



## **Episode 153: Astral Projection of a Horse**

Release Date: March 8, 2021

Running Time: 43 minutes

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

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

(theme song by Glynn MacKenzie plays)

Sally: Um, the reason Emily is talking about hypochondria is that today, very suddenly, we were able to get our first dose of the coronavirus vaccine.

Emily: Yeah. Don't ever let anyone, um, tell you that Dungeons and Dragons groups aren't powerful. (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. It's through Emily's D&D group that we were able to get vaccinated, so. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Um. Power to the people who play D&D.

Emily: I'm very able-bodied, and Sally's relatively ... okay. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) As I sit with my cane next to me --

Emily: Yeah. (laugh)

Sally: That we had to stop and get on the way home.

Emily: Yeah, we're in our twenties, so we're not in the bracket, um, that people are supposed to be getting their vaccines right now. But the thing with these vaccines is that, um, they will go to waste if enough people don't sign up, which, uh, Utah has some county disparity.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: In the types of numbers they get. So, like, they send the same amount of vaccines to Salt Lake County, which has a lot of, uh, younger, uh, more liberal people, who are more likely to get the vaccine, versus in Utah County, which has a lot of conservative and older people, I would say.

Sally: Less likely to get the vaccine, so.

Emily: Yeah. So, like, they were just like, "We're gonna have extra vaccines in Utah County," so.

Sally: Yeah. We wouldn't have gone if we were, like, taking the vaccine from somebody else.

Emily: No.

Sally: Um. But this was, like, one of those situations where, like, if they didn't use them, they would have to throw them in the garbage.

Emily: Yeah, so I just want to encourage you all, when your name is called or someone in your Dungeons and Dragons group is like, "Hey, there's vaccines available," um, go for it.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: If you have a grandparent or someone older in your life who you can get to get it as well, that's great and you should prioritize them, but ultimately, you getting the vaccine helps protect the community as well.

Sally: That's right, baby.

Emily: So this has been your Covid PSA, I guess. Get your vaccine.

Sally: Get your frickin' vaccine.

Emily: Get your frickin' vaccine. It's not like, um, the government's gonna do anything to help us with the pandemic, so you might as well do it yourself. You know what I'm saying?

Sally: This is Everybody Hates Rand, your friendly, vaccinated Wheel of Time podcast.

Emily: (laugh) Half-vaccinated. Gotta get our second dose.

Sally: (laugh) Yeah, half-vaccinated. Uh, in a couple weeks. I am Sally Goodger.

Emily: I'm Emily Juchau.

Sally: Um. Disclaimer: I have a headache, so if I sound insane, it's not a side effect of the vaccine. I had a headache this morning. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) I don't have a headache, but at any moment, I will descend into the depths of hypochondria and be convinced that I'm dying, so. It's all good. This episode started out angry, and it's not going to get better.

Sally: It's not going to get better.

Emily: But for different reasons.

Sally: Ugh..

Emily: This is the infamous transphobic --

Sally: Blegh.

Emily: Egg becomes the Amyrlin Seat, uh, duo of chapters.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: There's really not much going on in terms of plot. Like, Egg travels through Tel'aran'rhiod to get to Salidar, much sooner than even the Aes Sedai who --

Sally: Yeah, it's like a -- it's, like, three hours.

Emily: Yeah. It takes her, like, a couple hours to get there, and everyone's like, "What the. That was fast." Um, they tell her she's gonna be the Amyrlin Seat. She's like, "Ha ha ha, good joke, guys."

Sally: "Ha, ha. LMAO."

Emily: And they're like, "No, actually, you don't have a choice in this matter. You have been summoned™." Um, and then they get all the Sitters together and go through the ceremony of Egg becoming Amyrlin Seat.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, and that's, like, it in terms of what happens.

Sally: Yeah, it's two very short chapters. It was only, like, twenty pages --

Emily: Oh.

Sally: In terms of, um -- I always count because I am neurotic.

Emily: No, it's good to know.

Sally: And also hate reading Lord of Chaos.

Emily: (laugh) Lord of Chaos is so bad.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Um. But -- hoo. There are themes to talk about.

Sally: Do you want me to massage your -- your vaccination site while you talk?

