



Episode 139: Hypothetical Game of Thrones Writers Trolley Problem

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Sally: Everybody Hates Rand is a Wheel of Time podcast that will contain spoilers for all 14 books. So if you're anti-spoiler, pause this, read all 14 books, and come back. We'll be here. Waiting.

Emily: Our title is a joke and is meant to be taken as such. In the context of this podcast, "everybody" refers to us and our cat. You are free to feel however you want about Rand, who is a fictional character. Don't DM us.

(theme song by Glynna MacKenzie plays)

Emily: Well, this episode -- um, at least, fifty percent -- is going to suck ass, because fifty percent of what we read was just about the Forsaken torturing people.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Which, I know we've talked before about how that's dumb, but it really is just so egregious here.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like, when I think about chapters of the Forsaken torturing people, I --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Probably the one that pops into my head is Semirhage torturing a random Aes Sedai and her Warder.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Who I still, for the love, do not recall how this particular Aes Sedai is relevant. (laugh)

Sally: Mm.

Emily: I know she is in some way. I think it has to do with Aran'gar infiltrating the Aes Sedai camp later in the book, but I don't know. I just feel like -- I mean, I know it's unnecessary. It's not a feeling. It's a knowledge that I carry deep in my bones as an ethical person, that we don't really need to depict torture in fiction.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like, ever? Do you think there are any exceptions to that rule?

Sally: I mean, no. It's like that -- oh, and I'm not gonna remember his name, but I believe I've cited him on the podcast before -- it's like that French theorist who was like, you can't actually make an anti-war film because by portraying war, you are inherently and, even if unintentionally, like, glorifying it by turning it into a spectacle and something to watch. Um, and I think that is also the case with torture. Like, the -- the line is so fine between it being just, like, what it is and then becoming -- like, slipping into spectacle. Like, that line is so fine that I think hardly anyone stays on the side of it, like, just being torture.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um. And it just -- like, in this, it's just, like, so drawn out, and there's, like, really weird sexual undertones to it, and ...

Emily: Yeah, like -- um. (laugh) I'm sorry we're talking about this at the top of the episode, before we've even introduced ourselves.

Sally: I mean, we can just do that, I guess.

Emily: Yeah, go ahead and, uh --

Sally: This is Everybody Hates Rand, your friendly neighborhood Wheel of Time podcast. I am Sally Goodger.

Emily: I'm Emily Juchau. And, once again, back to torture -- um, yeah, I don't think I fully understood as a fourteen-year-old reading these books that when Semirhage is, like, activating the pleasure centers in the brain, that that's, like, you know, a sex thing.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Or adjacent to sex. So now I'm stuck with this rancid image of Semirhage being like, "Gonna make -- gonna torture people by making them too horny."

Sally: Yep.

Emily: And I'm like, what the fuck was happening in Robert Jordan's brain marinated in the Vietnam War and the -- the United States South that this happened? (sigh) It's really depressing.

Sally: Uh, the theorist who wrote that was Fran -- Francois Truffaut, I guess.

Emily: Cool.

Sally: Um, yeah. I mean, I'll be honest, I didn't actually, um, reread the torture scene. I just, like, skipped over it --

Emily: Good for you.

Sally: 'Cause I was like, I don't have the bandwidth for this today. Um, so I forgot that she was, like, fully activating the pleasure centers of the brain until people, like, orgasm to death or whatever.

Emily: Yeah. It's not, you know, graphically depicted because RJ is also scared of depicting sex, but --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: That is the implication, I guess?

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um.

Sally: Yeah, and just, like, taken -- this is gonna take me a minute to get to -- but, like, taken in context of like, the whole story's, like, sexual politics -- like, the whole series' sexual politics -- like, the way that it's distilled in this moment of, like -- because ultimately what, like, he -- he's playing with is the, like, pleasure -- pleasure and pain dynamic, you know?

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: So just, like, the idea that in this scene, it's like, pleasure is something that will ultimately become painful and ultimately be destructive --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Just has -- yeah. Taken in the context of, like, the rest of the sexual politics, just, like, doesn't paint a very healthy sex life for Wheel World.

Emily: Yeah, while the pain itself is actively giving Semirhage pleasure.

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

Emily: Again, if not in a blatantly sexual sense, in a subtly sexual sense.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: She is very clearly depicted to be, like, a sadist, um, and there is some indication that, you know, it's a -- there's a sexual component to that for her. Uh, but yeah, you're right that even without the whole activating the pleasure centers of the brain thing, it is already inherently sexual given that there are people who are, like, spread-eagled, and then Semirhage makes a big show out of ripping their -- (laugh)

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Clothes off. Like, this is straight out of, um -- like, Fifty Shades of Grey --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Adjacent porn. Like --

Sally: You're right. In Fifty Shades Darker, which I just watched with my friends this last weekend --

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Christian Grey does admit to being a sadist.

Emily: Does he?

Sally: Yeah. He's like, "I get off on hurting women that look like my mom," which is, like, a whole -- a whole thing --

Emily: What? (laugh) It's been so long since I've seen that movie.

Sally: Yeah. Um. So. Anyway. Semirhage's continued parallels to Christian Grey are not doing anybody any favors.

Emily: Doesn't he, at one point, have her spread-eagled on a --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Wall in that movie, or is it the third one?

Sally: I think it might be the third one that that happens. But, yeah, I mean the --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: It's a very, like, sexually charged image, like, especially in the context of, like, BDSM --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Which is so un--misunderstood by anybody who doesn't engage in that community that it's like, people are spread-eagle and chained to a wall and they're blindfolded, and, like, sure, that happens, but, like -- I dunno.

