

Jenn's Comments

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

Summary: Felix is a French writer living in Paris, who He believes he has everything in order—a beautiful girlfriend, a paying day job, and a novel he's working on—but when he moves in with his girlfriend, cravings start. There is something he wants that he cannot find.

Felix gave his heart to ~~Paris~~^{his city}, and he could not imagine ~~ever wanting it back~~^{he would ever want it back}. On the walk home under the pale rosy ~~Paris~~ dawn, bakeries churned out breads and pastries, and the smell of rising yeast filled the streets. In his youth, Felix would have knocked at the rear door of a bakery and offered cash for a take-away breakfast. He considered suggesting it to Juliette, who, tucked under his arm, was now half-asleep, but he ~~already~~ knew she'd say no.

good sensory

They hadn't meant to stay out all night. It had just sort of happened in a happenstance way. Felix disliked being tired, but Juliette delighted in staying out all night—it made her feel as if something were happening. He wasn't so old that it caused him great pain, and he valiantly, obligingly braved the night crowd—the party-til-dawners who seemed, in spite of their attraction to large crowds, to dislike other people—so that Juliette would have something to brag about. He agreed even though he knew, from months of experience and repetition, she would be in a bad mood for well over twenty-four hours following their night out without sleep.

Comment [PHS 1S1]: Watch the word echo.

Comment [PHS 1S2]: Be more specific.

He pulled her closer. ~~He was moving in with her~~. After a year together, they'd agreed to start cohabitating, when Felix's, "My lease is up," met with Juliette's raised eyebrows. "I'm searching for something close to you," he'd said.

Comment [PHS 1S3]: repetitive

She had feigned nonchalance. ~~eavalierly~~ setting out a candlelit romantic dinner for two, as picture-perfect as a magazine, but her hands had shaken, ~~and~~ Upon seeing that, Felix

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had taken her hands in his. She'd planned to ask over dessert, but the proposal tumbled out instead.

Comment [PHS 154]: POV shift. Unless you meant to say "He'd"

"My apartment is large enough for two." Juliette had inherited her three-room flat in the sixteenth arrondissement from her family. Her offer rescued him from the headache of hunting for a new home. Parisian real estate was so like the city, in near-constant construction, remodeling, and removing, a mercurial landscape. Felix spent most nights at Juliette's anyway. A small collection of belongs, mostly books, waited to follow his migration.

Comment [PHS 155]: Is that what is was all about for him? Or was being with her what he truly wanted?

Felix's longtime friend and coworker Remi had agreed to help him move in exchange for a dinner, a fine wine, and a selection of aged cheeses. Remi was half-Egyptian and half-Spanish, spoke four languages fluently and an additional two partially. It was a skill set that translated into an affable ability to speak with anyone, anywhere. He was also one of the few, rare, cherished people Felix knew with a car.

Later that afternoon, Remi eased his old Renault, full of Felix's boxes, into a small spot, sandwiched between a Tesla and a Peugeot. From her sixth story window, gripping a wrought iron railing, Juliette leaned out and waved down to Remi and Felix. Her long hair dangled down as if to reach down to Felix to invite him up. She seemed fearless and disregarded her safety, her torso hovering over the pavement below. With the sun behind her, Felix couldn't tell if she was smiling or laughing. He had to imagine her grin.

Comment [PHS 156]: Are we back t the present, or still in the past?

"No elevator?" Remi asked for the twentieth time.

"No—and pay attention. Sometimes there's a cat on the stairs."

"Anything else? Loose boards? Sharp nails? A madwoman in the attic?"

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Felix shrugged, pretending he'd forgotten the staircase narrowed after the third floor. He didn't mention the timer on the staircase light either. So when the light flicked off, Remi cursed and smacked the wall until he found a switch.

Felix and Remi had a similar build. They were long and lean and slim and in-shape. So Felix was surprised when after mastering three trips up the stairs, Remi collapsed on Juliette's couch and insisted Felix should have hired someone. One couch would have been easier than ten boxes of books, he claimed.

Juliette—who when asked to help, had noted, “But those boxes are too heavy for me. What help could I be?”—praised Remi and rewarded him with tea, while Felix continued to lug boxes ~~of his belongings~~ up six flights of stairs alone.

By the time he stacked his last box on Juliette's spacious hardwood floor, sweat pasted his button-down to his skin. Two couches and a television framed the front half of the room. A dining table with chairs sat in the other. Persian rugs covered wooden floors. Flowered blue wallpaper ~~plastered the walls~~ ^{er} peeling and cracking ^{er} in spots. In winter, radiators heated ~~to~~ the place, but they couldn't reach every ~~only~~ ^{er} drafty corner, in part because of the large, door-like windows that filled the opposite wall and funneled natural light throughout the room. Juliette had sequestered the corner with a folding Japanese print screen of bamboo in every season. This was to ~~be~~ ^{er} Felix's spot in the apartment. He'd bring in a desk and a chair and write by the window.

