



Episode 215: Barf Phase
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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, stop 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. "Everybody," in this context, refers to us and our cats. You are free to feel however you want about Rand. He's a fictional character. Please don't DM us.

[theme song by Glynna MacKenzie plays]

EMILY: Anyway, this is Everybody Hates Rand, your friendly neighborhood *Wheel of Time* podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

SALLY: And I'm Sally Goodger.

EMILY: We're a little under the weather over here at EHR headquarters. Um, [a cat cries in the background]. Oh.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Cats and humans alike [laughs].

SALLY: Tybalt's just sort of wailing in the background.

EMILY: Tybalt's wailing. Ed keeps barfing.

SALLY: Oh yeah.

EMILY: Just sort of, you know, the way cats do.

SALLY: Yeah, he's just going through his barf phase.

EMILY: [laughs] His *barf* phase.

SALLY: His barf phase.

EMILY: The entire *Wheel of Time* was Robert Jordan's barf phase [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: But perhaps especially these chapters, because of course we get an Alviarin point of view, and as you all know bad guy points of view are the *absolute* worst in Robert Jordan.

SALLY: Yeah, the Alviarin point of view is rancid for, like, so many reasons, but it's also sort of peak, like, let's torture women.

EMILY: I know.

SALLY: For shits and giggles.

EMILY: I was actually like – I think I've just become so, um, desensitized to the whole tormenting of women, that I was actually getting a pretty big kick out of it, because I was just like, "Alviarin's just, you know, an employee in the bureaucracy dealing with a very shitty manager."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And in a way...aren't we all? [laughs]

SALLY: Yeah, like if you can remove yourself from everything that's going, it is a deeply hilarious chapter, because Alviarin returns to the White Tower –

EMILY: No idea.

SALLY: After being gone –

EMILY: No idea where she's been [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs] No idea – she's been on Tremalking, I think, is what –

EMILY: Yeah, but like why?

SALLY: No idea. I also don't know what she'd be doing on Tremalking for a whole month. So, she's recently been on Tremalking, but before that and what she's been doing, no idea. But she has been gone –

EMILY: Probably because Robert Jordan has no idea.

SALLY: For a full month.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And comes back just being like, “It’ll be fine. Nothing will have changed in a month” [laughs].

EMILY: “There’s no way that Elaida, in the last month, will have decided to take a stand against my terrible abuse of her.”

SALLY: Yeah. Yeah, she definitely will not use this opportunity of my absence to sort of oust me from power.

EMILY: Yeah, and there’s no way that anything, like, bad will be happening in the White Tower or Tar Valon at large. And it’s like, “Ohhh, the rebels have teleported to outside of Tar Valon in the month you’ve been gone. This is so awkward and embarrassing.”

SALLY: Yeah, this is so embarrassing for you.

EMILY: You’re no longer the keeper.

SALLY: Yeah, they’ve deposed you.

EMILY: What [laughs] – when she, like, first runs into someone they’re like, “This is a sad time for all of us, but especially you.” And Alviarin’s like, “What the fuck are they talking about?” And I’m like, “In retrospect, I also don’t know what the fuck they’re talking about, because that’s not the way I would have phrased it.”

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: This is a sad time for all of us? Tar Valon being under siege?

SALLY: Yeah. It’s very strange. And like, “it’s a sad time for you,” it’s like, no it’s a really shitty time for you.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: You should be embarrassed [laughs] of your behavior.

EMILY: But she shouldn’t be, like, mourning her position.

SALLY: Yeah. It’s – so it’s just, like, so funny. She, like, confidently walks into Elaida’s study and Elaida is like, “Absolutely fuck off” [laughs].

EMILY: Yeah. Perish.

SALLY: Yeah. Um.

EMILY: And everyone assumes she’s just been hiding in the city.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: While this entire – while the last month has happened. Because, like...you know this – she presumably in other circumstances would have been able to be like, “Oh yeah, I’ve just been traveling the way Aes Sedai do sometimes.” But while she’s been gone, the city’s has, like, become under siege, so, like, the gates have been more or less shut down.

