



LITERARY INSPIRED · A FREE FIELD GUIDE

The Lead Magnet & Bonus Material

The free reading that builds your list, and the extra scenes that keep it. Two small pieces that do most of the quiet work in a series launch.

For authors who'd rather be writing.

literaryinspired.com

ONE BRINGS THEM IN. ONE KEEPS
THEM.

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New to list-building? Read 01, then jump to the idea bank on 05.

Same craft, two different jobs

Both are short pieces set in your book's world. The only difference is who they are for, and when a reader meets them.

THE FRONT DOOR

A lead magnet

A free short story or scene a reader gets in exchange for their email, before they have bought anything. It gives a taste of your voice and world, and hooks them enough to want book one. It is the reason a stranger joins your list.

THE REASON THEY STAY

Bonus material

Extra content for the readers already in: a deleted scene, an alternate point of view, a bonus epilogue, a backstory. It keeps the world alive between releases and gives superfans a reason to keep opening your emails.

A lead magnet brings readers to the door. *Bonus material is why they stay in the house.*

The free read that starts the list

A good lead magnet does one job: it makes a first-time reader want more of your voice, and trades that want for an email address.

Keep it set in your series world, so the reader who loves it is already primed for book one. A prequel, a meet-cute, a first-kiss scene, an origin story. Something that stands alone but leaves them wanting the full book.

It earns its keep in three places. It sits on your newsletter signup as the reason to subscribe. It gives your ARC recruiting a warm audience already in your world. And it gives your ads something free to offer, instead of asking a stranger to buy cold.

Deliver it automatically. A reader signs up, the file lands in their inbox, and your welcome sequence takes it from there. No manual sending, no bottleneck.

IT WORKS IN THREE PLACES

Newsletter signup

the reason a reader subscribes at all

ARC recruiting

a warm pool already inside your world

Ads

something free to offer a cold reader

The extra scenes that keep them

Bonus material is not for winning new readers. It is for holding the ones you have, in the quiet stretch between one release and the next.

A deleted scene, an alternate point of view, a bonus epilogue, a slice of backstory a reader has been wondering about. It rewards the people already on your list, and gives reviewers and superfans a reason to stay engaged when there is no new book to buy yet.

This is where a deleted-scenes folder pays off. The material you cut in editing is already written and already in your voice. Dripped out over a few newsletters, it keeps the world warm and your open rates up without pulling you off the next manuscript.

Gate it, or don't. Some authors keep bonus scenes subscriber-only as a reason to join. Others post them openly to keep the group fed. Both work. Either way, the reader feels looked after.

Long enough to hook, short enough to finish

Length is a budget. Each piece needs to earn its word count without stealing weeks from the book you are actually selling.

3k–7k

Lead-magnet short story

5k–7k is the sweet spot: a full arc, one sitting.

1k–3k

Bonus scene or alternate POV

One scene, one feeling. In and out.

Any

Deleted scenes

Use what you already wrote. No new word count.

A lead magnet needs a real beginning, middle, and end, so the reader closes it satisfied and certain they want more. Bonus scenes can be smaller because the reader already loves the world. Deleted scenes are already paid for, so reusing them costs you nothing.

The funnel, and what to write

One free story feeds a chain. Here is the path a reader travels, and a bank of pieces to fill it.



IDEA BANK

- ◆ A prequel short set in your world
- ◆ A side character's origin story
- ◆ A key scene from another character's POV
- ◆ A bonus epilogue after the last page
- ◆ A "how they met" or "how it began" origin
- ◆ A slice of world history or lore
- ◆ A love interest's backstory
- ◆ Deleted scenes, dripped over newsletters

The shorthand, decoded

Lead magnet

A free piece a reader gets in exchange for their email. Also called a reader magnet.

Bonus material

Extra content for readers already on your list. Not used to win new ones.

Welcome sequence

The automated emails a new subscriber gets after they join, starting with the magnet.

Permafree

A book, often book one or a prequel, priced free forever to pull readers into a series.

Newsletter swap

Two authors feature each other's magnet to their lists, trading readers in the same genre.

Deleted-scenes folder

Where every cut scene goes, ready for the day you need something to send.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Never delete good writing. Keep a deleted-scenes folder for every book. It is marketing you have already written, waiting for a reason to send it.



Write it once, let it work for years.

One free story builds the list. A folder of bonus scenes keeps it warm between books. If you would rather be writing while someone sets the funnel up with you, that is what I do.

Ready to build the funnel? Let's talk.