



Episode 105: **Cold, Sexy Eyeballs**

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Generously Transcribed by Lauren Livesey

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 Glynna Mackenzie plays]

E: It's our s-s-s...

S: Season premiere!

E: I wanted to say series premiere –

S: Yep.

E: - like I was in Britain or –

S: Series premiere.

E: - some sort of bullshit. Season premiere of [pause] *Everybody Hates Rand*, your friendly neighborhood *Wheel of Time* podcast. Why did I just forget the name of our podcast?

S: It's OK.

E: We literally have, like, three things on the wall that say what it is.

S: [laughing]

E: I can't stop thinking about *Frozen 2*.

S: Yeah, *that's* Emily. I am Sally,

E: Oh, sorry, yeah. [laughs]

S: Emily and I watched *Frozen 2* last night.

E: I read the Wikipedia summary today –

S: Yeah, it doesn't help.

E: No! It – it's – it sounded so much clearer in the Wikipedia summary and I was like, am I really just stupid, that I couldn't –

S: No.

E: - grasp it, but no, it was just a bad movie, with lots of plot holes.

S: I read the Wikipedia summary before I watched the movie.

E: Oh.

S: And I still was like, this movie is incomprehensible, so I truly think the Wikipedia summary is about a different movie. [laughs]

E: I was like, when did they fucking mention a fifth spirit, I don't know anything. Why'd they have to ... It didn't make sense. The movie didn't make sense. OK, so, *The Fires of Heaven* is - this may surprise you - all about fire. [laughs] And, like –

S: Heaven.

E: Well, yeah. And heaven, obviously. It's heaven when Rand and Aviendha fuck in an igloo.

S: Oh my God, I forgot that scene's in this book. OK, moment of silence for the sex igloo.

E: Yeah, we're gonna have a whole episode about it.

S: I don't wanna ...

E: I think it'll be fun, when we get to it.

S: Arggggh.

E:[laughs] Erm, like there's, you know, the little epigraph at the beginning is all, like, some prophecy about how the fires of heaven will come down and purify the land, etc., etc., and how I interpret that is that this book is the beginning of the longest summer of all time –

S: Mm, mm

E: - in Wheely Time, before the gals get the Bowl of the Winds and press reset on the weather cycle. Until then, everyone's just sweaty so this is the first of three books that are just constant sweat. Three and a half books, because even book eight gets a little –

S: Yeah.

E: Sweaty.

S: And then at the end there are very literally, like, fireballs –

E: Yeah.

S: - coming down from the sky.

E: Like, all the chapter names are, like, fire-themed. Chapter one is called – well, the prologue, which we read, is called *The First Sparks Fall*, and then the first chapter is called *Fanning the Sparks*, and as you get to the end of the book stuff like that keeps – *The Threads Burn. Glowing Embers*.

S: [laughs]

E: So, I don't really know why Robert Jordan was like, I'm gonna make this one book in the series really thematic.

S: Yeah.

E: And all the other ones are just kind of ... not.

S: I mean, at least it's a title that makes sense. The other one, it's like: *The Shadow Rising*?

E: Yeah, I still don't get that.

S: Like, only *The Dragon Reborn* and *The Fires of Heaven* have made sense to me so far. Like, *A Crown of Swords* I guess is, like, he gets the Crown of Swords but that's, like, literally a sentence at the end of the book.

E: Yeah, and like ... yeah. So often it's just a sentence at the end of the book.

S: Yeah.

E: Like, *Lord of Chaos* it's someone being, like, in a completely other book, *Let the Lord of Chaos rule*.

S: Yeah.

E: *Path of Daggers* is, like, some weird Seanchan saying, or something?

S: Gross.

E: It's, like, about walking the path of daggers. *Winter's Heart* is nothing.

S: [laughs] Winter sucks.

E: Except that it's the constant comparison to Lan's eyeballs.

S: Gross.

E: He's like, *Eyes as cold as winter's heart*, and I'm like, and yet –

S: What does that meeeean?

E: It – I don't know.

S: Winter doesn't have a heart, it's a season! [laughs]

E: Men, I have some advice for you. Sexually. [laughs]

S: Mm.

E: Don't have cold eyeballs.

[Both laughing]

E: Just generally.

S: [Still laughing]

E: But also, don't, like, look or be cold, because it's not attractive.

S: No.

E: I don't know why aloofness, to some people, is considered an attractive –

S: I know.

E: - quality. I'm like, you know what I like? Emotional openness. [laughs]

S: That's why she likes me!

E: Maturity, etc.

S: Because I'm, like, I would like to talk about my feelings.

E: That's fine. Talk about your feelings.

S: Erm, no, I think it's such a disgusting trope that we need to get rid of, that it's like ... Like, Edward Cullen is like the penultimate –

E: Oh, yeah.

S: - because he is both like, his body is physically cold and he is like [inaudible]

E: Because then it's like, once you – as soon as you get them in bed they become, like, a raging fire or whatever.

S: Yeah.

E: And it's like, I would prefer not to have to either physically or metaphorically thaw out a man before fucking him.

