

What our readers think about . . .

Katie & Kimble: A Ghost Story *and* Katie & Kimble: The Magic Wish!

“I love reading your book. Once I started to read it to my sister at bedtime, I didn’t want to stop.”

Cristina, age 7

“I liked both of the Katie and Kimble books. Because I thought they were neat and interesting. I really liked your pictures.”

David, age 8

“I think Katie was cool. Twinkle is a good dog trying to protect Katie. Mr. and Mrs. Russell are good parents.”

Nick, age 9

“I really like your stories. They are the best books I’ve read all year. I love the way you make the stories sound so real. It’s almost like they *are* real.”

Kelsey, age 10



Teachers and Homeschoolers

A full set of reading skills worksheets and classroom materials is available free of charge for *Katie & Kimble: A Ghost Story* and *Katie & Kimble: The Magic Wish*, at: <http://www.katieandkimbleblog.com>

"Guess what? I got to read your book! Katie and Kimble is such a fantastic book, everybody who reads it I bet will love it! And good ending!"

Miya, age 8

"Your book was great. I loved it."

Aaron, age 8

"I liked both of your Katie and Kimble books because they are very creative. Another thing is when Katie and Kimble race up and down the stairs."

Paul, age 9

"I love the books you write about Katie and Kimble. You write the best books I have ever read in my whole life."

Melissa, age 9

"I enjoyed your Katie and Kimble story because it was funny. Toby called Kimble *Kibo* and his parents wonder what he is trying to say. *That* is funny."

Brittany, age 9

"I loved your Katie & Kimble stories. They were really funny. It would be cool to have a ghost as a friend. I felt sorry for Kimble sometimes."

Tiffany, age 10

Katie & Kimble

A Ghost Story

Linda Thieman



*For Mrs. Dodd's 3rd Grade Class in Iowa and
Mrs. Countryman's 4th Grade Class in Illinois:
Thank you for being our first readers.*

My profound thanks to Kim Tharp for bringing my characters to life with patience, creativity and D12.

In addition, my gratitude goes out to Penny Ladnier, owner of CostumeGallery.com, for providing an authentic pattern for Kimble's clothing and overall look.

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Katie & Kimble: A Ghost Story

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Chapter 1

THE NEW HOUSE

Out in the country, there was a big, empty house. Well, it wasn't really empty. In one bedroom, there was a big picture. It was a picture of a girl and her dog. And floating in front of the picture was a ghost. It was the ghost of a ten-year-old girl.

The ghost looked at the picture.

"I hope she's my age," the ghost sighed.

Just then, there was a loud noise outside. The ghost quickly flew to the window. When she looked out, she saw two cars. The cars were coming into the driveway!

"They're here!" she shouted. "They're here!"



"We're here!" Katie screamed. "We're here!" She was struggling to get the leash on her big

sheepdog, Twinkle. They were sitting in the back seat of the minivan.



"Okay, settle down," her father laughed.

When the car stopped, Katie threw open the door. Katie was excited and Twinkle was, too. Twinkle rushed out, pulling Katie behind him. Then Twinkle stopped suddenly in the middle of the big, green yard. So Katie stopped, too.

Katie looked at their new house for the first time. "It's beautiful! I love it!"

Katie started jumping up and down.

That did it. As soon as Katie started jumping, Twinkle started running in circles. Before Katie knew it, her legs were wrapped up by the leash.

Boom! Katie dropped to the ground with a thud.

Just then, Katie thought she heard laughter. She was sure of it. It sounded like a girl laughing!

Katie sat up and dusted herself off. She looked around. She didn't see any children.

"Katie?" Mrs. Russell shouted from the other car. "Are you okay?"

"I'm all right," Katie yelled back. She tried to stand up, but she couldn't.

Katie laughed a little. "It was pretty funny," she thought. "But who was that laughing?"

Katie tried to undo Twinkle's leash. But Twinkle kept licking her face. Katie laughed harder.

"Boy, we just got here," she said, "and I'm already ready for a break!"

Katie looked at the "family train" in the sandy gravel lane. The first car was blue with four doors. Katie's mother, Mrs. Russell, and Katie's

two-year-old brother, Toby, were in that car. Then came the minivan. Katie, her dad, and Twinkle rode in that. Behind their van, they were pulling a big, metal wagon. They were moving into a different house because Katie's mom got a job in a new state.

The moving van would arrive tomorrow. Then, the next day was Katie's birthday. She was going to be nine. Katie was excited about her presents. She was hoping for a new bike. But she didn't know what to expect.

Four years ago, when she turned five, Katie got a dog. It was a big Old English sheepdog. It was silver—the color of stars, thought Katie. Since it was her dog, Katie got to choose the name. She chose Twinkle because the dog was silver. In the sunlight, he twinkled like a star.

Katie also liked that name because she had wished on a star. She had wished for a dog with all her heart. Now that she was almost nine, though, Katie was more practical. She knew she got the dog because she asked her parents for one, too. But she thought wishing on the star had helped.

Mrs. Russell lifted Toby from the car seat. She gathered up his blanket, his bottle and his diaper bag. Then she headed for the house.

"Come on, Katie," she yelled. "Let's go see the house."

Katie jumped up and ran after her across the big yard. "Come on, Daddy," Katie yelled.

Mr. Russell shut the minivan door and followed her. Twinkle followed, too.

The house was a big, old house out in the country. There were lots and lots of rooms. Katie was delighted because she got her own room.

Katie burst through the door. "Wow! This is great!"

In the front, past the hallway, was the living room. The living room had a fireplace. On the right of the hallway was a long staircase.

"Which room is mine?" Katie shouted.

Her parents laughed. "Run upstairs and see," her mom said. "I put something in your room for you."

Now Katie was really curious. She dashed up the stairs. She ran into the first room on the right.

"Nope. Empty. That's not it," she said.

Then Katie skipped over to the next room on the right.

"Nope. Too small."

Katie looked into the room across the hall. "The bathroom," she said. "That's important to know."

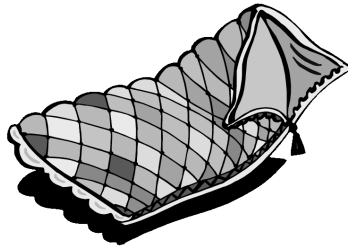
Finally, she found it. The second room on the left was her room! There it was. The surprise. A big, framed picture of Katie and Twinkle. It was leaning against the wall. Katie ran to the picture and bent down for a closer look.

