types of prose and one of them is prose fiction.

My Sister's Keeper (2004) is Jodi Picoult's eleventh novel. The novel was published in April 6, 2004. The story takes place in the fictional town of Upper Darby, Rhode Island. Jodi Picoult was born in Nesconset, Long Island, New York, in May 19, 1966. Jodi got married with Timothy Warren Van Leer in 1989. They met in college. They and their three children, live in Hanover, New Hampshire. She studied at Princeton University and graduated in 1987.

This novel tells the story of Anna who has to sacrifice herself for Kate's life. Kate had leukemia for a long period of time. Due to Kate's declining health, Sara and Brian, Kate's parents decided that they would have another child with the special purpose of making their new child suitable for Kate's blood and organ transplants. Thus, Anna Fitzgerald was born. Anna Fitzgerald was born with the goal of helping her sister in her recovery from leukemia by donating cells and organs and over the years she has been happy to give anything she can to help her deteriorating health. At first Anna does not blame her for helping Kate, but over time she becomes bored and does not want to obey her parents' requests any longer. Anna then hires a lawyer so she can escape her parents' demands. Campbell, Anna's lawyer, explains in court that she wants to get out of the house and gives up her parents' legal rights.

Before the end of this story, there is a plot twist. When Anna first finds out about the need for a kidney transplant, she would do it and has no problem with it. But Kate does not want to have surgery, she is sick of it all. He knows he would die without the transplant, but he could not go through with it all. Kate wants Anna to get a lawyer. The trial ends with the judge's decision in Anna's favor. She receives medical emancipation from his parents. Everyone is happy that the case is over, and no one is mad at Anna for doing what she does.

Moral values are objective descriptions of human actions in carrying out their life activities. In this case, the term morality refers to the actions of people or individuals who have positive values or goodness in life and the social environment. The moral values obtained in the novel *My Sister's Keeper* are good attitude, justice, willingness to take responsibility and moral courage.

This research is entitled Moral Values in Jodi Picoult's novel, *My Sister's Keeper*. This topic is chosen because the story contains moral learning. It shows a lot of life issues and the struggles of parents for their children to stay alive. There are many important and useful moral values to discuss. Basically, most people have reduced and do not care about the moral values that are around them. It is hoped that this study can provide motivation and information about moral value to readers.

Based on the background of the study, it is considered valuable to analyze the moral lessons in the novel. Thus, the objective of this study is to find out the elements of moral values in the novel. The analysis only concerns to the elements of moral values in. The elements cover basic moral principles and moral personality attitudes based on theory proposed by Suseno (2005). Dealing with basic moral principles, two points, good attitude and justice are focused. Furthermore, in moral personality attitudes, there are also two points to analyze. They are willingness to take responsibility and moral courage.

This research provides theoretical as well as practical significances. Theoretically it is expected that the readers can get information and enrich the knowledge of moral values. Practically, this analysis can be useful to the readers. In addition, it is also expected that this research is as a source of information for other researchers who are interested in carrying out their researches on the similar topic or in the same field.

2. Literature Review

The word moral comes from the Latin *Moralis -mos*, meaning “*moris*” custom, habit, way, behavior, or comes from words *mores* which means customs, behavior, character, morals, and way of life (Bagus, 1996: 672). As stated by Oxford Advances

Learner's Dictionary, moral relates to the standard or principles of good behavior. According to Hurlock (1997: 386), moral comes from the Latin Word *mores* that mean manner, customs, and folkways. This means that morality is trying to guide people to act rationally.

Gazalba (1981: 512) states that morals are compatible with his ideas generally accepted about human action, which is good and fair. She concludes that moral is an act according to the standard actions that are generally accepted by certain social or environmental entities. Suseno (1987: 20) say that the word moral is always referring to the good and bad of humans. The moral field is the field of human life in terms of its goodness as a human being. Moral norms are the yardstick for determining the correctness of an attitude and human action is seen in terms of the pros and cons of being human and not as actors in a certain and limited role. The moral issue is whether this human being is good or bad. From the description above, moral is something related to the principles of behavior morals, manners and mentality, which shape the character in a person so that can judge what is good and bad for life.

