



Episode 109: Minions, When Slaughtered

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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: I opened the utensil drawer a little bit ago, to get a spoon and eat some ice cream, and found a stick of butter that I had used during the lunch hour that instead of putting back in the fridge, I put in the utensil drawer. So ...that's about where we're at right now.

S: But, like, literally three minutes before that I opened that drawer to get a fork, and, like, didn't even register that there was butter in there, so: THRIVING.

E: Welcome.

S: I think we are in day seventeen of quarantine.

E: I can't keep track. We should be like the Count of Monte Cristo, you know, carving the days into –

S: The fridge?

E: Yeah, I don't know, what can we carve the days into, considering that this is a leased apartment?

S: I mean, we could use a whiteboard.

E: The underside of the coffee table. If you wanna get really creative. And someone'd be like, *What are all these notches in your coffee table?*

S: It's, like, the people I've killed.

E: Those were the days. What?

S: Nothing.

E: I heard that. Tybalt!

S: He's gotta crunch. He's gotta munch.

E: We should start when we want him to eat – just sit here and talk. Maybe that'll be effective.

S: He's just a weirdo. He's a weird cat.

E: Thirteen minutes in! Wonder which parts of that I'm gonna cut out. Probably the sexy dentist parts.

[Sally laughing]

E: If you didn't hear anything about dentists, you know I cut that out, and it'll live in infamy. Godspeed. This is *Everybody Hates Rand*, [Sally still laughing] your fucking friendly neighborhood *Wheel of Time* podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

S: I'm Sally Goodger.

E: We're here to talk about, uh, *The Wheel of Time* [both laughing].

S: Sometimes when I say my last name, it just sounds like the syllables are, like, pudding, like, *Goodger*. It just sounds weird to me, in my head.

E: Imagine having my name. Juchau.

S: Yours is, like, sharp, though. Juchau! Sha-sha!

E: Juch-a! That's how the P.E. teacher in high school always pronounced my name. Dew-sh-ow! Incorrectly, of course, but, what did he care?

S: Who cares, yeah. High school P.E. teachers are the scum of the earth, so.

E: Yeah. He made me P.E. student of the month just to mock me.

S: Whatever, who cares. Now you're fucking ripped.

E: I'm definitely not.

S: [speaking over] You do, like, push-ups and shit in your room every morning.

E: No? I mean, I do some push-ups, not every morning, and I can't really do a full push-up.

S: I can't, either. No upper-body strength.

E: It really confuses Tybalt, he's like, *What's happening here?*

S: Yeah, when Emily tries to close her door to work out, Tybalt legitimately loses his mind.

E: Yeah, it's not like I'm ashamed or something, to be working out. It's just I wanna do jumping jacks in the privacy of my own –

S: Yeah, working out with a cat around is the worst.

E: Don't want your judgmental eyes staring at me.

S: Yeah, no, I would close my door if I was just, like – It's nice to, like, be alone when you're trying to focus on your body, you know? Get physical fitness. Then there's Tybalt, who's like, *Crimes are being committed! Call the police!*

E: What does he think I'm doing in there?

S: I don't know [laughing].

E: Playing with the catnip fairy? Without him?

S: There's another cat in there!

E: Speaking of animal companions, Darkhounds, amirite?

S: Yeah! What do you think they look like? What kind of dog do you think they look like?

E: I don't know. I don't know enough about dog breeds. I know you've read that entire book about dog breeds when you were a child, so I feel like you'd be – They're described as, "as big as a pony", which is – I was gonna say "quite large", but I was reading a Tumblr post recently which was all about, like, the variety of horse sizes, so ...

S: Yeah, I feel like, what kind of pony? Like a Shetland pony? That's not a very big dog.

E: A really – like, a normal sized pony.

S: Like the ponies in *The Boy Who Would Be King*?

E: *The Boy Who Would Be King*.

S: They rode ponies.

E: Oh, yeah. *The Kid Who Would Be King*.

S: Oh, sorry, no –

E: I just got confused because there's also that Netflix original, *The Letter to the King*, or some shit –

S: So many kings.

E: - and then I started thinking about *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword*. Just – yeah. They look like those pon- No, those are big ponies.

S: So, between that and a Shetland pony?

E: Yeah.

S: I feel like, given that size, we're working with, like, wolfhounds?

E: Yeah, sure, like, heads come up to the chest area of a normal-sized person, not Rand al'Thor.

S: But, like, I also feel like wolfhounds are too slender. They're not, like, stocky.

E: What, you want like a pit-bull shape?

S: I want, like, a rottweiler shape, at like a wolfhound size.

E: I guess I picture rottweilers – what I'm picturing is, did you see the animated film *Oliver & Company* –

S: Of course I did.

E: - based on *Oliver Twist*? By Charles Dickens, don't get it twisted, that is based on Dickensian literature. The cat and dog movie that has –

S: [singing] "Why should I worry?"

E: Yeah, that fucking legendary song.

S: [singing] "Why should I care?"

E: Anyway, the mean dogs, I don't know what type of dogs they are, but that's kind of what I picture.

S: The Dobermans?

E: I guess they're Dobermans.

S: They have the pointy ears, right? And they're black and brown? Dobermans.

E: I picture pointy ears for some reason.

S: I could see – I could see, like a Doberman look. Dobermans are usually what people imagine. It's either, like, Doberman or rottweiler that people usually depict Cerberus as –

E: Oh, yeah.

