Exercise 2: Hooking the reader

***Example:***

*Francesca was already in her pajamas when the doorbell rang, so she was curious and cautious as she opened the door. Imagine her surprise when she saw a deliveryman holding an enormous bouquet of beautiful, fragrant yellow roses. “Miss Yates?” he asked. Francesca beamed. “Yes,” she said, “That’s me. They’re gorgeous!”*

***My response:***

It was a Thursday night when Francesca realized that the world was about to end. Okay maybe not the whole world, more like just her world. She sat cross-legged on the kitchen floor staring out at the opposite wall, looking for the remnants of the yellow roses that the delivery man had given to her just 15 minutes prior. Francesca poured herself a second glass of red wine and checked her watch. It was 9pm. 13 hours until D-day. She took a sip of the wine and sighed. She really shouldn’t be drinking it this quickly. Her best friend had bought the Merlot for her birthday and she’d managed to pour out half the bottle within a week. But Alicia was the least of her concern. With a sigh, Francesca got up, grabbed a broom and got sweeping up the remains of greeting card that she’d ripped to shreds straight after reading. She knelt down and picked up a piece that was curiously intact. ‘Love, Jessie’ it read. She took another sip of wine and got back to work. She would need to clean this place up as best she could if the step-monster was coming to stay with her.

1. Whose story is it?
   1. Francesca
2. Is something happening, beginning on the first page?
   1. Yes. Francesca is in the kitchen drinking wine
3. Does something hang in the balance?
   1. No.
4. Is enough of the big picture visible, from the get-go, to give us a sense of where the story is going?
   1. Yes. Her world is going to end (**what does that mean?**) We know that her step-mother is coming to stay with her and that she is not looking forward to it. To the point where she destroyed a bouquet of flowers and ripped up the card.

**Draft 2**

Protagonist: Francesca

Events: She gets a bouquet of flowers that she immediately destroys. She doesn’t do this because she has anything against the flowers, she actually likes them, but because she dislikes the person that sent the flowers to her. When we find her, Francesca is on her way to getting roaring drunk because someone she truly hates is coming back into her life and her response is to open a bottle of wine and start drinking while seated on the kitchen floor in her pajamas.

Inner issue: having to deal with someone she truly hates but is expected to - not just tolerate but – accept back into her life with open arms.

“You know when I moved out here, I thought I was leaving the fucking mess behind. Apparently not. Now the step-monster is going to be out in full force. The one consolation is that I get to see my sister again.”