



Episode 114: An Ode to Well-Legged Devin

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TW: We talk about sexual assault in this episode.



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: Yeah, I'll probably cut all that out, because it was too depressing and real. Welcome to *Everybody Hates Rand* [laughing], where we're talking about some of *the* most depressing and real chapters in the *Wheel of Time*.

S: I know, I do not like this set of chapters. They're so frustrating.

E: [speaking over] I know, it's nightmarish. I don't remember what I said, but I'm Emily, that's Sally.

S: Welcome to episode one hundred fourteen.

E: Oh, is that what it is?

S: Yeah, if you're starting on this episode, *please* reconsider.

E: Who fucking pulls up a podcast and is like, *Huh, episode 114, seems like a ...* Especially a literary one.

S: Yeah, there are some where it's just like what they talk to every week doesn't necessarily matter, but if it's obviously got some type of order do not start on these chapters of *The Fires of Heaven*.

E: I mean, I'm not going to say we are, like, pinnacles of order, you know, we are chaotic beings, but we are following a reading guide. That I created arbitrarily [laughing]. Two months ago.

S: Emily did great. It's on our website, I update it every week.

E: I don't feel like I did great because we have to read three chapters this week. And I know I did that so we wouldn't have to read two of the worst chapters without the circus buffer, but it's still so long. So much.

S: Yeah, I always flip through it, to be like – OK, what damage is being done to me by Robert Jordan this week? [laughing]

E: What trauma has been inflicted on my bones?

S: What big of a burden is Robert Jordan pulling on me, and this time I was like [gasps, strains] ...

E: I'm being crushed under the weight!

S: Yeah, the weight of this hefty ... More weight!

E: [speaking over] More weight! Like *The* fucking *Crucible*. I'm getting smushed. Is that what he says? "More weight?"

S: I can't remember, I haven't read or seen an adaptation of *The Crucible* in, like, a hundred years.

E: I saw it in tenth grade – not saw it, read it in the tenth grade.

S: I read it in the tenth grade, too.

E: Everyone read it in the tenth grade, I guess.

S: I read *The Crucible* with a teacher who basically just like ... She was the sweetest, loveliest person, and I loved her class, but she did not teach any literature to anybody. Like, for *The Great Gatsby*, we were basically all assigned the topic, "Please write about the color yellow in *The Great Gatsby*", so it was just, like, whatever, man. We had journal time at the beginning of every class.

E: Aw, damn, I would have loved that. I mean, I gave myself journal time at the beginning of every class.

S: Yeah, we got, like, a topic, and then a couple of people would read theirs. Very drama.

E: [speaking over] That's adorable.

S: I mean, it was great, but as a person who's deeply invested in literature, all my classmates were like, *Her class is the best*, and I'm like – I agree, she's very cute, but I would also like to learn about *The Crucible*. It's an actually very interesting text.

E: I had an eleventh grade English teacher who looked just like a Renaissance poet – like, one time he put up a picture of himself next to ... I can't remember which poet it was –

S: Good for him.

E: - but I was like, I don't know what's going on here.

S: What a vibe.

E: I know. He was deeply chaotic. Always, I feel, hungover, you know?

S: If you were an eleventh grade English teacher, wouldn't you also be hungover?

E: Also turn to the bottle.

S: For everyone who's like, *Emily's a [inaudible] lesbian*, partial credit.

E: No, literally? Just kidding, though. We had these reading assignments, between – like, during summer vacation? Reading assignments and grammar packets to fucking do, and I remember – because this was who I was as a person, and who I still am on some level – I just put it off until the last three days of summer vacation.

S: Naturally.

E: Yeah, natch. So, then I fucking killed myself to read *Siddhartha* and *Lord of the Flies* in two days, plus do this fifty-page grammar packet? Which, you know, I just made up, because who cares? And then I don't think we ever spoke of *Siddhartha* or *Lord of the Flies*.

S: Yeah, that shit happened to me. Like, every year, they were like, *You have to do summer reading, and then it'll be a big part of your semester*. And the first year, our assignment was *Jane Eyre*, to like, read – no, it was before eleventh grade, our assignment was to read fucking *Jane Eyre*, so I, like, slogged through *Jane Eyre* –

E: A terrible book.

S: - which I do not particularly enjoy, and I was like ... My experience with the Brontë sisters has not been pleasant.

E: It's not been good.

S: *Wuthering Heights* almost murdered me as a teenager, I was like, who in their right mind enjoys this book? Anyway ... I wrote, and then they were like – you had to take a little test on a computer that was "Do you remember the plot of *Jane Eyre*?" and I was like – not really? And they were like, "That's fine, you passed!" It was so annoying!

E: It was so frustrating, too, because usually I am so good at calling teachers on their bullshit, and knowing – this ain't gonna come up.

S: Yeah, you do have a good radar for that.

E: I have a really good radar for that. And I think this guy, like, taught it to me. Perhaps. Because after that I was like – I'm never doing unnecessary work again.

S: Good for you.

E: I refuse. Mr. Scotland – you did that to me. Calling you out by name.

S: I mean, I never learned that lesson. Someone will still be like, *Read this huge book*, and I'll be like, OK, I have to.

