



Episode 79 – “**Post-Apocalyptic Knitwear**”

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SALLY: Everybody Hates Rand is a *Wheel of Time* podcast that will contain spoilers for all fourteen books, so if you’re anti-spoiler pause this, read all fourteen books, and come back. We’ll be here. Waiting.

EMILY: Our title is a joke and is meant to be taken as such. In the context of this podcast, “everybody” refers to us and our cat. You are free to feel however you want about Rand, who is a fictional character. Don’t DM us.

[Theme song by Glynn Mackenzie plays]

EMILY: Have you heard that – ? What’s going on on Twitter? Okay, obvi – Okay. There’s so many things for us to address.

SALLY: That is true!

EMILY: Um, but have you heard that thing on Twitter that is, like, the LA Times or someone published an article about how celebrities are getting into podcasting [collar jangling, soft meow] and it’s ruining podcasting or something like that?

SALLY: No.

EMILY: I didn’t read the article; I’ve just been seeing all the podcasters I follow on Twitter respond to it.

SALLY: Saying they are?

EMILY: Um, what? That celebrities are ruining podcasts?

SALLY: Yeah. Or that they aren't ruining podcasts. What are the podcasters saying?

EMILY: I don't know. Here's what I want to say, though. If Sir Ian McKellen, or whoever, wants to bite the bullet and, um, take over talking about *Wheel of Time*, then I, like Thanos, will retire to a planet distant from here. My work done.

SALLY: Bitch, I won't!

EMILY: [laughing] Okay.

SALLY: [laughs] Ian McKellen cannot come for the space I have carved out for myself in the podcasting community.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: I fight tooth and nail every day to produce relevant media for the people [collar jangling in the background] and Sir Ian McKellen cannot come in, on his years of Shakespearean Theater and say that I am irrelevant. I will not accept nor allow it.

EMILY: I think I knew that this was where this conversation [laughing] would go. I don't think Sir Ian McKellen cares about *Wheel of Time*, which is the good news.

SALLY: Well.

EMILY: But if he did I kind of would want to hear what he has to say about it.

SALLY: I'd wanna hear what he wants to say, but I would not *retire*.

EMILY: I just –

SALLY: You can't break EHR. We're going all 14 books. If you leave that's fine. I'll get a new co-host. Put Tybalt in front of the microphone.

EMILY: [laughing] Ian McKellen could be your new co-host.

SALLY: No, one of us – *I'm* the whimsical one. I can't give that up.

EMILY: Oh, you think Ian McKellen would be the whimsical one?

SALLY: You don't think he would?

EMILY: I don't know. It's... *Wheel of Time*. Who's to say what he has to say about it? Would he be whimsical? Or would he be, like, really serious and bring some hardcore analysis? What are the other things we have to talk about? Oh. Yeah [laughing] Spider-Man is dying or something.

SALLY: That's what you lead with? Not the *Wheel of Time* casting? [Tybalt meows in the background]. Tybalt!

EMILY: I was kind of moving in order of relevancy today.

SALLY: Oh my god! He meowed at 7:38. I am a fucking oracle.

EMILY: Jesus Christ. The Oracle of Delphi is here.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: High, and ready to party. We predicted our cat –

SALLY: I am pretty high on life today. I'm just in a good mood.

EMILY: That's good.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: As we've discovered, one of us has to be manic at all times.

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: Or this podcast doesn't work. Come here ya little –

SALLY: Goodbye, Tybalt!

EMILY: Come here ya little buddy. Let's just sit for a minute.

SALLY: Oh! Oh! He punched Emily in the chin.

EMILY: He always does this.

SALLY: Hi!

EMILY: What if you just chilled?

SALLY: Oh, we're supposed to share our studio today or something. Because it's part of a Patreon thing.

EMILY: What?!

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: What?!

SALLY: It's part of a Patreon thing! I'm gonna take a picture of – put Tybalt up to the microphone. It'll be funny.

EMILY: No, it won't.

SALLY: Yes, it will! [laughing] Ha! This is the best picture of all time! What are you talking?

EMILY: Show me.

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: [laughs] You mean this is the best picture.

SALLY: [laughing] That's true. That's a very good one.

EMILY: If you don't put that on Instagram this moment [laughs].

SALLY: [gasping for air]

EMILY: Sally's broken me and now I want to be on Instagram [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Okay! You're scratching on me [talking as she walks away].

SALLY: [laughing] Oh my god.

EMILY: I don't want to post our studio. Because we don't have a studio.

SALLY: I know that's –

EMILY: We're literally – we literally have the most ratchet space of all time.

SALLY: Support us on Patreon.

EMILY: Oh my god. It's just our kitchen. It's not cool at all. We don't have microphones that come down next to our mouths! Ya know? So we can sit on the couch, or whatever.

SALLY: We do that sometimes anyway.

EMILY: We do that sometimes with – but it's for our secondary podcast, We Don't Watch Outlander. And Tom Holland Interludes. Um, and there is a severe decrease in audio quality.

SALLY: That is true. But there is an *increase* in sexual chaos.

EMILY: That's...also pretty true, yeah.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Okay, I guess we do have to talk about the *Wheel of* – oh, wait. No, no, no. First, because it's six minutes in and we cannot do another 10-minute cold open [laughs]. This is Everybody Hates Rand, your friendly neighborhood *Wheel of Time* podcast. We are...Emily? Juchau.

SALLY: We are Emily Juchau.

EMILY: And Sally Goodger! Is what I was –

SALLY: No, we are Emily Juchau [laughs].

EMILY: No! Emily Juchau is not a collective!

SALLY: Today I used the phrase 'drift compatible,' and then I had to explain to everyone in the meeting what drift compatible meant, and it was [laughs] very embarrassing.

EMILY: First of all, this is the karma that you have gotten for not like –

SALLY: Hating *Pacific Rim*.

EMILY: Hating *Pacific Rim*!

SALLY: A bad movie?

EMILY: [sadly] It's not a bad movie.

SALLY: It's not a *bad* movie. It's a movie that did not appeal to my aesthetic sensibilities, but I do really like the term 'drift compatible' and, like...the way you think about that, which is why I used it. [sighs] Then had to explain what a huge fucking nerd I am.

EMILY: It's interesting you should say aesthetic sensibilities because what appeals to me about *Pacific Rim* is the aesthetic sensibilities. For example, everyone is wearing post-apocalyptic knitwear.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: It's very nice.

SALLY: That's very big for you, I know.

EMILY: Yeah. I do love that. It's either post-apocalyptic knitwear, or post-apocalyptic leather. Per *Mad Max: Fury Road*. Either way, I like a post-apocalyptic wasteland, ya know?

SALLY: I know you do.

EMILY: Yep.

SALLY: Sorry I had to tweet that – those pictures of Tybalt in our studio. Because we're participating in hashtags? I think that's how we'll remain above Ian McKellen in the podcasting game.

EMILY: Yeah. He doesn't know *shit* about [laughing] hashtags.

