

Episode 49 – “Socks with Sandals”

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SALLY: And she's like, "The fuck are you talking about?" [laughing]

EMILY: That was a weird day

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: Weird day

SALLY: Anyway

EMILY: We just watched an episode of supernatural which included Leslie Odom Jr. Which was wild by the way.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY But also, I have come to the conclusion that Leslie Odom Jr. would make a great Asmodean

SALLY: Oh my god you're right

EMILY: And also, follow up, Lin-Manuel Miranda? Perfect Valan Luca. [laughing] I know. I'm amazing. Hire me as casting director

SALLY: I just choked

EMILY: Given the *Wheel of Time* television series could never afford Lin-Manuel Miranda's precious time. But

SALLY: [snorts]

EMILY: Can you imagine?

SALLY: Can you imagine is right

EMILY: Perfection. His entrance to "Circus" by Britney Spears

SALLY: Listen. I'm just saying. Emily's got the casting chops. I've got the music chops

EMILY: You do have the music chops. We were watching "Mamma Mia" last night, me for the first time, and Sally was like, "This is the song I imagine Mat blowing up the Stone of Tear to." And it came on and I was like, "This is the perfect song."

SALLY: Exactly. The beat just like really gets you

EMILY: So good.

SALLY: Are you reading anything new and exciting?

EMILY: Um, I just finished a lovely book by Robert McKinley called *Deerskin*. It was life changing. I'm still - I'm still absorbing it. But it was a really, really beautiful treatise on trauma, especially sexual trauma. Um, so highly recommend, although trigger for rape, obviously, because it's based on a pretty disturbing fairy tale. Although, actually, I don't know how - I was trying to look up the actual fairy tale, called a Donkeyskin rather than Deerskin, the much more elegant title that Robin McKinley chose. Anyway, but sill

SALLY: Imagine if Robin McKinley wrote a book called *Donkeyskin*.

EMILY: I'd still read it [laughs] to be honest

SALLY: I know you would. Does this mean you've read all of Robin McKinley's books now?

EMILY: I think all of her novels. She has a few, like, short story collections that I haven't read, because I have a really hard time with short stories. Although I shouldn't just trust her, because she's perfect. But yeah, I think that means I read all her novels. I read two of her novels this year that I hadn't before, and they were both delightful. In very different ways. *Sunshine* about vampires was like

SALLY: Didn't you read *Chalice*, too?

EMILY Yeah, but that wasn't my first time

SALLY: Really?

EMILY: Yeah, I have a distinct memory of reading *Chalice* in the waiting room for my oral surgeon who had to give me a gum graft

SALLY: [softly] What the fuck?

EMILY: I know

SALLY: You have a very strange medical history

EMILY: Just in my mouth

[both laugh; Sally snorts]

EMILY: And also that's not true. I haven't had a very...strange oral history. Heh heh

SALLY: Heh

EMILY: Heh heh. No, just my feet! And my gums

SALLY: I know your poor tendon

EMILY: My poor Achilles tendon. Isn't it ironic, don't you think?

EMILY: She's got a cool scar, though

EMILY: [singing] A little too ironic

SALLY: [singing] It's like raaaaain

BOTH: On your wedding day

SALLY: Which isn't actually irony

EMILY: Anyway, after this I'm going to read *The Neverending Story*, which hopefully does end because

SALLY: [whispers] Does it?

EMILY: Uh

SALLY: Remember how in *The Fault in Our Stars* the whole thing is that, like, the book that she's obsessed with supposedly ends mid sentence

EMILY: Which is such a -

SALLY: And it's supposed to be like -

EMILY: Profound

SALLY - poetic because she died in the middle of her cancer or whatever

EMILY: Like, look at this metaphor for death

SALLY: And every one is like -

EMILY: You die in the middle of a sentence, and I'm like, "That's the most pretentious thing of all time." If I actually read a book that did that, I'd be, like, I don't know. I'd believe it from someone like Jonathan Franzen, who's a douche bag, you know, like? Then Of course, they meet the writer and he's a douche bag, isn't he?

SALLY: Yeah, he's a major douchebag. So it's, like, maybe it's a little bit on the nose. But yeah, I think Jonathan Franzen - no, I'm thinking of Jonathan Safran Foer. He's the one who wrote incredibly loud and extreme close or whatever the fuck

EMILY Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah

SALLY: He does a lot of stuff like that

EMILY: Both of them. Both of them

SALLY: But that's about trauma. Anyway - what was I talking about? Why did I bring up *The Fault in Our Stars* [laughing] Why would I ever bring up *The Fault in Our Stars*?

EMILY: We were talking about a book that ends midway through -

SALLY: Oh, *The Neverending Story*

EMILY: Yeah, *The Neverending Story*. Who knows? I don't recall ever watching that movie. I have like some vague memories, and I know the whole story about the horse dying but

SALLY: I literally have no...I have nothing. No schema

EMILY: I feel like my family rented it once. And like, watched it on a road trip back when, you know, like

SALLY: Had a DVD player

EMILY: Yeah, back when we had our mini van and we would just put a DVD player in. Anyway, are you reading anything?

SALLY: No

EMILY: That's okay

SALLY: I've officially marked on Goodreads that I'm reading *A Wizard of Earthsea*, but I've not cracked open the cover

EMILY: Hey, way to go

SALLY: So taking big steps towards productivity in 2019 [laughing]

EMILY: Next up on "We Don't Watch Outlander": "Wizard of Earthsea" and then whatever, Tom Holland shenanigans we come up with

Yeah: Since we survived the *Wolf Hall*

EMILY: Barely

SALLY: Against all odds [laughs]

EMILY: [groaning] That was a rough one

SALLY: Maybe we'll watch something fun like *Spider-Man*

EMILY: He doesn't have anything fun. Except *Spider-Man*

SALLY: I know. Stupid fucking movies. Tom, what are you doing?

EMILY: Tom!

SALLY: Maybe? Yeah. Okay. Okay. Okay.

EMILY: Talk about this. Okay.

SALLY: Okay. Okay. Okay.