E: Personality factors into it too, it probably wasn't just Scotland, it was also Chris Juchau. I don't know how, but he did it somehow.

S: Yeah, Chris has a little bit of a ... anti-authoritarian streak in him.

E: And yet deeply authoritarian.

S: And yet.

E: Have I told you the most hilarious irony of my young teenage life? Which was that at one point, when I was like fifteen, my parents banned me from hanging out with boys.

S: [laughing] And you're like, *Oh no, what a nightmare!*

E: *Now I'm gay.*

S: No, I didn't know this, it's so funny!

E: It's hilarious. It's because I was hanging out with this particular boy named Chandler – Cambria will be getting a huge kick out of this, and no one else cares – we were all hanging out with pal Chandler, who lived in my – adjacent to my neighborhood. His parents went to, not the same church my parents did, but connected. I don't have the energy to explain the intricacies of Mormon ... what is that word? Congregations. But, like, my parents knew his parents, so they surely knew that he was growing steadily less interested in church attendance and all that came with it. And I didn't care, whatever, most of my friends weren't Mormons by that point already. Just because ... I was gay. Though I did not know it. Anyway, I would, like, go over to Chandler's house and watch him play video games or whatever, and watch *Band of Brothers*, and probably do things I wasn't supposed to do, but not in the way my parents thought.

S: Emily's over there being a total *floozy*!

E: Not, like, fucking, or doing hand jobs or whatever it is fifteen-year-olds do.

S: *In the sixth grade?*

E: *In the sixth grade?* Everyone watch *Middleditch and Schwartz*, it's very funny. It's a comedy special on Netflix, three episodes, all so good. But yeah, anyway, I like to throw that back in my parents' faces every once in a while.

S: *Remember when you banned me from Chandler's house?*

E: That turned me gay, Mom. It's your fault.

S: *It's your fault, Rebecca!*

E: It's your fault.

S: *There were no boys in my life, so then suddenly I had to turn ...*

E: There were no men for me to lust after, so just I had to turn to the fairer sex. [both laughing] And that voice is why I've accomplished so much with the fairer sex. [Sally laughing] OK, that was the cold open. Somewhere in there, in the rant about high school.

S: I'm reading this – OK. There are several things I want to say. To bring back some old bits.

E: We might as well face the facts now that we are *not* going to talk about these chapters. Maybe the circus part.

S: These chapters are brutal and horrible. And very frustrating. And Tallanvor is in them – barf. [Emily gags] So, I'm reminded yet again that his first name is Martyn, so double barf. OK, so two bits of – bringing back some old bits. One – what I'm currently reading, trying to get through really quickly so I can read *The Dark is Rising*. Because I started it before Emily gave me her copy of *The Dark is Rising*, and I do not have the brain capacity right now to read – to switch gears? My brain is at its maximum mental energy. It's this weird book I picked up at the little free library at the aviary. And I thought it had like a funny ... There's no description of this book, so I just was like, whatever, it's a collection of sci-fi/fantasy short stories, I'll pick it up, it's free. Whatever, it'll be good. For an experience which I'm now having, where I don't have a ton of attention, I'll just read a short story. But it's all about music? And like – they're all stories that are, like, how sci fi and fantasy interacts in particular with rock and roll, there's like a rock and roll element.

E: Just literally how men wanna fuck their guitars, or whatever.

S: OK, yes!

E: Oh, I nailed a plot point.

S: Pretty much. Not ...

E: We haven't got an artificial intelligence guitar-lady.

S: We haven't gotten that yet, but I'm sure –

E: So, it's a guitar with titties.

S: Kind of, basically, we got there in the last one. There are these people hooked up to wires, so when they move their body it creates music?

E: Just – men love to be, like, oh, the curves of an instrument are just like a woman's body.

S: I know, and I'm like, when was the last time you saw a woman or a guitar?

E: And not made out of wood! I think you're gay. You know who has wood?

S: Lumberjacks?

E: Well... People with dicks.

S: So, anyway, when you started talking about The Who it made me think of that, because it's all – It's all that particular disgusting incel-like behavior of people who are like *I LOVE ROCK AND ROLL!*

E: But I'm an incel.

S: Yeah, and it's just like – there's nothing wrong with rock and roll. I love rock and roll, too, but all the protagonists are like, *Rock and roll's the best music ever, I don't care about this new shit*. Like, who cares? So, old bit. Second old bit is book news, because *Midnight Sun* is finally being published.

E: Oh yes, I did, I forgot. This is the sort of thing we'd talk about, yes. Welcome to the new era, everyone. Stephenie Meyer was like, *Yeah, fuck everyone*.

S: *I'm gonna release this book from Edward's point of view*.

E: Which as all of you really – what's the fandom name for *Twilight*?

S: I think it's "Twi-hards."

E: Oh, my god.

S: Like diehards.

E: Yeah, of course. As all you Twi-hards may remember, she did already release, like, so much of *Midnight Sun*, just on the internet.

S: Yeah, like on her blog, or whatever.

E: Back when people had blogs.

S: Back when people were like, *I wouldn't just pirate a book anyway*, and you could just put it on the internet.

