

Episode 94: ARE YOU NOT HORNY?!

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Sally: Everybody Hates Rand is a Wheel of Time podcast that will contain spoilers for all 14 books. So if you're anti-spoiler, pause this, read all 14 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 Glynna MacKenzie plays)

Sally: Eat it!

Emily: I'm starting it now so we can have this fight on-air. I KNOW eggs are in cookie dough, but I thought the, like, Tollhouse company -- there's cookie dough that is -- doesn't have eggs in it.

Sally: Wanna look at the ingredients?

Emily: I'm sure you're right.

Sally: I'm not -- that sounded sassier than I meant it to be. (laugh)

Emily: (sigh) Yeah, it was --

Sally: But, like, legitimately, let's look at the ingredients, and then I can see if I can eat eighteen more of these.

Emily: (distant) Ingredients. Umm. Sugar, enriched flour (bleached), water, palm oil, canola -- canola and/or soybean oil. Contains two percent or less of: eggs, baking powder, salt, natural flavor.

Sally: Baking powder? That's fascinating.

Emily: Yeah, I mean, I guess you are supposed to bake these.

Sally: Well, yeah.

Emily: I wouldn't know. I've never done it. (laugh)

Sally: Anyway, the point is that I'm eating, just, a nugget of cookie dough.

Emily: She called it an egg nugget. And I thought -- got confused 'cause I thought she was making a pun on "eggnog" and I thought they were a special flavored --

Sally: No.

Emily: Type of cookie dough.

Sally: Eggnog fucking sucks. You will never see me --

Emily: I've never had it.

Sally: Ingesting eggnog.

Emily: Does eggnog taste like eggs?

Sally: I hate it.

Emily: But does it taste like eggs?

Sally: Kind of.

Emily: (gagging noise) I think anything that tastes like eggs is damned to hell.

Sally: Eggnog is, like, a contentious topic at the Aviary because Jeff loves eggnog, and he wants to have a whole party --

Emily: Jeff.

Sally: About it.

Emily: Jeff.

Sally: Convincing certain people, such as myself, that eggnog is a worthwhile beverage.

Emily: (sigh) If you have to throw a whole fete to convince people --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) That your beverage of choice would be agreeable to them, then it's not fucking worth it. You don't see me going around proselytizing Diet Coke. Like, I like Diet Coke. You don't have to like Diet Coke. You can like whatever the fuck you want.

Sally: You should like Diet Coke, though. It's good.

Emily: Except for on the cruise ship.

Sally: (sigh) Yeah.

Emily: This is our first time addressing --

Sally: Oh, yeah!

Emily: The audience since we got off the ship. Since we disembarked.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: That's a ship word.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Technically "debarked"?

Sally: Debarked.

Emily: Huh.

Sally: Debarkation.

Emily: Yeah, 'cause I know it was the debarkation. I had to go to the debarkation presentation --

Sally: Yeah, Emily --

Sally: Given by Ryan Rose, cruise director, our nemesis.

Sally: I hate him.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Ryan Rose, if you're listening --

Emily: Ryan Rose, if you're listening.

Sally: This is your final warning. (laugh)

Emily: (wheeze) The number of times I almost assassinated Ryan Rose on the cruise ship --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I mean, I only saw him, like, three times.

Sally: But every time, it was more -- he just would give these announcements that were, like --

Emily: EVERY twenty minutes.

Sally: Horrible.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: "Good evening, Carnival INSpiration family. Ryan Rose, cruise director here."

Emily: He'd say "good evening" at 11 p.m.

Sally: Yeah. And I'd be like, "I'M ASLEEP."

Emily: I'd be like, "Let us live."

Sally: "Stop making -- I am not going to Bingo. It's 12:30 a.m."

Emily: Or karaoke. God.

Sally: (laugh) I'm so tired, Ryan. Please just let me sleep.

Emily: We learned a valuable lesson on my company cruise, which is that cruises are for a specific --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Type of people, and we are not that type of people.

Sally: Well, I have -- talking to some of my coworkers about it who have done the same cruise -- apparently the cruise we went on is literally the cheapest cruise in the world.

Emily: That makes sense.

Sally: Yeah. And they're like, "You can go on nicer cruises," and I'm like, "But will I?"

Emily: Like, that makes a lot of sense because it was a company cruise --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: The company had to pay for a hundred of us plus our --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Plus-ones. But I can't fathom how a cruise -- I guess the food could be better?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But I just can't fathom how, if you're making food for a lot of people --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It just, by necessity, is not going to be as good as food for a --

Sally: No, of course not.

Emily: Small quantity of people.

Sally: The food was, like, never -- it never tasted like food. It just sort of was -- we were just eating it.

Emily: The closest I came to food, believe it or not, was at Guy Fieri's burger stand. He had a burger stand there. I think Guy Fieri was imprisoned in the bowels of the ship.

Sally: Maybe.

Emily: And that they were draining his power. Like, um --

Sally: Sad!

Emily: (sigh) What am I thinking of?

Sally: We have to go back and rescue Guy Fieri. We have to recruit Francisco onto our team, obviously.

Emily: Francisco was pretty good, but he was also part of the cruise cult.

Sally: Yeah, he was part of the Fun Squad. (laugh)

Emily: Yeah, literally called the "Fun Squad."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "Have fun, spread love, and we'll see you around the ship."

Sally: It's just that Francisco was, like, a lot cuter than most of the other Fun Squad.

Emily: Yeah, Francisco -- well, did you know any other members of the Fun Squad?

Sally: Yeah, you'd see them around. You could tell 'cause they had, like, Fun Squad shirts.

Emily: Sally paid way more attention to our surroundings than I did. I literally just --

Sally: That's standard. That's par for the course. (laugh)

Emily: I mean, yeah. That's pretty fuckin' true. (laugh)

Sally: But it's OK. Because we keep each other alive in the end.

Emily: What do I contribute?

Sally: Emily's like, "Maybe you should eat." And I'm like, "Oh, yeah." (laugh)

Emily: I'm like, "Maybe I should eat," and you're like --

Sally: I was like, "Oh, yeah."

Emily: "I guess I'll come along and eat with you."

Sally: "I guess I'll eat."

Emily: My constant need for food and warmth. That cruise ship was so cold.

Sally: It was very chilly.

Emily: We could go on this tangent for a long time. I don't have much to say about the dang Shadow Rising. As per usual.

Sally: I have a few points.

Emily: OK.

Sally: But nothing, like ground-breaking. It's just so --

Emily: Nothing time-consuming?

Sally: Just some stuff that I want to say.

Emily: Well, I'm excited to get to that.

Sally: I mean, we have not done nearly enough shenanigans, and we're only five minutes into the recording, so what other shenanigans --

Emily: Five minutes into the recording is technically when we give our introduction after I've edited out nine minutes of shenanigans -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: So what I'm saying is maybe we get ahead of the game here and just do the introduction. This is Everybody Hates Rand, your friendly neighborhood Wheel of Time podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

Sally: I am Ryan Rose, cruise director. (laugh)

Emily: I'm gonna murder you. (laugh) Now we can go on about the cruise or whatever, but we've got the dang introduction out of the way.

Sally: No, it's OK, we can talk about books. This is your ding-dong podcast for ding-dongs who read Wheel of Time.

Emily: What if we just talked about the books we read on the cruise instead of talking about the Shadow Rising?

Sally: I mean, that'd be a fun little recap. I was thinking it would be, um -- even though I haven't updated our blog in forever, we could do, like, EHR's top ten books of 2019.

Emily: Oh, that'd be fun.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It would require me to remember what I've read in twenty --

Sally: It's OK.