EMILY: Are we introducing ourselves?

SALLY: Yes.

EMILY: Sorry. Is that all what all the okays were for?

SALLY: I don't know

EMILY: I sort of got lost my...

SALLY: My forest of okays?

EMILY: My... Mind Palace. The forest of, um, the Forest of Coincidences. I know this is like the ninth time we've referenced that, but

SALLY: Because *Galavant* is a perfect show

EMILY: But that is legitimately the funniest show on the entire planet

SALLY: It's true.

EMILY: Um, ok. Welcome. Welcome. This is [laughing] Everybody Hates Rand. Is it my turn or your turn?

SALLY: It's your turn.

EMILY: Oh, your friendly neighborhood *Wheel of Time* podcast. Thank you for keeping track of that. Because I...don't

SALLY: Thank you

EMILY: Despite the fact that I edit every week, so you think I would be able to? Nope. Dumb as a pile of bricks up here. I'm Emily Juchau

SALLY: [laughing] I'm Sally Goodger

EMILY: If my voiceover changes tone dramatically during, like, mid sentence it's because I'm looking at Sally and she's made a face [both laugh] and I'm reacting to it. We are discussing - we're in the last stretch, the homestretch of *The Great Hunt*. The hunt stretch. [laughing] What the fuck am I doing?

SALLY: The hunt stretch of the great horn

EMILY: [at the same time] Home. What? [laughs]

SALLY: Do you guys know this our first episode 2019?

EMILY: [laughing] Hey!

SALLY: It's going really good

EMILY: What the fuuuck?

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: What the fuuuuuck? Um, Spoiler alert. There will be spoilers, probably especially in this episode, because we're going to have to talk about the Seanchan and da-main? Da-moni? We'll talk about that later

SALLY: [muttering] da-dammit

EMILY: Also, your weekly titular PSA: The title of our podcast - Everybody Hates Rand - is a joke, and is meant to be taken as such. Everybody in this context refers to the three of us: me, Sally, and our cat, Tybalt. It does not necessarily apply to you. You are free to appreciate or love or loathe Rand al'Thor, a fictional character, as you choose. Thank you and good night.

SALLY: Please don't DM me on Instagram

EMILY: Please don't DM us

SALLY: [laughing] To tell me how much you love Rand

EMILY: We don't care

[both laugh]

EMILY: [singing] That's the story of this podcast. Okay, okay. You're sick.

SALLY: Very

EMILY: I'm hyper. Here we go.

SALLY: Very

EMILY: Okay. We read two pretty brief chapters?

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: At least they felt to me

SALLY: They're pretty short

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: I was confused. I thought -

EMILY: What?

SALLY: I counted pages wrong. I thought I had to read an additional 10 pages.

EMILY: Oh, you did?

SALLY: Which was why I was groaning hysterically when you left?

EMILY: Was it, like, the next chapter?

SALLY: Yes

EMILY: Ah, right.

SALLY: And then I was fine when I figured out it was only like 20 pages

EMILY: Well and it jumped around point of views a lot. So that also gives it the effect of being more than

SALLY: Quick read.

EMILY: Yeah. This is our catch up with the girls. It's kind of weird, though, because we've only had a one chapter gap between girl point of views, and in that chapter gap it - we're told that it's only been a few days since Rand and co arrived on the Almoth Plain. Whereas with the girls, it seems that several weeks have gone by at the very least.

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: So again, I know we say this all the time, but the timeline of this book is, like, fucked to hell. What? Yeah, what the fuck is going on? I don't know. How long has Egwene been here? I'm confused. Just generally

SALLY: Yeah, me too. I mean I - I have to assume it's a significant amount of time just because Nynaeve and Elayne talk about how they're running out of money.

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: And in the last chapter Nynaeve was like, "We have money to last us, you know, a decent amount of time."

EMILY: Several weeks. And she does say the money's running out quicker than she thought it would, so I think we can say three weeks maybe?

SALLY: Yeah, maybe

EMILY: Three weeks? I guess. Yeah. I don't know.

SALLY: I don't have any concept of timeline ever, but especially in *The Great Hunt*, where Robert Jordan is like "Time's not a straight line, bitch."

EMILY: *The Dragon Reborn* does pretty good with timeline.

SALLY: Yeah, *The Dragon Reborn* is pretty good

EMILY: *The Dragon Reborn* is just a perfect book, I think we can all just agree

SALLY: That's true, I think

EMILY: Have I told you all my latest idea, which is that in the *Wheel of Time* TV adaptation, only Mat is introduced with pop music? [laughing]

SALLY: [higher pitched and DELIGHTED] Yes, and I love it so much ahhh!

EMILY: Only the Mat points of view include pop music. Everything - you always know it's a Mat point of view if suddenly we flip over to Fergie or something

SALLY: Carly Rae Jepsen

EMILY: [shouts] Carly Rae Jepsen! I hadn't even considered Carly Rae Jepsen! [yells]

SALLY: I know, imagine

EMILY: I love Carly Rae Jepsen

SALLY: What Carly Rae Jepsen song would be playing? "Call Me Maybe." Constantly, Mat's like -

EMILY: Just constantly

SALLY: "Call Me Maybe." Yeah exactly

EMILY: "Boy Problems," somehow. It would have to be, like, while he is talking to Rand, or something

SALLY: Looking into the camera

EMILY: I also want Mat to look into the camera, constantly. No, that's too self-aware. Mat's not that self-aware

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Who do I want to look into the camera constantly? Probably Thom

[SALLY laughs]

EMILY: Just constantly like -

SALLY: You know what I was thinking about the other day?

EMILY: Yeah?

SALLY: How Mat and Thom are the two, like, real world names, quote, unquote, and both of those are, like, the only two characters I can think of who go by shortened versions of their real name

EMILY: Oh, that's interesting. As opposed to Egwene who does not go by Egg

SALLY: [laughs VERY LOUDLY] You were just so serious when you said that

EMILY: I want to think of some fun nicknames. Like Aviendha is a ridiculous name. Av-i-en-dha. Four fucking syllables? How would I shorten that? Duh?