Emily: There's a -- there's a lot more that goes into it than just, you know, people being --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Physically put in that position.

Sally: Yeah, so it's just, like, Robert Jordan is intentionally or unintentionally, like, giving us these images. Um, and it's stinky.

Emily: Should we get the Forsaken out of the way? They're so terrible.

Sally: Yeah. Sure.

Emily: Uh, so we get that thing with Semirhage. We also get Sammael and Graendal, the world's least interesting duo.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, this whole chapter is riddled with little hints about their pasts, their former occupations, how they turned to the Shadow. Graendal, apparently, was a former psychologist and also an ascetic.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Is that how you say that word?

Sally: I think so. Ascetic.

Emily: Some -- someone who lives without worldly pleasures.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like a monk. Um. And then, when she decided to turn to the Dark, she just, like, swung into a full 180.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um. We already know Sammael's deal: he was on the side of the Light until he was like, "Lews Therin just gets so much more glory than me, so in a very typically masculine move, I am going to turn fully evil over that fact."

Sally: What a bitch. Literally, in this scene, Graendal comments on how Rand is tall, and Sammael's, like, straightens up, and he's like, "Everybody thinks that taller men are better."

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Like, he's such a pillar of just, like, rancid masculinity. I fucking hate him. (laugh)

Emily: Yeah, he's got a Napoleonic complex --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And he's not even short. As --

Sally: He's like a head shorter than Rand.

Emily: Rand's, what, six-five? Six-four?

Sally: Something like that. Tall, you know.

Emily: Which, yeah, means he's, I dunno, five-seven, five-eight. For -- it's not that short, man.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, you are not pint-sized.

Sally: No, he's a normal-sized person. He's probably, like, even a little -- whatever. It just, like -- I was like, I'm going to throw Sammael straight into a volcano. I hate this motherfucker.

Emily: (laugh) I know. He's horrible.

Sally: Such a bitch.

Emily: Um, and Semirhage's whole deal is that she was a doctor but then, like, people found out that she was sort of -- had this Angel of Death thing going on, where she would heal people but only after, like, extra dosing them with some pain for her own gratification.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And so they were like, "Great, here are your options: Either we still you, essentially, or we bind you," which is a concept from the Age of Legends that is brought up in this chapter and never again, where you can, I guess, prevent people from doing -- (pause) What the fuck, Tybalt?

Sally: Those were just on my bathroom counter. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Tybalt just walked in -- OK, you can't have those.

Tybalt: (meows)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Tybalt just walked in with something in his mouth, and I thought it was his fish or his little elephant toy, and no, it's a packet -- like a pocket-sized packet of Kleenex.

Sally: Mm. (laugh)

Emily: He just got -- (laugh)

Sally: Those were just, like, on my bathroom counter.

Emily: Tybalt, what's happening? What have we done to you that you, in the last 24 hours, have gone full apeshit?

Sally: Ahhhhhh. I never want to see his face again. (laugh) This is my -- this is the final straw.

Emily: Do you hear that, Tybalt? You're inches away from being taken to a home. Tybalt.

Sally: Taken to the farm. (laugh)

Emily: Taken to the farm.

Sally: No, we would never get rid of him.

Emily: We would never take Tybalt to a farm, especially because I come from a family that actually gave a dog to the farm. (laugh)

Sally: (wheeze, laugh) I can't.

Emily: (laugh) An actual farm, not, like, a --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: That's not a metaphor. Although she probably did join a local coyote pack. Um. (laugh) Stupid. So Sammael and Graendal -- Sammael -- oh, we're also getting hints of what everyone is doing. Um. We now know explicitly that Graendal is in Arad Doman, that she has members of, like, the king's family in her human ... circus.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um. (laugh) Most circuses are human. I don't know what I'm --

Sally: (laugh) Well, like, a flea circus.

Emily: I guess. Um.

Sally: But yeah. I mean -- although it is a little redundant, like, "human circus" is exactly what it is. Like, she has taken all these people and Compulsed them -- Compulsed them beyond, like, their own reason, and they just, like, live to serve her.

Emily: Compulsed. (laugh)

Sally: Compulsed. (laugh)

Emily: That is such a good way to put it. Yeah. She's like -- no one has brains or personalities anymore. They're just walking bodies for her entertainment.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Most of them are very beautiful people --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Because she's, like, "La dee da dee da, I love pleasure and looking at people."

Sally: Yeah. But they're just doing all this, like, crazy acrobatics shit.

Emily: Sammael's like, "Disgusting."

Sally: Yeah, he's like, "I hate the human body."

Emily: Sammael's, I guess -- (laugh) never been naked in front of anyone in his entire life. Which I would believe. He gives off huge "does not fuck" vibes.

Sally: Yeah, and it's not, like -- it's like Doctor Manhattan.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um. Not Doctor Manhattan -- um. Adrian Veidt. Ozymandias.

Emily: Adrian Veidt, yeah. (laugh)

Sally: Who's like, "I've never slept with a person because that would dilute my logic," or whatever. (laugh)

Emily: Exactly. (laugh)

Sally: It's not, like, an asexuality thing. It's like an active choice.

Emily: "Instead I jack off into vials and keep them in a fridge --"

Sally: Agggghhhh.

Emily: "Behind my Alexander the Great statue." (laugh)

Sally: Um, that would one hundred percent be what Sammael would do.

Emily: Spoilers for Watchmen on HBO, I guess. But also, you just look at Adrian Veidt, and you're like, "This is a man who does not have sex."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "And if he does, I don't want any part of it."

