

**CATCO**  
presents

# PRIMA DONNA



a world premiere by Chris Leyva  
inspired by the Sherlock Holmes story,  
*A Scandal in Bohemia*

**directed by Laura Gordon**

April 29 - May 15, 2022 | Riffe Center Theatre, Studio One

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# CATCO'S LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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We seek to inspire a community of empathy and have a responsibility to recognize the ways in which we benefit from colonization, both historical and ongoing. A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and celebrates the resilience and strength that all Indigenous people have shown worldwide.

We acknowledge that in Central Ohio, we are on the traditional homelands of the Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe, and Cherokee Indigenous nations who have strong ties to these lands. Today, individuals from a broad range of Indigenous backgrounds call Columbus and central Ohio home.

We recognize generations who contributed their traditions, hopes, and spirit to make the history that led to this moment. While some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted, others arrived here hoping for a better life, while others were forcibly taken and brought here against their will. The acknowledgment of the truth of these realities is critical to building mutual respect and connection.

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# A NOTE FROM CATCO'S ARTISTIC & EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

## Hello...

Thank you for joining us for the final play in our 2021/22 season, the world premiere of *Prima Donna* by Chris Leyva. We are thrilled to be rounding out our season with a play by a Columbus playwright created right here by Columbus artists.

We were gripped by Chris' dynamic writing and this fun, thrilling look at one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's most famous female character.

If you joined us for our virtual New Works Festival in February 2021, you'll remember the fantastic reading of *Prima Donna*! Audience feedback was great, thoughts shared with us about the reading were incorporated into the next draft, and now, more drafts later, here we are at the world premiere!

Our work this season is all about community and telling stories that bring us together. At CATCO, we believe storytelling grounded in the current moment sparks joy and connection, building a community of empathy.

We are also very grateful to all of our supporters, especially our season sponsors: the Greater Columbus Arts Council, the Ohio Arts Council, The



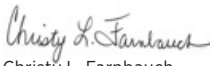
Leda Hoffmann, Artistic Director (photo left) and Christy Farnbauch, Executive Director (photo right). Photo by Purple Star Photography

Columbus Foundation, the LBrands Foundation, the Nationwide Foundation, and The Shubert Foundation.

Thank you for being with us this season. We'll be announcing our productions for next season soon! Stay tuned!

Leda and Christy

  
Leda Hoffmann  
Artistic Director

  
Christy L. Farnbauch  
Executive Director

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## CATCO STAFF

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**CATCO**

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Leda Hoffmann

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Christy Farnbauch

*presents*

# PRIMA DONNA



**INSPIRED BY**

The Sherlock Holmes Story,  
*A Scandal in Bohemia*

**BY**

Chris Leyva

**DIRECTED BY**

Laura Gordon\*

**Set Designer** Dan Gray

**Costume Designer** Angelina Herin

**Lighting Designer** Jason Fassl\*\*

**Sound Designer** Christina Bodensiek

**Props Designer** Ben Sostrom

**Dialect Coach/Movement and Intimacy Consultant** Angela Iannone

**Casting Director** Christopher Austin

**Stage Manager** Kaitlyn Pfeifer\*\*

**Substitute Stage Manager** Rebecca Lindsey

**Assistant Stage Manager** Jaclyn M. Benedict

**April 29 - May 15**

**Riffe Center Theatres, Studio One**

**SEASON SUPPORT**



**Nationwide  
Foundation**

**Ohio Arts  
Council**



The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

## CAST

Acacia Leigh Duncan.....	Irene Adler
Summit J Star.....	Pamela Proctor
Brian C. Gray.....	Godfrey Norton
Luke Bovenizer.....	Wilhelm Von Ormstein
Jeff Horst*.....	Sherlock Holmes
Nigel D. Salvador.....	John Watson

PRIMA DONNA WILL BE PERFORMED WITH AN INTERMISSION

## ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION STAFF

Angela Iannone.....	Dialect Coach/Movement and Intimacy Consultant
Ben Sostrom.....	Props Designer
Mariah Hamburg .....	Assistant Costume Designer
Rowan Winterwood.....	Master Electrician
Delaney Althausen.....	Wardrobe
Isaac Steinhour .....	Technical Director
Ellie Iannucci.....	Electrician
Rusty Sneedeen .....	Electrician
Braden Graves.....	Electrician

Scenic Build by Columbus Children's Theatre

## SPECIAL THANKS

Giving Tuesday Donors, Dr. Jeff Keyes, Cleo Bonnell, and The Ohio State University Department of Theatre, Film & Media Arts.