S: Yeah, that's not gonna do it for me. Oh my God, can you imagine like, if I called like, I've gotta thaw out my boyfriend –

E: I've gotta thaw out my boyfriend.

S: - like, got your blow-dryer.

E: At least his dick.

S: [laughs] Gross! Imagine him still encased in ice.

E: Oh nooo! That's someone's fetish, someone – someone listening to this just was like: *oh*. That does something for me. Erm, shall we talk about the cover?

S: Yeah, have you noticed on any of the other ones that there's like a watermark for the artist?

E: What the?

S: You can like see, it says like D.K.S or whatever, it's like Darrell something Sweet.

E: Darrell K. Sweet or something?

S: Yeah, I've never noticed it on any of the other covers.

E: I don't know, should I look at some other ones?

S: I mean, we have like 400,000 of them.

E: It's true. I'll go investigate.

S: OK.

E: I couldn't find it on any of the other books but I also could not find it on our other copy of *Fires of Heaven* –

S: It's right there.

E: - oh wait, there it is.

S: [laughs]

E: I don't have good eyeballs. You wanna see something weird? Look at the maps.

S: OK. [pause] WHOA, what is this map?

E: I know.

S: What? This is not real.

E: It's the same land map. One of them is a topographical map but one of them is just, like, political.

S: Excuse me?

E: I know the difference between maps because I work at an educational center where they teach children –

S: Oh shit.

E: - how to read maps. Are you getting me this picture?

S: I just have one of your eyeballs. [laughs] One of your cold sexy eyeballs. [laughs]

E: Oh my God. One of my cold, dead eyeballs.

S: That's really freaking me out actually. This map scares me.

E: I know, it's sort of uncanny.

S: But I mean I guess it's nice for once –

E: It actually is.

S: - to actually know where the countries are [laughs].

E: You can read it, that's nice. But I'm so used to this, like –

S: Yeah.

E: - coastal shading bullshit –

S: Yeah.

E: - and like, oh look – here's forest. I have no idea. How am I supposed to tell where forests are in this?

S: [laughing] I don't know. But for once I actually know where Altara is!

E: What's this weird thing?

S: A vagina.

E: Something -wall.

S: It's a vagina.

E: Something -wall. There's not a wall anywhere else, is this some sort of recycled –

S: Is this draft one of the map? I'm very close – this is the closest I've ever been to our microphone.

E: Ger-something, it's right in the middle of the spine, but apparently, it's a thing. A mountain range, one wonders?

S: Hmm.

E: And yet it's never mentioned.

S: Wow, look at how clearly the borders of Illian are drawn out.

E: Yeah, wow.

S: What the hell, these two things cross over. Tear and ... whatever that is.

E: The borders of countries are so weird. And also, like, rivers. Apparently, rivers are these -

S: Oh, maybe that is a river

E: So, there's like all these no man's lands –

S: Yeah.

E: Plains of Maredo apparently are not politically claimed by anyone. There's a huge fucking swath between Cairhien and Tear that just, I guess no one lives in.

S: [laughs] It's just where the Tinkers hang out.

E: Like, look at all of this. None of that is claimed territ- This is the weirdest map of all time.

S: I feel like that's not ... realistic.

E: They talk about it so much in book two when they're on their fucking road trip from hell with Ingtar –

S: [laughs] What, the world's worst dad figure?

E: - yeah, world's worst dad. Partly because he's, y'know –

S: Evil.

E: - evil. And partly because he's just the worst.

S: Yeah.

E: Erm, but he's all like, yeah, these monarchies aren't powerful enough to control more lands than the borders are currently situated at but, yeah, I don't feel like that's, like ... I don't know, was there a period in European history where there were just, like, swaths of unclaimed territory?

S: I have no idea.

E: That doesn't seem right.

S: Yeah, I feel like it's always been, like, the Holy Roman Empire –

E: Yeah.

S: - or tribal.

E: Like, that is not how kings work. Kings see some land and they're like: it's mine.

S: Mm-hm.

E: They're total dipshits for it.

S: They're super horny for land.

E: Yeah, kings are horny for two things – lands and multiple wives and divorces. You know, Henry VIII.

S: What are, what is it? Married, beheaded, divorced ...

E: Erm, divorced, beheaded, died -

S: That's what it is. Of course, they all got married, they're all wives, what the fuck.

E: - divorced, beheaded, survived. *Six the Musical* is a really good musical about Henry VIII's wives.

S: They're wearing really cool costumes, they're like a girl band and shit.

E: Yeah, it's fun. The conceit is that they're a girl band and they're competing to see who had the shittiest marriage with King Henry. And the ladies who are like, *Well, I was beheaded* are like – maybe have the strongest arguments?

S: Yeah.

E: Just saying.

S: Anyway, maps are weird.

E: Anyway, maps are weird and also the cover of this book is so buck wild.

S: OK, here are my primary complaints.

E: OK.

S: One, Rand's coat is so long. Like, I know that is the style but, like, this coat is horrendous.

E: I don't think of their coats being so long, y'know.

S: Yeah, it's, like, at his ankles. [laughs]

E: Well, he has, as usual - classic Darrell K. Sweet, these are not human proportions.