S: - in like, a lot of contemporary depictions of that. Those dogs are often – Because they're, like, security breeds? Or used for security, they're often pitched into like, a little bit more antagonistic?

E: But then again, this – these are hunting dogs, which is a little bit different, right?

S: Ooh, that changes the game completely. That's a whole different class of dogs!

E: Because they move around in packs, yeah. We can't – we can't just depict that dog –

S: I mean, I'm pretty sure that wolfhounds are hunting dogs. Like, *hound* dogs are usually –

E: The point is, they're big, they're slobbery, they melt out of the shadow and shit. Rand doesn't know jack shit about them, which is confusing, because, of course, we, the loyal readers, read all about them in book three and committed that whole scene to memory because dogs were mentioned, you know?

S: Yeah, of course, I love dogs.

E: Yeah, Perrin was like, *Uh, evil dogs?* And I was like, fuck yeah, evil dogs! I love me some dogs.

S: Maybe wolfhounds are stockier than I remember. This matters to me. [laughs]

E: That's big, That's so big.

S: I know, I love them, look at them run! But see, they are pretty slender, I just need them to be, like, thick. Oh my God.

E: I know, walking around Buckingham Palace.

S: OK, anyway, yeah. Rand is like –

E: Rand wakes up in the dead of night. He's like, *My spider senses are tingling*. He's like, *I smell something funky*. He goes outside, *Aw, is someone gonna murder me?* No one murders him. He's like, *It's below me* –

S: Unfortunately.

E: Yeah. Tragically. Can you imagine if he just walked out of his room, and: BAM. Gunshot. [both laughing]

S: It's me. I have come through the world with a gun. [laughing]

E: And he's like, *One time, Lan said something sick about choosing my ground*, so he, like, runs upstairs. If I – given the option to choose my ground, more stairs would not enter the equation, you know?

S: Yeah, and it's like, he's also in a space with only one entrance, as far as I'm concerned, as far as I know.

E: Yeah, he goes into this, like, rotunda thing, where there's like, the ancient symbol of the Aes Sedai –

S: Of course.

E: - and it's, like, all cool and visual and symbolic and shit, and then these Darkhounds come out and Rand's like, *Oh, this is easy, easy-peasy, I'll just do like, one sword move*. And he does, and like, kills the doggos, but then the doggos do that thing, that minions always do, in –

S: In *Despicable Me*?

E: - in *Resident Evil* – In *Despicable Me*? [laughing]

S: You said “minions”! [laughing]

E: Fuck – can you imagine if the minions, when slaughtered, melted and formed new minions!

S: [barely able to speak while laughing] Minions ... when slaughtered!

E: This is gonna be the live-action remake of *Despic-* [starts laughing]

S: Oh, why is that sentence so funny? [fit of laughter again] OK [inaudible] I know what you're talking about.

E: You know, they like, melt into goo.

S: [speaking over] They always become goo.

E: Yeah, and are just like, *Here I am, psych, you thought you'd seen the last of me, bitch*. And they're like, *Hey, I'm still here*, and Rand is like, *OK, zero to one hundred, super-fast, gonna use balefire*.

S: Yeah, it's really dramatic.

E: He's like, *Yeah, I'll just use this thing that I used one time*. He uses balefire, which of course kills them, because as Moiraine explains later in this chapter, it is the equivalent of a nuclear – of a localized nuclear bomb.

S: Yeah.

E: Like, fucking the – it's so bad. I've also been watching *Chernobyl*, so –

S: Very bravely of her.

E: Very bravely, it's very scary.

S: I have not been watching *Chernobyl*.

E: Yeah, you wouldn't want to. It gave me a little bit of anxiety, so I've been spacing it out with other HBO, less upsetting HBO.

S: Yeah, we've been watching a lot of, like, grim things.

E: Yeah, yeah, that's why we're in the middle of *Band of Brothers* right now.

S: You're also watching *Grace and Frankie*, though, right? Anyway.

E: Yeah. I'm watching, like, six things at once.

S: I can't stay on topic.

E: Yeah, Rand uses balefire. And then Moiraine appears, and she's like, *Did any of them, a) bite you? b) slobber on you? c) get any of their fluids on you?* And Rand is like, *That's a no from me, Captain.* And she's like, *OK, good, because that totally could have killed you. Just their fluids alone are poison*, which, you know is very convenient for ... Whatever.

S: Animals that turn into goo.

E: Yeah. And Rand's like, *That's too bad.* And she's like, *I wonder who sent them.* And Rand realizes, *Oh, I'm not the only person in Rhuidean who could be targeted by these things.* Because Moiraine is like, *Oh, they usually hunt in bigger packs, but there are only three of them*, that faced Rand, so Rand's like, *Well, they must be after other people.* To his credit, he goes to Mat before he goes to Asmodean, so, you know, childhood friendship lives on.

S: Yeah, he's like, *Gotta get ma boi.*

E: *Gotta get my boy.* He runs to – fucking sprints – straight to the building, passes Lan, who's like, *Where's Moiraine?*

S: *Fuck you, Dad!*

E: Rand's like, *I hate you*, gets to the building where Mat is, where he finds all these Darkhounds, like, trying to knock down Mat's door. He immediately balefires them, of course, and is like, *Mat – Mat, you good?* And Mat like, swings open the door, fully nude. [both laughing] Melindhra, you know, draping a sheet around her behind him. And Rand's like, *Oh.*

S: Mat's like, *I was good.*

E: Mat's like, *I was doing fucking great, you know.*

S: Wink.

