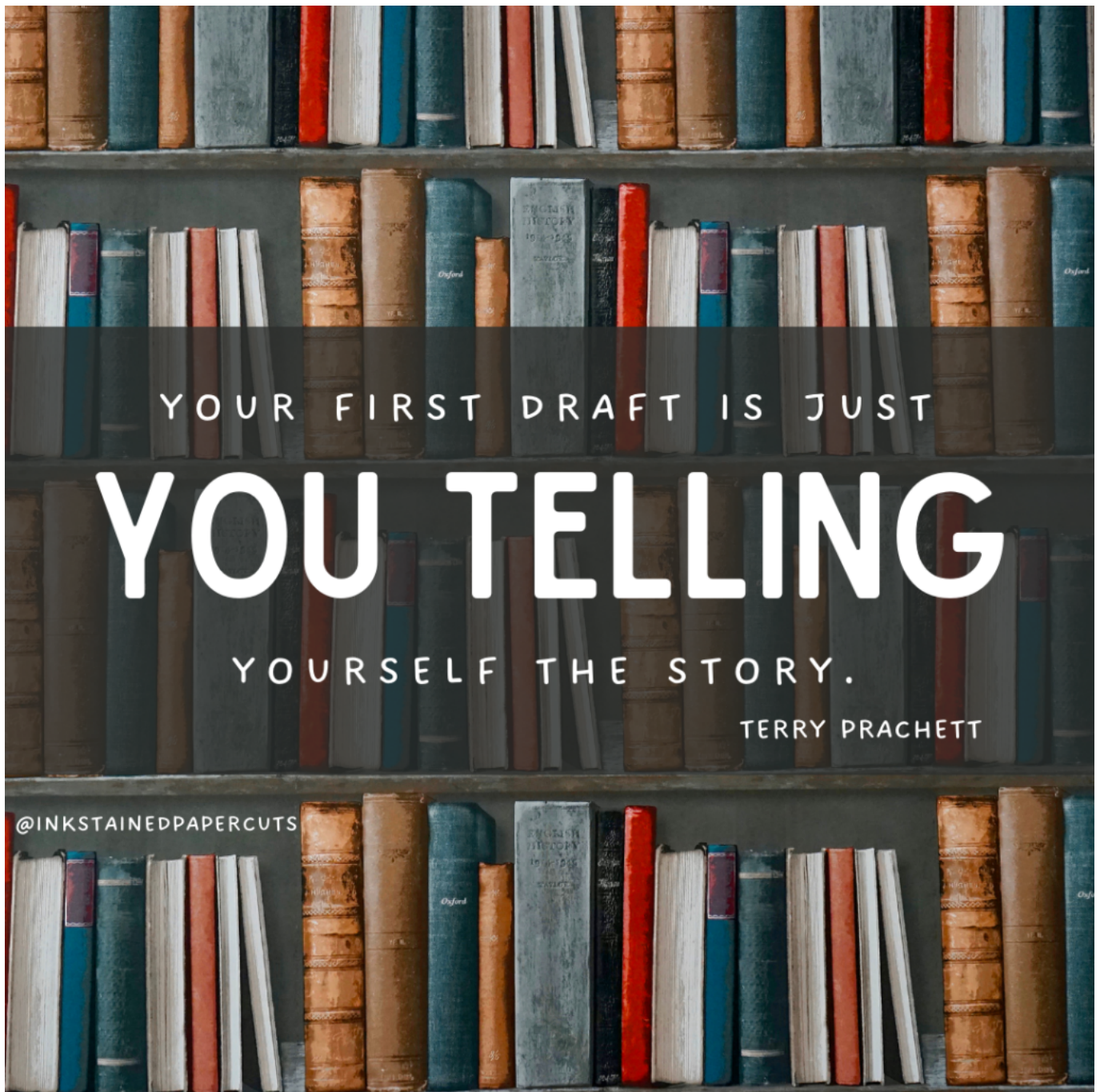I'm deep in the depths of editing my manuscripts from November of last year. I'm reading through them in full, making notes, marking mistakes, and leaving lots of what if questions behind for myself. The idea is that once I'm done I will have a new point to start from on the next draft.

