

Sentient Africa – Ten questions from the Author Ebuka Okparauzoma

1) What's fascinating about the Africa series setup?

The character of Dozie, his wound, his possibilities.

The cultural aspects: rivalries between tribes, even in an urban setting. As someone unfamiliar with Nigeria, this is what struck me as most fascinating. I hope to see more of this brought out in future episodes.

2) Are the individual set-ups (supporting character scenarios) compelling?

For the most part, yes. I'm not sure what Titi was doing in that particular building at the time of the disaster. Was it the apartment block where she lived? Or where she worked (a bit more interesting) or did she have a covert goal being there (even more interesting).

Dapo is introduced as a bad guy from the outset. I wonder if it would be more interesting if he was Dozie's friend, secretly harbouring a jealous rage? What if Dozie was surprised/shocked at seeing what Dapo had done? Or the betrayal became later in the episode, after Dozie is happy to see Dapo has survived?

3) Does each character have a unique and clearer goal pursuit?

Yes, mostly. I wonder why Oma doesn't think of finding her father – OK, they had a row, but he's a firefighter and a capable person in a crisis.

I keep thinking Titi might have a covert goal (not necessarily a nasty one, but a goal that she needs to keep hidden).

4) What characters are at their lowest and need to be improved upon?

Titi is the one who needs more development. At the moment she's mostly just the damsel in distress turned love interest. I'd like to know more about her skills, life problems – who she is. Make her complex with a secret, I'd say.

Dozie is good, although perhaps a little too much a straightforward hero at present. Is there anything dark within his character that is hinted here and could come out later?

5) Is the overall pace effective?

Works for me – I kept reading.

6) Was the first intro to sentient well established?

The 'face full of stars' visage needs to be brought in.

7) What areas need improvement? Why? How?

See above.

8) What do you think about the nemesis?

See no.2 above.

9) What direction/s do you see Africa going in?

I'd like to see it remain in the urban setting, bringing out aspects that are uniquely Nigerian/African. I don't know what those might be, as I don't have the cultural knowledge, but the clash between rival tribes, already hinted at in Dapo's motivation, might be one way to go.

I also imagine some kind of warlord politics will develop, based on the seizure of arms and the control of territory.

Dozie will become a leader of a group of survivors, but his authority within the group will not go unchallenged.

Titi's secret (whatever it is) will be exposed and potentially undermine Dozie.

Oma will grow from selfish teenager to an adult – possibly becoming bitter / damaged along the way.

10) What direction should be avoided?

Anything that seems unrealistic in the context of Lagos or Nigeria in general.

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