[both laugh]

SALLY: "Hey, Duh."

EMILY: Avi? Probably Avi

SALLY: Avi makes the most sense

EMILY: Yeah. Yeah Mat and Thom are just these nice monosyllabic names, and they are also -

SALLY: They are also like frat boy names

EMILY: Yeah, Mat and Tom

[SALLY laughs]

EMILY: Mat rolls up in khaki shorts and fucking...

[SALLY groans]

EMILY: Socks pulled up to his calves

SALLY: Probably

EMILY: Nike socks and sandals

SALLY: Mat is probably the frattiest of our boys, unfortunately

EMILY: He's a very fratty boy, but, like, in a - in a pretty good frat boy way

SALLY: A soft frat boy

EMILY: Like the type of frat boy who is kind of just, like, in the frat because he just sort of ended up there, and he doesn't know what to do, and he doesn't really partake in the frat boy culture, quote unquote.

SALLY: Mat is part of my idealized frat, where it's more, like, an aesthetic thing, and they're all just kind of dumb and nice

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: As opposed to, like, mean and rapey

EMILY: Yeah, exactly

SALLY: Yeah. A lot of polos

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: Actually, just kidding. A lot of bro tanks

EMILY: A lot of bro tanks. God I love a bro tank

SALLY: Deep v's. The deepest v's

EMILY: Mat would wear bro tanks a lot. I sort of picture him constantly in a coat over a bro tank, rather than an actual, like, long sleeve shirt.

SALLY: Yeah, that makes sense. Mat's in his, like, long green trench coat over a fluorescent orange bro tank

EMILY: Yeah, exactly

SALLY: And he's like, "Fashion"

[both laugh]

EMILY: "And here's my hat and my scarf and my necklace - fashion"

SALLY: Honestly though, if we do talk about how Mat's usually, like, shirt that's mostly unlaced because he's a true slutty icon

EMILY: And he's hot all the time. He's just

Both: Sweaty

SALLY: And so he's like: long green coat, his boots that he's been working for six years, his hat, his scarf, his necklace

EMILY: He's the most accessory boy

SALLY: Yeah, he honestly is kind of serving it

EMILY: Yeah just, like, a lot going on

SALLY: Yeah, where I'm just kind of like - like shabby chic over here

EMILY: Mm hmm

SALLY: Anyway, we're not - Mat's not even in these chapters. Why are we always talking about Mat?

EMILY: He's just so good. Um. The timeline's fucked. We talked about that already. We catch up with Nynaeve and Elayne, who are already embodying the dynamic that they will have for the next five books, which is that there's sort of a - there's an unreliable narrator thing going on whenever you have Nynaeve and Elayne together. Like Nynaeve throughout this chapter is like, "Elayne keeps doing this shit that's really reckless and, like, stupid, but I keep doing everything perfectly." Like she talks about bowing to the Seanchan, and she's like, "Elayne's got this mean look on her face like she doesn't really mean it, but I know how to do it right." And I'm like, "I seriously doubt if we switched over to Elayne's point of view that it would be described in the same way." Also I can't imagine Nynaeve bowing to anyone without, like, looking like she just smelled rotten milk, you know? So that's sort of an ongoing thing. They sort of give us, like, a bit of the lowdown on Seanchan.

SALLY: Yeah, just like what's going on

EMILY: What it's like to be an unoccupied city, I guess

SALLY: Elayne, of course - of course, this comes from Elayne - where she's just like, "I don't understand why people aren't just resisting this"

EMILY: O yeah, that's classical Elayne

SALLY: "Not fighting back."

EMILY: She's like, "How dare they not fight back?" And Nynaeve's like, "Well, no one actually really cares about the greater politics of the world. As long as they're like, eating."

SALLY: Yeah. Well, and she's also like, Nynaeve very astutely is like, "How?"

EMILY: Yeah

SALLY: "Fight back against monsters?"

EMILY: Like, look at that thing.

SALLY: Yeah, like in - yes. Nynaeve brings up two very good points about in war, like, kind of boils down to, like, you just need to survive sometimes. And also, like, yeah what are you supposed to use to fight back against these people?

EMILY: Again, like, this is part of their dynamic, which is that Nynaeve has this, like, kind of every man, practical outlook on life, that sometimes is too practical. Like she doesn't trust people enough to be good, I guess, or to like, win out over their more

practical instincts, I guess. Whereas Elayne has this idealized version of the world, which is typical of someone who's been locked up their whole life and fed stories about heroes.

SALLY: Yeah, and also, I mean, obviously, Elayne also is very privileged view of the world

EMILY: Exactly.

SALLY: Where she is very much like an American...person

EMILY: Yeah, she's never had to live anything shitty like this. So, of course, she just thinks people will react the way they do in fiction.

SALLY: Yeah, or yeah, and - yeah. I think heroism is a good way to frame Elayne, where she's very much got the mindset of like, everybody needs to act heroic and noble all the time.

EMILY: Yeah, one of Elayne's running threads is that she'll accuse herself being a coward, or not brave enough, despite the fact that she's, you know, objectively a very brave person. She does a lot of hard things, and she does them without thinking, and she often self sacrifices. She's also a shitty character, and I hate her. But -

SALLY: But

EMILY: But it's part of her whole, like, kind of warped version of what heroism is, and versus how people actually embody heroism. In that case, she's a lot like Mat, because Mat also has a skewed version of what being a hero means. He kind of thinks of it more in the way that Elayne embodies it, which is just: Charge into a situation, not caring what happens to you, but caring about the other people that are involved, you know? Whereas he's always constantly like, "Self-preservation comes first. I just end up in these shitty situations, and I just behave the way everyone would behave." And that's - everyone's like, "Oh, Mat you're such a hero." And he's like, "I'm. Just. Trying. To. Live."

SALLY: [laughing] "I would like one survive, please."

EMILY: [laughing] "I would like to start my day off with living. And I would like to end it with being still alive when I go to sleep."

SALLY: "It's the small things."