SALLY: Yeah, so it’s like there’s nowhere else she could really...

EMILY: Have been.

SALLY: Have been.

EMILY: Except for the city.

SALLY: Except, Alviarin, of course, has been given the gift of Traveling, which she will not tell anybody.

EMILY: Yeah, because she’s not supposed to.

SALLY: Under Darkfriend orders. So, yeah, everyone’s like –

EMILY: Which, I don’t know why. Let the Lord of Chaos rule, you know?

SALLY: Yeah, I – what is more chaotic than teleportation? But, um, yeah everyone thinks she’s been hiding in the city, like a yellow-bellied coward.

EMILY: [laughs] Yeah.

SALLY: [laughs] And they’re all, like, disgusted by her [laughs] and the way that she has been behaving while they’re trying to deal with this siege.

EMILY: They’re like, “Ugh, Alviarin.”

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: “Least favorite Aes Sedai. We all hate each other, but we especially hate Alviarin.”

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: And Elaida’s like, “Oh, how the turn tables!”

SALLY: Oh, how the turn tables. Yeah, and Alviarin’s kind of whole plot to keep Elaida under thumb, except for the rampant physical abuse, has been to be like, “I will tell everybody that you were in charge for what happened at Dumai’s Wells and I will tell everybody that you send

Toveine to the Black Tower and that also went horribly wrong.” And she’s like, “If you don’t do what I say, I’m gonna let these things out and that will be so shitty for you.” And it’s like, both of those things have come out in the month she’s been gone, and Elaida has just been like – without doing anything, the blame has fallen on other people.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Because both of those things were such a mess. So, it’s, like, totally fine [laughs].

EMILY: Like [laughs], like that was, like, already to begin with sort of shitty blackmailing.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: That Alviarin was doing. Like, Alviarin’s a person with an incompetent manager, aka Mesaana, one of the Forsaken, who herself has an incompetent manager, aka the Dark One.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: But Alviarin is also highly incompetent.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Based sheerly on what we’ve seen of her activities in the White Tower for the last year or so that she’s more or less been in charge. She sends a confusing letter to Rand al’Thor.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: That has no results.

SALLY: Yeah, Rand’s like, “Okay, well. File that away, I guess.”

EMILY: Rand’s like, “Okay, I have no idea what the fuck’s going on here.” She’s been supervising Elaida while Elaida has put in some of the worst projects of all time.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Into place. She’s been like, “I’ll take charge of Elaida.” Except she didn’t. she then promptly fucked off a month – for a month.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: *A MONTH!*

SALLY: [laughs] A whole entire month. Like, imagine just up and leaving your job for a month, and coming back and expecting to not be fired.

EMILY: Yeah. It's not like you're, like, taking sick leave or something. You're just like, "Bye." No call, no show for thirty full days. Or however long Wheely Time months are.

SALLY: Yeah, who knows. And it's like, I know you're under Darkfriend orders to, like, not tell anyone where you're going. But you couldn't be like, "Hey, I have Aes Sedai business to do. I'm going to be gone for a minute."

EMILY: Yeah, and I'm going to, like, shift the supervision of Elaida to some other person.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like Elaida, I mean Alviarin's – Alviarin's complaining about how Mesaana won't delegate to anyone other than her.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: Like, Mesaana is completely uninterested in knowing who all is in the Black Ajah.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: She's just got Alviarin and is like, "You take care of it," which is, like, so classic bad management.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: Like, I will just pick on my one employee who is immediately –

SALLY: Underneath me, yeah.

EMILY: Underneath me in the pecking order and how they get it done I don't really care, but as long as it gets done.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: But then Alviarin herself is apparently not delegating enough. Like, girl you're in charge of the Black Ajah now, because Galina beefed it.

