



Episode 120: Snap, Crackle, Squash

Release Date: June 22, 2020

Running Time: 41 minutes

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)

Emily: I'm starting the recording.

Sally: 'Kay, I hope that, um, you are not distracted by the sound of my spaghetti squash sizzling very loudly. Can you hear it?

Emily: I don't know if they -- I could probably take the microphone over there, next to the oven.

Sally: No, don't do that.

Emily: I can hear it for sure.

Sally: 'Kay, yeah, it sounds like I'm murdering her.

Emily: No, it sounds very pleasant.

Sally: Crackling squash.

Emily: Crackling squash sounds like a pretty good band name.

Sally: Hmm.

Emily: (whisper) Crackling squash ...

Tybalt: (meows)

Sally: Hi. Would you -- would you care to not yell?

Emily: I wish I could think of more things to talk about, since there's nothing to talk about in these chapters. (laugh)

Sally: Yeah, these chapters -- I was reading them -- we can talk about how I officially started Path of Daggers.

Emily: You did, now?

Sally: Yeah, I'm 23 pages in. (laugh)

Emily: You did, now? (laugh) Is that the whole epilogue?

Sally: No, uh, I --

Emily: What's the epilogue, like, 300 pages?

Sally: The prologue?

Emily: Prologue. I'm good at words.

Sally: Um, I don't -- I don't know how long the prologue is. I know the prologue and the first chapter are 63 pages. I don't know --

Emily: Combined?

Sally: What the division is. Yeah, 'cause that's what I'm gonna try and write about this week.

Emily: Hoo. Good luck.

Sally: Thanks. It is, let me tell you, not a good idea to take a year and a half break between reading Wheel of Time books. (laugh)

Emily: All the defenses you've built up -- (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. I'm also just, like, deeply confused. (laugh)

Emily: It's like when you, um -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Like, you guys know I'm an idiot anyway. Like, I can't remember fucking things I read three minutes ago.

Emily: It's like if you read Wheel of Time, then you sort of build up, like, an immunity to it, sort of like a -- like a resistance to drugs --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So you have to keep upping the dosage, but then if you take some time off, quit cold turkey --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Suddenly you go back and you get knocked flat by --

Sally: Yeah, my overdose on --

Emily: Half a Nyquil.

Sally: Robert Jordan's gender politics.

Emily: Oh, boy. And, yeah, Path of Daggers is not a great one to -- (laugh) I'm excited to read about you -- I don't want you to look anything up, I just want you to be confused relentlessly.

Sally: (laugh) No, at first -- I was sitting there, and I was like, "Mm. I could Google it." And then I did that, like, six times and I was like, "I don't care." (laugh) "I'll figure it out or I won't." (laugh)

Emily: I've done that so many times. Been like, "I don't remember how this is gonna go. Guess I'll find out."

Sally: Yeah, it's just, like, whatever, man. Tybalt, do you hear the spaghetti squash?

Emily: Tybalt is like, "What is this apocalyptic squash crackle?"

Sally: (laugh) It's so funny. His ears are --

Emily: (sing-song) Snap, crackle, squash, Rice Krispies. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) He is, like -- this is the closest I've ever seen him get to the oven unless he's trying to get on top of the oven.

Emily: Bastard. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) This is so funny, you guys. He's so fascinated.

Emily: (sing-song) Snap, crackle, squash ...

Sally: I don't know why it's being so loud, 'cause I didn't use as much olive oil as I normally do.

Emily: It's just a very crackly squash.

Sally: Yeah. She just has a lot to say. (laugh) I guess.

Emily: She -- (laugh) She's dying.

Sally: Yeah, she's wailing.

Emily: These are her screams of --

Sally: (laugh) That's so sad to think about.

Emily: (laugh) I know, actually, I don't want to think about that. Poor spaghetti squash. Um, this is Everybody Hates Rand. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Why don't I just say it at the beginning?

Sally: Ah, 'cause we're dumb.

Emily: I dunno.

Sally: We're stupid. (laugh)

Emily: I've done this so many times.

Sally: Yeah. Hundred and twenty, baby.

Emily: A hundred and twenty times.

Sally: Actually more than that, 'cause some of our episodes aren't numbered. Probably like 125 times.

Emily: Jesus Christ. And every time, I'm like, "I guess I'll wait until 10 minutes in to say, 'This is Everybody Hates Rand, your friendly neighborhood podcast.'" I'm Emily Juchau.

Sally: I'm Sally. And sitting here next to me is Tybalt.

Emily: And sitting to my left is our oven, which is making crackling noises --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: That I pray to God are not audible over the microphone, 'cause it might sound like a haunting.

Sally: (laugh) It's just my squash.

Emily: It's just Sally's squash.

Sally: I just want some squash.

Emily: That's good.

Sally: I love squash. I cut it open, and it just smelled so squashy.

Emily: I like watching you make squash.

Sally: Thanks.

Emily: It's nice. Spaghetti squash is a very satisfying food to watch other people --

Sally: I think it is very satisfying.

Emily: Make.

Sally: Yeah, 'cause then you, like, scoop it out, and it turns into, like, strings.