EMILY: "The small things that I would look for."

SALLY: "Being an alive boy."

EMILY: Then it bounces over to Egwene, who is, of course, in a mostly windowless room. There's one window that she's not allowed to go to close to. And she's positioned

herself far away from the window so that she can try and channel a little bit to sort of work at the lock on her collar, which - she kind of goes through many of the rules that have been set and are enforced really brutally and violently, and she often uses the terminology that is used when these rules are explained to her. Like she falls back on her captors' language, which, I don't know if that's anything. It's just something I noticed. So like, she can't channel huge amounts. She can barely channel small amounts without feeling really gross. She can't take her - if her - like the leash end of the - what's it called? Is it leash versus collar, like the - ?

SALLY: Yeah...?

EMILY: There's the leash, the rope. What's the - if the bracelet end of the leash is, like, hung on the wall she can't touch it

SALLY: What are they actually called, the leashes? What's the actual?

EMILY: The *a'dam*

SALLY: Okay. Yeah, that's right.

EMILY: A-dom?

SALLY: Adam.

EMILY: Adam. Yeah, what does that mean? I'm sure there's something there. I was thinking about *damane*, as it's actually pronounced. I looked in the pronunciation guide in a moment of weakness

SALLY: It's *damane*, but then there's also the Domani people

EMILY: Exactly

SALLY: And Bayle Domon

EMILY: Exactly

SALLY: It's like what?

EMILY: There all in the same chapter fucking - fuck me.

SALLY: I can't deal with this Robert

EMILY: Anyway, the *damane*. It looks a little bit like the French for "of hands." You know, *des mains*? In a way, so I just been like, I don't know that's terminology, like, the *damane* are the actual hands in that they're just attached to the end of this body, they don't really have their own -

SALLY: Agency

EMILY: Agency. Whoo, sorry. Um, and that's how it's explained to a Egwene is that *damane* are tools and they're to be used, and to just be used, or not used, as someone chooses

SALLY: Yes, um jumping back to your point from a second ago, about how Egwene is using her captors' language. Again, preface with saying that everything I talk about in terms of trauma is very much framed, probably problematically so, by my study of the Holocaust, and I really need to work on expanding my understanding of these types of cultural traumas in different cultures. So preface. But a large part of what I talked about my thesis was the way that cultures but particularly, like, I don't know just like the best word to use, but violent or fascist cultures in the Nazi sense, like, really made use of how words frame people's concept of categories. And so, like, taking Nazis and the Holocaust, for instance, it was just not feasible in Nazi thought for there to be a Jewish German. The two categories were so separate. A Jew was something different, and they could not occupy any other category

EMILY: Right

SALLY: And I think that's a little bit of what's happening here with Egwene. Like, she's so framed in the language of what's happening here that she's starting to use it, and she talks about Tumin¹ in this chapter. She says something like - she uses somebody else - like the wrong name for one of the Aes Sedai, and she's like, "They're training me to, like, think this way, and talk this way, and be this way."

EMILY: And she's aware of it

SALLY: And she's aware of what's happening, but it's a very conscious process with oppression. Like, it's obviously something we have to like - oppressors use words and categories to limit and oppress people.

EMILY: Often when we talk about how, like, it's a fairly common phrase, I think, that language is a form of violence. And I think often when we talk about that, maybe not we, but I at least have always thought of it as, like, in the way that it's a preface to violence. In the way that propaganda often spurs people to violence and stuff like that, and the way political rhetoric spurs violence. But like language itself in, like, categorization, especially as you spoke about in your thesis and just now, is like such a form of violence. And I don't know. I just never thought about it that way.

SALLY: No, I think that most logically it's like, well, words are violent. It's allowing people to say these things that leads them to violence. But when you really get into the nitty gritty of it, it's like the words that you apply to bodies in particular, it's, like, that does so much violence. Like just not even - like using another example before we had

¹ Sally means Ryma – who the Seanchan call Pura. No idea where Tumin came from.

words for genders that weren't just male and female, think of how much violence it does to a gender non-conforming person to be mis-gendered. Like - UGH. So bad

EMILY: Let's see what else is happening here. Min comes to visit Egwene. She, of course, has been instructed to leave off wearing boys clothes and is now in a dress, which is another small form of violence and oppression. that she's no longer able to choose what she wears, and how she presents herself. And she's, you know, she's been threatened into this by having her visiting privileges with Egwene revoked. And Egwene comments on how interesting it is - or maybe Nynaeve and Elayne do later in this chapter - like Min still is armed. She still has her knife, what she used against a Seanchan soldier, but that's just the way the Seanchan are structured in terms of their oppression is, I don't know, they're just like such a force of violence of they're just basically a hammer - they don't care if you're like an insect with little, little

SALLY: Knife. Yeah, and Egwene says something she's like, "The Seanchan trust everybody until they break a rule." And so it's like Min is allowed to keep her knife until she does something

EMILY: Yeah it's just interesting because she already has done something, but it was like she hadn't been sucked into Seanchan yet. And so it, like, didn't count. Which is interesting and weird. It's like as soon as everyone takes the oaths - it's very interesting. We'll - we'll talk about this more when we get to it, I guess, but Mat in the end of book seven - like, Ebou Dar gets taken over by the Seanchan - and we pick back up with him in book nine or whatever, and someone is talking to him about the oaths. And Mat is the first character who says like, "They're just words. They're oaths. I don't like - if I don't mean them I don't have to hold on to them." Which is interesting, because Mat is such a promise driven character. He does a lot of things because he's promised to. And so it's interesting that he's the character who says, "No, I just said that to stay alive. It doesn't mean anything." And like that's such a shock to the Seanchan characters. Like I think it's a conversation he has with Tuon where she's like, "Well you took the oaths" and he's like "Yeah, fuck, who cares? I didn't mean it so, yeah, I'm not doing that shit." And she's like, What the fuck? How? What?" Just like hasn't occurred to her that that's a possibility

SALLY: Yeah and it's - that's interesting for so many reasons, but keeping it focused on fantasy for a second. The word "enchantment" itself like has 'chant' in it so there's this running idea throughout human history that saying something makes it so, which is why spoken oaths were such a big deal for so long. That like word - like your word has magic. So anyway, it's just - yeah like people saying the oaths then that frames them in this mindset as if something has happened. It's like - it's another, like, aaaah I can't think of the right theoretical word, but it's this construct that we put on ourselves so

EMILY: Well it's like in fantasy names have such power. You're going to read this in *Earthsea* but already finished this book

SALLY: No, Alf talked about a ton

EMILY: Oh did he?