Djahiri (1985: 20) states that value is a belief that comes from a person's value system, about what a person should or should not do or about what is valuable and what is not valuable. Darmadi (2009: 27) says that value is something of good value by logical standards: really or wrong, aesthetics: good or bad, ethics: fair or unfair, religion: sin and become a reference for self-belief systems and life. In other sources, it is said that value is a set of beliefs or feelings as the identity to give a special style to patterns of thought, feeling, and connection as well behavior (Ahmadi et al, 2008: 202). Based on some explanation above, it can be concluded that value is an idea considered valuable to things. The value is believed to be an identity which gives a special pattern to a way of thinking, feeling, attachment and behavior. The value is closely related to the way people assess. Assessing means to consider human activities that connect something to something else, which is further to take a decision.

Wibawa (2013:173) says that moral values can be used as a reference standard for a person or a group of people to determine whether their attitudes and behaviors are good. Sorley (2014: 519) states that moral values are a full view of the worth of life must take all values into account, not merely those which, from their specific reference to character and volition. According to Hurlock (1990), moral values are behavior in accordance with the moral code of social groups. Moral means customs and habits. Moral behavior is controlled by the concept of moral concepts or code of ethics that have become habitual for members of a culture. From the description above, it can also be concluded that moral values are values that can encourage humans to act or do good deeds that guide human life in general.

According to Bertens (2001: 143-147) moral values have four characteristics. These characteristics are explained further below:

a. Responsibility

The definition of responsibility is human awareness of behavior or actions, whether intentional or not. A responsibility means a situation where you are obliged to bear everything. The attitude of responsibilities is formed along with the growth and development of a child because this attitude comes from within the heart and self-will to carry out its obligations.

A responsibility is one of the attitudes that every individual in the world must have. This attitude is very useful in living life and as learning to develop yourself. It is

characterized by values related to the human person responsible. Moral values make a person is said to be guilty or innocent, because he is responsible.

b. Conscience

Conscience is a cognitive process that produces feelings and associations rationally based on a person's moral view or value system. Conscience is related to a morality inherent in all human beings. Conscience is the norm of conduct related to guilt and is at the core of our hearts. Conscience can act as a guide in moral decision-making. Using conscience is the right of each individual. Realizing moral values is an "appeal" from conscience. One of the hallmarks of moral values is that only these values give rise to the "voice" of the conscience that accuses us of belittling or opposes moral values and praises us for embodying moral values.

c. Requirement

If someone does not have moral values, then humans will live as they please without having to follow the rules. So, all humans require moral values in their lives and require support from their environment so that they can live their lives with their moral values. It can be said that the absolute obligation attached to the values of Morality stems from the fact that these values are personal man as a whole, as a totality.

d. Formal Moral

We realize moral values by including values others in a *moral behavior*. Moral values do not have its own *content*, separate from other values. No moral values which is *pure*, apart from other values. That is meant *formal moral values*.

Moral value does not stand alone without other value. Although moral value is top value that we must appreciate, but it is not in top without other value. Moral values did not separate with other values. For example, a seller applies moral values all at once with apply study values. Moral values are nothing without other values. It is form of formal.

According to Suseno (2005), moral value has two important elements: basic Moral principles and moral personality attitudes.

2.1 Basic Moral Principles

Suseno (2005: 130) reveals that there are three basic moral principles. They are as follows;

a. Good Attitude

Good attitude is a person's good attitude and personality. Good attitude also concerns a person's attitude in interacting with other people and his family accompanied by a tendency to act in accordance with that attitude. Good attitude means looking at someone and something not only so far as it is useful to him, but wills, approves, justify, support, defend, allow, and support development.