Emily: Yeah. That's so cool. Just, like, how did a food do that? You know?

Sally: Dunno. It -- God punished me with my immune system and said, "Ah, sorry, sis," and created spaghetti squash.

Emily: He yeeted a spaghetti squash at her. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. He was like, "Sorry, that was an accident. Here, have some squash."

Emily: Yeet!

Sally: Yeah. Like a football. (laugh)

Emily: I just got a mental image of, you know, the Charlie Brown comic strips --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: With the football and God holding a spaghetti squash --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like a football and being like, "If you can kick this, I'll give you an immune --" (laugh)

Sally: "If you can kick this, I'll give you a functioning immune system," and then I missed it.

Emily: Because God pulled it away!

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: He's a tricky bastard. Or she. Or it.

Sally: They. It.

Emily: Yeah. God --

Sally: Tybalt.

Emily: Has no gender or whatever. Um.

Sally: Tybalt. (laugh)

Emily: Tybalt.

Sally: You guys, I keep having dreams that I have a math test the following day.

Emily: Oh, that's upsetting.

Sally: Isn't that very strange and specific?

Emily: I had a dream -- a very intense and intricate dream that, um, I was back at my old high school --

Sally: Nope.

Emily: And I -- well, yeah, I mean, that was bad enough -- and I could not find my old locker. Nor could I remember my locker's combination.

Sally: That's so scary.

Emily: But I had, like, a test to take or something --

Sally: (gasp)

Emily: And all my supplies were in my locker. And it, like, from there, devolved into, like, this almost, like, noir detective thing of me --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Discovering that I had suppressed memories of being on the tennis team and getting hit in the face by a tennis ball. (laugh)

Sally: Oh, no! (laugh)

Emily: It was a really intense -- in, like, a really weird way.

Sally: Yeah, that sounds very dramatic.

Emily: I think -- I don't even remember if I ever did get my locker open.

Sally: You know what upsets me very deeply?

Emily: Sure.

Sally: I can remember exactly where my locker was sophomore and junior year of high school, but I can't remember where my locker was senior year of high school.

Emily: Oh, that is upsetting.

Sally: I think it's because it was really close to the locker I had sophomore year, and so I think I'm getting them confused.

Emily: Oh, gotcha.

Sally: Wow, these fun anecdotes from American high school.

Emily: I'm, like --

Sally: (inaudible)

Emily: (laugh) Well, I'm, like, did I have a different locker every year? I think I did my sophomore year, but then I feel like I had the same one junior and senior year.

Sally: I don't know why we just didn't keep the same locker, unless someone changed schools. Like, that seems like a lot easier system.

Emily: I just don't -- lockers are so weird and wild.

Sally: Yeah. I liked having a locker. I don't know why. I just thought it was fun.

Emily: Yeah. It was fun. But what I didn't like was having only five minutes between classes to get all the way across campus --

Sally: Yeah, it was very strange.

Emily: And, like, go to the bathroom and feed myself.

Sally: Yeah. I mean, high school sucks.

Emily: American public school systems --

Sally: Yeah. It's just bad.

Emily: Yeah, are the worst. The devil.

Sally: It's just not a good place to be, especially in your formative teenage years. America is like, "Would you like a little bit of trauma before you turn eighteen?"

Emily: Mm. I'm like, "Yes. Give it to me." (laugh)

Sally: "Give it to me."

Emily: "Let me just chomp it down."

Sally: Would you like to stop biting me?

Emily: No, he would not. He's a bastard. Tybalt has taken to a variety of fun activities, such as getting on our TV stand, which we've mentioned many times, but also just plastering himself against my blinds.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Which is very annoying. (laugh)

Sally: I -- (laugh) It's very annoying. But also very silly. (laugh)

Emily: It's so stupid. Yesterday, he saw a spider on the other side of the window glass in my room --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: And he, like, you know, could not get it through his head that it was on the other side of the glass and was just, like --

Sally: It's 'cause you're dumb.

Emily: So upset by it. Like, he was doing that whole whisker twitchy thing, you know? Where he's kinda, like -- and trying to get the spider. But you couldn't, Tybalt. That spider outsmarted you by saying on the outside, where it belongs.

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. Stop.

Emily: So, in these chapters -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: A woman is murdered and dismembered.

Sally: It's so gross.

Emily: And Rand reveals that he doesn't know what taxes are.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) I was -- I read that at the end, and I was like, how --

Emily: Those are my main takeaways. (laugh)



Sally: The first time, did I, like, not fully grasp that Rand doesn't know what taxes are?

Emily: Like, we fully know that the people in the Two Rivers do not play -- do not pay taxes.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: National taxes. But then it's like, so in a -- in a village society, do you not pay taxes to the village either?

Sally: Yeah, like, the village council or whatever? Yeah. It was very strange.

Emily: I guess not, 'cause the village council members all have real jobs alongside being --

Sally: But -- yeah, but, like, they don't even have, like, taxes for, like, welfare purposes? Like --

Emily: Apparently not.

Sally: What if someone's fucking barn burns down?