SALLY: Yeah [laughs].

EMILY: [laughs] So hard.

SALLY: RIP, Galina.

EMILY: RIP, Galina. Also getting tortured on the other side of the world. So, like, why can't you just be like, "Alright, I will actually use the Black Ajah as the structural tool that it is, considering that there's apparently six billion of us."

SALLY: [laughing] Yeah!

EMILY: And, like, actually do something. But it's just like, incompetent people everywhere. And it's like, yeah. That's sort of Robert Jordan's whole schtick. Is that everyone, good or evil, is incompetent on some level.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: But that's not fun to read about. I'm not afraid of Alviarin.

SALLY: No.

EMILY: I'm laughing at her.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: I mean, not literally, because it sucks how much she's getting tortured and how much she's torturing other people and how literally – there's just this, like, locked battle of women torturing each other, and I'm supposed to be, like, "Wohoho, compelling." Or, I don't know, I'm supposed to be furiously masturbating or something.

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, it's impossible –

EMILY: I don't know what his intent is here [laughs].

SALLY: Impossible to say.

EMILY: But, like, I don't feel frightened.

SALLY: No.

EMILY: When Egg gets, like, kidnapped at the end of this book – spoiler alert – and taken to the White Tower, my immediate thought isn't like, "Oh my god! Mesaana of the Forsaken is there."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Alviarin of the In Charge of the Black Ajah is there!

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: My thought is like, oh great, can't wait to see how Egg will fuck this up.

SALLY: Right. There – yeah, Alviarin offers, like, literally no threat. She's such a ridiculous figure. The way that all of the Wheel Time bad guys, except for the Seanchan.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Are presented as sort of comedically ridiculous. Like, we're watching *Galavant* right now.

EMILY: Oh my god, yeah.

SALLY: And the king, who is – and the queen – who are supposed to be evil figures, are fully the most ridiculous people you've ever met.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: In your entire life. Like, the king is deeply incompetent, does things like lights barrels of vegetables on fire, you know?

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And that's what it feels like watching any of the bad guys in *Wheel of Time* operate. You know they're supposed to be evil, and they're doing vaguely evil things, but they are not frightening, and I would not be concerned about being around them.

EMILY: Yeah, I'm not, like, worried.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: About what Alviarin's been doing for the last month, you know? I'm not like, "Oh my god. I better get some of her itinerary stat, because god only knows what she's been fucking up on Tremalking."

SALLY: Tremalking.

BOTH: Of all places.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: I'm just like, "Well, 'kay. [an unidentifiable noise in the background] Presumably nothing came of that."

SALLY: Yeah, presume – and it's just [sighs]. Yeah. So, it's just so frustrating for her to be there at all. But, generally, uh, we walk in. Alviarin, like, wanders through the White Tower and is like, "Gotta go check on Elaida." And Elaida is telling the Hall, basically, that they can enter negotiations, the way that rebel camp did.

EMILY: The exact way that Egg did.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: By being like, “Of course you can do negotiations, but you have to stick to these unreasonable terms.”

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: And all of the Sitters um – notably, there’s several who are present who are, like, the Heads of their Ajahs, everyone’s clearly speaking on instructions of the Heads of their Ajahs, which I guess is, like, a big deal. And also very clearly, this is being motivated by our group of Black Ajah hunters.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: Who we know have uncovered exactly two plots. That the Black Ajah are around and they’ve got, like, two of them. Big – big deal [a cat crying in the background]. Oh my god.

SALLY: Two of nine million.

EMILY: And they’ve also uncovered that there are spies from the other side within the White Tower, and, presumably on some of that knowledge, they are trying to make overtures to the other side. Um, but Alviarin is like, “What the fuck are these – like, why are these people the ones who are doing stuff? Duh duh duh duh.”