Special thanks to Joe Bishara, Jeremy Sony, Andrew Protopapas, Daniela Vinitiski, Anne G. Morgan, Curtain Players New Play Initiative, PlayPenn, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council for their support in the development of this play.

**\*The Director is a member of the stage directors and choreographers society, a national theatrical labor union.**

**\*\*Actors and Stage Managers appear courtesy of the Actors' Equity Association.**

**\*\*\*The Lighting Designer for Prima Donna is represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the IATSE.**



The Director is a member of the  
STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS  
SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.



## A COLLABORATION CONVERSATION WITH PLAYWRIGHT CHRIS LEYVA AND DIRECTOR LAURA GORDON



**LAURA:** Hi Chris. First of all, let me say how much I've enjoyed working with you on *Prima Donna*. As a director one of the things that's always front and center in my mind is honoring the playwright's intent. You've been sitting right next to me at every rehearsal, and I can just turn to you and ask, "what do mean by that?" It saves so much time! But seriously, to have access to your thought process has been really inspiring. This play focuses on Irene Adler, the only woman to ever outsmart Sherlock Holmes. When did the idea to make minor characters out of Holmes and Watson first occur to you?

**CHRIS:** Hello Laura! I've so appreciated collaborating with you in the rehearsal room. Part of the joy of this rehearsal process has been testing the "wild ideas" in the play. One of the very first "wild ideas" I had when writing this play was, "Can I write a play based on a Sherlock Holmes story that doesn't have Sherlock Holmes in it?" I was so intent on writing Irene Adler's story that I resisted having Sherlock and Watson in the play at all. Obviously, that "wild idea" was scaled back a bit! There are plenty of other "wild ideas" still present in the play, including when the characters of Irene and Pam play a multitude of other characters in Irene Adler's past. I'm really curious how you, as a director, approached these "wild ideas."

**LAURA:** I'm wild about your ideas! Frankly, the uniqueness of the storytelling is one of the things that drew me to your script. I love that Irene and Pam are in control of their story. We're having a great time trying to figure out how to bring your ideas to life. That's what I love about collaboration. There's a kind of intuitive trust that it will all work out if we have the right people in the room contributing to solving the mystery. And we have a creative group of actors who are up to the task. It's a lot of trial and error. I have a notion about how a scene might be staged, but that notion often morphs into something else entirely. The other day an actor asked "like this?"



Does this work?" And I said, "I'm not sure. We didn't have a class on acting with doppelgängers when I was in grad school." And speaking of grad school, that was a crazy, wonderful realization that we went to the same program!

**CHRIS:** Yes! Go Hawks! That was one of many, many wonderful realizations we've had throughout this process. Sitting back and watching you and the actors work has been so rewarding. We have a room full of curious and engaged collaborators, unafraid to ask questions that end up strengthening the play. And then, of course, there were the frequent "blue line" moments! I use a fine tip blue marker to mark lines or moments I want to revisit or investigate for a possible revision. It was always so funny to me to check in with you after a scene and see that my blue lines completely matched the questions you had. I feel like you've had such a solid grasp on the tone and rhythm of the story from the beginning. It's certainly a different tone from other "Sherlock" stories!

**LAURA:** In addition to it being a different tone, what I most appreciate about the play is what it has to say about identity, and the value of embracing your authentic self. The way you've layered this theme within a fun, whimsical, sometimes irreverent romp is so delightful. You are an alchemist.

**CHRIS:** You are so kind! I'm so grateful for the way you and the actors have embraced the themes of the play and are constantly looking at crafting clear and honest moments. These are whimsical and heightened situations, yes, but these characters are grounded humans going through them. You've always kept sight of that! I try so hard to consider the audience's experience with the plays I write. I certainly want them to be entertained and enjoy their time with the characters, but I also want an audience to leave the play with something to discuss with their friends and families. I think we've done just that! Thank you so much, Laura!

**LAURA:** It's been my pleasure, Chris.

**ACACIA LEIGH DUNCAN** [She/Her/Hers] (Irene Adler) is happy to be returning to the CATCO stage where she was last seen in *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play*, and *The Rubenstein Kiss*. As a founding member of Available Light Theatre, she has had numerous roles: actor, director, choreographer, costume designer, and writer. A few favorites include *Every Brilliant Thing*, *Dance Nation*, *You Got Older*, *John Cage 101*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Don Quixote*, and *Cymbeline*. She has also performed with Actor's Theatre, Wild Women Writing, Gallery Players, Red Herring, and others. During the day, Acacia is the Director of Training and Coaching for Articulation, helping leaders excel as confident and compelling speakers. But more than anything, she loves to escape into nature and camp with her husband, Matt. "Thank you to Chris and Laura for entrusting Irene to my care. The game is most definitely afoot!"

