

Luisa d'Oliveira Talks Season 5, and Emori's Turbulent Journey on 'The 100' (Interview)

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What happens when you put Grounders in space? No, this isn't one of those obnoxious jokes some rando tries to ask you while picking you up at the bar. This is *The 100*, and the audience has been racking their brains over the possible ramifications of throwing not one, but two Grounders in space for a prolonged period of time. Luisa d'Oliveira, who plays

Emori, the tech scavenging Nomadic Grounder who traveled through the desert with her brother searching for the City of Light, only to find she was on the wrong side of history, has become a staple in *The 100* community. She quickly won the hearts of the audience, as well as misunderstood, bad boy John Murphy (Richard Harmon). And ever since the show-stopping Season 4 finale *Praimfaya*, the audience has been plagued with questions, no doubt. But, the biggest being 'where do we go from here?'

When *The 100* returns to The CW on Tuesday, April 24, our beloved characters will have experienced a time jump. They're all grown up, and six years has past since the gang went in totally different directions. Octavia (Marie Avgeropoulos) leading the charge of grounders (and some Arkers) in the bunker, Raven (Lindsey Morgan) and Bellamy (Bob Morley) leading a small group of people to safety up in space, and Clarke... well, Clarke has been exploring her maternal roots with a Night Blood stray named Madi (Lola Flanery) down on Earth as the only known survivors of the (second) apocalypse.

Season 5 promises to be a whole new show, and somewhat fragmented towards the beginning. D'Oliveira spoke with Fan Fest exclusively about her character's journey to space, her apprenticeship with Raven, the melting pot of change six years can bring, and so much more.

MCKENZIE MORRELL: First off, congrats on making it to space. Who would have thought, a grounder getting a seat on the spaceship?

LUISA D'OLIVEIRA: Two of us, even.

MM: Of course, Emori is a multi layered character from her mutation to her story of being an outcast and her tattoo. There's just so much that hasn't been explored yet when it comes to this role. Without giving any spoilers, can you tease anything that's coming up for your character and this continued story on *The 100*?

LD: What can I say? Emori has now gone through over six years in a situation she probably never imagined she'd ever be in. Not only in space, obviously but with a small group of people in a potentially safe environment. That's obviously their goal to try and make it safe. And I think it's going to challenge her in ways she's never experienced before. She's existed functioning in one day which is survival of the fittest, do what you have to do, everyone's out to get you so get them first, and no one cares about you, except for her brother and obviously when John Murphy came along that affected her and her circle expanded to include him. Kind of at the end of season four, after everything her and Clarke went through, we see her being challenged in ways she didn't expect and it's bringing out different feelings, even at the end of the episode in the finale, wanting to stay a tiny bit more to see if Clarke can make it. She doesn't want to leave Clarke behind. I really enjoy seeing the subtle ways in which her worldview is challenged. She's definitely going to have been challenged over the past six years in potentially good ways and potentially bad ways.

MM: Even interesting for your character to see that evolution because Clarke was the one who was going to sacrifice Emori to test the night blood and to see how far she's come and that she didn't want to leave her behind is a testament to how her character has progressed and where her loyalties and morals lie.

LD: Yeah and I think Emori recognizes in Clarke, there's a pragmatic reasoning which she gets. It's a separation from her emotion and the thing Clarke really wants to do is not the thing she knows she has to do but she still will do the thing she knows she has to do. She'll try to find the least harmful way through it but she'll still does the pragmatic thing, usually. I think Emori really recognizes that. Also, Emori is not blind to the fact that she totally manipulated Clarke. Her intention was to completely throw this guy to the wolves because she thought she was going to get sacrificed. She played the game multiple steps ahead. She's not completely innocent in this situation. She's smart enough to understand Clarke even through the suspicion and potential betrayal and all that.

MM: I agree. A lot has been happening over the six years that's gotta be an interesting position to be in for Murphy and Emori. Obviously we don't want to know too much about it but in one word can you describe Murphy and Emori's relationship and how it might have changed over the six years?

LD: In one word? That is spoiler free?

MM: I'm trying to give you the hardest task possible.

LD: Shifted.

MM: Oooh, excluding Murphy, what would you say has been your favorite dynamic to play between Emori and another character in season five?

