

Episode #6 – “Perrin Can Go To The Wolves, LITERALLY”

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SALLY: Okay so

EMILY, singing to the tune of “Footloose”: Book news!

SALLY: BOOK NEWS

EMILY, still singing: Everybody cut book news

SALLY: Ohhh

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: ‘k that’s it. That’s the end of our podcast [both laugh]. Thanks for coming along, listeners, but tragically we must cease and desist

EMILY: Delete it all. Start over [laughs]

SALLY: No, that was actually really good. [singing] Book news! Yeah

EMILY: [laughs] What do we have? For book news?

SALLY: In book news: this week an article was published – and this is thanks to, I got this from friend of the podcast, that was so exhilarating to say

EMILY: [laughs] AH!

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: We have friends!

SALLY: We have friends!

EMILY: I’ve never had friends before

SALLY: Never. Friend of the podcast, asthewheelturns, which is a wonderful tumblr blog and they’re also on Instagram, so check them out there on both those platforms, but this was an article published. This was about the *Wheel of Time* TV series that we’ve been threatened with for eons and eons, apparently

EMILY: Years, it feels like

SALLY: But the article says – this is the excerpt that asthewheelturns has on their blog:

“[Ted] Field believes his TV show with Sony, *Wheel of Time*, may find its moment. The show is set in the distant future when women now rule a universe that has been all but destroyed by the male power structure – ‘the ultimate gender dynamics series,’ Field says. The show is based on a series of 14 volumes written by Robert Jordan (pen name for James O. Rigney Jr). ‘Timing is part of the roller coaster ride,’ Field observes.”

So, a super weird excerpt and everyone is having really weird responses to it online.

EMILY: Yeah, I can imagine. I mean, having it canonically set in the future is super weird, and not a good thing, I'd say.

SALLY: Yeah, it's a weird choice to just, yeah, make that decision canon, because we've talked about it before. That's a possibility that Robert Jordan sets up

EMILY: But it's meant to be ambiguous, because it's so cyclical. The entire series. It could be past or future or kind of both

SALLY: Or both. Or in an entirely different world

EMILY: Yes

SALLY: That has some nebulous connection to ours throughout the dream world. Robert Jordan sets up a lot of possibilities, and yeah, I'm not super comfortable with the hard canon choice there

EMILY: Yeah, and that also...like we've talked about *The Wheel of Time* being a series about gender dynamics, but I think the fact that it's dealing with a world that might not be ours or is only sort of distantly connected to ours makes that better than having it be our world?

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: Like that's making it seem, that excerpt makes it seem as though it's just the patriarchy of our time experiences a kind of downfall and women take over, which isn't really how *The Wheel of Time* works

SALLY: That's not how *The Wheel of Time* works at all. And I'm also like –

EMILY: Men and women start from a position of equality in the Age of Legends, and it's just that men experience a fall. There isn't a total reversal of power

SALLY: Yeah, it's not some type of anti-patriarchy flip-flop that happens. So I don't like it. And also the way that it ends at the end of this – “Timing is part of the roller coaster ride” – throughout the context of the rest of the article, I think it's talking about TV in general, but the idea that it's like, “Oh, if we're gonna make this show now, a good way to market it is to highlight the gender dynamics and hop on the coattails of things like *The Handmaid's Tale* and other feminist stuff.” Where it's, like, gender dynamics and the exploration of that is a huge part of *Wheel of Time*, but saying it's “the ultimate gender dynamics series” is, first of all, false, because I would not put *Wheel of Time* alongside feminist canonical texts as the ultimate way to discuss gender dynamics, and it's not even the main purpose or part of *Wheel of Time*

EMILY: It's super reductive

SALLY: Yeah, that's a good word

EMILY: to say that *Wheel of Time* is just about gender dynamics

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: It's also about *millions* of other things

SALLY: It's about a billion other things

EMILY: War, trauma, insanity

SALLY: War, trauma, PTSD

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: History, culture, memory, magic, religion

EMILY: The Hero's Journey

SALLY: The Hero's Journey. So, anyway

EMILY: Well, I've said it before and I'll say it again about *The Wheel of Time* TV show: I don't want it [laughs]

SALLY: I don't want it, either [laughs]

EMILY: I'm not interested. Keep it

SALLY: But, put this on record: If it comes, I will watch it.

EMILY: Sally will be watching

SALLY: Emily will not, but I will because I wanna see the trainwreck

EMILY: Ahhh ohhhh I don't know

SALLY: Unless it's something that I have to pay for, in which case I will not give anybody my money to watch *Wheel of Time*

EMILY, laughing: if it's like on STARZ

SALLY: If they put it on STARZ, will not. If they put it on Netflix, absolutely

EMILY: I was gonna say it would have to be a STARZ or an HBO thing, but then I realized *Wheel of Time* isn't like *Game of Thrones* there aren't just like people fisting each other for thirty seconds

SALLY: [laughing very loudly]

[THEME SONG – “Tubthumping” by Chumbawamba]

SALLY: Anyways, kiddos, it's your mom and dad

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: [laughing] Welcome to Everybody Hates Rand.

EMILY: Uhh, yeah. Welcome to Everybody Hates Rand, a podcast about *The Wheel of Time*. If you're here on accident...that's okay, 'cause we're here on accident, too. [laughs]

SALLY: Yes. Correct

EMILY: [laughing] This is all a huge mistake

SALLY: All up in one Alice falls down the rabbit hole...

EMILY: I'm Emily Juchau

SALLY: I'm Sally Goodger

EMILY: We're your hosts. Today we're going to be talking about just two chapters in *The Eye of the World*. Where we left off we had just gone through Shadar Logoth. Where we're picking up we're still in Shadar Logoth, but Trollocs have entered the city, so our heroes are now trying to get out.

SALLY: Yes, and just before we begin this is our typical spoiler warning. We play pretty fast and loose with the content of all books up until book fourteen, which I have not read and which Emily refuses to mention because she doesn't want the whole series to be spoiled pour moi. So if you haven't read the series and care about spoilers, just know that we may be reaching in and around all the books, talking about them kind of as one whole mass. If you don't care...welcome.

[both laugh]

EMILY: So, Shadar Logoth. Do you have the book here?

SALLY: I do have the book here, it's right here.

EMILY: I have to, like, look at it. I have to hold. I don't know why, because I got through the first three episodes or whatever just fine

SALLY: [laughs] But now that we have it, it's, like, we need it

EMILY: Okay, so chapter 20. It should be noted that although we're, what? six episodes in, we're only a third of the way through the book. [laughs] Classic

SALLY: Yeah. Prayers

EMILY: Okay, so they venture out into Shadar Logoth. We haven't met the Trollocs, yet, Lan's just kind of scouting around and saw them in the city. So, go out into the creepy city. It's nighttime, and, this is what's gonna happen, the fellowship's gonna break up. And it happens super casually. It's basically, in the first three paragraphs they're all just kind of riding along and suddenly Rand realizes that Lan and Moiraine are kind of a little bit farther ahead. Because all the Emonds Fielders, as they're referred to in the text, plus Thom

SALLY: Honorary farmer

EMILY: Are kind of clumped together, keeping an eye out at the city, which is super creepy. There's always mention of watching eyes coming out of the buildings

SALLY: Horror

EMILY: Yeah, which is super creepy. “Rand did not even want to breathe.” Consider this, Rand: don’t.

SALLY: Stop breathing

[both laugh]

SALLY: Drop dead

EMILY: So he realizes they’re thirty paces ahead. He says, “Oh, we’re falling behind,” and starts to, kind of, catch up to them, but just then some of the mist, the sentient fog, *mashadar*, kind of creeps out into the street ahead of them and effectively separates them, because Moiraine warns them, “Don’t touch it, or you will die, basically.”

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah

EMILY: Which makes everyone really nervous, because of course Moiraine represents safety to them. So they’re like, “How are we gonna join up?” and Moiraine basically says, “Okay, I can’t do anything against the mist because it would require so much of the One Power that it would be like a beacon.” Which is also a very fantasy thing. There always comes a point where someone can’t use magic because the evil people would be able to detect the magic. I don’t know if that has anything to do with anything. I just think it’s really interesting

SALLY: It is really interesting. I’ve never actually thought about that.

