



**Episode 169: “It’s Over, Anakin!
I Have the Ethical High
Ground!”**

Release Date: September 6, 2021

Running Time: 45 minutes

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 Glynn Mackenzie plays]

EMILY: But then I had to live with the knowledge that there was a dead mouse in the garage somewhere, and also a cricket, and that maybe they were like...chillin’.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: I don’t think crickets eat dead things.

SALLY: I don’t think so, either, but I mean hey.

EMILY: I mostly was like, “Does the cricket know that one of its fellow quote unquote vermin is dead in this space?” How psychologically horrifying would that be for the cricket?

SALLY: Cricket’s just doing his little cricket thing and it’s like, “Dear god.”

EMILY: He's like, "Do do do do, just chilling in the ecosystem that is Crecky's garage."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: "It's very big. Three cars, baby, and tons of tools that no one ever touches, because Chris is not a handy man."

SALLY: I was gonna say [laughs]. Classic.

EMILY: Just lots of spiders and me, a cricket, and oh! What's that? It's CSI: Garage [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, maybe the cricket is a detective.

EMILY: The cricket [laughs].

SALLY: The cricket is Bones.

EMILY: The game's afoot! [laughing]

SALLY: The game's afoot!

EMILY: That's what I was hearing it say when I walked in.

SALLY: Yeah. Sherlock Cricket

EMILY: And out. It was still going, hours later.

SALLY: Good for it. Um –

EMILY: Sherlock Cricket is gonna be the funniest part of this episode, because boy. Woof. This is Everybody Hates Rand, uh, your friendly neighborhood Wheel of Time Podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

SALLY: I'm Sally Goodger.

EMILY: I should clarify that we are recording this the day before a trailer for the Wheely Time show is supposed to drop, so if you're wondering whether our quote unquote reaction will be in this, um, episode, it won't be. Sorry. Just probably whatever we felt we put on social media at the time. But, I feel like we keep promising we'll talk about it one day, but really when there's something substantive to talk about I think we will. Until then we have to linger with Egg. I know. It's hard to be on team Egg these days. And by these days I mean in Books 7 through [pops lips] maybe the end of the series.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: She still has her good moments and I think, as we've talked about many times, there are some really, like, satisfying and interesting moments in Egg's rebel, uh, Aes Sedai arc. And as she is developing as a politician and a leader, that can be really enjoyable to read about and I do understand that a part of why those moments are enjoyable and satisfactory is because, uh, there's a great deal of lead up to them.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: That said, the lead up isn't fun to read and chapters like these – we read three chapters, which doesn't help, but the next two chapters are very long – um, these three chapters could have been cut down to one.

SALLY: [laughs] God. Yeah.

EMILY: Very poorly edited. [sighs] Like, I feel like I could go through these chapters [laughing] and talk about what I would have cut. Well, first of all we have a weird little time travel sequence.

SALLY: Yeah –

EMILY: Where...

SALLY: It took me 'til chapter three to be like, "So, this before? The...what?" [laughs]

EMILY: I don't think – hrgh! We are embarking on –

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: [grunts] We're embarking on – soon, soon – the part of the series where the timelines do not match up.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: I think right now they still [sighs] technically match except for this one discreet moment. Because at the end of Book 6, you may recall, one of our many epilogue sequences was Egg poking her head into Moghedien's tent and being like, "Oh no, she's escaped." And, of course, Moghedien being helped out of her captivity by Halima/Aran'gar/Bathamel. I'm gonna do that every time. It will be super fun. Listing all their names. Um, so either that matched up in that that happened the night after Dumai's Wells or that happened a week and a half after Dumai's Wells. Whatever it is.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And really? It's impossible to say, but I'm going to take that from now on, until the end of this book, timelines are pretty synced up.

SALLY: Okay.

EMILY: I guess.

SALLY: I'll accept that. The entire time it just, like, everyone in these chapters was talking like the kidnapping of the Dragon Reborn and Dumai's Wells...was simply an impossibility. That would never have happened.

EMILY: Well, I guess the Aes Sedai don't know about it?

SALLY: It just is really blowing my mind.

EMILY: It just is really blowing my mind. And I think we are led to believe that the Wise Ones do know about it. So it at least happened after Dumai's Wells because they're like – I don't know. They just have some weird behaviors. But basically they're lying to Egg or omitting the truth, and I'm not sure why. It's one of the greatest frustrations of my life that all these women who can just talk to each other every night in their dreams don't tell each other relevant information.

SALLY: Yeah, I guess that's why I was like, "Surely this has to have been before Dumai's Wells because the Aes Sedai would tell her." I mean, the Wise Ones would tell her, right?

EMILY: Oh.

SALLY: But you're right, there's just – people in Wheely Time world are like, "It's better to sit on pieces of information for as long as possible before conveying them to one another."

EMILY: Yeah, I don't understand at all why the Wise Ones – like, you have this set up here with Egg being the Amyrlin where the Wise Ones could be like, "Oh, a person we trust is on the proverbial throne. So, now we might actually be able to accomplish something and start sharing information." But, instead they're like, "Hmm, well Egg has been corrupted by the throne and therefore we cannot share anything with her because she's part of the subset of people who we don't trust." And it's like, "Who's that benefiting, Robert Jordan? Except that you're able to mete out information in a way that is preferable to you."