While he'd worked, Juliette and Remi had settled together at the dining room table and sipped tea with their backs to the entryway and Felix.

“So Felix has submitted all of his change of address forms?” Remi asked. He leaned over the table ~~to get~~ closer to Juliette. When Juliette nodded, he said, “Shame.”

is the moving-in crucial

Comment [PHS 157]: You've got lots of backstory here. Is the description of the actual moving in crucial to the story? If not, cut it. Plus you're "telling" us everything. Not really "showing" us. If it's important then make it a scene.

shorten this

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

"You wouldn't want to live with me?" Juliette asked.

Felix ~~tilted his head back so he~~ scowled at the ceiling. He ~~headed to~~ grabbed a towel to wipe ~~off some of~~ the sweat. Juliette flirted with everyone, ~~and~~ But he thought ~~maybe~~ since he was huffing like a draft horse after bearing all those boxes up all those stairs, she should ~~see him and~~ knock it off. He agreed ~~with her~~ that everyone should be in love with her, but to see her flirt never failed to make him jealous.

"I would love nothing more. Where will Felix stay?"

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Juliette laughed. ~~Felix pulled a towel from the hallway linen closet and turned back in time to see hi~~er hand brushed Remi's arm. "Felix will stay here of course."

Remi shrugged. "Okay, but Felix sleeps on the couch."

Felix cleared his throat. Remi ~~had charm and~~ loved to flirt. He had a square jaw and a smile like a diamond. For as long as they'd been friends, Remi had prided himself on a playful rapport with the fairer sex. Felix wished he would practice on someone other than Juliette. While Remi could captivate anyone, he well knew that Felix struggled with women and how much he ^{loved} prized Juliette.

"Ah, Felix." Remi waved him in. "You know my upstairs neighbor Claude moved to Colorado in the United States. It's not too late to rent his apartment."

"Why would I want that?" Felix asked. He crossed his arms. "When I can let some loud family rent it and torment you by stomping on the floorboards at all hours?"

"One week here," Juliette's eyes narrowed. "And Felix will never want to leave."

He crossed the room to kiss her.

**

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

If working Monday after a sleeping weekend, spent moving and then unpacking, didn't offer enough torture. Felix suffered from a gnawing craving for something with cinnamon. When he woke in the early dark, he smelled cinnamon but brushed it off. He had a bowl of café au lait and a slice of Nutella toast, and fully expected the craving to desert him over the course of the morning.

Comment [PHS IS8]: I thought they were up all night?

It didn't.

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Instead, it clung to him as he slogged through editing typos out of advertisements, and He endured meetings where he would have napped if the lingering craving hadn't needed him awake. Lunch approached, and he listed off foods containing cinnamon. Cookies, onion soup, coffee cake. The vaguely insatiable desire frustrated him. Who craved cinnamon? ~~Maybe he was confusing cinnamon and apple tarts.~~ He had a nagging feeling that cinnamon had been an ingredient in some treat he couldn't remember. Why it should reappear now, he had no idea.

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He needed to focus. He'd brought his lunch to the office, a ham baguette, and planned to stay there in order to meet his deadline. The week before, he'd accidentally missed one deadline when a simple slogan for a milk poster had spawned an ardent love poem to Juliette. His afternoon had disappeared in a lyrical page to her. He imagined she would be pleased, flattered, spouting praise for him and his writing, but that hadn't been her exact reaction.

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"It's not bad," she'd said when she held it to her nose and squinted. She'd sniffed as if expecting it to smell. "You mix your /'s and /'s in your handwriting."

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LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

~~The disappointment~~ Felix's ~~disappointment~~ ~~feh~~ came out in one long sigh. If her feedback dwelled on his penmanship, then Felix would focus on his work and not risk another deadline. He'd kept his resolve—until an ~~improbable~~ ^{the} cinnamon craving distracted him.

"You aren't focusing," Remi said. He stopped to visit Felix's desk on the way to some meeting. They worked for the same company, but Remi wore ~~in~~ a suit, his job a mix of sales, ~~and~~ PR, and marketing instead of copy. "Go for a walk."

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JULIE

I studied in Paris junior year in college.

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Summary: Felix is a French writer living in Paris who believes he has everything in order--a beautiful girlfriend, a paying day job, and a novel he's working on--but when he moves in with his girlfriend, cravings start. There is something he wants that he cannot find.

NEEDS A STRONGER START. DRAW THE READER IN. SHOW MORE OF FELIX AND JULIETTE'S INTERACTION. I HAVE NO REAL SENSE OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP.

How? Elaborate.

Felix gave his heart to his city, and he could not imagine he would ever want it back.

On the walk home under the pale rosy Paris dawn, bakeries churned out breads and pastries, and the smell of rising yeast filled the streets. In his youth, Felix would have knocked at the rear door of a bakery and offered cash for a take-away breakfast. He considered suggesting it to Juliette, who, tucked under his arm, was half-asleep, but he already knew she'd say no.