Sally: Yeah, and Sammael has the very same vibes.

Emily: The very same vibes. It's like -- I -- you -- I. There's -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Exactly.

Emily: (laugh) There's nothing productive to say about Sammael and Graendal plotting except that it will, you know, lead to their more plotting down the line.

Sally: Yeah. It's, like, all they do.

Emily: Sammael -- like, Sammael's like, "Don't you have important intel for me?" and Graendal's like, "Yeah, Semirhage was not at the last meeting," and -- is that -- am I saying all the names right? (laugh)

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I get so confused. And Sammael's like, "That's -- I don't need your attendance records --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "For your secret club meetings with Demandred and Mesaana and Semirhage."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, how boring is that? They both also -- or, at least, Graendal -- has received secret orders from the Dark One.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: That's, like, boring.

Sally: I'm -- they've all received secret orders from the Dark One.

Emily: Yeah, they have all --

Sally: It's like, manipulation 101.

Emily: Yeah, they have all individually been told by the Dark One that they are the most important.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it's like -- it's like you guys don't have, um -- haven't heard of toxic parenting or --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Anything like that. The Dark One is just like, "Hey, I'm gonna manipulate all these immature idiots. Because they're immature idiots, they will never catch on."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And they're all just, like, dithering, like, "I'm Daddy's favorite."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: (laugh) It's like, shut up.

Sally: They make me crazy.

Emily: Ughhh. Anyway, Graendal's set up in Arad Doman. She probably has access to the king, or possibly the king is dead. At the end of this chapter, like, someone comes in and is like, "Ituralde is here to see you." So Ituralde himself, there is some indication, is about to be put under some sort of Compulsion or, at least, led astray.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Which I guess will be important in the next couple of books, when Ituralde is like, "I'm going to, uh, begin a huge war on the eastern half of the continent." I dunno if he starts it. And he's not, uh, visibly doing anything bad. He's, like, defending against the Seanchan, essentially.

Sally: That's fine.

Emily: Great for him.

Sally: Good for you, Rodel.

Emily: But I guess, you know, it sort of lends itself toward the, quote unquote, chaos.

Sally: Which is hilarious because that, uh -- Ituralde isn't mentioned again until book eight.

Emily: Book -- oh, yeah. Wasn't he just name-dropped where you are?

Sally: Yeah. Yeah. (laugh) I'm, like, a third of the way through book eight? So, like, one thousand pages from now, someone will be like, "Remember this?" and I'll be like, "No."

Emily: "Who?"

Sally: I absolutely have no idea what the fuck you're talking about.

Emily: What the -- ah, I've been meaning to tell you this for, like, three episodes. But you know in the prologue, when -- when Morgase is like -- like, some random Andor guy is like, "Hey, what's up. It's me. I'm an Andoran, and me and my dad can help you guys escape."

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: That dude was also in the Eye of the World. He was the skeazy Darkfriend who approached --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Rand and Mat when they were sitting at -- did you know that?

Sally: Paitr.

Emily: I didn't fucking connect those dots!

Sally: I only remembered that because we made fun of him so much in the Eye of the World.

Emily: Oh, yeah, well.

Sally: 'Cause he's an idiot.

Emily: He's super dumb. He's, like --

Sally: But, like -- sorry, go ahead.

Emily: No, just he's super dumb.

Sally: Yeah, I mean, he's a -- he's a dumb fuck. But it's one of those things where Robert Jordan's like, "Do you remember this person from six books ago?"

Emily: And I didn't! And I've read this series three times!

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: This third time -- fourth time reading this book?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I don't fuckin' know. I read the name and was like, "This seems familiar to me," having read the Eye of the World two and a half years ago.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So, uh, then I had to Google it. It didn't even come to me on my own. (sigh) I hate him.

Sally: Yeah. So anyway, Graendal pretends to be some, like, ailing old Domani woman, um, which is annoying and ableist, like everything Robert Jordan does. She's like, "People assume I am fragile because I am sick." (cough) Um. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh, cough) Boo -- Sammael: "Boo, you whore."

Sally: (laugh) Yeah.

Emily: Which is basically all Sammael's doing in this entire chapter.

Sally: Yeah, he's like, "Graendal's such a fat slut." (laugh) It's like --

Emily: "I hate Graendal. She's a SLUT."

Sally: I please calm down.

Emily: "And she's PLUMP." And I'm like, what is wrong with you? (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: You short bastard man.

Sally: I know. (laugh) He's such a fuckhead. I hate him so much. I basically, like, blocked out every scene he was in in my first read because I'm like, "This is such a bitch man, I can't deal with it."

Emily: His death cannot come soon enough.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I know I said that about Rahvin too. But God, why do we have to deal with Sammael for another two books when we could've had Asmodean?

Sally: Yeah, we could've had Asmodean. Also just being like --

Emily: La dee da dee da, following Rand around, doing his his nonsense.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: (sigh)

Sally: But yeah. Um. Anyway. (laugh) It is very funny when Graendal's like, "Yeah, so, um, Rand killed Lanfear and Rahvin on the same day, and Asmodean is also dead," and Sammael's like, "None of that is true." (laugh)

Emily: Sammael's like, "No." They're all like, "Where's Lanfear?"

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: And Graendal's like, "Well, there are rumors coming out of Cairhien that Rand killed her," and I'm like, how would that not be huge fucking news?

Sally: Yeah. They all just hate Lanfear so much. (laugh)

Emily: No, they would just be like, "Ah, hell yeah. Ding dong, the witch is dead."