E: And people were like, *Whatever*.

S: So, that's a fun, scintillating bit. One of my friends has already pre-ordered it. My group of aviary friends was very excited.

E: They love *Twilight*.

S: Yeah. Anyway, that's just like – of all the things you thought would happen in 2020, that's not one I would have picked on my bingo card.

E: Yeah, I thought it had died, you know? I thought we were free of the curse, but maybe Stephenie Meyer was browsing Tumblr and was like, *Huh, there really is a Twilight renaissance afoot*. Afield, etc. Just so many people who are like, *You know, Twilight was bad, but it wasn't as bad as we thought*.

S: Yeah, *Twilight* is bad, but the meme potential is off the charts.

E: It's so funny, you guys. So much.

S: It was so random and sudden, and I cannot stress enough how *disgusting* the cover is. It's like a pomegranate that someone has stuck two fingers in and ripped all the seeds out. Wink, wink.

E: Of course, we know it's supposed to evoke Hades and Persephone, but the thing with fruit dissected on the cover of a book is that you are like: vagina.

S: Yeah, obviously!

E: It's such a bizarre thing to me. I can never quite reconcile the fact that Stephenie Meyer is Mormon in the way that many middle-aged women that I know and grew up with are Mormon. And yet she's like, *Yes, this is fine*.

S: Yeah, because I immediately saw it and was like: pussy. Like, immediately [snaps fingers].

E: Yeah, I was like: pussy. And not in a good way.

S: Not in a good, sexy and titillating way. Like – this is *nasty*.

E: Maybe I'm straight after all? [laughs]

S: *I don't want this! Argh!*

E: Never mind!

S: It's so horrifying. So, anyway, that's the craziest shit. I mean, not the craziest shit that's happened in 2020, but again – I never would have picked that.

E: Yeah, 2020 just keeps finding many ways to up the stakes, somehow.

S: And the book is also, like \$32. It's so expensive.

E: I was reading this interview – I read, you know, this single interview where she announced it, and the person was like, *You know, surprisingly it's hard to write a book that's the same as the first book but from a different character's perspective*. And she was like, *Yeah, I found I was locked down in a lot of scenes to honor the dialogue and things that originally happened*. And I'm like –

S: Obviously?

E: - Was that a revelation to you?

S: What the fuck? Are you just gonna have Edward hear different things out of Bella's mouth?

E: It's precisely – it evokes precisely the same amount of visceral disgust in me that the live-action Disney remakes do. It is the same product. Just for more money. And probably worse in some way.

S: I'm sure it's worse – Edward is a disgusting, nasty, stank character.

E: I know, and he's telepathic. The only way that could make it better is if he's hearing Bella's horny thoughts and is like, *What do I do with this? She's so horny*.

S: And what's also particularly funny about it being a pomegranate on the cover is that it's like, canonically, Edward. Does. Not. Fuck. It's a whole, huge plot point that he is: big virgin. And they're like – and I get it, he's being tempted, blah, blah, blah, but then why make it look like he has been up in the business?

E: Yeah, it's not, like, a fresh [laughs] ...troublingly graphic ...

S: It's not, like, a freshly sliced pomegranate. It has, like, gone a few rounds. [both laughing] So, it's just funny and ridiculous and stupid.

E: I love the fruits that we find for genitalia. Peaches are now just – thanks to *Call Me By Your Name* or whatever – like, that's the gay man fruit. And it's like: what?

S: And every time – every time! – a peach comes up in a conversation with certain groups of my friends, they're like, *Hey, remember when Timothée Chalamet came on a peach in Call Me By Your Name?* And I'm like, STOP talking about this!

E: I mean, I don't. Because, luckily, I have not had that image seared into my brain, because I'm a –

S: Elise made me watch the scene.

E: Oh, noooo!

S: But I think it was, like, edited a little bit. I don't know how graphic it actually is, because it was on Tumblr or some shit. It wasn't like Elise played the scene in the movie. My friend Elise went through a period where she was really fascinated by *Call Me By Your Name*. I don't think she saw it or read it, she just needed to understand. But yeah, it's like – peaches ...

E: That happened to me with Naruto, so I can relate, you know.

S: And it's like peaches, you know, just ... are also the butt.

E: The scene can't be that graphic, right? Because it had a wide theatrical release.

S: Yeah, I'm sure – I think it cuts away to his face. I don't think you actually see –

E: [speaking over] It's not, like, a close-up on Timothée's dick.

S: Timothée's ting-a-ling! [laughing]

E: Nooo.

S: Do you want a ting-a-ling?

E: Nooo.

S: But, yeah, and then we've got apples for Eden.

E: Apples to represent specifically missionary-style heterosexual sex. Nothing exciting about that.

S: The forbidden fruit.

E: And pomegranates – eating a woman out, obviously.

S: Of course, duh.

E: Bananas – blow jobs.

S: Banana!

E: Bananas.

S: I don't think the pear has been overly sexualized yet, but we can change that.

E: They say some women are shaped like a pear.

S: Ah, damnit, you're right.

E: When she's got, you know, good hips.