"Oh, it's beautiful! It's beautiful!" she shouted. Then she sat down on the floor and started laughing. Twinkle had a funny look on his face in the picture. Soon after that, the real Twinkle appeared in the room. He wanted to be part of the fun.

That evening, Katie was so excited she forgot all about the laughing girl. Katie helped her dad unpack the wagon. She took the sleeping bags into the living room. The beds would come tomorrow.

There were four sleeping bags. Katie's dad had a big, ugly orange one with yellow dots. Katie's mom had a pretty blue and green one.

Katie's sleeping bag was pink and purple and blue. She loved it the most. Toby's bag was the smallest. It had dinosaurs on it.



Katie lined up the bags in sleeping order.

"Daddy will sleep on the outside," she thought. "Then Toby, Mama and me." Katie thought Toby should sleep between their mom and dad because he was only two. He might get up and run away at any moment.

Katie put the bags in front of the fireplace. "That way we can keep warm," she thought. It was the beginning of summer. Sometimes the nights grew cool.

For supper, the Russells roasted turkey hot dogs over the fire. Then Twinkle started getting noisy, so Katie went to the kitchen to feed him. That was her job. She went over to a box marked *Twinkle*. Then she took out his red food bowl. Next, she took out a can of dog food and a can

opener. She filled the bowl and set it on the kitchen floor near the wall. Then she took the blue water bowl from the box. She filled it from the tap and set it next to the food bowl. By that time, Twinkle had almost finished all the food. He was a big, hungry dog.

After the Russells sang a few songs, they got into their pajamas. Then, Katie's mom, dad and Toby crawled into their sleeping bags. Katie let Twinkle out to do his duty. Then she moved his big dog bed an inch or two. She wanted it next to her sleeping bag. Twinkle barked at the screen door, so Katie let him in. Then she locked the door.

Twinkle ran to his bed and hopped right in. Katie watched happily as Twinkle circled around. Finally, Twinkle plopped down. Katie looked at the room. The embers in the fireplace were growing dim. The sleeping bags were just as she put them. Daddy, Toby, Mama, Katie, and finally Twinkle. Katie crawled into her bag. She patted Twinkle and sighed.

"I think I'll be happy here," Katie said.

"So will we," her mom said. "Tomorrow's a big day. We'll have to get up bright and early. Good night, sweetheart."

Toby and Daddy were already asleep. Mrs. Russell leaned over and gave Katie a kiss.

Katie began to drift off into a peaceful sleep. As she did, she thought she heard the laughter of a young girl again.

"Hmm. I wonder what that was. I'll see about that tomorrow," Katie thought. Then she fell asleep.



Chapter 2

THE FIRST SURPRISE

The next morning, Katie felt Twinkle's warm, wet tongue on her face. Katie turned her head away and said, "Good morning, Twinkle." She gave Twinkle a pat on the head. The sun was shining through the living room windows. It was a beautiful day.

Katie's mom started to move next to her.

"Morning, honey," Mrs. Russell said. "Do you want to take the dog out in the backyard? I'll get breakfast going."

Katie agreed. First, Katie ran upstairs to the bathroom. There, she washed the dog slobber off her face. Next, Katie went into her empty bedroom. She threw on the clothes she had worn the day before.

"No need to put on clean clothes," Katie thought. "Today's going to be a dirty day."

Twinkle was waiting for Katie in the hallway. They raced down the long staircase. Then they ran through the living room and into the kitchen. The kitchen was in the back of the house. Katie opened the heavy door to the backyard. Twinkle put his head down. He took a drink of water from the blue bowl.

When Katie opened the screen door, Twinkle barked. Then out the door he went. Katie followed him. Suddenly, Twinkle started running at top speed. Katie didn't know why. It looked like he was chasing something. But what? Katie couldn't see anything that might explain it. No rabbit. No cat.

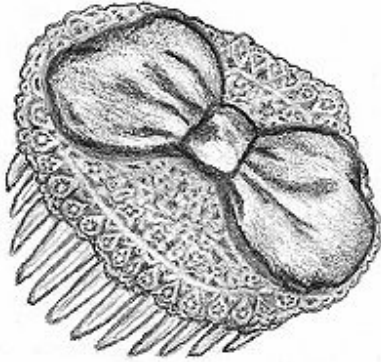
Katie started running after Twinkle. He was heading towards the forest that was right behind the house. When he entered the forest, it was quite dark. Then, suddenly, Twinkle stopped. Because it was dark, Katie did not see him. Katie tripped over Twinkle and went flying. Luckily, she landed on a big pile of old leaves. She was not hurt.

Katie stood up and brushed the leaves from her clothes. "Whew! That was some trip!" Katie said.

Katie thought she heard that laughter again. Maybe it was the same laughter she heard yesterday. Katie turned her head. She looked around. No one was there.

Just then, Twinkle barked. Katie looked down to see what Twinkle was pawing at. There, in the hollow of an old, dead log was a piece of lace. Katie picked it up.

"Hmm. Look at this." Katie walked back out into the yard. She could see the lace better in the sunlight. Twinkle followed her.



"It's a hair bow," Katie exclaimed. And so it was! On one side, there was a small comb. On the other side, there was a piece of lace. On top of the lace was a blue bow. It looked old-fashioned, but it was in good condition.

"Mama!" Katie shouted. She started running.
"Mama, look what I found!"

Katie raced in the back door. There was just enough time for Twinkle to slip in. The door slammed.

"My word," Mrs. Russell smiled. "The two of you are like a tornado! What did you find?"

Katie showed her mom the hair bow. "I found it in a log in the forest!" Then Katie rushed into the downstairs bathroom and looked in the mirror. She pulled her short, blond hair back. Then she held it in place on one side with the comb. It was beautiful! Katie was beautiful!

"Mama, can I keep it?" Katie yelled.

"Well, I see no harm in it," her mom said. Mrs. Russell came into the bathroom. "That is lovely," she agreed. "Until the real owner wants it back, you can keep it."

"Oh, thank you, Mama! I'll wear it all day," Katie said.

"There is one thing, though," her mother added. "Don't play too far back into the forest. And take Twinkle with you when you go."

Katie agreed. Her mother wasn't worried, though. Katie had a lot of common sense.

Mrs. Russell trusted Katie. And Twinkle, too.