S: [laughing] Yeah. OK, fair. These boots, like, do not fit him. Also, look at the way Mat's legs are drawn, it's like my niece has drawn a stick figure and his leg just like, curves completely. [laughs]

E: He has no knees. He has no knees.

S: He doesn't have any knees. [laughing]

E: Yeah, his body is like, that's where his pelvis is, which is like off-center of his fucking head. His fox pendant is *huge*.

S: It's like a whole bandanna.

E: Yeah, it legitimately looks like a scarf, and he will come to wear a scarf, so that's kind of funny but you, like, look really closely and you're like, aw, that's a little fox. I did not – I pictured it being able to, you know, nestle between his pectorals.

S: Yeah, me too, just like a - I don't know, like a good pendant size.

E: Yeah. Not like a fucking –

S: Not like – a pendant is not the size of your chest.

E: That's the size of a man's hand.

S: Yeah, a pendant needs to fit in the palm of your hand.

E: Come on. There's also, of course –

S: It also looks more like a lynx than a fox, so ... [laughing] It doesn't look actually like ...

E: You're so good at nature, and animal identification.

S: Thank you, it's my child. But it doesn't look like a fox! It looks like a cat!

E: Yeah, you're right, the ears are kind of funky.

S: Yeah. Also, Rand – as is also typical of Darrell K. Sweet – looks like he's about 55. [laughing]
Yeah.

E: They all do. Except Aviendha who has turned away in the classic Marvel superheroine pose.

S: Yeah.

E: Butt facing the camera.

S: [laughs] That's how I pose for all my photos, is butt first.

E: At least she's not, like, turned looking over her shoulder –

S: Yeah.

E: - with, like, one tit sort of exposed.

[both laughing]

S: Like, finger to her lips, a gun –

E: So you know how sexy and powerful she is –

S: - she's sort of sucking on it.

E: Don't worry, she's empowered, because she's got a gun.

S: Mat also looks about forty-five.

E: There's also the customary Trollocs, just, like, chilling -

S: Do they even encounter Trollocs in this book?

E: - hanging out around a corner. Yeah, they – oh, here. Oh, no, that's weird. I was like, maybe there's a watermark because this one doesn't have the *Cover Art by Darrell K. Sweet*. Wow, *Cover Design by Carol Russo Design*. Carol Russo's maybe the one we should be really going after.

S: Yeah, maybe we should be roasting Carol, not Darrell.

E: Because what the hell. Yeah, I mean, but this one also has the watermark.

S: Are they supposed to be in –

E: They're supposed to be in Caemlyn.

S: Yes – I wanted to say Cairhien, but I'm like, no, I know that's wrong.

E: Well, it's confusing, because I, my entire life, given the fact that the entire city except for these three characters and the Trollocs is deserted –

S: Yeah.

E: - and also vaguely sand-colored, I always thought it was Rhuidean.

S: Yeah, that's what I thought when I first picked up the book.

E: And it made no sense because there's never really a scene where Rand, Aviendha and Mat are just chilling in Rhuidean –

S: Just hangin'.

E: Yeah, they're all basically avoiding each other. So, it's Caemlyn but again, there are no signifying markers for that.

S: Yeah, it also doesn't look like Caemlyn architecture based on what I remember.

E: Based on what we've read there's, like, domes and things.

S: But I also – is this supposed to be depicting the scene where Mat gets balefired?

E: Yeah, it's like, depicting the moment when they enter, surrounded by an army, one remembers, of Aiel –

S: [laughs]

E: - and like immediately get ambushed. And then Mat and Aviendha – where's Asmodean, you know?

S: Yeah, where's my boy?

E: He should be here too!

S: I would love to see Asmodean on the cover of this book.

E: The one – you had one chance to depict a Forsaken on the cover, and it's the best Forsaken and they just fucking sidelined him.

S: And they didn't... Could have put him in like a fun little jaunty outfit.

E: Can you imagine if they had decided to go with like, the very vivid visual of right after they all get struck by lightning?

S: Yeah.

E: Which is when - I remember it so clearly, Aviendha's, like, perfect corpse - a kissable corpse, if you will –

S: [hissing]

E: Mat is like, ten feet away from his boots because the lightning knocked him out of his boots. Which is so comical and *so* Mat.

S: [laughing] Got knocked outta my boots!

E: And then Asmodean's just like, not a person any more.

S: Yike.

E: Yike. Very burnt.

S: But then Mat comes back and punches Rand in the kidneys, so.

E: Yeah, as soon as Rand tries to hug him.

S: Mat's like: not today!

E: Mat's like: male affection? Absolutely not.

S: Affection? Period?

E: Affection? Period? Hate it.

S: Disgusting.

E: I've already met Talmanes, he's my new boyfriend.

S: Yeah. We're getting married. We're already engaged.

E: Yeah. Erm, so that's the cover. It's bad.

S: It really is.

E: I mean, it's not the worst -

S: No.

E: - in the series, it is middling, maybe even on the higher end of the spectrum because at least no one's in a -

S: Fur vest?

E: - upsetting pose.

S: Yeah, I mean, it's like, fine. Like, you're right, it is one of the least offensive. Perrin doesn't look like a weird Mortal Kombat character.

