

Episode 48 – "Everybody Hates Dillon"

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Sally: I'm nervous.

Emily: (mouth clearly full) Don't be nervous.

Sally: I am, though.

Emily: Hello.

Sally: Do you guys remember, sort of mid- to late-season one where Emily and I would constantly be like, "It's weird energy this episode because we're living in New York City" and nearly every day of our lives was a different circle of hell. This episode's gonna be a lot like that. (laugh)

Emily: It's two days after Christmas. We both had the worst day of all time.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I'm eating cookie dough for dinner. As far as I know, Sally hasn't eaten anything for dinner.

Sally: I had a bagel a couple hours ago.

Emily: Here we go! (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) I've got a Diet Coke, I've got my little dinosaur -- my baby dinosaur rice baby --

Emily: It's very cute.

Sally: Thank you. My friend Sarah made it for me.

Emily: I know. So sweet.

Sally: She's so good. Although today -- I just -- I just don't understand how this keeps happening to me, where people are like -- I respond to a benign message, and they're like, "Would you like to listen to my relationship troubles?" And I'm like --

Emily: Is this about Sarah?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: OK, because, um, one of my first recollections --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Of our friendship was that, while we were in London, you were telling -- (laugh) You were telling someone about Sarah's relationship drama -- because it was funny, I think.

Sally: It was hilarious.

Emily: I can't even remember what it was.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But like, we, as a collective group in London, hated Sarah's boyfriend at the time. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Yeah, cause he was a dick.

Emily: What was his name?

Sally: His name was Dillon, spelled D-I-L-L-O-N.

Emily: Oh, yeah, yeah. Just, collectively, we would go out into London, and everyone would be like, "FUCK Dillon."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "We hate Dillon."

Sally: (laugh) I do hate Dillon.

Emily: Yeah, I don't even remember anything about him, but I do hate him. I know that.

Sally: I can't remember what story I was telling -- it was something dumb --

Emily: It was something about how he was terrible.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Sarah was still dating him, and we were all like --

Sally: And I was like --

Emily: "Help her." Yeah.

Sally: Anyway.

Emily: Anyway, that's how I knew Sally was a good and decent person was because she too had friends who were (laugh) -- had the most nonsensical relationships.

Sally: (laugh) And I'm just like, "What's happening?"

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Also -- I mean, I was telling everybody in London about somebody else's relationship drama, so --

Emily: But, like --

Sally: It's nice that you didn't think I was the gossipiest bitch, which --

Emily: No, I didn't, I --

Sally: Surprise, dear reader, I am.

Emily: I thought that you were most -- the most relatable person because I, too, just tell other people's stories.

Sally: Yeah. Oh, man. That's how I impress people. I'm not impressive.

Emily: Yeah, you are.

Sally: But I'm like, "Hey, I know this person who did this crazy thing."

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And everyone's like, "Damn. Hot diggity shit."

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Yep.

Emily: Are we gonna talk about what we're reading, or are we just gonna launch right in?

Sally: Um, well, it would be sad, considering I'm still reading the same book I talked about like four weeks ago.

Emily: Well, can't be helped. (laugh) It really can't. You've had a very -- several very busy weeks at work, and then the holidays. Very terrible.

Sally: The holidays were so hectic this year, you guys. I was almost happy to be back at work yesterday. (laugh)

Emily: Really?

Sally: Cause it meant people were leaving me alone.

Emily: Yeah, no, that's nice.

Sally: (groan)

Emily: My mom got my dad -- she was CACKLING as he opened this gift --

Sally: Oh, no.

Emily: My dad loves going to the gas station and getting, um, usually a donut, because he loves a donut from the gas station, cause he's weird, and also a large soda.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um. Because he's a stereotypical Mormon.

Sally: Meh.

Emily: I dunno. Anyway, my -- he opens this gift, and it's one of those giant jugs?

Sally: Yes! Those things are rad.

Emily: From the Holiday gas station? Yeah, it's like as big as his head.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's like a hundred ounces. It has fucking two places --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: To put straws.

Sally: Amazing.

Emily: It's -- he's just like, he looks like a child holding Thor's hammer.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: As he -- hefts --

Sally: I bet he'll use it.

Emily: He was like, "I can never use this because I could never bring myself to walk into a Holiday gas station with this."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: It has little clown faces on it. It's horrible. I know. The Holiday gas station, that's their --

Sally: Um. But. That's -- he can put water in it, and then he'd get, like, majorly hydrated.

Emily: True.

Sally: Although you shouldn't drink a hundred ounces of water every day. You should --

Emily: You shouldn't drink a hundred ounces of ANYTHING.

Sally: Yes.

Emily: To --

Sally: Maybe ever. (laugh)

Emily: Ever. (laugh) Cumulatively. Anyway, he almost paid my brother-in-law five dollars -- my brotherin-law lives to make money -- he almost paid Collins five dollars to go to the gas station and --

Sally: Collins would've done it.

Emily: He would have --

Sally: Collins --

Emily: But they had to go.

Sally: Oh. Collins has no shame. He loves money.

Emily: Collins -- that -- you just -- you just described my brother-in-law in --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Two sentences. "Collins has no shame, and he loves money."

Sally: (laugh) Text Sarah.

Emily: (laugh) I'm doing it.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: If I do it in the family group chat, are you OK with that?

Sally: Yeah, that's fine. (laugh) Emily's putting me on blast. Collins is gonna hate me now.

Emily: No, he'll love you. (laugh) Also, we all make fun of him mercilessly for loving money, so.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: OK. Let's talk about Wheel of Time.

Sally: Let's talk about Wheel of TIme. We're also doing a really fun thing (laugh) this episode, where Emily didn't read the chapters, and it is my responsibility to summarize them.

Emily: This is gonna be super fun. I --

Sally: Remember ...

Emily: What?