**SUMMIT J. STARR** [She/Her/Hers] (Pamela Proctor) is a Columbus-based artist who most recently performed in *Head Over Heels* at CATCO. She is the lyricist/vocalist for the music duo FOX+RAM and COO of Photography for RockDaddyDesign. She has traveled internationally with Teatro Travieso performing in their social justice production *Women of Ciudad Juárez*. Past musical theatre credits include *Flotsam - The Little Mermaid* (Beck Center for the Arts), *Consuelo - West Side Story* (Akron Symphony Orchestra), *Waitress #1 - Rock of Ages* (ShadowboxLive), *Peggy - Godspell*,

and Fruma Sarah - *Fiddler on the Roof* (Schoenbrunn Amphitheatre). Follow her on IG to stay up to date with her artistic endeavors!: @summit.j.starr

**BRIAN C. GRAY** [He/Him/His] (Godfrey Norton) is happy to be back on stage with CATCO once again this season. Local credits include *Mr. Burns: a post-electric play* and *Head Over Heels* with CATCO, *The Addams Family* Quarantine Concert (Mal Beineke) with Short North Stage, [Porto], *Dance Nation*, and *Bootleg Radio* with Available Light Theatre, *Rent* (Collins), *Hairspray* (Seaweed), and *Sister Act* (TJ) with Imagine Productions, *Annie* (Rooster) and *1940's Radio Hour* (Neal) with SoArtsPro, and *Zanna Don't* (Arvin) with Evolution Theatre.

**LUKE BOVENIZER** [He/Him/His] (Wilhelm Von Ormstein) has been seen in CATCO's *Head Over Heels*. Other Regional: *Matilda* (Miss Trunchbull - Jebby & Theatre Roundtable Awards); *The Addams Family* (Fester); *Noises Off* (Freddie); *Spamalot* (Galahad); *The Rocky Horror Show* (Narrator); *Mamma Mia!* (Harry - Jebby Award); *West Side Story* (Doc); *Aida* (Zoser); *Billy Elliot* (Mr. Braithwaite); *Young Frankenstein* (Victor/Ens.); *Sister Act* (Ens.). BFA in musical theatre from Otterbein University. Special Thanks: Mom, Matt, family, friends, and the entire team at CATCO! Instagram: @thebovenizer

**JEFF HORST\*** [He/ Him/ His] (Sherlock Holmes) is thrilled to return to the CATCO stage in *Prima Donna*! Selected credits include: *Fully*



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*Committed, The Story of My Life*(CATCO); *Jane Eyre* (AVLT); *A**Christmas Carol - National Tour* (NTC

Productions). Jeff has acted with several central Ohio theatre companies, as well as taught summer and after-school programs. Currently, he is Director of Theatre at Springfield High School in Springfield, OH. Jeff holds degrees in music education from Ohio State University and theatre education from Ohio Wesleyan University. He serves on the Ohio Chapter Board of the Educational Theatre Association and is a proud member of the Actor's Equity Association.

**NIGEL D. SALVADOR** [He/ Him/ His]

(John Watson) is currently employed in the Information Technology (IT) field but has aspirations to take his acting side hustle into the realm of a professional career. His big break in the community theater space was in the lead role as Walter Younger in MTVarts' production of Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*. This past January, Nigel was featured in Stage Right Theatrics' production of Dana Hall's *Underneath*, part of their 6th Annual Conservative Theatre Festival. His role as Dr. Watson in CATCO's production of Chris Leyva's *Prima Donna* will be his first time working with them, an experience he is greatly looking forward to. Later this year, you can catch Nigel in the role of Odysseus in Original Productions Theater's (OPT) production of Jeremy Llorence's *Voice of the Net*. Look for more of him in 2022 and beyond. Enjoy the show!

# PRODUCTION STAFF BIOS

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## CHRIS LEYVA [He/ Him/ His]

(Playwright) is so grateful to have the chance to share *Prima Donna* with you! He was awarded an Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award for FY 2022 for *Prima Donna*, which was developed through the CATCO New Works Festival and the Curtain Players New Play Initiative. Chris' previous plays have been commissioned and developed by CATCO, CLIMB Theatre, MadLab Theatre, Alliance Theatre, Curtain Players New Play Initiative, Great Plains Theatre Conference, and the Columbus School for Girls, among others. He received an MFA from the Playwrights Workshop at The University of Iowa, a BA in Directing from Coe College, and is a member of the Dramatists Guild.