It was moving day, so Katie decided to help. After breakfast, she rolled up the sleeping bags. Then she tied them up with string. Then Katie carried them, two by two, up the stairs.

"I'll put them on the floor in the big hall closet," she thought. "That's where they went in the old house. That's where they'll go in this house." Katie felt proud of herself.

Next, Katie joined her mom and Toby in the kitchen. It looked funny. There was no furniture. There was only a playpen. Twinkle was on the floor. He was lying next to the playpen. Toby was in the playpen. He was lying next to Twinkle.

"That's a sight!" Katie laughed. She pointed to the strange pair. Just then, Katie's dad walked in. He was carrying Toby's highchair.

"Katie," he said, "would you like to put the highchair together?"

Katie said yes. She'd done it many times before. When she was finished, she lifted Toby out of the playpen. Then she put him in the chair.

"Can I watch him while he eats?" Katie asked. She put Toby's bib on him.



"I've got the food ready now," Mrs. Russell said. She handed the bowl to Katie. Katie set it on Toby's tray. Toby squeaked. He was glad.

Toby grabbed a handful of breakfast cereal. Then he shoved it in his mouth. Then there was some on his bib. Then on his tray. Then on the chair. Finally, it was all over the floor. Katie didn't mind cleaning up after him. Sometimes she even pretended she was Toby's mom.

Katie remembered when Toby was a baby. He was just eight months old when they first gave him green beans. Toby did not like green beans. As a matter of fact, Toby hated green beans. He took one bite and threw up. That was the end of the green beans. Nobody was brave enough to try them again.

Just then, Mr. Russell came in the front door. "The movers are here," he shouted. Then he went outside to meet them.

"I can take Toby and Twinkle out back," Katie said.

"That would be a great help. Thank you, sweetheart. Let me know when you're tired of it," her mother said.

Katie quickly picked the cereal up off the highchair. Twinkle had already eaten the cereal that fell on the floor. Then the three of them went outside. They played happily in the sun for an hour. Then Twinkle lay down in the cool shade. He liked to sit under trees. And the Russells had a big oak tree in their backyard.

Toby followed Twinkle over to the shade of the oak tree. Then he sat down next to Twinkle. Toby rested his head on Twinkle's belly. One minute later, Toby was asleep. Then Twinkle fell asleep, too.

Katie's dad came out the back door to check on them. He'd already checked on them three times. This time he was bringing Katie a big glass. It was something cool to drink. He also carried a bottle of juice. The juice was for Toby.

"Hi," Mr. Russell whispered. "How's it going?" He handed Katie the glass. Then he sat down.



"Fine, Daddy. As you can see, I finally have a free minute."

She took a drink. "Oh, this hits the spot. Thanks, Daddy."

"Where did you get that blue bow in your hair?" Mr. Russell asked.

Katie touched it. "Oh! I found it inside a log in the forest. Mama said I can keep it." Katie didn't tell him about the laughter she heard.

"Oh, that's a nice surprise. What a happy welcome," her dad said.

Katie was pleased he noticed the pretty blue bow. And now, both parents knew about the forest. The forest worried her dad. Maybe just a little. Her mom and dad would have a meeting to talk about it. Katie was sure of that. But, for now, Katie was still free.



Chapter 3

ANOTHER SURPRISE

"The movers are gone, Katie," Daddy shouted. "Let's go up to your room. We'll do that first."

Katie was in the kitchen. She was wiping off the table and chairs. She threw down the rag.

"Come on, Twinkle!" Katie shouted. The two of them ran up the stairs. Toby and Mrs. Russell followed.

Katie took a look at her room. She gulped. It was a mess. Furniture and boxes everywhere.

"Where do you want the bed?" Daddy asked. He always got right to the point.

"Let's put the bed under the window. That way, I can look out," said Katie. "Then, the night stand and lamp go next to the bed. Then the dresser over there. And my little rocking chair here. And my toy box there."

Katie held Toby while her parents moved the furniture.

"Perfect!" Katie cried. Her room looked wonderful. Katie's mom and dad agreed. The room was perfect. Katie's dad then moved the boxes into the hallway. That way, Katie could unpack them one by one.

"Just one last thing," Katie said. "Twinkle's bed. It'll go right there. Between the door and the dresser."

Twinkle always slept in Katie's room.
Twinkle was Katie's dog.

Katie's parents took Toby downstairs. There was a lot of work to do. It was up to Katie and Twinkle to get the bed.

Twinkle's bed was oval-shaped. It was gold plastic on the outside. It had a big blue mat inside. And it was heavy. Twinkle was a big dog. Twinkle's bed was a big bed.

Twinkle's bed was in the living room by the fireplace.

"I'm getting bigger now. I'll be nine tomorrow. Maybe I can lift it," Katie said to Twinkle.

Twinkle barked. He was excited.

Katie reached down. She grabbed the bed in front. Slowly, she lifted it. Inch by inch. With great care.

"There! I got it!" she cried. And as soon as she said it, the bed dropped. The weight of the bed pulled Katie down. She flipped over and landed right in the bed! Twinkle barked wildly.

Katie looked up at Twinkle from the bed. "On to plan two, I guess," she said.

Katie stood up. "I'll push the bed," she said to Twinkle.

Katie put her foot on the end of the bed. Then she pushed. The bed did not move.

"This is one difficult bed," she said.

So Katie got down on her hands and knees. And she pushed it.

"Nope," she said. "It's not going to push. I'll have to pull it."

And that is what she did. Katie lifted one end of the bed. Then she dragged it to the foot of the stairs.

"There!" she said, satisfied. "I'll just drag it up the stairs."

But before Katie began, Twinkle jumped into the bed! He wanted a ride!

Katie laughed. "Twinkle, I'd love to give you a ride. But you are much too heavy!"



Twinkle looked up at Katie. He didn't understand. He was still waiting for his ride.

Katie ran into the kitchen.

"Need any help, dear?" her mother asked.

"No, thanks," Katie said. "I just need a doggy treat."

Katie went over to the box marked *Twinkle*. She reached in and grabbed a treat. Then she ran back to the staircase.

When Twinkle saw the treat, he jumped. Katie threw the treat into the living room. Twinkle ran after it.

"You are a smart girl," Katie thought. She grabbed one end of the bed. Then she started dragging it up the stairs.