SALLY: Okay, what were we talking about? Oh. Post-apocalyptic knitwear.

EMILY: No, now we're talking about the *Wheel of Time* casting.

SALLY: Oh! Okay.

EMILY: Which is –

SALLY: I think they would look good in post-apocalyptic knitwear.

EMILY: I think they would look good in anything, because they're a bunch of hotties.

SALLY: That's true.

EMILY: Like what the hell?

SALLY: I want Perrin to punch me in the face.

EMILY: I was reading this [voice cracks] – oh, god. My voice is cracking. Anyway, yeah. I was reading the chapters for this week's discussion, and I was like, "God, Perrin's so annoying, but he's going to be away with all of that now that he's being played by the hottest man alive" [laughs].

SALLY: It's true. I – I – forgot about the casting, because I committed a mortal sin, and was reading it and was like, "Perrin's annoying." And now I have so many feelings of affection for him because you're right. The actor is so hot.

EMILY: It's really unfortunate.

SALLY: Like, listen. He's *six-five*. Did you guys know that?

EMILY: Yeah, we did some research. He's six foot five, which is going to lead to some *Lord of the Rings* shenanigans if they want to make Rand look taller than him.

SALLY: That's true. They're gonna put Rand in high heels.

EMILY: Tall as Rand is. Isn't he like six-one, or something? We looked it up, but I can't – he was over six feet tall.

SALLY: Yeah, he was over six feet.

EMILY: And then, god bless Mat is over here at five-ten or whatever. Which makes sense.

SALLY: Average boy height.

EMILY: Yeah. And all the ladies are also super tall, which I think will –

SALLY: Like five-eight or something.

EMILY: Five-eight? Yeah, it's really buck wild.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: How tall is Rosamund Pike?

SALLY: I don't know!

EMILY: This is the content we're bringing to you. Emily Google's people's heights.

SALLY: [pops tongue]

EMILY: Rosa-mund. Pike.

SALLY: [pops tongue] Was that a good tongue pop?

EMILY: Height.

SALLY: Gay community let me know. I don't know the difference – I don't know if I can actually pop my tongue or if I just click my tongue.

EMILY: Homegirl is five-nine. What the hell?

SALLY: [pops tongue]

EMILY: Good for her.

SALLY: [pops tongue]

EMILY: I love a tall bitch.

SALLY: That one was bad. I do love a tall bitch. I love tall people. Did you guys know this?

EMILY: Yeah, Sally's really horny for tall people.

SALLY: [whispers] I love tall people.

EMILY: I'm really horny for short people. It's [laughing] what makes us drift compatible.

SALLY: I just – I love tall people. And their just...beautiful, giant bodies.

EMILY: Yeah. Good for them.

SALLY: I know. It must be so nice.

EMILY: I don't know.

SALLY: To have arms that can do actual reaching. Reach around me and my broken heart, ya know?

EMILY: Oh, that got really – that reached a level of existential despair that I wasn't expecting.

SALLY: Hmm.

EMILY: This early on.

SALLY: Anyway, Perrin is *super* hot. It was really offensive. I've actually like – I saw the casting for Rand and I was like, "Oh, this makes sense, you know?"

EMILY: He's just your average Scandinavian looking motherfucking. White boy.

SALLY: [laughs] Okay. Cami described him as emo boy hot and I was like, "yeah."

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: That tracks.

EMILY: Cambria really knows how to describe men. It's one of her talents, I've noticed.

SALLY: We should get her on the podcast again, because she's a delight. And just have her describe men.

EMILY: I know. We definitely should. How do you visualize each and every man in. Anyway. Yeah, that's a good point. Like, he is emo boy hot.

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: You could really picture him listening to Linkin Park.

SALLY: Yeah, and just like, like we just read the scene where Perrin walks in and he's just sitting on the bed, covered in blood, like, "AH!" And Perrin's like, "What the fuck?" And –

EMILY: He's literally *covered* in blood, like, post-Carrie's prom covered in blood.

SALLY: Yeah. And Perrin is like, "BOY."

[both laugh]

EMILY: Perrin is like, "Jesus fucking Christ."

SALLY: So, like, Rand makes sense and I was like, "Yeah, this is great," or whatever, but I hadn't really had any feelings of anything towards the *Wheel of Time* show.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And then I saw Perrin, and it was like....my brain exploded. I got *so excited*.

EMILY: It was like a fire lit inside my chest or possibly my pussy [laughs]/

SALLY: It's impossible to say which, but I was like, "Oh my god!"

EMILY: Yeah, he's just real good looking.

SALLY: And I was really excited that Perrin was cast as a person of color.

EMILY: Yeah, I think we've talked about that before. The complications of casting a person of color in a, uh, storyline that deals a lot with, um, man versus animal.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: And especially, like, when you put the narratives of Black men in our society of them being quote unquote "animalistic" and "bestial," and that narrative that white people have been trying to force feed all of us for a long time. And then you cast Perrin as a Black man, then that, um, that. I don't know. That can lead to some complications, so, obviously I'm hoping they're very sensitive about it. And, but I don't know. I'm just really delighted that there's people of color in the main cast.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And I don't know.

SALLY: I hadn't even thought about that. That's a really valid point. Um.

EMILY: But I think that – I think that having him be a person of color will bring more nuance to what is a very *un*-nuanced plotline otherwise.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: As we've talked about, Perrin has literally the most boring shit of all time to deal with. But now you have Perrin who just optically is a much more interesting character. And it's just really cool to think about him – I don't know.

SALLY: Being that hot.

EMILY: *Being that hot* on the screen.

SALLY: It's a crime. Imagine him like –

EMILY: I hope Faile's really hot, too.

SALLY: Oh my god, I hope she's literally, like, the hottest.

EMILY: I know.

SALLY: Now I'm just pissed because I want to know who they're casting as everybody. Like, where's Rhuarc? Excuse you.

EMILY: I know, but they're gonna cast these motherfuckers –

SALLY: Oh my god, Emily. I *know*.

EMILY: I know. I'm just, like, I wanna know too. And I'm really frustrated that they're not gonna be casting, I don't know, Aviendha for eight years.

SALLY: Eighteen years. I know it's actually –

EMILY: And Gaul? Come on, Gaul! What are we talking about?

SALLY: Listen, if they don't actively cast someone who's six-nine, I will riot.

EMILY: Yeah, that's so true.

SALLY: Anyway, Perrin is really hot. Rand is good emo-boy hot. Nynaeve is beautiful and powerful.

EMILY: Nynaeve's beautiful, and she was, in fact, a Power Ranger. That's one of her IMDb credits, and one of the first things Devin said to me. When the *Wheel of Time* casting was coming out, I was having three simultaneous conversations. One with Sally, one with my coworker Ashley, god bless her soul for going along with my *mania* in that moment, and one with Devin, friend of the podcast...slash my best friend Devin. Who [laughs].

SALLY: A good boy.