Emily: How does Nynaeve get paid?

Sally: Yeah, exactly.

Emily: Like, Nynaeve's not gonna not heal someone just because --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Nynaeve's a real health care worker, so she would treat anyone, regardless of their gender identity.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: Funny how people who wouldn't do that shouldn't be in medicine in the first place.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: Um. But, yeah, like, how does she, y'know, make ends meet if she -- if she's not getting paid via taxes?

Sally: Yeah, like, she should have, like, a stipend, right? And, like, a house?

Emily: Yeah, you'd think.

Sally: So how does Rand not know what taxes -- like, even just, like, theoretically, as a concept?

Emily: Like, what is Tam for if not to teach Rand how to pay taxes? (laugh)

Sally: Yeah, but I feel like --

Emily: That's what dads do.

Sally: Yeah. That's their only purpose.

Emily: Literally. You get one dad to teach you how to pay taxes.

Sally: Yeah, and then the dad's like, "Goodbye, now."

Emily: "Goodbye. You no longer -- I will no longer be a healthy presence in your life." You're like, "Bye, Dad." (laugh)

Sally: "Bye, Dad." Um. Yeah. It's very stupid. It makes Rand look very dumb.

Emily: Yeah. Especially because he's just gone on about how he's so intensely avoiding Moiraine --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Who would happily teach him how taxes function.

Sally: Yeah, he's like, "Oh, I guess I'll have to ask Mom how taxes work."

Emily: And it's like, ah, man -- it really -- I mean, it's -- it's, uh, emphasizes the fact that Rand, in his very forced-upon-him role as savior of the world, is preparing for the, uh, dramatic endgame aspect of that in which he will die and a cosmic force of a -- in a fight with a cosmic force of evil, y'know?

Sally: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Emily: As opposed to all the, uh, tedious stuff coming before that --

Sally: Natch.

Emily: Such as ruling countries. Um. 'Cause, like, you know, no one necessarily predicted with the Dragon Reborn that he would have to rule countries, only that he has to go fight the Dark One.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: But it is sort of a given, the way Rand is doing it, so --

Sally: Yeah. Because Rand's a imperialist piece of shit. But how do you understand, like, conquering things, but, like, taxes doesn't factor into your --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Idea there.

Emily: Like, he ruled in Tear for at least a month or two.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Ruled, quote unquote -- sort of told people what to do. And I guess he just didn't change any of the tax laws?

Sally: I guess.

Emily: But he also was, like, doing a bunch of other stuff in the infrastructure, which is -- what I understand about taxes is that you can't do infrastructure stuff without changing tax laws.

Sally: That's my understanding as well. It's kind of, like, one of the main purpose of taxes.

Emily: It's, like, literally --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: One of the main purposes of government is to tax.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) So --

Emily: So that they can provide infrastructural services.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: We teach this to the kindergartners at the publication I work at.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "Here's what taxes are." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. So. Rand has a preschool-level education, apparently.

Emily: Apparently!

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: It's so upsetting. Um, but that's getting out of order. First we have to deal with, uh, Kadere, our Darkfriend -- resident Darkfriend peddler --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, who apparently is Saldaean. I don't know what --

Sally: Yeah. That struck me really strangely too.

Emily: He's never mentioned as Saldaean until now, when it's important to, uh, frame -- like, put a frame of reference around his, quote unquote, beloved memories of his sister, who, spoiler

alert, he did murder. I don't know why everyone always does that with, like, murderer characters?

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: They're like, here's an evil character, and I will present them -- like, this just seems like a trope to me, where you have, like, a chapter or, like, a short work about someone who's evil, and you try and present them in a humanizing light at the end, but then by the end you've, like, gone back on that and been like, "Just kidding, they are evil."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And it's like, we been knew.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And also, even if he had not murdered his sister, he's still a murderer.

Sally: He still murders a woman in this chapter and then is, like, happily cutting up her body.

Emily: Yeah, just, like, doing shit.

Sally: He's also like, "The dead don't bleed that much," and I'm like, there's still gonna be blood, though?

Emily: I watched this -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) What are you -- there's a lot of blood in the human body, what are you -- it's not just gonna go away!

Emily: Like, it's patently untrue that the blood just dries up --

Sally: (laugh) Yeah.

Emily: Once the person's dead.

Sally: It's like, what? Like, she also died, like, 30 seconds ago. It's not like she's been dead for three days.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And her blood's congealed or whatever.

Emily: Like, rigor mortis, yeah.

Sally: Yeah. Like, she will bleed everywhere. (laugh)

Emily: It'll be disgusting --

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: If you cut apart her body. You don't even have, like, modern power tools to assist you.

Sally: It is truly so horrifying to imagine. (laugh)

Emily: He's also in a wagon. How is he gonna get out of there -- well, I mean, that's the point. He's, like, "Gotta stash her in a suitcase or something so I can get rid of the body."

Sally: And it's like, with blood dripping out of it?!

Emily: I mean, people do it.

Sally: I mean, I know.

Emily: So --

Sally: I've watched Dexter, Emily.