E: Wink. And Rand's like, *What is it like, to not be virginal and horrified by the thought of sex?* Oh my God, when Rand wakes up, he's like, *I was having such a pleasant dream teaching Aviendha to swim in the, like, watering hole beside Emond's Field*, which, we all know that swimming pool has, like, fucking sex vibes, because of all of Rand's sex dreams.

S: I don't know why they all take place in that, like, swimming hole. It's disgusting.

E: I don't know, what's he find so fucking attractive about that? What – why's he like, *Water – that's the thing.*

S: I wonder if there is some sort of, like, cloaking effect for his sexuality? Like, if it's happening in water there's a different –

E: Yeah, I mean he talks about how whenever the women are in the water, they're obviously naked but he can't see anything, but that's how water works, as we all know. It's not clear at all.

S: Unless it's truly the most disgusting water in the world.

E: Which I'm imagining it is, because it's a fucking hole, dug –

S: [laughing] So Rand's like, *Gonna put all my naked ladies in this nasty hole, and they're all gonna get giardia.*

[both laughing, Emily mimes retching]

S: So anyway, Rand's sexuality needs therapy. Rand needs to be therapized.

E: Mat, meanwhile, is doing fine. He's got, like, this red mark on his arm that he keeps itching, erm, and Rand's like, *Did they get you?* And Mat's like, *No, but it is super weird, I thought they broke in through the door, but now the door is fixed. Is fine.* And Moiraine rolls up, along with, like, half of the Maidens. Mat is like, *Eek* –

S: *Gotta put some pants on!*

E: - goes to put some pants on. Love that he is just, like, Rand can fully see –

S: I'm sure Rand has seen him naked so many times. Like, they bathe together in the first book –

E: Yeah, you're right. I always think – I mean, it's just like a thing in fantasy, bros are just like, *Yeah, bros can be naked around each other and it's not anything weird.* It's like, a locker room thing.

S: Yeah, like, I mean, my brothers are naked around their friends, like, all the time.

E: Why, boys?

S: I don't know.

E: I don't get it!

S: They're just, like, they were just like naked around each other –

E: [speaking over] Not socially conditioned to be ashamed of their bodies?

S: - it was like, the funniest thing in the world. I don't know, I don't know.

E: Yeah, boys are just like, *Naked, around other lads.*

S: They think it's funny. I don't know if it's a defense against like – *We're choosing it, and it's a bro thing?* Or if it's not gay? If it's a masculine, like, weird convoluted masculine defense?

E: I'm also wondering if because Rand woke up from a sex dream, if he has a boner while he's running around. [laughs]

S: I feel like -

E: I'd imagine it's gone away by now.

S: I also feel like the fighting for your life would be a little bit of a boner-killer.

E: Yeah, that's what I'm saying. He woke up, had a boner, then was like, *Aw, fuck. Spidey senses ...*

S: It's impossible to say. Robert Jordan does not let us know –

E: Unfortunately.

S: - the important details.

E: I'm just saying, if you're writing a male character ...

S: I assume it's gotta be a deal. A thing.

E: It's like – I feel like, why – Cowards who won't write women when they have their periods, then men when they have boners.

S: It happens, man.

E: It's just a biological thing that happens. It's all good. I shouldn't say men when they have boners. Many genders can have boners.

S: This is gonna break the record for how many times we've said "boner" on this podcast [laughing].

E: Yes! Exactly what I want from day seventeen. The boner – Welcome to the Boner Podcast!

S: No – I don't want to be a part of that podcast. I'm resigning, officially, effective today.

E: Anyway! Mat does this thing where he's trying to pull on pants but he also falls over because Moiraine's trying to put her hands on him, to heal him –

S: It's very tender.

E: - because he's all scratched on his arm. The whole, like, caper of Mat – Mat's physical movements are often described in this, like, comedic way, just to remind us that, oh yeah, he's the court jester.

S: I know. But god bless him, he's got, like, this horrible burn on his arm and he just wants to put on pants and he falls over.

E: He's just trying to put on pants! So as not to scandalize Moiraine, who I don't imagine would be thrilled –

S: Yeah. That's true.

E: - about it. And, you know, his own – protect his own body. But Moiraine is like, *Let me heal you*, tries to heal him, Rand's watching this but doesn't see – we're seeing this from Rand's point of view. But it seems to have no effect. Mat's like, *Aw, damn, my necklace just got really cold* [both laughing], still itching his arm.

S: And Moiraine's like, [shouting] *Then fucking take it off!*

E: Yeah, Moiraine's like, *O...K*. Rand says it's the only time he's ever seen Moiraine look, like, alarmed, startled. Moiraine's like, *What the fuck?* Because presumably she just thought this fancy foxhead with the little Aes Sedai symbol as an eye was, like, jewelry. You'd think she'd have picked up on, maybe it's a magic thing.