SALLY: I – yeah, I don't know. It doesn't make any sense to me and it makes a lot of sense hearing what you're saying, but when I was reading it, I was like, so unanchored in time and space. I was like, "Egg where are you? When are you?"

EMILY: Well that's just how [laughing] all Aes Sedai make me feel, generally.

SALLY: What's happening? Who are all these women? There are just, like, wild dogs in the soldier's camp. [laughs] What's happening?

EMILY: Oh, I missed the wild dogs part.

SALLY: I mean, I don't think they're wild dogs. Egg just has this comment about how there – some of the soldiers are keeping dogs.

EMILY: But that's so cute!

SALLY: I know. So I assume they're like feral dogs that they found.

EMILY: Can you imagine Gareth Bryne's little soldiers keeping puppies in their tents?

SALLY: Oh, that's so cute!

EMILY: Like how I had – when I lived in the dorms in college, someone across the hall was keeping a prohibited puppy.

SALLY: Hmm. Someone on my floor had a prohibited kitty.

EMILY: The RA – yeah, there's always someone.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Someone with a pet that's illegal.

SALLY: They're like, "No one will find out."

EMILY: And I'm like, "Everyone will find out. It barks."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: [laughing] You ding dong. It's like trying to keep a cricket for a pet.

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, cats I guess at least are intended to be a little quieter, except unless you have our cats [laughs].

EMILY: Not if you have Tybalt. And not if Tybalt can spread his infectious noise making skills. Poor Ed. RIP quiet Ed. Now he's loud Ed.

SALLY: Quiet Ed was a good time.

EMILY: Um, ugh.

SALLY: Okay, anyway. I also just – Egg's plotline, and I know this is how *politics* work, but it's also very frustrating to be, like, dealing with really important stuff like how are you going to get Elaida off the throne and, you know, the impending apocalypse, and she's also like dealing with other dumb shit. Like, I don't know. Like, does everyone have enough wagons? I don't know. It's just hard for me to deal with. Like, I like my good secretary characters who are dealing with

the day to day logistics, but, like, I need someone who is committed to that in order for that to work for me.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Like the secretary in *The Goblin Emperor*.

EMILY: Yeah, basically I just want Egg's sequence to be more like the Goblin Emperor where it's a rise to power that is predicated on, um, being kind [laughs] to people rather than manipulating them.

SALLY: Yeah, that's being kind to people and trusting people who are competent to do their jobs.

EMILY: Yeah! Wouldn't that be nice?

SALLY: And Egg is like, "I can't trust anybody but me. This girlboss is gonna do it alone."

EMILY: "Numero uno! Me and also Siuan and Leane, my two previous abusers. And also...Theodrin and Faolain."

SALLY: Fao – *foul*-ain.

EMILY: Well, she is foul. I'm sure we've made that joke before [laughs].

SALLY: Okay. Sorry, you can get into plot summary. I'm sorry. I'm not really with it today.

EMILY: Oh, I'm not really with the plot summary, either. I basically just keep thinking, "Here's how I would edit it if I were Robert Jordan's editor."

SALLY: What's – yeah.

EMILY: None of the first chapter would happen [laughs]. We would stick with what happened at the end of *Lord of Chaos* and have Moghedien's escape, along with Logian's quote unquote escape –

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Manufactured by Egg, uh, be in the past. Characters having already reacted to it. I don't necessarily need to see Egg being like, "Oh no, Moghedien escaped!" And then frantically telling Siuan and Leane, "Moghedien escaped!" And then being like, "Oh, well, that sucks we probably shouldn't have kept one of the Forsaken captive. We probably should have just killed her." And everyone to be like, "Ah, dang. We shouldn't have done that." Like, who needs that? I been knew for the last two and a half books, you know?

SALLY: Yeah [snorts]. It really is just a series of Egg being like, “Moghedien escaped. Siuan and Leane Moghedien escaped. Let’s go into the World of Dreams [laughs]. Hey Nynaeve and Elayne Moghedien escaped. Hey Wise Ones, Moghedien escaped.”

EMILY: We don’t need to –

SALLY: [laughing] We don’t need to see any of this!

EMILY: Who cares!

SALLY: She’s gone, okay?

EMILY: Yeah. I have been waiting for Moghedien to escape for the last two and half books. Did you genuinely think she never would? What kind of idiots are you? You guys are supposed to be smart.

SALLY: [sighs] That’s what they keep telling me, but all evidence to the contrary [laughs].

EMILY: Yeah, show not tell, Robert Jordan. I know Moghedien’s not some Houdini escape artist, but she’s one of the main bad guys.

SALLY: Yeah, like you can’t –

EMILY: Do you think Daddy Satan over there is gonna be like –

SALLY: I need –

EMILY: I only have thirteen main followers and they are getting picked off like flies! I should probably, you know, preserve the resources that I do have.

SALLY: Yeah. Yeah, literally in this chapter Egg is ticking them off, “Ishamael: gone. Lanfear: gone. Rahvin: gone.”

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: I can’t remember any of the rest of them now.