When Katie was halfway up the stairs, she heard laughter again. It sounded like a girl's laugh. Suddenly, something tickled Katie's nose! It made her sneeze. Katie sneezed so hard that she dropped the bed. It fell end over end to the floor.

Katie was lucky this time. The bed landed upside down. Twinkle was sitting next to it.

"Now, what was that?" Katie shouted. She sat down on the stairs. She wanted to laugh, but she was too surprised.

"Something touched my nose!"

Twinkle stood up and wagged his tail.

"You're a lot of help," Katie said to him.

Katie finally got the bed up the stairs. Then she put it in her room.

"Perfect," she said. "Now, where's Twinkle?"

Katie walked into the hall. She started to yell, "Twink—," but then she stopped.

Twinkle was in the hall. But he wasn't waiting for Katie.

Twinkle was looking at the big closet. The closet was at the end of the hall. There was nothing there. But Twinkle was wagging his tail.

"What in the world are you doing, Twinkle?" Katie asked. She walked over to the closet door. She opened it. She walked inside and turned on the light. It was empty. Only the sleeping bags were on the floor. The towels and blankets were still in a bedroom in boxes. Why was Twinkle wagging his tail? It was a mystery.

Katie spent the rest of the day in her room. She unpacked her boxes. She put her clothes in the closet. She put her underwear and pajamas in the dresser. She put her toys in the toy box. And she put her jar of lucky pennies on top of the dresser.



Katie had been saving pennies since she was six. When Katie went to first grade, she heard a rhyme.

*Find a penny, pick it up.
And all the day
you'll have good luck.*

Katie wanted to have good luck. She wanted lots of it. So, every time she found a penny, she picked it up. Then she put it in her lucky penny jar.

After dinner, Katie and her mom went up to Katie's room. They were going to hang a picture on Katie's wall. It was the picture of Katie and Twinkle.

"Right above the dresser, I think," Katie said. She walked over to the dresser. Then she saw something.

"What's this?" Katie said. On Katie's dresser was an old wooden top. Katie picked it up. "It's an old toy." Katie set the point of the top on the dresser. Then she gave it a spin.

"Hey, that's neat!" Katie cried. The top stopped spinning. Then it fell to one side.

Katie looked more closely. "It has four sides," she said. "It's a square top. I thought tops were always round."

Katie's mother picked it up.

"It's a dreidel," Mrs. Russell said.

"What's a dreidel?" Katie was very curious.

"A dreidel is a top that Jewish children play with," her mother replied. "When I was a kid, a Jewish family lived down the street. They had a special holiday in winter. It's called Hanukah. They played dreidel during Hanukah."

"What are these things on the sides?" Katie asked. She was very interested. She loved new games.

"Well, each side has a Hebrew letter. I can't remember what they are," her mother said. "I used to know."

Katie touched the top. Each side had a shape cut into it.

"So," her mother continued, "each letter has a meaning. Each letter is the first letter of a word. In English, it means *a great miracle happened there.*"

"What's a miracle?" Katie asked.

"It's a great wonder. Or a great blessing. It's a big favor from God," her mother replied.

"Neat!" Katie said. "So what was the miracle?"

"Well, let me see," her mother said. "There was a big army. They destroyed the Jewish Holy

Temple. Actually, there were two blessings. First, a small group of Jews beat the big army."

"Wow!" cried Katie. She touched the dreidel softly. "What was the second blessing?"

"Well, the Jews went back into the Temple," Katie's mom said. "Everything was smashed. But there was one jar of oil. It was enough for one day. But the oil burned and made light for eight days. That was the second blessing."

"That's so neat!" Katie said. "So the kids play dreidel. And they remember the blessings."

"Right! You are a smart girl," Katie's mom said.

"How do you play?" Katie asked.

"I really can't remember. You use coins or candy or something." Her mother laughed at the good times she'd had. "It was really a lot of fun. Where did this come from?"

"I don't know," Katie said. "It was just sitting here. Next to my lucky pennies."

"Maybe a Jewish family lived here. Maybe Twinkle dug it up," her mother added.

"Maybe," Katie said. But she didn't think so. Two surprises in one day. First, the blue bow. Now, the spinning top.

Katie's mom hung the picture on the wall.
Then she left. Katie sat on the bed.

"There's something strange here," she thought.
"First, I hear a girl laughing. Then my nose
tickles. Then Twinkle wags his tail at nothing!
And now, two surprises! They are like presents!
But what could it be?"

Katie thought and thought. She was very
interested. Very interested.

"And I've got to learn how to play dreidel."
Katie sighed.

"I'll think about it tomorrow," she said aloud.
"Oh, my birthday is tomorrow. That will be fun!"



Chapter 4

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

Late the next morning, Katie changed into some clean clothes. She put the blue bow in her hair. That was the bow she found in the log the day before. Then, the Russell family went to town. It was Katie's birthday. They would have a special birthday lunch.

The town, Milletville, was about ten miles from the Russells' home.

"Look," Mr. Russell said. He pulled the minivan over and stopped. "That's the computer company where your mom works. She'll start work there on Monday."

Toby yelled, "Mama!"

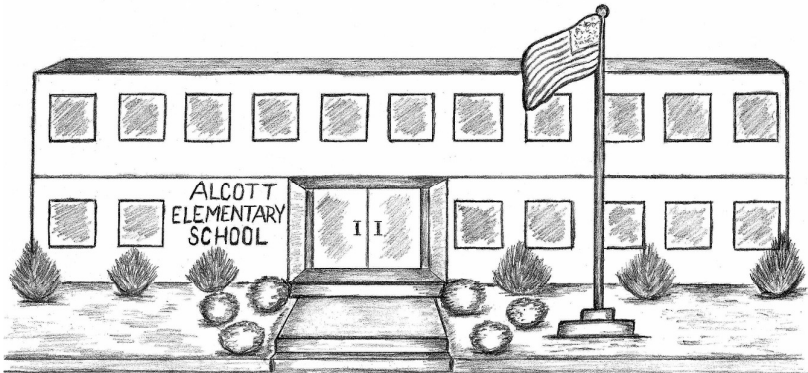
Katie laughed. "Where's my school?" she asked. School didn't start until August. Katie had almost three months until then.

"It's over that way," her dad said, pointing. He pulled ahead and turned right. They drove about a mile.

"There it is!" Katie cried. It was a big, white building.

Katie read the sign. "Louisa May Alcott Elementary School."