S: She's like, *Why would Mat, of all people* – and Rand comments on that, he's like, *Why would Mat, of all people, wear the Aes Sedai symbol?*

E: And Mat's like, *Oh, gotta keep the killing thing close to your* –

S: *Put the killing thing between your teeth.*

E; Done. Moiraine's like, *Why don't you just take it off, then?* Mat does, and Moiraine immediately heals him. Mat's like, *FUCK! Fuck, fuck, fuck! Why is it always fucking like that?* And Moiraine's like, *You need to be a little calmer, or I will find Nynaeve for you* – which I just love that she uses Nynaeve as a threat against Mat.

S: And she's like, *You watch your tongue, as the Wisdom says.*

E: *As the Wisdom says!*

S: *Watch your tongue.*

E: I love them. But then they pretty much leave Mat in peace – there's some banter between Melindhra and the other Maidens, that I'm sure is embarrassing to Mat, who just wanted to have sex in peace, you know?

S: God, poor Mat.

E: I know.

S: My kingdom for women who are just like, *Leave Mat alone!*

E: Why is his every sexual exploit publicized?

S: I don't know, man.

E: It's very sad.

S: Like, let the boy have some damn privacy.

E: But then Rand leaves and is like, *Hey, Maidens – you should leave too.* And they're like, *Fine*, and Rand's like, *I wish that you would listen to me in the normal things because how can I trust that you'll listen to me when it's battle time?* Which is logic that makes sense to a person in a leadership position, from Rand's cultural point of view. But the Maidens are like, *OK, well, for us it's a totally different context, so it doesn't matter, when we're not in a fight you cease being the guy in charge, as it were.* So that will just create more friction between Rand and the Maidens as this book goes on.

S: Also, in this chapter – I can't remember if it's before or after this – this is one of the only times I remember Rand explicitly saying, *I was raised in a – like, in a culture that taught me that I was to die before a woman was ever harmed.*

E: Oh, I don't even remember that. Sure.

S: And he is like, *It doesn't exactly make sense, but that's how I feel*. And it's just, like, a weird moment that I remember.

E: Yeah, it's, you walk this fine line with Rand of Robert Jordan being self-aware of what he's doing, and wanting to exploit it, to further Rand's psychological issues, but it's just like, he chose the wrong thing.

S: Yeah, also –

E: It's just like, the wrong thing to make Rand totally neurotic about.

S: And it's, like, the same thing with Perrin and the wolves. I would have – it just goes on for too long. If you told me that a boy raised in a rural, quote-unquote, chivalrous society has an issue with women dying for him, I would be like, OK, that's annoying, but the cultural context is provided. But the fact that it goes on and goes on and goes on and goes on and goes on, no matter how many powerful women, and women with, quote-unquote, agency Rand interacts with, it's still a thing. It's just frustrating.

E: Yeah, like, you could have had it end at the end of this book, when the Maidens confront Rand and are like, *You don't get to choose whether we die for you*. And Moiraine literally taking out Lanfear in the coolest-ass moment of all fucking time –

S: I know.

E: - she's really using her agency in that way to protect Rand. It's just, like, it would be fine at the end of this book if he accepted that, moved on, never had any problems with it again.

S: Yeah.

E: But, you know, Robert Jordan just drags things out.

S: Yeah, but anyway, that moment just really caught me, because it felt really out of the norm for Rand's narration and self-awareness. It was just really interesting.

E: Yeah, he's not usually a self-aware boy.

S: But anyway, here we have the infamous Moiraine-pledging-that-she-will-be-obedient-to-Rand conversation.

E: Yeah, Rand's, like, ready to leave, and Moiraine's like, *Will you please just talk to me?* And Rand's like, *What do you want to talk to me about? You've manipulated me, you've done really bad things*, which is just such an odd argument for Rand to have. I'm not arguing with how he feels, it's just like he can't really give examples, because I can't really give examples of Moiraine doing something that wasn't for his benefit, I guess. The whole, like, psychological trauma of Moiraine suspecting that one of them was the Dragon Reborn and not being upfront about that to begin with isn't written well enough into Rand's psychoses – again, the wrong things are emphasized – so that we end up in scenes like this, where it's like, *I don't really get it, Rand*.

S: Yeah, like – Yeah, because it's just like, where we're supposed to buy into it, I think, is that it's like, *Oh, Aes Sedai are manipulative* as a general concept, and it's very frustrating because it feels like Rand is projecting angers that should be directed at Suan Sanche that are directed at Moiraine. Because Suan is the one who's like, *I wanna do this with the Dragon Reborn, I'm gonna do this with the Dragon Reborn, I'm playing all these behind-the-scenes puppet master games*, where Moiraine is just like, *I would like the world to survive and we're gonna have to do what's necessary*. And I don't agree with Moiraine's mentorship tactics, hardly ever –

E: Absolutely not.

S: - but, yeah, this scene is very much where I'm like – I'm not on Rand's side at all, because again, I cannot point to a single moment where I'm – except in the first book, where Moiraine is, like, testing them, sort of subversively to see who she thinks –

E: Yeah, but it's like, homie, have some human sympathy. It's not like she could be, *I think one of you is the Dragon Reborn*, because you'd be fucking gone.

S: Exactly. And she could have been wrong, so what if she told you, *I think you're the Dragon Reborn*, and then it's none of the three of you? And she was like, *Shit*.

E: Yeah, she told you once she finally –

S: Knew.

E: - well, she didn't tell him. Oh yeah, he didn't know he was the Dragon Reborn at the end, he just knew he could channel.

S: Yeah, and they tell him in the second book.