Emily: I've -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Um. (laugh) Speaking of blood, I was watching this HBO show called "Avenue Five," with Hugh Laurie, that's about, like, a cruise ship but in space?

Sally: Oh, yeah, I thought that looked funny.

Emily: Yeah, and I kinda was like, "Oh, fun," but then Devin and Janet were like, "Oh, you should watch it," so I kind of turned on an episode to, um, see if I agreed with their consensus. It was very cute and charming. Uh, but also kind of stressful, as many workplace comedies can be.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: But in the first episode, a guy's, like, doing maintenance on the outside of the ship in space, and he, like, dies dramatically by, like, getting a screwdriver --

Sally: Mm.

Emily: Stabbed through his heart. And they bring him back in, and -- (laugh) the main guy's like, "Well, look, he's not even bleeding, like, so maybe it missed his heart." And the other -- and this other person is like, "You know space is cold, right? Like, his -- his blood froze."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "As soon as it thaws --" And then, just then, like, there's this fountain -- (laugh)

Sally: Oh, no! (laugh)

Emily: Of blood shoots out of his chest. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Blehhh.

Emily: Like, it's disgusting, but it's also very --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "You know space is cold, right?"

Sally: "You know space is cold, right?" You know? You're not in SPACE, my dude.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: She's going to bleed! (laugh)

Emily: What's your favorite true crime story? Do you have any?

Sally: No.

Emily: Oh my God, someone was like, um, "If we don't have the police, then who will find murderers?" And someone else was like, "White women with podcasts." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah, duh.

Emily: Obviously.

Sally: Problem solved.

Emily: Problem solved.

Sally: Listen, Karen and Georgia can probably solve it better than the police anyway.

Emily: Well, I was like, listen. Sally -- Sally doesn't even like true crime, but we are two white women with a podcast. And I could solve some of these murders.

Sally: That's true. Emily's very smart.

Emily: Oh, you say the husband didn't do it, Officer Nepotism?

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Well, I say he did. Just 'cause he was in your frat doesn't mean he's not a murderer.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah.

Emily: Rrrggh.

Sally: "Officer Nepotism." (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Um. This has been a very, uh, angry and combative episode of EHR, but what are you gonna do when you read about a man murdering a woman and dismembering her body?

Sally: Don't worry. No blood, though. (laugh)

Emily: Don't worry, no blood, though, because she's already dead. That's what happens when you die. The blood disappears.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) Yeah, death vampires come and drink it immediately.

Emily: (laugh) Ghost vampires.

Sally: Yeah. They're like, "Oh my God, finally. I'm so hungry."

Emily: "Blood!"

Sally: "Nobody's murdered anyone in this spot for WEEKS."

Emily: Uh. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: I mean, to actually summarize, Kadere's just chilling, being like, "Aw, man, it's so hard to be a Darkfriend in these trying times." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah, it's very annoying.

Emily: "Lanfear gave me these orders to keep an eye on the Dragon Reborn and, um, Natael -- Natael --" a.k.a., Asmodean, who he does not know is Asmodean. Um, and he's like, "That's so hard. Especially because I'm not doing any work. I'm just setting my, uh -- my homegirl Isendre on Rand."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Which sort of explains the relentless, um, hitting on Rand that Isendre has been doing. But she shows up to chat and is like, "I'm not doing --" Apparently she's been sleeping with Asmodean, which is, like --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Girl. You could do better.

Sally: But also, like -- (laugh) Somehow I think I missed that on my first read.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And I was -- this time I was like, what?

Emily: She's like, "All he wants to do is play music I've never heard before and make love." And I'm like, I mean, the guy's gotta blow off steam, but -- (laugh)

Sally: It -- I was like, WHAT? (laugh)

Emily: So wild.

Sally: It was, like -- it is so strange to me. I don't know why. (laugh)

Emily: It's just, like, not a pairing, really, you -- you don't -- I sort of envision Asmodean as this sexless being --

Sally: Yeah, I think it's 'cause Asmodean is, like, pretty heavily queer-coded.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um, at least in this particular iteration of him as, you know, a delicate bard wasting away in the corner. (laugh) And so I'm like, what?

Emily: Yeah. Especially when you have Isendre, this, like --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Compilation of all the terrible tropes about, uh --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Quote unquote, sluts.

Sally: Yeah. It's --

Emily: Written by heterosexual men. It's interesting that Isendre is most, um, heavily punished for her, um, quote, promiscuity, unquote --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: By other women. And pretty telling, I think.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: About Robert Jordan.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah. I just -- why, though? Why?

Emily: Why, though? Why must we police -- I mean, I don't -- Isendre's a bad lady. But why must we police women's sexuality by having women who are blatantly sexual without strings



attached, quote unquote, like marriage or a relationship, be evil. We see both Isendre and Melindhra --

Sally: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Emily: Kind of filling those roles in this book.

Sally: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Emily: So a bit bizarre.

Sally: It's getting to the point where I, like, don't even have words for how misogynistic Robert Jordan is.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Like, I can't even form a coherent thought anymore. Or maybe I'm just tired.