Emily: Oh, no, I was just adjusting my leggings. Um, obviously there's the transphobia. Let's just get that one, um, out in the open. Part of the ceremony for raising an Amyrlin -- and, it is implied, part of other ceremonies, generally, involving the Hall of the Tower --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Requires, um, all of the women present to disrobe to the waist to prove that they are women. Um. If you need the explainer, that's transphobic because many women do not necessarily have breasts, um, or might only have one breast or might have breasts that look different than the, quote unquote, standard. Women have mastectomies. A variety of other, uh, medical factors go into what a body looks like.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And it -- in fact, every body of every cisgender woman looks different.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So to imply that there is a standard woman, based upon the shape of her torso, is a little ridiculous.

Sally: Yeah, it's a -- it's a classic example of Wheel of Time's, um, gender essentialism.

Emily: Yes.

Sally: And -- I think we've talked about it on this podcast before -- but the philosophy of essentialism is that there is something essential inside of you that, um -- or -- inside of you or about your body that makes you a woman or a man. So it's often, like, your genitalia or other sex organs like your breasts or just -- yeah. And that's it. There's only one way to be a person. Or two ways to be a person.

Emily: Yeah, and obviously breasts do not a woman make.

Sally: No.

Emily: Um, and we were just introduced to Aran'gar as a character in the last, um, chapter or two -- a couple chapters ago. Who is a woman who -- is a person who does have breasts and female sex organs but is, as the book itself canonically states, a man.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, so the whole disrobing thing to prove -- whatever. It's all just nonsense.

Sally: Yeah, I mean, it's transphobic in, like, as many ways as possible -- (laugh) somehow.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Where it's like, you don't have to have breasts in order to be a woman, and also, having breasts is not an indicator that you are a woman.

Emily: Yes.

Sally: Um, so it's just fully ridiculous. Um. And also, like, Egg mentions that in histories past they would just completely disrobe and do the ceremony naked, which is furtherly -- furthermore -- is additionally transphobic.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: But also just, like, weird? Like, Robert, why would they need to be naked?

Emily: Well, that's because Robert Jordan has a fetish for portraying nude women. (laugh) And while many of his, uh, scenes involving nude women manage to sidestep the male gaze -- you know, there's not a lot of descriptions of women's breasts; there's the simple fact that women are now, uh, nude to the waist down, and that's just sort of --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: A thing.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's not like he's going out of his way to describe nipples or something like that.

Sally: Thank God.

Emily: Um, it's not the classic -- what's that -- uh, "Her breasts, like --"

Sally: (laugh) "Bounced boobily down the stairs."

Emily: Yeah, "She bounced boobily down the stairs." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: The usual, like, men writing female characters --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: As though breasts just -- we're constantly aware of them. I'm aware of my breasts at, like, three moments in the day. Otherwise it's just --

Sally: Otherwise I'm like, "What?"

Emily: Oh, so that's happening.

Sally: Annoying.

Emily: Um, so while that is a positive, if you're desperate for positives in this otherwise, uh, terrible situation, it is also very true that Robert Jordan frequently puts his women characters in situations where they have to be nude --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And does not do the same for his male characters.

Sally: No.

Emily: We see tons of scenes where -- Egwene, usually, with a lot of other female characters, are in the Aiel sweat tents. There's the classic Aviendha running naked through a blizzard. There's, um, this scene. There's any scene where a woman gets, uh, corporeally punished -- more on that later. Um, there's the scene which I don't believe you have got to in the series yet -- immediately after Faile and several other women get kidnapped by the Shaido Aiel, they are forced to walk naked through the snow.

Sally: Yeah, that happens at the end of Path of Daggers.

Emily: Oh. Yeah, and that's just, like, a long -- at one point, uh, during her captivity, Faile is left tied -- hog-tied, for lack of a better word -- ankles to wrists -- out in the cold, uh, naked. So -- and I could go fucking on.

Sally: Yeah, well, I mean, like, the men don't have to go naked to Rhuidean, do they?

Emily: Nope.

Sally: The women do, though.

Emily: Sure, yeah. We don't -- literally, as far as I know -- ever get a scene where the men, uh, are in a sweat tent, despite the fact that Mat and Rand lived with the Aiel --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: For a long period of time.

Sally: (laugh) Did they just not bathe?

Emily: Well, I would -- I mean, I wouldn't be surprised if Mat just didn't bathe. (laugh)

Sally: Nasty, sweaty, disgusting boy.

Emily: He's disgusting. Um. We don't get these extended scenes of them in baths the way we do with, uh, the females, and never does a man have to ceremonially present his genitalia for the inspection of other men. So. (laugh)

Sally: So while Robert Jordan does not actively inhabit the male gaze with the way that he is, you know, Game of Thrones-style describing everybody's nipples or whatever, the entire book presents women through the male gaze in that they are so much more -- their bodies are so much more readily available for consumption --

Emily: Yes.