EMILY: It just seems like it’s a storytelling way to curtail the magic users abilities

SALLY: True

EMILY: Because that always becomes the danger when you introduce a Gandalf-like figure who has sort of – we don’t really know– inaccessible...

SALLY: Well Gandalf is technically a low-level angel so

EMILY: Yeah, Gandalf is basically god, so [laughs]

SALLY: [laughs] Well, actually [laughs again]

EMILY: Oh, boy here comes the

SALLY: No, no we’re not here to talk about *Lord of the Rings*. We’re here to talk about *Wheel of Time*

EMILY: But Gandalf is the best comparison to Moiraine

SALLY: Exactly

EMILY: Although we get – we get really into the nuances and the techniques involving the One Power. We’re gonna know exactly how it works, how it functions, later in the series, but for now everyone is so – Rand, as a our point of view character, and although we also get Perrin a little later on, they’re so clueless that’ it’s like

SALLY: They're like [makes a frightened noise]

EMILY: Moiraine's basically god to them

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, Moiraine is god and a nuclear bomb all in one

EMILY: Yeah. Awesome

SALLY: Super awesome. Yeah, she's incredible. But, yeah, she can't do it because all the Trollocs would be like, "Oh, yes. That's where she is."

EMILY: "Oh, yeah. There's that bitch."

SALLY: "Ah, yes. There she is."

EMILY: "Here I am."

SALLY: "That bitch."

EMILY: [laughs] Okay, so she's like, "Look at that star." I don't know why that's always a fantasy thing, too

SALLY: I know. It's like so, like...

EMILY: Navigate by that star

SALLY: Yeah...nothing

EMILY: What?

SALLY: I'm thinking of a Christmas carol, but now all of the sudden that Christmas carol just whipped out of my brain

EMILY: I was thinking of *Stardust* because it plays with that so cutely, where Tristram? His name's Tristan in the movies, but I think it's like Tristram or something in the books?

SALLY: Oh, that's so British. Of course it's Tristram

EMILY: It's terrible and there's a hilarious anecdote about Neil Gaiman being like, "Tristan's not really his name," when they were making the movie, and they were like, "We can't say the other one. Stuff it." [Sally laughs] and he was like, "Fine. Makes sense, I guess."

SALLY: "I guess."

EMILY: Anyway, he uses the North Star or whatever to navigate and then meets the North Star personified because she's fallen from Earth. So when he tries to navigate she's like, "Oh, you're trying to find your way with that?"

SALLY: "That's me!"

EMILY: “That sucks. You can’t.”

SALLY: *Stardust* is an incredible movie

EMILY: I agree

SALLY: Okay, but yes. They’re supposed to navigate by the North Star

EMILY: The East Star

SALLY: Whatever it is. A red star

EMILY: Yeah, basically she’s like, “We’re gonna meet up outside the city.”

SALLY: At the river, because, again, Darkfriends don’t like running water

EMILY: She also – Egwene says, “How will we find you again?” and Moiraine says, “Imma find you.”
[laughs] “Like, be assured. I will find you.”

SALLY: [laughs] Liam Neeson

EMILY: Yeah. I will find you and I will end you [laughs]

SALLY: Yeah. She’s like, “Don’t worry, my babies.”

EMILY: Yeah, so then she peaces out with Lan. Lan, notably, says nothing in this entire exchange
[laughs]

SALLY: He’s just like, “Okay.”

EMILY: He’s like, “This has been inconvenient for me. As always.” But, this is hilarious, we’re in Rand’s point of view, so in his mind everyone’s kind of just standing around, and he’s like, “Oh, we need a leader and it might as well be me.” So he just sort of starts moving and everyone follows him, but a little later on, when they actually run into Trollocs, in a few paragraphs, they freeze and Rand says, “‘This way!’ but he heard the same cry from five throats,” which to me indicates that if we were any other character’s point of view, they would be thinking of themselves as the leader.

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: And it’s just hilarious to me?

SALLY: It’s so funny. I also love the visual of they run into Trollocs and it’s like freeze frame, because everyone is, like, “Oh.”

EMILY: [laughs] “Oh, shit.”

SALLY: And then all the sudden they’re like, “This way!” and they all just break out like a *Scooby-Doo* cartoon and run into six different directions

EMILY: *Oh my god*

SALLY: It's a *Scooby-Doo* chase scene! That's exactly what it is

EMILY: It really is. Like running through and out

SALLY: Yeah, running through and out, and through different doors, through this city that nobody knows, and they're all separated. It is absolutely a *Scooby-Doo* chase scene.

EMILY: Ah, that's hilarious

SALLY: [laughing] Really cuts down the tension if you think of it that way

EMILY: [laughs] 'Cause this is a very tense sequence.

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: At one point some Trollocs and a Myrddraal catch up to Rand and they almost have him, but *mashadar* just catches them so he gets to see what happens to them. And it's really creepy. They basically all just, like –

SALLY: Basically like boa constrictor-ed slash suffocated slash torn apart

EMILY: Yeah, they kind of just – the fog like eats them

SALLY: Yeah, it's super nasty

EMILY: And makes them go into convulsions. The Myrddraal makes this screaming sound that makes me think of the Nazgul, you know? When it's fucking dying

SALLY: [makes a screeching noise, attempting to sound like a Nazgul]

EMILY: [makes a better screeching noise, sounds more like a Nazgul] Um, anyway, Rand runs into Mat pretty quickly

SALLY: [laughs] And almost kills him

EMILY: Yeah he almost slashes Mat's throat. Which, again, Rand almost kills Mat a lot

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: [laughs] So if you're ever like, "Gee, Mat is paranoid about Rand." Mat is justified [laughs]

SALLY: Mat has almost been stabbed, throat slit, hung, killed

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: Trampled

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: Drowned

EMILY: Mat's just doing his best

SALLY: Yeah, but he runs into Mat

EMILY: Yeah, and they – oh god, this is also a hilarious visual – they get to the gate leading out of the city, towards the river, and haven't seen anyone else, and kind of as soon as they make it outside, and are out on the road, suddenly Thom just comes up behind them

SALLY: Like barreling

EMILY: Bolts through and is like, "Fly, you fools!" [both laugh] Then they hear Trollocs behind them and have to chase after him, and it's just really hilarious

SALLY: They're just like, "Oh, we're fine. We've got it under control."

EMILY: They're like, "We fine," but then Thom like, road runner-esque

SALLY: [laughing] Yeah, just runs through them

EMILY: A cloud of dust

SALLY: Shrieking. And then, don't we get our first – first Perrin point of view. This is our first point of view other than Rand's, correct?

EMILY: This is our first point of view other than Rand's, or Lews Therin, who, technically, is Rand

SALLY: The same person

EMILY: Yeah, but we get Perrin

SALLY: UH

EMILY: And it's just a delight, immediately

SALLY: It's so lovely

EMILY: Perrin is so sweet

SALLY: I know

EMILY: He's basically just sitting there, like, near the gate of the city

SALLY: Yeah, because I'm assuming he just got there immediately

EMILY: He's just like, "Yeah. No problems."

SALLY: "Found it."

EMILY: And he has this whole kind of internal monologue about how everyone, Mat especially, kind of thinks he's slow and a little stupid, but really it's just that he's very careful and likes to think things

through. How it's because he was always bigger than the other children, so he had to be really careful not to hurt anyone

SALLY: UGH

EMILY: And it's really sweet

SALLY: It's *so sweet*

EMILY: It's also just, I don't know, it's kind of funny to jump into an internal monologue where the author immediately calls attention to how this internal monologue is going to be different.