Emily: Anyway, Isendre got her head and her eyebrows shaved, which -- like, I'm on the very edge of doing myself in this quarantine times.

Sally: Don't shave your eyebrows. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) I won't.

Sally: You can shave your head, though. Please don't shave your eyebrows.

Emily: Um. And she's just, like, "Not -- I'm not gonna try anymore." So Kadere's like, "You've outlived your usefulness," and strangles her to death. And then is like, "What will I do with the body? Luckily, there's no blood, so I will dismember it."

Sally: (laugh) It's so upsetting to me.

Emily: He's like, "Oh, and just by the way, I did kill my sister, who I've been referring to throughout this chapter as missing her --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: In precisely the same way, essentially. And it's like, dude.

Sally: Why you so stanky?

Emily: Why you so stanky?

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) That's just my question for you. Why are you so stanky?

Emily: It's also, like, casually fatphobic that he's one of our very few, um, canonically, quote unquote, fat characters --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Who -- I mean, is this evil serial murderer.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Of women.

Sally: Yeah. No, this is also a very fatphobic text. I just, in the first -- the epilogue -- the epilogue? See what you did to me.

Emily: Ha ha ha.

Sally: The prologue of Path of Daggers, the, like, narrating character is, like, “That is the fattest man I have ever seen on a horse. How is his horse not dead, basically?” And it’s like, shut up. (laugh)

Emily: Referring to whom?

Sally: Oh, just some dude. It’s, like, the meeting of all the Borderlander --

Emily: Oh, yeah.

Sally: Homies. And whoever the fuck is narrating.

Emily: Oh, yeah, you’re finally getting the Borderlander homies --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Being like, “Hey, we’re in the plot too.”

Sally: And I’m like, what?

Emily: And it’s like, literally, no you’re not.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) Yeah. I was -- yeah. Whatever. I’ll save it for the blog, I guess, which people will read in eight years, when Emily’s finished A Memory of Light. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Listen, if I have to read it, then so do you.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Um, anyway, we then switch over to Rand, who, as Sally mentioned, is just looking at a river. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Because that's sort of the, you know, level of emo white boy sadness that we've descended to. Rand's like, "I could just look at this river all day."

Sally: It's like, "OK."

Emily: Um, and Sulin, one of the Maidens, approaches him and is like, "Um, you should eat." And Rand's like, "All these women are babying me!" And it's like, when people are like, "You should eat --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Why is that so offensive to you, Rand?

Sally: 'Cause men freak out when they're not in power for even 30 seconds.

Emily: He's like, "I'll starve myself if I want to," and Sulin's like --

Sally: (whisper) "Okay."

Emily: "Fine. Do that."

Sally: (whisper) "I don't fucking care anymore."

Emily: "You absolute bastard."

Sally: (whisper) "I hate you."

Emily: Ahhh! And while he's chatting with Sulin, there's the approach of horses, um, led by two Tairens whose names are, very confusingly, Estean and Edorian.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Both starting with the letter "E," so they kind of get mixed up. Uh, if you've read this enough times, I believe both of them were present at Mat's card playing game early on in book four --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: When he got attacked by playing cards. So it's kind of sad that they don't get to see Mat again here.

Sally: Yeah, be like, "Hey!"

Emily: "Ah, hey!"

Sally: "It's that motherfuckere."

Emily: "You're horrifying." Oh, Rand does tell us that a few, like, weird, fate-bending things have been happening.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Sulin's like, "We were gambling, but suddenly everyone was throwing sixes," and Rand's like, "Ah, sorry," and Sulin's like, "...What?"

Sally: She's like --

Emily: (laugh) "For what?"

Sally: (laugh) Yeah.

Emily: Um, and, like, that some dude just tripped and broke his neck. Freak -- quote unquote, freak accidents --

Sally: Yep.

Emily: That type of thing. Meanwhile, some people just fell into a viper pit --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Which is so bizarre.

Sally: They didn't get bit by any of the vipers.

Emily: But they did not get bit.

Sally: It's like that scene in "Holes."

Emily: Ah, man. Just like that scene in "Holes."

Sally: Except there's no onions.

Emily: And unlike that scene in "Vikings," when Ragnar gets murdered -- executed by getting thrown into a pit of snakes.

Sally: Horrifying.

Emily: I know! The, like, medieval English and everyone was just like, "What are the worst ways we could kill someone?" And then, like, "We'll do it. Have fun." Yeah. Very gross. Um.

Sally: Listen, weren't people, like, just disgusted by the human body the way we are in the 21st century?

Emily: I guess not.

Sally: Like, what did they -- had they not learned shame yet?

Emily: No, the shame was imposed by the introduction of bras.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: We can track it. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: As bras increased -- bra sales increased, public executions decreased.

Sally: Yeah. Everyone was too busy looking at those perky tities and feeling ashamed about it.

Emily: So -- (laugh) (high-pitched voice) "No! Ankles! Cankles!" (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) These are very sexy cankles that you have.

Emily: I just think the word "cankles" is so funny.

Sally: It is so funny. I love it when people are like, "Look at my toddler's cankles." (laugh) And I'm like --

Emily: I'm like, "Your toddler just has ankles."

