Twitter Thread by Briston Brooks



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Writing tip: let's talk about the INACTIVE PROTAGONIST. I've seen a lot of amazing books lately with incredible plots, intricate worlds, and just really great writing with one recurring issue, which is the inactive protagonist. I think it can get tough when you're writing (1/10)

a big world, making sure your world building is there, your minor characters don't fall flat, etc, & we can get an amazing story with one key component missing: an active protagonist. A lot of times, these protagonists will have motivations and they'll be great characters (2/10)

but instead of moving the plot, they're reacting to it. I read a great synopsis thread once that talked about your synopsis shouldn't be a series of "and then'sit should be a series of "because," and that because needs to come primarily from your protagonist. (3/10)

They react to the inciting incident, and then the plot needs to be reacting to them. They are your protagonist for a reason. This is their story, and in order for it to feel like its theirs, in order for your reader to fall into it headfirst—they have to own it. (4/10)

It's not enough to want something; the protagonist needs to be actively seeking it. And I see a lot of this in the form of "oh they're just looking for a sense of belonging" (trust me, I've done it too) and that leads to a very internal, borderline stagnant story (5/10)

because usually it's an excuse for your protagonist to stand still while the plot provides them with convenient ways to move forward. Don't be afraid to let your protagonist mess up; don't be afraid to make them run away; don't be afraid to make them ACT. (6/10)

Because an introspective protagonist isn't a bad thing, but a protagonist that only introspects without driving their own story is a protagonist that will inevitably fall flat. Got a character with a newfound power? What's their plan for it? (7/10)

Have a character trapped in a prison? How are they trying to escape? Have a character thrust into a competition where they might die? How are they planning to survive? Want to get into an ivy league school? What are they doing to make sure they do? (8/10)

Want to escape their hometown and get out? What's their plan to do that and how are they acting on it? Make sure your characters are active participants in the story and aren’t just along for the ride, because a powerful protagonist makes a powerful story. (9/10)

Anyway, it's just something I've noticed in editing my own books and CPing others. It's somehow something we all tend to miss because we think the reaction is enough, so try writing that synopsis and see how many bc you have. It might help. (10/10) #amquerying #amwriting