Emily: You keep track.

Sally: I've been keeping track of what you read.

Emily: When did we start the Goodreads?

Sally: Ummm, May, I think? Or April?

Emily: That's too late in the game, I read so many books before then.

Sally: Oh my hell in a handbasket.

Emily: I did!

Sally: OK, well, we can do EHR's top ten books of the 2019 parts that we were on Goodreads.

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: That'll be the title of the blog, and everyone will be like, "What the fuck does this mean?"

Emily: Did you put down on Goodreads everything I read on the cruise?

Sally: Uhhh, I did the ones I could remember. I did, um --

Emily: Did you give them star ratings?

Sally: Jade City ... no, I didn't give them stars.

Emily: OK.

Sally: 'Cause I didn't want to ask you. I thought it would annoy you.

Emily: It never annoys me. I think you think it annoys me because Sally will say, "How was your book?" And I'll say "Four stars." (laugh) She'll put it on the Goodreads. What annoys me is that you don't just come out and say, "Give me how -- what's your star rating for this book?"

Sally: OK, well, first time I did it, you were like, "I don't think of things that way," and so I was just trying --

Emily: Well, now I do. You've trained me.

Sally: OK, I'm sorry. I just -- I do genuinely want to know what you think about the books that you read.

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: I just also don't want to annoy you.

Emily: You're so good. You're so good. Um --

Sally: See, that sounded like a lie. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Hook me up to a lie detector, fuckin --

Sally: No, that's police propaganda.

Emily: Lie to Me, Tim Roth. He knows I'm not lying.

Sally: Kay, what did you read on the cruise, Emily T. Juchau?

Emily: I read a book called -- a novella called, um, *River of Teeth*. It was about hippos in the Louisiana -- in the --

Sally: In *the* Louisiana.

Emily: In the Louisiana bayous.

Sally: (laugh) There we go, we got there.

Emily: (laugh) I -- I got there. Which was a thing that historically could have happened in our country, which is fascinating to think about. Anyway, today I read the sequel at work because my computer was broken and I couldn't do work. It was pretty good. Very queer, which is always surprising in a book set in the 1800s in America. Um, I've read a book called *A Conspiracy of Truths*. That's about an old man who takes down an entire country by being bitchy, and it was pretty satisfying. He was a good narrator. He was just pretty funny.

Sally: Good.

Emily: That one was cute. And I read *Jade City* -- I think that's the name.

Sally: *Jade City* by Fonda Lee.

Emily: By Fonda Lee, and it was a cross between kung fu movies and the Godfather. It was pretty slow-paced at times, and I felt like there could've been more kung fu sequences. Like, it leaned a -- like, the balance between the Godfather and kung fu got a little too deep into the Godfather.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: I was like, "I don't care as much as you think I do about the mob business." (pause) Oh, Tybalt.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: But it had some good, good sibling content, which I am here for. Um, and I can't remember what else I read. I know I read a book called *The Perfect Assassin*, which did not have as many assassinations as you might have expected or that I would have liked. So overall that one got, like, two stars.

Sally: Kay.

Emily: And I read a book -- (laugh) What's that one called? I read an old-timey book from the nineties --

Sally: Oh, yeah, I forgot you read this one. (laugh)

Emily: That was so weird, and now I can't remember what it was named. Something about fire. 'Cause there was a volcano in it.

Sally: Ooh.

Emily: It was like about a rogue, a fighter, and a -- and a magic user go on a quest. But: queer.

Sally: Make it gay.

Emily: Yeah, but two bisexual main male characters and the female character was, um, coded asexual.

Sally: Cool.

Emily: So it was very cool. And it was just, like, a genuinely pleasant read. So that's what I read. Oh, and then I read a really good book at the end that was something about tarot.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: And I can't remember what it was called either, but it was my favorite of the books. So that might be shocking to you that I don't remember what it was called --

Sally: That's fine.

Emily: But the truth is that I could never bring myself to look at the cover because the cover was so bad.

Sally: It happens.

Emily: On it, there was a picture of a man who looked exactly like the guy in the CW series Arrow. I am one hundred percent sure that was the reference they used.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Don't choke -- (laugh) And that really distressed me, so I never looked at the cover.

Sally: That's -- (laugh)

Emily: Do you want to talk about what you read? (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Sure. I'm just gonna be stuck on this -- the Arrow actor's secret life of modeling for books' covers.

Emily: No, I think they just got a screenshot of -- from Arrow --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: And were like --

Sally: "Sure, this'll do."

Emily: "This'll do for our bodyguard character."

Sally: (laugh) Um. Um, what did I read? Um. I read, uh, the first, uh, installment of *Lumberjanes* by Noelle Stevenson and Grace Ellis and one more author I can't remember, and that was just absolutely fucking charming like everything Noelle Stevenson does. She's --

Emily: There's more, right? Has she --

Sally: Yeah, there's, like, a bunch of them, I think. I see them at the King's English and there's, like, quite a few.

Emily: Are they still coming out, do you know?

Sally: I don't actually know. I don't know if it's been finished or not.

Emily: I just know Noelle Stevenson did Nimona --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And I loved that, but it was kind of a one-off.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So I'm interested in --

Sally: Noelle Stevenson is also the showrunner on the reboot of She-Ra on Netflix right now.

Emily: Which we watched the first season of and really liked, but --

Sally: I know, we need to --

Emily: Then we could -- we're bad at watching TV sometimes.

Sally: I'M bad at watching TV, so whenever Emily is like, "Watch a show with me," I'm like, "Do you really want to do this?" and she's always good and gives me another chance, and then we watch four episodes and I sort of vanish into my need to work 70 hours a week constantly all the time. (laugh)

Emily: I was like, "I'm catching up on my shows with Sally," and Devin was like, "What are your shows?" and I was like, "We have the Good Place and My Hero Academia, which is two shows, which is pretty good for us." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: Usually we have one or zero --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: That we are watching together.

Sally: I know. I'm just bad at TV. I'm bad at visual media.

Emily: I don't think you should call yourself bad at it. You just don't like it as much.

Sally: Yeah. It's just not a priority for me.

Emily: Yeah, that's not bad.

Sally: I know.

Emily: You're not -- you're not less than other people who enjoy that.

Sally: I mean, it makes -- it's bad when I, like, want to engage people in conversation.

Emily: I see.

Sally: They're like, "What are you watching?" and I'm like, "... The wall." (laugh)

Emily: Wall.

Sally: Um --

Emily: Like, "The face of my beloved cat as he --"

Sally: Yeah. Smooshes his wet face --

Emily: Attempts to murder me. Yeah.

Sally: Into my cheeks in the morning. Um, I also read *Uprooted*, which is the other stand-alone novel that, um, Naomi Novik wrote, who --

Emily: I'm so pumped to read that. Rrggh.

Sally: Wrote *Spinning Silver*. And also the Temeraire series, which I have not read.

Emily: Don't read the Temeraire series is my general recommendation.

Sally: OK.

Emily: Unless you're -- have some very niche interests, like our former roommate, Lee.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: That really fit right up her alley.

Sally: Um. And it was very good. It was a lot like *Spinning Silver* in that it had a lot of fairy tale vibes and there was a -- a very intelligent and self-assured woman -- young woman, and sort of this grumpy eldritch creature. (laugh) It was very -- it was very good. I'm still deciding which one I like better. Not that I need to compare them. They're both very different in very good ways. But I really like Up -- I really loved *Uprooted* a lot. It was very good.

Emily: I'm excited to read that one.