Sally: Um, and observation, um, particularly in sexual senses, because every time someone gets naked, there's an inherent -- there shouldn't be, but there's an inherent sexuality to that with the way that the characters respond. Um.

Emily: And it's -- until very recently -- and this is still an ongoing, um, issue -- when there is nudity on television or, um, in movies, there's -- there has generally been a huge gender disparity.

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: Women, uh, are subjected to full-frontal nudity much more frequently than men. And that's, you know, begun changing in the last few years. More and more, quote unquote, male bodies are being presented to the cameras, I guess, in the way that women's have historically been. And it's just, like -- wow, it takes a lot to render what ought to be a totally visual disparity of nudity into a book series.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: (laugh) Like, that takes fucking effort.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Ah, man.

Sally: Yeah, like -- I don't know. Just -- yeah.

Emily: On an analysis, um, level, the effect of rendering your characters nude is to -- especially in the Aes Sedai's case -- uh, quote, declaw them.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Uh, it makes women more vulnerable; it removes some of their power, especially given Robert Jordan's obsession with detailing the, uh, dress -- the garments that women, uh, wear and how it elevates their status --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: How it, um, reflects what types of individuals they are.

Sally: Yeah, it's like everything about them that makes them powerful or unique or, you know, individuals, is stripped away and they are just Woman.

Emily: Bodies.

Sally: Body.

Emily: Um, so, yeah, Robert Jordan also has a thing for disempowering his powerful female characters.

Sally: Yep.

Emily: Relentlessly.

Sally: Relentlessly disempowering them.

Emily: Um, another way he does that is by having them get spanked. And we kind of skimmed over this, uh, in the last section, but it's, like, prevalent throughout here that Egg has just been whipped.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Uh, especially on her butt and, like, upper thighs.

Sally: Yeah, it's like from her -- the top of her butt to the back of her knees, I think is what she says.

Emily: Um, yeah, which makes, of course, things like riding on a horse difficult, or it would be if she weren't in Tel'aran'rhiod. And the whole ceremony of her becoming the Amyrlin Seat, like, is -- culminates when she actually has to sit on the Amyrlin Seat, and she's like, "Ah, fuck, but my butt hurts."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, obviously, the female characters are -- in the same way they're subjected to nudity -- spanked, and the male characters are not. Male characters do the spanking.

Sally: Yeah. So the -- I mean, spanking is inherently infantilizing. It is a punishment that is -- quote unquote, punishment -- that is most frequently visited upon young children.

Emily: Yeah, and spanking, um, you know, in and of itself, removed from all of the connotations, is not a -- you can't assign moral, um, value to it the way you can't assign moral value to almost any action. Between consenting adults, spanking can be a lovely way to unlock, uh, intimacy, self-expression, et cetera, et cetera. But yes, spanking is something that, with the connotations intact, is usually done to children to punish them, and that connotation carries into the bedroom.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: To make spanking, um, a form of humiliation or degradation or -- so you're getting -- spanking is either something you do to children innocently, quote unquote --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: As punishment, or it's something you do in the, um, context of quote, kinky sex, unquote.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So all of those connotations are just carried along with it whenever a female character in Wheel of Time gets spanked. (sigh) Which, sadly, Egg is the most victim to this. I'm not sure why.

Sally: Yeah, and just the, like, way that Robert Jordan manages to, like, conflate both the childish, like, "You are being punished," with, like, the additional layer of sexual humiliation, like, in the same moment -- like, every time they're -- a woman is spanked -- it feels like we've got both this very condescending, like, "You are a children who doesn't know better," but also, like, "You are a woman who must be reminded that she is for fucking and nothing else." Somehow both of those seem to come out every time.

Emily: Yeah, like, the main con -- the main scenes, I guess, we get, um, is that one terrible one when Perrin spans Faile, which, because they are romantic and sexual partners --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: They're sort of automatically carrying that; or it's in, uh, usually in the White Tower or similarly in this Aiel camp where Egg was subjected to this mostly by former teachers. So you're dragging into it -- it into this, like, sexy schoolgirl --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Thing. Where, uh --

Sally: (gagging noise)

Emily: You know, I don't even want to talk about it, really.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah, well, it's just -- (sigh) Don't want to yuck anyone's yums, and if, like, roleplay is done in the context of two consenting adults, that is, again, a great way to explore it. But, like, removing it from any individualized, you know, understanding of consent, the schoolgirl fantasy is so troublesome because it's basically just, like, societally accepted pedophilia.