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: So, even she is like, “There’s clearly something going on there.” And it’s, like, we’re supposed to be like, “Oh no! The Black Ajah hunters don’t know, but, like, Alviarin’s after them. She’s on the scent.” Nothing happens.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: It’s not like Doesine and Yukiri start getting picked off. Murdered, you know?

SALLY: Yeah [laughs]

EMILY: The way murder is happening in the Saildar [laughing] camp, which we’ll get to in a minute.

SALLY: Right. Oh yeah, I think I jumped.

EMILY: It’s okay.

SALLY: Directly into Alviarin's point of view.

EMILY: It doesn't matter, exactly.

SALLY: It's just, like, so ridiculous.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: But yeah, she – when we are with Egg in the White Tower in Book 9, Alviarin is also just being, like, mercilessly beaten by the Mistress of the Novices.

EMILY: Yeah, repeatedly.

SALLY: And it's, like, she doesn't have any time [laughing] to do nefarious plots.

EMILY: [laughs] She's either being beat up or, like, ailing from being beat up.

SALLY: Yeah. So, it's just, like, I don't know why Robert Jordan keeps setting up these sort of, like, figures of alleged terror only to, like, totally nerf them.

EMILY: I know.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: He's like [goofy voice], "Look at all my scary bad guys." And I'm like, "Where?"

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: What you're showing me is just, like, cardboard cutouts, you know?

SALLY: Truly just these, like, caricatures of –

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: Evil.

EMILY: Villainy.

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, villainy and treachery. But –

EMILY: Scar from *The Lion King* –

SALLY: [laughs loudly]

EMILY: [laughing] Is scarier than fucking Alviarin.

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: Because at least he's a lion. Whatever.

SALLY: So, all the, like, Sitters and Elaida, like, literally has Alviarin in a corin – corner. And Alviarin's like, "You listen to me." And Elaida, like, slaps her and is like, "*No*, you listen to *me*."

EMILY: No, you listen!

SALLY: You're a piece of shit and you stupid and I'm in charge now. And you're gonna get beaten for the next however long, and I, like, know you're Black Ajah or I assume and I'm gonna figure it out. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

EMILY: Yeah, Elaida basically is like, "First of all, your blackmail didn't work, so fuck you. Everyone knows and no one gives a shit, because there's a siege happening. There are other things to worry about."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: "Second of all I can def – I'm definitely on this – " She doesn't say anything specific. She just says, "I could take you to the headsman for treason, but I won't."

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: Which is vague enough that it's very obvious she has no evidence of anything.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: And that she's just sort of making a threat to scare Alviarin, but of course Alviarin's incompetent so she's not like, "Oh yeah? What's the fucking proof?"

SALLY: Prove it, bitch.

EMILY: Yeah, prove it, you know? Tell me what the deal is.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Alviarin just runs, flees for her life.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: After Al – uh, after Elaida, I believe, has *punched* her, which is just further backup of Elaida in this archetype of, like, physically intimidating lesbian trope, you know?

SALLY: Yeah, of course.

EMILY: She can only settle things with her fists, because she's not ladylike, because [whispers] she's a lesbian. Anyway, Alviarin runs to her room and then, like, basically pulls out a box in which there is a, um, what are those things called? That, if you're an old person and you press –

SALLY: Oh, [laughs] life alert.

EMILY: Yeah, [laughs] she, like, presses her life alert that contacts Mesaana.

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: Supposedly. We don't know if that's what it actually does, because Mesaana gave it to her and Mesaana is, remember, one of the Forsaken. And Sammael famously was like, "These are teleportation cubes, ya idiots."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Anyway, Mesaana appears in her, like, blaze of glory and she's all, you know, covered in channeling so Alviarin can't see what she actually looks like. But Alivarin's like, "This is terrible. All of my work is gone to waste." And Mesanna's like, "I don't care. You'll get over it. Duh duh duh duh."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Clearly doesn't give a shit. And it's like, Alviarin, you stupid asshole. How was she gonna help you?

SALLY: Yeah [laughs].