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: Like, Semirhage is like, "I fuckin' hate Lanfear. I would kick her ass. Give me --"

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "Like, name the time, name the place." and I'm like, girl. A little -- a little late.

Sally: Yeah. Moiraine beat you to it.

Emily: Moiraine's been there, done that. Um.

Tybalt: (meows)

Emily: But, like, I guess, at the time, Rand and Moiraine did fight Lanfear and, like, a bunch of citizens of Cairhien were standing around watching, and then it wasn't like, after that, Rand was like, "Nobody worry. It was Lanfear."

Sally: Yeah. They just saw them fight this random woman.

Emily: They just saw this white woman -- white-wearing woman, but also white woman --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: The whitest woman to ever white --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Come out of a wagon and be like, "Who's the bitch who fucked you?"

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Adn then things were exploding, and it was very chaotic, and Rand was standing there laughing, crying, and Moiraine was like, “Gotta do everything my fucking self,” and tackled her, and they disappeared and the doorway melted --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And everyone in Cairhien is like, “Yeah, just fuckin’ Tuesday. We’ve already been invaded by the Aiel --”

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: “Three times this week.”

Sally: Yeah. They’re like, “This might as well happen.”

Emily: This might as well happen.

Sally: I feel like the only other thing we actually get out of this is just, like, vague references to Shara.

Emily: Yeah, Graendal also shows off some of her acquisitions from Shara, which gives us legitimately --

Sally: (whisper) Acquisitions.

Emily: Acquisitions --

Sally: She’s so nasty. (laugh)

Emily: Which gives us some of the only, like, details we will get about Sharan culture. I don’t even think Shara is itself named.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: She’s just like, “These people are coming from far to the east or whatever.”

Sally: Yeah, beyond the Waste or whatever.

Emily: Beyond the Waste, and they won’t even -- there -- there is also this idea that -- like, Sammael says, “The Dark One’s prison is physically on this continent,” which is why what happens on this continent is such a big deal.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like, everyone else it will hit eventually, but it’s gonna be here, and it’s gonna be worse here, first.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Which is kind of an interesting concept, but I guess, uh -- and I guess that's been sort of implicit in, you know, the series up until this point, but it's nice to have someone finally say --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: You know why this particular place is important? It's 'cause, you know, Dark One's, uh, Candy Mountain is way up there.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: Um, but yeah, these are some of the only references to Sharan culture that we will get until the Sharans themselves, spoiler alert, become not even characters because none of them are named, but start being on-screen, uh, under full, uh, control of their own faculties, unlike with Graendal --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: When they arrive in book fourteen. Um. And at this point in the series, I don't know if we can credit Robert Jordan with setting up that anyone was going to do anything with Shara. One of our -- another of our Patreon followers, Katie McNeal -- I looked up your name this time -- she, like, asked on our Patreon what we thought of the idea --

Sally: (whisper) Oh, yeah.

Emily: That, um, Robert Jordan had indeed intended Mazrim Taim to be Demandred but then switched that up. And I Googled that, and, you know, there's some article that's like, oh yeah, a fan, you know, confirmed that by looking through Robert Jordan's published notes, that he originally was like, "Yes, Mazrim Taim is going to be Demandred," but so many readers figured that out, is the implication, or maybe he just changed his mind, but probably because everyone figured it out, he was like, "Gonna change that." Which is the Marvel way of doing things, which means the wrong way.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: You never -- oh, people figured out your plot twist?

Sally: It's OK if your readers are smart --

Emily: Great.

Sally: And you've, like, laid out enough for them to draw accurate conclusions.

Emily: Yeah, like, this is fantasy. I --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Congratulations to everyone who has been awaiting the latest installment in Brandon Sanderson's Stormlight book. That was the series that made me realize that I'm not smart enough to read fantasy. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: So I just want to commemorate all of you for having way more brain cells than I do. Because I read the first two Stormlight books and was like, I can't -- I've -- fuckin' don't know what's going on. Can't keep anyone straight. And so these are the people -- type of people who read these books and are like, "Ah, yes, this connects to passage thirteen --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "In book -- (makes a sound like a fish slamming into a keyboard)"

Sally: (imitates noise)

Emily: (laugh) "Book two." And they're just like, "Oh, yeah, Taim's Demandred? Fuckin' makes sense. You're giving us --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "You're giving us some solid hints there, pal." And Robert Jordan's like, "Oh, no! They figured it out!"

Sally: And the fact that he's like, "Mazrim Taim is now not Demandred," it just makes it look so weird.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Because it's like, the hints are there, and they're so obvious. Like --

Emily: Mazrim Taim --

Sally: Not, like, obvious in a bad way. It's just like, Mazrim Taim is an evil fuckin' dude, you know?

Emily: And just, like, there's no real other explanation for all these little hints.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like Bashere not recognizing Taim or Taim's sort of, like, weird approach to a lot of the things --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Uh, that Rand tells him. Like, he seems to not really understand some sort -- some basic modern things --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But is also sort of totally cool with Rand when he jumps into his Lews Therin headspace.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And also, it explains a lot of the fact why Mazrim Taim and Rand just sort of instantly hate each other. I mean, it would be nice if Rand just instantly hated Mazrim Taim because he's a war criminal.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: That would make sense. But no, there's this automatic, like, hate chemistry --

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: That is explained by the fact that Demandred and Lews Therin, uh, you know, hated each other so much that hate sex wasn't even on the table. They hated each other too much for hate sex.