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Um --

Emily: It's like the Lolita thing.

Sally: Yeah! There we go. It's Lolita. Um, it's 16-year-old Britney Spears being put in that very sexy schoolgirl outfit.

Emily: She was only sixteen when that -- ?!

Sally: Mm-hmm. Yeah, she was sixteen.

Emily: I don't know enough about Britney Spears. When did her career start? When she was, like, fifteen or sixteen?

Sally: She was on the, um -- she was a Mouseketeer --

Emily: Huh.

Sally: If you know what that is, when she was, like, a little kid. Like, I wanna say, like, between eight and ten. Or eight and twelve, maybe? And then the few years later, yeah, she was Britney Spears.

Emily: So she was basically like a Disney Channel star --

Sally: Yeah, and then --

Emily: Who got hyper-sexualized immediately.

Sally: Yep.

Emily: Which, similar things happened to, like, Miley Cyrus.

Sally: Yeah. And --

Emily: And other Disney stars, but. Jesus Christ.

Sally: Yeah, so there's -- there's just, like, that -- like, we've talked about this before, that, like, even, like, particularly when it comes to, like, female desire and the way that -- the way that women are able to desire and be desired is so formed by patriarchal standards --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Including this concept of the sexy schoolgirl, which is, like -- I mean, I actually don't even know how to begin to understand that one, except that -- I don't know, it's a power thing, I'm guessing.

Emily: Yeah, what's the Janelle line? All --

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: All sex is about power --

Sally: Power -- all --

Emily: Power is about sex, except sex, which is about power.

Sally: Which is about power. Yeah.

Emily: Um. Yeah. But it's also like, there are -- are different ways to express power dynamics in roleplay and in, you know, fetishes, but the schoolgirl -- or, I guess, schoolboy? Though less prevalent -- um, is just, like, hanging on. You know?

Sally: Yeah. And, like, I don't find -- this is not where I expected this episode to go. (laugh)

Emily: Sure, sure.

Sally: Um, like, I --

Emily: We will not be visiting Pornhub in this episode, let me just -- (laugh)

Sally: I can't make that promise. I almost just looked up "schoolboy" on Pornhub.

Emily: Ahh!

Sally: To see --

Emily: Is that why you looked at -- I don't know if it's, like, a thing.

Sally: Yeah, and that's the thing, is, like, I've never --

Emily: I just assumed there's a --

Sally: Seen that. Um.

Emily: Yeah, I think if there's -- no, you know, the equivalent for -- for boys is, like, coach and student athlete.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: I think that's a thing.

Sally: Mm.

Emily: But that's also not necessarily equivalent because, uh, I dunno, you can be, like, an athlete and not be under eighteen, you know?

Sally: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Emily: A minor. But -- whatever. Whatever, we don't have to --

Sally: Yeah, and --

Emily: Talk about this. (laugh)

Sally: It's not necessarily, like, the shift in power dynamics that I have a problem with. Because, like we talked about in -- maybe it was even the episode where Perrin -- whatever. About Perrin and Faile, where, like, every relationship is about the constant shifting back and forth of power and that's just something you --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Have to be comfortable with if you want to have anything resembling a healthy relationship. You cannot be in power over someone else all of the time, which is something I don't think Robert Jordan ever grasped or was willing to --

Emily: Engage.

Sally: Engage in, 'cause every single one of his characters has to be in charge and in power over the other people at any given moment, no matter if they have a romantic relationship or a platonic relationship --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Or a professional relationship. So that's not necessarily what I have an issue with at all. It's just that it always runs the same way in *Wheel of Time*, which is even though we are -- claim to have this incredibly powerful group of women who are, you know, allegedly the real political power in this continent, they are constantly brought down in ways that ultimately empower men or the male fantasy or the male gaze or the male understanding, and, you know, disempower the women by -- and in, like, incredibly -- incredibly, like, vulnerable ways, like being naked, being physically abused, sexually abused. I don't know if that made any sense.

Emily: No, yeah, it does, it's just -- it's exactly what we said about rendering women nude again. It's about taking away women's power, making them -- infantilizing them. Um.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah.

Emily: Et cetera.

Sally: I just -- I don't know, I can't quite get at what I -- what I -- is the nugget behind the -- the infantilizing and the sexualizing of women. But, I mean, I -- it's all just to turn them into objects, I think, that don't really have any agency, 'cause children, apparently, in the typical understanding of them, don't have their own agency.