Sally: The first episode, where I was like -- the prologue, and I didn't remember any of it? Emily: Yeah, you didn't remember fucking anything. You were like, "Is there a tapestry?" Sally: There WAS.

Emily: (laugh) It was the title.

Sally: And -- but -- that -- we also didn't have a book then, so ...

Emily: Oh, yeah.

Sally: That makes me feel a little better. We were just, like, going off pure memory.

Emily: Oh my God.

Sally: For like three episodes.

Emily: Jesus.

Sally: EHR had a pretty rough start, guys.

Emily: Yeah, we were pretty low-tech back in the day.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um. "Back in the day." That was a year ago. Jesus.

Sally: Yeah, we're approaching our one-year anniversary.

Emily: We've been doing this for a year? What the fuck.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: We've hardly missed a week.

Sally: Yeah, I think we've done --

Emily: That's impressive.

Sally: I think we only skipped one week this entire year.

Emily: Wow. In the middle of our move?

Sally: Yeah. We took, like, a -- a break. After season one ended. And then (inaudible) --

Emily: Wow. We are so impressive, you guys.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Okay -- oh, fuck, I forgot we have to introduce ourselves.

Sally: Oh! Yeah.

Emily: Hello. This is Everybody Hates Rand --

Sally: Your friendly neighborhood Wheel of Time podcast.

Emily: Your chaotic --

Sally: Yeah, it's --

Emily: Evil.

Sally: Maybe not so neighborly this episode.

Emily: Also, I've been listening to a lot of, um, music from the soundtrack of Spiderman: Into the Spiderverse, which, stop what you're --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Stop listening to this podcast, and go watch Spiderman: Into the Spider-verse because it is a fantastic movie.

Sally: Maybe the best.

Emily: Yeah, and also the music is so on point. Um. Anyway, there's a bunch of the songs that reference friendly neighborhood Spiderman.

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: And it's really good.

Sally: Oh, yeah, that must be where I got that from.

Emily: Spiderman?

Sally: Your friendly neighborhood Spiderman. (long pause) Makes sense. I'm fine with it.

Emily: I thought you were aware that we were referencing Spiderman.

Sally: Mmm. I just said it one time. I don't even --

Emily: It just rolled off the tongue?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Huh. I was like, "Cool, I love Spiderman."

Sally: I love Spiderman too.

Emily: Yeah. All --

Sally: Now I feel stupid.

Emily: Don't feel stupid.

Sally: It's too late.

Emily: I didn't mean to make you feel stupid.

Sally: It's OK though. I always feel stupid.

Emily: No you don't. I'm just a weirdo who loves Spiderman so much that I know all the catchphrases.

Sally: (laugh) I like Spiderman too. I like Spiderman comma t-o-o. I don't like Spiderman 2. Either of them.

Emily: I haven't seen either -- well, wait, I saw the Amazing Spiderman 2. THAT was terrible.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: That was super terrible. Um. And I was gonna say I love Spider*men*, as in, I love all iterations of Spiderman, but really I only love Miles Morales -- the current --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: The one in Into the Spiderverse. And Tom Holland. And, to be honest, my love for Andrew Garfield's Spiderman has died.

Sally: Me too! I was about to say, this is my hot take: the Andrew Garfield Spiderman movies were not very good.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Just as the Tobey Maguire Spiderman movies were terrible.

Emily: Probably in five years, we'll think Homecoming was terrible.

Sally: Maybe Spiderman's just cursed.

Emily: Maybe it is. I just --

Sally: I --

Emily: I don't -- I don't have any -- we need to stop talking about Spiderman -- but I don't (laugh) -- I have never watched the Tobey Maguire movies, so I cannot offer an opinion on, um, him, but my take on the Andrew Garfield Spiderman was that he was kind of a douchebag?

Sally: Mmm.

Emily: In, like, the traditionally, like, Nice Guy[™] way.

Sally: Yes.

Emily: That he was mild-mannered, um, but -- and for that reason, he got away with bad behavior.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: I dunno.

Sally: No, I agree. Yeah. No. I think the only Spiderman that gets it right is Miles Morales, the cutest, most purest --

Emily: God, I fucking LOVE HIM.

Sally: Child who ever lived.

Emily: I can't believe I have two sons, and they're both Spidermen.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: (laugh) Um. Fuck.

Sally: Also, John Mulaney plays a pig in that movie, and it's, like (laugh) -- it's --

Emily: Nicolas Cage is involved?

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: There's just, like, a lot going on.

Sally: It's really super good, though.

Emily: Lily Tomlin is Aunt May, which I was like, "Why hasn't Lily Tomlin herself played Aunt May yet?" Cause she's --

Sally: Exactly. It made so much sense.

Emily: Perfect. Yeah.

Sally: Yeah. It was very --

Emily: That voice?

Sally: Very confusing. Very disconcerting. Kay. Um, spoiler alert.

Emily: Oh, wait, I'm Emily Juchau, and that's Sally Goodger.

Sally: Didn't we already say that?

Emily: (laugh) No, we didn't.

Sally: Oh, sorry. You guys know. Unless this is your first episode, in which -- listen to a different episode first. (laugh)

Emily: Fuck. Yeah. Rewind. Get out. (inaudible) Climb out of the pit.

Sally: Yeah. Um. Like she said --

Emily: Raise your -- grip yourself tight and raise yourself from perdition. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: That was a Supernatural reference. You should watch our -- listen to our Supernatural episode.

Sally: It was really good.

Emily: It was fun.

Sally: It was really good.

Emily: Um. Spoiler alert. Also, requisite, um, PSA. Our title, Everybody Hates Rand, is a joke and is meant to be taken as a joke. Please don't take it too seriously, because if you come at us (laugh) with you taking it too seriously, we have no patience for that.

Sally: It's really kind of ridiculous.

Emily: It's very annoying. We understand that other people have different opinions of Rand. Everybody - the word "everybody" in our title, Everybody Hates Rand, is hyperbole.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's OK.