## LAURA GORDON [She/ Her Hers]

(Director) A Milwaukee based actor and director, Laura's directing credits include *Steel Magnolias* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park); *She Stoops to Conquer*, *The Unexpected Man*, *An Ideal Husband*, *The Royal Family*, *Seascape*, *Old Times* (American Players Theatre); *The Foreigner*, *Venus in Fur*, *Almost Maine* (Milwaukee Rep); *Boeing, Boeing* (Indiana Rep); *Measure for Measure*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Winter's Tale* (Utah Shakespeare Festival); *Romeo and Juliet*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Santa Cruz Shakespeare); *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* (Actors Theater of Louisville); *Russian Transport*, *Amelia*, *Skin Tight* (Renaissance Theaterworks); *The Revolutionists* (Next Act Theatre); *Heisenberg*, *Red*, *Going to St. Ives* (Forward Theater). Her acting

credits include Winnie in *Happy Days*, Margie in *Good People*, Linda Loman in *Death of a Salesman*, Sister Aloysius in *Doubt*, Elizabeth in *Richard III*, Maureen in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*. Laura is a Lunt-Fontanne Fellow and an Associate Artist with the Milwaukee Repertory Theater. She received her MFA in Acting from the University of Iowa and is a member of SDC and the Actors Equity Association.

## DAN GRAY [He/ Him/ His] (Set Designer)

is excited to be back at rocking out with *Prima Donna*. Other recent CATCO designs include *Head Over Heels*, *Life Sucks*, *Educating Rita*, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, *The Seafarer*, *The Secret Garden* and *The Pillowman*. Dan's other regional theatre credits include numerous designs for The George Street Playhouse, Capital Rep, Players Theatre Columbus, the Delaware Theatre Company, and The Human Race Theatre Company (Dayton, OH). He also designs for many Central Ohio companies including BalletMet, Opera Columbus, The Dayton Ballet, and The Columbus Symphony. Dan is the Resident Scenic Designer and an Associate Professor at The Ohio State University Department of Theatre.

## ANGELINA M. HERIN [She/ Her/ Hers]

(Costume Designer) is a Cleveland-based costume and wig designer. Her work has been presented nationally at venues including the Cleveland Play House, Texas Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Opera, Cleveland Public Theatre, American Folklore Theatre, Montana

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Repertory Theatre, and Theater at Monmouth. Additionally, Ms. Herin is an Associate Professor of Theater and Resident Costume Designer at Case Western Reserve University. MFA: The University of South Carolina. She is a proud member of USITT, StateraArts, and an alumna of Alpha Xi Delta. [www.angelinaherin.com](http://www.angelinaherin.com)

**JASON FASSL** [He/ Him/ His] (Lighting Designer) This is Jason's second CATCo production following last summer's *An Iliad*, and his seventeenth production collaborating with Director Laura Gordon. Jason has consumed mass quantities of electricity at American Players Theatre, The Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Milwaukee Ballet, First Stage Children's Theatre, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Next Act Theatre, Forward Theatre Company, Skylight Music Theatre, Peninsula Players, Milwaukee Opera Theatre, The Fireside and many others. Jason is member of Scenic Artists Local #829, Milwaukee Stage Hands Local #18 and a proud graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. Portfolio and information at [www.AntiShadows.com](http://www.AntiShadows.com).

**CHRISTINA BODENSIEK** [She/ Her/ Hers] (Sound Designer) is new to CATCO and is excited for the opportunity to work on *Prima Donna*. She is new to Columbus and is currently working as a lighting specialist for Mills James. Prior to her move she worked as the Assistant Technical Director at Eissey Campus Theatre in Palm

Beach Gardens, FL for four years, and freelanced as an audio engineer and lighting designer. She holds a bachelors in Music Composition from Palm Beach Atlantic University.

**CHRISTOPHER AUSTIN** [He/Him/His] (Casting Director) graduated with a BA in theater from Otterbein University and earned his MA in pastoral and professional counseling from Methodist Theological School in Ohio. He has worked in voice-over, film, and stage productions in Ohio and abroad. His performances as Othello in *Othello* and John in *The Whipping Man* received critical acclaim and award recognition. He served as the emcee for CATCO's 2021 gala and performed in CATCO's virtual productions of Short Plays Toward an Antiracist Tomorrow and A Columbus Christmas Carol last season.