S: Cherries, of course, the horrific euphemism. Pop the cherry.

E: Let me just google a list of fruits – [laughs]

S: Which – let's take this opportunity to do a little more *EHR* sex education – you cannot pop [claps] the hymen.

E: Yeah. Ew. Ew.

S: It's not, like, a film over the vagina. It's not, like, saran wrap! A penis doesn't make it disappear. This has gotten very odd! [laughs]

E: Yeah, what are we, a half an hour in? I say this every week – I refuse to delete any of it. My will.

S: I'm a different person now is a very good tweet.

E: I am! I always hear myself say that and be like – Emily, you dipshit.

S: Emily, you fool! It's just that I think it's nice to bring some light, positive sexuality into chapters that are basically like, "Women don't deserve human rights." So ...

E: The good part, first, is that we do have Elayne and Nynaeve sneak out of the inn after doing some theatrics with fainting spells –

S: Yeah, it's very dramatic.

E: - and meet up with Thom and Juilin five miles down the road, they say. It takes a while to walk five miles.

S: Yeah, most people walk about three miles an hour.

E: Yeah, so they've been walking for a solid – and they're in dresses, so round that up to two hours.

S: Fuck me, yeah. And it's hot.

E: And it's hot. Anyway, they meet up with Thom and Juilin, who then go to the circus. Which I don't quite understand. I can't quite grasp the mechanics of "they met the circus on their way *to* this town, and now they backtrack to the circus and now they're, like, *So, we wanna go back – wanna go forward again? But to Ghealdan?*" So I'm like, will you not be going through the same village? Or is there a way to go around? I don't know.

S: [speaking over] It's very confusing.

E: Irrelevant. But they're like, *Valan Luca, we are here to pay for your services as hider of people.*

S: Yeah, he's like, *Errrrr ...?*

E: Fucking everyone in Valan Luca's circus is on the run from the law. He's, like, the Robin Hood of this series, but with – you know ... He does steal from the rich.

S: Good for him.

E: Give me your money.

S: Have you seen that tweet where Robin Hood's like, *Here you go, my poor friend.* And he's like –

S & E: *I'm rich!*

S: *You're what?*

E: *You're what, now?*

S: It's, like, the reason the internet was invented was for that tweet specifically. Anyway ...

E: I just find it so funny that Valan Luca just hides – it's like whenever someone – whenever a character is like, *I need to suddenly be in a disguise, or hide from the law for a while*, Valan Luca just appears on the horizon with his caravan.

S: He's like, *Hello*. If you say, "I need to hide," suddenly Valan Luca's whole circus appears like Bloody Mary.

E: I need to hide, I need to hide, help me hide! Oh!

S: And then Valan Luca's like, *Here I am. With my very sexy legs.*

E: Yes, apparently.

S: Apparently.

E: Please look up Sarah McClintock's tweet thread about sexy leggings.

S: Sexy leggings.

E: In tights, and how men padded their tights to look like sexier leggings. I spent a great deal of time on the phone yesterday talking to friend of the podcast Devin about his legs, specifically.

S: When was this?

E: Yesterday. He texted me and was like, *I'm catching up on EHR*, and he was quick to assure me that he does have conventionally attractive legs. And I was like – I have leg blindness, I legally cannot tell. [laughing]

S: And Devin was like, *I need you to know that I have really good legs*.

E: Literally! Not on-the-phone-talking, we were texting. He was just like, *I want you to know, I have really good legs*, and I was like – OK!

S: Thanks, Devin.

E: It doesn't matter to me.

S: Wrong audience, bub!

E: Then I was texting his girlfriend and I was like – Are Devin's legs really something to write home about? And she's like, *Uh, they're pretty good legs*. And I was like – I don't get it. I mean, I've seen his legs before. They're just legs. Can you visualize Devin's legs?

S: I really cannot. I'm like, [inaudible] the bust of Devin. [laughing] It's, like, the rest of his body is –

E: It's like a blank?

S: Yeah, it's so weird, because I think I'm just confused, and conglomerating him with every tall man I've seen in my life, so he's just: body. And then I know it's Devin's head. Seriously, my mind is like, Devin? And it's just his floating head.

E: Horrifying. And, you know, a set of well-turned leggings. Apparently.

S: Apparently. Nothing in the torso –

E: He doesn't wear shorts very often, so –

S: Maybe that's why I'm having trouble, because he's always in jeans. Well, we'll take Janet's word for it.

E: Yeah, Janet's word is law. If she says he's got good leggings, he's got good leggings, I guess. OK. Whatever, Valan Luca's [laughing] like, *I don't want your fucking money. Are you on the run from the law? Clearly you're just thieves, not real noble people*. And Nynaeve, like, throws a money bag at his head or whatever, and is like, *We do have money*. He's like, *Well, you have to, you know, do stuff. You can't just be with the circus. You have to do things*. And Thom's like, *Well, look at all these circus skills that I just have*.

S: Of course.

E: *I'm good at juggling.* And he's like, *Alright, you can stay, old man. But what about the rest of you?*
And Elayne's like, *What about that, uh, rope up in the air?*

S: What goes through her mind?