Do they often stay out all night?

Is she walking or being carried

They hadn't meant to stay out all night. It had just sort of happened in a happenstance way. Felix disliked being tired, but Juliette delighted in staying out all night—it made her feel as if something were happening. He wasn't so old that it caused him great pain, and he valiantly, obligingly braved the night crowd, the party-til-dawners who seemed, in spite of their attraction to large crowds, to dislike other people so that Juliette would have something to brag about. He agreed even though he knew, from months of experience and repetition, she would be in a bad mood for well over twenty-four hours following their ^{sleepless} night out without sleep.

happen x

misplace modifier should describe "brag"

redundant

He pulled her closer. He was moving in with her. After a year together, they'd agreed to start cohabitating, when Felix's "My lease is up" met with Juliette's raised eyebrows. "I'm searching for something close to you," he'd said.

word choice

She had feigned nonchalance, cavalierly setting out a candlelit romantic dinner for two, as picture-perfect as a magazine, but her hands had shaken, and seeing that, Felix had taken her hands in his. She'd planned to ask over dessert, but the proposal tumbled out instead.

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“No elevator?” Remi asked for the twentieth time.

“No—and pay attention. Sometimes there’s a cat on the stairs.”

“Anything else? Loose boards? Sharp nails? A madwoman in the attic?”

Felix shrugged, pretending he’d forgotten the staircase narrowed after the third floor. He didn’t mention the timer on the staircase light either. So when the light flicked off, Remi cursed and smacked the wall until he found a switch.

2 lived here!

yet, there are stunning Parisian edifice

important?

Is that balcony cliché?

Does it matter?

Best line of all 5 pages

JULIE

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So Felix was surprise when after mastering three trips up the stairs, Remi collapsed on Juliette's couch and insisted Felix should have hired someone. One couch would have been easier than ten boxes of books, he claimed.

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While he'd worked, Juliette and Remi had settled together at the dining room table and sipped tea with their backs to the entryway and Felix.

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Verb choice
accomplishing
3 trips
or
3 successful
trips
or
only 3
trips

Tight
up

tea-
drink
#

Verb
choice
partitioned
condoned

tea-
drink

Chaos
one

? or 0

Jealous

JULIE

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bearing all those boxes up all those stairs, she should see him and knock it off. ~~He agreed~~
~~with her that everyone should be in love with her, but to see her flirt never failed to make~~
~~him jealous.~~ *redundant*

"I would love nothing more. Where will Felix stay?"

indent Juliette laughed. Felix pulled a towel from the hallway linen closet and turned back in time to see her hand brushed Remi's arm. "Felix will stay here, of course."

Remi shrugged. "Okay, but Felix sleeps on the couch."

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**

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JULIE

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bowl of café au lait and a slice of Nutella toast, and fully expected the craving to desert him over the course of the morning.

Not stand-alone

It didn't.

Indent #s

Instead, it clung to him as he slogged through editing typos out of advertisements and endured meetings where he would have napped if the lingering craving hadn't needed him awake. Lunch approached, and he listed off foods containing cinnamon. Cookies, onion soup, coffee cake. The vaguely insatiable desire frustrated him. Who craved cinnamon? Maybe he was confusing cinnamon and apple tarts. He had a nagging feeling that cinnamon had been an ingredient in some treat he couldn't remember. Why it should reappear now, he had no idea.

image

misplaced appositive

He needed to focus. He'd brought his lunch to the office, a ham baguette, and planned to stay there in order to meet his deadline. The week before, he'd accidentally missed one deadline when a simple slogan for a milk poster had spawned an ardent love poem to Juliette. His afternoon had disappeared in a lyrical page to her. He imagined she would be pleased, flattered, spouting praise for him and his writing, but that hadn't been her exact reaction.

redundant

"It's not bad," she'd said when she held it to her nose and squinted. She'd sniffed as if expecting it to smell. "You mix your t's and l's in your handwriting."

The disappointment Felix felt came out in one long sigh. If her feedback dwelled on his penmanship, then Felix would focus on his work and not risk another deadline. He'd kept his resolve—until an improbable cinnamon craving distracted him.

Contrast that to Felix's attire.

"You aren't focusing," Remi said. He stopped to visit Felix's desk on the way to some meeting. They worked for the same company, but Remi wore in a suit, his job a mix of sales and PR and marketing instead of copy. "Go for a walk."

already mentioned on p. 2.

SEEMS LIKE A MUNDANE SCENE PAINTED ON A CANVAS. INSERT MORE - OF CHARACTERS AND PLOT.

REALLY SHOW PARIS!
PEOPLE-VIBRANT COLORS OF OUTFITS
ARCHITECTURE
HISTORY
FOOD

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

Summary: Felix is a French writer living in Paris who believes he has everything in order--a beautiful girlfriend, a paying day job, and a novel he's working on--but when he moves in with his girlfriend, cravings start. There is something he wants that he cannot find.