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: No, Perrin is just kind of sweet and –

SALLY: Perrin is lovely, and I love – his first paragraph, as a narrator, is so indicative of what his story is like and what his point of view is like throughout the rest of the series. Because he's like, "I take a long time to think through things," and you read – and, again, every episode I gotta hit this – book four Perrin's story almost killed me because it is so slow

EMILY: Mmm-hmm

SALLY: And Perrin is just thinking, thinking, thinking, but it's so true to character. Everything he does throughout the series, and you are taught that immediately in the first section you get with Perrin. It's gonna be slow, it's gonna be steady, but it's gonna be sweet and lovely

EMILY: And it's also interesting because Perrin has – one of Perrin's internal struggles is that he is a berserker basically. When he's in battle he basically goes a little crazy and stops thinking, and that's really interesting given the rest of his point of view, and also – he also sets himself up as a contrast, as the polar opposite of Mat right to begin with

SALLY: Yeah, which is hilarious. I was thinking about that when I read it. Go on

EMILY: Yeah, especially because Mat's point of views are also super quick, super fast-paced, but Mat is also the most cautious character in the entire book

SALLY: Yeah, so it's, like, yes Mat is the polar opposite of Perrin, but on the other hand they are exactly the same. In the way that they both think through things

EMILY: They're both very careful

SALLY: Very methodically

EMILY: They're both very analytical

SALLY: Mat just thinks quicker than Perrin does, so

EMILY: Ugh, I love them both

SALLY: I know. Perrin is so good. And Perrin is so – in contrasts, speaking of Rand being like so, “Oh, Egwene. We’re separated.” In this section, we get – I’m really interested in how the fellowship breaks up.

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: Because you get Mat, Rand, and Thom. You get Nynaeve, Lan, and Moiraine, and then you get Perrin and Egwene on their own.

EMILY: Yes

SALLY: Without an adult so to speak

EMILY: Without an authority figure, and although it’s true that Mat and Rand are going to lose Thom pretty quickly, and Thom, as himself, doesn’t quite function as an authority figure more as like – he’s really weird. He’s sort of fluid as a –

SALLY: Yeah, but he is at least, like, competent enough. And then he provides Rand and Mat with the skills that they need for the rest of their journey. Rand and Mat, like, buy their time at inns by basically performing as baby gleemen

EMILY: Ah! Baby gleemen

SALLY: Yeah, so it’s, like, Rand and Mat have a so-called stepping stone to being on their own, whereas Perrin and Egwene don’t, and it’s just very fascinating. I don’t know, I think it’s really significant for both of their stories moving forward. Is that they’re both competent enough to handle it on their own, especially, like, just again methodical

EMILY: Yeah, they’re both kind of forced into taking responsibility for themselves and for each other right away, and not have anyone to rely on. And that’s interesting because Perrin and Egwene are, really quickly, going to be in huge leadership positions. Not as quickly as Rand, given, but also they’re going to be more competent at taking leadership than I think Rand is. So

SALLY: Yeah. Rand struggles with it a lot

EMILY: Yeah, Rand has a lot of internal dissonance, basically, with being a leader. Perrin and – Egwene steps into it really naturally. Perrin doesn’t like it, but he’s really good at it.

SALLY: Yeah, he’s really good at it, and always kind of has a mind for what his people want from him, which is I think very important. But to go – that was a huge rant of mine, but to go back to – I love Perrin and Egwene because there’s this very specific parallel between when they’re running from Emond’s Field and you get Rand thinking about Egwene. And he drops back so he’s behind her so that he can protect her

EMILY: Yes

SALLY: But here with Perrin, Egwene – because Rand isn’t here to make Bela run faster – Perrin’s like, “Egwene is falling behind,” and he falls back to keep pace with her.

EMILY: Yes

SALLY: And that’s, like, so important? Because Perrin is much more likely to treat Egwene as his equal and someone he can rely on

EMILY: Yeah, it's very sweet. They're only together – in the segment we're gonna be in – they're only together for about a page and a half. He's with Egwene, they kind of hear – they leave the city, they hear the Trollocs behind them, start running. Yeah, Bela falls behind. Perrin kind of tries to fall back to keep pace with her, but they both end up falling into the river

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, that's true. So he attempts to, and then they fucking fall into a river

EMILY: They literally just run headlong into the Arinelle

SALLY: Which is horrifying

EMILY: I know. That's always – that's also always a scene in fantasy, is someone runs into a river on accident

SALLY: On their horse

EMILY: On their horse

SALLY: And I'm like, "These horses."

EMILY: I know. The poor horses. Of course, Perrin loses his horse entirely

SALLY: But Bela. Can't kill her

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: I'm a bad bitch, you can't kill me

[both laugh]

EMILY: Bela is unbreakable

SALLY: Bela is unbreakable

EMILY: Like Bruce Willis in the M. Night Shyamalan movie [laughs]

SALLY: I was going with Kimmy Schmidt, so [laughs] we got there in the end

EMILY, singing the "Kimmy Schmidt" theme song: Unbreakable!

SALLY, singing: They alive, dammit

[both laugh]

EMILY: Yeah, noticeably Perrin's horse isn't even named

SALLY: Yeah, Perrin is like –

EMILY, laughing: That's what a throwaway horse it is. Literally

SALLY: RIP though, honestly. That would be so scary if you were a horse.

EMILY: I know. I like to think it didn't die. It just wandered off

SALLY: It just became a wild horse

EMILY: Good

SALLY: Yeah. Be free. *Spirit, Stallion of the Cimarron*

EMILY: [laughs] Oh, I think there is a horse named Spirit later in these books. So they both end up in the river. Perrin kind of tries to find Egwene, but he can't, and pretty quickly he's occupied with not drowning

SALLY: As one would be

EMILY: He has a whole thing where he really wants to strip off his clothes and his axe, but then he's like, "I'm gonna end up on the riverbank facing God knows what. I better keep my weapons and my clothing."

SALLY: Yeah [laughs], so good for you, Perrin. You kept your wits about you

EMILY: Yeah. So he finally gets to the other end of the river. I mean the other side of the river. Doesn't see Egwene, so he just goes to try and find shelter. And that's where we leave him.

SALLY: What a good boy. And then we get back to our, uh, super dummies

EMILY: We get back to resident idiot, Rand.

SALLY: [laughs] Resident idiots, at this point. Like, it's an odd little group of three

EMILY: [laughs] We're with Rand, Mat, and Thom. They've kind of shaken the Trollocs, but they're a little bit lost.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY, laughing: First line of dialogue: "'I still say it's over there,' Mat said." So they've been arguing, which is hilarious. "'We were going north at the end and that means east is that way.' 'There it is,' Thom said," and points the opposite direction.

SALLY: Yeah, and Mat's like [mumbling noises]

EMILY: Mat's like, "Fuck me."

SALLY: Mat's like, "Fuck me, right? Sorry I can't navigate by starlight."

EMILY: "I'm sorry I'm not just a wilderness child like Nynaeve over there."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Sort of Trollocs then attack them. Mat kills one with an arrow. Good for him.

SALLY: I know. What a badass

EMILY: One kill for Mat. And they basically run out, make it to – Oh! Thom has his first badass thing where he kind of breaks away, gets behind them, throws knives at them, and sort of eliminates them.

SALLY: It's super cool. But then he's like, "My best knives!"

EMILY: He's like, "My best knives," but he doesn't want to go down [whispers], obviously

SALLY: So RIP Thom's knives

EMILY: I know, but that's sort of like – I remember reading this when I was a kid and being like, "Thom's just sort of the bard figure," but we sort of get to this and Thom uses his knives and is a badass. So it's like, Thom's not just... Thom's gonna be competent in lots of different ways. Which, sort of makes it more of a blow when we lose Thom in a few chapters

SALLY: Yeah, Thom really breaks out of his trope at this point, which is just a really fascinating arc that Thom has. He is so stereotypical, or he's supposed to be

EMILY: As a bard

SALLY: As a bard, but then you're like, "Thom is actually political mastermind, badass knife-thrower, competent circus performer [Emily laughs], loving father and uncle." [laughing] He fulfills a lot of roles, where's a lot of hats

EMILY: He really does. Yeah. Oh, god. Thom's so good.

SALLY: I don't know. Probably talks to animals too

EMILY: Honestly? Would I be surprised? No.