E: Some car's alarm is going off. Anyway – so yeah, not really on Rand's side, not really into this scene, but Rand's like, *You're the worst*, and Moiraine's like, *Listen, I just wanna help, so I will make whatever promises you need me to make here and I will do what you say*. And Rand's like, *Ooh, fun. Love this idea*. He's like, *OK, as a – As a test, I want you to not try and take Mat's fancy necklace from him*. And she's like, *That is a powerful object, that –*

S: [whispers] Belongs to the White Tower.

E: - *should go to the Tower*. And Rand's like, *Who fucking said all of the magical objects in the world belong to the White Tower? Let it go. He paid for it*. And she's like, *Fine. I'll do what you say*. And then, that's it.

S: Yeah, and it's just such a frustrating dynamic, to have to have, like, obedience come into their whole shit in this book –

E: Yeah, it's not – it's not about respect, it's about the ... It's, like, this weird power dynamic to it. It's not an equal sharing of power, it's just like someone always has to be above the other one.

S: Yeah, and like, it's just gross. It's gross.

E: Yeah, not great. I maintain that much of it is to do with the fact that Moiraine is a woman mentor.

S: Mm-hmm.

E: This wouldn't happen with fucking Gandalf!

S: Yeah, Gandalf didn't deal with – again, Gandalf did not have to put up with this shit. Frodo was not, like, *Obey me, Gandalf. Fucking promise to do what I fucking tell you, Gandalf.*

E: Yeah, of course, Frodo wasn't conquering nations. I guess Aragorn –

S: Aragorn: *Don't fucking tell me what to do, grandpa!*

E: Gandalf's like – Gandalf would kick him into next year.

S: Exactly, Gandalf would be like, *Frodo, just take him and put him into Mount Doom. I can't deal with this shit.*

E: *Get him out of here. Chosen King or not, I will –*

S: Yeah. Gone. Deleted.

E: - *I will put Gimli on the throne.*

S: It's what we all deserve.

E: Yeah. Eowyn.

S: Anyway – so I wish Moiraine would fucking throw Rand into Mount Doom [Emily laughing], but that's not the timeline we were given. Instead, we have to listen to Rand and Lanfear talk.

E: Yeah, Rand goes back to his room, takes a moment to, you know, caress his high-powered [Sally laughing] magical items – who fucking knows why he does this? Except Robert Jordan needed us to know that he has them.

S: Needed to remember that they were there.

E: He's like, *I have to unlock the special safe that I've carved into the wall by myself.* Like, I know he probably means with the Power, but I imagine him with a chisel –

S: [speaking over] No, I imagine him with, like, a spoon.

E: - Count of Monte Cristo. Where he's put his special statues –

S: Think there's, like, a poster in front of it? Like in *The Shawshank Redemption*? [both laughing]
Like, a naked lady or whatever?

E: God. Elayne's letters. But of course, Lanfear shows up while he's putting them away, which again is, like, why you shouldn't maybe take them out to begin with, Rand.

S: Just caress them.

E: Oh, he does check on Asmodean, I forgot to mention that.

S: Yeah, and then he like, gets rid of the paw-prints, so that people don't realize the Darkhounds were going towards –

E: Yeah, Asmodean slept right through it, classic. Classic.

S: Phat move. That's a big Sally act. And then Rand also does like, some gateway shit, and Moiraine's like, *What the fuck? How do you even know how to, like, teleport?*

E: Yeah, he uses Skimming, the bastard stepson of Traveling, and Moiraine's like, *What in the hell?* And Rand's like, *Oh, I've known how to do this for, like, three books now, what are you talking about?*

S: Also, why didn't he do that to go save Mat, you know?

E: Yeah, one wonders.

S: Why did he have to sprint through Rhuidean instead of just, like, beep-beeping on over?

E: The drama. [both laughing] I don't know.

S: Anyway ...

E: Yeah, Lanfear shows up in his room, and is like, *Oh, so you do have those two high-powered statues.* And he's like, *Listen –*

S: [whispering] *I do not.*

E: *I do – Look at me. Look how innocent I look. I would never.*

S: And then he has, like, a creepy Lews Therin moment where he's like – calls her by her old name. Call Me By Your Name and I'll call you by mine. [Emily retches]

E: He's like, *Mierin, I was never – I was way fucking over you by the time Ilyena –*

S: Ilyeno ...

E: Ilyeno!

S: - *by the time my hot boyfriend came into the picture.*

E: - *came into the picture.* And Lanfear's like, *Lews Therin?* And Rand's like, *No, I'm RAND!*

S: And she's like, *OK, this is ... taxing.*

E: She's like, *OK, fine, please just pick a side.*

S: And they talk about –

E: They talk about dreams, Lanfear's like, *I see your dreams are warded*, and Rand's like, *Yis*. She's like, *Well, I've been spying on the Wise Ones and Egwene, and whatever* – trying to make him jealous, or something. No, she's trying to make him – I don't know.

S: Because she's like, *Egwene has sexy dreams about Gawyn*. And Rand's like, *Who?*

E: *Who?*

S: Literally, Rand's like, *What? I do not know who that is*.

E: Oh, she also reveals that Rahvin is in Caemlyn controlling Morgase, which has probably the most chilling unresolved narrative thread there, that nothing comes of it because Robert Jordan's a coward, but Rand, we see, knows this, in his internal monologue he's like, *I hope Elayne can forgive me, but I'm not gonna fucking do anything about saving her mother. Or hey, maybe communicating to someone that Elayne's mother needs to be saved*.