Sally: It is hyperbole. That's right.

Emily: Women can speak hyperbole. Women can --

Sally: What?

Emily: Women can be funny. I know. It's the twenty-first century.

Sally: Oh my gosh! Emily, why would you say something so controversial?

Emily: Yet so brave. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) OK. Um. I think you should call that little segment Titular.

Emily: Titular?

Sally: I just think it would be fun.

Emily: Why, cause you like when I say the word "titular"?

Sally: I do. (laugh)

Emily: I don't understand that.

Sally: I just like it.

Emily: Is it one of those, like, audible -- like, what's the word? One of those, like, kind of -- um, sensual things? Auditory?

Sally: Yeah, I just really like how it sounds.

Emily: OK.

Sally: Titular. Or you can call it PSA. EHR PSA. Umm.

Emily: What happened?

Sally: (groan)

Emily: In these chapters? You can do it.

Sally: (whisper) I can't.

Emily: You can.

Sally: Um, so, this week, we are talking about chapters 40 and 41. Um, and chapter 41 opens -- it's kind of a interesting opening, if I recall correctly, which will be -- that's just like the asterisk on this whole episode --

Emily: Can I say you read this 30 minutes ago? (laugh)

Sally: I did. I did read it 30 minutes ago. Um. Which just says a lot about my memory.

Emily: A lot has happened since then.

Sally: A lot has happened since then.

Emily: I ate like three things of cookie dough.

Sally: Emily didn't get Buffalo Wild Wings.

Emily: I know. Cause they don't deliver until 7:45.

Sally: It was --

Emily: What the fuck.

Sally: Really sad.

Emily: Ugh.

Sally: Um. So -- how do you say it? Is it (using different pronunciations) damane? Damane? Damane?

Emily: I've always said it *damane* ... but I have no -- I think the official pronunciation is *damane*. And I don't like that, cause it sounds demonic.

Sally: And also isn't, like, Domani a -- like, nationality?

Emily: Is it?

Sally: In the Wheel of Time world? Like Arad Doman? Don't they call them --

Emily: Oh, Domani. Yeah. Arad -- yeah, Domani. So -- damane, damane? I don't fucking know.

Sally: I've always --

Emily: It's one of those words that I have always pronounced in my head and have never --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Pronounced out loud.

Sally: I was thinking about it when I was reading this chapter, I was like, "I've never said this word aloud." In my head, it was always like, *damane. Damane. Dama --* I don't know. (sigh)

Emily: *Damane*?

Sally: Da -- damane.

Emily: Who knows.

Sally: I like damane.

Emily: Yeah. Yeah. Sure.

Sally: I guess we could consult the pronunciation guide. (laugh)

Emily: Yeah, but who the fuck would we be if we did that?

Sally: Will we? No. The book is across the living room. I can't go get it.

Emily: It's like in our description. We play fast and loose with pronunciations. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) OK.

Emily: Try and pronounce it differently every time you say it. (laugh)

Sally: OK, I'll try. (laugh) Kay. Um, so the chapter opens with, um, them ladies -- Egwene, Min, Nynaeve, and Elayne -- and Liandrin coming out of the Ways. And there is just, like, this major army in front of them. It's like 50 Seanchan soldiers -- not major, but, like, 50 Seanchan soldiers -- you know.

Emily: Yeah, sure.

Sally: And, like, a bunch of the -- the *damanes*. And their keepers. And the High Lady Suroth. Who, like, I think you mentioned before, the Seanchan nobility really do have some major aesthetic power.

Emily: I know. It's --

Sally: With her, like, shaved head.

Emily: And, like, weird fingernails.

Sally: Yeah. And she's in, like, a silk robe.

Emily: Yeah, they're all dressed so fine.

Sally: Yeah. Anyway, so she's, like, sitting on a palanquin, which is really funny. Palanquin? I think it's palanquin. Um, and --

Emily: I've always pronounced it palanquin. So that's where I'm at.

Sally: Palanquin.

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Palanquin. Um.

Emily: My older sister, until she was like 14, pronounced the word "grotesque" as "gro-te-skew."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: So clearly my family has some trouble with the letter "Q."

Sally: What is it that your dad said? "You can't marry someone who can't pronounce cinnamon. It will dilute the gene pool"? (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) There's a collection of sticky notes on the inside of a cupboard in my parents' house where, just, someone has written down something ridiculous that someone else has said and stuck it there? So there's a whole thing about the goat running away: "Fancy! Adam, is that Fancy?" And then, yeah, my dad was like, "You can't marry someone who can't pronounce the word 'cinnamon.' It will dilute the gene pool." (laugh)

Sally: What a weirdo. Um, so this episode's a lot like that. You can't marry us. We'll dilute your gene pool.

Emily: (snort) Fuck.

Sally: (laugh) So, um -- kay, they come out of the Ways, and Egwene's like, "Hey, what the fuck?" Um, and Liandrin is like, "I need to speak to that lady over there. Lady Suroth." And they are like, "Blah blah blah blah." They have some sort of, like, battle of wills, basically.

Emily: Nefarious chat.

Sally: Um, but then, uh, Egwene gets leashed is what happens. Is, um -- there's like this confusing moment where, um -- I think the implication is, like, Nynaeve gets really mad and so she, like, calls a bunch of lightning? Cause they --

Emily: Oh, yeah.

Sally: Try to put a leash on her? And so then sort of all hell breaks loose. And Nynaeve and Elayne get away and Egwene gets leashed and Min gets, like -- Min stabs one of the soldiers or something, so she gets thrown to the ground and ... duh duh duh duh. Um. So then Egwene is like, "Liandrin, why would you do this? This is super rude." And Liandrin's like, "I don't even -- I don't know who you are. Why are you talking to me?"

Emily: "Fuck you."