Good attitude is not an attitude that is carried since a person is born, but is formed or learned throughout the development of the individual in relationships with others. Good attitude is not a fixed attitude, but can change. Attitude can be learned by someone or vice versa so as to make attitudes can change if there are certain conditions that make it easier to change attitudes in the individual.

b. Justice

Justice is something we should all be prepared to accept-for justice will always come, in some form, sooner or later. It is the law of the harvest and of cause and effect. Justice is a condition of ideal moral truth about something, whether it concerns objects or people.

The principle of justice essentially means that we give to whoever is entitled. Because basically everyone equal in value as a human being, then the most basic demand for justice is equal treatment towards everyone, of course under the circumstances the same.

c. Respect for Yourself

Respect refers to a term to describe the admiration we feel or show to someone or something that we consider to be of good quality. So, respect for yourself can be interpreted as a form of attitude to respect or consider ourselves important, because we consider ourselves to have good qualities.

This principle states that humans are obliged to always treat self as something of value in itself. This principle based on the understanding that humans are persons, centers of understanding and wills, possessing freedom and conscience, beings who intelligent.

2.2 Moral Personality Attitudes

Suseno (2005) also reveals that there are four moral personality attitudes. It is included several categories, namely:

a. Authentic values

Authentic means original. Authentic humans are humans who live and show themselves according to their authenticity, with a personality that in fact. Authentic values state that the authentic values of the real human personality and condition that they have in themselves are shown inhuman attitudes to behave in accordance with moral values.

b. Willingness to take responsibility

Willingness is an expression to express a willingness and readiness to do something and responsibility is the meaning of responsibility which shows that a person must carry out his duties and obligations. So, willingness to take responsibility is an action that is done, whether intentional or not, one must be responsible for what has happened.

Responsibility means an attitude towards a burdensome task us, we feel bound to get it done. People who are ready to be responsible will direct energy and ability when he is challenged to save something. He is positive, creative, critical and objective.

c. Moral courage

Courage is able to meet danger or endure pain or hardship without giving in to fear. Courage is arising from mastery of fear and intelligent use of faculties especially under duress. So, moral courage shows itself in the determination to maintain an attitude that has been believed to be an obligation, even though it is not approved or actively opposed by the environment. Every time we dare to maintain the attitude we believe in, we feel stronger and more courageous.

Moral courage is loyalty to the conscience that proclaims them in a willingness to take the risk of conflict. Moral courage means siding with the weaker against the strong, who treated him unfairly.

d. Humility

Humility is an attitude of being aware of one's own limitations and inadequacies, so that a person is neither arrogant. The last essential virtue of a steady personality is humility. Humility does not mean that we are condescending ourselves, but rather that we see ourselves as we are. Humility is inner strength to see oneself in accordance with reality.

3. Research Method

This research is analyzed based on theory proposed by Suseno (2005). The researcher applies qualitative research method to collect and process the data. Moleong (2006: 04) says that qualitative research method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written words. Analysis in qualitative research tends to be done by inductive analysis and its meaning is essential.

In conducting research, data collection is important to consider. Data collection shows how the procedures for data collection and analysis are structured. In collecting data, the researcher uses library research. According to Zed (2008: 3) library research is a series of activities related to the methods of collecting library data, reading and taking notes and processing research materials. Most of the data are obtained from libraries and website. The procedures of this research are as follows:

1. Taking and marking some phrases and sentences related to the topic of the study. The data are taken from the English novel *My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult.
2. Searching and finding another sources, such as journal, books, literary theory, internet related to the subject matter in this research.
3. Classifying the data based on the elements of moral values i.e. basic moral principles and moral personality attitudes.

In analyzing the data, the data analysis procedures in this study are organizing the obtain data based on the research problems in this study, describing the obtained data in detail based on basic moral principles and moral personality attitudes explanations.

4. Discussion

Moral values are human actions in carrying out their life activities. In this chapter, the author focuses on discussing Moral Values in Jodi Picoult's novel *My Sister's Keeper*. Moral values are raised through the characters in the novel. The discussion is divided into four sub-chapters i.e. good attitude, justice, willingness to take responsibility and moral courage. This sub-chapter will be discussed further below.