S: Yeah.

E: Like, the lack of communication here is so bizarre.

S: Yeah, Rand is like, so determined to protect the fact that he's got Asmodean teaching him, that he's like, *I can't let anybody know anything that I know about the Forsaken, because then they'll start putting the pieces together*.

E: Yeah, you just have to imagine if Elayne ever found out, *Hey, my baby daddy fucking knew that my mother was being raped and tortured and didn't do anything about it*. Like, Robert Jordan?

S: Yeah, that's, like, very charged. Never really thought about that.

E: I didn't think about it until I was reading it just now, but it suddenly – Like, the alternate timeline flashed through my head, where Elayne finds this out, kicks Rand's ass to the curb, Aviendha also kicks Rand's ass to the curb, because she's on Elayne's side –

S: Of course she is.

E: - because who wouldn't be? And then, I don't know, Rand and Min are free to be the world's most annoying couple, by themselves.

S: And then Elayne and Aviendha just get together.

E: Take the polygamy out of the equation.

S: Yeah, like they should have in the beginning.

E: Exactly. So – I don't know, just one of those “could-have-beens” that I don't think Robert Jordan thought through all the way. It's just like, that's such a – Usually, when you're a writer, I think, and you set up that type of potential tension between two characters, it's with the goal of like, *I am going to bring this back up later*. Or even just if you unintentionally do it, you're like, *Ah, this has got to come up later*. Because it's good drama, or whatever.

S: Yeah, it's the tea.

E: Robert Jordan was clearly like, *This isn't a big deal*. It is!

S: It's just like, *Everyone's gotta forgive Rand because he's sad*.

E: It's a huge deal!

S: It's so annoying.

E: Rand's fucking machinations aren't worth all this bullshit.

S: Yeah, no, they're not. They're not worth anything.

E: Yeah. Anyway, so, that's upsetting. Lanfear leaves eventually, and Rand goes to sleep.

S: No, then the chiefs –

E: Oh, right.

S: - come a-knocking.

E: One of the Maidens comes and grabs Rand and is like, *I wish you would tell us when you come back to the house so we're not out looking for you*. He's like, [childish voice] *Ugh, mom, I hate you*.

S: *I'm beholden to no one*.

E: She's like, *All the clan chiefs are here, you need to go out and talk to them*. So, he goes down, and they're like, *All the Shaido and everyone else are fucking on the move*. And Rand's like, *Aw, dunk, they're gonna get to Cairhien before I can. And, you know, Cairhien will suffer for my indecisiveness and for the fact that I was waiting around for all the other clans*. And Rhuarc's like, *Yup!* That's just the plot of this book, I guess. [both laughing] But Rand's like, *OK, we gotta move. We don't really have an option, regardless of whether the Shaido get there before us, we have to get there ASAP after them*. And so – next day, Egg's point of view as they are all getting prepared to leave. Egg's like, *Quick update: did super-good at my dream homework last night. Found Amys's dream, and we had, like, some nice dream tea, chatted, I guess, and then I went on to do my –*

S: *Illegal*.

E: - *illegal dream homework, and spy on everyone else*. She's like, *I can't get to Rand, other Wise Ones are boring*. Bair apparently had two husbands in the past, which I love. Homegirl has a type.

S: Unit.

E: Unit. Erm, and – I can't remember, I don't think she spies on anyone else's dreams, because everyone else is –

S: She spies on Aviendha's, and they're, like –

E: Sad, Rand is an ogre, chasing her, or some bullshit. And she's like, *I will not go near Mat's dreams*. Mat's probably not fucking dreaming. He just had the most stressful night of his life.

S: [speaking over] Mat's conked out, yeah.

E: He's flatlined.

S: Mat probably just has incomprehensible dreams.

E: Yeah, you're probably right.

S: The ones where you wake up and you're like, *What the fuck?*

E: Mat's one of those characters who never talks about his dreams.

S: Yeah. Maybe he doesn't dream!

E: Maybe he doesn't. *I don't sleep. I just dream.*

S: *Tel'aran'rhiod's* like, *No, no, no-no, no. I don't want that boy.*

E: He should stay out.

S: *Who knows what the fuck that kid'll do?*

E: He is chaos. So – I guess ... Egg's like, chatting with Mat, he's like, *Get this.*

S: *Oh, shit.*

E: *Oh, shit, you'll never believe what happened. Rand told Moiraine to shut up and she did. And Egg's like, You seem a little too happy about this. Mat's like, I am happy about this. Girl. Moiraine has been cray. And Egg's like, Again, don't really see it, but –*

S: *I'm not a lad, so.*

E: *I'm not a lad. Don't really get the "lad" solidarity.*

S: *Moiraine's been a little nicer to me than she's been to the lads, allegedly.*

E: Allegedly, yeah. It makes more sense for Mat because, just Mat – it's built into Mat's character that he's resentful of authority figures. I don't know. Feel less upset.

S: Yeah. Yeah. Especially because Mat, of anyone, Moiraine tried to lock up in the White Tower, so I kind of get it a little bit more with Matrim, but ... Then Egg and Aviendha talk, blah-blah.

E: Blah blah-blah.

S: Girl stuff.