E: Right.

S: And Rand isn't in *jeans*. [laughing]

E: I don't know how Darrell K. Sweet's artform is, like, making a moment of intense action seem like the most boring shit on the planet.

S: I know, they're all just like, standing around.

E: I mean, it's perfect for a *Wheel of Time* book but -

S: I mean, yeah, they are all just standing around. It's just very funny and there's like, always just Trollocs in the background.

E: Look at them hanging out.

S: Maybe they're, like, kissing.

E: So, we read the prologue, which has some, like, random villain points of view.

S: What else is new.

E: In a classic *Wheel of Time* prologue style. Next week, we'll read the official first chapter which also manages to feel like a bunch of random villain points of view, even though it's technically, you know, characters like Min and Siuan, but ... as we've discussed ...

S: Mmm. Siuan is definitely a villain.

E: Yeah. IMHO. But, erm –

S: [laughing]

E: I always pronounce that when I actually read it as “im-ho”.

S: Me, too. I'm like “I'm-ho.”

E: “Im-ho.” I am ho!

S: I'm ho! [laughs]

E: We ho. You ho.

S: He ho.

E: So, we start out with Elaida, and then there's like a brief thing with Padan Fain and then it goes over to Rahvin, so basically our main villains of this book, I guess I would say? Because we also get the other Forsaken join Rahvin at his office? I don't know. I think it's actually in his bedroom, which is buck wild.

S: Which is gross.

E: I know.

S: Rahvin is a disgusting character. I love it when he dies.

E: It's so pleasant when he just gets balefired so hard.

S: I love – yeah. I love it when sexual predators get brutally murdered.

E: Right?

S: It just makes me so happy.

E: So satisfying. But first we have to deal with Elaida, who is surrounded by various Aes Sedai, most of whom will become important at some point.

S: Mm-hmm.

E: And all their looks - don't worry - are described in detail.

S: Listen – there's like, twelve women at the table and I know what each one of their breasts look like.

E: Yeah, it's insane. And, like, whether or not they're pretty.

S: Yeah.

E: As though – I don't know, it's so ... It's like it's the fucking first night of *The Bachelor*, is how I'm ...

S: Yeah, like, we've talked a lot about Robert Jordan's weird obsession with describing how women look, in particular the Aes Sedai. He always has to comment and be like: *They're super powerful, and also, pretty, because they don't look old.*

E: Yeah, and it's also a little bit creepy, because they don't look young, either.

S: I have not seen *Midsommar*, nor will I, I've heard it's haunting [laughing] but my friend Julie described a scene where like, there's a scene where it's just like a bunch of older women, over forty - "older", that's not even older – women over forty are, like, in a room and they're naked, and that's supposed to be the horror of the scene, is that it's like women over forty who are naked and nothing horrifying is happening but it's like, presented as if it's something frightening.

E: What the hell.

S: I know.

E: But is it like, tongue in cheek?

S: No, I think this director from, again, I don't remember the director and I've never seen any of his movies –

E: Like Ari Aster, or something?

S: Yeah, erm, Julie was describing – at least I think she was talking about *Midsommar*, I don't watch movies – but describing how, like, this has been common in several of his other movies, and like, throughout *Midsommar*.

E: Weird. And also gross.

S: Yeah. Gross, but I also get that same type of energy sometimes with the Aes Sedai, where it's like, they are older women who are powerful, but, like, sexually available enough – quote unquote – in the fact that they still look young.

E: Yeah.

S: There's just a really weird energy and dynamic to it that I'm frustrated with.

E: And also dumb and incompetent enough to not be super threatening.

S: Yeah, actually threatening. This whole opening chapter of Elaida's point of view is just the brutal incompetence of the Aes Sedai.

E: Yeah, and also Elaida's total incompetence as a person in a leadership position because of course she exists to be a foil to Egwene who is put into power in the exact same circumstances as Elaida, almost, which is ... Almostly? Is that what I just said?

S: Yeah. Almostly. Gotcha.

E: Hoo. Erm, almost, in that they're both sort of figureheads, for some sort of movement, and expected to not have any power, and they both go about getting actual power in entirely different ways, and obviously Egwene does it well –

S: Yep.

E: - and Elaida doesn't know how to do it. So that's like an underlying thread.

S: Yeah.

E: But yeah, this chapter is mostly - or this point of view is mostly - there to provide exposition. It seems like Robert Jordan, whenever he wants to give us a status update on the world, has a bunch of Aes Sedai sit in a room and talk about it.

S: Yeah.

E: Because theoretically they'd be the type of people who would monologue about various countries.

S: [laughing] World events.

E: Yeah, as they're writing thesis statements. Erm, but yeah, it's kind of, like, annoying, because normal people don't talk like that. I don't even think politically people –

S: Mm-hmm.

E: - talk like that, in just running down the list of events –

S: Yeah.

E: - and countries that are being affected by those events?

S: Yeah, like, if I wanna talk to someone about a world event, I'm not just like, *Did you hear what happened in XYZ?* and then explain what happened in XYZ and then be like, *This is what I think about what's happening with XYZ. And this is how I resolve that we solve it.* That's not how people talk.