E: I don't know. It's like she just saw it. And Valan Luca is quick to tell us that the previous tight – what's that ...?

S: Tightrope walker.

E: Tightrope walker DIED.

S: Like, an hour ago.

E: Like, an HOUR ago.

S: They're like, *We just finished burying him, literally an hour ago.*

E: And you're telling me Nynaeve's not *ta'veren*. I mean ...

S: [laughing] Honestly! Very convenient for their sake. Nynaeve just killed this poor tightrope –

E: This alcoholic tightrope walker.

S: Valan Luca's like, *In our defense, the workplace was –*

E: [speaking over] *I will not be liable for this.*

S: - *insurance. He was smashed!*

E: *He was smashed. Doing the tightrope. Which we all were fine with, for some reason.*

S: Yeah, it's, like, what kind of ship are you running here, Valan?

E: Anyway, Elayne gets up there using channeling to just waltz her way across the tightrope, and then is like, *Juilin can obviously do this, too.* Juilin can't see the fucking – he's got no idea!

S: To Juilin's credit, he's like, *Guess I'm fucking walking across this tightrope!*

E: Juilin just does it! He's, like, such a – He's a ... We talk a lot of shit about Juilin, but –

S: He's pretty ride-or-die for these girls.

E: So, he successfully crosses the tightrope, and then Valan Luca's like, *What about you?* to Nynaeve, and she's like, *I dole out the money, and that is the end of my resumé.*

S: And Valan Luca's like, *Horny.*

E: Valan Luca's like, *Hmm, perhaps.*

S: [whispers] I love you.

E: *Perhaps I love you*. He hasn't quite yet made the shift from being horny for Elayne, but she does slap him in this chapter. You know, classic *Wheel of Time* gender dynamics. Don't slap people. Also, don't sexually harass people.

S: Don't come on to people if they're obviously sixteen.

E: All forms of violence are bad.

S: Not interested.

E: Then they kinda go through the roster of the circus, introduce us to some characters we mostly won't meet again until book nine or so. But Aludra is a face we might remember from book two. I don't know if we even saw her face, just heard her name. And we're like, oh, yeah, she's an Illuminator on the run, because she got pinned for the explosion that blew up an Illuminator chapterhouse in Cairhien, which was actually caused by Rand and his dick. Not physically, just, like, being horny for Selene. You know. The usual.

S: Cosmically, it was his dick's fault.

E: And we are introduced to the keeper of the boar-horses – the elephants – a Seanchan woman who – Nynaeve is quick to call her out for being Seanchan, and then she's like, *Fuck you*. And then she talks to Elayne and is like, *Oh, wait, you're a noblewoman, so I have to serve you*.

S: It's very weird.

E: Yeah, weird dynamic. I'm sure we'll get into them later. That's the circus. We then float over to Liandrin and the rest of the Black Ajah, who – to keep it brief – Moghedien is now in town, and is like, *Hello. I'm here. I'm in charge. Obviously*. And Liandrin's like, *Plot, plot, plot, scheme, scheme, scheme*. And I'm like – surely this will end well.

S: Yeah, but at the end, Moghedien – go ahead.

E: Not that I care, because ... How can you have a character who's like, *I'm plotting to overthrow another character at great risk to myself*, and it's like – Robert! I don't care who wins in this!

S: Yeah, it's like Bad Lady 1 or Bad Lady 2.

E: Yeah. It's irrelevant to me. Maybe just don't have this scene to begin with.

S: Yeah, it doesn't really do anything, except it – at the end, Moghedien's like, *I want you to capture Nynaeve, because I fucking hate her*.

E: Yeah, it sets that up, sort of, but we've also sort of known Moghedien was gonna come after Nynaeve.

S: Because that's the whole point of Birgitte, barely two chapters ago, or whatever, she's like, *Moghedien is chasing you*. So, it's like, why do we need this scene?

E: I mean, it explains a little bit why suddenly all these members of the Black Ajah start appearing in random cities. We have this little scene where Li- not Liandrin, excuse me. Moghedien sends them

out on various missions, and we don't hear what they are because why would we have a scene like this, meant to dispense information but not actually ... [frustrated grunt] But suddenly our characters will be in Ebou Dar, seeing people from the Black Ajah, or Caemlyn, seeing people from the Black Ajah. They're just everywhere. And supposedly this is the moment that explains that. Why they're no longer just a girl gang, they're now multiple –

S: We are now legion?

E: We are now legion. But because these women don't start cropping up again for another several books, I had forgotten all about this scene, Robert.

S: I literally – like, I opened it, and I was like, who's talking? Where is she?

E: Yeah, who are these people?

S: I don't know. And they always name, like, all twelve members of the Black Ajah, or whatever, and I'm like – I will remember exactly one of these and that's Liandrin.

E: As though they are important. Nothing. It means nothing to me. Finally, then, we go over – not finally, because there's also a Padan Fain scene where he goes and gets the dagger from the fucking basement of the White Tower. Because they were like, *Huh, a historical artefact with great destructive power. A nuclear bomb, no less!*

S: *Keep it in the basement.*

E: *We'll keep it in the basement.* And Padan Fain's like, *This seems suspiciously easy.* And Alviarin's like, *It is suspiciously easy. You were meant to think that. Ah-ha-ha!* And then they sort of villainously laugh at each other for a little while, and are like, *We'll kill each other*, and then Padan Fain leaves.