E: Yeah, Egg's like, *Are you sure you don't want me to talk to someone?* And Aviendha's like, *I wish you'd fucking shut up about it.* There's all this stuff about the different jewelry Aviendha's wearing, like a bracelet from Rand and a necklace from Egg, or something.

S: Yeah, and apparently Egwene borrowed money from Moiraine to pay for the necklace?

E: Yeah, what the hell? What's their relationship?

S: Could she be like, *Mom*?

E: *Mom, can I have some money to pay for a necklace for my girlfriend?* And Moiraine's like, *Yes, future lesbian* –

S: *Of course you can.*

E: - *I, current lesbian, will assist you.*

S: *Best day of my life.*

E: I love this.

S: *What do you want? How much do you need?*

E: Oh, and there's this whole foreshadowing bullshit where Egg's like, *I got her a snowflake pattern, because she'll probably never see snow.*

S: Ha-ha!

E: Psych, that's what you think.

S: In, like, twenty chapters she will!

E: Oh yeah.

S: Gross.

E: Oh, by the way, Rand's wearing the fancy new belt buckle Aviendha gave him.

S: And Egg's like, *Well, he thinks highly of himself.* [laughing]

E: It's really hilarious to me to imagine Rand's wake-up routine, where he's like, you know, *Oh, my new* –

S: *Put my new belt buckle on.*

E: - *belt buckle on, Aviendha will see it, see how grateful I am.* [both laughing]

S: There are moments when Rand could be such a charming character.

E: I know. And yet.

S: And yet.

E: Here he is.

S: Imagine him in front of the mirror, he's like, *OK, I gotta look like I'm the Dragon Reborn, gonna put on my belt buckle, get a really nice coat, I'm gonna do my hair. Can't do anything about these under-eye circles, but we're just gonna go with it.* [laughing]

E: Egg's like, *Mat has been sleeping in his coat again. Rand has a fancy belt buckle. I am disparaging of both of them, for completely separate reasons. I am the Fashion Police.*

S: Egg is the Fashion Police.

E: It's true, yeah. They chat, and then they all get ready to move out. Someone's like, *Rand, are you leaving forever?* And Rand's like, *Dunno, you know! Who knows where these books will take me? Robert Jordan certainly doesn't!*

S: *Who's to say?*

E: *So, I can only make empty promises, but here, have some hydration to remember me by,* and makes all the fountains start spewing water. And Rand's like, *I maybe should have done that a long time ago,* and everyone's like, *So, you could just do that? You could just do that, and we've been hauling water from the fucking lake?* [both laughing]

S: And Rand's like, [very quickly], *OK, time to go!*

E: It doesn't even look like it was hard!

S: Yeah, it was just, like, latent water, right? He just channeled it up again. Anyway, Rand's just like, *OK, time to get the fuck out of here!*

E: *Gotta get gone!* And everyone's like, *Grab your torches and pitchforks, this man is a dummy!*

S: They're right.

E: Then it switches over to Moiraine's point of view as she's, like, doing her little meditation thing. Chatting with Lan, the way that Moiraine and Lan always chat, which is that they exchange three sentences, and there are apparently worlds of meaning behind those. Lan makes a joke at one point, and Moiraine's like, *Oh my God. He has changed so much. Love has changed him.*

S: It's like not even a joke. [laughing]

E: It's not even a joke!

S: And she, like – Seriously, for about a page and a half, she talks about how Lan has changed so much and he would never have cracked a joke before seeing Nynaeve –

E: What are you talking about?

S: - the least funny person in the world.

E: What – what's happening? Yeah. [both laughing] Lan and Nynaeve, the couple with the *least* humor in *The fucking Wheel of Time*.

S: Like, when they –

E: Imagine having them over for game night.

S: Lan would break your coffee table. Excuse me – *Nynaeve* would break your coffee table.

E: They both would.

S: It's like, whenever Nynaeve is funny, she's not trying to be funny. She's just a funny character. But yeah, she's like, *I've never laughed in my life*.

E: Anyway. Moiraine tells us about going through the *ter'angreal* at Rhuidean that shows you all your possible futures, much like what happened completely accidentally with Rand and co when they went through a portal stone. All the alternate lives. And Moiraine's like, *Basically, I remember some things – like, I remember that if I were to sleep with Rand it would be super-bad*. And everyone's like, *Yeah, we could have told you – could have told you that one*.

S: Yeah, did you need a magic circle to tell you that?

E: Do you – did you need to bring it up, also? It wasn't an option. No one thought about it.

S: Yeah, because Lan's like, *What the fuck are you doing obeying her?* And she's like – *obeying him*, she's like, *I'll do everything short of sleeping with him*. And Lan's like, *I did not ask*.

E: Lan's like, *I know you wouldn't*.

S: What?

E: *Can you talk about this with someone else?* [both laughing] Lan's like, *We made an agreement twenty years ago*.

S: *That we would not talk about this*.

E: *Yeah, sex is totally –*

S: [speaking over] Out of the picture.

E: - *separate from us, we don't talk about it. I don't care what you do. If you do sleep with Rand, though, that would be horrifying. I am teaching him the sword. Get it? The phallic stuff?*

S: Wink.

E: *It's all bad, Moiraine!*

S: No! Anyway. That's a horrendous aside that nobody needed.