"Louisa May Alcott was an author. She wrote *Little Women*," Mrs. Russell said.



"I like it," Katie said, looking at the school. "I think it will be a fine school. It looks fresh and clean."

Mr. and Mrs. Russell laughed. "It does, doesn't it?" Mrs. Russell agreed.

Katie was looking forward to starting fourth grade.

"And I'm hoping to get a job there," Mr. Russell said.

Katie jumped. "You are?" she cried.

"Well," her dad continued, "I've written to fifteen different elementary schools. The ones in this town. And many in nearby towns. I'm sure one of them will have a job for me."

In their old town, Katie's dad was a teacher. He taught sixth grade. Katie wished they could be at the same school.

For lunch, the Russells went to a pizza place. Katie got to order the pizza. She chose Canadian bacon and black olives. This was her favorite. Everyone else liked it, too.

After they ate, there was a big surprise. Three people came out of the kitchen. Each wore a funny hat. And each carried a balloon.

The first man bent down and put a funny purple hat on Katie.

"Happy birthday, Katie," he said.

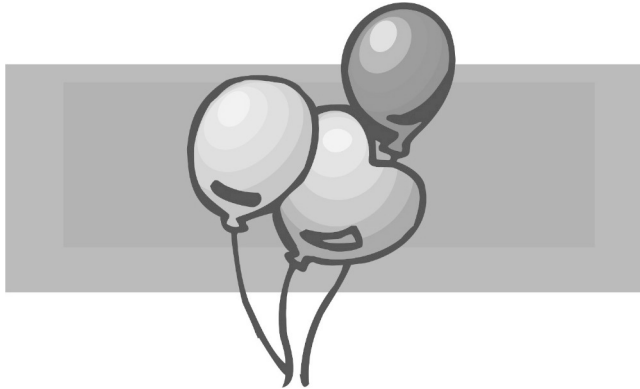
Next, the three of them sang "Happy Birthday" to Katie! When they were finished, everyone in the pizza place clapped for Katie. Katie was so happy. Then, each singer gave Katie a balloon. The first one was red. The second one

was yellow. The third one was blue. Each balloon was tied to a string.

Katie thanked each singer for the song and the balloon. Then the three singers in the funny hats bowed and left.

"What a surprise!" Katie exclaimed. She handed a balloon to Toby.

"Kay-Kay!" he shouted. He couldn't say Katie yet.



On the way home, they stopped at a bakery. Katie and her mom ran in. They got Katie's birthday cake. It was all ready to go.

"Do you like it?" Katie's mom asked.

"It's great! I love it!" Katie cried. The cake was chocolate with white frosting. That was Katie's favorite. It said "Happy 9th Birthday, Katie." And it was covered with flowers, bows and

candy balloons. Pink, blue, green, yellow and purple. Katie was breathless.

When they got home, Katie carried the cake into the house. Twinkle was so glad to see them! He tried to jump up on Katie.

"Wait a minute, Twinkle!" Katie shouted. She almost dropped the cake!

Katie set the cake on the counter. "Okay," she said. "Now I'm free."

Twinkle jumped up on Katie. They fell to the floor together. Katie and Twinkle were a happy tangle of arms, legs, and fur.

Next, Katie opened her birthday presents. The Russell family sat in the kitchen. There were three presents on the table. There was a small one from Katie's dad. There was a medium-sized one from Katie's mom. And there was a big one from Toby and Twinkle.

Twinkle put one paw in Katie's lap. He wanted to be part of the fun, too. Katie patted Twinkle's paw. She understood.

Katie opened the little one first. It was a book of ghost stories.

"Thank you, Daddy!" Katie jumped up and hugged her dad. Katie loved to read. Ghost

stories were her favorite. The book was long—120 pages. But each story was only ten pages long.

"That will be easy to read," she thought.

Next, Katie opened her mother's present. It was a pair of shorts with a matching shirt. They were blue with pink and yellow stripes.

"Wow!" Katie said. "These are great! Thanks, Mama!" Katie gave her mother a hug, too. "I'll wear them tomorrow."

Finally, Katie opened the third present. It was from Toby and Twinkle. Katie tore the paper off and then unrolled the gift. It was a small rug for her room.

"It matches my curtains perfectly," Katie said. She was really surprised.

"It's so Toby and Twinkle can have a warm place to sit," Katie's mother said.

They all laughed.

"Thank you, Toby." Katie gave him a kiss in his highchair.

"Kay-Kay, Kay-Kay," Toby said.

"And thank you, too, Twinkle." Katie patted his head. Twinkle wagged his tail.

Katie took a deep breath. "Is it time for cake and ice cream?" she asked.

"Not yet," Katie's dad said. "There's one more present. Close your eyes."

Katie sat in her chair and closed her eyes.

"What could it be?" she wondered silently. She was hoping for a bike, but she didn't really think she was going to get one.

Katie heard the back door slam. Then, a few moments later, she heard it open.

Then Katie's dad said, "Okay, honey. You can open your eyes now."

Katie opened her eyes. There, to her surprise, was a big, new bike. It was purple with two pink stripes. And it had a new yellow helmet hanging on it.

"Is that for me?" Katie screamed. Katie was really surprised. She jumped up and ran to the bike.

"That's for you," her dad said. "Now that you're nine, we thought you needed a bigger bike."

"Do you like it?" Katie's mom asked.

"Oh, Mama," Katie cried, "it's just perfect! Can I take it out for a ride?"

"Okay, but just a short one," her mom said.
"We're going to have cake, remember?"

Katie remembered. "Just a short one. Then Daddy can help me change the seat. It might be too high or too low." Katie plopped the helmet on her head. "Come on, Twinkle," she cried.

Katie and Twinkle returned ten minutes later. They burst in the back door.

"The bike is so great!" Katie shouted. "Thanks, Mama. Thanks, Daddy."

"We're glad," her mom said. "Are you ready for cake and ice cream?"

Katie's mom had set the table with birthday plates and napkins.

"I'm ready," Katie said. Then she went to wash her hands.

Katie's dad set the cake in front of Katie. Then he lit the candles. Nine candles for nine years. Then the family sang "Happy Birthday."

Now it was time to make a wish and blow the candles out. Katie touched the blue bow in her hair. Then Katie made a silent wish.

"I wish," she thought, "I could meet the person who left me the hair bow. And also the spinning top on my dresser." Then she took a deep breath.