3.1 Good Attitude

Good attitude is one of the elements of Basic Moral Principle. Good attitude is an action that exists in human life, usually used to help someone. Good attitude means looking at someone and something not only useful, but supports life and prevents death for its own sake. Good attitude is also a commendable attitude as some of the data below.

Kate has acute promyelocytic leukemia. Actually, that's not quite true—right now she doesn't have it, but it's hibernating under her

skin like a bear, until it decides to roar again. She was diagnosed when she was two; she's sixteen now. Molecular relapse and granulocyte and porta Cath — these words are part of my vocabulary, even though I'll never find them on any SAT. I'm an allogeneic donor—a perfect sibling match. When Kate needs leukocytes or stem cells or bone marrow to fool her body into thinking it's healthy, I'm the one who provides them. Nearly every time Kate's hospitalized, I wind up there, too. (Picoult, 2004: 10)

The data above illustrates Anna's good attitude towards her sister, Kate. Anna is an allergenic donor to Kate. Since Kate's parents and Anna find out that Kate is seriously ill, they decide that she would give birth to a child through a superior baby program through IVF so that Anna's body donor is suitable for Kate. After Anna was born, she helps cure Kate's *leukemia* by donating her umbilical cord and body cells.

Anna realizes that the purpose she was born for was to help her sister. Therefore, at first, she did not mind the frequent donations she made for Kate. Whenever Kate is in the hospital and she must be with Kate too. Anna's good attitude shows that Anna is doing well by helping her sick sister. Other good attitudes in this novel can be seen through the quotation below.

Thirty-six hours after Kate is officially diagnosed with APL, Brian and I are given an opportunity task questions. Kate messes with glitter glue with a child-life specialist while we meet with a team of doctors, nurses, and psychiatrists. The nurses, I have already learned, are the ones who give us the answers we're desperate for. Unlike the doctors, who fidget like they need to be somewhere else, the nurses patiently answer us as if we are the first set of parents to ever have this kind of meeting with them, instead of the thousandth (Picoult, 2004: 60).

The quotation shows the good attitude of the nurses at the hospital where Kate was treated. The quotation above describes the situation when Kate's father, Brian, wanted to ask about his daughter's condition. In contrast to the behavior of the doctors who are in a hurry and restless when handling and answering patient questions, nurses answer questions asked by the patient's family with great patience. They answered Brian's questions as if he were the first parent to ask. On the positive side, the behavior shown by this nurse provides some relief and provides support to the patient's family. This explanation shows that nurses have a good attitude towards their patients.

3.2 Justice

Justice is one of the elements of Basic Moral Principle. Justice it is a morally ideal condition of truth about something. Justice essentially means we give to anyone who is entitled, because basically everyone has justice for himself. Here, Anna asks for justice for herself from her mother. The right that Anna wants to achieve is her medical right. This can be seen in the quotation below.

I can be sure that opposing counsel won't try to use her living arrangements to her best advantages, Your Honour, and possibly pressure my client'. Campbell stares right at the judge, unblinking. Mr Alexander, there is no way I am pulling this child out of her home," Judge De Salvo says, but then she turns to her mother. "However, Mrs

Fitzgerald, you cannot talk about this case with your daughter unless her attorney is present. If you can't agree to that, or if I hear of any breach in that domestic Chinese wall, I may have to take more drastic action." (Picoult, 2004: 87)

The quotation above describes a situation where Campbell, Anna's lawyer, tries to give justice to Anna. Campbell pleaded with Judge De Salvo to grant Anna's rights. This debate took place in the courtroom and it was between Campbell and Sara Fitzgerald, Anna's mother who also served as attorney for the Fitzgerald family, during the first trial of Anna's lawsuit. From this trial, De Salvo gave a wise decision, namely, Anna will be assisted by her lawyer to decide her case, and Sara will not discuss Anna's case at home and will not pressure Anna. If Sara violates these rules, Judge De Salvo will give strict and drastic sanctions.

Other justice also can be verified through the quotation below.