One of these manuscripts is small and one is big, as you might have guessed, the smaller one needs the most work. This is the one that takes part, in place, back on The Island, and so piecing together those scenes without drowning my poor reader in minute details that don't matter was a slight struggle for a while. Now that I've tackled that, I'm noticing in my editing that I have other things to focus on now, from bizarre to funny typos.

At one point this week I managed to spray water all over when I stumbled upon a typo that declared: his bread twitched. It should have been beard, but the idea of twitching bread sent me into hysterics. There is nothing quite so entertaining, and humbling, as editing your own work.

There are some real gems in the editing, I shared a couple with family who are very familiar with the area and places I'm writing about. I was thrilled when one of them said, "That sounds just like…" I may have used all caps and a few dozen exclamation points to declare that it was the exact place I'd written about.

This month's quotes were all selected with my current writing focus in mind. The intent is to remind myself that it's a first draft, that it's going to be cringe worthy, and that in itself is what makes it so beautiful– and in need of a *lot* of editing. Enjoy.

YOUR FIRST DRAFT IS JUST **YOU TELLING** YOURSELF THE STORY.

TERRY PRACHETT

@INKSTAINEDPAPERCUTS

While I quite literally tell myself the story before I commit it to the page, I love this reminder from Terry Prachett. Even on paper, or screen, our first draft is still just telling the story to ourselves. Especially if you're not on a first name basis with your characters yet.

> ❝
> EVERY SENTENCE
> MUST DO ONE OF
> TWO THINGS --
> REVEAL CHARACTER
> OR ADVANCE
> THE ACTION.
>
> KURT VONNEGUT

@INKSTAINEDPAPERCUTS

Making everything you write count, is one of those rules that I hear people arguing about in writing groups. I'm not sure why, because reading a book with pointless scenes is always frustrating. I like to keep this reminder front and center when I don't want to remove a scene because I think it's really sweet or well written regardless of its ability to advance my story.

NOTHING TRULY WONDERFUL IS MADE WITHOUT BEING FIRST A BIT CRINGE.

--UNKNOWN

@inkstainedpapercuts

My hip young adults love to say the word cringe. I hear it all the time, "Oh Mom, that's so, like cringe." When I saw this quote a week or so ago it just made me laugh, because I heard it being spoken in my youngest's voice. And yet, how true is it? Every beautiful thing was once a raw idea but through consistent hard work it will eventually be made wonderful in its own way. This is one of those quotes that will land on my word wall, because during every long slog of editing there's a point where I panic. Where I say, "Why am I doing this, no one's

going to read it!" And each time it happens, I take a deep breath, back away from the writing area and walk it off.

> THE VERY NICEST THING ABOUT BEING A WRITER IS THAT YOU CAN AFFORD TO INDULGE YOURSELF ENDLESSLY WITH ODDNESS, AND NOBODY CAN REALLY DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, AS LONG AS YOU KEEP ON WRITING AND KIND OF USING IT UP, AS IT WERE.
>
> -- SHIRLEY JACKSON

@INKSTAINEDPAPERCUTS

We're all just a little bit weird in our own wonderful ways, and I love that this quote reminds me to embrace my own oddities and weirdness. I don't think you have to be a writer to use up your oddness, but I will confess it helps when people ask why on earth you're researching

some questionable things. Saying, "Oh, I'm a writer, it's for my story." can go a long way in ensuring people that you're not totally off your rocker.

Author's Note:

If you're gearing up for July's Camp Nano, look me up on the NanoWriMo website, you might find me over there. I'm still debating this round of Camp Nano to spur me through the editing process and just focusing on one of my two current works in progress.

If you, too, need to do some editing, be sure to check out the handy cheat sheet that Nano made for anyone who wants to edit projects instead of writing new ones from scratch.

I hope you enjoyed these quotes as much as I did, or know someone who might enjoy them. As always, you can right click on each image to save.