But before Katie could blow the candles out, something strange happened. The candles went out by themselves. All nine of them! It looked like a big wind went through the kitchen.

"Whoa! What was that?" Katie said, surprised.

"It must have come in the screen door," her dad said. Then he shut the back door. "Let's try it again."

Katie's dad lit the candles again.

Katie touched the bow in her hair and made the same wish. Then she took another deep breath.

Whoosh! Before Katie could blow out the candles, it happened again. All the candles went out!

"What in the world?" Katie's mother exclaimed.

Just then, Katie thought she heard laughing.

"Do you hear that laughter?" she asked her mom and dad. "It sounds like a girl. A girl laughing."

Katie's mom and dad grew quiet.

"I don't hear anything," Katie's dad said.

"Neither do I," said her mom.

"Listen," Katie said. "There it is again."

But before they could hear anything, Katie saw something strange.

"Look at that!" Katie almost shouted. She pointed to Toby and Twinkle. Toby was standing in his highchair. He was completely turned around. He was facing the back corner of the kitchen. Twinkle was right beside him. Twinkle was also looking at the empty corner. And Twinkle was wagging his tail!

Toby shouted, "Kibo, Kibo!"

"What's he saying?" Mrs. Russell asked. She grabbed Toby before he fell.

"I don't know," Katie said. "It sounds like *Kibo*, but what does that mean?"

"No idea," Katie's father said. "Want to try the candles one more time?"

Katie did. This time she made it. She blew them out herself.

After they had cake and ice cream, Katie took her presents to her room. Then she saw something on her dresser. It was next to her jar of lucky pennies. And it was next to the spinning top that Jewish children played with.



It was an old-fashioned locket. A heart-shaped locket. Katie picked up the locket and opened it. Inside was an old-fashioned picture of a girl. She wore her dark hair in a ponytail with a big bow. On the other side was a picture of a young woman. She, too, looked old-fashioned.

On the back, Katie read some words. "To Kimble," it said. And then lower, it said, "Love always, Mother."

"Kimble!" Katie said out loud. "Toby said *Kibo*," Katie continued. "Kimble. Kibo. Could it be?"

Just then, Katie heard a noise. She turned around. Sitting on her bed was a blue ghost. The ghost wore an old-fashioned dress. She had long, dark hair. And her hair was in a ponytail with a big bow!

Katie jumped a little. She wasn't scared. She was just surprised.

"Kimble?" Katie said.

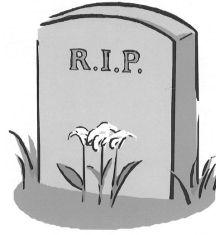
Just like that, the girl disappeared. Then Katie heard the laughter again.

"Kimble," Katie said dreamily. "Kimble."

Katie was lost in thought. She felt happy and peaceful.

"Boy, that was neat," Katie thought. Then she picked up the locket and ran downstairs.

"Hey, Mama!" Katie shouted. "Guess what?"



Chapter 5

THE GRAVEYARD

"So," Katie said to her mom, "there are three surprises now. The blue bow, the dreidel, and the locket."

Katie had found her mother in the kitchen. Toby and Twinkle were in the living room with Mr. Russell. Katie was glad. She had just found the locket. She needed time to talk to her mother alone.

Katie's mom sat down at the kitchen table. Katie handed her mom the locket.

"*To Kimble,*" Mrs. Russell read. "*Love always, Mother.* I think you're right, Katie. The two pictures inside the locket must be Kimble and her mother. It looks like they lived a long time ago."

"And the girl I saw in my room, Mama," Katie said. "She looked just like this picture!"

Katie's mom nodded her head. "There are many things we can't explain. Sometimes we need to understand with our hearts."

"So," Katie went on, "do you think the girl I saw was Kimble? Was she Kimble's ghost?"

"Kimble's ghost. Hmm," Katie's mother said. "I don't know what I think yet. I need more time. But I believe you saw something."

Katie was glad her mother believed her. But, Katie was now sure that it was Kimble's ghost.

And Katie was not afraid.

"Kimble is friendly," Katie thought. "She has shared her own belongings with me. Maybe that was Kimble who blew out my candles today." Katie laughed at that thought.

"If that was Kimble," Katie reasoned to herself, "then Toby and Twinkle saw her, too. First, she blew out my candles. Then she went over to Toby and Twinkle in the corner. And they like her. Toby was laughing. And Twinkle was wagging his tail."

Katie looked at her mother. "How can I find out about Kimble?"

Mrs. Russell had an idea. "If the child you saw was Kimble's ghost," she said, "then Kimble

probably died when she was a child. And that was a long time ago."

Katie agreed.

Mrs. Russell continued. "When we bought this house, I remember Daddy and I saw a small church. It was about a mile down the road. Farther down from the church was a cemetery. You know, a graveyard. It was quite small. But it was very neat. It was still in good condition. Maybe someone takes care of it."

Katie jumped. This sounded exciting.

"Maybe tomorrow," Mrs. Russell said, "you can ride your bike over there. You can look around. You might learn something from a grave marker."

"I'll do that!" Katie cried.

The next day, Katie got up early. She dressed in her new blue shorts and top. And she put the blue bow in her hair.

"Kimble's bow," she thought, touching it.

Katie decided to leave the locket on her dresser, though. She took a red velvet box out of her top drawer. She removed the necklace that was in the box and placed Kimble's locket there instead.

"There," she thought. "A special box for a special locket." She placed the red box next to the dreidel and her jar of lucky pennies.

After breakfast, Katie went out into the backyard. There she found her dad and Twinkle. Mr. Russell was watering the lawn. Twinkle was resting in the shade.

"Daddy," Katie said, "I want to ride my bike down to that church."

Katie's dad looked up from his work. "Okay," he said. "But please stay by the side of the road. And take Twinkle with you."

Katie threw on her new helmet and jumped onto her new purple bike.

"Come on, Twinkle," she cried.

And they were off.

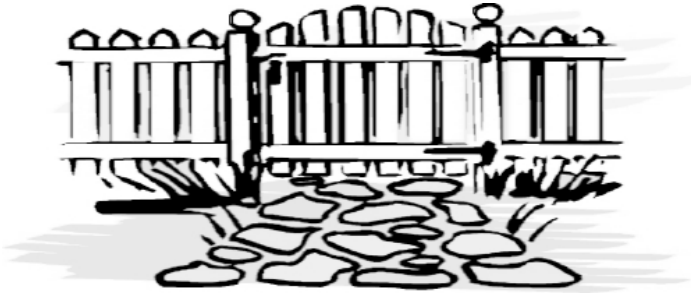
It didn't take long to find the church. The church was small and white. It had steps in the front.