Emily: Ugh.

Sally: Are you OK?

Emily: Just this whole -- I mean, we're 32 minutes in, and I have nothing else to say about how bad it is.

Sally: It's just really nasty. And just is -- again, if you have, for some reason, clinging onto the idea that *Wheel of Time* is a feminist text, I'm begging you to just let that go.

Emily: Let it go.

Sally: Just let -- just let it go. It's OK.

Emily: Let it go.

Sally: It's OK to still have read *Wheel of Time* and to like *Wheel of Time* --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: But you have to let that one go.

Emily: Yeah. Just -- just -- (laugh) Shh. Go to sleep.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) The -- the presence of multiple female characters does not a feminist text make.

Emily: Ugh. Ugh.

Sally: Um, OK, we're going to leave behind all of that, as much as we can, and get into the ceremonial foot-washing. (laugh)

Emily: Oh, yeah! Fuck, I forgot about that part. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Now let's talk about Robert Jordan's foot fetish. No. Um --

Sally: Well, I mean, it's really hard in the context of just having bared your breasts --

Emily: Yeah, and half the women still have titties out.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um, yeah, so -- (laugh) This -- this -- this ceremony, um, requires --

Sally: (laugh) I hate this chapter.

Emily: (laugh) Hold on, let -- hold -- hold on. Let me back up. Let me back it up.

Sally: OK. (laugh, cough)

Emily: OK, so this is our first introduction to the Hall of the Tower, um, in its, like, full format and as -- as a, um, as a real, like, political body rather than as kind of an abstract concept.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Where, you know, Siuan or whoever will be like, "I have to go talk to the Hall," but we don't know who's in the Hall, how the Hall is constructed, how it works, et cetera, et cetera.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So here's our first introduction to what will be a, uh, horribly overused standby for pretty much every one of Egg's points of view for the next five books.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, the Hall of the Tower, both in the White Tower and in Salidar, uh, is constructed of three representatives from each of the Ajahs. So normally this would be 21 women total, uh, but since there are no Red Ajah in Salidar and no Blue Ajah in the White Tower, we're down to 18 women.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, the youngest -- a lot of, uh, what goes on in the Tower is determined by age. Often, like, the youngest woman is, for some reason, in charge of speaking and carrying out ceremonial duties.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Or whatever. And there is a tense relationship between the executive power of the Amyrlin Seat and what is kind of the equivalent of the legislative power of the Hall of the Tower.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, there are checks and balances there, obviously. Uh. And the detriment to not seeing the Hall of the Tower in action prior to this is that we can't really get a good handle on the ways that, like, Siuan, for example, abused her power.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: It is sort of implied that she, uh, just steamrolled over the Hall of the Tower as much as she was able to, withheld things from them, and did not act in, uh, concord with them.

Sally: (laugh) Not Siuan Sanche.

Emily: Not Siuan Sanche! A tyrant? Her? Never! (laugh) Um, and a lot of Egg's arc will be about, um -- a lot of Egg's arc will be about taking the Hall's preconceptions about her as a political force -- that she is young, inexperienced, is just being sort of puppeteered by all of them --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And turning it around so that she can actually get, uh, not just the normal amount of executive power but additional power, um, in the Siuan Sanche tradition.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Although of course because Egg is a good character and a good guy, that's not bad at all.

Sally: Totally fine.

Emily: Uh, yeah, tyranny's, like, totally cool as long as the tyrant is a good person.

Sally: Blegh.

Emily: Um, and of course Egg's, uh, good person status is cemented by the fact that she didn't seek this power; it was thrust upon her.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: She's just making the most out of a bad situation.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So, um, during the ceremony proper to raise a woman to the Amyrlin Seat -- and Egg, by the way, is like, "How can you even raise me to the Amyrlin Seat? I'm not even Aes Sedai," and they're like, "Well, there's a loophole in the law where it's never specifically referenced that an Aes Sedai has to be made Amyrlin; they just use language like 'the woman you call,' so. Ha ha ha ha ha ha."

Sally: They're like, "Isn't the law fun?"