Sally: Um, and then I read ... oh, this book called *These Witches Don't Burn*. Which was, like, cute. It was, um, this little, like, teen lesbian witchy romance novel. YA.

Emily: YA, yeah.

Sally: Um, and it was, like, cute, but I spent the whole time thinking that the main character was, um, Black or Hispanic or Latina. I don't think -- I think "Hispanic" is not the politically correct term.

Emily: I think it's OK when you're referring to Spanish-speaking communities.

Sally: Yeah. I just know there's, like -- Hispanic has, like, colonialist --

Emily: Oh. That's interesting.

Sally: Implications. I read an article in Teen Vogue, of all places. Um, like a year or so ago. And I need to educate myself more on that. But anyway, I spent the whole time thinking she was a woman of color, and then I looked at the cover art, and everyone was very white and that kind of turned me off a little bit.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: 'Cause there was no reason for everyone to be white, as there is always no reason for everybody to be white.

Emily: Exactly.

Sally: And it was also just, like, surprisingly violent. The more I think about it, the more upset I am about it. Um, and then I read "The Body Is Not An Apology" by, um ... I can only remember her first name, which is Sonya. But I really loved that one. Um. It is the one I'd probably recommend the most. Um, it's just very, like, tender and healing.

Emily: I want to read that.

Sally: Um, I read "Gideon the Ninth" by Tasmyn Muir. Muir?

Emily: Muir ...

Sally: It's, like, a big thing in the fantasy circles at the moment --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Published by the Wheel of Time's own Tor.

Emily: Ah, Tor.

Sally: Um, and I really liked it -- I really did. Um, I know there's been a little bit of controversy about the author, who apparently wrote some fanfiction that dealt with, um, some potentially pedophilic themes.

Emily: Ah.

Sally: Which is a little upsetting. I found that out after I read the book and was looking through, uh, fanart and stuff on Tumblr. They were talking about it. Um, so I haven't done a lot of research into that. But also, the book is, like, marketed and reviewed and everyone talks about it as it's, like, this great lesbian representation. And, like, the main character, who is a delight, is a huge, dumb lesbian idiot, and I'm obsessed with her, and she, like, talks frequently and openly about her attraction to women. But, like, there's no, like, canonical lesbian romance between -- there's, like, a lot of tension between the two main girls, but it's never, like ...

Emily: Consummated.

Sally: I hate -- like, I hate to use that word, but yeah, in a way, that, like --

Emily: Realized, perhaps.

Sally: Yeah, in a way that is, like, realized in a way that would be satisfying to me. Like, in terms of queer representaiton, I'm so tired of, like, stand-ins for physical contact or, like, relationship-defining being the queer content. Like --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Anyway.

Emily: It's like -- there's a -- there's an instinct to, um -- what's that word -- to, like, sanitize --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Queer, uh -- queerness in fantasy in the way that, say, Brandon Sanderson says a character "prefers men" --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Twice, and we count that as gay representation for some reason.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it's just, like -- that means nothing to me, a) because these are characters that are irrelevant but also because they're not in gay relationships --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, it's just, like, a one-off by a character who is not queer making this --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Statement about them. They don't have any -- you know. It's just -- (sigh) Do better, authors.

Sally: Yeah, it's just very frustrating, especially 'cause the main relationship between the two young women is, like, very combative and there's a lot of, like, kind of icky power dynamics. So for people to call it, like, "great lesbian representation" and, like on the cover of the book is a blurb that's like, "Lesbian necromancers in space," and it's like, I don't know. I just don't really love that it's getting so much applause for that reason.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Like, there's a lot of reasons to applaud it. It's, like, a very well-constructed and interesting fantasy, and the main character is, like, a great narrator. But, like, I just don't think we should -- I'm just tired of people getting credit for their, like, little spittle of queer representation. It's ...

Emily: I think that the blurbs industry --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Is poison.

Sally: Yeah. I do too.

Emily: I just think that authors -- it's, like, this weird, incestuous thing where it's like, "I'll give you a blurb on your book -- that you can put on your book --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Cover, and I'm a well-known author," and it's like, I dunno, we get some sort of payback.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it's just, like, the thrill of helping make you into what you are.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: 'Cause, like, I've picked up books that are like, oh, this was liked by some author I like.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, I picked up a book that had a little blurb from Naomi Novik, and that -- you know what? That book sucked.

Sally: (laugh) Sorry, Naomi.

Emily: It literally sucked balls, Naomi. Like --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Naomi, it was so shitty. Why would you --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Endorse that unless a) you have no taste, which I don't want to believe --

Sally: Yeah, or b) your publisher made you.

Emily: Yeah, or b) your publisher made you, because the publishing industry is also poison.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I don't know. I don't want to, like, assume the worst about people. I just think the whole thing lends itself to, like, dumb practices where we are valuing -- like, just fucking be honest about what you think about a book, I say.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah, and, like -- again, like, there's a lot about the book that's super interesting. It just made me really mad that that is, like, the reason people are talking about it.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Because it's like, I also -- like, it's better lesbian representation than most things that I've seen in that there is a character who's canonically a woman who is like, "I am attracted to these other women and men -- and not to men."

Emily: But it's so sad that that is literally the standard --

Sally: Right?

Emily: For lesbian representation. Y'know?

Sally: And she doesn't -- well, actually, no spoilers. But.

Emily: Ah. Well, and it's like, I just don't -- just because it has gays in it doesn't mean it's --

Sally: Yeah. Good gay representation.

Emily: Good. Like, I wouldn't call *Captive* -- the fucking *Captive Prince* trilogy good gay representation. That shit's extremely toxic. What I would call it is escapist fantasy.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And that is what it qualifies is -- as.

Sally: Yeah, and that's why -- that's -- if you read it in that mindset, it's enjoyable.

Emily: With, like, some sparkling prose thrown in there. Sparkling prose?

Sally: Yeah, there is some very gutting prose at times.

Emily: Yeah, I was like, ah, fuck. Fuck me.

Sally: Excuse me.

Emily: Whatever your name is, I forgot. CS?

Sally: CS Pacat.

Emily: CS Pacat.

Sally: Pacat.

Emily: OK.

Sally: I also read one last book, which is, um --

Emily: The Seven --

Sally: *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls*. Which I loved. It was a bit more academic and, like, intense than I thought it was gonna be. Um. I don't know exactly what I thought it was going to be, but I learned a lot about global feminisms, which was really cool, and various global feminist activists that, um, she did a really good job -- 'cause she's Egyptian-born, Mona Eltahawy, I think her name is? I can't remember. Um. She was born in Egypt and lived in a variety of places in the Middle East, so she did a really great job, obviously, not focusing on the United States like most feminists do.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: So it was really great. I really loved it.

Emily: That's good.

Sally: And it gave me a good radical feminist stance on some things.

Emily: I'm excited to read that book, *The Body Is Not An Apology*, and *Uprooted*.

Sally: Yeah, *Uprooted* is really good.

Emily: And *Lumberjanes*. The other books you read I don't think were --

Sally: Yeah. I mean --

Emily: Were as interesting to me, anyway.

Sally: Yeah. If Gideon had turned out a little better, I think you would have really liked it. The necromancy in it -- the, like, magic -- the way they do their necromancy, is very interesting.

Emily: Ah, cool.

Sally: But, um.

Emily: Yeah, I'm always down for some necromancy. You know me.

Sally: And, like, the aesthetic is very good. Like, Gideon is this -- just this, like, huge jock himbo lesbian with, like, your haircut --

Emily: Do love that.

Sally: And she always wears, like, face paint like a skull.

Emily: Cool.