E: Yeah, even in – even in an extremely well-run meeting –

S: Yeah.

E: - and those –

S: Don't exist.

E: - pretty much don't exist, no one talks like that.

S: I spend so much of my time in meetings, and no one, no one, no one, no one talks like that.

E: There's like a theory that the more time a company, like, spends in meetings, the less efficient it actually is. And yeah –

S: [loudly and passionately] Let me tell you!

E: I see that in your eyes [laughing] that that's accurate in this instance.

S: Fuck.

E: Erm, but fucking what is the status update?

S: It's like Bavram – Bavram!

E: Bavram Dashere!

S: I mean he is very dashing. Davram Bashere is leaving to chase Mazrim Taim.

E: They think.

S: Allegedly.

E: Allegedly, yeah, Mazrim Taim has escaped. It's a very neat bookend, because Mazrim Taim, like his first appearance on screen – at the very end of this book, like the last ... Or will he? It might be at the beginning of the next book, I'm sorry.

S: [speaking over] I think it's the beginning of *Lord of Chaos*.

E: It's Bashere who shows up at the end of this book.

S: Yeah, who rolls up with his fantastic moustaches –

E: I know, it's fucking iconic.

S: - and is like, *Hello, I am tiny, and the best*.

E: Tiny and a huge dad.

S: And everyone's like, *Thank you*.

E: Thank you. Your presence is very much appreciated.

S: And required.

E: And required, actually, because Rand –

S: Is incompetent.

E: - needs about nine father figures around him at all times to feel secure, swaddled, as it were.

[both laughing]

E: Erm, but Mazrim Taim's escaped, the Borderlanders are, uh, moving, we're told the Saldaeans have kind of left the main city, and also that there's some sort of fighting in Shienar and that basically the Waste is unguarded. Not the Waste, excu- Is that the Waste?

S: The Blight.

E: The Blight, excuse me, is unguarded, which they're all kinda put off by, but they're also like, there hasn't been a lot of trouble there, but if you'd read a few books ahead you might remember that the Borderlanders are all about to meet up for their big conference to be like, *We need to go slap the Dragon Reborn in the face*.

S: Is that what they do?

E: Literally, yes.

S: Someone slaps Rand?

E: Four people slap Rand.

S: Who slaps him? Oh my God!

E: All the Borderland rulers.

S: So, like, Faile's cousin?

E: Yeah, Tenobia.

S: Oh my God, oh my God – please tell me you're not kidding?

E: I'm not kidding! It's not very satisfying, though, because it's after Rand's reached enlightenment.

S: Oh, that's like so many books from now!

E: I know, it's like, literally book thirteen or something, and that's how long the Borderlanders are in stasis, it starts –

S: [to Tybalt] Hi!

E: - in this book and won't end until book thirteen.

S: [laughing] Tybalt just would like to be in my cardigan, he's trying to bite me through my cardigan.

[both laughing]

E: Which is ridiculous, because they are literally, like –

S: Ow!

E: - four very important countries, They're right on the edge, you know?

S: [singing] Of glory!

E: Like, why does this narrative favor the rulers of, you know, fantasy England and fantasy France so much more than fantasy Japan and fantasy Mongolia? Oh wait, I know why: it's racism.

S: [laughing] Racism watchdog: *bark, bark.*

E: Bark, bark, bark, yip, yip.

S: And that's so upsetting, because I cannot tell you the joy it would bring me if sometime in book six some fabulous Mongolian lady showed up and just cracked Rand across the face.

E: The whole thing is, they're like, *If you'd reacted badly, we would have known you weren't ready to save the world or whatever and it would have been a sign of your immaturity.* Or some like, you know, total prophecy bullshit. So, it's like Robert Jordan, like, justifying the fact that they've been not able to contact Rand for eight books until he reached enlightenment, but it's all just bad. I agree. I would love, in book six, Rand to just get fucking decked –

S: It would be so good.

E: - four times -

S: It would be so good! Shit!

E: - while Bashere stands in the background, laughing.

[both laughing]

S: He's like, *Love this.*

E: Love my crazy niece.

S: Yeah, she's the bomb.

E: She's the bomb dot com. Yeah, meanwhile, Arad Doman and Tarabon – still fucking civil war, or whatever the hell. And they're like, *Aw, the Panarch's gone missing. And an Aes Sedai was involved.* And it's like, huh, wonder –

S: Who was that?

E: - wonder what could have happened there? Moments later someone's like, *So, has anyone heard from Elayne?* And they're like, *No, we have not, we've been sending –*

S: Fake letters, yeah.

E: - *forged letters to her mother*, who I guess we're assuming is an idiot.

S: But, surprise, she's just being brain-controlled.

E: Yeah, surprise, she's just, you know, redefining Stockholm Syndrome. Erm, and they're like, *Well, what about Galad?* This is the first mention of Galad's –

S: Yeah.

E: - disappearance we've received, like, he wasn't brought up at all when the Tower broke, but oh! He's missing, apparently.

S: Which is fake news, because everyone wants to clock where the hot boy is.

E: I know, I feel like everyone would know constantly where Galad is.

S: Yeah, got a radar on him.