SALLY: So, yes. Thom breaking out of his trope. But then they get to... a boat [laughs]

EMILY: Well, they get to the river, see the boat, and sort of the Trollocs break out behind them, and they just, like... jump onto the boat

[both laugh]

SALLY: There's some incredible boat-jumping scenes in *Wheel of Time*

EMILY: They ditch the horses – oh yeah, there's the one where Mat

BOTH: pole vaults onto a boat

SALLY: [laughing] I love that scene

EMILY: And he's like, "Thom! Keep up!" and Thom's super drunk

SALLY: I got really excited because it was at this point, but then I was like, "Oh, no no no. That's much later."

EMILY: It's after Mat's quarterstaff

SALLY: This is when Rand falls on somebody

EMILY: Yeah [laughs]. They ditch the horses, get all their stuff, and then they just jump onto the boat. And Rand jumps onto a person's face, basically

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: There's sort of a little fight scene on the boat, where Rand doesn't really know where the others are. The guy he just steps on is begging for mercy because he doesn't know. He's confused in the chaos. A Trolloc gets on board the ship and basically is about to kill Rand when he has his – is this his third? His third experience with the Power? I think?

SALLY: I think so. It's the horse, then in Baerlon, then here

EMILY: Basically, he has a – the Trolloc lifts this pole to spear him with it and to Rand everything kind of slows down, and he can't breathe, and he says, "No," and the ship lurches, and a boom swings out to catch him and throw him over the side. The Trolloc that is. And Rand has a really funny moment where he says, "That has to have used up my luck. There can't be any more after that." Which is just kind of a funny thing. That he still doesn't know what's going on, but also the parallel between luck and power, which is what's going to happen with Mat a little later on. Where Mat has just luck, no power. And Rand has just power

SALLY: No luck

[both laugh]

EMILY: Basically

SALLY: Admittedly a lot of shitty things happen to Rand

EMILY: Yeah, and then we get our...pirate captain

SALLY: UH

EMILY: Bayle Domon

SALLY: America's sweetheart

EMILY: He comes bellowing out, catches the swinging boom with his bare hand

SALLY, laughing: I know, it's so cool

EMILY: And fucking yells at the guy that Rand that stepped on for failing to secure it. Which is an interesting little thing that the probably the guy did secure it, but Rand actually

SALLY: Undid it

EMILY: Undid it. This guy's name is Floran Gelb, he's kind of a whiner and a – was sleeping while he was on the watch, so sort of he's incompetent and this was the last straw. Basically Domon's like,

“You’re fired. The next time we make harbor, you’re out.” Which is going to present a problem. Gelb accuses Rand of being in league with the Trollocs. Domon says, “In league with my aged grandmother!”

[both laugh]

EMILY: “Fuck you. Get out of my sight.” And then he says, “These Trollocs are following me. Why won’t they leave me alone? What the fuck is happening?” And sort of starts this conversation with Rand, Mat, and Thom. Domon’s our first interaction with the Illianer accent. Illian accent, I guess. We’ve talked before – I don’t know if it was on this podcast. It might have been on our little separate thing with the *Wheel of Time* music thing. We’ve talked about how, just as *Wheel of Time* is monoreligious, it’s also monolingualistic. There’s a single language. I guess English or whatever

SALLY: The common tongue, or whatever you want to call it

EMILY: Yeah, common. Whatever the hell in *Wheel of Time*, and the only difference we get are accents that are geographical, regional. Regional accents. Illian has a really distinct accent, so does Tarabon has a really thick accent, and so do a few Borderlanders, and so does Seanchan. Which, Seanchan is – like Illian you can read the accent – Seanchan is just that the characters describe as people from Seanchan having a really thick, slurred accent, which just makes it difficult to understand them for a little while, and marks them as foreigners. I just think it’s interesting, because, especially because all these countries are at war, it’s tactically advantageous to have different languages. It would be really sweet if you were about to attack someone, if you could communicate without having to worry about scouts listening in on you. Stuff like that...so, I guess the whole monolingualistic thing is just for Jordan’s convenience? I don’t really get how

SALLY: Yeah...it’s...weird. It’s really weird. Just ‘cause there’s so much cultural difference. And yeah, it is just more convenient. Not everybody is Mr. J.R.R. Tolkien, who wants to invent three different languages

EMILY: Master of languages

SALLY: And seventeen different alphabets [Emily laughs]. Yeah [laughs]. So not everybody wants to do that, and I get it. And it’s also like – in *Lord of the Rings*, because Tolkien was a linguist – a linguistic, wow. A linguist, he can do interesting things with the language, and Robert Jordan didn’t have the background. It can be really exhausting when a writer that does not know languages so in-depth tries to invent one. It feels really clunky

EMILY: Yeah, uhhhh, yeah. Sorry. I was thinking of *Eragon*. That dumb fifteen-year-old book

SALLY: Yes, exactly. It just feels really clunky, and it just feels like there’s no point to it, so it just gets annoying, and I don’t really think there would be a point in *Wheel of Time* because so many other things are happening. And there’s also like – because there’s only one religion – typically in myth, people receive their language, the gift of language or some sort of knowledge from their god

EMILY: Ooh, that’s interesting

SALLY: So I wonder if it’s, like, there’s just one god so they were gifted one language? I guess there’s the Old Tongue – which, because there’s one language that’s why it’s so alarming when Mat starts basically speaking in tongues [Emily laughs]. Everyone’s like, “What the fuck are you doing?” Nobody has any idea what he’s saying

EMILY: It's just interesting to me that the world was broken, and that's how it's described – the Breaking of the World – but that breakage actually brought together a whole lot of things. We don't get to see exactly what the world was like in terms of languages and religions before the Breaking of the World, but it sure seems like a lot of things were meshed together that weren't before. And the only languages that people experience that other people don't understand are the Old Tongue and Maiden Hand Talk, which is like the Maidens form of Sign Language. Which I think is really interesting that they get to have their own language and it's basically the only

SALLY: And speaking of tactical advantage. They seem to be the only people who are like, "It's really nice if people don't know what the fuck we're saying when we're about to attack them." [Emily laughs]. They're the only ones who are like, "Oh, I wonder if that would be a good idea."

EMILY: "Slash, we can gossip about Rand."

SALLY: "Slash, we can be like look at this idiot. Tryin' to tell us jokes."

EMILY, whispers: God. Love them.

SALLY: So, yeah – you get the accent

EMILY: Domon's accent, which is super thick, and I love him

SALLY: Yeah, he [laughs] sticks around for a very long time

EMILY: Yeah, Domon's gonna be one of those characters – I always tell people this when they start *The Wheel of Time* series. Every character you meet in *The Eye of the World* is going to come back in a big way in the rest of the series, and Domon is no exception. He reappears in book two and is just going to be omnipresent throughout the series doing shit

SALLY: It's basically like every time they get on a boat it's like, "Oh," [laughs]

EMILY: [laughs] Literally

SALLY: "You again!"

EMILY: Every time they get on a boat up until about book seven, and then Domon is on land

SALLY: Oh god, poor him

EMILY: And joins Mat's crew

SALLY: That's not surprising to me at all

EMILY: Yeah, Domon and Mat. Mat doesn't remember him, it should be noted

SALLY: Oh, yeah

EMILY: Because Mat loses his memory

SALLY: So he's like, "This lunatic."

EMILY: “Who are you?”

SALLY: And this guy’s like, “You juggled on my boat.” [laughs]

EMILY: “You were a little Gollum guy.”

SALLY: Yeah...yeah [Emily laughs]. Mat, not in this section, but soon becomes full Gollum

EMILY: Anyway, Domon takes them to his cabin is basically like, “I don’t know what the fuck you guys are doing here. What’s happening?” and the three boys proceed to kind of bargain for their keep on the boat. First Thom tells a story. Domon’s like, “What are you doing? Why are Trollocs after you?” Mat’s like, “We’re on our way to Caemlyn,” and Thom’s like, “Shut your mouth.”

SALLY: And Thom’s like, “And then to wherever the wind takes us!” and then he launches into this epic of treasure maps and nonsense [laughs]

EMILY: Thom just spins this fucking tale, and you can tell Thom, the entire time they were on their way, is composing this

SALLY: He’s like, “What epic will I inevitably need?”

EMILY: “With myself as the hero.”