Sally: And just has -- like, loves her long sword. (laugh)

Emily: I -- no one should have my haircut. I should say that.

Sally: It's a good haircut. I really like it.

Emily: Not right now it's not. It keeps trying to part down the middle. And I don't like it.

Sally: (laugh) I'm sorry.

Emily: It's OK. It'll grow out eventually.

Sally: Tybalt, why are you sitting there of all places?

Emily: Then I came home and Devin just, like, threw a bunch of comics at me as is his custom.

Sally: Yesterday I walked in the house -- (laugh)

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: And Emily was sitting -- or maybe it was Monday.

Emily: It was Monday.

Sally: Whatever. Emily was sitting on the couch reading a comic that Devin gave her with just the most horrified and bewildered look on her face, and I was like, what is going on? (laugh)

Emily: Ironically, that was one of my favorite comics that he's ever given me.

Sally: You looked shocked and appalled.

Emily: It was very good. It was just, like, about a man who loves his tall wife. I mean, there was, like, superhero shit going on too --

Sally: Mm.

Emily: And, like, trauma recovery --

Sally: It's about a man who loves his tall wife.

Emily: But mostly it was about a man who loves his tall wife. The other one he gave me that I -- well, he gave me a bunch more, but now I'm reading Bitch Planet --

Sally: Mm.

Emily: Which is pretty triggering. It's, like, the whole, um -- so far it's just like *A Handmaid's Tale* --

Sally: Hmm.

Emily: In, like, "Imagine a society where women are oppressed," and I'm like, "I don't have to imagine it, bitch. I live there."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Like, I don't need to read about it, y'know?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um, but we'll see. Maybe it will turn out great. Hi, Devin, if you're listening -- (laugh)

Sally: Hi Devin, if you're listening, which I think you are.

Emily: He does.

Sally: I love you, Devin.

Emily: I love you, Devin. Thanks for watching Die Hard with me last night. Well, really, thank you to Janet for allowing me and Devin to watch Die Hard last night.

Sally: Janet should've come and hung out with me.

Emily: Anyway, so that was our book round-up of the cruise. Do you want me to imprison him?

Sally: I just want him to stop being such a piece of shit.

Emily: He just is -- we got a -- Sally got a printer for Christmas --

Sally: I did get a printer.

Emily: It's very exciting. OK, now we can talk about the Wheel of Time. Sorry if you're like, "Oh my God, they're not even talking about the Wheel of Time until 25 minutes into the podcast." You know what? No one's forcing you to listen to this. Go away. (laugh)

Sally: Oh, OK, that's good stewardship of our listeners.

Emily: Well. Just don't complain to me, is all I'm saying.

Sally: (laugh) OK. Don't seek out Emily.

Emily: Don't seek out Emily. That's me. OK, we read two chapters, one of which was called "Misdirections," which I know 'cause Sally posted an Instagram about it, and I saw the chapter card -- tile? -- tile -- tile. Chapter tile?

Sally: I usually call them chapter tiles. I don't know --

Emily: OK.

Sally: What the fuck anyone else calls them.

Emily: No, I think you're right.

Sally: And I don't give a shit.

Emily: Anyway, they're two chapters, uh, plot-wise, following Rand and co. as they leave Rhuidean and head toward, uh, the Golden Bowl.

Sally: All ... Call ...

Emily: Alcair Dal?

Sally: (mumbling)

Emily: (mumbling)

Sally: All tear Dal.

Emily: Ochre? That's --

Sally: Oh -- okra.

Emily: Is that something?

Sally: Fried okra. (laugh)

Emily: Oh, hey. Um. They're kinda two weird chapters 'cause they alternate, in-chapter --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Between Rand and Mat, multiple times --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: In one instance. So that's a little strange break from tradition, but, uh, I guess it's fine because I don't want to be inside Rand's head for a full chapter.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: It's just a little --

Sally: That sounds awful.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And I know 'cause I've gone through seven books that way.

Emily: Multiple -- multiple chapters that are just in Rand's head. They're so bad. Like the whole first book.

Sally: He's got a bad head.

Emily: Yeah. He does have -- there's a hilarious line where Mat is like, "I just wish Rand would decide whether he's crazy or not." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) I know, he's like, "It's getting to bother me, personally."

Emily: He's like, "I'm just, like, you're just confusing now. I just want -- are you gonna be -- are you gonna be visibly insane or not?"

Sally: "You gonna be crazy or nah?"

Emily: "I would just like you to pick a side."

Sally: "I need you -- I need you to pick a side."

Emily: "Enough flip-flopping, young man." (laugh)

Sally: Which is rich, coming from the world's -- (laugh)

Emily: Flip-floppiest -- (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) Flip-floppiest boy.

Emily: Boy. (laugh) Anyway, Rand's whole first segment is all about how annoying it is that Aviendha's hanging out with him now or whatever. He's like, "It's obvious that she's been sent

to spy on me, but it is also obvious that now she's wearing skirts to seduce me," or something, and it's like, you're fifty percent correct, Rand Al'Thor. And also so dumb.

Sally: Yeah. It -- (sigh) Rand is just such a fascinating character because there are moments like this where his ego and just, like, his inflated sense of self really comes out of this character that everybody quotes as having so much, um, self-loathing and therefore excusing his actions in that way. And I'm like ...

Emily: Here's a hot take: self-loathing? Still self-centered.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like --

Sally: True. Damn, Emily. Your galaxy brain.

Emily: (laugh) It's because I've been watching Critical Role, and my least favorite character in that entire thing is just like, "I just hate myself so much," and I'm like, "Stop being selfish." (laugh) "Do -- do things for other people. Maybe you'll feel better about yourself."

Sally: It's true.

Emily: "Calm down." Um, yeah, I just -- I agree. Rand is a very egotistical person.

Sally: Yeah. And just the fact that he's like, "Aviendha has changed her clothes. Obviously it's to hop on this dick," and it's like, first of all, you absolute fucking idiot -- (laugh) She's dressed like a Wise One. Do you not have fucking eyes?

Emily: I know, he's -- she's like -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Rolls up in uniform --

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) And he's like --

Emily: And he's like, "It's all for me."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "This -- she could not resist this hunk of sun-burned flesh."

Sally: (laugh) I know, it's so annoying.

Emily: (laugh) "This -- this crime against God."

Sally: Like, "I'm too hot. Obviously she had to put on extremely bulky skirts --"

Emily Oh my God.

Sally: “And an unflattering linen shirt.”

Emily: Is it because she’s not standing in a line with the Wise Ones?

Sally: I guess. He’s just an idiot. (laugh)

Emily: He’s so stupid.

Sally: It really pissed me off.

Emily: I know.

Sally: But -- (laugh)

Emily: He’s like, “And Egwene’s hair is in two braids, and it looks dumb. But I’m only saying that ‘cause I’m mad at her.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it’s like, Rand. Calm down.

Sally: Please stop commenting on women’s bodies.

Emily: Yeah. Anyway, he basically is just like, “And here’s what we’re doing. We’re moving across the desert. Us, with the Wise Ones in the middle -- there’s a Wise Ones sandwich.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: “With Rhuarc’s group and then Couladin’s --”

Sally: Taardad?

Emily: The Taardad, I think.

Sally: Taardad.

Emily: Taardad. It’s like crawdad.

Sally: Eldritch blast.

Emily: Eldritch blast.

Sally: (laugh) OK. Um, yeah, and then the Shaido behind the Wise Ones.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um. But my first point that I noticed when I was reading it is that I think they should film part of the Aiel Waste in Arches National Park.