Ed
shows
Paris!

Felix gave his heart to his city, and he could not imagine he would ever want it back. On the walk home under the pale rosy Paris dawn, bakeries churned out breads and pastries, and the smell of rising yeast filled the streets. In his youth, Felix would have knocked at the rear door of a bakery and offered cash for a take-away breakfast. He considered suggesting it to Juliette, who, tucked under his arm, was half-asleep, but he already knew she'd say no.

?
1.
too many medications
why not contraction?
how old is he?

he's walking home, the ballerina aren't
Ledve go in?

They hadn't meant to stay out all night. It had just sort of happened in a happenstance way. Felix disliked being tired, but Juliette delighted in staying out all night—it made her feel as if something were happening. He wasn't so old that it caused him great pain, and he valiantly, obligingly braved the night crowd the party-til-dawners who seemed, in spite of their attraction to large crowds, to dislike other people so that Juliette would have something to brag about. He agreed even though he knew, from months of experience and repetition, she would be in a bad mood for well over twenty-four hours following their night out without sleep.

this is a core show us.

isn't this where the story begins?

He pulled her closer. He was moving in with her. After a year together, they'd agreed to start cohabitating, when Felix's "My lease is up" met with Juliette's raised eyebrows. "I'm searching for something close to you," he'd said.

expa this impo

switching from dawn walk to flashback

She had feigned nonchalance, cavalierly setting out a candlelit romantic dinner for two, as picture-perfect as a magazine, but her hands had shaken, and seeing that, Felix had taken her hands in his. She'd planned to ask over dessert, but the proposal tumbled out instead.

d. it please make chron

instead of not the proposal?
instead of not tumbling?
instead of ...?

What?
* Slow down! take your time. give us a scene, with setting, action & dialogue.
* Show us Paris!
* You're skipping over the most interesting parts

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

"My apartment is large enough for two." ^{who said?} Juliette had [?] inherited her three-room flat in ^{means nothing here} the sixteenth arrondissement from her family. ^{What happened the scene is this to only could not no idea what this sentence means} Her offer rescued him from the headache of hunting for a new home. [?] Parisian real estate was so like the city, in near constant construction, remodeling, and removing, a mercurial landscape. ^{belongings} Felix spent most nights at Juliette's anyway. A small collection of [?] belongs, mostly books, waited to follow his migration.

^{What happened to the walk?} Felix's longtime friend and coworker Remi had agreed to help him move ^{so you've just given up the pos of a life-dream and dream score. why} in exchange for a dinner, a fine wine, and a selection of aged cheeses. Remi was half-Egyptian and half-Spanish, ^{does this figure to the rest of the story?} spoke four languages fluently and an additional two partially. ^{who owned} It was a skillset that translated into an affable ability to speak with anyone, anywhere. He was also one of the few, rare, cherished people Felix knew with a car. ^{I think this is possible without being quadri-lingu}

^{what afternoon?} Later that afternoon, Remi eased his old Renault, ^{now} full of Felix's boxes, into a small spot, sandwiched between a Tesla and a Peugeot. From her sixth story window, gripping a wrought iron railing, Juliette leaned out and waved down to Remi and Felix. Her long hair [?] dangled down as if to reach down to Felix to invite him up. She seemed fearless and disregarded her safety, her torso hovering over the pavement below. With the sun behind her, Felix couldn't tell if she ^{wave} was smiling or laughing. He had to imagine her grin.

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"Anything else? Loose boards? Sharp nails? A madwoman in the attic?"

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He didn't mention the timer on the staircase light [?] either. So when the light flicked off, Remi [?] cursed and smacked the wall until he found a switch.

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on scene!

chronology

what room?

of what?

not the right word

huh?

be
1

from what?

so? they're his things!

now!

why descr now why is this way

is he's 7.9 moving? or done?

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

bearing all those boxes up all those stairs, she should see him and knock it off. He agreed with her that everyone should be in love with her, but to see her flirt never failed to make him jealous.

"I would love nothing more. Where will Felix stay?"

→ Juliette laughed. Felix pulled a towel from the hallway linen closet and turned back in time to see her hand brushed Remi's arm. "Felix will stay here of course."

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this can't be the first time has happened

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"Why would I want that?" Felix asked. He crossed his arms. "When I can let some loud family rent it and torment you by stomping on the floorboards at all hours?"

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I don't know stand what ol means

He crossed the room to kiss her.

**

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convoluted

ignored it?

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¹¹
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what:
the
point

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missed

oh not again

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Where is this going?

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

Maggie-

The setting, Paris, comes loaded with meaning. An apartment in Paris with two young people moving in together is also loaded with meaning. Narrow streets, small shops, young love, it all adds up to a very cozy story where the reader expect certain elements – like soft, romantic opening, then into young people struggling to make it together against all odds. Something like that.