EMILY: Oh, Egg’s accounting of the Forsaken is particularly funny when you consider that actually half of them [laughing] have now been resurrected.

SALLY: Yeah, that’s a good point.

EMILY: She’s like, “Well, uh – ” Does she even account for Asmodean?

SALLY: I don’t – no, I don’t think so.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: She's probably like, "Asmo-deen? Asmo? Asmodein?"

EMILY: She said, "Rahvin, Aginor, Bathamel Bel'al, and Ishamael are dead."

SALLY: That's right.

EMILY: Which according to – maybe she does mention Asmodean – which, according to her, leaves Sammael, Asmodean, and Demandred. Obviously we know Asmodean is out of the picture.

SALLY: RIP to a real one.

EMILY: RIP to...our homie.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: We also know that Aginor, Bathamel, and by the end of this book, Ishamael have all been resurrected.

SALLY: [whispers] Ishamael gets resurrected?

EMILY: He is Morridin.

SALLY: Oh! That makes sense. I've been – [laughing] literally, you guys, this is how uncommitted I am to this series. I cracked open *Path of Daggers* and it was talking about some bitch named Morridin and I was like, "I don't know who that is. Don't care."

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: Like literally in one of my blogs I was like, "Then some guy named Morridin shows up, who I know I'm supposed to know, but I just don't care [laughing]." So.

EMILY: I appreciate that so much.

SALLY: Okay. Morrdin.

EMILY: Then of the five female Forsaken, only Lanfear is dead. But don't worry, she, too, will be resurrected eventually.

SALLY: She too.

EMILY: So that leaves Moghedien, um, who obviously was in captivity. And Semirhage, Graendal, and...Mesaana, who are all at large. And we don't even have any idea where Semirhage.

[crosstalk]

EMILY: Yeah, the Dark One is running low on baddies.

SALLY: I mean, this is what happens when you make the foolish choice to only have thirteen assistants and you're trying to conquer the world.

EMILY: Yeah, the whole world's ahead of you and you're like, "I'm only going to delegate to thirteen people." What about like – I understand if that's like your round table. You have your thirteen top knights, but then they ought to have secretaries. Where's the vengeful – where are all the vengeful people who served beneath Demandred?

SALLY: Yeah, where are Demandred's little thotties, you know? [laughing] They could have a little bowling team.

EMILY: [laughing] All of the – the thirteen – there's a fucking competition. They have a softball competition every – [laughing].

SALLY: Yeah! Yeah, they all have little teams.

EMILY: And if you lose you die.

SALLY: [gasp] Oh no!

EMILY: Like in *Game of Thrones*.

SALLY: [laughs] Actually, instead of softball every year they pick a country to conquer [laughs].

EMILY: Oh my god. [valley girl voice] Whoever gets there first.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um.

SALLY: It is also just very funny to think that – I mean, I know this is, I don't know if this comment really makes sense because, like – it feels like everyone throughout the series is tracking what the For – our, like, human good guy characters will track where the Forsaken are and what they're doing. Like, Rand will have his little monologues about them, Egg has her little monologues about them, and I just find it very, like, strange that they think they would know at all what the Forsaken are doing?

EMILY: Yeah, that's something very much left to the reader to do.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, I would do that because I'm neurotic and, Robert Jordan, you gave me thirteen bad guys to keep track of. Of course, I, being who I am, am going to want to, at the beginning and end of each book, be like, "Alright."

SALLY: "Alright, who's left?"

EMILY: "Alright, let me name them. Let me see who survived this round of combat, you know?"

SALLY: [whispers] Seriously.

EMILY: And this is not, for the record, our little softball teams jest was not a plea to Robert Jordan to create *more* bad guy [laughs] characters.

SALLY: Yeah. No.

EMILY: That's the opposite of what I want. But also it just frustrates me that, like, I don't know, instead of the Dark One being like, "I'm really going to commit to the Forsaken that are left, and those ones to become bigger and badder bad guys, I'm just going to resurrect a bunch of them."

SALLY: Yeah, it's very frustrating.

EMILY: I am a, um, abhorrent – what's the opposite of proponent? I want to say abhorrent. I'm *against* –

SALLY: Denouncer!

EMILY: I'm *against* the whole Forsaken resurrection thing.

SALLY: Oh, I agree! Like, we've talked before about how the Forsaken just get...nerfed basically at the end of the *first book* when Rand kills two of them. So, it's like you should have made your bad guys more intimidating, like, more powerful, scarier, more difficult to deal with as opposed to just being like, "They be can be killed off and resurrected whenever I want them to." Or if you get to this point where you're like, "Oh, actually, I only have four Forsaken left, or whatever," they should be the four most powerful Forsaken who are just given...armies of the dark or whatever.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: It's very frustrating. Except for Asmodean. If they were to resurrect Asmodean I would accept that one instance.

EMILY: Yeah, that would have been really funny if the Dark One, for some reason, was [laughing] like –

SALLY: No, no, he stays.

EMILY: Second chance. He amuses me, like a court jester [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs] He's gonna stay.