Emily: Oh my God, I was gonna say that.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Literally, he's like --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "All the mount -- all the ground is so broken --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "And there are natural arches --"

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "And things, and there's this big looming mountains in the distance," and I'm like, "You're fucking describing Utah, Robert Jordan.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: That's just what the whole dang state looks like.

Sally: Yeah. Go to --

Emily: Once you get away from the suburbs.

Sally: Yeah. Once you just get past, like ... really, I guess --

Emily: Springville.

Sally: Yeah, Springville.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Then it's just like beautiful golden-brown red rock.

Emily: Or Nephi, perhaps.

Sally: Oh, God, Nephi. (laugh)

Emily: I know, Nephi's terrible.

Sally: Is where dreams go to die. (laugh)

Emily: We went to a truck stop there on the way to the Shakespeare festival --

Sally: Yeah. We would always stop there too.

Emily: It's the one combined with the Denny's.

Sally: Yes.

Emily: Yep.

Sally: That one's also where dreams go to die --

Emily: It's bad.

Sally: Specifically.

Emily: And I was like, "I just want a donut," and my dad was like, "Here, have a hot dog," and I was like, "I hate you."

Sally: This is not even remotely the right food.

Emily: I was like, "No, Chris! No!"

Sally: But yeah, they should film it in Arches or, um, Goblin Valley, I think is the one that's got all those rocks that are, like, tilted.

Emily: Yeah. I went to Goblin Valley on a little weekend trip with my family when I was little.

Sally: Yeah, so anyway, um, Wheel of Time at Amazon Prime or whatever, if you're listening, come to Utah to film the Aiel Waste.

Emily: Yeah. Consider.

Sally: And then pay us to report on it on social media.

Emily: Yeah, we could do that.

Sally: I know how to get to Arches National Park.

Emily: And we have a national park card.

Sally: That's fuckin' true. We'll get there for free. You don't even have to pay our entrance fee.

Emily: We really -- We really gotta use that. (laugh)

Sally: I know, we should go somewhere fun.

Emily: Grand Canyon.

Sally: Grand Canyon. I would also like to go to Glacier National Park in Montana.

Emily: OK. I'd like to do that too when the weather warms up a little bit.

Sally: Yeah, obviously we should not go to Montana in the winter. (laugh)

Emily: We could go to Grand Canyon in the --

Sally: Yeah. That'd be fun.

Emily: Middle of the winter. I've never been to the Grand Canyon.

Sally: Me neither!

Emily: I don't even think that I'll be that impressed with it. I know that's the worst --

Sally: It's grand. (laugh)

Emily: I know it's grand. (laugh) It's in the fucking name.

Sally: And it's a canyon -- it's a big fucking canyon. What's not impressive about that?

Emily: I just know myself, and I know that I've seen pictures and so then I'll get there and kind of want there to be more majesty than is represented in the pictures, and I'll just be like, "Ah, it just looks the same in the pictures."

Sally: Well, we can't get a fuckin' bird's eye view of it, Emily the way they do on Nat Geo. (laugh)

Emily: Isn't there a glass platform?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: There was in Percy Jackson.

Sally: Yeah, it --

Emily: Literally, if Rick Riordan writes something about a national park, I assume it is there.

Sally: Yeah, he --

Emily: Why haven't any of Rick Riordan's characters been to Yellowstone?

Sally: Maybe he's saving it. Don't reveal his secrets.

Emily: Maybe he is. Next Trials of Apollo book.

Sally: The fourth -- surprise fourth Magnus Chase book takes place in Yellowstone National Park. (laugh)

Emily: (gasps) Don't fucking at me, I would love that! I love that series.

Sally: I know, it --

Emily: Except it really stumbled at the finish line around some things. But.

Sally: Around what?

Emily: Well, it didn't have his dads become gay.

Sally: Oh, that's right. I remember now.

Emily: And also just the ending was a little anticlimactic.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: We talked about that.

Sally: Yeah, we did.

Emily: The third book was, like, just not as good as the second book.

Sally: The second book was a fucking work of art.

Emily: Yeah. Second book was kick-ass, then it got to the third book, and it was like, "We are no longer going to focus on the core group."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Now we're expanding suddenly."

Sally: "To all these weirdos." And I was like --

Emily: And I was like, "Nah, homie."

Sally: "Why aren't you letting my dads kiss?"

Emily: I know, it's just like, just let the five main characters be the five main characters, y'know?

Sally: Yeah. They're so good.

Emily: Six, if you count the talking sword. Which I always do.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: OK, whatever. Anyway, Aviendha's like, "I am -- let me just describe Elayne's body extremely porno -- pornographically in front of a lot of strange men."

Sally: Yeah, and I'm like, "Girl."

Emily: And I'm like, "I bet Elayne would love that, Aviendha."

Sally: Yeah. It's like, listen. I don't -- I don't even know where to start on this one.

Emily: I know, I can't -- I can't even begin to parse it.

Sally: If --

Emily: But Aviendha's like, "Are you not horny? As I describe --"

Sally: "Are you not horny?!" (laugh)

Emily: (laugh, imitating Russell Crowe) "ARE YOU NOT HORNY?"

Sally: Joaquin Phoenix is -- the thumbs-down. (laugh)

Emily: Fucking Russell Crowe -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Are you --

Emily: (distant) ARE YOU NOT HORNY?

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Does some groin thrusts. (laugh) Ah, damn. Title of the episode.

Sally: (laugh) Are you -- all caps.

Emily: Are you not horny? (laugh)

Sally: Anyway. And Rand's like, "No, this is uncomfortable!"

Emily: "No, this is super uncomfortable because I'm in front of, like, three of my father figures."

Sally: Yeah. And also, like, seven hundred strange Aiel.

Emily: And also I've got so much shame surrounding women's bodies.

Sally: Yeah. But it's also like, if one of my friends was like, "I'm gonna insult the man who you're in love with by graphically describing your hips and breasts," I'd be like, "You're dead."

Emily: I know. Like, that would be --

Sally: "You're a dead bitch."

Emily: Such a betrayal of trust.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: She's like, "Haven't you seen Elayne in the bath?" and Rand is like, "Fuck -- no, I haven't. What?" (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: And she's like, "Damn, someone should've arranged that."

Sally: And he's like, "What are you talking about?!" (laugh)

Emily: (inaudible) Like, it's just supposed to be, like, a funny culture clash thing, but it's like, don't have the battleground for culture clash --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Be sex and --

Sally: Women's bodies in particular.

Emily: And women's bodies and just, like, romantic sexual relationships, because that is always going to turn out poorly --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: For the women involved especially.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: The men will get off looking -- oh yeah, it's fine.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: They're men, who cares? No one's humiliated there. But, anyway. This turned out in a way I wasn't expecting, which was defending Elayne. (laugh) But.

Sally: Goddamnit.

Emily: Girl does not deserve to have her entire naked body aired in the goddamn desert.

Sally: Yeah, it's, like, so -- it's just so awful. And it's like, "Aviendha, what are you doing?"

Emily: The only funny part about it is that Aviendha keeps being like, "She told you so much truth in those two letters," because that's what Egwene told her to say.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Egwene doesn't know fuck-all.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Rand is like, “I cannot emphasize this enough to you: those letters were written by two different women.” (laugh) “I don’t know what to begin -- I don’t --” I’m only mad that Robert Jordan didn’t give us the text of the letters.

Sally: I know.

Emily: It’s a real crime against humanity that he didn’t, like --

Sally: I feel like we should write them.

Emily: We could.

Sally: Which one do you want to write?