She looks at me, and I nod, standing up with her. "At this time," Judge De Salvo says, "I'm going to declare you medically emancipated from your parents. What that means is that even though you will continue to live with them, and even though they can tell you when to go to bed and what TV shows you can't watch and whether you have to finish your broccoli, with regards to any medical treatment, you have the last word." He turns toward Sara. "Mrs Fitzgerald, Mrs Fitzgerald – I'm going to order you to meet with Anna dan her pediatrician and discuss the terms of this verdict so that the doctor understands he needs to deal directly with Anna (Picoult, 2004: 394)

Justice can also be seen from the quotation above. Judge De Salvo does justice to Anna. After a series of grueling trials, in the final trial of Anna's lawsuit, De Salvo gave Anna the justice she deserved. De Salvo finally decides that Anna deserves the freedom to decide her medical rights. Anna is free to refuse any medical treatment she does not approve of and her parents have no right to oppose her decision. De Salvo also reiterates to Sara that with respect to matters concerning Anna's medical decision, she must meet with the pediatrician and discuss the provisions relating to Anna. This decision implies that parents should not impose their will on children without thinking about their children's feelings.

3.3 Willingness to Take Responsibility

Willingness to take responsibility is one of the elements of Moral Personality Attitudes. Responsibility is a *fitrah* which means it has become part of life. Willingness to take responsibility is a person's willingness to accept everything that happens as a result of his actions or words. In this sub-chapter, the willingness to take on the responsibility is made by Campbell, Anna's attorney. This can be explained through the following quote.

"Anna," I say, at the exact moment as Sara Fitzgerald. It is my responsibility to explain to Anna that Judge De Salvo wants a few minutes in private. I need to coach her, so that she says the right things, so that the judge doesn't throw the case out before she gets what she wants. She is my client; by definition, she is supposed to

follow my counsel. But when I call her name, she turns toward her mother (Picoult, 2004: 82).

The data above explains that Campbell is responsible for Anna. Through Anna's behavior of refusing to respond to Campbell's call and instead walking towards her mother, it could be said that Anna's stance wavered a little after seeing her mother, Sara. But Campbell stood his ground. As Anna's lawyer, he explains the things she needs to do. Campbell wants freedom for Anna. When De Salvo said he wanted to talk to Anna privately, Campbell trained him to say the right things so the judge did not drop his case. In order to get what Anna wants, Campbell feels Anna needs to follow his advice.

Willingness to take responsibility also can be verified through the following quotation.

"Ask your mother. Ask Julia. Every time I turn around someone informs me that you don't want to go through with this." I look down at the armrest, where her hand sits-purple sparkle polish, nails bitten to the quick. "If you want to be treated like an adult by the court, you need to start acting like one. The only way I can fight for you, Anna, is if you can prove to everyone that you can fight for yourself when I walk away." (Picoult, 2004: 215).

The quotation above verifies Campbell's willingness to take responsibility for Anna's case. The quotation above takes place in Campbell's car and between Anna and Campbell. Through the quotation above, Campbell gave Anna advice and support. Anna always wavered about her decisions, especially when she talked to her mother. Campbell insists to Anna that only she can prove to everyone that she is entitled to her rights and that only Anna can fight for herself. And as a lawyer, Campbell will fight alongside Anna.

3.4 Moral Courage

Moral courage is also an element of Moral Personality Attitudes. Moral courage is loyalty to the conscience that proclaims themselves in a willingness to take the risk of conflict. Moral courage means siding with the weaker against the strong, which treated him unfairly. This can be seen in the data below.

"Fine, then. You can polish my doorknobs." It's not that I'm a particularly charitable man, but rather that legally, this case is a lock: she doesn't want to give a kidney; no court in its right mind would force her to give up a kidney; I don't have to do any legal research; the parents will cave in before we go to trial, and that will be that. Plus, the case will generate a ton of publicity for me, and will jack up my pro bono for the whole damn decade. "I'm going to file a petition for you in family court: legal emancipation for medical purposes," I say (Picoult, 2004: 22).