Emily: "Isn't the law -- isn't manipulating the law fun?" And Egg's like, "Great, love this for us." Um, part of this ceremony is that the Sitters are asked to, like, stand in consensus that Egg should become the Amyrlin Seat, and if a consensus is not reached, then Egg has to do this thing where she washes the feet of every Sitter in the room and says something like, "I am only here to serve," or something like that. And then a second vote is called for, and, uh, in Egg's case, they achieved the unanimous vote, I guess.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um, so she's able to become the Amyrlin. Now, foot-washing -- (laugh) in the context of service, especially, has to do with some fun Christian mythology. Recall, if you will --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Or -- (laugh) Let me dispense this knowledge if you, unlike me, did not have to go to church school for, uh -- like, that was a legit part of the school curriculum in Utah.

Sally: Which -- (sing-song) should be illegal.

Emily: (sing-song) Should be super illegal, but, um, in Utah, you don't -- (normal voice) you can graduate with fewer credits than in the rest of the country to allow Mormon students to attend church school during the school day.

Sally: (sing-song) Because we live in a theocracy.

Emily: It sure -- it sure do. (laugh) We sure do.

Sally: So. But for the rest -- us heathens, such as myself --

Emily: Oh, yeah, I was like -- I mean, I had to go to seminary, but I did show up very late every day. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Heathens such as myself, uh, had to do the regular credits. I mean, I probably could have enrolled in seminary --

Emily: Yeah, probably.

Sally: But I don't think they would have, like, turned me away.

Emily: No, they would have loved the missionary opportunity.

Sally: Yeah, to try and convert me.

Emily: Convert you, yeah.

Sally: Um. Anyway.

Emily: But mostly --

Sally: Tell us about Jesus.

Emily: Seminary is, like, me sitting in the background, going, "WACK."

Sally: "Sounds misogynistic, but OK."

Emily: "OK, explain the homophobia, then."

Sally: "Why do you hate trans people?"

Emily: "Why --" (laugh) OK. We could go on.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: So, uh, Jesus Christ, the --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Messiah. (laugh)

Sally: Who didn't hate trans people.

Emily: No, he was all about people of all genders, presumably sexualities, et cetera, et cetera. He was a man of the people, so suck on that, Mormon church. Um. Christ, very symbolically, at the end of his -- what is called his ministry, meaning the time that he was up and about teaching folks, and immediately preceding his, um, arrest for being a, uh, political -- what's that word?

Sally: Dissident?

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Aggravator?

Emily: Well, Christ didn't go around actively preaching that you should, uh, rebel against the Roman occupation, but he received so much support and love from the people that the Romans -- the Romans couldn't, you know, handle another leader who wasn't directly under their control. Therefore Christ was arrested and, uh, executed horribly. But on the last night, supposedly, that he, uh, got to hang out with his twelve disciples -- the twelve frat boys who just followed him around -- (laugh) Presumably this was a large polycule. We'll never know. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Good for them.

Emily: Um, but Christ, who was a fan of teaching with metaphors, tried to show them how the, uh, most valuable way to teach any sort of gospel to people is to serve them, so he went about the room, uh, washing their feet. Which the men were uncomfortable with because they -- he was their leader. He wasn't supposed to get on his knees and do degrading things like that.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: But he was like, "No, this is right where I'm supposed to be, because when you're a leader, what you're supposed to be doing is serving people." Um, now obviously, like everything else, the Christian church threw that little doctrine right out the window. Um, but that imagery is still strong with Egg going around washing these women's feet. Casting Egg in the role of Christ figure is a little odd because up until this point, we've gotten mostly Rand as Savior-Messiah --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Type figure. But of course, like, the literal translation of Aes Sedai is "servants," or something like that? So what we're getting is this sort of idealism from the early days of the Christian church.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, so that's the context. I don't really have any fun things to say about it.

Sally: Yeah, I mean it is just weird to paint Egg as a Christ figure. Um. I mean, I guess she did just spend forty days and nights in the desert or whatever --

Emily: Yeah, sure. Sure.

Sally: Metaphorically speaking. Um, yeah. Just kind of odd. It's -- and, I mean, I guess it could be kind of the start of her becoming more of a foil to Rand --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um, but mostly, I just think it's kind of odd.

Emily: Yeah, it's just weird, generally. Sorry for any background noise, I'm rubbing my arm.  
Ha. Um --

Sally: Wasn't there something about someone washing Jesus' feet and drying it with her hair?

Emily: Yes, um --

Sally: Was that Mary Magdalene?

Emily: I don't believe it was Mary -- well, who am I to say? I don't think it was Mary Magdalene, but it's been a while since I read the fuckin' Bible. Um, at one point, Jesus was at dinner with some fancy dude, and a woman -- an unnamed woman who, uh, either the implication or the explicit context is that she's a sex worker --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, finds him and uses this precious oil that would've cost an arm and a leg and probably all she had and her own hair to wash his feet.