S: And you're like – great use of word space, Robert.

E: Thank you for adding to the already massive quantity of pages in this book. [S laughing] But the bulk of this section is Morgase quote-unquote waking up from what has been going on around her. It is, on the one hand, pretty interestingly written, this process of her coming to herself, and having gaps in her memory. And sort of being forced to realize – she's talking to Lini, she finds Lini, the nurse, who we've often heard of but never yet seen – being like, *I visit you every week*, and Lini's like, *You haven't seen me since spring.* And Morgase is like, *What?* That's quite a chilling sequence, and I think a more interesting way of emphasizing the horror of what's been done to her than some of the more graphic things we get on the sides. Lost memories are a fascinating topic, and especially the legal history of recovered memories. I've been rewatching the documentary *The Keepers* on Netflix, which is very good and a very important documentary about the subject of Catholic priests abusing minors, but also very graphic and triggering, or it can be. It talks a lot about this lawsuit brought by two women against this one particular priest in the nineties, and it was built on the foundation that they had just recovered these memories. So, they had to first convince a judge to accept that this could then circumvent the statute of limitations. Which, by the way, the fact that there's a statute of limitations on rape is ridiculous. Fuck off, United States.

S: I know, I hate this country. I hate this stupid country.

E: Spoiler alert, it didn't go well, because it was the 1990s, and everyone hates women, and the Catholic Church.

S: [deadpan] So much has changed. [E laughing] I know, what a cheery episode.

E: We had a peak there, for a little while, talking about high school, and sexy fruits –

S: Pomegranate pussies. [E laughing] The pomegranate pussy. The pussy-granate.

E: I really hope that doesn't have to be the title of this episode. [both laughing]

S: I do also like, "Cosmically, it was his dick's fault" as a good title.

E: Yeah, cosmically, it *was* his dick's fault. I try to veer away from getting too genitalia-focused in the titles themselves, but sometimes it just be like that.

S: Yeah, but no – the concept of lost memory is very frightening. It's something that I have personally dealt with in my experience of childhood trauma, and it's very scary to just have huge sections of your life that are missing. In particular, when you're trying to explain that to other people or justify it, they just seem to not have patience. Of course, that's not a blanket statement; a lot of people are empathetic, and a lot of people have the same experience, because it's a big hallmark of trauma, it's the mind protecting you, basically. It's a repression survival technique, is what it is. This entire chapter, when every – Lini is the most like, *Maybe you need to see an Aes Sedai*, but a lot of people are like, *What the fuck is wrong with you?*

E: Yeah. Tallanvor's like, *Why have you waited this long?* And it's very odd – I mean, the whole thing is that Morgase does not know what has been done to her, which of course is also a troubling thing about lost memories. The idea of trying to piece together what has happened based on what little information you may have. But Morgase doesn't consider – or she does consider, but very briefly – the fact that someone has done channeling on her. She's like, *That's impossible*, because of what she knows. She doesn't know that the Forsaken are running around, because it's not like Rand al'Thor, who did know this, came in to tell her.

S: Yeah, the entire time, she's like, *I have such weird feeling about Gaebril*, or Jay-bril, or whatever his name is supposed to be. Gerbil.

E: Gerbil!

S: And she's like, *Obviously, he couldn't have done anything to me, because men can't – there's no men who can channel*. And it's like the person who knows she is being raped and held against her will and brainwashed is like, *Whoopsie-doopsie*.

E: Whoopsie-doopsie! Again, please watch *Middleditch and Schwartz*.

S: He's like, *I can't be bothered, I have to go on my weird conquering thing, and not even send literally anyone in my massive army to take care of this*.

E: In his usual, idiotic way, Robert Jordan has seemingly, without intention, stumbled into an experience that female – not just female, excuse me – just generally survivors of intense trauma, experience. Especially intense sexual or childhood-based trauma.

S: Yeah, I think it's like – I didn't mean to bring it back to my own experience, as I am not a survivor of sexual assault, but just, like, commenting on how terrifying it is that there are just, like, *years* of my life that I cannot remember. It's freaky!

E: And I think it's accurate to say that the lost memories thing is either connected to childhood abuse or sexual abuse, those are sort of the two things ...

S: Yeah, yeah, those very intimate violences.

E: We have Morgase experiencing this thing that's very real, including the fact that she is victim-blaming herself, because she does not know how else to process this. The fact that others are blaming her, including Tallanvor, who she'll one day marry. [S screams in frustration] And you have things like that, that clearly Robert Jordan didn't actually know what he was doing, or maybe that wouldn't have happened. Maybe that wouldn't have been the particular path that she's gone down. Morgase does have a process of recovery, but first it gets worse for her, in that she goes to the Whitecloaks and gets raped again. And she has to go from this riches-to-rags thing, where she's on the road, masquerading as a servant, and eventually she is recognized and restored to her place as, you know, a powerful woman who is now the mother of the queen. But that's it for Morgase. We pretty much never see her again. So, it leads you to believe – what was the point? Was it just to have a woman be hurt on screen? Because, certainly, we got that. Otherwise, you know ... You hate to be like, *Oh, maybe you should just have killed off your female character*, but I would have preferred Morgase to die than for us to have to suffer through this horrific narrative with her.