We have a French writer, Felix, working to succeed. Rather than working on his novel, he's writing copy for an advertising agency. He becomes distracted and writes a love poem to Juliette. She demeans his poem.

He's also very insecure. His friend, Remi, makes passes in front of Felix. She seems to encourage the gesture. There seems to be a muted reaction by Felix at first and then the passes are forgotten. I have a hard time accepting Felix's passivity. Maybe Juliette has made a mistake. Remi is far more interesting than Felix.

Then there is the cinnamon craving. It is so odd at this point and out of the blue. I think you have to bolster the craving with some reason for the craving. Is there some history with cinnamon? Does he have a brain tumor? What's going on here? It's not a bad thing to leave some element hanging to be answered later with a good reason. This is just strange, unless you have something really captivating up your sleeve.

The bottom line at this point, if someone were to ask me what this story is about, I'd have to say, "I don't know." After five pages, the reader should have a sense on where were going with this. Thus far, we have an interesting scene, a couple of potentially interesting characters, but no direction. You know where the story is going. You can give the reader some help to cross the street.

Good luck with this worthy effort.

Dave

*write
in
Scenes*

Summary: Felix is a French writer living in Paris who believes he has everything in order—a beautiful girlfriend, a paying day job, and a novel he's working on—but when he moves in with his girlfriend, cravings start. There is something he wants that he cannot find.

Felix gave his heart to his city, and he could not imagine he would ever want it back.

On the walk home under the pale rosy Paris dawn, bakeries churned out breads and pastries, and the smell of rising yeast filled the streets (*bakeries and breads and pastries don't walk down the street. You have to attribute the smells to what Felix is doing, like Felix is smelling the breads and pastries on the way home.*) In his youth, Felix would have knocked at the rear door of a bakery and offered cash for a take-away breakfast. He considered

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

suggesting(*that they crawl out of bed and go to a local bakery and knock on the back door ...*)
it to Juliette, who, tucked under his arm, was half-asleep, but he already knew she'd say no.

They hadn't meant to stay out all night. It had just sort of happened ~~in a happenstance~~
~~way~~. Felix disliked being tired, but Juliette delighted in staying out all night—it made her
feel as if something were happening. ~~He wasn't so old that it caused him great pain, and he~~
~~valiantly, obligingly braved the night crowd, the party-til-dawners who seemed, in spite of~~
~~their attraction(Whose attraction? The crowd or Felix and Juliette?) to large crowds, to~~
~~dislike other people so that Juliette would have something to brag about.(Confusing~~
~~sentence.)~~ He agreed even though he knew, from months of experience and repetition, she
would be in a bad mood for well over twenty-four hours following their night out without
sleep.

He pulled her closer. ~~He was moving in with her.(delete)~~ After a year together, they'd
agreed to start cohabitating, when Felix's "My lease is up" met with Juliette's raised
eyebrows. "I'm searching for something close to you," he'd said.

She had feigned nonchalance, cavalierly setting out a candlelit romantic dinner for
two, as picture-perfect as a magazine, but her hands had shaken, and seeing that, Felix had
taken her hands in his.(*When did this take place?*) She'd planned to ask(*ask what? That he'd*
move in? confusing) over dessert, but the proposal tumbled out instead.

"My apartment is large enough for two." (*Why not have a continued dialogue here. It*
seems this one line is too brief for an important statement like this. Some kind of reaction
from Felix and some back and forth. Like, Are you sure... ")(*New paragraph*) Juliette had
inherited her three-room flat in the sixteenth arrondissement from her family. Her offer
rescued him from the headache of hunting for a new home. Parisian real estate was so like

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

the city, in near constant construction, remodeling, and removing, a mercurial landscape. Felix spent most nights at Juliette's anyway. A small collection of belongs (*belongings?*), mostly books, waited to follow his migration (*from his old place to her place.*)

Felix's longtime friend and coworker Remi had agreed to help him move in exchange for a dinner, a fine wine, and a selection of aged cheeses. Remi was half-Egyptian and half-Spanish, spoke four languages fluently and an additional two partially. It was a skillset that translated into an affable ability to speak with anyone, anywhere. He was also one of the few, rare, cherished people Felix knew with a car.

~~Later that afternoon,~~ *After work,* Remi eased his old Renault, full of Felix's boxes, into a small spot *near Juliette's apartment house*, sandwiched between a Tesla and a Peugeot. From her sixth story window, ~~gripping a wrought iron railing,~~ Juliette leaned out and waved down to Remi and Felix. Her long hair dangled down as if to reach ~~down~~ to Felix to invite him up. She seemed fearless and disregarded her safety, her torso hovering over the pavement below. With the sun behind her, Felix couldn't tell if she was smiling or laughing. He had to imagine her grin.

"No elevator?" Remi asked for the twentieth time.