Sally: It would be really funny, though, if, like, they did hate-fuck, and then Mazrim Taim shows up as Demandred and is like, "I'm so attracted to you." (laugh)

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: And Rand is like, "Whooooaa!"

Emily: I know, Robert Jordan really gave us all the most boring relationships --

Sally: I know.

Emily: For Lews Therin to have had with the Forsaken.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's like Lanfear, the woman scorned --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And then a bunch of dudes who are just like, "I hate Lews Therin 'cause he's better than me."

Sally: "He's taller than me."

Emily: Eugh! It's --

Sally: "He's more powerful than me."

Emily: It would be so much more interesting if you had someone who was like, "Oh, no, we definitely -- we deffo fucked."

Sally: yeah.

Emily: And, like, not in a weird --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Lanfear way --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: We just, you know, did -- it.

Sally: Yeah. But -- yeah. I mean, I just think it's sad when authors do that, because then the fans don't get the pay-off that they worked really hard to find, um, and, like, think about and put together, and I think that's, like, one of the more exciting things about, like, online fan communities is, like, sharing your fun theories and, like -- um, it was like when everyone was like, "Jon Snow is totally --"

Emily: This guy.

Sally: "This guy, you know, not actually Eddard's bastard son but the heir to the throne or whatever." And then everyone was like -- I dunno, people just had, like, such a weird attitude to it when, like, they were right.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: It's like, "They're gonna have to change it now." And it's like, no, they're not gonna have to change it.

Emily: I'm like --

Sally: It's OK when people are right.

Emily: Thank fuck they didn't. Because -- have you heard that quote that's like -- (laugh) One of the writers of Game of Thrones being like, "Themes are for eighth grade book reports." (laugh) That's the funniest, most white man thing I have ever heard.

Sally: I'm gonna vomit. (laugh)

Emily: It's so funny. You should watch Lindsay Ellis' video just all about the last season of Game of Thrones --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Because she just flashes that quote across the screen every once in a while and is like --

Sally: "Themes are for eighth grade book reports."

Emily: What the fuck?

Sally: No, themes are pretty inherent to works of literature. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Themes are like the top thing you learn in literature!

Sally: Yeah. Um.

Emily: Oh my God. It's a whole category on Sparknotes. (laugh)

Sally: Yeah, and just because, like, you shouldn't --

Emily: "Themes are for eighth grade book reports, and Charles Dickens, who was a pussy."

Sally: (laugh) Oh, speaking of which, Dev Patel's David -- David Copperfield is now available for purchase somewhere, I think, so we would watch it.

Emily: Let's watch it. I think he's so sexy.

Sally: I know. I'm, like, really horny for him. Um. But anyway, we'll have to put together our eighth grade book report on David Copperfield. (laugh) Ahh! I -- the people who made Game of Thrones, those motherfuckers, are, like, my literal nemeses.

Emily: I know. (laugh) It's like, if there was a trolley problem -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Kill 'em!

Emily: And my option was -- I don't know. There's actually not a -- a metric of the trolley problem where I wouldn't choose to drive the trolley -- (laugh) If it was an -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) If it was an empty track on one side --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) And I had to turn the trolley to hit them, I would do it.

Sally: They're such motherfuckers.

Emily: Ah. Bastards.

Sally: "Themes are for eighth grade book reports." (laugh) Stupid shits.

Emily: Ah, I'm sorry I'm -- oh, hey, look.

Sally: Yeah, you've got some tissues. (laugh) Tybalt brought them to you in a moment of -- prophecy.

Emily: Tybalt knew I would laugh hysterically. Um. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Oh, God. Men are so annoying.

Emily: Ah. "Themes are for eighth grade book reports."

Sally: Something Sammael would also say.

Emily: I know. God, I hate him. But anyway. (laugh) Over in Cairhien, Mat is sweaty, which is how we will begin every Mat point of view for the next two to three books, is Mat just being like, "I'm fuckin' sweaty."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "And my shirt is unlaced."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "My coat is open." And -- you know? Sexy.

Sally: Yeah. Looking pretty sexy. Here I am with my table full of sweaty boyfriends.

Emily: Yeah, I love that Mat is sitting with -- on a -- at a table by himself --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And then the other -- his three boyfriends are sitting --

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: At a table, debating how to beat him in --

Sally: Yeah. Gambling. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Fuckin' gambling.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Ah, your OT4 could never.

Sally: (laugh) So true. 'Cause it's -- what, it's Nalesean, Daerid, Talmanes, and then Mat?

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Sitting at this other table. There's also a point when, like, Mat puts his elbows up on the table --

Emily: (laugh) Does he?

Sally: And is like, "Let's horse race."

Emily: "Let's --" Someone's like, uh, "Maybe horse racing?" and Mat's like, "Oh, let's." (laugh)

Sally: "Please." (laugh)

Emily: Thinking to himself, "You know, I have no idea if the luck would work on that, but my dad literally --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Like, traded horses."

Sally: "Was a used horse salesman." (laugh)

Emily: "Was a used horse salesman." (laugh) Modern AU, Abell Cauthon is a used car salesman. It explains a lot about --

Sally: Like in Matilda. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Danny DeVito.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) Danny DeVito is Abell Cauthon, and Mat is played by -- what's that girl's name?

Emily: Mara Wilson?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: God. Legend.

Sally: (laugh) Um. Yeah, so it's very cute. Um.

Emily: Yeah, we get some -- they're, like -- they, like, do the run-down of, a) Mat's whole backstory, and also, um, the three boys. Mat's 20, Talmanes is a few years older. Talmanes, Mat describes -- Mat says he looks at Talmanes and always thinks of a coiled spring, which --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Is the, like, most sexually intense --

Sally: I know.