LD: There have been lots of wonderful moments with her space kru. With Raven, Echo, Harper — you know what it is? It's the women. The Space Kru women. On this show we have never seen Emori have a lot of interaction with women over a long scale of time so to see the ways that that has affected her, challenged her, changed her, made her better or worse, has lead to some really great, juicy interactions with the Space Kru women.

MM: Why do you think that Emori and Raven end up gravitating (pun intended) towards each other while up in space? Do you think their tough journeys have helped them to connect over the years of getting to know each other?

LD: *[Laughs]* I think Emori gravitates towards Raven for a lot of reasons. Emori has a lot of curiosity and a deep respect for Raven's engineering and technological capability. Emori would have been scavenging tech for years, and I think Emori can't get enough of seeing the ways Raven can use technology. They've definitely both suffered and endured a lot, yet come out stronger each time. I think they understand each other's journeys on a very

personal level. When Clarke almost made Emori their test subject, Raven was the only one who really stood up for her aside from John, of course. I think even before they went to space a foundation of gratitude and admiration towards Raven was being laid. It's only natural that a real friendship would follow, especially after working alongside each other for six years in space.

MM: Any stories, or tidbits you can mention about working with Lindsey Morgan. Your characters have known about each other but never really got to work alongside one another.

LD: Lindsey loves Emori's hand. LOVES. With great joy. Also the glove, but the hand even more. Lindsey is a powerhouse, a funny powerhouse! Her and Sachin [Sahel] need a show.

MM: Your character and Lindsey Morgan's character both face similar challenges, when it comes to their disabilities. Raven has sort of accepted her disability, but can you speak to if Emori has learned to love/embrace her mutation now that things have changed drastically?

LD: I think Emori embraced her mutation long ago and was proud of it, even though she fully expected no one else to and resented them for it. Which was why John Murphy was such an incredible force in her life. He was the first one who thought it was awesome aside from her. That really helped her open up, and probably began the process of healing any deep, secret, negative feelings she still had about it. Now that she's up in space with almost all people who don't subscribe to the frikdrena prejudice, it's natural that she'd have her real hand out for all to see!

MM: Your character has struggled with a bunch of things with her backstory and her brother, but the bigger thing is the concept of trust throughout her time on the show. She's opened up a bit since we've last seen her but are these new bonds solidifying her ability to trust and open up to people?



Photo Credit: Matthew Burditt

LD: I think one of the things that comes into play when you start to create deeper relationships with a greater number of people is that if those people are opposing each other, it complicates where you stand. So I think, if anything, that is a challenge for her. Her alliances were always so clear before when she only had one person in her corner. It's very obvious that you have the back of this person and they have your back. But what happens when you have a lot of people's back and a lot of people have yours and what if those people go against each other? And the thing is, there's so many people in this world. That might have been a bit of a misleading statement to make. Can you give me the question again?

MM: What other issues will she face in Season 5?

LD: I think Emori is — she's starting to open up more and she's seeing what the fall back from that is if there is fallback when you let people into your life and you learn how to trust, there's — you can get hurt. Things can happen. I think that will always be her greatest crutch. That will be her forever struggle that she will be getting better at, regressing from, figuring it out again, being challenged again. That's sort of at her root is her abandonment issues. I think that's always going to be with her.

MM: Thankfully you can't get abandoned up in space. I'm sure there's always a way though. We won't speak too soon. You're gonna get floated.

LD: And that's it. She was in the first episode.

MM: [Laughs] Do you agree with a lot of your character's decisions? If present day Emori could go back and give some advice to past Emori what do you think she'd say to her?

LD: After six years of being able to reflect on her life on earth and her decisions, I would think that Emori would suggest to her younger self to take a minute and don't be so rash. Think about the decisions you're going to make and really assess whether or not this gut reaction is the best course of action. I think that's the result of being forced to have nothing but your thoughts. I'm sure there's lots to do, but six years is a long time. I think she will have learned to take time to think about things which I don't think she's ever really done ever. It's always been how do I survive for the next three hours? For the next 24 hours? To the next day? This is a completely different way of living for her. I don't think she's ever had that in her entire life. That's pretty shocking. It's something completely foreign. What is this way of existence? Which is where I think the challenges will come in for a lot of them. Everyone who had been on the Ark, they've been used to this. But for Echo and Emori, I don't think they've ever lived in this way. Echo, being a spy she will have learned to think and be clever, to take time to think about things because that's part of her job. But for Emori, it was always desperation. She would consider things but make decisions quickly.