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: That, like, the magical structure of *Earthsea*, and which, again, we see - I guess, Pat Rothfuss co-opted it for *The Name of the Wind* - is that if you could name something, if you can give it its, quote unquote, true name, then it's, you know, yours to command or to control. And it's the sort of power you can harness. Why do I always think of *Eragon* when I say that?

SALLY: I think there was something to do with that in *Eragon*

EMILY: Isn't that how magic works in *Eragon*?

SALLY: Yeah that you have to learn words

EMILY: That the language is super specific?

SALLY: Yeah, because it's that, like, insufferable period in the second book where he's learning magic for, like, 600 pages

EMILY: Okay, first of all, that's - terrible series. Terrible books. But I do think it does an actually interesting thing with that, which is that if you take that system of magic down to its roots, it gets really complicated 'cause that means that everything you say is literal. And that can be really dangerous. So that's like the one single thing I can think of in *Eragon* that was done in an interesting way. But anyway, yeah, it's just fun, because in *Wheel of Time* itself words and names have power. We don't name the Dark One. They have their whole oath, like "By the light in my - "

SALLY: Oh, yeah

EMILY: Which Siuan breaks. Or, you know, set she's sort of bending when she swears to, like, I don't know. Come back and serve what's his name? Gareth Bryne?

SALLY: Gareth Bryne [retches] I can't even talk about that plot line

EMILY: Fuck me

SALLY: Like nothing could be more insufferable to me than that specific plot

EMILY: Where I'm at in *The Gathering Storm*, that plot line of their romance just came to an insufferable, quote unquote, climax. It was like they were like, "Oh, now we're in love. I'm gonna bond you as my Warder." And I was like, "this is the stupidest fucking ever read."

SALLY: I don't understand - we will get more into this. But just laying it on the line here: I do not understand the equation of love and bonding men as Warders

EMILY: It's stupid

SALLY: It's very upsetting to me

EMILY: It's very upsetting, especially when you get into the murky ethical situations of Rand being forced against his will. Mat being constantly threatened with the Warder bond. It's just bad

SALLY: Very upsetting. BUT - back on track. So it's very interesting this thing, this idea of the Seanchan oaths and how they, like, frame people's mindsets of these promises that they've made. Because I think that like does really sort of affect people

EMILY: Yeah, it's really interesting

SALLY: And the idea of making false promises, like, is a big thing. Obviously, in religion, they're like, "Say that you convert or whatever." So

EMILY: Well, it'd be interesting - we don't have a lot of, of our main characters - a lot of our main - almost all of our main characters interact with the Seanchan, but very few of them end up in Seanchan occupied territory, as Egwene does here as an actual captive, and as Mat does in a - not at a captive, but in the sense that he's now part of the Seanchan system. And so it's just kind of - I kind of wish we saw more characters like, say, Galad, what would Galad do if he had to take the oaths? You know? How would he react to that?

SALLY: Bad probably

EMILY: Badly. Exactly. He'd be the type of character who would refuse. He'd just die

SALLY: God. You gotta respect him for that

EMILY: Yeah, I know. You've gotta respect him

SALLY: I really do like Galad so much

EMILY: I do like Galad. Anyway, I'm kind of avoiding talking about Egwene's captivity, because it's upsetting

SALLY: It is very upsetting. Um, one thing that I did want to talk about, because it's a pretty common thread across fantasy, is the idea that like a character, typically like a magic user, with some sort of ability, will be taken into a traumatic situation and put under extreme duress, and that is one way in which they like increase their magical abilities

EMILY: Yeah, yeah. Egwene talks about how it's frustrating because she really does feel like she's made more progress, magically speaking, here than she would have at the White Tower which really paces you out. Possibly because it's not used to people with the tremendous amount of power that Egwene and Nynaeve have

SALLY: Yeah, and also probably for safety reasons [laughs]

EMILY: Yeah. For both reasons

SALLY: And so it's - it's a trope that I find really interesting because I don't just want to dismiss it off hand as being problematic as I am wont to do with most things, because, like, you can't really control at what rate you increase or under which circumstances that you will make breakthroughs. But it is like a really, like, I think I'm more troubled by the frequency of it as if, like, it's something we fall back on where we need a character to increase in strength and so we put them into a traumatic situation as sort of like a fight or flight response to their abilities

EMILY: Yeah, we're often fight or flight activates magical powers. Stuff like that

SALLY: Which I'm just - I don't know. So I'm curious if you have any thoughts about that

EMILY: I don't know. There's nothing quite like it in the real world sense, like, I don't - people often then are putting magic down to a survival instinct or, like, a type of reflex. You know, like the type of thing that, like, there's the old story of a mom lifting her car up in a surge of adrenaline to rescue the baby or whatever the fuck. And it's just, like, I don't know, pretty reductive that all - that most systems of magic that we see in fantasy operate like that. Either that or they're intense objects of study I don't know it's interesting

SALLY: Yeah, it's always the constant, like, *Eragon*"level of, like, insufferable erudite learning of magic or it's this, like, you will be trialed by fire

EMILY: Action packed. Yeah. Trialed by fire?

SALLY: I don't know [laughs]

EMILY: You'll get fired and THEN

SALLY: And then when you're homeless and destitute

EMILY: Exactly

SALLY: You'll learn how to use the One Power [laughs]

EMILY: I don't know I really like -as I like many things about *Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse* - I really like Miles learns to control his power when he's had a moment of

emotional catharsis. Rather than when he's in physical distress or peril, which he is constantly in that movie. And each time he comes up against danger and, like, really needs to control his power and he can't necessarily, and he only learns control when he kind of, I don't know, fits the puzzle together inside of himself. Which is just like a much more pure, healthy way of looking at one's selfhood

SALLY: It's a very healthy way. I just think *Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse* is the perfect movie

EMILY: Do you want to go see it again -

SALLY: Yes

EMILY: On Friday?