EMILY: A good boy. Who genuinely this entire time has been like, "What do you think of all the *Wheel of Time* casting?" Because he doesn't read *Wheel of Time*, he doesn't know shit about *Wheel of Time*, but he's supportive [laughs].

SALLY: He's a good boy!

EMILY: And he also, I think, will really get into the *Wheel of Time* show. So when Rosamund Pike was cast he was like, "How do you feel?" and I was like, "I literally don't care." And he was like, "How do you feel about this?" And I was like, "I CARE SO MUCH."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: And he was like, "Yeah, it's really cool. I wish that Rand was a person of color, too," and I was like, [laughs], "No, actually he's the only one who's canonically white. Because he's descended from the crazy Irish Russian people." And he was like, "Irish? ... Russian?"

SALLY: [snorts] And I was – and you were like, "Yes."

EMILY: Yeah, it just sort of became a series of, you know, random [laughs] letters.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: After that. I was like, "I can't explain it, but that's what happened. You have to read *Dune* to really get it. To really see Robert Jordan's plagiarism." Anyway, Nynaeve is beautiful as hell. I'm so happy her hair is in braids. I hope that is a thing that they do.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Rather than styling her hair to be in one braid, that they just have her be in braids.

SALLY: Or they could do braid-ception. Have her be in braids and then they're braided.

EMILY: Ooh! That would be super fucking cool!

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: God, I just love her.

SALLY: Um, I also experienced a period of deep mania that I had to project onto my coworker Gethin.

EMILY: Yeah, god bless Gethin.

SALLY: Not friend of the podcast, but friend of my heart.

EMILY: I feel like Gethin is a friend of the podcast?

SALLY: Yes. I mean, he's a friend of me, who [laughing] hosts the podcast, whether or not he listens.

EMILY: That's all it takes, really [laughs].

SALLY: He's an absolute treasure. And I, like, maintain a pretty cool cat façade at work.

EMILY: Yeah, you do.

SALLY: Because I have to, like, keep it mellow, otherwise I'll probably get fired [laughs]. But I, like, rolled in – Gethin's boss was out that week, and he was the only gift shop, and I was like, "I have to yell at you about something."

EMILY: Where was Jeff?

SALLY: He was on vacation.

EMILY: Good for Jeff.

SALLY: And I, like, lost my mind. And he, god bless him, was like, "I don't really know what to do with this energy that she is bringing to the table right now, but I am going to support it and look at her podcast Instagram while she explains to me who these hot people are." [laughing] And it was really so cute.

EMILY: [laughs] Oh man.

SALLY: Yeah, and I seriously, like, my heart was beating out of my chest. I had to go take a lap around the Aviary, because I – otherwise I was gonna punch a wall I was so excited.

EMILY: I know. I had to take a walk. I was like, "Okay. This is very good."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: It's just, like, what you'll hear from us in the coming months is that we had absolutely no faith in the *Wheel of Time* adaptation. And this suddenly skyrocketed our faith in the *Wheel of Time* adaptation.

SALLY: Yeah, which also makes me nervous. Like, am I flying too high?

EMILY: I still think it has the potential to really suck. When I was talking to Devin I was like, “This makes me really excited.” And he was like, “Are you excited because they’re all hot? Because you could just watch the CW and have that need satisfied.” And I was like, “No, I’m really excited because these characters didn’t, according to the books, have to be people of color, and the fact that they went in this direction means that they are A) giving a big Fuck You to the conservative contingent of *Wheel of Time* fans who are really distraught over this for some god forsaken reason.

SALLY: Yeah, cry bitch.

EMILY: Yeah. Die angry, I guess. Um, but also it’s just, like, I don’t know. They’re doing really cool things. That means – it means that there’s some hope.

SALLY: Yeah, I almost cried when I saw Mat’s casting, because I was like, “Look at this perfectly weird looking white boy.”

EMILY: That’s – yeah, that’s exactly what I wanted from Mat’s casting. Was a weird looking white boy.

SALLY: How did they do it so good? [laughs]

EMILY: [laughs] Not specifically. I would have been happy if Mat had been cast as any race.

SALLY: Oh, of course.

EMILY: He’s weird looking and beautiful, and that’s what really matters.

SALLY: Right, any race he just needed to be that specific brand of weird looking hot boy.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Where it’s just like, “Huh you’ve got an interesting face that I wanna kiss?”

EMILY: I’m like did they pose for their – are these their headshots that they auditioned with?

SALLY: [snorts]

EMILY: Or did they, like, casting director be like, “Okay, Barney or whatever your name is.”

SALLY: [high=pitched] His name is Barney! And I love it!

EMILY: His name’s Barney. “You need to sit down [laughs], and do like a mischievous twinkle at the camera, so that we can really get people to embody – to understand you embody this character.” Or was he just like that? [laughs]

SALLY: I don't know. Either way.

EMILY: Because homeboy does have a mischievous twinkle. Good for him.

SALLY: And then, last but not least, they dropped Egg...

EMILY: [snorts]

SALLY: And I died [laughs].

EMILY: Certainly not least. Egg is the most beautiful woman on the planet.

SALLY: I know.

EMILY: Finally.

SALLY: And her headshot is so powerful. She's like, "You wanna fuck with me? You better not."

EMILY: She's just powerful. She has a lot of power which she is bringing. Which is what matters, because she's literally one of the most powerful women in the entire world.

SALLY: In the history of the entire world.

EMILY: Yeah. In fantasy, certainly.

SALLY: Yeah, she's just a tiny beautiful Egg.

EMILY: Egg!

SALLY: EGG. I literally tweeted that. [laughing] I was like, "Drop Egg's headshot before I die." So, I hope she didn't see that. That we call her character Egg.

EMILY: I hope she did.

SALLY: [snorts]

EMILY: I think she'd like it.

SALLY: She'd be like, "Rad."

EMILY: [laughing] "Rad." Well, I mean it would totally depend on – I'm sure they'll.

SALLY: I'm sure they'll call her Egg-wayne.

EMILY: I know.

SALLY: Which is fine.

EMILY: I have to deal with that. I have to come to terms with that.

SALLY: Egg-wayne won't bother me so much, because people have said it enough. Like, I've heard it enough.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: But I think some of the other ones will. Like, if they – I'm sure they will call Faile "Fah-eel."

EMILY: Oh, yeah.

SALLY: Which will – that one will really mess with me.

EMILY: That'll fuck me up.

SALLY: For some reason.

EMILY: Thank god for characters like Mat, Perrin, and Rand, [laughs] who have indisputable – impossible to mispronounce names.

SALLY: Yeah, and, like, they'll probably do *Moi-raine* [pronounced like the French *moi*]. Not Moiraine.

EMILY: Fuck. I cannot handle the French pronunciation.

SALLY: Which I know you hate.

EMILY: Of *Moi-raine*.

SALLY: What else. Maybe they'll do Talmanes like Tal-mane, which will make him very Fronch.