E: Yeah, it's all about how she remembers certain things, so it will make a little bit more sense to us when the end comes. And Moiraine's like, *I've left you all letters*. So we're not taken aback by that.

S: *Meanwhile, I'm tackling Lanfear through a door*.

E: Girl, that was its own last will and testament. Fucking tackling – that is, everything that needed to be said, was said.

S: Preach it. Anyway.

E: Girl. There's the letter to Thom where she was like, *You do have to rescue me*. That was kinda necessary. But no one else needed a last message. They were there. Anyway, those were those two chapters. We are now about to embark on – count em – twelve chapters of Nynaeve and Elayne and/or Sivan Sanche/Gareth Bryne or like, bad villain asides. So – that'll be a slog. Maybe by the time we get through it the quarantine will be over? [laughing]

S: It's important to set goals.

E: It is important to set goals.

S: I just, like, I know I've said – We've all said this a hundred times: Nynaeve and Elayne's plot could be so fun if it was a third as long as it actually is.

E: It's like – ladies. It's called editing. [both laughing] Robert. Why.

S: They do not need to be in the circus for that long.

E: They don't need to be in the circus for that long, they don't need three chapters about them going into town and getting kidnapped and drugged, or whatever. But it is. We definitely don't need all this time about Sivan Sanche going into sexy inns and showing off her legs to get info. Come on. [frustrated sigh] Time skips. They're so valuable, yet so under-utilized in *The Wheel of Time*.

S: Or they're just, like, utilized at the weirdest times, where you're like, *What do you mean, it's been, what, like, three months* –

E: - *between* The Great Hunt *and* The Dragon Reborn?

S: Yeah!

E: What?

S: Where are we?

E: What happened? So yeah, that's that.

S: So, welcome to the outro of this podcast [laughing], where we're supposed to say thanks. Emily is gonna be doing some fairly regularly *Wind Waker* live streams, might be doing some other fun quarantine content that may or may not be *Wheel of Time*-related, so check in on our socials for the schedules and the links to all that if you guys need a little pick-me-up.

E: A lot of our stuff will be done over the weekend, but besides that last *Wind Waker* – the first *Wind Waker*, I guess – livestream that I did will be recorded in the future, so if you can't join the livestream they should be available to you in the future.

S: So yeah, look out for that. Trying to be a little bit more active on social media, just to have more stuff if you guys are feeling low. Not saying that we are the magic cure to quarantine and depression, but hopefully we can help.

E: Whatever helps.

S: The usual stuff – this week instead of a call to action in terms of money, if you love the podcast it would be awesome if you could give us a rating on iTunes. I know it sounds hokey but it really does help with visibility and stuff. Just something, you don't even have to leave a review if you don't want to – just a little star rating. That'd be lit. Just take good care of yourself.

E: Do you have a signoff?

S: [laughing] I do, yeah. It's a listener-submitted signoff, because you guys are so funny. OK, so this comes from absolute EHR legend, Gavin. [laughing]

E: Of "kid on the airplane watching *Wolf of Wall Street* with bare feet" fame. Haunting.

S: Yeah. Haunting.

E: Someone should do an animatic of that sign-off.

S: It is truly – Like you said, I think about that all the time. Haunt me.

E: I'm just like, oh god, that kid.

S: I hope he's getting some appropriate parental supervision. OK. Gavin writes, *Hi guys. I hope you guys are having a delightful apocalypse. Mine is OK. I'm currently locked in –*

E: [laughing] *Mine is OK!*

S: - *locked in a house with my girlfriend's parents, which is going about as well as you'd expect. Anyway, I started my quarantine off with getting my wisdom teeth removed, [sympathetic sounds from Emily] which I know sounds ridiculous coming from a guy in his twenties, but I'm finally at a point in my life where my job gives me dental insurance, so shoot me. That's a fab mood.*

E: And I didn't get mine out until I was – last year.

S: [speaking over] I didn't get mine out until I was twenty or twenty-one.

E: So, twenty-five.

S: *When I told my GF's parents that I was getting my teeth removed, they offered to pick me up from the dentist, because my roommate, Kyle, has a history of being a scallywag. [both laughing] I can't think of a better word. Not a bad dude, just a bit irresponsible. Now, I was rather trepidatious about being around them while highly drugged – for obvious reasons – but I went for it, because her mom makes a great soup. [both laughing] I have faint memories of the day, but the thing that stands out the most is Wheel of Time related. We had sat for dinner – some blended soup – and they then proceeded to ask me what I was thinking about. Well, I guess what I was thinking about [pause, Sally laughing] was how much I love Mat, and I decided to go through each individual Wheel of Time book and what Mat was doing in them. [both laughing] The big boom, adopting a child, stabbing the gholam – which*

they thought was Gollum – him and Tuon in a garden. I went on until the soup was finished. Needless to say, they have a full knowledge of how much of a weeb I am, and I'm also told that I was barely coherent. Lots of mumbling about the atrocities of Brandon Sander and how much I hate Dagger-Mat – you get the idea. Oh, and I called her sister a bitch. [both laughing] And then I cried because I called her sister a bitch. And now I am locked in the house with them for the foreseeable future. [both laughing]

E: Oh, my God.

S: It's a little twist on the end there.

E: Yeah, that's a really good – [laughing] really good ending.

S: [still laughing] Have a good week.

E: Have a good week. Don't do war crimes. Wash your hands. Bye.

ENDS