"No—and pay attention. Sometimes there's a cat on the stairs."

"Anything else? Loose boards? Sharp nails? A madwoman in the attic?"

Felix shrugged, pretending he'd forgotten the staircase narrowed after the third floor. He didn't mention the timer on the staircase light either. So when the light flicked off, Remi cursed and ~~smacked~~ *needed to smack* the wall until he found a switch.

Felix and Remi had a similar build. They were long and lean and slim and in-shape. So Felix was surprise(d) when(,) after mastering three trips up the stairs, Remi collapsed on

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

Juliette's couch(.) and *He* insisted *that* Felix should have hired someone. One couch would have been easier than ten boxes of books, he claimed.

Juliette—~~who when asked to help, had noted, "But those boxes are too heavy for me. What help could I be?"~~—praised Remi and rewarded him with tea while Felix continued to lug boxes of his belongings up six flights of stairs alone.

By the time(,) he stacked his last box on Juliette's spacious hardwood floor, sweat pasted his button-down to his skin. Two couches and a television framed the front half of the room. A dining table with chairs sat in the other. Persian rugs covered wooden floors. Flowered blue wallpaper plastered the walls, peeling and cracking in spots. In winter, radiators ~~heated to~~ *would heat* the place, but they couldn't reach every chilly drafty corner, in part because of the large, door-like windows that filled the opposite wall and funneled natural light throughout the room. *(Sentence too long. Break it up into bite sized pieces.)* Juliette had sequestered the corner with a folding Japanese print screen of bamboo in every season. This was to *be* Felix's spot in the apartment. He'd bring in a desk and a chair and write by the window.

While he'd ~~worked~~ *finished moving? Began writing?*, Juliette and Remi had settled together at the dining room table and sipped tea with their backs to the entryway and Felix.

"So Felix has submitted all of his change of address forms?" Remi asked *her*. He leaned over the table to get closer ~~to Juliette~~. When Juliette nodded, he said, "Shame."

"You wouldn't want to live with me?" Juliette asked. *(New paragraph)* Felix tilted his head back so he scowled at the ceiling. He ~~headed to~~ *grabbed* a towel to wipe off some of the sweat. Juliette flirted with everyone, and he thought maybe, since he was huffing like a draft horse after bearing all those boxes up all those stairs, she should see him and knock it off. He

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

agreed with her that everyone should be in love with her, but to see her flirt never failed to make him jealous. *(No reaction. No internal monogogue? No overt reaction? Is the guy a wimp?)*

“I would love nothing more. Where will Felix stay?”

Juliette laughed. Felix pulled a towel from the hallway linen closet and turned back in time to see her hand brushed Remi’s arm. “Felix will stay here of course.”

Remi shrugged. “Okay, but Felix sleeps on the couch.”

Felix cleared his throat. Remi had charm and loved to flirt. He had a square jaw and a smile like a diamond. For as long as they’d been friends, Remi had prided himself on a playful rapport with the fairer sex. **Felix wished he would practice on someone other than Juliette.** *(weak)* While Remi could captivate anyone, he well knew that Felix struggled with women and how much he prized Juliette. *(Some friend.)*

“Ah, Felix,” Remi waved him in. “You know my upstairs neighbor Claude moved to Colorado in the United States. It’s not too late to rent his apartment.”

“Why would I want that?” Felix asked. He crossed his arms. “When I can let some loud family rent it and torment you by stomping on the floorboards at all hours?”

“One week here,” Juliette’s eyes narrowed. “And Felix will never want to leave.” *(I don’t know what to think of this comment.)*

He crossed the room to kiss her. *(Looks like a thank you. How does Remi react?)*

**

If working Monday after a sleeping weekend, spent moving and then unpacking, didn’t offer enough torture, Felix suffered from a gnawing craving for something with cinnamon. When he woke in the early dark, he smelled cinnamon but brushed it off. He had a

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

bowl of café au lait and a slice of Nutella toast, and fully expected the craving to desert him over the course of the morning.

It didn't.

Instead, it clung to him as he slogged through editing typos out of advertisements and endured meetings where he would have napped if the lingering craving hadn't needled him awake. Lunch approached, and he listed off foods containing cinnamon. Cookies, onion soup, coffee cake. The vaguely insatiable desire frustrated him. Who craved cinnamon? Maybe he was confusing cinnamon and apple tarts. He had a nagging feeling that cinnamon had been an ingredient in some treat he couldn't remember. Why it should reappear now, he had no idea.

He needed to focus. He'd brought his lunch to the office, a ham baguette and planned to stay there in order to meet his deadline. The week before, he'd accidentally missed one deadline when a simple slogan for a milk poster had spawned an ardent love poem to Juliette. His afternoon had disappeared in a lyrical page to her. He imagined she would be pleased, flattered, spouting praise for him and his writing, but that hadn't been her exact reaction. "It's not bad," she'd said when she held it to her nose and squinted. She'd sniffed as if expecting it to smell. "You mix your t's and l's in your handwriting."