SALLY: [laughing] Yeah, and then Rand mentions, “Everything that Thom said cast him in the best light as this, like, heroic go-getter.” It’s hilarious. It’s so funny

EMILY: Thom was just like, “At some point I’m going to need a cover story, and I’m going to have one *completely* ready.”

SALLY: “It’s perfect.” It is so funny. I would read this book

EMILY: Yeah. God. And he finishes and Rand’s got his mouth open, and Mat is just staring at him. He’s like, “What? Did any of that happen? I don’t remember.”

SALLY: Mat is already like, “Schwat?”

EMILY: And Domon is like, “Okay, well that was difficult to believe,” and Thom says, “Every word of it true.”

SALLY: “From one who lived it.”

EMILY: “From one who lived it.”

SALLY: [laughs] Lying sack of shit

EMILY: God, and Domon is immediately like “Do you have some of this treasure with you?” And Thom is like, “Nope.”

SALLY, in a weird voice: “It’s with the horses.”

EMILY: “Sadly we lost it. All I have left are my flute and my harp, a few coppers, and the clothes on my back. But believe me, you don’t want that treasure.” Like [in a dramatic voice] “It’s tainted.”

SALLY, whispers: It’s tainted

EMILY: So Domon’s like, “Okay, so you don’t have any money to pay. I’m just gonna get – why shouldn’t I just get rid of you?” and Mat’s like [in a trembling voice], “You’re gonna get rid of us? You’re gonna dump us on land?” And Domon’s like, “Sure. Who says I’m gonna dump you out on the shore? I’ll just dump you in the fucking river.” And before Thom can do anything the boys panic and just offer up their money, what they have, which includes the coin that Moiraine gave them way back in the beginning. It’s a Tar Valon...

SALLY: Silver mark, or whatever

EMILY: Silver mark. Speaking of things that are the same and things that are different regionally in *The Wheel of Time*. Everyone does have different money systems, which is really interesting to me. So they hand over all this and he says, “I’ll take you to Whitebridge.” And Rand says, “Well what about our friends. They should be at the river by now. Can they come too?” And Domon’s like, “We’ve been sailing for like nine miles, you idiot. I don’t know what the fuck you...never been on a boat before?”

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: And Rand’s like, “I have not.”

SALLY, in a timid voice: “Just a ferry.”

EMILY: They do find out – they do get some information about how Domon’s been up North in Saldaea, and there have been hella Trolloc attacks, which to him sort of indicates that – “The people are all saying it meant the Dark One is stirring, the last days are come.” So that’s sort of like your immersive fantasy there. We know something is coming

SALLY: Yeah, it’s more of that shadow creeping in at the edges. The Borderlands are the edge of this continent basically and then we get into the [whispers] darkness. So the shadows – and Domon mentions, he says, “I’m really excited to get back to where Trollocs are just fairy tales basically, and people won’t believe me.” Because he has like HAD IT with being chased by monsters

EMILY: He’s like [in an affected voice], “This is IT. I’m done.”

SALLY: “I’m done.” And it’s also really interesting. The fact that Domon gets – keeps getting chased really does tie him into this pattern, so he keeps coming back so we know he’s significant. And at this point – is it Domon who has the Dark One’s seal?

EMILY: Um, it doesn’t say in this book, but in the next book we are going to get that he has a Dark One’s seal

SALLY: But it is him, right?

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: Okay. I was reading it and I couldn’t remember. So there is that possible explanation that they’re like, “Oh, we’ve gotta get this seal.”

EMILY: Chasing him down

SALLY: And Domon is like, “I have had it.” Getting chased

EMILY: Domon, one of our hyper-competent pirate captains is like, “This is so stupid.”

SALLY: “This is so dumb.”

EMILY: “I hate this.”

SALLY: “I hate this.”

EMILY: God, he’s such an icon

SALLY: I know. I love – I know I say this a lot, but I literally would happily join Bayle Domon’s crew and put my life on the line for him

EMILY: Right?

SALLY: I feel like he would treat me real good

EMILY: Oh, we then have a little thing where Thom is like, “That was dumb of you idiots. I could have bargained basically. Because I’m a gleeman, I inherently have value. I could have bought us passage by saying, ‘Oh, I’ll entertain your crew.’” Which is what they end up doing anyway.

SALLY: So Thom is like, “I hate these idiots. Yes we had to pay, but also we have to perform.”

EMILY: Yeah, and it’s just sort of this – the boys’ first lesson in street smarts. Like you were saying earlier, Thom’s going to give them the tools to survive without him, and this is the first thing it that you, if you have skills, you can trade them, basically. Even if they’re just entertainment skills

SALLY: He’s teaching them how to barter basically

EMILY: Yeah, and that’s going to happen a lot in this series. Thom’s going to weasel his way into places just by the virtue of his being a gleeman, and Rand and Mat too are going to use that

SALLY: They’re going to learn how to do lots of different barter-y things. So yeah. Street smarts is a really good

EMILY: Oooh, and then there’s a dumb throwaway line where Rand’s sort of gazing out over the river and Thom’s like, “There’s nothing you can do,” and Thom explicitly mentions Egwene and Perrin as those being the ones Rand is worried about. He says, “Can you think of any better than those two for getting the lot of them clear.” He’s saying Egwene and Perrin and Nynaeve will all be safe, and Rand says, [in a soft, dramatic voice], “I tried to talk her out of coming.”

SALLY: [gagging noise] and everyone’s like, “Nobody cares, Rand. Shut the fuck up.”

EMILY: Yeah, and Thom’s like, “Okay, you did what you could.” And Rand’s like, “I told her I’d take care of her. I should have tried harder. [whispers softly] I should have tried harder.”

SALLY: I know. It's so dramatic

EMILY: UGH UUGGGH

SALLY: Like "Welcome to My Life" by Simple Plan plays in the background [both laugh] while Rand stares out into the distance. It's so emo, I can't handle it

EMILY: Ugh, he's so annoying. He doesn't even mention Perrin and Nynaeve

SALLY: He's like, "Perrin can die for all I care, basically."

EMILY: "Perrin can go to the wolves."

BOTH: Literally

EMILY: As long as Egwene's safe

SALLY: Yeah, and so you're like, "Be quiet."

EMILY: Egwene is better equipped to handle most things than you are, you dummy

SALLY: Yeah, you dumb idiot. But then we flip the page, and we get the chapter titled "Listen to the Wind," which is our first Nynaeve point of view

EMILY: Yep, our third point of view, basically in this book, and also: a delight.

SALLY: Yes. Before we go, I want to talk a little bit about the breaking of the fellowship and what it specifically means for points of view. So this, again, like all things, comes from my study of *Lord of the Rings*

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: And infamously in *The Two Towers*, after you have the breaking of the fellowship, you get, what I think is one of the weirdest structures of all time, where you have the first half of the book is Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli, and then you split and you go back in time, and have to relive the same thing, much more boring, with Frodo and Sam.