SALLY: I thought that was tomorrow for a second. I'm so fucked up, because I didn't work on Monday and Tuesday

EMILY: [mutters] That's okay

SALLY: Yes, I would love to I think that would be fabulous

EMILY: Thanks [laughs]

SALLY: Ummm [laughs] But yeah, 'cause I - I just wish that more of what Miles gets in his arc - more emotional self-discovery. More, like, mending relationships with your family. More figuring this all out - was a part of your ability to grow, as opposed to just your response under physical duress

EMILY: Well, Miles has the classic bildungsroman, you know, coming of age story

SALLY: Classic tm

EMILY: Tm

SALLY: Slap a trademark sticker on that motherfucker

EMILY: Which just tells you how good *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* is, is that it's able to take this really old story and make it really delightful

SALLY: Make it fucking awesome

EMILY: Anyway, go see him immediately

SALLY: Stop this podcast immediately. I don't care if you're at work. I don't care if you're in church. Jesus will understand

EMILY: [laughing] Why are you listening to this podcast in church?

SALLY: I don't know

Emiy: Oh God, get out

SALLY: Get out of the house! [laughs]

EMILY: Get out. Go see *Spider-Man* [laughs]. I just lost my train of thought

SALLY: If you guys have any thoughts on that. It's one of the reasons why I'm deeply, deeply interested in the intersections - intersections - intersections of fantasy and trauma is because they collapse in these really interesting ways that I just am so fascinated by. So if you guys have any thoughts about characters sort of super charging and moments of extreme trauma, hit me up. I'm on Twitter. Well, we're on Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, we have an email. That's it - we have a website with a comment feature

EMILY: One thing that I find both interesting and frustrating about this, the process of Egwene sort of getting supercharged here, is that much later in the series, in the book I'm reading, "The Gathering Storm," she actually refers to this as a thing that was done to her in terms of her magical power suddenly being forced on her. And she has, like, a specific word that she uses and I can't remember what it is, but, like, some novice is talking to her - and this is when she's the Amyrlin Seat - and they're like, "Well I really want to work harder in my lessons - " maybe this wasn't in the book I read, maybe it was a couple books back. But they're like, "I really want to, like, get - I just want to move faster and - like you did." And Egwene's like, "Okay well what happened to me was really unsafe, and shouldn't have been done to me." And it just, like, I don't know. It frustrates me because we're never given a word for it nor is Egwene ever conscious of it really, in that way. She will reference like, "Oh after my Seanchan captivity I'm super -I'm way more capable now than I was before." But, I don't know, it's not - maybe it's with time that she's allowed to think of that as a part of her trauma, but it doesn't come across that way. As with many things in *Wheel of Time*

SALLY: Of course, of course, of course

EMILY: That are well intentioned but

SALLY: But just like don't hit the mark. I just get frustrated in books like this where I'm, like, how many words are dedicated to naming sword moves that Rand does that I have no concept of what that means

EMILY: Yeah who gives us a fuck?

SALLY: And you cannot dedicate a few more words to Egwene being like, "What happened to me was complicated and bad and weird and I should think about it and talk to people about it"

EMILY: Yeah, or especially in, like, the next book where we get relatively few Egwene points of view, and they're just, like, not enough, you know?

SALLY: Yeah. Never enough

EMILY: Because there's still ongoing stuff for her deal with the Black Ajah and blah blah blah. It's just meh

SALLY: Meh is right

EMILY: Anyway, Min has to leave because Egwene gets caught for channeling and immediately gets tortured

SALLY: Yes and she also gets her name - she also gets renamed

EMILY: Yeah, her name gets revoked. Her name has, until this point, been seen as a privilege that she's allowed to keep, and now she's being renamed as a punishment. So she - Min leaves and is very frustrated that she can't help, and kind of goes outside and then runs into Nynaeve and Elayne

SALLY: Classic Forest of Coincidences

EMILY: Classic Forest of Coincidences. They're like, "Gee, I wonder where Min's been this entire time?"

SALLY: "Der der der, she's right in front of us"

EMILY: "She's right in front us. Look we have apples."

SALLY: Because Elayne stole some apples

EMILY: [at the same time] Stole a bunch of apples. What is she, fucking Aladdin?

SALLY: [laughing] I was about to say the same thing

[both laugh]

EMILY: And then Min's like, "Well I've talked to this guy who can, like, maybe get us out of Falme." And Nynaeve is like, "Take me to him immediately and I'm going to bully him into taking us right now," and that's how Bayle Domon gets back into the story, is when Nynaeve comes up to him and slaps him, and is like, "Hello."

SALLY: "Hello. Help me." And he's like [shaky voice], "Okay?"

EMILY: [shaky voice], "Okay?"

SALLY: "I guess I have to?" Bayle Domon is tired of being Scheherazade

EMILY: Exactly

SALLY: He's like, "Let me free. I'm tired of telling you stories"

EMILY: What if we had a few fewer Rand point of views, and instead could have more of Bayle Domon's Scheherazade story. Because we don't get any of it and I want to know

SALLY: Which is a crime. That is assault on my person

EMILY: I know it's absolutely a crime

SALLY: That I don't get to see Bayle Domon rolling up

EMILY: And just lying

SALLY: And just lying his beautiful ass off

EMILY: That's like my favorite plot line, is characters who's just have to fucking lie

SALLY: All the time

EMILY: It's so nice. And get away with it as he sort of is. Anyway, Nynaeve's like, "Well listen you can get us out if you have me, channeler." Aka, she waves her Aes Sedai ring in front of him

SALLY: And he's like

EMILY: He's like, "Ahhhhh"

SALLY: "Put that thing away"

EMILY: He's like, "A) put that thing away."