Emily: Umm. I dunno, I could really rip Rand a new one in the -- in the angry one, but I don’t know. I feel like my prose could never come close to what --

Sally: That’s true. One of us then would have to feign some sort of affection for --

Emily: Yeah, and I couldn’t do that. Anyway, the whole time, Rand is just like, “God, I wish Min was here because Min doesn’t make me feel uncomfortable except for the multiple times that she does.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it’s like, Rand’s weird nostalgia for Min is so odd and off-putting, and when it’s contrasted with the other two women, it just makes it feel like she is the only actual relationship he has.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It kind of, like -- I -- I mean, I don’t know. We’ve all -- we’ve all come to the consensus that while we would love if Rand’s relationship with his three girlfriends was an actual polyamorous relationship --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: We’d all love that, but it isn’t. It’s just polygamy.

Sally: Yeah. And I was actually thinking about this a lot, because I’ve been becoming increasingly more interested in, like, ethical non-monogamy --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And the way that people practice that and the ways that it can, like, function. And it’s just, like, there’s nothing, really, like, ethical -- you can’t really call it non-monogamy, because the

three women, while they eventually consent, it's like, everyone comes to it through a lot of trial. It's just not like everybody walks openly --

Emily: Yeah, no one's happy about it.

Sally: Yeah. Like, not even Rand, really. (laugh) So it's just, like --

Emily: Yeah. Rand is miserable with it for 85 percent of it, at least.

Sally: Yeah. And so it's just like nothing about it can be considered ethical non-monogamy or polyamory. It is legitimately just like, straight up and down across the board, toxic polygamy.

Emily: Yeah. And it's just like, also, when you combine the fact that Min spends the -- way, by far -- the most screen time with Rand --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It just becomes this, like, weirdly, like, tiered thing, where it's like, oh, well, Min's the actual wife.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Elayne and Aviendha are just like his -- his women that he makes babies with.

Sally: Yeah, side pieces.

Emily: That he impregnates.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's a -- it's just, as always, disturbing. Uh, anyway, then they -- their group comes across some peddlers in the Waste. Which, we switch over to Mat's point of view, presumably so that we're not in Rand's head when he's like, "Ah, the Forsaken are here."

Sally: (laugh) Are all four of them Forsaken?

Emily: No. Uh, the gleeman is obviously Asmodean --

Sally: Asmodeen.

Emily: Asmodeen. (pause)

Sally: No, it's Asmodean, I just like calling him Asmodeen.

Emily: OK, I forgot what the joke was there for a minute. I was like, I could no longer parse what was reality and what was the joke.

Sally: No. (laugh) I'm pretty sure it's Asmodean. I just like calling him Asmodeen. I think it's funny.

Emily: I like Asmodeen too. Um --

Sally: Like Rhuideen. Asmodeen.

Emily: Rhuideen. Asmodeen. Anyway, yeah, he's there, and so is Lanfear, disguised as the woman peddler. The, like, ugly -- quote unquote "ugly" one --

Sally: Oh, yeah. But you know she's not really ugly because her voice is really pretty, as Mat tells us frequently.

Emily: Because her voice is really pretty. Mat's like, "It doesn't match," and it's like, shut the fuck up, Mat.

Sally: Mat, you piece of shit.

Emily: And also, shut up, Robert Jordan. Women --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Are not just, like, their parts.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: That if one of them is beautiful, everything -- I don't know. It's all bullshit.

Sally: (laugh) Robert Jordan, you're full of shit.

Emily: You're full of shit, Robert. Robbie. Bobby.

Sally: Bobby!

Emily: Bullshit. Um -- bullshit Bobby, up in here.

Sally: (laugh) Bullshit Bobby Jordan.

Emily: Yeah. (laugh) Uh, and then the main peddler dude, who Rand keeps being like, "He's a dangerous dude 'cause his eyes don't change," and it's like, that's just a sociopath, Rand.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, given, he's probably a serial killer 'cause he's a Darkfriend or whatever, but that doesn't mean he's a Forsaken. Look at the extravagantly gay gleeman over here who's interrogating Mat for information about Rhuidean.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: He's the Forsaken.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Just 'cause -- just 'cause he doesn't have "scary eyes." And anyway, the hot lady is also just a Darkfriend.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So they're just a couple of Darkfriends who will be brutally murdered --

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: By the end of next book, I believe.

Sally: I think that's right.

Emily: Yeah, they're --

Sally: Spoiler alert, I guess.

Emily: Short-lived. Just like Lanfear. Man, half this -- half --

Sally: Rest in pieces, bitch.

Emily: Literally, this entire crew we just meet die --

Sally: Dead.

Emily: By the end of book five.

Sally: RIP, Asmodean.

Emily: Except Lanfear, sort of ...

Sally: That's the only one I'm a little sad about.

Emily: Yeah, I know, I'm -- RIP --

Sally: Asmodean's a fascinating character.

Emily: I know, bring him back. He was, in fact, the only interesting Forsaken.

Sally: (laugh) I love that scene where Mat's like, "Da da da, plotting war," and Asmodean's, like, playing his harp --

Emily: Asmodean's like, "What the fuck?"

Sally: In the background, like, "Jesus Christ." (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) His music getting increasingly more confused.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) It's like the best scene in the whole series.

Emily: Aw, God, you could do so many funny things with that scene.

Sally: I know.

Emily: Just imagine if Asmodean was just, like, playing hip-hop songs always, and everyone was like, "Oh yeah, like, da da da da da --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And he's, like, playing "Toxic" by Britney Spears.

Sally: (laugh) Again --

Emily: We should be writing the Wheel of Time.

Sally: Yeah, what the hell. Sorry to this man or whatever, but we should be in charge.

Emily: Anyway, there's some clashing of the Aiel over the, uh, who's gonna escort the peddlers, who are like --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "We're looking for Cold Rocks Hold." And everyone's like, "Yeah, that's on our way, we'll take you there." Um, but also, "You are way far out of your way --"

Sally: (laugh) My friend Brianna just sent us this -- (inaudible) What are you doing?

Emily: (wheeze) It's so funny.

Sally: (laugh) OK, sorry, guys.

Emily: (inaudible, laughing)

Sally: (laugh) I'm -- OK, sorry.

Emily: It was good.

Sally: Um.

Emily: Uh, and --

Sally: There's a territory thing.

Emily: Yeah, there's a territory thing. It's like, "Oh, who's gonna escort the peddler?" and then Mat is like, "I don't give a fuck. Someone give me their hat."

Sally: (laugh) Again --

Emily: And he does, which is, like, gross to me.

Sally: Yeah. It's like --

Emily: I would -- like, if I get a hat from someone's sweaty head --

Sally: Yeah. That's all I was thinking.

Emily: It's -- I don't want that. I'm like, "Aw, damn, the sweat transfer." How can you not be thinking about that?

Sally: I know. It's like -- and when he asks for it, it's like, "Give me a hat like that one --"

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And then she just rips the sweaty hat off his head and is like, "Here you go," and Mat's like, "Excellent."

Emily: This is an unrealistic portrayal of what it's like to be in a hot climate, is all I'm thinking, because no one is thinking enough about how sweaty they are.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: When I'm hot, it's just, like, a constant monologue.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "I'm so sweaty. I'm so sweaty. I'm so uncomfortable. I want to be dead."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "I want to be in the shower."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Dear God, someone help me."

Sally: And I dunk my head in a bucket of ice water.

Emily: Yeah, no one's thinking -- I mean, Mat comes closest, but. And Rand's --

Sally: Mat does comment frequently about how sweaty he is.