Katie could see the graveyard farther up. She kept on going. Twinkle ran after her.

When Katie got to the graveyard, she saw a big gate. The gate was closed.

"Do you think we can go in?" Katie said to Twinkle. Twinkle barked.

Katie got off her bike. She parked it next to the fence and hung her yellow helmet on it. Then she and Twinkle walked to the big gate. Katie looked at it. Then she tried to lift a piece of metal. The metal piece moved and the gate swung open.



Katie and Twinkle walked inside. Katie walked slowly. Twinkle walked slowly, too.

"This is a little spooky," Katie said.

Twinkle put his head to her hand.

A small road went down the middle of the cemetery. There were grave markers on each side.

"Well, let's start here. In the front," Katie said to Twinkle. "First, we'll do the left side. Then the right."

Twinkle followed along as Katie walked from grave to grave. Katie read each marker carefully. But she did not see Kimble's name.

Katie kept moving from stone to stone. She was almost in a trance.

"Kimble," she whispered aloud. "I have to find Kimble."

Katie was so lost in her dream that she wasn't paying attention to where she was walking. Then, just as Katie was about to start another row, boom! She fell over backwards into an open grave! Katie was six feet under!

"Oh, no!" she cried. Katie was not hurt. But Katie was lying at the bottom of the grave. After a moment, she sat up. There was black dirt under her. There was also black dirt on all four sides.

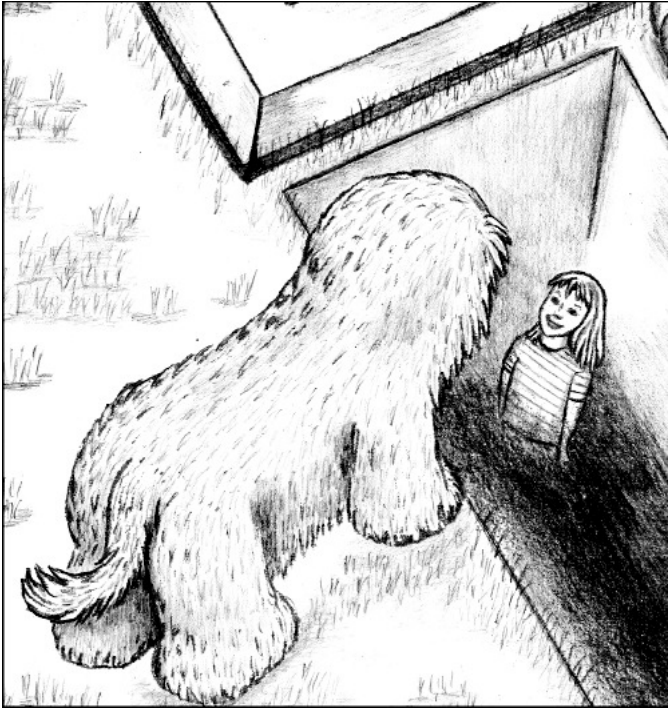
"This ground is hard," Katie said loudly. "I should be hurt. Very hurt."

Then she remembered. When she fell, she heard a loud *whoosh* sound. And it felt like she landed on a pillow. A big, soft pillow of air.

"I wonder what that was," Katie thought.

Katie stood up. She looked up. Two feet above her head, she saw Twinkle. He was looking down at her. And he was barking wildly.

"I'm okay," she shouted up to Twinkle. "But how am I going to get out of here?" she said to herself.



Just then, Twinkle's barking changed. Twinkle ran from the grave. The barking sounded far away. Then he ran back to the grave. The barking got louder again.

Katie looked up. This time, she saw two faces. Twinkle's and an old man's.

"Hey, hey, Missy," the man laughed. "How did you get down there? I'd join you, but it's not my time!" At this, the old man laughed even harder.

Katie shouted up to him. "Can you help me out?"

"I can sure try," the old man said.

The old man got down on his hands and knees. He put his right arm into the grave. Katie held on to his hand.

"Try to climb up," the man shouted.

Katie tried.

"It's not working," Katie yelled. "The dirt falls and my feet slip. Can you lift me?" Katie hoped he could.

"Sorry, Missy," he said, still holding her hand. "I'm an old man. My arms are not strong enough."

Katie thought a moment. "Maybe you can go get help," she yelled.

"Okie-dokie," the old man agreed. "Let's try it one more time, first."

Just then, as the old man pulled one more time, there was a loud noise. *Whoosh!* Katie felt a blast of air beneath her. Up she went. The wind pushed her up and the old man pulled her out.

"Whoa!" cried Katie.

"Whoa, indeed!" said the old man. He fell back on the seat of his pants. "I guess I'm stronger than I thought!"

Katie was lying on the grass. She was out of breath, but she was happy. Twinkle fell all over Katie. First, he licked her. Then he barked. Then he licked her again.

"That's some dog you have there, Missy."
The old man laughed.

Chapter 6



MR. CLEM

Katie and the old man stood up. They brushed the grass from their clothes. Twinkle stood up, too.

The old man looked into the open grave. "That was some fall, Missy," he said. "Are you okay?"

"I'm okay," Katie said. "Just a little dirty." Katie's new blue shorts and top were a real mess.

"And thank you for saving me," Katie added.

The old man leaned over the grave again.

"Looks like you lost your hair bow down there, Missy," he said.

Katie looked back into the deep grave. At the bottom, she saw the blue bow. Kimble's bow.

"Oh, no," Katie said quietly. "That was a special gift." Twinkle sat down near Katie. He put his head down.

The old man looked at Katie and Twinkle. They seemed so sad. The old man felt sorry for Katie.

"I'll tell you what, Missy," he said.

"Tomorrow, I'll borrow my nephew's truck. We'll bring a ladder. We'll get your hair bow back."

"Oh, thank you!" Katie cried. Twinkle jumped up. "And by the way, sir, my name is Katie Russell. I am pleased to meet you," Katie said.

"And I, Miss Katie, am Clem Evans," the old man said. "You may call me Clem."

"Thank you, Mr. Clem," said Katie politely.

"You know, Miss Katie," said Mr. Clem, "something strange happened this morning."