SALLY: Put that light out!

[both laugh]

EMILY: [signing] Put that thing back where it came from or so help me! Umm, and then she's like, "Yeah, and I've got two more." And I'm like, "Okay, you're maybe overstating

Elayne's abilities at this point given that Egwene could fuck shit up right now. Elayne: not so much. She's still in the middle of her dumb training

SALLY: Elayne's still in the middle of being a dick

EMILY: Anyway

SALLY: Dicks don't get to use the One Power

EMILY: Ah, I wish that were true

SALLY: Wouldn't that be cool? If, like. you're a bad person, you were just like a douche bag

EMILY: Ah well, we wouldn't have a plot 'cause

SALLY: You make a very valid point, 'cause then Rand couldn't channel

EMILY: Rand couldn't channel

SALLY: And then it'd be like, "Who the fuck's the Dragon Reborn?"

EMILY: Who can channel? Mat couldn't, he's a douche bag, too

SALLY: I know. God bless him

EMILY: Perrin, I guess.

SALLY: Aww, Perrin. Yeah, Perrin's not a douche bag. He's just sort of like a nice guy. Which I don't love

EMILY: He's a nice guy tm in many instances. But yeah. Rand the douche bag tm, and Mat's a frat boy tm,

SALLY: Which means inherently

Both: douche bag.

EMILY: Yeah [laughs] it's an umbrella term

SALLY: Yeah frat boy is an umbrella. Well, what else is under frat boy? Douche bag

EMILY: Sandals with socks

SALLY: Is that comfortable?

EMILY: I guess. The most frat boy I ever knew was - I used to work at our school's,

[SALLY laughs]

EMILY: Our school's old newspaper, and the most frat boy ever knew was our sports editor who was, in fact, in a frat, but then the fees became too much [laughing] so he was like, "Bye."

SALLY: Amazing, first of all

EMILY: So he's, like, my ideal version of a frat boy in that he was in a frat but then was like, "Can't keep up the culture. Too expensive," and left. Anyway, he would sometimes wear socks with sandals. Fuck. What else is there to say? So now the girls have a way out, assuming they can get Egwene, who is now under threat of being taken to

SALLY: Seanchan

EMILY: Seanchan. The Seanchan continent, because she has -

SALLY: Is that also called Seanchan?

EMILY: I think it's called Seandar?

SALLY: The shit?

EMILY: I don't know

SALLY: I never heard that in my whole damn life

EMILY: I don't know where I'm getting that

SALLY: But basically Egwene can find, like, iron ore something

EMILY: She can be a miner

SALLY: Which is sort of this hilarious -

EMILY: [singing] Hi ho!

SALLY: I was thinking of the Underminer from "The Incredibles"

EMILY: [in the Underminer voice] The Underminer!

SALLY: [laughs] Exactly, which is sort of like a very strange plot that's inserted here is that she is no longer explosions, she is miner

EMILY: Yeah, it was, like - again, it was kind of like this transparent thing for, I don't know, Robert Jordan to be like, "I need to have an imminent threat of her being taken away, rather than just the imminent threat being that she's losing her sense of self, and she's kind of really falling victim to this brainwashing, and this quote unquote, training that's being done to her." Which is enough of a treat for me. Like the second they're like "And your name is not Egwene anymore," I'm like, "Get her out of there"

SALLY: [claps with the words] Save her

EMILY: Yeah, it doesn't have to be, like, and now we're going to, like, take her to some unreachable place.

SALLY: Yeah, it's like, save the girl. Save the cheerleader, save the world.

EMILY: Exactly. What's the - what's the tagline of?

SALLY: *Heroes*

EMILY: Right. We go over this all the time on the air. I'm sorry [laughs]

SALLY: [laughs] It's because I'm constantly saying, "Save the cheerleader, save the world." Why? I don't know. It's not 2003, or whenever *Heroes* -

EMILY: But God, if only it were.

SALLY: No

EMILY: No, actually I don't want to be in 2003

SALLY: Well, how old were we in 2003?

EMILY: Well that was 15 years ago

SALLY: I was eight. I would not want to be eight again

EMILY: I'd be nine. I'd be in the third fucking grade

SALLY: [whispers] I'd be in second grade

EMILY: Third grade was a terrible year for me, personally, where I'm at. Actually, I don't really remember. First through fourth grade is all kind of a blur. Except for in the second grade when a kid brought a tarantula to class. That was the worst thing that ever happened to me

SALLY: Naturally

EMILY: Naturally. Anyway, it was all...I was about to say, "It was all uphill from fifth grade." But that's not -that's not true, because the Valley of Death of seventh and eighth grade happened in the middle there.

SALLY: [mumbling] Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death

EMILY: Yep

SALLY: I shall fear no evil. Do you know, my grandmother would pay each of her grandchildren like \$35 if you've memorized Psalm 23 and recited it to her?

EMILY: That's a lot of money.

SALLY: Yeah. When you're like, eight?

EMILY: Jesus

SALLY: Yeah

EMILYL Did you know my grandfather would give us all 20 bucks to leave him alone whenever we were there?

SALLY: Yeah, which is rad as hell there

EMILYL I know that's so iconic

SALLY: Sort of mean, and traumatizing. But also funny.

EMILY: Well, that was who he was [laughing] as a person

SALLY: Yeah

EMILY: Ummm

SALLY: But it was always so weird to me. I was like, "Why that one?" Yeah. And I get that it's, like, famous or whatever

EMILY: Maybe it was really meaningful to her or something?

SALLY: [sighs] I guess.

EMILY Okay. Um, do we have anything else to say? It's hard to like - it's hard to say anything about this. Because it's bad in so many ways, but it's hard to separate what is bad because it's upsetting and what's bad because it's really written poorly

SALLY: Yeah, this is not a scene that - is not a section that I feel like is handled very well

EMILY: No, no. Just generally it's not great.

SALLY: Yeah. I just - we talked about this last time, but I'm just really tired of having to read really terrible things happen to characters that I love for seemingly very little reason other than that, they need to be pushed forward.