Emily: Line I've ever read -- (laugh)

Sally: I know.

Emily: In my entire life.

Sally: I was like, "Alright."

Emily: I was like, "Oh."

Sally: OK, boys.

Emily: Because, you know, that's what I like about short men.

Sally: Oh, yeah, they're just, like, ready to --

Emily: They're just, like, small packages with a lot of tension and power in there.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And I'm like, yes. I'm about that.

Sally: These tissues have proven surprisingly useful. (laugh)

Emily: I know, thank you, Tybalt. (laugh) For once, you're useful.

Sally: (laugh) Um --

Emily: He's sleeping peacefully now.

Sally: Yeah, now that he fulfilled his chaos quotient. Um. Yeah, but he's like, "Talmanes is just, like, coiled up. He's an intense man who never smiles."

Emily: Yeah, Talmanes is also a nobleman who, um, does not wear any insignia to indicate that he's a nobleman, which of course is great in Mat's book --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And in all our books because Talmanes, uh, is not a classist.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Uh, then there's Daerid, who is in his 30s --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: I guess, uh, leading the infantry. Also not a nobleman, also Cairhienin. Uh, and then there's Nalesean, who's Tairen, and has his neat little --

Sally: Yeah. Pointy beard.

Emily: Pointy beard. Um.

Sally: Daerid's also apparently had his nose broken like eight times.

Emily: I know, Daerid's got a lot of scars on his face.

Sally: And he just, like, looks fucked. (laugh) And Mat's like, "I love him."

Emily: Mat's like, "Sexy." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. Um.

Emily: Um, and it's nice to see them all getting along --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: After the last time we saw the Band of the Red Hand -- Hand. They were kind of at each other's throats.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And as the chapter goes on, we learn that Mat has installed a lot of, um, procedures, uh, with this intention to get everyone to stop thinking along national lines and start thinking of themselves as one unit.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Especially as the band is accumulating, uh, more and more members from other nations, including Andor and even some, you know, farther-reaching ones.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, so the Band of Red Hand is really just gonna be this amalgamation of dudes who've been slumming it in the, you know, frequent national and natural disasters --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: That are plaguing this continent.

Sally: Yeah, it's just a group of disgusting, dirty boys.

Emily: Yeah, who are like, "Might as well join the military." And Mat is like, "WHY are they joining the military? It's terrible here."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Everyone's sweaty. Men smell."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: “The pay’s not great. I have a hard time paying them. And men just keep being like, ah, da da, gonna join the Band of the Red Hand.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Mat, you’re ta’veren. (laugh)

Sally: I mean, also, like, if you saw this very sexy, unkempt man walking around --

Emily: With his hat and his spear --

Sally: Yeah, and his, like, scarf and his fancy necklace, I’d be like, I do not believe in the military-industrial complex, but that is a sexy man.

Emily: Yeah, but I would --

Sally: I would get on board, yeah.

Emily: I would follow that man around. See what he’s about.

Sally: Yeah. Just kind of, like, need to be close to his sexual prowess.

Emily: Especially ‘cause they have all these, like, myths about him --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: That he’s unkillable --

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: That he never wears armor --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Because the hat is his armor --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Or whatever, and Mat’s just like, “If I’m close enough to need armor, I’m not doing my shit, y’know?”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: “Like, that’s bad.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: “Also, I’m already so sweaty and so hot.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "This is terrible."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, this all happens in the, like, late afternoon in this town across the river from Aringill, where we've been several times before. It's like the port town. Mat and Thom stop there --

Sally: Oh, yeah. I just -- how am I supposed to remember all these names?

Emily: Yeah, seriously.

Sally: They all start with "A."

Emily: That's true.

Sally: Alguenya.

Emily: Alguenya. And, uh, the Band has been here for days if not weeks.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like, they're all pretty set in their inns. Mat and all his officers are staying in this one inn, and then everyone else is kind of separated out. Um. And they are just sort of, like, waiting for the order. And at the end of this chapter, we find out that Mat -- like, the order is now.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Mat, that night, is like, "OK, we're leaving in the morning." And everyone 's like, "It's two a.m."

Sally: And he's like, "Yep. Chop, chop, motherfuckers."

Emily: "Yep. Fuck you." And they're like, "We're not getting any sleep," and he's like, "I am. Two hours, baby. Wake me up."

Sally: So then, the next morning, everyone is like --

Emily: "We hate you."

Sally: Except for Talmanes, who's just like, "Let's do it."

Emily: Talmanes, who is ready to go.

Sally: Yeah. Daerid's, like, asleep in the saddle. (laugh)

Emily: I know. (laugh) Mat's like, "Relatable."

Sally: Yeah. Ah, I just love the boys.

Emily: I love the Band of the Red Hand. They're so delightful. Um. This whole -- (laugh) Uh, Mat is -- like, we pick up with Mat sitting in this inn, being sweaty, trying to drink away his sorrows. He's like, "I can drink as much as I want, 'cause I just sweat it out immediately." Which is horrifying.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um, he is trying to flirt with this random chick at the inn, who herself is kind of iconic. Mat is like, "I cannot -- for the life of me, I cannot tell if she's a huge idiot or, like, just dancing -
-"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Around me."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Incredibly intelligent." Because she just talk, talk, talks, talks Mat's ear off, totally throws him off his game --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But really loves to dance with him, which is what he gets into.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, it's nice to see Mat dancing.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's very cute. Especially 'cause he's got all these, like, weird archaic dances --

Sally: Yeah. They're just, like, leaping around.