Sally: "Fuck you." And then Liandrin and the Lady Suroth -- like, I think the implication is that they're both Darkfriends, is what happens because they keep talking about their master.

Emily: I mean -- a, yes, they are --

Sally: Rad.

Emily: Later, that's confirmed with Suroth. Um. And she, like, does a bunch of shit to try and get, uh, Tuon assassinated, which, hint, doesn't work.

Sally: What?! Tuon lives?

Emily: Because she -- I know, Tuon is like, "You can't kill me, bitch. I'm in the circus --"

Sally: "I'm a bad bitch, you can't kill me."

Emily: "With my -- with my fucking husband."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um. So, yeah, I know that. But I am -- I can't recall the actual motives for Liandrin capturing Egwene and Nynaeve and bringing them here?

Sally: What they keep talking about is the -- she -- Liandrin is like, um -- Liandrin's really upset that Nynaeve got away cause her orders from the Dark One --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Et cetera, is that Egwene and Nynaeve need to be taken to the other side of the Aryth Ocean and kept there? Sort of away from the events of the Last Battle? And there's no, like, reason given for that, obviously, and Egwene is constantly like, "What do they mean? That -- like, why am I being singled out? Why is Nynaeve being singled out? What's going on here?" Um. So they're being -- that was sort of the motive there. And, like, that's why she's like -- heh, it's also hilarious cause Liandrin's like, "Oh, don't worry about Elayne. She's not important and can't do anything."

Emily: Mm. That's true.

Sally: "Worry about Nynaeve, who is --"

Emily: A hundred percent true.

Sally: "A bomb."

Emily: Who is literally nuclear power.

Sally: Yeah. And is going nuclear at this moment. She's just like pissed as hell. And so she's throwing lightning bolts and just lighting trees on fire.

Emily: Hell, yeah.

Sally: Yeah. It's rad.

Emily: It's still confusing, though, because, like -- I mean, a lot of the shit the Darkfriends do makes zero sense --

Sally: Yes.

Emily: And it's like, "Hello, the Dark One? Perhaps if you got a better organizing system, you would do better at your job of bringing the world to ruin."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Et cetera, et cetera. But, like, why bring the girls to the other side of the ocean? Like, is the Dark One like, "Both of these girls are important, so I need to, like, get rid of them," and in which case, why aren't the girls officially labeled as *ta veren*?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Because that's dumb. And it's like, it would be kind of interesting if they were like, "We're here to use them as bargaining chips for Rand," but then Rand has no idea that they're there, and they escape on their own, and it's kinda like --

Sally: Eh.

Emily: They're supposed to end up together, but they're all kinda like --

Sally: Meh.

Emily: "See ya."

Sally: Yeah, exactly. No, it's one of those things that feels like another major plot hole.

Emily: Where Robert Jordan was like, "Ah, I just need to get everyone to this one place, and I --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Gotta figure out a way to do it without ..." I don't know.

Sally: Yeah, and it is particularly frustrating, like you said, because, like, as much as Moi -- and we've had this conversation before --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: As much as Moiraine is like, "Ah, the girls are as much a part of it as the boys are," it's like, the girls very specifically -- the girls, meaning Egwene and Nynaeve -- are very specifically, like ... there's like a division between them and, like, the boys being *ta'veren*. And it's like, in this moment, like, Robert Jordan could honestly explain so much --

Emily: If he just was like, "And they're ta'veren too."

Sally: Like, "All five of them are ta'veren." And it's, like, very frustrating that the girls' narrative then has to, like, constantly justify itself more because then it just feels less cohesive.

Emily: Yeah, and it's especially -- yeah. Especially because, like, the things Egwene does, in particular, are very *ta'veren*-ish.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like, she manipulates people later in the series in such a way that is, like, indicative of what happens with Perrin and Rand when they're talking to people and the people are, like, "Oh, I didn't mean to agree to that, but I guess I have."

Sally: Yeah. Yeah.

Emily: Egwene's just so, like, smart that people end up in corners and are like, "Oh, fuck, I didn't mean to end up here, but here I am."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it's like -- I don't know. You've talked before about how the boys are endowed with hard power vs. soft power.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And that's one of the, uh, instances of sexism in the Wheel of Time series. You don't get a lot of women who are, um, using power in the way that it's usually assigned to men.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Which isn't necessarily brutal violence, although that's an aspect of it, but is just, like, forceful power.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And I know it -- it sounds weird to say that, considering, like, we've just talked about how Nynaeve's a nuclear bomb, but, like, a lot of what Nynaeve does is in the background of the world's major events.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: She's usually a helper, if that makes sense.

Sally: Yeah, she's usually the assistance. And she isn't, like -- Nynaeve is not endowed with any authority.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: The way that --

Emily: Nynaeve has to fight for any scrap of respect.

Sally: Yeah. Even Moiraine does.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Moiraine is constantly like, "Oh, these teenagers won't listen to me because I'm a woman."

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: "And therefore I have to quote unquote manipulate them."

Emily: Yeah, and everything Egwene does, although she does have some, like, badass moments of wielding magic and shit, but it's also like, most of what she does is political, which is sort of a soft power.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um. And often when she wields the Power, it's feminized. She never uses it, um -- cause she holds to the Aes Sedai Oaths -- she never uses it violently --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Against other people, duh duh duh duh duh. I don't know. It's just.

Sally: It's just frustrating. Cause, like, in a way, I kind of wanna say that magic is a soft power as opposed to a hard power?

Emily: Well, it certainly is when you gender it --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: The way Robert Jordan genders it.

Sally: Yeah, that's a fair point. In Wheel of Time, it's very much considered a soft power -- cause Rand is like -- Rand very much uses his ability to channel as a form of intimidation and as a way to get his authority. Like, you think of his big, like, "Kneel, Aes Sedai, or you will be knelt" moment --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: At the end of book five or what -- or four. Or six. What the shit just happened?