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: Mesanna is –

EMILY: Has she – when has she ever given you evidence that –

SALLY: That she knows anything. Or cares.

EMILY: That she cares about anything. No one knows what Mesaana is plotting here. And it's like, we've been told, and it's been alluded to, and now we know explicitly that Mesaana is in the White Tower.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: But the only evidence of evil things happening in the White Tower is what Alivarin's doing.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And here we're seeing Alviarin's not doing shit, so what exactly is Mesaana doing?

SALLY: She's just having laugh.

EMILY: It would appear so!

SALLY: [laughs] Just having a good time.

EMILY: Like, it's not like – like, as terrible as Halima slash Aran'gar is as a character and as this sort of, like, dog whistle for trans –

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Archetype things going on, like, at least she's fucking murdering people, you know?

SALLY: Yeah and is very – like, if we're talking about letting chaos reign, Halima is doing a really excellent job of, “Hahaha who could have done these murders with the male half of the power?”

EMILY: Yeah, like, you hate to say that Halima is the most competent of the Forsaken.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But, you know, she's doing murders, which is more than any of the other ones can say.

SALLY: Yeah, at this point she is. If we're talking about competence in terms of doing a good job at being evil, then yeah. Mesaana is apparently just having a laugh. Anyway!

EMILY: Okay, anyway, yeah. So, Alviarin is, like, groveling to Mesaana. Then, with excellent timing, because Robert Jordan always wants, you know, women's humiliating to be compounded by it being witnessed.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: Um, that creepy Myrrdraal, literally exists only to terrorize the female members of the Forsaken with, like, threats of sexual assault, shows up to punish Mesaana for not showing up to the fun party where everyone [laughs] tried to kill Rand while he was cleansing *saidin*.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: Which, Semirhage didn't show up, either did she? So.

SALLY: I don't think so.

EMILY: I don't know. She's in deep cover, or maybe she's been getting her own ass beat. I don't know. We'll see it later perhaps. But, um, [clears throat], yeah, Mesaana didn't show. So, now she's getting punished I guess. Which, of course, her punishment involves [laughs] her clothes all being ripped off.

SALLY: Burned away.

EMILY: Yeah, which is so – you're like, it's so obvious, you know?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, can you imagine Mazrim Taim in this situation?

SALLY: My clothes have been burned away!!

EMILY: Yeah, like cowering, you know? Crying?

SALLY: No.

EMILY: Being humiliated.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: No.

SALLY: No.

EMILY: Fuck no.

SALLY: It would never happen in Robert Jordan's universe.

EMILY: It would never happen. All that happens when the men fuck up is that they die.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: The end.

SALLY: And you know what? That's preferable to what happens.

EMILY: I know! To all the fucking women – okay, whatever.

SALLY: To just beef it. Completely. No, it's truly just, like, so egregious, Um, I don't know why what's his name – Shadar Haran, or whatever.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Even exists.

EMILY: It's literally just to function as 'look how rapey the Dark One is.' He had to create an avatar for himself so he could rape women, because, you know, he's a cosmological horror, but he still needs to have a dick with which to terrorize people.

SALLY: Yeah, of course. [laughs] Why else?

EMILY: Why else [screeches] indeed! Whatever. So, then Shadar Haran, uh, gives Alviarin the mark of Cain [laughs]. Like that season of *Supernatural*.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: He just, like, touches her forehead and is like, "You're mine now, so basically you don't answer to Mesaana anymore, so go out and do your evil —" [in a vampire like voice] Go out and do my dark bidding on the Internet. [laughing] What are you bidding on?

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: A table!

SALLY: [in a vampire voice] Dark bidding.

EMILY: Um, and then Alviarin runs away and is like, "Oh my god! That was so scary." And it's like, yeah okay. I don't know what the effect of that was supposed to be, except to remind me that Alviarin exists, Mesaana is in the White Tower, and Elaida is mean.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: These are all basic status quo things that I didn't really need. Um, we flip back over to Egg, whose chapter was technically before this, but.