Sally: OK, yeah.

Emily: Um --

Sally: That's what I'm thinking of.

Emily: And, yeah, all the fancy folks at the party didn't like that because they didn't like having a sex worker in their midst unless she was being paid to do what -- you know. And Jesus was like, "Uh, fuck off. This lady's cooler than all of you."

Sally: Yeah. "I'm gonna hang out with this lady."

Emily: So. Once again proving that Jesus Christ as a person was pretty rad.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But, like, the whole Christian church fuckin' sucked. (laugh)

Sally: Serve people?! No!

Emily: What?!

Sally: Give us six thousand dollars.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: (laugh) You owe me seven dollars.

Emily: You owe me seven dollars. (laugh) Two ... dollars. Like the newspaper boy --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: From Better Off Dead. (laugh)

Sally: Um. Yeah, so some odd -- odd -- odd symbolism there.

Emily: Yeah, and it's, you know, interesting because Egg, unlike Rand, is the one to, uh, actually, spoiler alert, die at the end of the series.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: So you might call that, uh, foreshadowing, but really I think it's just, like -- in the context of this scene, it's kind of, like, a -- a -- a way to be like, "There's a direct parallel here between the Amyrlin Seat and her -- the Sitters as between Jesus and his disciples."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And that is the relationship that, uh, the series strives to put Egg in.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: You know, to have her be the beloved leader of all of these variously hesitant women with their own agendas and desires for power.

Sally: You're so smart, Emily.

Emily: I don't remember -- I literally don't remember what I just said. (laugh)

Sally: It -- don't admit that to the people.

Emily: So fuck me. (laugh) Uhhhh. OK. Sorry there wasn't a lot of, like, fun shit to talk about in this episode.

Sally: You can take it up with Robert Jordan.

Emily: Yeah, go, you know, knock on his gravestone. Be like, "Hey, Rob. Why'd you write that, huh? Why?"

Sally: I mean, Bela was there, in --

Emily: Oh, that was nice, yeah.

Sally: In astral projection form. (laugh)

Emily: Spirit. An astral projection of a horse --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Is a really powerful concept --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So we do have to credit Robert for that one.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: Like, Egg was like, “Mm, not just any horse will do.”

Sally; ‘Bela.”

Emily: “Has to be this horse.”

Sally: “The best horse.”

Emily: “The only --” (laugh) The best horse. OK.

Sally: She is the best horse.

Emily: No, yeah, you’re right.

Sally: Powerful.

Emily: She’s the only one whose name I can remember -- oh, no, Pips.

Sally: Pips. Rand names his something ... it’s, like, Tie Dye Shar.

Emily: Mm -- (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) I only remember that --

Emily: Tie Dye Shar.

Sally: Because it sound -- it looks like it should read like “tie dye,” like --

Emily: No, Rand has been, uh, riding a tie dye horse for the entirety of the series.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Robert Jordan just didn’t tell us that because it -- it wasn’t relevant to the plot.

Sally: Ugh, that’s such a good look.

Emily: God.

Sally: And, uh, Perrin’s horse is named Stepper, I think.

Emily: Oh, yeah. (laugh)

Sally: Which is like --

Emily: Name it “Stomper.”

Sally: Congratulations, your horse does step. (laugh)

Emily: I can’t believe there’s so many horse names and that I have to keep track of horse names as well as the millions of real people names.

Sally: I think Bashere has a horse named, like, Quick.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Or Swift, which I love. I -- I have --

Emily: Mandarb.

Sally: Yeah, OK, there we go.

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Mandarb. Um --

Emily: None of these horses have personalities, it’s important to note.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: They’re just horses, which is a real, like, detriment to the series because, as Robin McKinley proves time and time again, horses have personalities.

Sally: Yeah. Animals do have personalities.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And I’ve stored all these horse names because reading Path of Daggers is the only thing that got me through, so.

Emily: See a horse name.

Sally: Also I love horses.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And I love their names, I guess.

Emily: Who doesn’t? They’re beautiful, majestic creatures. Well. (sigh)

Sally: Yeah, this was episode 153, baby.

Emily: That was episode -- was it?

Sally: Yep. I'm transcribing 152 right now.

Emily: Oh, OK. I'm not good at counting.

Sally: (laugh) Math?

Emily: Math?