Emily: And just, like, he always has a sword made out of the Power.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And everything he does is about explosion -- like, he's King Explosion Murder over here.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: And the girls are like, "Well, I'm gonna use my power to heal shit."

Sally: "I'm gonna use my power to travel across the world."

Emily: "And change the weather."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "And, like, research, um. Tel --" I forgot what --

Sally: Tel'aran'rhiod.

Emily: "Tel'aran'rhiod and ter'angreal and --"

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: No, it's both. Counts as both. You know? It's just like --

Sally: Yeah. It's just really frustrating because I'm not saying, like -- I'm not -- it's -- this is a very frustrating dialogue for me because I am in no way supportive of hard power.

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Like, I don't think people should use power that way? I don't think, like --

Emily: It's not fun watching Rand use magic.

Sally: Yeah. Because he's just, like, aggressive, and he's like, "Everyone will listen to me." And, like, there's a reason that people are so interested in, like, political machinations --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Cause soft power is a lot more interesting and a lot more dynamic to watch come about, which is how I think people get away with being like, "Look at Cersei Lannister, my, like, strong female character who, like, has so much power and so much agency," because she's doing all these political maneuverings that are objectively really interesting even if they're very strange. Cersei also has some interesting dynamics with hard power, but we're not talking about Cersei. But it's, like, really so frustrating -- so, again, I'm not like, "Yes, hard power, let's have women be violent," because that's just, you know, an underpinning of patriarchal relationships to power, but it is also just, like, so annoying to see that women are not allowed into that space.

Emily: Well, and it's, like, frustrating too, because it's one of the ways that the series tricks you into --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Thinking that it's at all quote unquote empowering for women.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Because yeah, the stuff the women do is more interesting.

Sally: Yeah, of course.

Emily: Objectively speak -- like, you can only watch Rand intimidate people so many times.

Sally: Like, "Oh, look, he's shirtless again, and he's got a sword made of fire."

Emily: I understand that the world we live in is so, like, caught up in masturbating to patriarchy and hard power and, like, we just have fucking a million movies about men who just shoot guns and make things explode and it's like, you can have those things and you can have fun with them, but, like, recognize that there are inherent problems with that and that to the mass population, there's a limit.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: That you can only watch the Fast and the Furious, I dunno, one movie, before you're like, "OK, I'm a little bit done with --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Shooting guns and driving fast cars --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "And looking at women in booty shorts." You know?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: You're like, "I need a break."

Sally: No, like -- the Fast and the Furious, I think, is a perfect example for this, because I am trash for the Fast and the Furious movies.

Emily: Who doesn't fucking love the Fate of the Furious?

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. Or -- what is the one where they're in Miami? Where Vin Diesel isn't in it?

Emily: Oh my God, yeah.

Sally: I love that one. (laugh)

Emily: So good.

Sally: Not because Vin Diesel isn't in it. Just cause I love that one.

Emily: But Paul Walker is like at the height of his twink power in that movie.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah, he really has some -- speaking of aesthetic power. Paul Walker --

Emily: Yeah. Jesus.

Sally: In the Miami Fast and Furious movie. Like, they're so fun, and, like, if you're -- like, you can -- like, it's very frustrating -- for like, a woman to enjoy that type of movie, it has to be a weird escapist kind of thing --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Like you have to pack up so much of your personal identity and the way that you want to be treated in order to enjoy that movie? Be -- and like -- but there really is a limit. Like I can watch one, and then I'm like, "That was fun." But then you, like, put another one on -- cause, like, last summer, my mom and I, like, marathoned the Fast and the Furious movies --

Emily: Yeah, I remember.

Sally: Which was fun, cause it was, like, me and my mom, and it was like the last week we were spending together before I moved to New York. But, like, we would get to a point where we were like, "Blegh." (laugh)

Emily: I can't.

Sally: We feel disgusting.

Emily: I can't watch this anymore.

Sally: I cannot watch another --

Emily: Sweaty women --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Draping themselves over a car.

Sally: For the enjoyment of -- you know.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Ludacris, or whatever. (laugh) Or, like, it's --

Emily: Fucking Ludacris. Uh --

Sally: Um, that was -- I don't know why we just went on a Fast and the Furious --

Emily: We went on a -- yeah.

Sally: Rant, but here we are.

Emily: Well, it's like -- it's why I like Mad Max: Fury Road, because that's an example of feminized hard power.

Sally: Mm!

Emily: Is like --

Sally: Yes.

Emily: There's a lot of, like, fast cars. There's a lot of violence in that movie, but it's, um, made feminized --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: In an interesting way.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I don't know, I'm not gonna -- I'm not gonna give you my whole Mad Max: Fury Road essay on why it's personally my favorite movie in the entire world, but, like, needless to say, it takes a lot of the aspects of hard power and makes them palatable --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: For -- for people who enjoy soft power.

Sally: Yeah, and Mad Max is the really interesting thing of, like, you have these women who take hard power, but they do so without it being, like, stepping into the masculine --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Like, Furiosa is able to, like, take the hard power that she wants without becoming --

Emily: A man.

Sally: A man. She's able to remain her -- like, remain feminine in her way.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Anyway, maybe the next text we talk about that's not Wheel of Time will be Mad Max. Because. Jesus Christ, it's a perfect movie.

Emily: I love Mad Max: Fury Road. OK. Um. So, Egwene gets leashed.

Sally: Egwene gets leashed, and then we have --

Emily: Isn't the next chapter just about the reaction to that? Is that what we read?

Sally: Um. No.

Emily: Okay.

Sally: No, we read -- so, the, the chapter where Eglene gets -- Eglene? -- Egwene gets leashed is pretty long. Excuse me. Not pretty long, but like 15 pages. And, like, she gets leashed pretty quickly, and the rest of it is her, like --

Emily: Yeah. I'm always -- I always remember, when I reread that, how, like, surprised I am --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: At how quick it comes.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Just, like, someone snaps it on her, and it's done.

