Deletion, Erasure and Question Movements

We have shown that deletion, whether or not it is deletion of the copy of something that has moved, is restricted by 11 in the text, repeated here as 1.

1. An element, if it is deletable, can be deleted if it is adjacent to an overt head and it is either in that head's complement or it _is_ its complement.

But if you examine Aux movement as it applied to (3) on p. 110 of the text (repeated here as 2), you find that the inflection PRES is deleted, even though it does not meet the requirements of 1.

2. [$_{CP}$ PRES [$_{IP}$ [$_{DP}$ the man][$_{I'}$ ~~PRES~~ [$_{VP}$ like movies]]]]]

PRES is the _head_ of the IP of which _the man_ is the Specifier. PRES is by no means the complement of _the man_ or the topmost element of its complement. In fact, _the man_ doesn't even have a complement. Yet the copy of the moved PRES is deleted anyway.

The deletion of PRES in 2 is possible because the deletion obeys one of two other related restrictions that apply to short-distance movements. In 2, PRES can be deleted if it obeys the restriction in 3.

3. The copy of a moved head may be deleted if the head has moved no farther than the head position of the phrase that immediately includes its own phrase.

PRES in 2 has moved from the head of IP to the head of CP, and this is the head position of the phrase that immediately includes IP. In a sense, the copy of a moved head can be moved as long as the moved head is close enough for it to "see".

In (6) on p. 111 of the text (copied here as 4), the Wh element _what_ had been moved and its copy deleted.

4. [$_{CP}$ what would [$_{IP}$ you [$_{I'}$ ~~would~~ [$_{VP}$ like ~~what~~]]]]

In 4, the copy of _would_ that remained in its original position is deleted under exactly the same condition that allowed the deletion of the copy of PRES in 2. Furthermore, in 4, _what_ meets the requirements of 1; it is the complement of _like_. But this is not true of all Wh movement. Consider 5.

5. [$_{CP}$ where did [$_{IP}$ Chris [$_{VP}$ buy [$_{NP}$ her car] ~~where~~]]]

We'll ignore Aux movement in 5 (it works just like the previous examples) and concentrate on Wh movement. The copy of the moved _where_ is deleted successfully, even though it doesn't conform to 1. _Where_ is an adjoined Adverb Phrase, consisting only of its head Adverb. Since it is an adjunction, it cannot be a complement and that means 1 cannot apply. Instead, it obeys a restriction similar to 3, namely 6.

6. The copy of a moved phrase (XP) can be deleted only if it has not moved beyond its own CP.

The restriction in 6 permits a copy to be deleted as long as it has not moved out of its own clause, that is, its own CP. Again, it is as if the deletable copy must be close enough to "see" the copy that has been moved.