Emily: That I imagine everyone's just like, "What the fuck?"

Sally: What a fancy, fancy dancer.

Emily: What a fancy lad.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: This woman is also very handsy, though, which is sort of the theme with Mat --

Sally: Yeah. Yeah. I was gonna say. Like, she's very, like, sweet generally, but, like, as soon as she starts talking to Mat, she's pulling his scarf down and taking the necklace out of his shirt, and it's like --

Emily: Yeah, it's said she, like, fishes the medallion out of his open shirt, which means she's just, like, sticking her hand in there. (laugh)

Sally: In his cleavage, yeah.

Emily: And it's like, first of all, girl, the sweat.

Sally: Yeah, does -- you'd just come out, like --

Emily: Ugh. Dripping.

Sally: Like Lube Man from Watchmen. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) So nasty. And also just, like, you can't just reach into someone's shirt.

Sally: Just because he's trying to flirt with you doesn't mean he's consented to have you just, like, inside of his clothes.

Emily: Although Mat does also try and kiss her a bunch of times.

Sally: Yeah, so.

Emily: So --

Sally: Good point.

Emily: Either, you know -- it's not great. It's Robert Jordan, uh, trying to have, you know, one of his funny little "Look at how women are from Venus and men are from Mars" moments, and this time it's at least semi-successful in the rhetoric that Mat is like, "Is she dumb? Or is she very smart?"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, that is funny, but everything else is sort of like, "Ugh."

Sally: Maybe just stop trying to touch each other if you are aware the other person doesn't like it.

Emily: Yeah. Anyway, um, but Mat is interrupted from dancing with this girl -- he's also been, like, teaching the musicians in this bar, like, old-ass songs --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And it's like -- there's this interesting moment where he's dancing with her, where he has this very, like, Anastasia moment, you know that --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Once Upon a December song, when she's got all the, like, ghosts coming down, where Mat is just, like, transported to this ball from before the Trolloc Wars --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And it's like, "And after that it all went to fuckin' hell."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And you're like, oh. Jesus.

Sally: I hope they do fun stuff like that with Mat in the show.

Emily: I know, I think that would be really fun.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: To, like, have him walk into his old memories --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Walk through them a lot.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah, it'd just be -- I think it could be really interesting, visually.

Emily: Yeah, you have a lot of really interesting opportunities to do things with Mat and Rand.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Rand with, like, his Lews Therin voice in his head. Like, it would be interesting -- I know, like, half the point is that Rand doesn't know if it's his own mind or if it's just an auditory -- like, if it's an auditory hallucination or, like, an actual thing --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: But it'd be so interesting to have a character who plays Lews Therin who's just sort of, like, walking around behind --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Rand in the background all the time.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like a ghost. Like in the Haunting of Hill House. They do that all the time -- like, some ghosts pass in the background.

Sally: Or in -- like with Sense8.

Emily: Yeah. Yeah.

Sally: That's just my reference point. I'm just trying to get in --

Emily: Sense8.

Sally: With it.

Emily: Um. (laugh) And yeah, Mat walking through his own memories would be fascinating.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Especially because music is one of the huge triggers for his memories. We see that a lot in this book. Um. But Mat is grabbed by one of his other, uh, Tairen guys, Edorion, who is one of the guys that Mat played cards with but seems to have grown up a little bit. Um, who's like, "Oh, you're supposed to go on your rounds now." Mat just inspects something different at random every day. So today, he's just poking his head into all the inns to make sure the boys are behaving.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um. And while he's doing this, he stumbles on this, like, altercation. He sort of shoves his way in, and it's, like, these two Heroes of the Horn -- Heroes of the Horn. Hunters of the Horn, I guess.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Who are just, like, shaking little Olver by the scruff of his neck. And Mat, who is not a fan of child abuse, understandably --

Sally: (laugh) Yeah.

Emily: Is like, "Please don't do this." (laugh) And they're like, "We will, because he's a peasant." And Mat is like, "Fuck you."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And, like, puts his -- swings his staff up between the dude's legs, which I, like, cannot imagine how crippling that move --

Sally: (laugh) Yeah.

Emily: Would fuckin' be.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Dude's just, like, out.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And he clips the other dude's head and then is like, "OK, what the fuck is up with you, little boy?" And Olver's like -- (laugh) "I'm Olver, and for some reason, I'll be relevant to this entire fucking series." (laugh) Like, it's nice to see Mat interact with a child on the very surface level of seeing that Mat interacts with children in a normal adult way.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: That when Olver is like, "Talk to me, not over me," Mat is like, "Yes, I also did not like that."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Here, I'm talking to you and I am going to use reverse psychology on you --"

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "Incredibly easily."

Sally: Yeah. Because he --

Emily: "Because I am you --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "On some level." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, that's nice. Olver did not need to be a character after this. We all know this. I have wracked my brains, and the only reason I can imagine for him to be there anymore is for him to, um, keep Mat in Ebou Dar.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: But, like, you could've come up with something else, RJ.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I mean, I know Olver does also eventually blow the Horn of Valere, but we have discussed how that shouldn't have happened.

Sally: (whisper) It makes me fucking crazy.

Emily: Um. So Mat's like, "Go get this kid a fucking bath; he smells," to Edorion --

Sally: And Edorion's like, "I'm not a fucking babysitter."

Emily: Edorion's like, "OK. Up my pay grade." And then Estean --

Sally: (laugh) I love Estean.