Sally: Yeah. And then it's done, and she doesn't know how to get it off, and it's the rest of the chapter -there's like a brief Nynaeve point of view at the end, where Nynaeve is like, "We're gonna go save our friends. I have to stop being afraid and become angry so that I can channel." Blah blah blah.

Emily: And Elayne's like, "Okay!"

Sally: And Elayne's like, "We don't have any money." And then Nynaeve's like, "Jesus Christ, we have so much money. Could you stop being so rich for one second?"

Emily: (laugh) OK, that's a --

Sally: (laugh) Which is hilarious.

Emily: Setting up the Elayne/Nynaeve dynamic --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Of many books.

Sally: Yeah. But, um, the bulk of that chapter is Egwene figuring out what it means to be leashed. Like, the pain that she experiences without any physical wounds, like, her connection to, um, the *sul'dam* at the other end of the leash --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Which, I just hate saying that word -- and, like, the way that she's treated like a dog, and, like, the dynamic, and, like, we learn a little bit about how the leash was made in one of these very famous expedition -- exposition dumps where they're like, "Oh, let me tell you this story." And it's just really sad. And hard to read, obviously, 'cause Egwene is losing it because how could you not?

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: And Min is also there. Um. And Egwene and Min keep, like, kind of making deals to try and keep the other one safe, which is --

Emily: Again, upsetting.

Sally: Yeah. So that's what happens.

Emily: Like, Egwene, at one point, isn't she like, "I'll be good if you don't kill Min," basically?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um.

Emily: That's upsetting.

Sally: And then the next chapter, we switch over to a Rand point of view, where they're in, um, one of the towns the Seanchan have gone through that's, like, pretty much deserted and, like -- because it's been pretty, uh, ravaged, like -- like, what I always remember is that Hurin walks in and there's like this patch of burned land in the middle of the town, and it's like --

Emily: Oh, yeah.

Sally: Something so horrible happened there that he just, like, starts puking and, like, won't go near it ever again.

Emily: Right.

Sally: Um, but basically it's, like, deserted, and they all sort of gather at this deserted inn --

Emily: Is it the Seanchan or the Whitecloaks that did it?

Sally: They talk about the Seanchan --

Emily: Oh, OK.

Sally: 'Cause, like, the people still there are, like, talking about how the Seanchan --

Emily: Huh.

Sally: Freaked them out.

Emily: Right.

Sally: And, like, Verin has a note that, like, some people go towards where the Seanchan headquarters is, thinking that, like, the Seanchan won't be as violent in a town that they are holding, and other people are fleeing, and, like, then we get caught up in this, like, long drama conversation about Rand being like, "I have to go to Falme 'cause that's where Padan Fain is," and -- or, Toman Head -- yeah.

Emily: Everyone being like, "That's a bad idea."

Sally: Yeah. Everyone's like, "Kay, we need to get the Horn of Valere." Duh duh duh duh duh. So. That's kind of the conversation there.

Emily: Like, "Oh, darn, we're the heroes, and we have to head straight into the fire as per usual."

Sally: Yeah. Yeah. Which is kind of basically the gist there. And there's also a hilarious moment where it's raining and (laugh) Rand turns to Verin and he's like, "Can't you make this stop?" And she's like, "Eh, maybe," and Mat's like, "Then WHY DON'T YOU?" (laugh)

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Um.

Emily: Oh, Mat.

Sally: And of course she's like, "I can't channel that much 'cause everyone will know," and he's like, "But I'm so wet."

Emily: "But I'm wet."

Sally: "I hate being mildly inconvenienced."

Emily: "It's sad." Oh God, Mat.

Sally: I know.

Emily: You beautiful, beautiful soul.

Sally: And I, like, think that's all that happens?

Emily: Eh, sounds right.

Sally: Eh. This is sort of our, like, calm before Rand's storm.

Emily: Yeah, before the boys enter Falme and, um, you know, there's some more with the girls -- isn't next week, I think we talk more about Egwene being in captivity?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And stuff like that.

Sally: Yeah. Which, I will have much more to say about that.

Emily: Yeah, no, I'm sure. It's --

Sally: I think.

Emily: It's just such a disturbing chapter.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Partly because it is written, I think, as an episode in a fantasy adventure.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Which, it's hard to, uh -- it's hard to get away with using slavery as an episode in an adventure.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Many people do it -- I'm not saying they don't. See literally every fantasy series in the world, pretty much --

Sally: Yeah. Yeah.

Emily: At some point, someone will be enslaved.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But it's just, like -- it's really bad.

Sally: No, it's really terrible. Um. For obvious reasons. Like, slavery isn't a joke. And it -- it's not an episode, it's not a plot point. Like, it's something that I think -- especially what happens with Egwene, I think just deserves a lot more attention than it gets. (sigh)

Emily: Yeah, it's this weird thing where, like, you don't want to spend a lot of time reading about trauma --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Because at a certain point it begins to feel like trauma porn.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But you also -- there's, like -- there -- you have to do it justice. You have to talk about it.

Sally: Yeah. And I -- again, we will probably get deep into the waters in this next week -- but, like, Robert Jordan does something really interesting where, like, you don't spend a lot of time with Eg -- like, in Egwene's head while she's leashed.

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Like, you sort of get this moment when it happens and then, like, you get her a little bit, and then it's like you get her after -- after it's, like, done.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um. Which is, like -- I'll look up the actual theorist -- but that's like a big thing --

Emily: Yeah, that's trauma.

Sally: In trauma theory, where, like, you do not actually live the traumatic moment. Um. Which we've talked about before. But. Um. What is upsetting, then, is, like, I don't have any problem with that, and I don't want to see more of Egwene being leashed, 'cause, like -- yeah, I don't want it to become this, like, pornographic thing.