EMILY: Tal-mah.

SALLY: Tal-mah

EMILY: Tal-mah. Hon.

SALLY: Hon hon.

[both laugh]

EMILY: [in a bad French accent] Hon hon hon! I want a baguette.

SALLY: [laughs loudly]

EMILY: [laughing] Was that racist towards French people. I'm sorry.

SALLY: [snorts, laughs] Anyway, I'm super excited. I want them to drop more characters immediately before I die.

EMILY: Yeah, I was a little surprised that they didn't drop Lan. Maybe they –

SALLY: Me too. Maybe they're holding out to be like, "Surprise, bitches. It is Keanu Reeves." [laughs]

EMILY: It is Keanu Reeves!

SALLY: And then I would fly to Prague immediately and be like, "I won't even need to be paid just give me a job and I'll do it. "

EMILY: I will provide donuts to these people. I don't fucking care. If Keanu Reeves is there, I *would* be there.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: In an instant.

SALLY: Could you imagine if – I bet Keanu Reeves would have to get so fucking swole for that role, too.

EMILY: Keanu Reeves would single-handedly save Lan's character.

SALLY: That is true.

EMILY: I know everyone's big on Lan, whatever. Well, less so now. But all the Robert Jordan faithfuls are like, "Yeah, I want to suck Lan's dick because Robert Jordan wanted to suck Lan's dick." And I'm like, "No...unless it was Keanu Reeves."

SALLY: Yeah then I'd be like, "Yeah, put me in the line."

EMILY: Catch me on my knees.

SALLY: Yeah, exactly.

EMILY: [laughing] Ready.

SALLY: I would –

EMILY: God, I hope my mom never listens to this podcast.

SALLY: Eh, she won't.

EMILY: Yeah [panicked laughter]. Anyway, so we're very happy.

SALLY: Yes. Delighted! High on life! Everything is excellent and good.

EMILY: Good! Now we have to talk about lit-erary stuff. Literary stuff.

SALLY: We have degrees in that! Between the two of us we have eight years of literary training. We should be able to say something interesting.

EMILY: Eight years of literary training. Woof. That's tough to think about. That's really tough to process.

SALLY: Yeah, today Gethin – friend of the podcast and infamous EHR guest star [laughs].

EMILY: Yes.

SALLY: And I were talking, because he went and tabled at the university that I went to, because I was like, "I refuse to do this. I don't want to be at the university where people that I know will come and speak to me."

EMILY: Woof.

SALLY: And he was like, "Why don't you want to go?" And I said that exact answer.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: And he was like, "But wouldn't it be fun?" And I was like, "No. The last time I ran into someone from college she was – she was at my place of work and she was like, "Oh my god what are you doing here?" and I was like "Well, I work here." And she was like, 'Oh.'" So.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Pretty much fuck everyone I went to college with, except for the three people I remain in contact with.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Four? Four people.

SALLY: So anyway, eight years of literary training.

EMILY: Eight years of literary training have led us to this: Perrin wandering into Rand's room and being like, "That boy's covered in blood. [laughs] What the hell?"

SALLY: [singing] Got my red dress on tonight. Dancing in the dark [laughing] in the pale moonlight.

EMILY: All I can visualize is the chicken vine [laughs].

SALLY: [squeaking] I know! It's my favorite vine. [laughing] It's a chicken. In a tiny –

EMILY: One time –

SALLY: [laughing throughout] Someone had to make that dress for that chicken. Like, can you imagine? Ah, I'm so sorry. But could you imagine measuring the chicken? Okay. I'm back.

EMILY: I don't think you are.

SALLY: [laughs] I'm present.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: [laughs] Okay. No, first Rand – or Perrin and Faile have to have, like, the most heterosexual encounter of all time.

EMILY: Yeah. These are the chapters immediately post, or after I guess – like literally immediately after what just went down in the last chapter. Uh, Perrin and Faile are beelining it for Rand's room so they can confront him. Because they still think that he caused, uh, what happened with Perrin's axe, and yeah, they have a whole thing where they run into some high lords of Tear and one of them kind of does a creepy look at Faile. And so Perrin's like, "BEH. Leave the lady's honor." Or whatever. And Faile's like, "I could have handled that. Like, can you chill out?" Perrin's like, "No!" And Faile's like, "Okay, fine. I find that kind of sexy." And it's, like, stop feeding the narrative that women actually like it when men are jealous. That's not true. Have you watched – are you a *Veronica Mars* fan?

SALLY: Yes.

EMILY: Have you watched the new season?

SALLY: I have not.

EMILY: Okay. Well, there's some real progress on the Logan Echolls front. I've always despised him.

SALLY: Yeah, me too.

EMILY: As a love interest character, but he really won my heart in this season, because he's suddenly grown into a character who, like, advocates for therapy and really wants – like, has locked down his anger and jealous issues. And is like, "I handle things like a mature adult now."

SALLY: Good for you, Logan.

EMILY: And I was like, "Damn, Logan. You really brought it back around."

SALLY: More arcs about people experiencing emotional growth. Especially men.

EMILY: Yeah. Logan definitely did. Anyway, watch *Veronica Mars*. I love it.

SALLY: But yeah, like, Faile, in particular, and Perrin have, like, the worst relationship with jealousy of all time. Where it's, like, in their relationship in particular it is, like, taken as a token of affection with, like, the whole Berelain narrative.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: Which is, like, god so many layers that we will peel back at some point I am sure.

EMILY: Yeah, well this is their first encounter with Berelain. Of course, it happens kind of as a couple.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And the way Perrin refers to her is that he's, like, seen her around before. He knows who she is. But he kind of stops and, like, they bow when she passes. But he stops and kind of does a double take, because she smells like really gross fear.

SALLY: Yeah, just terrified.

EMILY: Which I forgot to track the progress of Perrin's sudden, like, nose.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Sixth sense for smelling people's emotions. The, like, mood ring that is Perrin's nose.

SALLY: Oh my god.

EMILY: He should get a nose ring [laughs].

SALLY: Oh my god. If they gave – what is his name? Marcus Rutherford? – the hottest man alive a nose ring? I'd be like, "Suddenly Perrin is my favorite character!"

EMILY: I know. That would really add a level of personality to him that Perrin lacks.

SALLY: What if he got one of the, like, not one of the side ones, but in the middle. So it's like a bull?

EMILY: Ha ha!

SALLY: You get it? Like Young Bull?

EMILY: He he he. Get it?

SALLY: Somebody draw this for me. Thank you. A request has been made.

EMILY: Um, but yeah, he looks after her and Faile is like, "[scoffs] Yeah? Like what you see?" And Perrin's like, "What?" 'casue he's dumb.

SALLY: Wot?

EMILY: [British accent] Wot?

SALLY: [British accent] WOT?

EMILY: And Faile's like, "Never mind! I'm going to bed!" And Perrin's like, "Okay. I literally do not understand what just happened." And Faile's like, "Oh. Okay. Well that's kind of sweet. Goodbye! I'm still angry!"