EMILY: Um, [sighs] so anyway, yeah, I would delete all this Moghedien crap that is prevalent throughout these three chapters. Um, I would probably just have it be a single brief scene where Egg is in her tent talking to Siuan and Sheriam to update us on the reality of the politics in this camp. Um, as we are told, Egg is pretty much in the same situation as she was at the end of Book 6. She is caught between multiple factions within the Hall of the Tower. Um, she is being quote unquote puppeteered by Sheriam and Sheriam's group of girls, but also Romanda and Lelaine, who are the top MP's in Aes Sedai parliament who are also vying for power. And the only people Egg feels like she can count on are Siuan and Leane, and to a lesser extent Theodrin and Faolain, who she can only count on because they owe their rise to Aes Sedai-hood to Egg.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: So that comes with limits, obviously.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, basically Egg has limited allies, very few resources, and it would be interesting to see her rise up from that, uh, but we're going about it in the least interesting way possible. In that, like, Egg can get what she wants from Sheriam or whatever, as long as she just rolls high enough on her intimidation check, I guess. Like, there's no skill involved.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: She's basically like, "Hey, Sheriam, what the fuck are you keeping from me?" And Sheriam's like, "Um, oh my gosh I can't tell you duh duh duh." Also, I have the benefit of hindsight here and I know Sheriam is, in fact, Black Ajah.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, she could have just lied to Egg.

SALLY: I know.

EMILY: [laughs] Was she just so afraid of getting caught in a lie?

SALLY: I don't know.

EMILY: What a dumb – what a dumb thing for me to care about, but that's what I am left with in

—

SALLY: No, it's one of these things. If you're trying to play *the game of thrones* and weave these really complicated political webs, like, they better be air fucking tight otherwise I'm just gonna be frustrated reading about them, feeling like you're just making up whatever rules you want at any given time. That's not how games work [laughs] and it's not fun to read. Like, it just makes me feel like –

EMILY: It's like playing Monopoly with an eight-year-old.

SALLY: Yeah! It's like when I play Candyland with my niece, and she just draws a card and does whatever she wants.

EMILY: Yeah!

SALLY: And for some reason it makes me really fucking angry, but I can't yell at my five-year-old niece for not playing Candyland correctly [laughs]. That would make me an insane person.

EMILY: But Robert Jordan is an adult.

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah.

EMILY: Was an adult, excuse me. And should have been able to be like, "Alright, Egg is gonna do some detective work or something." I don't know. Something actually substantive. I don't know. We – we – if Egg didn't have allies in this camp it was up to Robert Jordan to bring her allies.

SALLY: Yeah, or show her making allies. Egg is, apparently, extremely politically savvy and she is, like, "Instead of focusing on building allies, I will just focus on using my four allies to the point of destruction."

EMILY: Well, and Egg is very charismatic so she's like – but instead of Robert Jordan utilizing that and being like, "Here's Egg using what she's learned from the Wise Ones to, um, enact power by making really balanced relationships with people that she can trust. And yeah, being a little afraid that people are gonna betray her, because that's what trust is."

SALLY: Mm-hmm!

EMILY: Whatever. Instead, he's like, "Egg's gonna go on this long journey of trying to back enough people into corners that they'll have to swear fealty to her and she build her support system that way." And for some reason, all the people that swear fealty to her, of them it seems like one of them are ever like, "I don't really appreciate being pressured into this position?"

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Instead, all of them are like, "Wow, I have come to respect her. And I am really genuinely on her side." And it's, like, that wouldn't happen.

SALLY: Yeah, well no and it's – this is, like, to parallel that with everything that happens with the Seanchan oath that people have to take –

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Robert Jordan keeps presenting this form of power and obedience – power as obedience, basically, is getting obedience from people. He is not, apparently, interested in seeing – I don't know. I just don't think he's committed to doing the actual work of making a person be powerful and respectable because that's a lot harder than being powerful and just bullying your way into it.

EMILY: Yeah, it's power via obedience rather than loyalty.

SALLY: Yeah, and to your point, like, yeah I agree. Like, if someone was like, "I'm going to bully you into making an oath," I would first of all be like Mat and be like, "An oath means nothing if I'm forced to take it," so I'll whatever pretty words you want me to say, it has absolutely no binding ties to me. Um, but again Mat is the only logical person in this world, apparently.

EMILY: Well, the Aes Sedai supposedly have to keep their oaths, you know, because of the thing. But that would make me even angrier!

SALLY: Yeah! That's a good point.

EMILY: I would be like, "I'm already constrained by these three fucking stupid rules. I can't kill people unless they're threatening to kill me? What are you saying?"

SALLY: "You mean I can look a Whitecloak dead in the face and just not kill him?"

EMILY: "And not just burn him where he stands?"

SALLY: "Yeah. You want me to just not kill the Whitecloaks. Ridiculous."

EMILY: Stupid.

SALLY: Yeah, that's a good point. Egg is not only bullying you, she is taking advantage of, um, what makes you an Aes Sedai. You know, the whole point is that they're –

EMILY: Which she doesn't have to do.

SALLY: Yeah! Which she doesn't have to do because she doesn't – she hasn't sworn on the oath rod or whatever the fuck. Um, it's just. Yeah, it's also really frustrating because Robert, like, talking about characters who just get tanked, I feel Egg's plot with the whole rebel thing could have been like Egg is the coolest fucking character and instead Robert Jordan is like, "I'm going to turn her into a full blown manipulator, horrid person, who just, yeah, only cares about getting the power she doesn't really seem to care how she gets it."