E: Yeah.

S: Track my Galad. Find my Galad.

E: I don't even know if it's ever explained. My assumption is that, because we're told in book four that he's started to go out drinking with Whitecloaks, that he was like out in the city –

S: Yeah.

E: - when it happened, and just left, because for some reason he was just like, *See ya, Gawyn, brother who I have always protected and loved?*

S: Yeah.

E: I don't know.

S: You know, I've never thought about that, how weird it is that Galad just like, fucks off.

E: It's bad writing, Robert.

[both laughing]

S: It's ... bad writing.

E: And what about Gawyn? And they're like, *Don't worry, he's barely under control. Also don't worry, he will remain there for the next nine books.* Eight books, whatever.

S: He's a psycho.

E: He's a total sociopath.

S: I hate him.

E: So that's, you know, status update on a lot of places. And they're like, oh, and by the by, Elaida's like, *I need you all to just look at this painting of Rand al'Thor, that I have in my office.*

S: [laughing]

E: *LOOK AT IT!* And one woman faints.

S: It's very: drama.

E: Which I wish is how everyone reacted, like, I wish that was the percentage of reactions to Rand, just one out of twelve people faints. [laughing]

S: That would be so good. Because I was thinking about it and I was like, I feel like people, are like, overreacting –

E: Yeah.

S: - to fear, but then I was like, how would I feel if someone was like, *Surprise! Antichrist is a ginger boy.*

E: Yeah, I don't know.

S: I mean, I know he's not the Antichrist, but that's how they think of him.

E: It's weird. Like, there's no point of real-world comparison that I can think of, so.

S: I mean, real world comparison is reductive anyway and I shouldn't do it.

E: [speaking over] Yeah, well, no. I mean, I just - it would work better if there was a real-world comparison because then I might be able to wrap my mind around why people are fainting, left and right.

S: Like, yeah, I just, like, don't get it. It's mostly just funny. [laughing] Someone's like: [whimpers].

E: Yeah, you're like, OK. And Elaida's like, *I'm gonna have to take care of this bitch.*

S: Yeah, then Elaida tries to, like, exorcise her power, and it's really pathetic.

E: Elaida's like, *Rand al'Thor is God knows where.* And everyone's like, *Oh, yeah –*

S: Oh, good point.

E: - *we did a bad. Don't really know where he is?*

S: Where in the world is Rand al'Thor?

E: She's like, *Rand al'Thor: no fucking idea where he is. Same as Galad, and Elayne and Siuan Sanche, who we have been reporting executed. Basically, we don't know fuck all about anyone. And how are we going to resolve this situation, ladies? And they're all like, Well ... And Elaida's like, I want you to write reports on all of your failings, because that's how you get things done.*

S: OK, but that is how my place of work operates.

E: I know, Elaida is literally, like, an example of bad management. And everyone knows it.

S: Yeah.

E: Everyone's had that boss.

S: She's like, *instead of doing something I would like you to write a report on what you've been doing*. Or what you're going to do, is my favorite. *Will you please write me a report on what you're going to do?* It's like, why don't you let me just do it?

E: And I'm going to punish you overmuch for not obtaining the results I would like.

S: Mm-hmm.

E: She's bad. I mean, it's gonna be so boring for the next eight books when she's just around, continuing to do this.

S: Continuing to be incompetent?

E: Yeah, and Alviarin is there, like, *Hello, I am cool, calm femininity*, or whatever. So stupid. Alviarin's there, like, *I'm not intimidated by Elaida because I'm a Darkfriend and nothing intimidates me anymore!* And Elaida's like, *Why won't she be intimidated by me?*

S: [laughing]

E: And there's this absurd power struggle going on that no one cares about.

S: Yeah.

E: Meanwhile, Padan Fain is there –

S: Ugh.

E: - and he's like ... I would like to make a map -

S: I know.

E: - just tracking Padan Fain's movement in comparison to everyone else, you know?

S: Yeah, I feel like he's got, like, zoom powers.

E: He just zigzags all over the fucking place! He's in every single prologue, it feels like, just chilling, to influence some other bad guy ruler.

S: I wish Padan Fain would go away.

E: I do, too. I wish he would just perish. But, alas. It's not the world we live in.

S: Yeah, it's also unfortunate that we have to get a point of view from him when we could literally have just stayed in Elaida's point of view.

E: I know! Like, come on.

S: We have his point of view for like, three pages, or something ridiculous.

E: Yeah, just for him to be, like, *Ah, there's clearly some tension between these two women, and I'm crazy.*

S: [laughing]

E: *And also, I can feel where the dagger is and I'm defo gonna get that before I leave, but not the Horn of Valere?*

S: [laughing]

E: It's nonsensical!

S: It's written like *Frozen 2*!

E: Seriously! Argh!

S: It's the *Frozen 2* syndrome. Why didn't her mom just tell them where Elsa's powers came from?

E: Her mom's like, *Genetically, there's a 50/50 shot she'll have powers.* Does her dad not know?

S: Yeah, why wasn't her mom like, ding-dong, *Hello, I'm of this other race of people who worship magic spirits*, and her dad's like, *Didn't hear that.*

E: Like, did their dad just marry this woman without knowing anything about her background?