EMILY: Yes, makes those books painfully difficult to read

SALLY: Yeah, and we talked about – the reason [laughs] there are so many reasons to do that. First of all, because Frodo and Sam, in book two, it's, like, agonizing honestly because they're in their darkest hours basically. It's super painful

EMILY: Their only company is Gollum, who's not exactly a fun time

SALLY: Not exactly a delight, yeah. He's not exactly interesting or

EMILY: He's no Thom Merrilin

SALLY: He's very interesting, but he is no Thom Merrilin. But, part of the reason that that's so painful is the long points of view become interlaced points of view as opposed to intercut point of views, and laces

are inherently long. So you get this really frustrating delayed gratification in those books, where you're like, "I want to know what's happening," but it's also suspenseful, and you're anxious about what's happening with the other characters. And it's just exhausting, it's absolutely exhausting to have to do it again, and it doesn't happen as much in this book, but later on as you move throughout *Wheel of Time* books, there will be long stretches, a hundred pages or more, where Robert Jordan does the same thing. Where you're with Rand for a hundred pages, or Elayne and Nynaeve for a hundred pages, and you get that type of exhaustion again, where you have to *do it again*, because he mixes up the time

EMILY: It's weird because some of those long point of views will be over the span of a single day, whereas some of the other ones will be almost a week at a time, or whatever

SALLY: Yeah, so it's very just – honestly the way the points of view are done in *Wheel of Time* – it's done really well. Robert Jordan handles it really well – but it's really exhausting, and it's one of the reasons why reading these books – despite the length. Yes they are 900, 1,000 page books, but the way the points of view are done is really exhausting. To have to read 100 pages, and then read the same time span again and again and again and again and again, because the fellowship, from this point, only continues to fracture and fracture and fracture, and get more spread out and more spread out, and it's a little bit better here because the chapters are shorter. And you don't get the vast expanse of 100 pages of somebody doing this and 100 pages of somebody doing that, you get 10 pages or whatever. But you're still, because – breaking of the fellowship is such an interesting thing. The term fellowship, it's obviously a word, but in fantasy it typically comes from *The Fellowship of the Ring*, where a group of people come together with – it's a company with a similar goal. There's companionship, camaraderie, friendship. They go off into the wild on their adventure

EMILY: Face trials together

SALLY: Face trials together, but the idea that there is a fellowship is what makes it comfortable for them

EMILY: And basically a unit that's stronger together than it is apart

SALLY: Absolutely, and this comes from game theory. It's really not that fancy, but the idea of a fellowship aesthetic. In game theory, there's the idea of mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics. So how the game is played, I don't remember exactly what dynamics is, but aesthetics is what comes out of the game. So there are a bunch of different ones, but the idea of a fellowship aesthetic is the idea of a game as a social network. Part of the reason you play is to have that connection. And the same applies in books, obviously, although they're very different than games. So when you have the breaking of the fellowship, you literally break that sense of assistance, comfort, camaraderie. And it's very stressful on the characters, but it's also very stressful on the readers, and that's mimicked in the different points of view, because I don't know exactly what's happening. Like we don't know what happens with Egwene for a while, and we're like, "What the fuck is happening with Egwene? Where is she?" And we just constantly lose – like Perrin and Egwene are the ones in the most danger in this section, so that's super, duper stressful

EMILY: Yeah because they have – like we've said before, they don't have an authority figure with them, basically to provide backup.

SALLY: And they're literally in the wilderness. Nynaeve is with – as we find out in this chapter – with Lan and Moiraine, so we're not super worried about her. Perrin and Mat – or Rand and Mat and Thom are on a boat, so there's a little bit of security. But Perrin and Egwene are in the fucking wilderness, so. Anyway, that's my little rant about point of views and fellowship and breaking and

EMILY: No, I think it's really interesting. The breaking of the fellowship is such a thing in fantasy, and...yeah, it's so interesting that this book has a mini-breaking of the fellowship, which sort of foreshadows the idea that this fellowship is going to be broken later on in the series. Basically multiple times. Like you said, fractured again and again and again. And – spoiler alert – we're not going to get the entire fellowship together – the last time we see them all together in the same room is in book three

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: After that: done. Not even in – it's really annoying actually because in book fourteen you're hoping for them all to come together, but Mat, of course, is off doing something, so we only get most of them together

SALLY: Mat, you idiot

EMILY: Yeah, it's just a really interesting thing to play with. It's one of the fantasy things that I know is a trope, but I really like it every time it happens

SALLY: But I absolutely love it

EMILY: I would die for it

SALLY: Yeah, and it is a trope, but I almost don't want to call it a trope because trope in my mind is a little bit derogatory

EMILY: Sure, yeah

SALLY: I think because I think of, like, love triangles or like –

EMILY: It just has bad connotations

SALLY: Yeah, it has bad connotations. But absolutely is a fantasy trope, but I do absolutely love it. And you come to expect it. Like eventually we literally get a group of nine, and so I'm like, "Ah, how will they separate."

EMILY: How will this end?

SALLY: How will this end? And so [laughs] we get – it ends hilariously with Nynaeve being paired with the people she least wants to be paired with: Lan and Moiraine. [laughs] So we get – at the beginning of this chapter, Nynaeve has fallen asleep, and then she immediately starts yelling at herself because she's like, "You could've got eaten by Trollocs, you stupid idiot."

EMILY: Nynaeve talks to herself and it's the most beautiful thing ever. She talks to herself out loud

SALLY: Yeah it's – which I relate to on a spiritual level because all I do is talk to myself

EMILY: She says, "You could have awakened in a Trolloc cookpot." She also just has that little country flavor to her [laughs]. She's adorable

SALLY: [laughs] She's so charming, yeah. And so then she decides – kind of – she talks about her encounter with the Trollocs where basically they see her, and they're chasing her, and then they immediately turn around

EMILY: Because they – in her point of view, too, she’s like, “It’s just ‘cause I’m not one of the ones they want.”

SALLY: And then she decides to go downriver

EMILY: Yeah, she’s looking for the other ones. She’s hoping if she doesn’t find any of them it’ll take her to Whitebridge and Caemlyn and all the way to Tar Valon. She’s like, “Even if I’m separated, I still have a goal.”

SALLY: “I’m still going. I still have to protect my Emond’s Fielders.”

EMILY: She does have a very sweet line here: “The prospect was almost enough to daunt her. Before this, she had been no further from Emond’s Field than the boys.”

SALLY: And so here we have Nynaeve passing through her own portal, so to speak. And so kind of the beginning of – because Nynaeve is kind of, in a weird way, tacked on to the end of the fellowship, so I really appreciate that Robert Jordan gives her one of the first points of view, because then it’s like Nynaeve’s introduction to her own Hero’s Journey, or her own Journey, so to speak, which is just really love. That she’s not actually an afterthought

EMILY: Yeah, Nynaeve is super important. She’s as important as any of them. It’s so interesting, and it’s just the fact that her age is, I don’t know, sort of a buffer between her and the rest of them is – it’s sort of defeated here because she gets to be – yeah, have her own thing, be her own Hero’s Journey

SALLY: [laughs] So then she smells a fire

EMILY: And she basically decides to go scout it out and overhears Lan and Moiraine having this conversation, where she gets some information. Basically that – this is important to us as much as it is to Nynaeve, but basically that Trollocs are getting into the Two Rivers in some ways that Moiraine and Lan haven’t figure out

SALLY: Yeah, it’s very troubling to them how many Trollocs there are, how organized they are

EMILY: There appearing in such huge numbers that it would be like – like Lan says they appeared kind of as a scouting party on Winternight, during Bel Tine, but then so many more of them appeared too fast, for it to be that they scouted, got word back, and then the larger force came

SALLY: Yeah. It’s really troubling to him and to Moiraine

EMILY: Moiraine says, “The ways are closed,” which we find out later is incorrect, and the ways are basically going to be the way that the Trollocs are getting around. She says, “No one’s been powerful enough to travel since the Time of Madness.” Which is kind of interesting because I – what we actually find out later is that no one knows how to travel. It’s not a lack of power. Most of the Aes Sedai – hmm

SALLY: A fair number of them

EMILY: 30% of Aes Sedai can travel. It’s just that they don’t have the knowledge to do it. She says, “Unless one of the Forsaken is loose, there’s still no one who can. In any case, I do not think all the Forsaken together could move a thousand Trollocs,” which is interesting to me. It’s one of those

throwaway lines that I think Robert Jordan hadn't figured out yet. What he actually meant. Because later we're going to get people traveling, and you can make portals big enough to move an army

SALLY: Like Rand does it at the end of book five. That's the climax of book five. I don't think it's that big –

EMILY: He's not traveling, either, in that one

SALLY: Oh, that's right. Beg pardon, but he still does it.

EMILY: But still you can make big gateways, and can move through them. That's the point of traveling, you dingus

SALLY: Yeah, like to move armies. So that's, like, a weird thing. It's fourteen books, I don't know how much outlining Robert Jordan was able to do in advance

EMILY: Honestly? I think when he was writing this first book he thought it would be a trilogy, which, God bless him

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, I know. How was he like, "This'll be over in three books."

EMILY: "This'll be done in three books. It's easy."