EMILY: Yeah, one of Egg's most interesting character traits, I think, from the early series is that she's a deeply empathetic person and she cares very deeply about learning and expanding her worldview. And it's, like, as soon as she's in the Amyrlin Seat that all just goes away.

SALLY: Yeah, like, it's like – and, like, it would be, it would feel intentional if there was more, like, discourse about what power does to people but it A) feels like it happens immediately.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: As soon as she's given the – the –

BOTH: Stole.

SALLY: Um and there's – everyone around her responds as though Egg is doing the correct thing in that she is just becoming a respectable, powerful, incredible leader. No one is ever like, "This is a...tiny dictator in the making."

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Whatever those are my incoherent, completely incoherent thoughts about Egg. Her plot – it's just really disappointing because, I don't know. Like, we have so many characters dealing with leadership, that I wish we got to see her leadership arc turn out in a better way.

EMILY: Well –

SALLY: And I know there's still a long way to go. Like, *Crown of Swords* is just the beginning of her time as Amyrlin, but.

EMILY: Egg manages to weasel out of Sheriam that, uh, shortly after Salidar was established, she, Sheriam, and the others sent ten, um, Aes Sedai back to the White Tower to establish themselves, basically as moles, and to spread the rumor that Logain is a – was created by the Red Ajah. Whatever. Egg is like, "Wow, that's big news." I'm like, "I don't really think so" [laughs].

SALLY: I don't think so either.

EMILY: But, if you – that seems like the obvious thing to do. And I feel like the, then, obvious conclusion is, "Okay, well who are Elaida's spies in our camp." That also seems like an obvious...

SALLY: Yeah! If anyone was using their, apparently, enormous brains.

EMILY: Anyone. No.

SALLY: Like [laughing] it's fine!

EMILY: Just a bunch of geniuses in here, just –

SALLY: Just unable to tie their shoes!

EMILY: Just talking constantly about how the fucking furniture is collapsible. Yes, I get it. We're camping.

SALLY: I know, I'm like – it is very funny to imagine –

EMILY: [laughing] Shut up about the décor, Egg! Shut up about the décor!

SALLY: It is very funny to imagine these very regal Aes Sedais in actually camping chairs. Like, that is very funny to me. But, yeah, stop talking to me about your collapsible stools and maybe...put some brain power into thinking that there might be spies.

EMILY: [laughing]

SALLY: I don't know.

EMILY: Der der der!

SALLY: I don't know. I don't know.

EMILY: Um, then Moghedien escapes, which Egg feels through her bracelet. She goes and looks and, lo and behold, Moghedien has escaped. So, like we said already, Egg is like, "Leane, Siuan, Moghedien's escaped!" And Leane and Siuan are like, "Ah, dunk. Curse your sudden but inevitable betrayal."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: "Who could have seen this coming?" And they're gonna go look for a man. Key word on man. No one – no one suspects Halima! Which is the fucking point. Egg is like, "Siuan, do you want to be taken off Gareth Bryne duty?" and Siuan is like, "No, I don't. I can totally handle him." We learn some distasteful things, such as, Gareth Bryne has spanked Siuan in the tradition of Perrin spanking Faile and all men in this series being able to spank women if they're misbehaving. Because we live in a patriarchy and life is hell. Um.

SALLY: I'm just trying to think how I would legitimately respond if I was in a situation where a man was like, "You have misbehaved and therefore I am going to punish you via spanking."

EMILY: I think I would literally kill him.

SALLY: [laughs] No, I think so too.

EMILY: I think that would drive me to murder.

SALLY: I think – like, whenever they, whatever the, like the show *Snapped*? That would be me. Something so deep inside my psyche would completely be obliterated and I would start just murdering every man I saw.

EMILY: If I man was like, “I am going to use my physical, my greater physical power to literally spank you, not in a consensual sexy way that we’ve discussed beforehand, but just because I think you need to be punished for your quote unquote misdeeds,” yeah. Kill Bill sirens, bud.

SALLY: Like I am getting angry just thinking about it.

EMILY: I know. Literally, it makes me irate. But Siuan is like, “I have a big crush on Gareth Bryne.”

SALLY: [sighs]

EMILY: “Any physical contact of his, even in the form of spanking, turns me the fuck on.” Like, oh my god. We’ve talked – Siuan is a prime example of Robert Jordan’s insistence on the idea that men and women can flirt by pulling on each other’s pig tails. Like we’re all in the sixth fucking grade.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Grow up! Whatever. That’s all I’m gonna say about that. Then Egg goes for a little walk. She has a brief conversation with Leane, who she also was just with so I don’t know –

SALLY: [giggling]

EMILY: Why they had to be separated and then come back together. Uh, and Leane’s like, “Well, I wouldn’t worry about the embassy that’s been sent to Rand. They’re very competent. You need to stop worrying.” And Egg’s like, “I really just want to, you know, be able to use the fact that we can teleport to go to Rand.” And apparently, it’s some archaic law that the Amyrlin can’t put herself in danger unless, you know, they’re in a war, or something like that. So, Egg doesn’t have permission from parliament, so she has to stay in the camp and not talk to Rand. And it’s, like... you...can talk tonight to women, who you know are with Rand.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: You can be like, “Hey, Rand – tell Rand I’m the Amyrlin Seat now and I think we should talk about it. Meet at X time and X place in *tel’aran’rhiod*. He knows how to get here. I’ve fucking seen him.”