Sally: "He's two." (laugh)

Emily: "His chubby little ankles. It's adorable."

Sally: It's so cute.

Emily: Yeah, his -- all the little dimples.

Sally: I know. Babies are so funny.

Emily: Fat babies are --

Sally: I know. I love a fat baby.

Emily: So good. Um. So these two guys essentially report that, uh, Cairhien is obviously under siege by Couladin.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, and Rand's like, "OK, well, can the city hold?" And they're, like, calling some -- they're traveling with some Cairhienin dudes, who are like, "We think we can hold out for maybe eight or nine more days." And Rand's like, to Rhuarc -- (laugh) They're like, "Surely you

won't be able to make it in time, 'cause none of you have horses." And Rand, like, to Rhuard, is like, "How long?" And Rhuarc's like, "Seven days."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Rand's like, "Sweet." (laugh) "Fucking badass."

Sally: "What a convenient number. It is one less than what I need." (laugh)

Emily: "Ah, hell yeah." So he's like, "You guys have to go back and report, uh, to the Cairhienin that, um, we'll be there to back them up. They just have to hold for those eight or nine days." And the two Cairhinins and one of the Tairens is like, "Sweet. We'll do it."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "We're loyal to you." And the other Tairen, Estean, who keeps asking if there is any alcohol on the premises because, as we saw in book four also, he's definitely an alcoholic --

Sally: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Emily: Is like, "Well, I'll stay here, I guess." And Rhuarc's like, "Great, we'll question you." And he's like, "No!"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Maybe I want to go back behind enemy lines." And Rhuarc is like, "I'll be nice, I promise. 'Cause Rand is making me. For no other reason."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Um, and of course the central themes there are the tensions between Cairhienin and Tairen. Rand references about six times how the Tairens call to the Cairhinins as though they are dogs.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: But Rand also, himself, likens, I believe, both Cairhinins and Tairens to dogs in the way that they are effacing themselves --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, in their haste to --

Sally: Please him or whatever.

Emily: Please him. To react to him like they would a lord in their own cultures. Um, and Rand's just kinda like, "Please stop kissing my hands. Icky."

Sally: "There's a pandemic out there, dudes, whatcha doing?"

Emily: I know. "Guys. Stop. Guys! Social distancing."

Sally: "The CDC says NO! No hand-kissing!"

Emily: "Stop it with the hand-kissing! And the ankle-looking."

Sally: No, the ankle-looking can stay.

Emily: The ankle-looking is fine. You can do that from six feet away. Ohhh, yeah.

Sally: (laugh) It's gonna get real sexy in here.

Emily: Gross. I know there's foot fetishes, but is, like, ankle fetish part of that? Or is it a separate thing?

Sally: I dunno. Some people have very nice ankles.

Emily: I mean, yeah, I agree.

Sally: (laugh) I don't know. Hit us up if you have an ankle fetish, I guess.

Emily: Um. (laugh) "Hit us up if you have an ankle fetish."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: I'd rather you didn't, if I'm being honest.

Sally: I'm just curious.

Emily: "Is it just the ankles, or is it the whole zone?"

Sally: "The whole foot zone?"

Emily: "Is it the whole foot zone?"

Sally: "The whole hoof zone?" (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Um. Right, yeah, Cairhienins and Tairens do not respect each other. The irony is that, I believe, most of these men -- the Tairens, at least -- I'm not sure about the Cairhienins; neither of their names were familiar to me -- which, you know, wasted chance to introduce some important Cairhienin characters. What few there are. Uh, but they'll all end up in the Band of the Red Hand, working together, and those tensions will eventually dissipate. Uh, less because of Mat's stellar leadership -- we would never call Mat a stellar leader of men; he's a good military leader, but --

Sally: Hates other humans.

Emily: But he hates other people, and that, sort of, you know, dims his -- shine --

Sally: His shining light.

Emily: No one is going to say, "O captain, my captain," to Mat Cauthon. (laugh) Um --

Sally: I mean, I would.

Emily: I mean, yeah.

Sally: If you know what I mean.

Emily: (laugh) But, like, in a sexy way.

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. Obviously.

Emily: Obviously. Um.

Sally: "Show me those ankles."

Emily: Ahh! (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) That was a very funny noise.

Emily: Don't clip that noise. (laugh) Do you think he has good calves and good ankles?

Sally: Well, we know, canonically, he's got a good butt.

Emily: So, you'd think the whole lower half would be pretty good.

Sally: You'd think the whole -- yeah, like, I feel like it's gotta be, like, a whole package, you know?

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Like, you need strong calves, ankles, and thighs to hold up all that cake. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) I just want this episode to end. I just want it to be over. And I'm trying so hard.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (sigh) Whatever. Rand doesn't know what taxes are. And he's like, "Great."

Sally: 'Cause they make a bet. Some motherfucker's like, "I'll give you, like, a billion dollars if you make it to Cairhien on time."