SALLY: Yeah, sorry.

EMILY: We catch up with Egg after this meeting all about whether or not they should send an embassy to the Black Tower. Typically, because this is a female government body, nothing has happened. They've all just argued and have been grandstanding and what not for all this time.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, everyone goes to bed. Egg's all happy because her headache went away, probably because Halima was busy doing murders or something, so, like, forgot to keep it up. And Egg's like, "Great! This means I can actually go into *tel'aran'rhiod*." Because she, like, struggles with that when she has her headaches. But she goes to bed. Her maid who fawns over her is just there to fawn over her. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. As they go to bed – as she goes to bed, Egg's like [wistfully], "Chesa, do you really Halima's a slut?" [laughs] And –

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Chesa's like, "Uhh, well, I don't know. She just sort of gives me the creeps. [intense voice] Like I'm changing my clothes and [whispers] a man is staring at me." And it's like, [laughing] Robert Jordan could you be less –

SALLY: Could you be less transphobic?

EMILY: I know! Seriously!

SALLY: This is seriously just the 'I don't want trans people in bathrooms because they're going to sexually assault me.'

EMILY: Because they're going to see my body in some way.

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah! Trans people just want to be in the changing rooms and the bathrooms that align with their gender identity, so I don't know why [laughs] Robert Jordan had to put this specific, deeply transphobic line into the book.

EMILY: [sighs] But. Here we are.

SALLY: Here we are!

EMILY: So, Egg goes to *tel'aran'rhioid* and finds Elayne's dreams and is like, "Elayne, I need to talk to you." And then goes to their little meeting spot, which is just her old office in Salidar. I don't know why they don't have a less obvious meeting spot, but whatever. Eventually Aviendha shows up and is like, "Sorry, Elayne can't come because [singsong] she's pregnant! And it's just so hard to be pregnant and magical and whatever, but she was super mad and sent me instead." And Egg's like, "Uh, okay. Well, here you are, I'm just going to talk to you about nothing in particular." Like, it's not like Egg had a particular thing to say to Elayne. I don't know why this happens.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Except, as you said, to show us that Aviendha is deliberately not telling Elayne that Rand was at the, um, big, three-mile-wide hole. Which is, like, obviously bad from a writing perspective.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, it makes no sense that these characters are choosing not to communicate with each other. Second of all, Robert Jordan sort of makes it a thing about Aviendha being a Wise One, rather than an Aes Sedai, you know? He's like – Egwene observes that Aviendha's, like, dressed as a Wise One and is clearly making decisions as a Wise One, trying to behave as one.

But then that doesn't make ethical sense, because Aviendha is not there as herself, she's meant to be representing Elayne.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: So, it's just, like, now you're just making Aviendha seem like an even shittier person.

SALLY: Right. It's very str – it's just strange. I don't – I truly don't know why we can't know – why Egg can't know that Rand did three mile hole.

EMILY: Yeah, it's not like she would march up to the Hall of the Tower and be like, "Oh, actually it was Rand and I know this for reasons, so actually we don't need to worry about the Black Tower embassy." Like, she has made clear that she doesn't really have any feelings about the Black Tower.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Embassy. She's just like, "Yeah, seems like something that should happen eventually." So, it's like, girl.

SALLY: Yeah, it – it –

EMILY: Whatever. Whatever!! That's the big take away from these chapters Anyway, Aviendha leaves and then Egwene goes to have her normal *tel'aran'rhiod* dreams, which are like symbolic dreams. Um, the important ones are that she has a dream about, uh, Mat bowling and all of the pins represent men.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Um, and she's like, "This is a dream that I've had before." It's clearly a reference to Mat inventing cannons and also clearly a reference to the idea that cannons are, um, something that's going to cost hundreds of thousands of lives.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: In the long run. It's a very interesting image. Um, all of Egwene's Mat dreams for some reason like –

SALLY: *So good.*

EMILY: Slap so hard. But it's just, like, an interesting symbol of Mat not taking this seriously.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Which is interesting because when Mat actually starts working with the cannons and realizing what they can do, he does think about it, like, very clearly. But it is something he chooses to do in all seriousness.