"What was it?" Katie asked with interest.

"Well, I was over at the church. I'm the caretaker there. And here, at the cemetery. Anyway, I was sweeping the floor. And then. . . ." Mr. Clem stopped.

"What?" Katie cried. She couldn't stand it.

"And then," Mr. Clem said, "a song book fell on the floor. Boom! Just like that!"

"That is strange!" Katie said.

"But wait, Miss Katie. There's more," Mr. Clem said, gulping. "The book started moving."

Katie got chills up her back. Twinkle barked.

"It moved and I followed it," Mr. Clem continued. "Then the church door opened. All by itself! And I watched the song book. It went bang, bang, bang. Right down the front steps. Then it stopped."

"Oh, my!" shouted Katie.



"Then, I walked down the steps," Mr. Clem continued. "I bent over to pick up the song book. That's when I heard your dog barking! So, I came right over!"

Katie was shocked. "Kimble!" she thought.

It all became clear to Katie. The pillow of air at the bottom of the grave. The burst of wind pushing her out. And now the song book moving. Kimble.

"Kimble must have followed me to the graveyard," Katie thought. "When I fell, she saved me. She made a pillow of air! Then, she moved the song book. Mr. Clem followed it. He went outside and heard Twinkle. Then, Mr. Clem was not strong enough to pull me. So Kimble made a burst of air to help push me."

Katie felt her heart grow big with love. She was so thankful. Kimble was such a good friend.

"So, where do you live, Miss Katie?" Mr. Clem said. They started walking towards the gate. Twinkle ran ahead.

"We just moved here a few days ago," Katie said. "We live in a big, old house. It's about a mile down the road."

"Oh, you moved into the old Laurence house, did you?" said Mr. Clem.

"The old Laurence house?" Katie said. "Why is it called that?"

"Why, I believe there was a Dr. Laurence. A medical doctor. He built the house."

Mr. Clem laughed. "It was a little before my time. But just a little!"

Katie laughed.

"Was Dr. Laurence Jewish?" Katie asked.

"Jewish. Hmm. Not to my knowledge," Mr. Clem said. "Think he came from England. Why do you ask?"

Katie decided to tell Mr. Clem.

"Well," she said, "I found an old toy in the house. A Jewish toy. A dreidel. It's a spinning top."

"Hmm. A dreidel," Mr. Clem said. "I don't remember a Jewish family there. But, you know what, Miss Katie? I know someone who might remember."

"Who?" Katie cried. She was growing excited.



"Her name is Mrs. Bumgart. She lives on a farm near the old Laurence house. Near you, Miss Katie," Mr. Clem corrected. "It's about half a mile the other way. Towards town. On the other side of the road."

"And you think she'll remember?" Katie said hopefully.

"Well, she might know," said Mr. Clem. "You see, up till a few years ago, her family had the newspaper. Her grandfather started it more than a hundred years ago. Mrs. Bumgart saved all of them. Each and every newspaper, Miss Katie."

"Oh!" Katie cried. "So Mrs. Bumgart could look in the newspapers!"

It was a great idea. Mr. Clem, Katie and Twinkle walked out the gate. Mr. Clem closed the gate behind them.

Katie got on her bike. "Thank you, Mr. Clem! Thank you!" she cried. Katie put on her helmet and started down the road. Twinkle ran after her.

"You are very welcome, Miss Katie!" Mr. Clem shouted. "Very welcome!"

When Katie got home, she ran into the kitchen.

"What have you gotten into?" her mother said, surprised.

"I'll tell you later, Mama," Katie said. "Now I just want to take a bath. And change clothes."

Katie ran upstairs to her room. When she walked in, something blue caught her eye. Katie went over to the dresser. The blue bow! Kimble's blue bow! It was on the dresser!

"It can't be!" Katie shouted. "I just got home. Mr. Clem is still at the church."

Then she understood. Kimble!

Katie closed her bedroom door. She didn't want anyone to hear her.

"Kimble! Kimble!" Katie whispered. "Please appear."

Just then, Kimble appeared in front of the bed.

"Kimble!" Katie cried. "Oh, Kimble!"

Kimble looked the same as she had before. She had long dark hair. Her hair was in a ponytail. And she wore an old-fashioned dress.

This time, Kimble was standing. Katie saw that Kimble was tall. Just a little taller than Katie. Kimble looked like a real person now. Not like a ghost.

"Can I touch you?" Katie asked.

"Sometimes you can," Kimble said. "You can now." Kimble held out her hands for Katie.

Katie took Kimble's hands. Such joy she felt!
Katie swung Kimble's hands. Back and forth.
Back and forth.

"I'm so happy to meet you," Katie cried.

"I like your new birthday clothes," Kimble said, smiling. "Blue is your color."

"But I'm all dirty now," Katie said. Then she remembered. The grave!

"Kimble," Katie cried, "you saved me! You saved me when I fell! And you brought the blue bow back. You put it on my dresser!"

"I did," Kimble said. "And I heard you talking to Mr. Clem. Will you go see Mrs. Bumgart today?" Kimble asked.

"Well, I know you now," Katie said. "Do I need to know more?" she asked.

"Oh, yes, Katie. Please go," Kimble said.

"There's something I need to know."

Kimble looked like she might cry.

"What is it, Kimble?" Katie said gently.

Kimble continued. "It's my mother," Kimble said. "I can't find her. Please go, Katie. Please help me find my mother."

"Of course, I will," said Katie.

"Can I follow you?" Kimble asked. "I mean, secretly?"

"Of course, you can," said Katie. Katie was so glad to help Kimble.

Kimble cheered up. "I'll come back tomorrow, too," she said. "I'll show you my secret room."

"Secret room!" Katie jumped. "That sounds great! And thank you, Kimble. Thank you for the presents. And thank you for saving me."

Katie hugged Kimble. "And thank you for being my friend," Katie said. "I love you, Kimble," Katie whispered in her ear.

"I love you, too, Katie," Kimble whispered back.

Then Kimble disappeared.

The Kimble, Kimble Chant

Kimble, Kimble is a ghost.
Katie, Katie loves her most.
Twinkle, Twinkle great big dog,
Found a bow inside a log!

Kimble, Kimble put it there.
Katie wore it in her hair.
Friends they are and friends they'll be
Throughout all eternity.

*Make up your own hand claps to go with the
Kimble, Kimble chant!*

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