SALLY: "Your innocence is so charming, but it – " [sighs] It's fine.

EMILY: Jealousy with them is, like, it's an acceptable thing for Faile to feel – I mean. Faile, the way – it's just, like, supposed to be a cultural difference.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: That to Faile it is, like, a turn on. That it's, uh, it's some form of affection that people are jealous of each other. That you bring these big, passionate emotions to your relationship. And to Perrin – and I think Perrin has the mentally healthy stance on this, or he should, you know, culturally that's where he's coming from – it's not necessarily a good thing.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You're certainly not supposed to vocalize it. And be, like, blatant about it. I don't know. It's just, like, bad.

SALLY: Yeah. I also really – there's – this is another narrative that I hate that Robert Jordan enforces, but in this section Perrin's like, "Yeah, everyone says you can never understand women because they just speak in these different languages." Where, like, the issue is that, like,

women are not taught that it matters that they voice their concerns and desires, because their concerns and desires don't matter. So the expectation is that people aren't listening, and we, like, reinforce that narrative.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And it's, like, a bad behavior! And it's, like, you should communicate what you mean [laughs].

EMILY: Yeah. Just the whole men are from Mars, women are from Venus bullshit schtick that Robert Jordan is trying to cram down our throats is so boring.

SALLY: Yeah. The gender dynamics really, like, comes to a head in Perrin and Faile's relationship.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Where you can see how it broke bad [chuckles].

EMILY: [chuckles] Yeah. Because he does an admirable job of showing us multiple perspectives, like, he'll show us Faile's perspective on this and whenever she's talking of course it seems more reasonable.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Everything seems more reasonable from the character whose point of view you're inhabiting. And you're like, "Okay, I get it." But he also doesn't bring in the cultural reasons that men and women have different, like the – like you said. The societal forces that enforce men and women communicating –

SALLY: Yeah, the social conditioning.

EMILY: – differently. Which, I don't know, maybe he would argue [mumbling] "Well it doesn't exist in my fantasy world, where women aren't as oppressed or whatever." But it's just, like, it does.

SALLY: But yeah it does. Because they're still the underlying – even if it's not necessarily like, "Oh, women don't matter," it's still the idea that women use more subterfuge as power.

EMILY: Yeah. Even if your – even if the societal conditioning isn't women are inferior and don't matter, it's still women are different.

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: And women are the other.

SALLY: Yeah! Exactly.

EMILY: In a way. Men are default.

SALLY: They are othered. Especially because we get, I think, percentage wise, more male points of view than – like it's pretty balanced, but...

EMILY: Yeah, that's good. I'd like to [crosstalk].

SALLY: I think someone has done an analysis. I saw it on Tumblr once. I'll see if I can find it. But even thinking of the brief snippets we get.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: Most of them are male, I believe.

EMILY: Yeah, I don't know. I think, percentage wise, those first two books, where it's primarily Rand and some Perrin, is just kind of – would really skew things.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um.

SALLY: And, I mean, but those first two books are the ones that lay our foundation of the gender politics.

EMILY: Yes!

SALLY: So even if it balances out, or even skews more towards the women in the latter half of the series, like, they have to do so much to correct our understanding.

EMILY: Make up lost ground.

SALLY: Yeah! Like, that, again, is just putting emotional labor back on women in the form of your, like, plot structure.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Which is stupid.

EMILY: [sighs] Anyway, Perrin gets to Rand's room. Does another dumb straight male thing where he is, like, trying to get in and goes to, like, manhandle, uh, one of the Maidens out of the way.

SALLY: Bain.

EMILY: Bain, I think. Yeah. And this is, again, this very straight male writing thing, where Bain's just, like, cool with it. Once Perrin is, like, "I'm not gonna back down [mumbles]. I'm not afraid of spears," or whatever. They're like, "Oh, this is kind of sexy. Do you want to play Maiden's Kiss sometime?" And it's, like, that's not how it works. Like, manhandling isn't fun.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: It's also particularly stupid that it's the first thing that Perrin reaches for.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: In his problem solving.

SALLY: Yeah, because it's like, how many – this is, like, the fourth time that he's just moved a woman out of the way.

EMILY: Yeah. Perrin has a particularly bad habit of moving women out of the way.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You rarely – I was just trying to think about that. Rand does it too sometimes.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Mat, noticeably, the only time I can think of when he does it is when he's trying to get away from Tylin.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: He literally is in a – like he is experiencing it as a life or death situation.

SALLY: Yep.

EMILY: So, again, Mat's the best character.

SALLY: Yeah. And it's also, like...like this... I don't exactly know how to get to this thought. But, like, Perrin and Rand are so much physically present than Mat is.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: Like Mat is a smol boy. And so, I don't know, maybe has more of an understanding of his body in relation to people. But it really bothers me, I guess is what I'm saying, how Rand and Perrin are allowed to use their physicality as a weapon. Which men do, for sure.

EMILY: Yeah. And it's interesting because we're told, Perrin tells us and then immediately unshows us, un-demonstrates, that he is really conscious of his body and his physicality.

SALLY: Oh, that's right. Yeah. He talks about that in his first point of view.

EMILY: His first point of view. He's like, "I have to be, like, really careful about how I am with people, how I approach people physically, because I'm a big boy, and so I don't want to freak people out. I don't know my own strength." But then immediately, throughout his entire arc, he's just, like, manhandling people and getting in people's faces.

SALLY: Hm.

EMILY: And it's, like, homie...

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: That don't work. But it, it almost is more effective when you have a character like Mat who almost never references his own physicality.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And then, like, he just – like doesn't have a body, almost.

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: Unless he's in a fight and is bleeding, Mat is, like, just kind of a brain.

SALLY: Yeah, the characters' relationships to their own physicality would be an interesting sort of...essay.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: To do.

EMILY: You have characters like Nynaeve, who's a very physical character, I would also say. She's constantly talking about tugging on her braid. She's constantly talking about [laughs] the way she folds her arms under her bosom or whatever.

SALLY: Yeah, and her clothes are always a big deal for Nynaeve.

EMILY: Yeah, but then you have characters like Egwene, on the female side of things, and I guess Mat on the male side of things, who don't really – aren't conscious of that. What we know about their appearance is told to us by other people.

SALLY: Yeah. Hmm.

EMILY: Like Egwene changing her hair? That's something other characters always comments on. Egwene herself never really offers much about it.

SALLY: Because Egg is like, “It’s my brain, bitch.”

EMILY: Yeah. Egg’s a brain. Mat is also a brain.

SALLY: In two very different ways [laughs].

EMILY: Yeah, in two very different ways. It’s not, like, a bad thing – physical characters done really well can be really interesting.

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: And good.

SALLY: I can’t think of one...

EMILY: Like Nynaeve.

SALLY: [whispers] Like Nynaeve.

EMILY: Nynaeve has a lot of cool body stuff going on.