SALLY: Maybe that's why there's so much confusion about whether Rand's fighting the Dark One or whether he's fighting Ishamael

EMILY: Yeah, that could be

SALLY: Like maybe Robert Jordan, like, didn't rewrite it good enough – well enough

EMILY: Yeah, he was just like, "Meh."

SALLY: "Eh! I don't know. They won't care"

EMILY: "They'll figure it out. I'll figure it out as I go."

SALLY: And we're like, [laughing] "James. We do care."

EMILY: [laughing] "James. James. Consistency is key."

SALLY: So yeah, this is kind of one of those overheard, spy at the door exposition moments, where we hear a little bit about

EMILY: And we get Moiraine, kind of giving us her, I don't know, almost her eulogy. She says, "I must have those young men. That Shayol Ghul will hunt them, I expect. Opposition from within the White Tower, even from the Amyrlin Seat, I accept." Moiraine's basically saying, "I'm gonna do anything. Like this is what I'm – This is my..."

SALLY: [laughs] This is why God made me

EMILY: This is my Hero's Journey. And then she sort of realizes that Nynaeve's there. Nynaeve has a moment of satisfaction because Lan didn't realize she was there. And Nynaeve throws him the middle finger, "Fuck you. I'm silent...as the grave."

SALLY: Silent as the grave. And then there's this charming thing where Lan puts up an arm, and Nynaeve tries to move it [laughs]

EMILY: Nynaeve's totally occupied with moving his arm while she's also yelling at Moiraine, which is hilarious to me

SALLY: [laughs] I know. She's so good

EMILY: [laughing] That just puts the dynamic of the three of them so neatly. Nynaeve's like: Push. No give.

SALLY: Yell

EMILY: "I'm sorry?"

SALLY: "I'm sorry?" Continues to yell, pushes again

EMILY: "I'm not weak, and yet you won't move?"

SALLY: "This is absurd."

EMILY: "I've never encountered this before in my life."

SALLY: "Do you know who I am?"

EMILY: Moiraine's like, "Would you like some tea?" [laughs]

SALLY: She's basically like, "Fuck your tea."

EMILY: "Fuck your tea."

SALLY: It's so charming. I love this scene.

EMILY: Nynaeve calls her "filthy Aes Sedai" and "dirty Aes Sedai" multiple times. So racism

SALLY: Racism!

EMILY: The language of racism, anyway. And this is when Nynaeve finds out that she can wield the One Power, basically because Moiraine first says, "I can sense it on you," and basically is like, "Here's your entire life story, Nynaeve, that's how I know you can use the One Power."

SALLY: Because Nynaeve is like, "You don't know me, Mom," basically, and Moiraine is like, "Let me tell you exactly how this happened," and it is word for word basically

EMILY: Yeah, she's like, "At one point you healed one of those idiots. It was either Egwene or Perrin."

SALLY: And Nynaeve's like [mumbles], "Egwene."

EMILY: [mumbles] “It was Egwene. Fuck you.”

SALLY: Although how charming would it have been had it been Perrin?

EMILY: [whispers] God. I love that

SALLY: Like, it’s important because Nynaeve and Egwene’s relationship is very important, but imagine little baby Perrin and Nynaeve is like, “This little curly-haired toddler.”

[both laugh]

EMILY: Awwwww. Perrin as a toddler

SALLY: Perrin was probably the cutest baby of all time. Oh my god

EMILY: They were all – ugh – Rand: ginger baby

SALLY: UGH

EMILY: Perrin: curly baby. Mat: insane baby

SALLY: Insane baby!

EMILY: Mat was one of those babies that was almost dying all the time

SALLY: Yeah. Mat’s lovely and charming father, Abel Cauthon, looks up and Mat is on top of the house
[laughs]

EMILY: He’s like [confused noises]

SALLY: At the ripe old age of six months old

EMILY: It happened. So basically Moiraine tells Nynaeve exactly what she’s experienced. Nynaeve sort of has to admit to herself that it’s true, and she’s really upset by it. She’s like I can’t believe it. “Using the Power like an Aes Sedai. A filthy Darkfriend, Aes Sedai.” Nynaeve is so entrenched in this rural understanding of Aes Sedai and what it means, that it just like she’s being told “You’re a Trolloc.”

SALLY: Yeah, and Nynaeve struggles with that, like, self-loathing for a really long time.

EMILY: Yeah, it’s sort of part of her...block. Nynaeve’s gonna be one of our characters who have a – this is something that frequently happens to Wilders as they’re called, the women who learn how to Channel on their own, which is what Nynaeve did. Where they just like can’t Channel unless a specific set of circumstances is met. With Nynaeve it’s that she’s mad

SALLY: [laughs] Anger. Yeah

EMILY: We hear some other funny ones. There’s a lady we meet later on who could only Channel for a long time if a man was present

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: And they finally tricked her into getting rid of that one, by getting a girl to dress up as a man

SALLY: Oh my god

EMILY: And then she Channeled, and the girl was like – whipped off her wig and was like, “Here I am!”

SALLY: “It is I!”

EMILY: “It is I! A woman! I am no man!”

SALLY: “I am no man!” Yeah, it’s Eowyn. Rips off her helmet. And then the lady is like, “Whee! I Channeled.”

EMILY: “Whee! I Channeled. I did it by myself.” So sort of this – Moiraine then says, “Okay, you have done it, but Egwene hasn’t yet, so you have a crude control over the Power, but Egwene doesn’t and it’s going to kill her.” And Nynaeve is like, “No, no, no. If I can learn to control it, then so can she.” And Moiraine is like, “You got really lucky. It’s like one out of four. Like 25% odds, and it kills people. Not knowing how to control it.” Which is really troubling, the idea that this magic will just kill you if you don’t know how to use it

SALLY: Yeah, and Nynaeve thinks about it, and she’s like, “Oh, my mentor’s apprentice before me. This happened to her. And there’s a woman in Deven Ride – ” and real quick can we just talk about how excellently Robert Jordan named these Appalachian hick villages. Like Emond’s Field, Deven Ride, Taren Ferry. They’re all so good

EMILY: I love them all

SALLY: She’s like, “That happened to a girl in Deven Ride, and here and here and here.” And she starts thinking about it and she’s like, “Yeah, this happens.” And I’m so fascinated by the way that this happens. Like this weird, like, initiation of sorts that happens to these girls. It’s just very interesting

EMILY: Yeah it’s – oh god, just so interesting. Egwene’s so eager and so happy to learn. Nynaeve’s super against it, and it turns out that Nynaeve is actually not the norm, because later Aes Sedai are going to come to Emond’s Field, like in book four when Perrin’s there as well, and they’re going to say that tons of these girls have the potential and basically say, “Do any of you want to go to the White Tower?” and, like, most of them

SALLY: All of them are like

BOTH: Hell yeah!

EMILY: Like, “I wanna go to the White Tower.”

SALLY: “It sounds awesome.”

EMILY: “That sounds great.”

SALLY: Yeah. Become a super cool powerful witch lady? Fuck yeah

EMILY: Yeah. Great! Yeah, so it's sort of this funny thing where Nynaeve isn't actually representative of the rural mindset. She's sort of this outlier, who's just really – yeah, entrenched in self-loathing, and sort of a lot of internalized phobia of what it means to be

SALLY: And I think Nynaeve has sort of really weird limits on herself. She's really comfortable with the power that she had in Emond's Field, and she just wants to stay there so badly in that position of power, that she won't

EMILY: Which is so relatable. You get comfortable with something, and you find out that you can do more. And it's, like, I don't know if I do want to do more. To challenge yourself is so difficult

SALLY: Oh, absolutely

EMILY: Especially because Nynaeve is told, and she's constantly told throughout the next few books, that she has the potential to be one of the most powerful Aes Sedai ever. In fact, Moiraine tells her that right now. She's like, "You have great potential. You might even become more powerful than Egwene, and she could be one of the most powerful, Egwene, in centuries."