S: Yeah, it's so upsetting. And just for like – like, so much of this chapter bothers me, but this two-page monologue of Morgase going back through her various relationships with men –

E: Ugh.

S: And she's like, *I had to marry what's-his-fuck, Taringail or whatever, for political reasons, and he was cold and uninterested in me. And then I had Thom*, who is apparently twice Morgase's age, she says here.

E: She says he was at the time, so if you think that maybe she was twenty-something, he's in his forties –

S: It's disgusting.

E: - which means, yeah, he's now in his sixties or early seventies.

S: And Elayne is like, *Ooh, hey*. Fuck off, Thom, I have lost all respect for Thom Merrilin as a character with that one sentence. And then she's like – and then it's Gareth Bryne, right?

E: And then she's like, *And it's Gareth Bryne, who of course turned out to be a traitor*, and it's like, *What?*

S: And she talks about how Gareth Bryne – she, like, mentions Tallanvor. Morgase starts to say something and Tallanvor just steamrolls over her and is like, *We have to do this*, and she's like, *Oh, Gareth Bryne used to do that to me. He used to talk over me.*

E: She's like, *He's as stubborn as Gareth Bryne was*. And it's like, oh, my god.

S: It's like, girl, you're ... And she's like, *I just make bad decisions*, and it's like, no! Men are just bad! And Robert Jordan glorifies particularly Thom and Morgase's relationship as like a perfect, very passionate affair.

E: And just something that, narratively, Robert Jordan pins the blame for what happened with Thom on her, because she's like, she lost her temper with him when he snapped at her because of course he'd just been going through some trauma with his nephew, and it's like – Thom might have explained that.

S: Yeah.

E: Thom is not – It's not on Morgase that Thom chose to not be emotionally vulnerable with someone he's purportedly loved.

S: Yeah! Basically, she goes through this series of things, and she's like, *It's my fault*. No – men in this series are written, to use a phrase that I love from a writer whomst I hate, to have the emotional capacity of a teaspoon. They are not written with any type of depth beyond *Oh, I am powerful* and *Oh, I am able to handle Morgase*, who's a fiery redhead. It's so gross.

E: It's like this statement that goes around white feminists especially, that, "Men are trash." Obviously, you don't wanna say, "Not all men," either, but of course men are capable of great things, just as women are. There are lovely men in the world.

S: Including the well-legged Devin!

E: Including the well-legged Devin, who's a prime example.

S: Gonna change his name in my phone to "well-legged."

E: Well-leggèd.

S: Well-leggèd Devin, yeah, with an accent.

E: He'll *love* this episode. [S laughs] Men aren't all bad, but in *The Wheel of Time* world it is accurate to say that men are trash, because they have been written to be trash, whether or not that was the intent.

S: Yeah, and I – [S laughing] – just got into a bit of a tiff with one of my friends regarding this particular "men are trash" statement. Because, yeah – of course it is not a blanket statement, that all men are trash. I am so tired of having to explain that. I was skating with my mom last week, like, *Should we go down to an empty parking lot?* And she walks around and I skate and we chat and it's very lovely. But some old man skateboarded by, which was very weird, and he's like, *Oh, you look so cute*, and I just frowned at him. And my mom was like, *You couldn't have said thank you?* And I was like – to a man who just told me I look "cute" on my rollerskates?

E: Unsolicited? No!

S: Yeah, and I was like – I hate men. And she was like, *You can't hate men, your brothers are men*. I was like – I can't have this conversation right now.

E: When we say "men are trash," it's like a coping mechanism. A survival statement,

S: Yeah, and I don't wanna get on – there are enough tweets and comments and posts about how it's –

E: Sure, do your research if this confuses you.

S: - an encompassing statement regarding male privilege and the male-coded behaviors that are accepted in society that are actually very predatory. [pause] I lost my point because I started thinking about the fucking skateboard man.

E: Erm, Robert Jordan wrote men in *Wheel of Time* to be trash?

S: Yeah, and so it's like – of course, not all men are trash. That's a blanket statement. But what Robert Jordan has done on the flip-side of that, trying to give sympathy to men in a weird way has stripped them of agency as well. Is the point that I'm trying to get at. That all men behave in this way, basically, is what Robert Jordan is saying. And any man who – like Mat, as we've discussed – is sort of more, I don't know, gender-ambiguous along the lines of his relationship with the world gets punished for that.

E: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

S: And the men who constantly don't have emotional capacity, are extremely violent, have this weird, quote-unquote chivalrous relationship to women where they put them on pedestals, like Rand, and Perrin –

E & S: - and Thom, and Tallanvor –

E: Tallanvor's the prime example of putting a woman on a pedestal and simultaneously managing to treat her like she's a piece of shit.

S: Yeah, how does he do it?

E: How does he do it?