S: He's like, *Mm, good butt, gonna marry her.*

E: Yeah. And then she'll just stand there silently for the rest of, you know, the movie.

S: Yeah. All she does is sing a song about a glacier.

E: They don't even know it's a glacier, they think it's a river. They're like, *A river!* And then Elsa's like, [simplers]

S: [sing-song] A glacier is a river of frozen water.

E: That's how water works.

S: Water has memories.

E: Water has memories!

S: For some reason there's a snowman character [laughs]. And Elsa like, tames a – like, doesn't tame, what's a more negative word for tame? Breaks?

E: Erm, yeah?

S: Breaks a wild water horse?

E: The water ... water spirit.

S: It's very violent.

E: I wasn't watching that part, I'll be honest.

S: It was very upsetting.

E: That's sad.

S: I just – in a movie that was, that like, I think attempted to have an ecological message, it was just a lot about like, mastery of nature, which is –

E: Boring.

S: - not an ecological message, actually, that's what anthropocentrism is.

E: It was just like, we should break dams. And I was just like, *Oh, maybe ... maybe we should have put more thought into this.*

S: Maybe there's a way to undo ecological destruction without causing other ecological disasters.

E: Maybe the first thing we could do is not occupy Native land.

S: I just dabbled. In support of not occupying Native land.

E: Hell yeah. Erm, so anyway, Elaida, blah blah-blah blah-blah, Padan Fain, blah-blah-blah. Then we go over to Rahvin, who's like, literally - the Aes Sedai were like, *Don't worry, we have a spy inside Caemlyn.* And Rahvin's like, *Hello, spy inside Caemlyn, I am brainwashing you now.*

S: Yeah.

E: So, it's like, OK, clearly ...

S: They do *not* have a spy inside Caemlyn.

E: They do *not* have a spy inside Caemlyn. And he's like, *Hey, I'm just going to think my gross rapist thoughts for the next four pages, you know,* until Lanfear shows up and is like, *Hello, this is a warning, some more people are about to show up, unannounced, in your bedroom.*

S: [laughing]

E: And Rahvin's like, *My kinda party.* And Lanfear's like, *Samesies.* Cause we're all: *nasty.*

S: Yeah. And then, like, all my least favorite Forsaken are in a room together, [laughs]

E: Seriously. Lanfear's like, *We're the best Forsaken, because we're the ones who are just, like, setting up power bases.* And I'm like: So, my least favorite Forsaken. You could have been Asmodean.

S: You could have been As-mo-dean.

E: You could have been Demandred, who's just, like, *Fuck you all. I'll be doing my thing, over on another continent.* Or Mesaana, who's just, like, *I've got the White Tower super on lock.*

S: Yeah. I'm just gonna hang out there.

E: I'm just gonna chill.

S: Literally, when they were like, *Four Forsaken have died*, I'm like, I don't even remember ...

E: Exactly.

S: I was like, Aginor and Balthamel, because I just transcribed that episode, then I was like ...
[laughs]

E: Who? Yeah, exactly. Ishamael, I think, is another one?

S: Maybe? Is he even dead? We killed him like three times!

E: Here's the thing, they're like, *Four Forsaken are dead.* Three of those will be resurrected, within the next like, two books.

S: But seriously, who's the one that he kills in the Stone of Tear?

E: Belal.

S: OK, thank you! Fuck!

E: Belal, who Moiraine had the foresight to balefire, so he's perma-dead at least.

S: God. I seriously was like, Forsaken, Forsaken, Forsaken, I can never name all of them.

E: No, you can't.

S: Thirteen is many.

E: Thirteen is too many. I don't want to be controversial here, but –

S: Because like, the four in this room are basically the same person.

E: Yeah.

S: They're just different genders.

E: They all coulda been the same person.

S: Yeah.

E: Rahvin's like, *Lanfear's as beautiful as I am, I am handsome*. And I'm like, what an upsetting way to [both laughing] think about yourself.

S: Yeah, Rahvin – [both laughing]

E: He's so wild.

S: He's also so disgusting when he's like, *Graendal would be hot if she wasn't standing next to Lanfear*.

E: And it's like: Newsflash! Hot women are still hot regardless of who they're standing next to!

S: I know, it's like, believe it or not, two women can be hot in the same room. [laughing]

E: What is happening in Robert Jordan's mind? That he's, like, *One woman's hotness diminishes another woman's hotness*. That is not! How! It works!

S: It's so funny. [still laughing]

E: Robert Jordan needed to go to lesbian boot camp to learn how to talk about women. It's where Hozier went. God.

S: [speaking over] Like, have you ever been in a room with two hot women? Hozier was like, *Hello, here's my certificate from lesbian boot camp*.

E: I know how to talk about women now.

S: I'm also an excellent boyfriend.

E: I'm also very good. At fucking. One imagines. No pressure, Hozier.

S: Also, we don't mean to objectify you. We love you.

E: Yeah, we're fine. You do your thing.

S: You can be good or whatever at anything you want to be.

E: We love you.

S: Love you!

E: As though Hozier's listening to us!