EMILY: Yeah. Because it's not like Egwene was stuck in place. Egwene is a very ambitious character. She would have progressed regardless, and it's frustrating, again, that we don't just get to see that happen naturally. It like it's, I don't know, it's an act of violence that isn't portrayed as violence, it's portrayed as a good thing throughout rest of the series.

SALLY: Yeah, it's really strange, because you compare it to, like, Rand's captivity in book six, which I think these mirror each other and a lot of ways. And Joe on Instagram - Joe, if you're listening, hope you are - brought up a point to me today about how, like the women's trauma is much more tied up in aspects of humiliation. Whereas male trauma - like, no matter what if you're traumatizing somebody or torturing them, humiliation is inherent in that. But it is not quite as obvious, like in Rand's whole being kept in a chest thing it's more about, like, making him obedient

EMILY: Physical restraint

SALLY: Yeah physical restraint, and making him smaller and less threatening, whereas with Egwene and all the other things that happened to the girls - even with like the Aiel all of Egwene's punishments like wearing her hair and braids, all the stuff that - are belittling her through who humiliation as opposed to like belittling her - them through physical restraint

EMILY: It's really like - yeah that's a really interesting point

SALLY: I know I was like my desk, I was like, "Joe? Joe!" [laughs]

EMILY: God, I'm going to be thinking about that forever, because so much of what happens to Egwene much later in the series when she's the Amyrlin and is taken captive in the White Tower, she's forced to become a novice again. And so much of that is humiliation but it's, like, she's grown out of that and she has to then learn how to grow out of the physical punishments. And it's very interesting, and also there's like a whole thing in "The Gathering Storm" about Semirhage, one of the forsaken, what finally quote unquote breaks her is humiliation. Which is disturbing in its own way. And especially because it's not written to be a disturbing scene. As always. Troubling. But also like, what happens to Matt, how much of that is humiliation versus -

SALLY: An especially because Mat's arc of being a victim of sexual assault is inherently, like, a feminized arc. That is something we typically see happen to female characters

EMILY: Yeah, Mat is very much humiliated

SALLY: Yeah, just constantly, constantly humiliated. Just everything Tylin does is -

EMILY: Terrible. And public and, like, spectacle

SALLY: Yeah, it's humiliation for spectacle. Absolutely. And so ugh ugh

EMILY: I know it makes my skin crawl

SALLY: But anyway, now I'm going to thinking about humiliation in *Wheel of Time*

EMILY: But, like, so much of Mat's arc is a feminized arc, because he doesn't have, like, traditionally the male power or, like I don't know. Mat's very interesting in his relationship to the gendered aspects of *Wheel of Time*, which is probably why I find him to be one of the most interesting characters

SALLY: He's just like a skinny boy who knows how to fight but doesn't want to

EMILY: And in the same way Egwene is also I think the girls' version of straddling the line in that she has, like, these masculine forms of power. Anyway, we'll have a whole episode where we talk about this later, but we're out of time

SALLY: We are out of time

EMILY: Once I edit out all the bullshit with our cat. So thank you for joining us, in this, our first episode of 2019. Hope you are having a happy new year. Stay tuned next week we're not quite sure which chapters we're going to read our - keep an eye on our reading schedule which is on our website everybodyhatesrand.com. Sally made it, it's beautiful

SALLY: Thanks

EMILY: And because we're just - I think this happened to with last book, too

SALLY: Yeah, the climax will be a moving target

EMILY: Yeah, yeah. It kind of depends on how much we feel. So much of it is action. Sometimes we can't talk about that. Anyway Stay tuned, but any housekeeping?

SALLY: Nope, just we're on track, more or less, to finish *The Great Hunt* by the end of January so -

EMILY: Hell yeah

SALLY - season to is coming to a close. We may do another Q&A episode, or if you guys are interested in that versus another special episode, where we talk about *Mad Max* or something. It's just always nice to sort of take a break

EMILY: [laughs] from *Wheel of Time*

SALLY: Between episodes - between seasons. And then we'll dive into the world's most perfect book: *The Dragon Reborn*

EMILY: God I'm so excited. I can't believe we're almost

SALLY: I know, I'm really probably going to cry hysterically in the first episode

EMILY: I feel like I've been in the middle of *The Great Hunt* for eons

SALLY: I feel like *The Eye of the World* went really quickly, and *The Great Hunt* has just been taking us a really long time

EMILY: Which is funny because *The Eye of the World* actually I think it took us longer

SALLY: I think so

EMILY: Yeah, because we haven't figured out pacing. Yeah, we'll talk about this

SALLY: We'll just - we'll have a EHR podcast zone zone where we meta game about our own podcast

EMILY Uh, yeah. If you - let us know what you're interested in. You can tweet us at EHR underscore podcast or DM us on Instagram. Just tell us whether or not you like Rand [laughing] because we don't care

SALLY: Please don't ever

EMILY: Um, if we want to take a poll on who loves Rand and who doesn't, we'll let you know. But do let us know whether like what kind of special episode you'd prefer to celebrate the end of the season. Sign us off

SALLY: Um, so the other day was New Year's Eve, right? And so we gathered, me and my mom and some neighbors who are very close they're basically like family, and they have this, like, crazy uncle. Their moms sister's, like, [laughs] fourth husband

EMILY: oh my god

SALLY: And he is like - Look, I believe in all things. There are more things on heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, but this guy says some crazy shit. And

apparently Cole, who is like, my best boy, was helping him out on Thanksgiving and he was like, [laughing a little bit] "Oh, your backyard looks really nice. Like, you didn't really good job like redesigning your gate" and Sean's like whips around and he's like, "Oh, you mean my portal?" And just walked away [laughs]

EMILY: What. The fuck?

SALLY: And I know the story isn't as funny if you don't know him. But holy shit.

EMILY: Oh, you mean my portal?

SALLY: You mean my portal?

EMILY: What does he know? That the rest of us don't know

SALLY: [whispers] I don't know

EMILY: Okay

SALLY: Byyyyyyye. I love you

[EMILY laughs softly]