Emily: I know. Mat's just like, "I'm fucking sweaty," and it's like, big mood.

Sally: Yeah. Rand's got his coat on, 'cause he's like, "The layer of sweat keeps me cool."

Emily: And it's like --

Sally: (gagging noise) Disgusting.

Emily: The smell.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Imagine the smell.

Sally: You stink. You need a hygiene talk, Rand Al'Thor.

Emily: He's just a tall stink man.

Sally: Didn't anyone ever give you the maturation program? (laugh)

Emily: Ew. (laugh)

Sally: Wear deodorant!

Emily: Oh, Utah, you're so stupid.

Sally: He's a tall stink man. (laugh)

Emily: Oh, the other funny thing about this is that Rand's so self-conscious -- self-centered, is like, "All the Wise Ones should be coming with me because they are all obsessed with me."

Sally: Yeah. And they're literally just like --

Emily: "I can't help that everyone is obsessed with me."

Sally: "I'm sorry, everyone's just obsessed with me." While they're literally off just, like, doing completely unrelated shit.

Emily: No, they're eavesdropping on him with Moiraine's --

Sally: Oh, that's right, with Moiraine's little jewel.

Emily: Jewel. They're like -- and they're all gathered around it, and it's like, "It's 'cause they're listening to your convos, you dummy."

Sally: And he's like, "They're just women looking at pretty jewelry."

Emily: He's like, "Oh my God, they're just do distracted by shiny things." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) "Like a bunch of magpies."

Emily: "Like raccoons." (laugh) Like, what the hell.

Sally: You know it's legal in Oklahoma to have up to six raccoons? (laugh) No more, though.

Emily: (laugh) Uh, anyway, then they get to, uh, this, like, place where they're camping for the night called Imre Stand. Imre? Imre?

Sally: Imre

Emily: Imre. Imre. Something Stand. And they're like, "It has water, so that's why we're staying there," even though the sun hasn't gone down yet.

Sally: Even though the water is like a bucket.

Emily: The water is like three sips, and Rand's like, "This ain't water." And Rhuarc's like, "What the fuck? This is a fortune of water. What are you talking about? Privileged fuck." (laugh)

Sally; (laugh) "Take your wetlander privilege out of here."

Emily: "Take your wetlander privilege out of here." Um. (laugh) But some scouts are like, "I dunno, looks wack," so then they go up there and there's, like, the little building that's just, like, soaked in blood on the inside.

Sally: Yeah. It's disgusting.

Emily: And Mat's like, "Well, Trollocs were here," and Aviendha's like, "Don't be a dipshit, Mat. Trollocs would never come far this south."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Mat's like, "OK, I know Trollocs, but what the fuck -- what the fuck ever, lady."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Cue ten minutes later --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: When the Trollocs attack --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: En masse.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Mat is like -- locks eyes with Aviendha and is like, "Hey."

Sally: (whisper) "Fuck you."

Emily: "Fuck you. Don't you dare question my expertise." (laugh)

Sally: "Who's the dipshit now, Aviendha?"

Emily: Yeah, "Who's the dipshit now?" Although they have a -- they have their one and only amiable interaction --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: At the end, when Mat's like --

Sally: Oh, yeah, it's very charming.

Emily: He says, "Oh, I'm fine. Nothing like a little dance with Trollocs to ready you for sleep. Right, Aviendha?" and she just, like, smiles.

Sally: She's like "Ha ha, OK."

Emily: She's like, "Ha. The Aiel humor."

Sally: Yeah. "Ah ha HA HA."

Emily: "Ha ha ha."

Sally: "Someone who gets it."

Emily: Anyway, everyone's like, "Ah, no worries. We're just gonna camp here." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) I know, it's super funny.

Emily: In this clear trap. No worries.

Sally: Yeah, in this clear trap, with just, like, Trolloc bodies everywhere.

Emily: Yeah. Rand's legit like, "I am one hundo percent camping with at least two of the Forsaken," and he's just like, "No big deal."

Sally: Yeah, he's like, "Eh."

Emily: NBD. "Don't worry about the NPCs who are all gonna get slaughtered tonight. I don't care about red-shirts." Whatever. Um, and then he has a whole thing where he's like, "Oh my God, Lan, train me with the sword. Lan. Daddy. Please. Just fucking train me with the sword." And Lan's like, "Fine, even though it will be culturally offensive to literally your entire army here," and Rand's like, "Don't give a shit." And then Rhuarc's like, "You want me to teach you how to use spears?"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "God's perfect weapon?" (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) "Let me introduce you to my favorite possession."

Emily: "The spear."

Sally: "Every spear ever made." (laugh)

Emily: And Rand's like, "Sure, I guess." Um, and they talk about tactics and some bullshit. And he finally finds out, oh, Aviendha's a Wise One. And he's like, "Oh, does that mean she's gonna channel? Ugh. Every woman channels. Except Min. Min's the only woman I feel safe around."

Sally: "Min's the perfect only woman. Everyone else is a ho."

Emily: Why don't you fucking marry her then, Rand?

Sally: Yeah. It's such a, like, weird take on the, like, Madonna/whore complex.

Emily: Yeah. That he's just like, "But I love my mom."

Sally: Yeah. "But I love Min, who's untainted and doesn't channel."

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: "But all these whore women who can channel."

Emily: Who have power.

Sally: Yeah, there was an interesting -- speaking of women being called whores -- there was -- one of the chapters in *The Seven Necessary Sins for Women and Girls* talks about the equation of, um, like, attention whores -- the idea that --

Emily: Mm. Yeah.

Sally: A woman wants too much, and that's the same with sex -- like, you're called a whore when you want too much or more than women should take, and I feel like that's kind of the vibe you get from channelers. Like, these women are taking "too much" power away from the natural order.

Emily: Yeah. Yeah. Just because I want something doesn't mean --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: You know.

Sally: I feel like that's why a lot of people have problems with Egg -- Egwene.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: They're like, "She's such a --" they, like, don't like her character because she's a woman with ambition.

Emily: Yeah. Because she wants --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Shit in life. It's like --

Sally: Yeah. Other than someone's dick.

Emily: I mean, she does want someone's dick.

Sally: Yeah. That's unfortunate. I try to not forget --

Emily: It is unfortunate.

Sally: I try to forget about that.

Emily: I know. He just has -- it's kind of charming in book five, when she's just like, "I started having sex dreams about him, and then I saw him and was like, 'Sweet, and now I can hop on that dick.'"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But then it, like, just devolves into ...

Sally: Yeah. Honestly, if Gawyn was just, like, on screen to be Egg's, like --

Emily: I literally spent my entire last blog talking about this. I was like, Gawyn had such wasted potential as a -- just like a side piece character.

Sally: Yeah. Just as Egg's body.

Emily: But it just becomes this meta thing where he's like, "I deserve to be in the plot more --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Literally.

Sally: Ah, that's annoying.

Emily: And you're like, "No, you don't. You're not -- just 'cause you're --"

Sally: Like, how funny would it be if he was just, like, Egg's booty call.

Emily: Honestly.

Sally: And he was just like this chill frat himbo.

Emily: God, I would love if Gawyn was a himbo.

Sally: And Egg is just like, "Hello, I need an orgasm," and he's like, "Coming."

Emily: (sing-song) "Come heeeeere." (laugh)

Sally: LMAO. (laugh) And she's like, "Thank you, you can leave now," and he's like, "Cool." (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) "Cool. I've got things to do."

Sally: And then he just fucks off. Yeah.

Emily: "I'm gonna play on my X-Box or whatever."

Sally: Yeah. And she's like, "He's perfect. He's the perfect man."