Emily: Especially because -- as we've already talked about, with this particular situation, it has such high chances of becoming sexualized, especially if you --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Bring the male gaze into it.

Sally: Yes. Which is inherent.

Emily: Yes.

Sally: Um. This is a total sidebar, but I -- in one of my classes in college -- it was a children's literature class, actually --

Emily: Hmm.

Sally: Which was really random -- we were talking about Sleeping Beauty and, like, the way that she is often painted invites you, no matter what your gender is, to, like, inhabit the male gaze --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: In that painting. And I think that happens a lot in fantasy as well.

EMily: Yeah.

Sally: And in any writing. Like, when a man is writing, you are -- like, even if it's a female point of view, even if there's no men involved -- like, you're just sort of asked to inhabit the male gaze.

Emily: Yeah, that's interesting.

Sally: Anyway.

Emily: I'd like to think more about that.

Sally: Yeah. So, anyways. Food for thought. But, um. What just kind of bothers me -- and, like, again, I have not finished the series, I have not really gotten into the, like, Seanchan half of Wheel of Time, I guess --

Emily: You're about to get there, my dude.

Sally: When the Seanchan -- I know, I'm not very excited about it.

Emily: Sorry.

Sally: Um, when the Seanchan become more involved. But, like -- so maybe my this will sort of -- my issues will sort of resolve itself. But it is, like, pretty upsetting that this episode is dropped in really early and, like, we're expected to buy that Egwene is in a large part motivated by the fact that, like, she doesn't want to feel that powerless again.

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Which is sort of an annoying arc to give a young woman anyway.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Why is it always stripping young women of agency? Why do we always have to do that?

Emily: Especially because women lack agency to begin with.

Sally: (whisper) Already.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: What the fuck is your problem? Um. But I just don't understand why it isn't a larger thread. Like, Robert Jordan, as we've talked about, tends -- tends to sort of, like, pick up and drop trauma as it is convenient.

Emily: Yeah, he just -- whenever it makes sense. Whenever he has an opportunity to bring it back. Otherwise.

Sally: Otherwise it just sort of, like, floats away? And, like, to an extent, that's kind of interesting because he's like -- then, in a way, the characters are not defined by their traumatic moments. But also, like, it doesn't necessarily have to be like Egwene constantly thinking about it, but, like, there are ways that that would -- like, impact her behavior --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: That I don't seem to see very much of. So, again, like Emily said, it just reads like a fantasy episode, and I don't like that.

Emily: I'm reading a book right now, uh, by Robin McKinley, my -- one of my all-time favorite authors - which is all about a young woman's very terrible trauma, and it's, uh, disturbing to think about and to read because it's about, um, her being a princess and her father, the king, raping her.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: Uh. And it's based on a fairy tale, et cetera, et cetera. But I was -- as always, with Robin McKinley -- I've been very, um, pleased by how it's handled and how the trauma is handled and how it's, uh -- the scene itself, the rape, is not depicted graphically --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um. Which is always good. And also, it's -- it's more about the, um, like the trauma itself is almost more in the lead-up to it, because you have --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: There's such a sense of dread ---

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: In the pages, because you know it's coming. Like, even if you don't know -- because she, the protagonist, like, has this moment where she -- she hardly ever, like, speaks to her parents, but then her mother dies, and she goes and sees her father, and she just, like, instantly is like, "Something's wrong."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And, like, "Something terrible will happen."

Sally: Mmm.

Emily: Um. Anyway, and then the rest of the book, which -- the very large, uh, majority of the book -- is about the aftermath and the recovery of it.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Which is good, but it's all -- it's just very -- if you would like to read a book that I think does trauma justice, then I think that's a good book. It's called "Deerskin." I'm only halfway through it, but I think it will be really nice.

Sally: Well, it's Robin McKinley, of course it will be nice.

Emily: Yeah. It's lovely.

Sally: And -- yeah, I think that sort of hits the nail on the head. Where, with a lot of instances of a trauma or a traumatic thing happening to a character, it's like all the emphasis is put on that scene --

Emily: The trauma.

Sally: The trauma. To, like, make it dramatic -- even this chapter is, like, I think veers a little bit close to that, like --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Talking about in, like, visceral detail what Egwene is feeling when, like, she's being hurt through the leash.

Emily: Yeah, of course.

Sally: And so, like, a lot of it leans into that and it becomes that sort of, like, trauma porn aspect where it's, like, that is the focus of the arc, like, the actual scene and not the recovery.

Emily: The before and after.

Sally: Not the before and after. Like, not what it actually means to, like, live in a traumatized narrative.

Emily: Yeah. Yeah.

Sally: (sigh)

Emily: Well, we'll talk far more about that, uh, next week, and I will have actually read the chapters, but you did a great job summarizing.

Sally: Thank you! There's a lot that they talk about in the second chapter --

Emily: But it's like --

Sally: That I just don't remember, so.

Emily: It's, like, fine. It doesn't matter.

Sally: Thanks, guys.

Emily: We should maybe have you do it all the time, because if you don't remember, that's usually a sign that it isn't actually important. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) No. That's not true at all! Because then you miss large details like, um, everything.

Emily: Oh my God.

Sally: But yeah. That's what happens. It's like a boring Rand point of view. He's, like, moody. Oh, and he, like, sees Ba'alzamon again at the end.

Emily: Oh, yeah.

Sally: And he, like, almost burns himself out cause he's drawing so much of the Power, and Ba'alzamon's like, "Maybe chill." Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Um. (laugh)

Emily: When I came in, carrying an obscene amount of stuff from Target because I'm ridiculous and I just got a bunch of gift cards --

Sally: It was really funny. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Um. Sally was cracking up at some shit Ba'alzamon had said.

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. He's like -- Rand's like, "I'm not Lews Therin," and Ba'alzamon's like, "Listen, I would know you down to your miserable soul, Lews Therin." And I was like --

Emily: (laugh) "You fucking emo psycho --"

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. It was really hilarious. Um.