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Oh my god!

SALLY: Yeah, the fact that Egg is like, “Please don’t tell Rand I’m the Amyrlin Seat, because he’ll like think that I’m in trouble and he’ll try to come rescue me.” And, like, I don’t think Rand – like, Rand is a huge dumb fucking idiot, but if Rand heard that you were the Amyrlin Seat, I don’t think his immediate thought would be, “You’re in danger.”

EMILY: Yeah. I mean, Rand is a stupid idiot who doesn’t know how to respond to women, ever, but if – all Egg would have to do is be like, “Hey, guess what? Elayne? Nowhere in the vicinity. Aviendha? Nowhere in the vicinity.” And he’d be like, “Alright. I can conquer my fear of women to go talk to Egg for a minute.”

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Jesus Christ.

SALLY: And she also is just like, “Please also don’t tell Rand that I’ve sent Mat and Elayne and Nynaeve away.”

EMILY: Oh yeah. So now – I don’t even think she tells the Wise Ones that.

SALLY: Oh yeah.

EMILY: She just thinks it. She’s like, “I better not tell Rand that I sent Mat – he’d be so mad.” And like –

SALLY: Yeah he would be fucking mad!

EMILY: Yeah, he would be mad, but he also doesn’t have a leg to stand on. Pretty much everyone, except for Mat, has acted stupidly in this situation.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Mat’s just going where the wind blows him. He has no choice in this.

SALLY: I know. It’s so sad. But, the whole thing is just like – it’s just such a clusterfuck of bad choices. And not in like an interesting way of like you watch well-meaning characters make bad choices and it ends up badly, you know?

EMILY: Not in a way where we are, in later books, to reflect upon these bad decisions.

SALLY: Yeah. And be like perhaps I should stop sending Mat random places. Perhaps I, Rand al’Thor, should let women make their own choices [laughs].

EMILY: Again, yeah, there’s never some tragic moment where Egg and Rand get together and are like, “Oh dunk, we put Mat in this terrible situation. Der der der. If only we’d spoken to each other sooner about it.” No one ever says, “I wish I’d spoken to you about this sooner.” Or, “I wish I’d told you the truth.” No, never. These are just bad decisions with no consequences.

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: Okay, thanks. [sighs] On her walkabout, Egg is – encounters Nicola and Areina.

SALLY: [laughing] Oh yeah! I completely forgot this happened.

EMILY: Who are two randos who were on the same boat as Moghedien and continue to be randos who, I don't know why they're in the plot. I literally don't know why they're in the plot. These were two completely disposable characters.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: But Nicola's a novice and she wants to, I don't know, get taught more stuff. So she's decided – they've decided between them a good idea is to [laughing] blackmail the Amyrlin Seat. That's smart. And Egg's like, "Hey, you dumb shits. What the fuck are you thinking?" And they're like [scared voice], "Oh, uh, we weren't thinking, mom. Sorry. That wasn't a very good idea of ours."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And she's like, "Yeah no fucking way. Are you kidding? Who do you think they're going to believe? You two idiots? Or me, the Amyrlin Seat?"

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah.

EMILY: "What the hell?"

SALLY: [laughs] aaah!

EMILY: Whatever. But now Egg is stressed about there being a blackmailing situation and people knowing that Nynaeve and Elayne used to pretend to be Aes Sedai, because that's apparently the worst crime you can commit.

SALLY: Ugh.

EMILY: Um, you also held Moghedien captive.

SALLY: Yeah, maybe we should talk about the SLAVERY.

EMILY: Egg's like, "The amount of capital crimes I've committed in my three weeks' tenure –

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: As Aes Sedai knows no bounds."

SALLY: [continues laughing] However –

EMILY: However, I must continue committing capital crimes for the sake of humanity. Shut up.

SALLY: And I absolutely will not be blackmailed.

EMILY: And I will not be blackmailed. How dare they. I have the ethical high ground here!

SALLY: [cackles] Don't try it, Anakin! I have the ethical high ground!"

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: Don't try it, Nicola!

EMILY: So Nicola and Areina get sent off with their tails between their legs. But don't worry! They'll be back I'm sure! I don't even know why Nicola's so eager to learn. We do hear a very brief, like, thing where Nicola's like, "You got taught super fast." And Egg says, "Well, what happened with me is called forcing." And in her internal monologue she says, "I – that's something Siuan did and Siuan apologized for it." And I'm like, "Siuan didn't have much to do with your actual learning of the Power. I don't know what you're talking about there. If I was going to blame anyone for your forcing, quote unquote, it would be the Seanchan."

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: After whom, we – we're all very well aware that after Book 2 when Egwene is a captive of the Seanchan, she is way more proficient in the One Power.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And talks about being about to do things instinctively.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, I don't know if that was just a miswrite of Robert Jordan's or if he was trying to slide in there, "Oh, Siuan did in fact apologize to Egg for sending them off after" – I don't know.