SALLY: Yeah, it's part of this weird perception, I guess, that everyone still thinks Mat doesn't take anything seriously?

EMILY: Yeah. It's more like –

SALLY: It's so weird.

EMILY: The dreams that Egwene has works – function more on archetypes than on reality.

SALLY: Right. Sure.

EMILY: Um, which I don't know if that was intentional on Robert Jordan's part at all, but we see some of the most, like, archetypal images in these dreams, and also we see things like Mat leaning into his whole trickster/gambler persona, more so than he does in real life, necessarily.

SALLY: Yeah, totally. That's fair.

EMILY: But I do think it's interesting that, yeah, there's a difference between Egg's perception of Mat and how serious Mat is actually taking this.

SALLY: Yeah, no. You're right about the archetypes, though. Um.

EMILY: Egg also dreams about, like, climbing a cliff and then she falls and then a Seanchan lady catches her and, spoiler, this is meant to be, like, Egeanin, but it doesn't make a ton of sense, because Egg and Egeanin do not meet until *A Memory of Light*, so there's not really much Egeanin can do.

SALLY: Hmm.

EMILY: It sort of seems obvious that Robert Jordan was going to do more with this idea but didn't.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: Partly because he died and partly because he must not have left enough notes for Brandon Sanderson to that effect.

SALLY: [sighs] Yep. RIP.

EMILY: Um, Egg also has a dream about the White Tower being attacked by the Seanchan specifically.

SALLY: Yeah, it's attacked by – it's, like, a white pillar on top of a cliff being attacked by ravens.

EMILY: Yeah, which are the symbol of the Seanchan.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: And, like, the idea of drop – the White Tower represented by this lamp and, like, drops of oil from this lamp kind of get spilled and that's maybe indicated maybe women getting captured or killed. Um, [clears throat] so that will come to fruition, at least, in an interesting way. It's frustrating that Egg, having foreknowledge, doesn't actually do anything, you know? But.

SALLY: [sighs] She tries very hard, at least from what I remember, to tell multiple people that this is a threat.

EMILY: Yeah, and just no one takes her seriously.

SALLY: And no one takes her seriously, um, specifically because she's usually telling, like, Elaida. And Elaida's like, "Perish."

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: I hate you. And, well.

EMILY: Like, pick your audience, Egg, perhaps.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: Yeah, I think she also tells Sheriam, which is, again, like, [laughs, getting higher in pitch] what is she going to do?!

EMILY: Yeah [laughs], what is she going to do?

SALLY: Sheriam doesn't do anything and also she's Black Ajah, so.

EMILY: So. Anyway, Egg finally sort of half wakes up just as Halima is coming back into the tent all, like, [laughing] excited, and Egwene, you know, like, she's more or less, like, disposing of her bloody gloves, OJ Simpson style.

SALLY: Right, right.

EMILY: Um, but Egg is like, "Oh, she must have been having [laughs] sex somewhere." And I'm like, "Why would she come back to your tent in the middle of the night?"

SALLY: I know.

EMILY: After having sex. Like, girl.

SALLY: You are so weird.

EMILY: Wouldn't she just sleep – whatever. But clearly she's just done a murder and then, typically, when Egwene wakes up she is – one of the first things that happens is that, uh, an Aes Sedai comes in and is like, "Uh, just so you know, Anaiya and her Warder were both murdered last night." And Egg's like, "Oh my god! How and by whom?" And this lady's like, "Well, I tested for resonances, and it was *saidin*, um, so there is a male channeler in the camp."

SALLY: [singsong] Dun dun dun.