The data above shows the moral courage of Campbell. Campbell tells Anna that he is ready to become Anna's lawyer. Campbell will fight for his medical rights. He knows that Anna did not want to give any more of her body cells and organs to her sister, Kate. Campbell's decision shows the courage of the risks he will take. Campbell

realizes that he would not be paid dearly for this case, but because of instinct and moral courage, he finally accepted the case. Despite being interspersed with personal interests, such as publicity for her career, Campbell wants Anna to get her due and will soon register her case in Family Court.

Other moral courage can be seen through the quotation below:

My mother whacks her purse down, then her car keys, and then advances on me. "All right," she says, her voice so tight it might snap. "What's going on?" I clear my throat. "I got a lawyer." "Evidently." My mother grabs the portable phone and hands it to me. "Now get rid of him. "It takes enormous effort, but I manage to shake my head and drop the phone into the cushions of the couch. I duck my head. "I don't want to do it anymore." The thing is, I do have a choice. Which is exactly why I have to be the one to do this (Picoult, 2004: 51-52).

The quotation above shows Anna's moral courage. The situation above depicts Anna and her mother arguing in the living room. The quote above also illustrates that her mother was angry and told Anna to fire her lawyer. Despite the fear, Anna persists in her conviction that she would hire a lawyer to claim her medical rights. It took great courage to defend her will when her mother firmly rejects Anna's decision. Her mother tells her to stop whatever Anna is trying to do with the lawyer. But Anna still decides that she has the right to herself. She feels that she has the right to refuse to do things she no longer wants to do.

The situation above also illustrates Sara's selfish attitude which forces her will, and she does not try to understand Anna's feelings.

Another moral courage also can be verified through the data below.

"Can I ask you something?" "Sure," he says. "Does there have to be trial?" "Well... your parents can just agree to medical emancipations, and that would ever happen.

"On the other hand, once someone files a petition – like you have – then the respondent – your parents – have to go to court. If your parents really believe you're not ready to make these kinds of decisions by your self, they have to present their reasons to me, or else having me find in your favour by default. I nod. I have told myself that no matter what, I'm going to keep cool. If I fall apart at the seams, there's no way this judge will think I'm capable of deciding anything. I have all these brilliant intentions, but I get side-tracked by the sight of the judge, lifting his can of apple juice (Picoult, 2004: 85).

The above data shows Anna's moral courage. The event takes place in Judge De Salvo's room. Anna is currently meeting and talking to the judge. She wants to file a liberties lawsuit against her. Judge De Salvo very well explained all the possibilities and the rules that had to be done with the lawsuit that Anna wanted to file.

The data above also explains Anna's strong intentions through a nod. Anna promised herself, no matter what happened. She would stick to her point. Anna's intention to tell the judge was suddenly diverted when she sees the judge holding up his can of apple juice. Anna thinks about what the judge would say later, but she has to stay calm no matter what will happen. This can be shown by Anna in her moral courage.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of moral values in Jodi Picoult's novel *My Sister's Keeper*, there are two elements of moral lessons found in the novel. The first element is basic moral principles. This element includes good attitude and justice. The second is moral personality attitudes. This consists of willingness to take responsibility and moral courage. Good attitude in the novel is presented from Anna's help for her sister, Kate. Anna's good attitude makes her more appreciative and helpful to her sick sister. Good attitude also can be found in the treatment done by the nurses at the hospital where Kate is treated.

Justice is found in Judge De Salvo's decision to give Anna her rights, and in Anna's struggle to get her rights. Anna demands the justice from her mother. She wants to live freely without having to sacrifice herself for her sister. Willingness to take responsibility can be shown from Campbell's responsibility to give Anna her rights. Anna's sense of responsibility towards Kate and her mother makes her care about herself and her family. Moral courage can be shown in Campbell's courage to take any risk to give Anna her rights. It can also be shown in Anna's courage to maintain her decision to take her medical rights. Anna's moral courage makes her a person who never gives up and fights all the decisions of her mother that are conveyed to Anna to help for the healing of her sister.

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