SALLY: Nynaeve my little powerhouse girl.

EMILY: Yeah. But [coughs] Perrin does get into the room and is like, “Oh, fuck. [laughs] Rand [laughs again] Rand is covered in bloooooo!” He’s like, “Is Rand *dead*?” And Rand’s like [sort of British accent], “Shut the door, Perrin!” And Perrin’s like, “Okay fine, someone go get Moiraine. To heal him.” And then Perrin goes over and they have a very – I was also thinking about this – the physicality of the boys interacting with each other.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: I think we’ve talked about this before, that Perrin and Rand almost never touch. This is the one time I can remember them.

SALLY: Mm. Yeah.

EMILY: Being physically close together and touching each other, as opposed to Rand and Mat who are kind of constantly hanging off each other and –

SALLY: Yeah, in various states of ailment. Or punching each other.

EMILY: Yeah. Or punching each other [laughs]. Which is funny, because you’d think the two most physical characters would go head to head but.

SALLY: There’s Mat.

EMILY: Mat is – Mat’s almost so connected to his body that he, like, doesn’t process it. I guess.

SALLY: Yeah, which is –

EMILY: Which, yeah, it makes sense. It just means he’s comfortable in his own body in a way that –

SALLY: Yeah, no. I like that analysis because usually, like, we’ve talked about how Mat punches walls without realizing it or throws up without realizing it.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And my first instinct would be to read that as a character who’s not, like not connected to their – there’s, like, a disconnected between mind and body. But the idea that, like, it’s all just kind of, like, one system is interesting.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: Especially because Mat, yeah. I think just that – ah it just makes sense. Mat’s narrative is always so cohesive to me. It always makes so much sense.

EMILY: Yeah. There’s never really a delineation between Mat’s mind and his body, the way that there often is with Rand and Perrin, and some other characters. Those are just the two that most...

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: So yeah, in a way, Perrin saying that he’s conscious of his body does make a little bit more sense. Because, yeah, he does consciously think about it. He’s just kind of bad about it.

SALLY: Yeah, it’s, like, today I was reading this – sorry.

EMILY: You’re fine.

SALLY: Um, Instagram page that I found. It’s called, like, the Holistic Psychologist or something. I don’t know. But they were doing, like, side by sides of what is emotionally healthy and what isn’t, and it was just the idea that, like, one of them that reminded me of Perrin, was, like, in bad situations I tell other people why – which is, like, the bad thing, like explaining away your behavior – instead of asking myself why. And I think Perrin is just like, “Oh, I’m a big boy.” Instead of being like, “Oh, I’m a big boy. How do I, like, navigate the world in a responsible way.”

EMILY: Yeah. Yeah.

SALLY: I’m a little ramby today. Didn’t you know?

EMILY: No, that's really interesting. I like that we've finally come to a cohesive way to explain [laughs] Mat's weird presence. Physical presence.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Anyway, uh, Perrin is, like, trying to bandage Rand up and is like, "What the hell? What the fuckening?"

SALLY: [snorts]

EMILY: [laughs] "What happened to you?" They have a – I can't remember how their conversation goes. Perrin is kind of like, "Oh, fuck. If this happened to both of us then probably –" Or he says, "Rand what did you do?" And Rand's like, "Oh, it wasn't me. It was the Forsaken." Because that's Rand's assumption. And Perrin's like, "Oh, shit. Well then Mat's probably fucked up, too." And it's interesting because both Perrin, and later Moiraine, think of Mat and then are like, "Well, I can't do anything about it. Either he's dead or he's fine. And I just can't do anything." Which is so interesting, because we're told that these people are friends.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But like [laughing].

SALLY: Do I believe it? [laughs]

EMILY: [laughs] I just don't believe that Perrin, like, I believe they have lingering affection for each other.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But, like, if one of my friends – if I was like, "Shit. Something just happened to one of my friends." [laughs] Like, I'd want to go and...

SALLY: Yeah. I wouldn't be like, "Well, Devin is dead or he's fine. I don't know." [laughs]

EMILY: [laughing] Yeah, like, seriously!

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Someone's like, "Devin might be dead." I'd be like, "Take me to him?! I'd like to know!"

SALLY: "911, is Devin okay?"

EMILY: "Is Devin okay?" I hope Devin listens to this episode and [laughing] knows that he's mine go-to as friend standing.

SALLY: But it's also very funny when later Rhuarc is like, "I saw Mat going this way. But not to the stables. He's not running away." [laughs]

EMILY: I know. Rhuarc is hilarious in this scene.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Yeah, you have Perrin there with Rand, and then you have people trickling in. Rhuarc comes in and is like, "Oh, shit's going down. Everyone – like everyone's heard something's happened. So, the whole Stone of Tear is in a *fuss*." And then Moiraine and Lan come in. And then Perrin has to comment on the sexual tension [laughs] between Lan and Rhuarc.

SALLY: Could you imagine? The only way to redeem Lan's arc.

EMILY: I know.

SALLY: It's not Nynaeve, it's Rhuarc.

EMILY: Just, like, the gay dads.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, Lan has a very good Aiel joke here, though, where he's like, "I thought you learned how to shave?" [laughing] to Rand, who's covered in blood.

SALLY: Yeah [laughs].

EMILY: And Rhuarc's like [snickers].

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah. That could be the moment they fall in love, Robert Jordan.

EMILY: It could be. He's a coward. Yeah, that was their big gay meet up.

SALLY: That was there meet cute [clicks tongue].

EMILY: Ah, Rhuarc is just so hilarious.

SALLY: Rhuarc is my character of all time.

EMILY: I know. Rhuarc is just like, "Hello." Yeah, Moiraine comes in. Goes to heal Rand. First, she's like, "Hey, you should hold the Power, because that will help with the healing process." And Rand's like, "Nope, can't do it." So Moiraine's just like, "Fine." Heals him.

SALLY: Gotta fuck you up, boy.

EMILY: It's terrible, as usual.

SALLY: Yeah. He's like, again, like demonic possession is happening.

EMILY: Yeah. Yeah. There's very, like, throwing your limbs back, muscles visibly cramping.

[crosstalk]

EMILY: Gross.

SALLY: Perrin's like, "Excuse me while I yack."

EMILY: [gagging sounds]

[both laugh]

SALLY: If Mat was there he fully would have vomited.

EMILY: [laughing] If Mat were here, he'd be vomiting.

SALLY: Just actively, all over Rhuarc.

EMILY: Yeah, just [gagging noises].

SALLY: "Dad!"

EMILY: "Dad!" And Moiraine's like, "Okay, what the fuck happened?" Moiraine is, like, jumps to the conclusion that Rand did this accidentally to himself somehow.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: And Rand's like, "No. It was one of the Forsaken." And Moiraine's just like, "Couldn't have been one of the Forsaken." And she comes up with her bubble of evil explanation.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Which is basically that the apocalypse is nigh, and fortunately you three are – what's that word?