## ADDITIONAL STAFF BIOS

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**LEDA HOFFMANN** [She/Her/Hers] (Artistic Director) is in her second season as CATCO's Artistic Director. CATCO directing credits include *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play*, *An Iliad*, the reading of *George and the Hidden Dragon*, and the virtual production of *A Columbus Christmas Carol*. Previously, Leda was Artistic Director at Strawdog Theatre Company in Chicago. Before that, Leda served on Milwaukee Rep's artistic staff for seven years, working in the Education and Literary departments and founding Milwaukee Rep's Community Engagement Department. Also in Milwaukee, as the Artistic Director of Luminous Theatre, Leda produced and directed site-specific productions of *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play*, and *The Penelopiad*. Leda's work as a director has been seen across the country at Milwaukee Rep, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Texas Shakespeare Festival, University of Miami, Door Shakespeare, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Jedlicka Performing Arts Center, Northbrook Theatre, The Alchemist Theatre, Max and Louie Productions, and Riverside Theater Iowa City. Leda has also been a teaching artist for over ten years, directing youth and teaching with Hartford Stage, Milwaukee Rep, Mudlark Theater, Northbrook Park District, and Skyline Studios. Leda is a proud graduate of Grinnell College, a former Milwaukee Rep directing resident, Hartford Stage apprentice, SDCF Observer, and a member of Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab. [www.ledahoffmann.com](http://www.ledahoffmann.com)

**CHRISTY FARNBAUCH** [She/Her/Hers]

(Executive Director) became CATCO's executive director in April 2020. She is a highly respected leader in central Ohio's arts and cultural sector, as well as nationwide. Her professional journey has included managing funding and programs for the Ohio Arts Council, building community partnerships for Hilliard City Schools, managing a first-of-its-kind national study of jazz audiences, and serving as executive director of an association for women business owners. She founded her consulting business in 2006 to support nonprofits and small businesses through strategic planning, board development, and fundraising. Her entrepreneurial and innovative mindset has led to the creative transformation of organizations while strengthening their governance structures. Christy holds degrees from Otterbein University in music performance and business administration.

**ALEESHA NASH** [She/Her/Hers] (Marketing Director), a Columbus native, who has experience in theatre and film directing; play and television writing; and theatre marketing, previously oversaw audience development at The Flea Theater in New York City. Before that, she worked in marketing roles for Manhattan-based global nonprofits, collaborating with diverse stakeholders to plan and implement strategies for fundraising, recruitment, and community and government relations. In addition to writing, directing, and producing new works on Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway, director and playwriting credits include Cherry Lane Theatre,



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the National Black Theatre, The Flea Theater, Primary Stages, The Wild Project, The Arctic Group, Goddard College, the Kraine Theatre, and the Drama League in New York City. Nash is an alumna of the Lincoln Center Directors' Lab and the Stage Directors and the Choreographers Foundation Observership Program. A graduate of Otterbein University, she also received an MA from New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, and an MFA in dramatic writing from Goddard College, where she received its Engaged Artist Award.

**FRANCINE MARCHELLE** (Education Director), an educator, producer, director, actress, and singer, who has more than 20 years of youth program

leadership, curriculum development, youth development, child-care, and education experience, most recently was the director of after-school and summer programming at Broad Street Presbyterian Church. She has a master's degree in educational leadership, curriculum, and instruction from the University of Phoenix, and has also led youth education initiatives at the YMCA, Crittenton Community School, and Directions for Youth and Families, where she also was the theatre director. Founder of the Achievement Retro Awards, a youth research arts project based in Atlanta, and the founder and director of Amateur Community Theater, a youth academic arts program also based in Atlanta, Marchelle has produced and directed her own staged plays, including a gospel musical



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love story, *A Trip to God's House*, an autobiographic story, *For the Love of Me!*, and monologues, *We the People Telling Hour Story* and *Men on Pause*.

**JULIA KELLEY** [She/Her/Hers] (House Manager) is thrilled to be back with CATCO as House Manager after working on the New Works Festival in 2021! Julia will graduate from Otterbein University this May with a BFA in Design/Technology for Theatre and a minor in Arts Administration. Some of her Otterbein credits include *A Gentleman's Guide to Love* and *Murder* (House Manager), *The Pajama Game* (Stage Manager) and she is currently the Box Office Manager. Julia would like to thank Leda and Christy for the amazing opportunities with CATCO, as well as everyone she's met on this project!

**SARAH MILLS BACHA** [She/Her/Hers] (Press Representative) is a professional writer and communications/marketing consultant. As president of her own firm, SMB Communications Ltd., which she founded in 1994, she has assisted numerous national and central Ohio companies and organizations with their marketing and communications needs. Before becoming a consultant, she worked as a journalist at daily newspapers. Previous positions include business reporter at *The Columbus Dispatch* in Columbus, OH, comment page editor at *The Journal-Gazette* in Fort Wayne, IN, and stringer for *Reuters*.



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*This list reflects donations and pledges received from July 2020 - February 2022.*

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