Emily: Yeah. Eddard's like, "I will give you -- like, let's have a bet. One thousand gold crowns or whatever the hell it is that you won't make it to -- to Cairhien in time." And Rand's like, "I've



never seen that much money in my life.” And Sulin’s like, “It’s ‘cause you don’t know what taxes are.” (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) Sulin’s like, “It’s ‘cause you’re fucking stupid.”

Emily: Sulin’s like, “Oh, we’ll take that bet, if you up it.”

Sally: Yeah. It’s like --

Emily: And the guy’s like, “Alright, fine.” Who knows how he has this much money.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But he’s like, “I just realized if I win, I won’t even collect.” So it’s like, dude. Why even?

Sally: Why are you stupid? Rich people are stupid.

Emily: I know, but Rand’s like, “I don’t have that much money,” to Sulin, and Sulin’s like, “Well, since you are the chief of the Aiel, a fifth of what the Aiel get goes to you, so technically, you own a tenth of Tear.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Just, like, total. And Rand’s like, “... Okay. Didn’t know that. But, you know.”

Sally: The more you know.

Emily: “Great.” And Mat’s like, “I have a tenth of Tear also, but it’s through sheer earnings --”

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: “In dice.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: “With Tairens. So consider that. Who is more efficient?”

Sally: Where does Mat keep all his money? Does Mat have a bank account?

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Does Mat have a MasterCard?

Emily: Um, banks are referenced as being a thing when Elayne is becoming queen, ‘cause she has some, like, finance chat, and bankers are mentioned.

Sally: Mm. Boring.

Emily: Yeah, it's incredibly boring. But no, I am almost one hundred percent sure that Mat does not keep his money in banks, because if anyone screams "Don't trust the banks; keep your money under the bed" energy, then it's Mat Cauthon.

Sally: You're right. You're so right, Emily.

Emily: I think he has a shoebox that's just full of coins.

Sally: Just puts it on the back of his horse.

Emily: Yeah. Legitimately. Actually, we know, later in books, that he has, like, chests of money. Literal chests of money.

Sally: Weird pirate boy.

Emily: I know.

Sally: Do people, like, guard his chests of money?

Emily: He just, like, leaves them in his tent. (laugh) It's like, dude.

Sally: That's so much dollars.

Emily: So many dollars. I want someone to write a -- a fanfiction that's about a heist --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Committed against Mat Cauthon.

Sally: Steal all his money.

Emily: Just, like, random characters.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Make up your own characters. And they're like, "We are going to steal from Mat Cauthon."

Sally: Yeah. Better yet, have Birgitte steal from Mat. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: She's like, "It's just so easy."

Emily: She's the mastermind.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "I've put together an elite group." (laugh) "Myself, and that's it."

Sally: "Myself."

Emily: So, that's that. Rand's like, "Alright. Great. Guess we're on the road, headed for Cairhien, then." Nothing, really, has changed except that we now have an update on, uh, the situation at Cairhien, which is that Couladin is in -- besieging it and just, you know, setting fire to things and torturing people so that everyone else will be nice and freaked out. And it's like, great. Great guy.

Sally: Yeah. And it's like, Robert Jordan, we knew he was the bad guy. You could've just told us he's at Cairhien.

Emily: Couladin's at Cairhien --

Sally: And we'd be like, yep. Time to go stop the bad guy from doing bad guy things.

Emily: We don't need further motivation.

Sally: We already saw those people, like, hung up or whatever.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Back at the -- the mountain.

Emily: Tragically, next week will be about sex igloo. The face you're making now is indescribable. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: I seriously can't tell if it's joy or disgust or a mixture of both.

Sally: I think it's mostly disgust.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Because I hate sex igloo, on, like -- as a -- as a person who's very invested in the idea of sex positivity -- (laugh)

Emily: Yeah. It's hard -- hard --

Sally: It is, like, antithetical to my very being.

Emily: Hard to get behind sex igloo.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: It's like, alright, sex igloo is a minor, uh, a minor increase in quality over the dismembering of a woman --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But not by much. And the fact that it's not by much is pretty upsetting.

Sally: Yeah, they're also, like, too close together in the text, I think.

Emily: Yeah. Lots of -- yeah. Horror.

Sally: Horror.

Emily: Horror.

Sally: Anyway --

Emily: It's like "Silence of the Lambs" and then immediately slides into "Fifty Shades of Gray," and it's like, what kind of double feature is that? You know? Not a good one, I propose.

Sally: A bad one.

Emily: A bad one. Primarily because they're two very bad movies, but that's --

Sally: I've never seen "Silence of the Lambs." Never will.

Emily: Don't. It's so bad.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Someone made me watch it 'cause they were like, "It's a classic," and I was like, "It's transphobic."

Sally: Yeah. I don't believe in classics.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: I will watch "The Fall," and that is it.

Emily: That's a good one. Sort of feel I don't --

Sally: And maybe "A Knight's Tale."

Emily: Ah! "A Knight's Tale." Both -- two movies with very good costuming.

Sally: Yeah. Anyway, that was this episode or whatever. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) We'll see what I gather.

Sally: Yeah, cobble together out of that one.