SALLY: Yeah [laughs], which I love. These two girls from Emond's Field

EMILY: These two hicks

SALLY: re out here kicking ass

EMILY, sings: Hell yeaaaaah

SALLY: Because Nynaeve does some of the most incredible things. Like my favorite scene of all time is at the climax of book four where she's fighting um

EMILY: Moghedien

SALLY: Moghedien, and they're just [laughs], first of all just staring at each other [Emily laughs]. It's not physical at all

EMILY: There's this huge epic battle going on with the One Power

SALLY: Yeah, it's so funny. And she just like kicks her ass

EMILY: *It's so good*

SALLY: It's so good, because Nynaeve is so powerful, but she is just, like, yeah. So much self-loathing, so much phobia, so much fear. So much confusion. Like, it's so good. And I also think it's a really interesting – compared to Egwene and Elayne, Nynaeve is a little bit older than them, so it's interesting that it's given to her. She's had time to settle into her life and come into her own. It's almost like she's have a mid-life crisis, almost?

EMILY: She's have a quarter-life crisis

SALLY: She's having a quarter-life crisis where she's like, "I don't know what's happening!" I love it. Nynaeve is beautiful

EMILY: Ah, she's so sweet. And she kind of accepts eventually. She says, "I'll have nothing to do with – ' With what? Myself?" She's like, "I can't – this isn't something I can run away from." So she asks Moiraine not to tell anyone else, which is interesting. And then they have this little conversation where she's like, "Okay, so I get why you're taking Egwene, but none of that explains why you want Rand, Mat, and Perrin," and Moiraine says, "The Dark One wants them. If the Dark One wants a thing, I oppose it. Can there be a simpler reason, or a better?" Which is Moiraine in a nutshell.

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: "If the Dark One wants something, I do not. Fuck you."

SALLY: Moiraine has, like, an anti-authoritative disorder with the Dark One in particular

EMILY: Honestly, Moiraine is such a rebel

SALLY: Moiraine is such a rebel. Like [laughs]

EMILY: She's such a badass

SALLY: She does not accept authority from anyone, but demands total obedience [laughs]

EMILY: Yes [laughs]

SALLY: It's really hilarious

EMILY: And then she's like, "I don't think the Wisdom will come with us," and Nynaeve is like, "You can't stop me, from coming with you. Fuck you." And Moiraine is like, "Okay, fine. Whatever." So they kind of get ready to go. Lan goes to fetch her horse

SALLY: The way that Lan and Nynaeve flirt is, first of all

EMILY: So stupid

SALLY: So stupid. Because she's like, "I can track better than you," and Lan's like, "No, I can track better than you."

EMILY: "I can find your horse," and Nynaeve is like, "No you can't. I hid it really well."

SALLY: Nynaeve is like, "No you can't! You didn't even know I was there!" And everyone is like, "God, just fuck already."

EMILY: Ugh

SALLY: Even Moiraine is like, "Jesus Christ."

EMILY: Moiraine's like, "Oh my god"

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Anyway, Nynaeve finds out that the coins that Moiraine gave the boys is basically like a tracking chip. But once Mat and Rand gave it away, it sort of lost the connection, so Moiraine can't find

where they are anymore. She knows they went downriver, but that's it. She's – but as for Perrin and Egwene, she knows where Perrin is

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: He's only a few miles away, but she's like, "I'm not going to go after him." It's really interesting. She decides to go after the two. Sort of judges the odds there. "Do I go for the two or do I go for the one? I'm gonna go for the two." So she's already decided to chase after Mat and Rand, even though she doesn't know it's Mat and Rand

SALLY: Yeah, which is another thing that I love. If Moiraine knew who was who, I wonder if that would change her...I don't think so

EMILY: No, I think she'd still go after

SALLY: She'd be like, "Perrin's fine in the woods. He loves it there."

EMILY: [laughs] "Mat's fine."

SALLY: "Mat's fine, but it's Rand I'm worried about."

EMILY: "Rand is going to kill himself."

SALLY: Rand is gonna...

EMILY: Die

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: Anyway, here's more conflict between her and Nynaeve. Nynaeve is really upset because she doesn't know where Egwene is, and Moiraine is basically like, "I don't know and I can't go looking for her. I don't have a way of finding her." And Nynaeve is like, "Okay, so basically you're just ditching her, even though you were just talking about how important she was." And Moiraine is like, "Yes." Like...this is the same thing we've already seen with the inn burning down in Baerlon. Moiraine has such a grander view of the world and what it means to make sacrifices

SALLY: Yeah, her cosmic sense of – again, I'm fighting the Dark One, that is my ultimate goal. And she's also, at one point, is like, "Egwene is powerful and intelligent and gonna be fine." Which is so lovely. Ugh, I just love Moiraine and basically all the time she's like, "Egwene's fine."

EMILY: "I'm good. Egwene is gonna be okay."

SALLY: "Egwene is gonna be okay."

EMILY: "It's those idiots that I can't."

SALLY: "Don't y'all keep worrying about her." Yeah and then she's like, "Rand and Mat and Perrin on the other hand..."

EMILY: "Are gonna die."

[both laugh]

SALLY: So that's the breaking of the fellowship

EMILY: Yeah, they set off. To Nynaeve's disappointment, Lan does find her horse

SALLY: Yeah, she's like, "Son of a bitch," and then she's like, "He wasn't gloating," and that bugs her. That he wasn't even gloating. And I'm like this is nonsense

EMILY: Heterosexual nonsense

SALLY: Yeah. Heterosexual nonsense

EMILY: But yeah, that's how it falls out. Perrin and Egwene are we don't know where, when we leave. Mat and Rand and Thom are headed down the river with Moiraine, Lan, and Nynaeve in pursuit.

SALLY: Once again, thank you all for listening and engaging, spreading the word on twitter, following ups on tumblr, following us on Instagram. If you ever get lost [laughs] I don't know, in terms of looking for our stuff, you can find it on our website ehrpodcast.wordpress.com

EMILY: Mhmm. And we're on iTunes. So rate and subscribe

SALLY: Yes, we're on iTunes.

EMILY: Der der der

SALLY: Um, yeah. We've come to the end.

EMILY: Yeah, I can't think of anything. I feel like we went on for a long time

SALLY: We did go on for a long time. So much for us doing shorter episodes

EMILY: [buzzes lips]

SALLY: We're trying

EMILY: We'll get there. I was like, "Two chapters? That won't let us go on for long." But then I spent twelve hundred minutes synopsizing

SALLY: That's okay

EMILY, singing: Sorry!

SALLY: I also talked about points of view for about a hundred hours

EMILY: No you didn't

SALLY, whispers: I did

EMILY: Next up, we're gonna go into Perrin's point of view

SALLY: [gasps] and do some wolf stuff

EMILY: Do some wolf stuff

SALLY: Wolf stuff

EMILY: Fuck yeah

SALLY: Hopefully Emily and I can share some fun anecdotes from our werewolf class with you

EMILY: Oh no. Oh no

SALLY: OH YES

EMILY: I can't

SALLY: It was a ride. Good? Mostly bad

EMILY: No, it was the worst class I've ever taken

[both laugh]

SALLY: It was terrible. It was absolutely terrible

EMILY: But I loved it

SALLY: I did love it. For nothing else it has brought us to this moment

EMILY: It brought us closer together as friends

SALLY: It did. Suffering begets good friendship?

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: It's true. Suffer together. You're gonna suffer, but you're gonna be happy about it

EMILY: [laughs] I think we quote that every single fucking episode

SALLY: That's because it's really an incredibly relatable quote. And an important part about fellowship is actually a group of people suffering together

EMILY: Suffering the same traumas

SALLY: Yeah, suffering the same traumas. It's like soldiers in combat

EMILY: Sign us off, Sally

SALLY: [pained noises] Boy [both laugh]. God my sign off last week was so good

EMILY: Oh, yeah. That was [both laugh] historical

SALLY: A historical moment in time. Um [laughs]

EMILY: I can sign us off

SALLY: One time when I was younger – I'm not kidding – I got attacked by a pug

EMILY: What the fuck?

SALLY: [laughing] And my entire family, instead of helping, laughed at me and watched me sprint away from a pug. Like for my laugh, sprint deadass as fast as I could run away from this pug, and my entire family just sat and, like, and died. Especially my mother. That was a true abandonment moment as a child [laughs]

EMILY: Have a great week [laughs]