MM: Diverting a bit, if Emori had to go into a battle and she had to pick three teammates who would she choose?

LD: Obviously John Murphy, clearly. Clarke, if Clarke was on her side. If she believed Clarke's goal was the same as hers she'd want Clarke because she respects her. I'm trying to think who else. Probably — just for straight up battle? I think she'd want Bellamy. Because even though at the end of season four she barely knows him, she's heard of him from John Murphy, but she would just straight up recognize that this is a smart, very physically capable person who I'd want on my team. Plus, it's always a good place to be to survive, close to the leads of the show.

MM: Although, Murphy and Raven have saved everybody a couple times now so I feel like they're the second leads in my eyes.

LD: No doubt. They're the ones who keep coming through.

MM: He's always the one saving everyone. It's like Clarke didn't save everybody. It was him saving her, saving everybody. Nice inception.

LD: Basically everyone needs everybody to save everybody.

MM: We need no one to ever die but unfortunately this season is going to be bloody.

LD: What season isn't bloody?

MM: This one is extra bloody I'm told.

LD: We broke a blood record. I did hear that.

MM: Lindsey spilled all the secrets during her interview. She joked of passing time with some space orgies. What unlikely pair on the show would you like to be stuck in space with?

LD: Niylah because Niylah is such a calm, soothing presence. I think Emori would just — it's like she'd find a spiritual guru that would open her up to a world she didn't even know existed. I think she would join the cult of Niylah.

MM: Wouldn't we all

LD: Truthfully, wouldn't we all? Just give me some of that and a tea and I'll be happy. Maybe also Indra. Because I think that Indra is sort of — she doesn't know really much about her but I'm imagining, if they had time together she would start to see Indra almost like a mother figure, because she would not only understand the world Emori comes from but she's a very calm, rational but killer person. I like to see Emori with those kinds of energy.

MM: That's the unlikeliest of pairs coming to spend some time together. As we start to wind down in the conversation, I like to throw in my signature question. If you could construct a donut based off Emori's personality, what kind of donut would it be and what kind of toppings would be on it?

LD: It would be an everything and the kitchen sink kind of donut. Because I think Emori likes and will eat anything. I don't know if she's ever even cultivated tastes buds, poor girl. It's some kind of beef jerky thing. Because I'm sure in the desert if you wanted meat, it was dry. Probably dried desert lizard or something like that. And maybe honey? I think if she probably had anything sweet for the first time she'd probably lose her mind over it. Then some spicy pepper. It would be disgusting. Actually it wouldn't be that bad, it'd be okay. She would have the weirdest choice of taste is my thought. She'd like the oddest stuff. It's probably the kind of thing John makes fun of her for and she bugs him back by eating it in front of him.

MM: Nothing is off limits. I've made a hot cheetos donut. It was interesting. Wasn't my favorite. But it was edible. Not my go to donut by a long shot.

LD: I feel like the Emori donut might actually be half decent.

MM: I might have to make it for the premiere. Honey, jerky, you can't go wrong.

LD: Yeah and like a Cayan, like a jalapeno. You could always cheat and substitute bacon for jerky. It's not the same thing but bacon on a donut can be pretty good. Bacon on anything is pretty good.

MM: We all need to survive on bacon. That's all we need to stay happy. Donuts and bacon. Just wrapping up, why should the audience tune in to see *The 100* season five on April 24th? Give us a tease.

LD: Season five is going to be fantastic. When we were shooting four, I was so excited about it because I thought the audience was going to love to see it and I felt even more so about season five. I just love what they've done with the story this season. I'm so excited about it. *The 100* fans will not be disappointed. The show is always constantly challenging you as a viewer to think about things differently and then plays with your emotions and then does the thing you don't expect. Just expect a whole more of that. It's going to be fantastic. It's going to be an adventure, that's for sure.

MM: I can't wait.

***The 100* Returns to The CW, April 24 at 9pm**