Sally: We're gay on this podcast. We don't know how to do math.

Emily: Ugh. Gay? Math? Doesn't mix.

Sally: I mean, I literally don't know how to do math.

Emily: The Venn diagram is two separate circles. Oh, no, no, Alan Turing didn't die for me to say that you can -- can't do math if you're gay. The Venn diagram is very -- it's a very small overlap --

Sally: It's very slim.

Emily: And it's just Alan Turing. (laugh) OK. It was, like, homophobic that Blenderdick played him in that movie.

Sally: It was extremely homophobic.

Emily: Ugh.

Sally: They were like --

Emily: "Who's the worst man we could cast in this role?" A straight --

Sally: This man.

Emily: This straight.

Sally: I just -- straight people have had enough opportunities.

Emily: (snort, laugh)

Sally: (laugh) That's --

Emily: The gay agenda actually is --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Now, a lot of people will tell you this isn't true. But we trust you guys, our one thousand listeners. So.

Sally: Yeah, to keep it a secret.

Emily: The gay agenda actually is taking opportunities from straight people and giving them back to gay people. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Yeah.

Emily: So.

Sally: They've had enough opportunities.

Emily: That's enough.

Sally: (laugh) That's enough out of you.

Emily: 'Kay, this has been Everybody Hates Rand. There's been some real, um -- (laugh)

Sally: It's been an episode.

Emily: It's been a pendulum swing. (laugh) Uh. Thanks for listening. Thanks to Glynna MacKenzie for our theme song. Thank you, Glynna, for allowing us to continually attach your name to this ding-dong podcast.

Sally: (laugh) If you ever want to recede that right, we support that.

Emily: Yeah, if you ever want to, like, become anonymous or something.

Sally: Or just be like, "No." (laugh)

Emily: Be like, "Maybe don't use my song, actually."

Sally: "Maybe never speak to me again." (laugh)

Emily: We would understand.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Thanks to our Patreon -- patrons?

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, check out all our fun offerings on Patreon.

Sally: Yeah, we just watched the movie 300?

Emily: Oh my fucking God.

Sally: Which, unbelievably, was just a few days ago. I feel like it was -- (laugh)

Emily: I feel like I've lived several lifetimes since then.

Sally: Um, and we talked about that at length on our Patreon.

Emily: Yeah, it was seriously a very long episode. Um. So if that's something you would enjoy, go for it. Pffft. But, um, that's that. Do you have a sign-off?

Sally: I'm trying to think of one.

Emily: Besides the fact that we got vaccinated.

Sally: We did get vaccinated.

Emily: But that was mostly a positive thing.

Sally: That was a positive thing. Um. Not a very exciting one, but I was babysitting my nephew on Monday, and he's two, and for some reason, all he wanted to do was stick his grubby little fingers in my ears.

Emily: Ohh.

Sally: He was, like, fascinated, like he's never seen ears before.

Emily: Wow.

Sally: And I was like, "Dude, this is a little gross." (laugh) "Just stop sticking your fingers in my ears."

Emily: Nephews, man.

Sally: And he was like, "No."

Emily: My nephew loves -- loved nothing more than to touch my belly button piercing.

Sally: Oh, yeah. That was sweet, though.

Emily: That was sweet. Less sweet was the time he looked me dead in the face and asked to see my nipples.

Sally: "Emmy nipples?"

Emily: (laugh) "Emmy nipples?" And I said, "Well, I'm not Robert Jordan, so no."

Sally: No, I don't have nipples, I'm just kind of -- it's kind of like a Barbie doll --

Emily: It's a Barbie doll.

Sally: From the neck down.

Emily: He just thinks, you know --

Sally: Including the, like, built-in white underwear. Yeah.

Emily: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Oh, I forgot it was -- OK. OK.

Sally: It was, like -- mine were always, like, a little textured so that you knew they were underwear, not, like --

Emily: Yeah, that makes sense.

Sally: Not, like, everyone just had, like, a really wicked tan line. (laugh) Um.

Emily: OK, this has been -- (laugh) No, I --

Sally: OK, that was a dumb sign-off. I'm sorry. Goodbye.

Emily: Stick -- just, like, he'd -- a dry willie?

Sally: Yeah, he'd just be like --

Emily: Ahhhh!

Sally: And I would be like, "Declan, stop," and he'd be like --

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Just come at me, finger first.

Emily: "Precious."

Sally: Weirdo.

Emily: OK. Goodbye, everyone.

Sally: (laugh) Bye.