

'Sharknado' Star Cassie Scerbo Talks Nova Clarke, Con Surfing and Anti-Bullying Organization

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McKenzie Morrell

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Hold onto your fins, *Sharknado* is back! The cult classic, which took the nation by storm (shark storm, that is) just unveiled its fifth installment of the shark-flying, arm-gnawing, chainsaw-wielding tornado phenomena, premiering August 6th at 8/7c on The SYFY Channel. It showcased fan favorite Nova Clarke, played by [Cassie Scerbo](#) as well as many familiar faces amongst the star-studded cast.

Photo Credit: Diana Ragland

Back in 2013, when the first movie was first released, no one could possibly fathom the rabid following it would bring, and if we're being honest- [*Sharknado 5: Global Swarming*](#) has completely revitalized the franchise and made it fun again, featuring characters that continue to shock us, excite us and pull at our heartstrings.

Scerbo, known for her role as Lauren Tanner on ABC Family's (now FreeForm) breakout hit, *Make It or Break It*, packs the punches in *Sharknado 5*. Scerbo was kind enough to fish- I mean, dish up the goods on reprising her role as Nova, as well as what's next for the determined actress. From being a VP of an anti-bullying organization to starring in an upcoming psychological thriller- there's really no stone unturned for this extremely motivating young woman.

Onto the interview!

MCKENZIE MORRELL: Hi Cassie, thank you for taking the time to answer a few questions for Fan Fest News. We're happy to have you.

CASSIE SCERBO: Of course, thank you.

MM: To get started, let's talk about *Sharknado 5: Global Swarming*. What can you tease about your role in the latest *Sharknado* installment?

CS: Nova's back! And just like her comeback in 3, she's more driven, tough... and has even formed her own Sharknado Sisterhood, a powerful army of shark-slaying women.

Photo by: Raymond Liu/Syfy

MM: Sounds fierce! You're coming from your most notable roles in *Bring It On: In It To Win It*, and *Make It or Break It*. How was it branching out into a more genre-based role?

CS: That's the beauty of being an actress. Constantly changing it up and stepping out of the box. I love the different types of fanbases I now have and being able to engage with a much different demographic. I'm a tomboy at heart, so playing Nova has always come very natural to me. She doesn't mess around, she's determined.

MM: You were my fave in *Bring It On*, and let's be real, Nova is pretty awesome, too. But, if you had to choose one character to swap places with in the movie- who would it be and why?

CS: Thank you! I absolutely love playing Nova. Hmm, Fin?! Mainly because he's like the male version of Nova! [Laughs] Sometimes they bump heads a bit do to it, but at the end of the day they're an amazing team – strong, determined and both have a ton of heart.

MM: How different are you from your character Nova Clarke? Are there any qualities you admire about her?

CS: I think a lot of Nova's attributions were Cassie-inspired to be honest. Our writers and director have always been great at letting me make her my own, ad-lib a bit and what not. I'd say we're pretty similar besides the fact that I have a large, incredible family and Nova is unfortunately alone in that field.

MM: We saw Nova in the first *Sharknado*, and here and there throughout the movies... it's seems you're in every other movie... did you expect to be a more recurring role?

CS: There was no multi-movie deal when *Sharknado* was first made. The sequels are always based off of how the films do rating-wise. At that point, it really has a lot to do with our schedules. I would have loved to be a part of more *Sharknado* films but scheduling didn't

permit in the past.

MM: It happens! Now, did you face any unforeseen challenges while filming this movie?

CS: To be honest, as an actress who takes their craft very seriously, *Sharknado* was quite challenging. It's an interesting recipe, the fine line we have to walk to be "in on the whole joke" yet still portray entertaining and engaging characters. *Sharknados* are also (obviously) completely unrelated! [Laughs] So trying to dig into your imagination and put yourself inside of one is quite challenging, especially because it's all green screen and CGI! We're directed to look in a specific direction and see and feel all of these things... that aren't actually there! Things that no one has ever actually seen in real life!

MM: It sounds exhausting! And running around, in a bathing suit nonetheless, has to take its toll. How do you mentally prepare for more physically demanding scenes?

CS: Running around is one thing – yes, these movies are physically exhausting at times, especially because it's as freezing as it is when and where we shoot! It's the running joke! Even when we shot in Orlando, FL it was one of their coldest weeks EVER! However, running around in Nova's attire is a completely different thing! I maintain self-confidence at all times, but I've got to walk that fine line of having sex appeal as well as showing that I'm still bad a** and tough enough to take on any of these storms, just like the boys.

MM: What are some shows you're binge-watching?

CS: At the moment, *Ozark*! And old episodes of *The Office* because I'm simply obsessed.

MM: How have the fans been on social media? The fanbase has evolved, especially in the way they communicate with actors and creative teams.

CS: They are INCREDIBLE! The fans are so dedicated. I've even seen a trend of people having their weddings done in a *Sharknado* theme! It's insane! A phenomenon for sure.

MM: Wow, that's insanely awesome! Can you name five random facts that the fans might not know about you?

CS: I've been boxing since I'm 17. I have 8 tattoos.

I've sang the national anthem at Dodgers stadium as well as the LA Galaxy stadium. I'm the Vice President of an anti-bullying organization called [Boo2Bullying](#). I've skydived 4 times.

MM: I heard you've attended Comic Con, any plans to attend any other conventions? Such as New York Comic Con?

Photo Credit: Diana Ragland

CS: I'm actually going to be attending Palm Springs Comic Con at the end of the month which I'm thrilled about. My charity has a booth there as well for our new animation program (art therapy). I'm very excited! However, I'll be in Spain and Portugal prior to Palm Springs for some fan screenings with SyFy International. I can't wait!

MM: I like to throw in my signature question: if you were to construct a donut based on your personality in real life, what kind would it be? Any funky toppings on it?

CS: A pizza-donut. I'm a savory kinda gal! I'm also 100% Italian. I'd ditch the sugar for some Parmesan to hold it all together and throw some well done pepperoni on top! I've got a pretty spicy and outgoing personality, so I feel like this donut would be a good demo of my personality!

MM: MMM yum! Anything else you're working on that you'd like to add to our conversation for the fans to look out for?

CS: I have a psychological thriller coming out in October called *Truth or Dare*. The most challenging role I've ever taken on. The places I had to go as an actor were quite intense and horrifying! I'm also a part of a short film called *Graffiti* that has been placed in the opening night line up at Holly Shorts Film Festival here in LA, at The Grauman's Chinese Theatre, which is an Oscar-qualifying short film festival. I'm extremely proud of this project and really got to step out of the box by playing a graffiti artist / street chick.

MM: Thanks so much for chatting with me! I'm looking forward to everything you have coming down the pike!

CS: Thank YOU! Enjoy!