S: Hozier, if you're listening to our Wheely Time podcast, we'll start another podcast called *Letters to Hozier*. I just talk about how much I love him all the time.

E: Just talk about one of his songs every – That's actually a really good idea, fuck.

S: [laughing] Should that be our new \$5 reward on Patreon instead?

E: Yeah, it should be.

S: Nobody take our *Letters* – delete this, we need to keep the idea.

[both laughing]

E: TM, TM, TM!

S: [laughing] Copywriting Google “how to get a patent”. It’s what? It’s my intellectual property? What does Griffin McElroy always say?

E: I don’t know.

S: It’s my intellectual property, you can’t take it anymore.

E: But I feel like someone could take it and that would just be karma for us, you know, abusing *Tubthumping* for –

S: Yeah, but we *fixed* that. And every episode we apologies. Because redemption is not a one-time act.

E: That’s true.

S: That sounds like such a fun podcast so let’s do that.

E: OK, let’s do it.

S: In all of our infinite free time.

E: Alright, yeah, we have soooo much.

S: Erm, anyway, Rahvin –

E: Basically, they’re like, *Let’s do an alliance*. And it’s like, OK. Boring. And they’re like, *It will be, our alliance will be the, like, plot of this book, but we will not tell you what it is*. And I’m like, on a certain level fine with that. I would prefer not to know what the bad guy’s plans are –

S: Yeah.

E: Because, huh, it makes it so surprising –

S: It’s called tension.

E: - when bad things happen. But then I don’t wanna like, *know*, that the bad guys are sitting around planning *it*. Just don’t have this scene, perhaps. Like, we get enough of Rahvin through Morgase’s point of view in this book.

S: Yeah, and Lanfear’s around.

E: Yeah, lots of people are around.

S: And Graendal's off, like –

E: And Rand kills him at the end, so.

S: - keeping people in sexual slavery, and then there's Sammael. Sa-male, or whatever.

E: Who's just a dick.

S: He's gross. I like, seriously, he's, like Rahvin and him both gross me out because I feel like they've just got major predator vibes.

E: Oh, yeah, seriously.

S: I mean, Rahvin is like a canonical predator.

E: Yeah, and Sammael is just like, *I just hate one man, and that's gonna inform all my actions*, and it's like, what a stupid reason to become a villain.

S: Yeah. [laughing]

E: You know.

S: I just –

E: I hate so many men –

S: [whispers] So many men.

E: - but hating a man has never been enough reason to violate my code of ethics, so maybe, Sammael, the problem is you.

S: It's like, accountability exists.

E: Shocking, I know. OK, whatever, this episode has gone on long enough.

S: It's pretty wild. Oh my God, I didn't even realize we'd been talking for that long.

E: Yeah, we went on for a while about the cover and things like that. So, we'll wrap up here. That was the prologue. We'll be back next week with Chapter Uno. Again, *Fanning the Sparks*, in case you forgot. It's gonna be all about, like, setting up the slam-dunk that is Siuan Sanche and Gareth Bryne's romance.

S: Ew.

E: Am I right? [silence] That was a joke. I think they're terrible.

S: Do they have like a fire thing going on?

E: What?

S: Oh, the next chapter is –

E: The next chapter.

S: I thought you meant the fire - I'm sorry, I'm not with it. I was like, is the relationship just based on fire metaphors? [laughing]

E: That would be a shocking way to do it, I guess

S: No, their relationship is hor- I mean, talk about power imbalances and shitty power dynamics.

E: Yeah, it's just icky. Well, we'll get there.

S: When we get there!

E: It'll be next week.

S: [laughing]

E: Until then, thank you for listening. Do we have any housekeeping?

S: Erm, just kind of some general support. As we mentioned, assuming it makes it into the final cut, we are raising money to try and get a studio space, which for us just means an apartment with an extra bedroom.

E: Eeee!

S: That will also double as Tybalt's bedroom if that's more incentive to you to support us because he deserves his own couch –

E: Ding-dong knows his name.

S: - so he's not scratching mine.

E: He turned around.

S: Like a little vampire. Like a little gargoyle. Erm, and so if you want to support us in that endeavor then the best way to do that is by pledging monthly on our Patreon. We've got a \$1, \$3, \$5 and \$10 level, so anything that you can, um, spare for your favorite ding-dongs [laughing] - I assume we're your favorite – would be much supported. Or if a monthly thing is too much you can buy one of our stickers on Etsy, that's another great way to support us and support some independent artists. The artists get – erm, 30% of the proceeds go directly to them, so you can find our Etsy linked on our website, on all of our social media, and the shop is just *Everybody Hates Rand* if you just wanna go there directly.

E: Hell yeah. Welcome to season five!

S: Anyway, *Fires of Heaven*. There are telescopes at the end -

E: That's true.

S: - which I'm excited to talk about because I think telescopes are cool.

E: We'll have a telescopes episode right alongside – right after the sex igloo episode, you know.

S: Talk about the two things I love most: sex education and telescopes.

E: Hell yeah.

S: That's not true, I don't have that strong feeling about telescopes, but I do about sex education!

E: We have to stop. Don't do a war crime.

S: [laughing]

ENDS