Emily: (laugh) I know. He's so --

Sally: He's so chaotic and incompetent. (laugh)

Emily: He's such a dumb fuck. (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: He shows up and is like, "Mat, there's a big boat!" And Mat's like, "Oh, really? Take me to it." And they go and there's, like, a whole-ass Sea Folk ship --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: This far up the river, and Mat's like, "Wild," and is, like, gonna go, I guess, hail it, 'cause he asks for a -- a boat and rowers, but then it sort of, like, um -- I don't know what happens. It basically keeps going.

Sally: Yeah, they, like -- either, like, pick up someone or talk to someone, and then they're like, "Goodbye."

Emily: Yeah. And this will, um -- I guess this is the same ship that will arrive in Cairhien later and be a bother --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: For quite a while for Rand. Just another -- yet another subplot being introduced. And Mat's like, "OK, well, that was weird." Um.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: He also has this flashback -- it's so odd how Mat is the only character who ever gets flashback sequences.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: I don't know what to make of it. But he's the only one who gets these, like, long italics.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um. I guess we're frequently catching up with Mat in the middle of things, but I don't know. Further discussion may perhaps be warranted at a later date. But he talks about being in his room and, like, taking off his shoes, and then Rand just teleports in. The gateway that we know from Sammael can just cut people in half, and Rand's like, "I'll just do this in Mat's bedroom."

Sally: Mat's like, "Could you fucking not?"

Emily: Like, what if you cut off one of Mat's toes or something?

Sally: Oh, nooo.

Emily: Mat would've been like, "What?" (laugh) "This too?"

Sally: Yeah. "Come on!"

Emily: "Man --"

Sally: "I died in the last book. Twice!"

Emily: "Ugh! Twice in the last two books!" Um, but Rand is just acting very crazy.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: He's like, "How -- what does it mean to love a woman?" and Mat's like, "Fuck if I know."

Sally: Mat's like, "What the --"

Emily: "Never have."

Sally: "Fuck are you talking -- ?" It's a very charming, like, very, like, back to his --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Farmboy slang, where he's like, "How in the Pit of Doom would I know?"

Emily: Yeah

Sally: "Never put my foot in that snare." (laugh)

Emily: "In that particular snare."

Sally: Whatever.

Emily: Um --

Sally: And then Rand's like, "OK, never mind." Mat's like, "Could you --"

Emily: Rand's like, "We have to be sneaky. Sammael can't know what we're doing." And Mat's like, "I -- I made the plan, Rand. I know what I'm doing."

Sally: Yep.

Emily: It's just, like, the most batshit thing.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But it is just Mat once again being like, "Is Rand going insane?"

Sally: "Is Rand a little crazy?"

Emily: "Will I know when Rand is insane? Because he always just acts like this now."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Where do I draw the line?"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Whatever. Uh, so that evening, Mat, again, dances the night away until, at 2 a.m., he's like, "Alright, guys. Uh, we're moving out at daylight." And they're all like, "What?!"

Sally: "That's in, like, three hours!"

Emily: And he's like, "I know. Sucks to suck, don't it?"

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) And then we, you know, cut to them the next day as they are, in fact, moving out. And Mat is like, "We're gonna go so fucking fast," and Talmanes is like, "No!"

Sally: "Eugh!" (laugh)

Emily: And Mat's like, "Yes. Thirty-five miles a day." Which is, like, so many.

Sally: Yeah. He also starts quoting, basically, Sun Tzu --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: (laugh) You know? Talmanes is like, "Who?"

Emily: And Mat's like, "Ah, some general. I read his book once."

Sally: And Talmanes is like, "No you fucking didn't."

Emily: Mat -- Talmanes is like, "I know you're illiterate."

Sally: "I know you can't read. That's half of my job." (laugh)

Emily: "You can't read, Mat."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Um -- (laugh) But Mat is also giving us little oblique hints as to what the plan is, but again, it's not clear. He does seem to be actually moving toward, you know, where the other people --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Are camped. Um. To lead them, but that all seems to be about, like, distracting Sammael. I don't know if Rand is like, "Gonna do some SEAL Team Six --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Thing on Sammael," if that's the plan or what it has to do with Bashere and the Saldaeans. I dunno. I hope we figure it out one day, 'cause --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: I sure can't remember. It's bothering me, though. Um. (clears throat) But that's that.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: In terms of the plot and things that happened. OK, the, uh, next chunk will take us to Nynaeve and Elayne.

Sally: Ugh.

Emily: I know. Tragic. We thought we'd seen the last of these motherfuckers. No, we didn't, but, God, they, as a continuing dynamic, are going to plague us for the next few books. OK. (laugh) Thanks for listening. Um, thank you to Glynna MacKenzie for our theme song. Thank you to our Patreon supporters. Thanks to Katie McNeal for making that fabulous point about Mazrim Taim and Demandred. Um. And -- just follow us on Twitter and, um, Instagram and -- (laugh) Sort of - - I'm sort of losing it. I can feel the energy draining.

Sally: And Tumblr.

Emily: And Tumblr, yeah.

Sally: That's the next big one. And you can also subscribe on YouTube if you want to --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Listen to the podcast on YouTube for any reason.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um.

Emily: Um. Thanks again. Do you have a sign-off?

Sally: Um, I mean, Tybalt brought tissues into the -- I feel like we had about eighteen sign-offs.
(laugh)

Emily: (inaudible) -- Brought in -- bringing tissues into the studio that we did later use when I started laughing hysterically about the hypothetical Game of Thrones writers trolley problem.
Um.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Stupid.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Have a good week, everyone. Don't do war crimes.

Sally: Bye!

Emily: Bye.