# Twitter Thread by planefag



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## I can second this observation through personal experience. I was only able to start writing because "it's just dumb weeb fanfiction quests, who cares." 100,000 pages of dumb weeb fanfic later, and I actually got better... but only because I was trying my best with every page.

> I think the mistake a lot of people make is that they write to make a good work instead of writing to make themselves a better writer (who will eventually be able to make good works). The second promotes training and builds humility while the first is just narcissism.
>
> — Dan Kim (@CloneManga) October 31, 2020

"It's dumb weeb fanfiction" gave me permission to be bad, to vomit things onto the page that I knew fell far short of what I wanted it to be. To just write and write instead of laboring over six paragraphs for weeks like I'd always done before.

But I still *wanted* to be good.

Writing is HARD. And unfortunately, most people don't appreciate just how hard writing (or communication in general) is, and that cultural attitude infects writers, too.

You must give yourself permission to be bad. And realize that all writing is practice.

IT. COUNTS.

And as the folks in my mentions are pointing out...

https://t.co/5kyxA5Ezm2

> It gave us hellcow, so it clearly worked
>
> — Argatson (@warhammer651) October 31, 2020

... it's an excellent way to find out what actually resonates with other people - putting work out there. Even your early bad stuff you'll cringe at later.

What resonates is NOT easy to tell, because we all, inherently cringe at ourselves, a lot.

https://t.co/g5Nt5LGTNN

> \u201cDumb weeb X\u201d is a concept with a lot of power.
>
> — J (@Becquerl1) October 31, 2020

Writing is inherently indulgent. We're plumbing our Id and dredging up the things we like and care most about after all; and inside our brains we're still six year olds playing with toy airplanes and wanting to be cowboys when we grow up, without a trace of self-consciousness.

But even then...

Not long ago I was in the Greenfield Village train museum, watching a young boy who reminded me much of myself. Despite his youth he clearly knew his shit about trains; he knew terminology I only vaguely recalled myself, as an adult.

And yet, despite being encouraged by everyone, and having a very receptive (and plainly thrilled) senior engineer happy to talk about trains and answer every question he could, the kid was very plainly painfully shy and had to be coaxed into talking about it.

It's always there.

Even at that age, it's already apparent that you like things others don't. Most kids don't play with airplane toys. They run out to the playground to play Power Ranger or whatever. They're into things you can actually see on TV.

Somehow, you always know.

It's always hard, then, to write about what you *really* want to write about. To turn people into dinosaurs instead of curing cancer, which is what Conventional Wisdom says you should do with your skills.

But if you do, you'll find out just how many people think like you do.

And if you're tempering your indulgence; if you're subjecting your deeply-held beliefs to the bite of reality, and exploring how they can be resolved, if ever, you're just mirroring the internal struggle of most human beings. It's perhaps the essence of the human condition.

Dumb fun indulgent things sell well. And I don't mean just "hurr cute" like Strike Witches; I mean the stuff your inner seventh-grade chuuni still loves and unironically thinks is cool as hell.

But we're ALL like that, deep down. We all have the inner chuuni, still lurking.

That's the stuff we really, truly love. Nobody loves being an adult, stuck on this bitch of an earth where dull pragmatism and soul-crushingly boring routine labors dominate, all so we can perpetuate existence till we're in a pine box.

We all *want* that magic back again.

But you have to remember that vast tension between our imagination and our reality is what has driven our civilization ever-onward. You'd have to be a chuuni to be a fighter pilot; bolting your ass to a supersonic fuel tank with a lit torch on one fucking end.

You have to be even more insane to do it with a moon rocket - especially given how mind-numbingly hard they are to engineer and build.

But that's where the hard-working, pragmatic adult and the chuuni have a meeting of minds; the former can realize the latter's ambition.

And that, IMO, is why I was pushing the limits and always *trying* for serious things even when I was writing what was effectively a weeb crossover fanfic romantic comedy.

Because I simply couldn't help myself. Because I really DO believe we can realize our chuuni dreams.

I'm not saying that pure fluffy escapism fantasy is bad. I'm certainly not qualified to judge. But I DO think that if you wall off your own work like that, because you think those nice things can never be realized, not even a little, in real life - you're going to live a sad life

I went through a very dark period after my grandmother died a few years back; what little I produced during that period was just an existential scream. I thought I'd embraced that philosophy wholesale, swallowed the blackpill.

But eventually I realized, I couldn't accept it.

Whatever your inner chuuni ambition is, you have to embrace it. *Fully,* and without shame. Use whatever excuse you have to, to start out with. But shed them, when you're ready. In the end, you can't outrun yourself. And really, you shouldn't try to.

Say what you truly believe.