The disappointment Felix felt came out in one long sigh. If her feedback dwelled on his penmanship, then Felix would focus on his work and not risk another deadline. He'd kept his resolve—until an improbable cinnamon craving distracted him.

"You aren't focusing," Remi said. He stopped to visit Felix's desk on the way to some meeting, but Remi wore ~~in~~ a suit, (.) ~~his~~ *His job was a mix of sales and PR and marketing instead of copy.* "Go for a walk," *he suggested.*

Susan

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Summary: Felix is a French writer living in Paris who believes he has everything in order—a beautiful girlfriend, a paying day job, and a novel he's working on—but when he moves in with his girlfriend, cravings start. There is something he wants that he cannot find.

~~Felix gave his heart to his city, and he could not imagine he would ever want it back.~~

Comment [s1]: Telling, not showing.

On the walk home under the pale rosy Paris dawn, bakeries churned out breads and pastries, and the smell of rising yeast filled the streets. In his youth, Felix would have knocked at the rear door of a bakery and offered cash for a take-away breakfast. He considered suggesting it to Juliette, who, tucked under his arm, was half-asleep, but he already knew she'd say no.

Comment [s2]: Great sentence

They hadn't meant to stay out all night. ~~It had just sort of happened in a happenstance way. Felix disliked being tired, but Juliette delighted in staying out all night—it made her feel as if something were happening. He wasn't so old that it caused him great pain, and he valiantly, obligingly braved the night crowd, the party-till-dawners who seemed, in spite of their attraction to large crowds, to dislike other people so that Juliette would have something to brag about. He agreed accompany her, even though he knew, from months of experience and repetition, she would be in a bad mood for well over twenty-four hours following their night out without sleep.~~

ages?

Comment [s3]: Kind of "fluffy" — and isn't he relatively young? "so old that it caused him great pain" seems exaggerated. You really don't need it, anyway.

He pulled her closer. He was moving in with her. After a year together, they'd agreed to start cohabitating, when Felix's "My lease is up" met with Juliette's raised eyebrows. "I'm searching for something close to you," he'd said.

She had feigned nonchalance, cavalierly setting out a candlelit romantic dinner for two, as picture-perfect as a magazine, but her hands had shaken, and seeing that, Felix had taken her hands in his. She'd planned to ask over dessert, but the proposal tumbled out instead.

Pick where to start + then make it a scene. You could start w/ either the scene where Juliette asks him to move in, or where he actually moves in. → need to bond to Felix quickly

author skipped

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

“My apartment is large enough for two.” Juliette had inherited her three-room flat in the sixteenth arrondissement from her family. Her offer rescued him from the headache of hunting for a new home. Parisian real estate was so like the city, in near constant construction, remodeling, and removing, a mercurial landscape. Felix spent most nights at Juliette’s anyway. A small collection of belongs, mostly books, waited to follow his migration.

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Later that afternoon, Remi eased his old Renault, full of Felix’s boxes, into a small spot, sandwiched between a Tesla and a Peugeot. From her sixth story window, gripping a wrought iron railing, Juliette leaned out and waved ~~down to Remi and Felix~~. Her long hair dangled down ~~as if to reach down to Felix to invite him up~~. She seemed fearless and disregarded her safety, her torso hovering over the pavement below. With the sun behind her, Felix couldn’t tell if she was smiling or laughing. ~~He had to imagine her grin.~~

Comment [s4]: Awkward-makes it sound like t hair is reaching which doesn't make sense

Comment [s5]: If he can see she's smiling or laughing, he doesn't have to imagine her grin. In fact, just make her smiling. Makes her more appealing

“No elevator?” Remi asked for the twentieth time.

“No—and pay attention. Sometimes there’s a cat on the stairs.”

“Anything else? Loose boards? Sharp nails? A madwoman in the attic?”

Felix shrugged, pretending he’d forgotten the staircase narrowed after the third floor. He didn’t mention the timer on the staircase light either. So when the light flicked off, Remi cursed and smacked the wall until he found a switch.

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Felix and Remi had a similar build. They were long and lean ~~and slim~~ and in-shape. So Felix was surprised when after mastering three trips up the stairs, Remi collapsed on Juliette's couch and insisted Felix should have hired someone. One couch would have been easier than ten boxes of books, he claimed.

Comment [s6]: Make this a scene with dialogu
Applies to rest of scene

Juliette—who when asked to help, had noted, “But those boxes are too heavy for me. What help could I be?”—praised Remi and rewarded him with tea while Felix continued to lug boxes of his belongings up six flights of stairs alone.

