



dreamer_marie wrote in [mdmfans](#),
[2007-02-15](#) 19:05:00

Mina de Malfois and The Thoughts on Yaoi - Part 1

Last Sunday, I sat down with the author of *Mina de Malfois* for an interview. Here's the transcript. If you have questions you would like me to ask her next time I chat with her, don't hesitate to leave a comment!

My questions are in bold, and Mina's answers in plain font.

Enjoy!

First, thank you for agreeing to this interview.

First question: how long have you been in fandom?

I've been in fandom for around ten years, although my level of involvement has varied over time. At one point I was deeply involved with a couple of zines (which I won't name) and with amateur productions of Doctor Who "episodes" (the less said about that, the better).

What was your first fandom, and what fandoms are you in now?

I suppose if you're going to take family history into account, my first fandom was Star Trek--I was raised with it, although not quite as intensely as PrinceC. But the first fandoms I remember coming to when I was slightly older were Lord of the Rings and Doctor Who, and then, years later, Beauty and the Beast (the television series) and (I blush to admit this) Remington Steele. Now--well, I still consider myself a fan of ST and LotR, and I'm enjoying the new Who episodes. And I've picked up Phantom of the Opera along the way--it's highly contagious--and HP.

That's a long time! It must have been something, to witness the transfer of fandom from real life to online life. Did people always act so crazy, or is that new?

I can tell you from first-hand observation: they've always been this crazy. They're crazier at a faster **rate** now, but some of the most extreme online behaviours--pseuicides; BNFs, and their rabidly defensive fanpoodles; devotion to fictional characters--have been around even longer than I have.

I personally watched friendships dissolve over the "are Xena and Gabrielle a couple?" argument, and saw more than one relationship formed based on a shared delusion of the "Astral Plane" variety (only they didn't call it that).

I think fandom attracts some really bright, imaginative, iconoclastic people, and then it also

serves as a medium for them to express themselves--and I think the huge amount of emotional energy that gets invested in fandom means that sometimes that self-expression is rather extreme.

You don't say!

Now, am I correct in assuming that you're a member of Fandom Wank?

Yes, I read Fandom Wank regularly. I find it therapeutic, especially when I've done something stupid myself--I can always hop over to Journalfen and be reminded that stupid behaviour is just part of the human condition, and we all slip up sometimes.

That's a good way of seeing it.

decides to go to FW next time she does something stupid

Would you say it's the Fandom Police, like some people do? Or just a bunch of Mean Girls from High School? Or do you think it's more like a satirical gossip magazine, just like the Fandom Gossip of the Minaverse?

I think it sometimes encourages 'Mean Girl' behaviour; for example, I've seen people remark that they 'can't stand' someone based on having seen them featured on FW, which really, is an awfully harsh judgement--no matter how big an arse they may have been during one online incident, they could still be a reasonable person the rest of the time. But I think that usually when FW gets denounced as the Fandom Police or a pack of Mean Girls, it's because some people aren't willing to shrug off the experience of being wanked; it's easier to blame FW than to admit you've done something wanky.

That said, to be fair FW isn't always as lightly satirical as I imagine Fandom Gossip is. Too often, FW does seem to be saying "look at this idiot!" rather than "look at this person behaving idiotically!" Fandom is a bit of a fishbowl at the best of times, and it can get even more claustrophobic in a space like FW, where people remember all the dumb things you've *ever* done, and have screencaps of your very worst moments.

What else have you sort of idealised in Minaverse? For instance, do you think that in "real" fandom, people would be as forgiving towards BalletChic, or if Warr1or would still have friends?

I think that in real fandom, Warr1or would alienate people--or scare them--to the point that it would be very difficult to be friends with him. And there's obviously a real-fandom example, but I'm not sure it would be polite to name him in an interview. :)

BalletChic might be forgiven, but...well, in the Minaverse I've given the characters a lot more patience than real humans usually have; the Minaverse characters don't, for the most part, hold grudges or act out of malice. Mostly they're seeking entertainment, so a well-performed pseuicide doesn't stand in the way of eventual forgiveness. Because of the P. G. Wodehousian tone of the stories, the characters are more likely to laugh something off, or roll thier eyes at it, than to complain about "hurt feelings" or nurse a longstanding grudge. And of course, the Minaverse has its older-and-wiser fen (most particularly Arc) to smooth out the worst of the difficulties and keep things ticking along nicely.