SALLY: I just think Robert Jordan really is c – um conducting some extreme literary gymnastics to not make the Seanchan be responsible for anything.

EMILY: Yeah, that's sure true.

SALLY: So, that's how it feels to me, anyway, in Book 9 but.

EMILY: Egwene then goes to bed where she has one of her least empathetic sequences. Like, sympathetic as a character. Because she has this maid who is helping her get ready for bed and keeps saying dumb things. Egwene in her head is like, "I hate this woman. She's such an idiot."

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Never does Egwene think, “I know for a fact that this woman has been sent to spy on me. And she is obviously a woman who did not have many options. She was a refugee when she was found. How must it feel to get pulled into an Aes Sedai camp and be forced to spy on the Amyrlin Seat of all people and not really have a choice in the matter.”

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, she is just so – at least not out loud, but internally she is incredibly cruel to this woman.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Which is just, okay Egg. It’s not like you were ever a peasant, you idiot.

SALLY: Yeah. Like, oh the mighty do fall, Miss Egg.

EMILY: Stupid.

SALLY: You could maybe like – again, it’s just another example of how all her empathy and kindness and human decency seem to have just been drained away.

EMILY: Yeah. And she just has no class consciousness now. The only character in this entire fucking series that has any class consciousness is Mat.

SALLY: Yeah, well even, like, to dial – to backpedal for a second, the fact that Egg is like, “I know I can stop Nicola and Areina from blackmailing me by pulling the trump card that I am the fucking Amyrlin Seat.” And it doesn’t even cross her – like, I don’t exactly remember the whole monologue because I just kind of skipped it, but it doesn’t seem to cross her mind to be like, “It’s actually pretty shitty that I can just send these women away and completely belittle them and, um, render null their testimony because I am the Amyrlin Seat.”

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Like, it does not seem –

EMILY: Boy, the power imbalance here sure is unethical.

SALLY: Yeah. She’s like, “Thank goodness I’m the Amyrlin Seat and therefore I can send these two girls away.” What – and yeah, like, make them, like, convince them that nobody would believe them.

EMILY: Egg goes to bed. She goes into *tel'aran'rhiod*, she sends Nynaeve and Elayne the message, "Hey, um, there's a blackmailing situation here so *don't* come back until you have the Bowl of the Winds. Also, P.S. Moghedien escaped."

SALLY: [laughing] I know!

EMILY: [laughing] Like that's not the first fucking thing that you say. Um and she's like, "Duh, duh, duh, duh." Then she goes to, uh, Amys' dream and is like, "Hey, we need to talk." So she meets with all the Wise Ones, where they don't actually have a substantive conversation, except that Egg is like, "I'm the Amyrlin Seat now." And they're like, "Great, you're obviously a figurehead for them." And she's like, "Yep, you hit the nail on the head, but I'm not going to let that stand. I'm obviously going to take real power." And they're like, "Okay, good for you." And she's like, "How's Rand?" And they're like, "[high pitched noise, speaks in a tight voice] He's fine."

SALLY: [in a tight voice] "He's doing really good."

EMILY: "He's doing great."

SALLY: [in a tight voice] "So good."

EMILY: And Egg's like, "I'm really worried about the embassy that was sent from Salidar, and I just really want him to know that they are just there to tell him 'hey we're your allies' or whatever." And Amys is like, "Oh yeah, I wouldn't worry about the embassy and Rand. [whispers] They swore fealty to him. He has nothing to worry about from them."

SALLY: Also, like, it is actually Merana's fault for overreacting –

EMILY: It is fully Merana's –

SALLY: So when everyone's like, "Don't worry, Merana is so competent." And it's like the human meat grinder can be traced directly back to Merna.

EMILY: Yeah [beeping noises]. I mean, further back it can be traced to that nameless Whitecloak that stabbed that Aes Sedai. But you're right, Merana's overreaction did –

SALLY: The fact that she wasn't like, "It seems a little strange for someone to murder an Aes Sedai in an alley. That doesn't usually happen. Perhaps we should have a discussion about this."

EMILY: Was it Merana at that point? I feel like that was also the point where she, like, lost the reigns of power.

SALLY: Oh! You're right! You're right.

EMILY: So actually, it's not Merana's fault, it is Verin, Alanna, and the rest of their fault.

SALLY: You're right. I'm sorry, Merana, sweetie, I slandered your name.

EMILY: So, yeah. Merana is hyper-competent, but no one will let her do her fucking job.

SALLY: Yeah, you're right. I'm sorry. The human meant grinder can not be traced back directly to Merana. It can be traced back to the fact that Merana lost her job [laughs].

EMILY: [laughs] Merana loses her job –

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: Arrow. Human meant grinder.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Jesus Christ.

SALLY: [still laughing]

EMILY: Okay. So, the Aes –

SALLY: [still laughing]

EMILY: I know. The Wise Ones are like, “Yeah, we’ll for sure tell Rand that everything’s cool and don’t worry about it.” And Egg’s like, “Thank you so much. It’s so reassuring to have you on my side.” And they’re like, “Thumbs up...yeah. Thumbs up emoji. Seen, message seen.”