S: You can have it all, Tallanvor! But those are the men in the narrative that get rewarded, and rewards always come in the form of a woman. And in Rand's case: three women. In Tallanvor's case: the Queen.

E: The Queen who he has crushed on for his entire adult life.

S: Life, probably, since he was a baby. And so it's just like those are the men that are getting rewarded with sexual bounty, and it's just like *barf, barf, barf-barf-barf, barf, barf-barf-barf*.

E: Yeah.

S: *Barf*.

E: Whereas Mat is getting raped and ending up with a woman who a) is a fascist, and b) isn't particularly sexually available.

S: Yeah, and it's just like –

E: Which is not to say women *have* to be sexually available for men.

S: Of course not.

E: It's just within the context of the narrative.

S: It's very telling, that, *You are being punished, for your feminine behaviors. With no pussy.*

E: No pussy. Your feminine behaviors of slutting it up –

S: Your feminine behaviors of, like, having feelings –

E: What the hell?

S: - trying to talk to women like they are equals. It's just like – I'm getting to a point where my fatigue with Robert Jordan's whack quote-unquote feminism is reaching its threshold. We're talking about – it is becoming –

E: Difficult.

S: - difficult, yeah, to form articulate thoughts that I feel we haven't harped and harped and harped against. And they need to be harped against, because there are people on the internet who are like, *Robert Jordan LOVES women*. [E laughing] *Robert Jordan had SUCH good gay representation*. So it's obviously things that need to be said, because there are people who are like, *Elayne is such a strong female character*, and shit like that. But it's just becoming exhausting, when there are other authors out there – I just read a book by Becky Chambers, who I love, who had a pansexual protagonist. That word was *not* used, the character was having sexual relations with two different people in her four-person crew, it was not a big deal, just lovely portrayals of men being sensitive and open, and women exploring their sexualities in a way that does not involve being coerced or assaulted. There are people out there doing the work. Sorry. That got a little soapbox-y.

E: Nah, I'm just thinking about how there's so many more books to go.

S: I know! And we haven't even gotten to some of the worst of it. Like, what if we just had a series of episodes that were completely silent during Mat's adventures in Ebou Dar? I don't know.

E: OK. [exhales] Winding down.

S: The outro.

E: The outro. It's like in yoga, when you slowly descend into corpse pose, the only pose I'm incredibly good at. OK, I apologize, there was not a lot of actual *Wheel of Time* chat in this *Wheel of Time* podcast episode. But, as we've just said, we're getting a little bit fatigued with some of the harsher violence against women that happens in this series. And men. Sexual violence in general isn't fun to read about or talk about. But, all that said, we hope you enjoyed the less upsetting parts of this episode. Well, I guess it was all upsetting, depending on how you look at it.

S: It was all graphic, in one way or another.

E: It was all graphic, in one way or another. Fruits.

S: Ooh, sexy.

E: Sexy fruits.

S: I'm gonna have an apple for dinner. Probably.

E: Great, me too. Probably.

S: Gonna have an apple and a bagel.

E: But this has been *Everybody Hates Rand*. Thank you so much to Glynna Mackenzie for putting your music in front of this absolute tomfoolery. You're a saint.

S: Truly.

E: Glynna's voice just sounds so classy. Sometimes when I put it in front of the episode, I'm like, "Ah!" and then immediately we're saying –

S: Pussy!

E: Uh, pussy-granate, whatever.

S: The pomegranate's a pussy!

E: I'm an invol- I'm an incel!

S: Sorry, Glynna. We're just two dumpster fires on human leggings. Not as well-turned as Devin's leggings.

E: Here's an ode to Devin's leggings.

S: That's a great title for this episode.

E: He'd hate it so much. Do you have a sign-off?

S: Yeah, speaking of the cat ...

E: Oh yeah! Yeah, yeah yeah.

S: Last week, I was writing a grant, which is [dissolves into laughter] I can't do this! I can't even do the sign-off! Are you done?

E: Nope, just getting started, baby.

S: [still laughing] OK, we're gonna try and get through this. As quickly as possible. I was writing a grant, that for some reason was done in a survey software, instead of an online form, and so Tybalt walked across my computer and typed in a bunch of nonsense in two of the boxes, and then went to the next page. It was *annoying*, because he won't get off my laptop, but no big deal, I'll just edit it at the end. Filled the rest of the grant, get to the end, click the next button – it submits the grant. [both laughing] And so I was like – I have *literally* no idea what it said on that first page. Tybalt could have written "Fuck you" for all I know. And so I had to email the grant administrators and be like: "Hello –

my cat walked across my laptop and submitted a bunch of nonsense. How can you help me? Humbly, Sally.” And they were like – they were really sweet. I actually know the woman who ended up responding to me, and she’s really lovely. She got me in contact with the people and they fixed it. Thank god! But he just doesn’t even have the shame to be embarrassed about it.

E: Go sit somewhere else in your harness!

S: Anyway. He [dissolves laughing again] I can’t, I ... I hate our cat.

E: He did so many war-crimes this week. What are you looking at?

S: Goodbye, we love you, take care!

E: Bye!

ENDS