Emily: Out of that --

Sally: We can re-record it if it's too messy, I guess. (laugh)

Emily: No, I would -- I would sooner die than re-record an episode. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: That's my challenge to myself. Um, so, that's that. As I said, next week is sex igloo, so look forward to that, or look forward to skipping that, as the case may be. Um, thanks to Glynn MacKenzie for our theme song. Thanks to the accompaniment by, uh, the squash in the oven --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Which you may or may not be able to hear. Thanks to all you for listening and supporting. Please remember to rate, review, and subscribe. Uhhh.

Sally: Um, we are continuing to offer stickers -- uh, complimentary stickers to anyone who sends us a donation receipt, um, that they donated to, um, any of the organizations helping out with the, uh, quote unquote, revolution, as it were. Um, but organizations helping with the Black Lives Matter movement, bail funds, mutual aid funds, organizations on the ground helping Black people, helping to defund the police, all that good stuff. We'll send you one of our lovely stickers.

Emily: One I've heard about this week -- an organization -- is the Okra Project, which is all about, uh, assisting Black trans people --

Sally: That's awesome.

Emily: Feeding Black trans people. Um, so that's a really good one if you're looking for one to donate to.

Sally: Yep. That'd be awesome. Um, because Black trans people deserve a lot more than our country has been giving them, so.

Emily: Which is primarily murder.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Thanks, America.

Sally: Um, yeah, so, uh, that is just gonna be a standing offer until we run out of stickers, so please make your donations as frequently as you are able. Um, as always, Emily will be playing Windwaker live this ... Friday? Thinking of next week.

Emily: No, that's next week. It's a long way off, my guys.

Sally: (laugh) But in your timeline, this Friday at 5:30 p.m., Mountain Standard Time. If you need a little more EHR in your week. Um, yeah.

Emily: Light-hearted. It's just me, screaming while I fight a worm or whatever.

Sally: Yeah, that was very stressful last week.

Emily: Reciting the Litany of -- the Litany Against Fear from "Dune."

Sally: "Fear is the mind-killer."

Emily: "Fear is the little death that brings total obliteration."

Sally: (laugh) Anyway, it's very silly.

Emily: (laugh) "I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me."

Sally: Exactly.

Emily: Uh, yeah. Do you have a sign-off?

Sally: I do. Unfortunately.

Emily: Uh-oh. (laugh)

Sally: Um. There are some listener-submitted sign-offs, but I have to say this out loud publicly for the people to judge me so that it can no longer haunt me so much. Um. On Monday -- (laugh) uh, uh, my lovely friends moved into an apartment really close to us, like three or four minutes away, so I was trying to be, like, good, friendly neighbor person. And before I go back on our whole social distancing stance, I have to see these people at work, so I, unfortunately, am not able to distance from them. So I didn't even ask you if it was okay, but I kind of figured --

Emily: (inaudible)

Sally: That, like, I can't not see Julie and Gethin, 'cause I am forced to go into work. So anyway, I was bringing them dinner, and we were having, like, a lovely time watching Gethin unpack his stuff, and he needed to get past me, and there was a little shelf in the hallway that had a pretty expensive bottle of gin on it. And as I turned around, apparently hit the shelf with my ass, and the bottle fell to the floor, shattering into, like, literally one hundred million pieces. And so there was just, like, glass everywhere and gin everywhere and sweet Gethin reached down to pick a piece of glass up and sliced his finger open, and we didn't have any Band-aids, 'cause they were just doing, like, a quick move-in, but Gethin was like, "Oh, no, I have a first-aid kit in my car." Turns out that didn't have any Band-Aids in it either, so he was just, like, in the sink, bleeding, while me and Nathan are trying to Swiffer mop up all this fucking gin. It was truly one of the most embarrassing things that has happened to me in a while. Because it's like, why would that happen to a human being? (laugh)

Emily: Was the shelf on the wall?

Sally: No.

Emily: Oh, OK. I just had, like, a visual of a shelf --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: With just a free-standing bottle of gin, like a decoration --

Sally: (laugh) That was, like, right at butt height. It wouldn't be very tall, 'cause I don't have very long legs. And it's very upsetting, 'cause, like, I don't even have, like, an ass with a presence, you know?

Emily: I just want to call back to earlier in the podcast when you said something about Mat Cauthon's "cake." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. Too much cake, baby.

Emily: And I think that was the problem here. Just too much cake, baby.

Sally: Mat Cauthon would have also broken the bottle of gin, I guess. Anyway, it was really sad, and I feel really terrible, 'cause I broke a bottle of gin and made one of my friends bleed, and it was really embarrassing, and I had to flee the premises immediately.

Emily: But gin is terrible, so.

Sally: It does smell very aggressively like a Christmas tree.

Emily: Oh, that's a shocking revelation. I guess I've never smelled gin before.

Sally: It just smells like Christmas.

Emily: Like a Christmas --

Sally: I don't -- I don't like gin or, really, alcohol. Anyway, it was sad. Don't, um -- just be careful of where you put your ass this week, I guess. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: I gotta go get my squash!

Emily: Goodbye.

Sally: (laugh)