Emily: "It's the perfect man." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) But instead, he's the worst character ever written.

Emily: I know. So terrible. Anyway, while Mat -- I mean, while Rand is chatting with some of the creepy peddlers, Mat starts talking to Asmodean about Rhuidean. Mat also tells us now, explicitly, "Oh, check it out, I've got a bunch of dead dudes' --"

Sally: "In my head," yeah.

Emily: "Memories in my head." Um. Including, like, Asmodean starts, like, declaiming about some battle and --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Uh, Mat is like, "Oh, no, it didn't actually happen like that. I was there."

Sally: And he's like, "Wait." (laugh)

Emily: "Wait, wait, no I wasn't."

Sally: "What the fuck -- what just happened? Ahh! Ahh!"

Emily: "Ahh!" Um. It's actually a very charming scene --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Because the entire time Mat's just like, "Thom would do this better."

Sally: Yeah. He's like, "This is a shitty-ass gleeman. He doesn't even flourish his cloak."

Emily: "This is a shitty gleeman." Yeah. He's like, "He takes no pride in his goddamn work."

Sally: Yeah. And Asmodean's like, "That's right. I'm very depressed."

Emily: Asmodean -- (laugh) Asmodean's like, "First of all, I'm undercover, so jot that down."

Sally: (laugh) "Jot that fucking down."

Emily: Asmodean's like, "I have to run fetch my harp," and Mat's like, "What?"

Sally: "You don't just have it with you?"

Emily: "You don't just have it up your ass like Thom constantly has his?" (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "Thom couldn't be parted with his harp to get through goddamn airport security."

Sally: It's true.

Emily: He'd be like, "I refuse."

Sally: Like Liz Lemon eating her whole sandwich --

Emily: Exactly.

Sally: "I can have it all!" (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Ah, Thom, you nutcase. But then while they're sitting around chatting about bygone eras, the Trollocs attack, and there's just some -- you know, mindless slaughter for a little while.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um. And Mat has another iconic line where Rand is like, "OK --" Rand is acting crazy, and Mat says, "I'm going to get some sleep. Wake me if the Trollocs show up again. Or better yet, let them kill me in my blankets. I am too tired to wake up again." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Which is such a huge mood.

Sally: Yeah. "Just let them kill me. I want to be asleep."

Emily: "Just let them kill me. I want to be dead." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: "You all are so annoying. I'm so sweaty."

Sally: "I hate this place."

Emily: "This is terrible, and I cannot wait to leave with the peddlers."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I dunno. Oh, Mat.

Sally: They're just, like -- they're -- these chapters are so frustrating to read because Mat is just such a charming narrator no matter what he's doing, and then Rand, who's just like, "Gloom, gloom, death.: Self-centered --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Fucking nonsense.

Emily: And we have Mat, who is, like, embodying what I want in that he's like, "I want to get away from Rand."

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) Yeah, true.

Emily: But there is this element of violence, like, just compelling him to stay.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: He talks about being held there by Rand, which is just, like, so uncomfortable to think about, because it's like, I dunno, you, like, get the vibe that he is metaphorically being pinned by Rand.

Sally: Yeah. Which is so sad, because Mat's entrie --

Emily: Which is an upsetting, yeah, thing to think about.

Sally: Arc is about being captured and then striving for freedom --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: In a variety of different ways, and it's really upsetting.

Emily: Yeah. I just want Mat to be free.

Sally: I just want Mat to go live his gambling life.

Emily: Yeah. I just want him to do his little thing.

Sally: Yeah. Little cutie.

Emily: Let him be his self. (sigh) Anyway, did you have anything else you wanted to say about these chapters?

Sally: No, I think we got it -- most of it -- in roundabout ways.

Emily: OK.

Sally: Plus we just got Rand's dumbass ego.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: It's really bothering me.

Emily: It is.

Sally: In these chapters. 'Cause at one point, Aviendha's being rude to him, and he's like, "If you don't have any respect for your chief, maybe you can have respect for the Car'a'carn," or whatever, and Rhuarc's like, "Listen, bitch."

Emily: Rhuarc flips him off --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And is like, "Listen."

Sally: "You don't deserve anybody's fucking respect."

Emily: Yeah. "A) We're not like that."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "We're not -- we don't believe in monarchies, you dumb fuck."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But then he's also like, "Aviendha, I know you're unhappy, but you don't have to be a dick to literally everyone."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Aviendha's like, "Ah, fuck. Put in place by my dad."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it's like, Rhuarc, you're so wise.

Sally: I know.

Emily: I wish you were in my life always.

Sally: Yeah. Why -- can we just, like, take Lan out of the narrative and just put you in wherever Lan is?

Emily: I know, it would be so much better. Anyway, next chapters will be about Elayne and Nynaeve, which is unfortunate, and also some, like, weird Seanchan shit. Catching up with Egeanin --

Sally: I hate the Seanchan.

Emily: And Bayle Domon.

Sally: Do like Bayle Domon, though.

Emily: Do like Bayle Domon. Egeanin is literally the only Seanchan character that I'm like, "I could give a fuck about you." She has some troubling things happen later, though, that are imposed upon her by the narration. She changes her name 'cause she's like, "Ah, the shame." I don't -- I can't --

Sally: What the fuck?

Emily: I can't talk about it now. We'll talk about it when we get there. Blegh. But, uhhh, that's it.

Sally: That's it!

Emily: Thanks to Glynn MacKenzie for the use of our theme song. It's so nice. Thank you.

Sally: Yeah. It slaps.

Emily: Thank you for bearing with us while we had a week off. That was good. I feel refreshed.

Sally: I do too. That was the first time we've taken a week off in over a year.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Almost a year and a half.

Emily: I feel like we have more energy. We definitely did this episode. Are you not horny? The title of this episode.

Sally: Are you not horny?!

Emily: Are you not HORNY?! Ahhh!

Sally: Um. Thank you -- I -- looking towards the future, thank you to everybody who submitted a sticker design for our --

Emily: Yes.

Sally: Call for submissions. We --

Emily: We're so excited to look at all of them.

Sally: Yeah. To look at all of them and get that process moving so that we can, um, make some merchandise. So thank you for, um, putting time and energy -- your creative pursuits -- into our ding-dong podcast. (laugh) For ding-dongs.

Emily: Um. Yeah, thank you for your sticker submissions. Do you have a sign-off?

Sally: (laugh) Yeah.

Emily: Oh.

Sally: So today -- (laugh) This is another dumb coworker story. This is me being dumb, though. We have our holiday party coming up in January, which is weird, but, like, the holidays are a confusing time, so we always do it in January. And they always do a white elephant, and this year they're doing, like, a -- a board game-themed party, and I'm like, "I hate everything about this, but I will go because I like my coworkers." And we were talking about the white elephant, and one of my coworkers was like, "It's close to Valentine's Day, I'll just bring something Valentine's-themed," and my brain immediately went, like, saying Valentine's-themed must mean, like, sex toys --

Emily: (gasp)

Sally: So I was like, "What, like a ball gag?" and he was so embarrassed. (laugh) He was like, "No, like a teddy bear," and then I was like, "Oh my God, what is wrong with me? I'm such a horrible heathen. Why did I just say that?" (laugh) Like --

Emily: (laugh) Are you not horny?!

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) It was really upsetting.

Emily: That's so good.

Sally: Ahhh! Anyway. I'm an idiot. (laugh)

Emily: Alright. (laugh) So good. Alright. Hey -- be slutty this time around.

Sally: Yeah. Be slutty. Are you not horny?!

Emily: (laugh) Goodbye.