By the time he stacked his last box on Juliette's spacious hardwood floor, sweat pasted his button-down to his skin. Two couches and a television framed the front half of the room. A dining table with chairs sat in the other. Persian rugs covered wooden floors. Flowered blue wallpaper plastered the walls, peeling and cracking in spots. In winter, radiators heated to the place, but they couldn't reach every chilly drafty corner, in part because of the ~~large~~ door-like windows that filled the opposite wall and funneled natural light throughout the room. Juliette had sequestered the corner with a folding Japanese print screen of bamboo in every season. This was to be Felix's spot in the apartment. He'd bring in a desk and a chair and write by the window.

Comment [s7]: Common adjective; often not needed, as in here, when a "door-like" window is obviously large

Comment [s8]: Why not have him set it up so that we can see how this act welcomes him in?

While he'd worked, Juliette and Remi had settled together at the dining room table and sipped tea with their backs to the entryway and Felix.

“So Felix has submitted all of his change of address forms?” Remi asked. He leaned over the table to get closer to Juliette.

~~When~~ Juliette nodded.

~~he said~~, “Shame.”, Remi said.

“You wouldn't want to live with me?” Juliette asked.

LITERARY NOVEL EXCERPT: MAGGIE FERGUSON

Felix tilted his head back ~~and -so he~~ scowled at the ceiling. He headed to grab a towel to wipe off some of the sweat. Juliette flirted with everyone, and he thought maybe, since he was huffing like a draft horse after bearing all those boxes up all those stairs, she should see him and knock it off. He agreed **with her** that everyone should be in love **with her**, but to see her flirt never failed to make him jealous.

"I would love nothing more. Where will Felix stay?"

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.5", First line: 0

Juliette laughed.

Comment [s9]: I already don't like her.

Felix pulled a towel from the hallway linen closet and turned back in time to see her hand brushed Remi's arm. "Felix will stay here, of course."

Remi shrugged. "Okay, but Felix sleeps on the couch."

Felix cleared his throat. Remi had charm and **also** loved to flirt. He had a square jaw and a smile like a diamond. For as long as they'd been friends, Remi had prided himself on a playful rapport with the fairer sex. Felix wished he would practice on someone other than Juliette. While Remi could captivate anyone, he well knew that Felix struggled with women and how much he prized Juliette.

Comment [s10]: I don't like Remi much, either

"Ah, Felix," Remi waved him in. "You know my upstairs neighbor Claude moved to Colorado in the United States. It's not too late to rent his apartment."

"Why would I want that?" Felix asked. He crossed his arms. "When I can let some loud family rent it and torment you by stomping on the floorboards at all hours?"

"One week here," Juliette's eyes narrowed. "And Felix will never want to leave." → good, but we don't

He crossed the room to kiss her.

see this connection early!

**

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If working Monday after a ~~sleeping~~ weekend ~~—~~, spent moving and ~~then~~ unpacking ~~—~~, didn't offer enough torture, Felix suffered from a gnawing craving for something with cinnamon. When he woke in the early dark, he smelled cinnamon, but brushed it off. He had a bowl of café au lait and a slice of Nutella toast, and fully expected the craving to desert him over the course of the morning.

Comment [s11]: This craving for cinnamon seems out of place; also, comparing it to torture; doesn't fall into the category of having to move all of that stuff.

↳ perhaps it's significant later

It didn't.

Instead, it clung to him as he slogged through editing typos out of advertisements and endured meetings where he would have napped if the lingering craving hadn't needed him awake. Lunch approached, and he listed off foods containing cinnamon. Cookies, onion soup, coffee cake. The vaguely insatiable desire frustrated him. Who craved cinnamon? Maybe he was confusing cinnamon and apple tarts. He had a nagging feeling that cinnamon had been an ingredient in some treat he couldn't remember. Why it should reappear now, he had no idea.

He needed to focus. He'd brought his lunch to the office ~~—~~, a ham baguette ~~—~~ and planned to stay there ~~in order~~ to meet his deadline. The week before, he'd accidentally missed one deadline when a simple slogan for a milk poster had spawned an ardent love poem to Juliette. His afternoon had disappeared in a lyrical page to her. He imagined she would be pleased, flattered, spouting praise for him and his writing, but that hadn't been her exact reaction.

Comment [s12]: Indent all paragraphs .5"

"It's not bad," she'd said when she held it to her nose and squinted. She'd sniffed as if expecting it to smell. "You mix your t's and l's in your handwriting."

The disappointment Felix felt came out in one long sigh. If her feedback dwelled on his

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penmanship, then Felix would focus on his work and not risk another deadline. He'd kept his resolve—until an improbable cinnamon craving distracted him.

Comment [s13]: reword

"You aren't focusing," Remi said. He stopped to visit Felix's desk on the way to some meeting. They worked for the same company, but Remi wore in a suit, his job a mix of sales and PR and marketing instead of copy. "Go for a walk."

Comment [s14]: a bit vague here. I can't figure out why all of this talk in his office. Not enough is happening—too much telling.

- not sure I like Juliette or Remi, which is okay,
but I need to identify more w/ Felix to
feel for him