SALLY: Apocaly – *ta'veren*?

EMILY: Harbingers was the word I was going to say.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: But yeah, *ta'veren*. You three are, canonically, main characters.

SALLY: Oh shit.

EMILY: So these things are going to be happening to you more than anyone else. And it's, like, okay. Thank you for that. I just love adding a little bit more mayhem to my already chaotic existence within this high fantasy story.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Um, yeah. At one point Moiraine's like, "Uh, is Mat okay?" And Rhuarc's like, "I did see him. He's alive. He was heading in the direction of the docks. But there are no boats in the docks, so don't worry about it" [laughs]. And Moiraine's like, "I'm constantly worried about it."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: [laughing] "He is a wild card to say the least."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, yeah. When Perrin's like, "Is Mat even okay?" And Rand's like, "He's probably gone [laughs], by now. Probably gone-zo."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And Perrin's like, "It seems like you don't care." And Rand's like, "I do care. That's why I hope he's gone." [laughing] Jesus Christ.

SALLY: Yeah. Crying.

EMILY: Yeah. Um, bubbles of evil are whack.

SALLY: [snorts]

EMILY: [laughing] Like we've said before.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: I mean, if you really want to bring it down it's, like, Robert Jordan really needed something to spice up the more boring parts of the *Wheel of Time* narrative. Like, it's very convenient that bubbles of evil tend to happen when things are otherwise kind of boring.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: When people are having down time. When people are not in any major conflicts at that moment. Things just sort of happen when he needs something to happen.

SALLY: Yeah, it's that forest of coincidences in a plot way.

EMILY: Also, noticeably, I can't do the exact math on this, but I did sort of look it up, bubbles of evil tend to happen more with the Aes Sedai and with Perrin.

SALLY: Hmm.

EMILY: And a little bit with Rand. But, like, Mat tends to have more rare instances of bubbles of evil, uh, then the other people who I think have less action-driven plotlines.

SALLY: Yeah, and well also, bubbles of evil, while they do function to add some drama to the, um, stale toast that is Perrin's plotline.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: Also, like, they do function to, like, alter the logic of this world. Like, the ground rules that Robert Jordan has set up. These intrude, like we talked about last week, to change things. Um, and, like, I really like the terminology bubble, because I think we've talked about this in the context of the *stedding*, but in game theory there's something called a magic circle, where inside certain spaces certain rules apply, um, that don't apply in other spaces. So the idea that these bubbles are coming in to, like, envelop, um, a space for a minute and change the rules, where outside of those bubbles playing cards wouldn't try to kill you, so to speak.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Like, in terms of that happening in the plot, it does kind of make sense that it doesn't happen to Mat, because Mat's story is already so buck fucking wild, that it's hard to make it [laughing] more crazy than, like, being hanged and, like, having magic [laughing] gambling powers, and, like, all this crazy – like, Mat's scenes, like, the waking up in Vegas, breaking out of Tar Valon sequence is, like, crazy.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And, like, Rand and Perrin don't really have those. I guess Rand, to an extent, with his, like, fading grip on sanity, might get a little bit more liminal. But Perrin who's like, "I am a heterosexual, cisgender man, who likes marriage and axes."

EMILY: And wolves.

SALLY: "And wolves." It's, like, okay, let's add a little chaos into that narrative.

EMILY: Yeah. Spice it up.

SALLY: Stale toast.

EMILY: Stale toast. Put some cinnamon on that.

SALLY: Oooh yeah. Make some cinnamon toast –

EMILY: Yeah. Anyway –

SALLY: Crunch.

EMILY: We'll talk about bubbles of evil as they crop up, because they continue to be wealth of interesting things.

SALLY: They're really neat.

EMILY: Uh, we –

SALLY: I just think they're neat [laughs].

EMILY: I just think they're neat.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: We then hop over to Thom's point of view as he is actively forging a letter.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Uh, and, as he tells us, he is stationed in the servants' quarters. He is pretty much here just to spy and watch out for Rand. He feels like he is Moiraine's equivalent in terms of keeping Rand alive in an otherwise really complicated political situation. He's like, "I've got the experience. I've got the know-how. I've got the bard stats. I'm here to keep Rand alive and, more or less, give him an option other than an Aes Sedai to sort of protect him. Um, and it's all very subtle and no one really knows what I'm doing." He talks about – he's like, "When Mat asked I was just like, 'Oh I don't want people to know I arrived with an Aes Sedai,'" and he's like, "Mat hasn't really questioned further into that, because of course that just makes sense."

SALLY: "Mat being Mat" [laughing] is what Thom says.

EMILY: Mat being Mat.

SALLY: [laughing] Completely understood that.

EMILY: [laughs] Completely understood and was like, "I, too, would like to leave." Uh, but Mat shows up and they have a very kind of cute conversation wherein Mat is like, "I am just so frustrated because I want to leave, but I feel like I can't. Like I have this sense of anticipation that something big is coming and I can't walk away from it." And Thom's just like, "[laughs] shrug emoji."

SALLY: [laughs] My favorite line is when Mat's like, [laughing] "If you say *ta'veren*, Thom, I'm leaving." Which is like –

EMILY: Thom's like, "Have you considered that –" [laughs]. Mat's like, "No, fuck you."

SALLY: I'll fucking kill you.

EMILY: Thom's like, "– that Rand is your friend and you don't want to abandon him."

SALLY: And Mat's like, "No!"

EMILY: "Literally no. We don't even like each other anymore what are you talking about."

SALLY: [snorts]

EMILY: "Have you seen us interact? Exactly. We don't like each other anymore, Thom."

SALLY: "Come on. We broke up."

EMILY: "It's over. Yeah. Our boy band broke up."

SALLY: Yeah. One Direction...Rand is Zayn and he left.

EMILY: He fucking left.

SALLY: And then...Mat is the other one.

EMILY: Mat is the other – which – you would – it doesn't [laughs] okay.

SALLY: But it also does make sense because everyone's like, the Forsaken will be like, "We had to kill Rand and the wolf boy" and Asmodean's ghost comes up and is like [fading], "What about Mat?"

EMILY: [laughing] They're like, "We can't fucking find him!"

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: As Thom says, Mat is very good at sneaking. It's hilarious.

SALLY: I love this chapter, because Thom's feelings of affection towards Mat are just, like, palpable.

EMILY: Yeah. He's just like, "Here's my dumb boy."

SALLY: "I love this dumb boy, who I also owe my life."

EMILY: Yeah. He's like, "I owe him in a way. But also..."

SALLY: [whispers] "I love him."

EMILY: Like it's so cute. Mat just kind of storms in and Thom's like, "Alright. Let's play some chess. Fantasy chess."

SALLY: "We're gonna calm down."