Emily: God, I love that.

Sally: Honestly, all of the Forsaken are sort of, just, so funny.

Emily: I know. (laugh) They're really funny.

Sally: The only one I can't stand reading is Ishamael.

Emily: (sigh)

Sally: Speaking of hard power.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: I hate him. (laugh) But, like, Ba'alzamon cracks me up, Asmodean --Emily: Ba'alzamon is Ishamael. Sally: Cracks me up -- oh, that's right. I meant Sammael. Sammael. Whatever. Emily: Ohhh, Sammael. OK, yeah. Sally: Sorry. Sorry sorry. They just sound so much alike. Emily: No, yeah, they're all the same. The only one I can't stand is Lanfear --Sally: Oh, yeah. Emily: 'Cause I'm just like, "Ugh. Boring." Sally: That's fair too. I forget about Lanfear because Moiraine kicked her ass. Emily: And I have a hard time with Graendal too, who you haven't met --Sally: Oh, yeah. Emily: But I'm just like --Sally: No, I've met Graendal. Emily: Oh, yeah, you have. I'm just like, "Blegh." Sally: What a boring male fantasy. Emily: What a stupid -- yeah, masculine portrayal of women's evil. Blegh. Sally: Yeah. All the art I see of her makes me want to fucking blow my brains out --Emily: Yeah. Sally: Because it's all just, like, nipples first. Emily: It's all like, "Hello, look, she wears sheer things." Sally: Yeah. Emily: "So therefore you will be able to see her nipples," and I'm like, "Fine? Why do we have to -- why is that --" Sally: Nipples. Emily: "Why do we have to make a big deal out of it? You know?"

Sally: They're just nipples. Literally everyone has them. (whisper) Literally.

Emily: OK. OK.

Sally: That's the end of that shit.

Emily: This is the end of the -- episode. (laugh)

Sally: The end of the -- book.

Emily: What? Fuck.

Sally: The Great Hunt is over.

Emily: Almost. God, I --

Sally: I know. And then we can talk about the Dragon Reborn.

Emily: Auuuggh, the best book ever.

Sally: Auuughhh! I love the Dragon Reborn.

Emily: Fuck. Hey, our cat has been quiet this entire episode. It's like he knows. Or maybe when we do it on the couch, he --

Sally: Oh, yeah. We're also sitting on the couch --

Emily: Yeah. Hence the weird energy.

Sally: I don't know if we mentioned that. Um.

Emily: Thanks for bearing with us during this weird episode.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um.

Sally: Oh, I keep forgetting to say --

Emily: Fuck.

Sally: This because it is impossible for me to fathom that anyone would want it, but, um, our last iteration of our other podcast, on our Patreon, We Don't Watch Outlander, we talked about City of Bones? And, like, regularly we've, like, given away the book we've talked about on We Don't Watch Outlander 'cause we're, like, going through our library, so if anyone wants our copy of City of Bones that our cat has chewed on, um, just -- same rules as always, take a picture of yourself using public transit, use the comment, the hashtag #TheDragonLovesPublicTransit, and tag us in it on Twitter, Instagram, or Tumblr, and you might just win your own copy of a chewed-up City of Bones.

Emily: It literally -- all the corners of the cover are chewed. It's really funny.

Sally: It's really hilarious. And maybe, just maybe, we'll copy edit it a little for you.

Emily: Oh my God. No, that's too much for me.

Sally: We'll do, like, one chapter.

Emily: I can't --

Sally: I'll do one chapter. Except I don't know how to copy edit, so.

Emily: Maybe we can just do one chapter.

Sally: Anyway, it's chewed up. But again, I don't fathom that anyone would want that, but if you do, the option is on the table. Um. (laugh)

Emily: OK. Um. Any other housekeeping? Nope?

Sally: I don't think so.

Emily: The usual. Rate, review, subscribe. That helps us out a lot, if you wanna give us a Christmas present?

Sally: Mm.

Emily: I guess?

Sally: Yes. You know you do.

Emily: Um. Happy holid -- Happy New Year. When this comes out, it will be --

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: New Year's Eve?

Sally: Yeah. It will be New Year's Eve. December 31st.

Emily: It'll be New Year's Eve. Yeah, um. Enjoy that. I'll be working.

Sally: Mmm. I might also be working.

Emily: Yeah. Not that I care, really. New Year's Eve I'm not a big proponent of.

Sally: I just love not working.

Emily: Yeah. It's nice. It is nice. OK. Um. Sign us off?

Sally: Um, today -- there's a cafe at the Aviary, and I usually don't go there very often because the food's not great --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: But today I didn't have lunch. I, like, roll over there; it's like snowing and fucking freezing in Salt Lake today --

Emily: Ugh.

Sally: So I, like, trudge over there, soggy and annoyed, and, like, I am -- like, roll up -- and, like, the cafe people are just having, like, the most graphic conversation about their co-workers' sex lives?

Emily: What the fuck?

Sally: Yeah, like, one of the girls was like, "Yeah, I was hanging out with these other two girls that work at the Aviary," and she was like, "And, like, I just realized how vanilla I was, 'cause these girls were talking about, like, threesomes and orgies and sex parties that they went to and, like, saying all this stuff," and I had to, like, ding the bell and be like, "I want my food, but also I want you to know that I am here so that you don't just think that you're, like, having this conversation and nobody's listening?"

Emily: So while we're talking about orgies, could I please get a sandwich?

Sally: Yeah, no, literally! And I was like, I feel like the biggest just, like, douchebag right now.

Emily: (mimicking the iconic vine) Can I get a waffle? Can I please get a waffle?

Sally: (laugh) The biggest tool. Anyway, it was just -- I was like, "Bing! Hello?" (laugh)

Emily: Oh my God.

Sally: I dunno why this always happens to me. Why do I always hear people talking about fucking?

Emily: (wheeze)