SALLY: [laughs] Read 4:48pm.

EMILY: I don’t know if this is ever, like, addressed. If the Wise Ones are ever like, “Hey, we have *toh* to you. You know, our big huge honor system about lying to each other that you had to, we had to whip you for, like, three hours because you lied to us.”

SALLY: We just happened to omit the fact that the Dragon Reborn was kidnapped and kept in a box for upwards of, mm, a week.

EMILY: And that might, hmm, negatively impact his relationship with most of the Aes Sedai.

SALLY: We didn’t think that was important for you, the Aes Sedai leader, to know.

EMILY: Don’t worry about it.

SALLY: [laughs] It’s no big deal! We all know Rand responds really well [laughing] to things.

EMILY: I feel like, is the Wise Ones' goal we want to keep all Aes Sedai away from Rand and just have his advisors be Wise Ones? I wouldn't think that's the case based on how they react to, say, Cadsuane.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: They're pretty much like, "Yeah, sure, this lady can do whatever she wants."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know? There's not any direct interference with the Wise Ones, so I don't really understand why this is here now.

SALLY: Well, yeah, it's also really strange because I could kind of see the perspective 'we're gonna keep *the White Tower* Aes Sedai away from Rand based on what happened.' But, like, this is Egg?

EMILY: Girls, you trained her.

SALLY: Yeah, like Egg is your adopted baby.

EMILY: Yeah, you talk to her all the time about how much you just want her to come back.

SALLY: Yeah. Like, it seems very odd. And, again, why I thought this happened completely pre-human meat grinder.

EMILY: So that's those chapters.

SALLY: I'm sorry we keep calling Dumai's Wells the Human Meat Grinder.

EMILY: I think it's a better name for it.

SALLY: It's more accurate.

EMILY: Oh, then Egg is like, "Time for real-y dreams. Real dreamsies." And then she just dreams about Gawyn.

SALLY: Gross.

EMILY: And how Gawyn's life is in danger or something. I don't care. She does have a sexy dream about Mat pulling a firework out of the sky.

SALLY: Oh yeah.

EMILY: That's the only cool one.

SALLY: One of my favorite images in the whole series to be honest.

EMILY: Yeah, just snatching it.

SALLY: Just reaches up and snags it.

EMILY: That's neat as hell. [clears throat] Okay. Unfortunately, we're still with Egg next week. Even more unfortunate [laughs] Lan will also be involved.

SALLY: Ew. Oh, god. And that is deeply unfortunate because that plot is rock, paper, fucked up.

EMILY: Yeah, you're so right.

SALLY: So.

EMILY: Uh, the good news is after that we're in Ebou Dar. The also bad news is that I think we're first with Nynaeve and Elayne for a while.

SALLY: Disgusting.

EMILY: So, just a lot of ups and downs, you know. Real rollercoaster of emotions here.

SALLY: [sighs] Whoopsie daisy.

EMILY: But thanks for listening! Um, and thanks to Glynna Mackenzie for our theme song. Do you have anything to add?

SALLY: Um, thank you to everyone who follows us on Twitter. We now have officially 1,000 followers.

EMILY: Oh, cool.

SALLY: I think it's, like, 1,003.

EMILY: Nice.

SALLY: Not holding my breath it will last very long based on Twitter, seems pretty fickle. But hey! Celebrate the moment while it lasts.

EMILY: Sure.

SALLY: So, yeah! Thank you guys. You're the best.

EMILY: Do you have a sign off?

SALLY: Yes. This one is so dumb [laughs]. Um, I had to go hand therapy this week, which is physical therapy for my hands. Um, and my physical therapist – like, there's not a lot you can do

for your hands, right? So I got fitted for my little braces and then he was just showing me that I can't hold things in a particular way. You guys can't see this lovely visual, but it's, like, I can't pick things up like this.

EMILY: Yeah, she's making like a little bird shape.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know, like, shadow puppet.

SALLY: So, if I were to pick up *Crown of Swords* I can't pick it up like this.

EMILY: Okay.

SALLY: He called that the book hold. Then he was demonstrating that I have to, like, curve my hand a little bit more in order to grab things.

EMILY: Claw.

SALLY: Claw, yeah. And he's like, "So if that one is the book hold, what [laughing] – " Guys. "What should we call this?" And he holds his hands up like this [laughs] and –

EMILY: She looks like she's about to grab two boobs. I'm just gonna say it. I'm predicting where this is going.

SALLY: [laughing] Yeah! So immediately I was like, "You can't say boobs. [laughs] You can't say boobs. You can't say boobs." So I just didn't respond.

EMILY: Just –

SALLY: [laughing] Because I was like, "If I open my mouth I will say boobs." And he was like, "We'll call it just an arch hold." And I was like, "Okay, that sounds great" [laughing].

EMILY: It's the boob hold though.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: My hands are made for holding boobs.

SALLY: I mean, I wish.

EMILY: Just –

SALLY: Just a big handful of some titty [laughs].

EMILY: [laughs] That's good.

SALLY: Okay, bye!

EMILY: Thanks, everyone! Bye!