EMILY: "Talk to me about whatever girl troubles you're having." Mat's like, "I'm dating three women at once, Thom, [laughing] so I don't know what you want me to say about it." Um, I don't know. We're already over time and I'm going to have to cut things out. But I wanted to mention that in these few chapters we are, um, collectively heading towards entropy. This is sort of the vibe of the beginning of Book 4. Um, and it is the mode that each of our characters is placed in, and they now have to struggle to re-discover some sort of direction or purpose. Like, they're literally all just kind of, like, drifting apart. And now all of them – Perrin's going to go back home, and then just sort of that's where his plotline is going to be.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Like, everything that happens to him starts in the Two Rivers. Similarly, Mat and Rand are going to Rhuidean and everything that happens with them starts there.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Um, but this entropy is really affecting the points of view. There's typically a point of view hierarchy in *Wheel of Time*, which is what happens – which is why we have Rand as the primary point of view character in Books 1 and 2, because he is our like top-tier point of view hierarchy and we only get Perrin's point of view when Rand is off-screen, etc. etc. But that begins to break down in Book 3 when suddenly we're not with Rand anymore. We are now choosing to focus on other characters. But then it's particularly odd when we now get into Book 4 and Perrin's talking when he's in a scene with Rand, and Rand could just as well be speaking.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: There's nothing preventing Rand from talking. Similarly, we're now with Thom, even though Mat's there.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Which is super odd. But, um, I don't know. It's just, like, we're now suddenly seeing all these characters from multiple points of view. Like, they're all kind of in glass boxes and we're all just looking at them from a lot of different ways.

SALLY: Yeah. No, no, it's really interesting, and I was thinking about this, too. Because, like, I am really, uh, I'm a huge fan of scenes – or even books – that technically place the primary point of view away from the main of action.

EMILY: Mm.

SALLY: Like it's, like I really love it when secondary characters are, like, describing interactions with main characters. There's something about it that's very, like, tender to me. And the ability to, like especially Mat who's so not in his body. When Thom rolls in and he's immediately like, "This is Mat. He looks very dishoveled." [laughs] Dishoveled. "*Disheveled*." And, like, his hair is crazy and he normally has this twinkle in his eye, but it's gone because he's stressed." Like we don't really – like, it's just fun to get that type of stuff.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Obviously, like, nobody – sometimes people write this way – but nobody describes the twinkle in their [laughing] own eye.

EMILY: Exactly. Or they shouldn't.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Or that's bad writing, folks.

SALLY: It's! Bad writing!

EMILY: Like ugh.

SALLY: Um, but yeah I was thinking about the function of it in *Wheel of Time* because you pointed out the...hierarchy of points of view when we were driving this weekend. And I was like, "Oh, yeah. Why, in Book 4, is this now happening?" And I think you're right. That the system is breaking down, and with characters splintering – we talked about the, like, structure of *Wheel of Time* is that our fellowship gets more and more and more fractured.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: Over and over and over again until we're looking at a completely shattered mirror, as it were.

EMILY: I just think it's interesting because Book 4 is not the only book where this happens, but it's where it's the most prominent. I think it's because we have so many characters all in one place at the beginning.

SALLY: Mm.

EMILY: But also, as we just get further into it Mat and Rand and Egwene are all together, so you kind of have to – sometimes Mat is speaking or Egwene is speaking, even though Rand is right there. Stuff like that. And Nynaeve and Elayne kind of take turns talking even though technically it should be Nynaeve talking all the time. Elayne is usually the one providing points of view in this book. So, it just, like, sort of resets itself in Book 5 and things get a little bit more back to normal, but in Book 4 it's just this wild, crazy roller coaster.

SALLY: Yeah, and I think the – yeah, that's just one of the primary themes and threads that carries Book 4. Is that the rules, as you know it, of everything – religion, society, geography, magic – just break, and you have to re-learn what it means to exist.

EMILY: Yeah. Like you said, it's, like, important that this book starts with a breakdown in logic that is the bubble of evil, and then just everything is just also breaking down around it. It's also a microcosm that represents the macrocosm of what's about to happen with the Aiel.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Super cultural breakdown. Which, I see more foreshadowing of now, that I am re-reading it and conscious of that. I don't know if it was foreshadowed enough that this big thing would happen with the Aiel. But as Perrin is leaving Rand's room he kind of has this little aside with Rhuarc, where he's like, "Like, you guys don't treat him with – you don't fawn over him the way us [laughs] Europeans do, I guess." And Rhuarc's like, "Well, he's your Jesus, but we don't really know if he's our Jesus, yet. And we haven't proven that yet, and when it happens, I guess we'll find out." And Perrin's just like, "Okay, well what will happen if he's not?" And Rhuarc's just kind of like, "We'll find out!"

SALLY: Yeah, and it just lends, like, the Aiel have a really interesting kind of Jewish narrative.

EMILY: Yeah, they do.

SALLY: That I need to know more about, like, diaspora and all that to really understand, but this idea that your Messiah is not necessarily *the* Messiah.

EMILY: Yes.

SALLY: Adds a really – just a really interesting element to the Aiel. They're just fascinating, you know?

EMILY: Yeah. Ummm, anyway. That was those chapters, I guess. Have fun editing, Emily. Thank you to Glynna Mackenzie for our beautiful theme song. Thank you for listening, even when you could be [laughing] listening to Ian McKellen.

SALLY: I hate you. Support us on Patreon so I can replace Emily with Ian McKellen [laughs].

EMILY: [laughs] Uh, yeah. Fine.

SALLY: Nooooo. I would never replace you.

EMILY: With Ian McKellen? [laughing] I would want you to replace me with Ian McKellen. Come on.

SALLY: Maybe I'll replace you with Ian McKellen.

EMILY: Come on. He's Ian McKellen. Have Gandalf on this podcast. Talking about sexy Gandalf, Moiraine.

SALLY: Obviously.

EMILY: Exactly.

SALLY: [pops lips]

EMILY: Do you have a sign off?

SALLY: Yes. This weekend, Emily and I were in Yellowstone National Park. We had just left the Museum of the National Park Ranger, which was truly a fabulous experience. And as we were driving, we noticed the car in front of us had a bumper sticker.

EMILY: Oh my god [laughing].

SALLY: That said, "My other ride is a Hitachi," and had a wand on it. This was obviously transcendent. The tragic part was that we couldn't get a picture of it.

EMILY: Yeah, we can't *prove* it.

SALLY: [laughing] So no one will ever believe us, that this perfect person exists.

EMILY: It happened I swear!

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: It was literally the coolest thing that's ever happened.

SALLY: Yeah. Both of us were too busy screaming and trying to find a phone.

EMILY: I, like, couldn't move. I was frozen in place.

SALLY: Because it was literally so iconic.

EMILY: Whoa. Whoa. We're in the presence of god herself.

SALLY: Yeah. It was really incredible so. But it will forever live in infamy as the bumper sticker we couldn't get a picture of.

EMILY: The one that got away.

[pause]

SALLY: [singing] the summer after high school.

EMILY: [laughing] I'll kill you.

SALLY: [singing] When we first met.

EMILY: Bye!