EMILY: And Egg is like, "Okay, well, you better find out what's going on." To this woman who isn't, like, necessarily suited to the task of detective work.

SALLY: Yeah, it's very –

EMILY: It's a very mysterious choice on Egg's part.

SALLY: Nisao, I think is who it is?

EMILY: Yeah, Nisao, who like –

SALLY: Who is Yellow Ajah, I think?

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Maybe? I don't really remember. The point being, like, it's not like it's Siaun Sanche, master spy...spy master, you know? It's just, like, some lady who happened to bring the news to her.

EMILY: Yeah, like, um. Yeah. It's just, like, Egg, delegate better.

SALLY: Be like, "Hey, maybe don't tell anybody. Meanwhile, I'm going to tell my spymaster to figure this out."

EMILY: Or, like, Gareth Bryne.

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: You know? Like, I know Egg and Gareth Bryne have a weird, convoluted relationship. It just makes sense to me that if I knew a *man* was channeling, and obviously that's the whole sh – thing.

SALLY: That's the whole surprise.

EMILY: It's not a man channeling, but if that's what I thought, I'd be like, "Gareth Bryne, I need you to keep an eye on various men, you know? Like, here's the threat that I'm thin –" You know I'm – whatever.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: Anyway, so this will be Halima's reign of terror, where she's just sort of killing people at random, Jack Ripper style. Which I think is kind of funny of her.

SALLY: Yeah, it is, like, an interesting plot and is sort of, like, one of the more satisfying ones, in the murder mystery style, being, like, as soon as someone Poirots it out, it's gonna have such a nice –

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Monologue at the end, where someone explains what was going on. And explains how all these things came to be. But for now it's just kind of like, okay.

EMILY: It's just kind of funny that Halima's like, "I'm so evil. I'm must [laughs] murder people at random whenever I'm upset with Egwene."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know? [laughs] Like, could you be any more obvious?

SALLY: Nope. I'm just gonna – I'm bad so obviously I have to just be killing people willy nilly. I can't have, like, an actual plot that I [laughs] –

EMILY: I know.

SALLY: Am attempting.

EMILY: Our last very short chapter is from Pevara's point of view as she is talking to, uh, Ta – Taline? What's her name?

SALLY: Tarna Feir.

EMILY: Tarna! Feir, yeah. Who, famously, was the sort of ambassador who came to Salidar to strike fear in everyone's hearts. And apparently has just been traveling back all this time, and only got back recently.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: She has taken Alviarin's position as the Keeper. Um, and basically all that happens in this chapter is she tells Pevara the Black Tower is a much bigger threat than we are taking seriously, you know, like, there's a lot more men and they are recruiting actively. Duh, duh, duh, duh, duh. I think that it should be our job as people in the Red Ajah to, um, bond the men as Warders. Which is an interesting proposal, I think.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: It's an interesting idea to be like, okay, here's the Red Ajah, which is very obviously becoming obsolete.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: In this age, where the Dragon has been reborn. And now that we know that *saidin* has been cleansed. To the extent that the Red Ajah were ever necessary to begin with. Which, we know that they are just sort of Robert Jordan's puppet for misandry and representing lesbians badly.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But if we take them seriously as something that ever really needed to exist, well, clearly they no longer need to exist, but here we are proposing an evolution that is quite interesting.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: And it's interesting that we'll get it through Pevara's point of view, this woman who is Red Ajah, but is not of the typical Robert Jordan man hating model.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: She's just sort of like, "I am angry and full of revenge because my entire family was killed by Darkfriends." So that's understandable.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: But she's like, "Yeah, I don't really have anything against man – men. I'm just sort of like, yeah okay."

SALLY: I'm just here to do some hunting of evil folk.

EMILY: Um, but she shows Tarna that she's just received this message. Some of the first knowledge that, uh, Toveine's group has been *taken*, more or less.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: And Tarna is like, “Oh, that just proves my point, you know? Like, clearly we’ve got to get a handle on these dudes.”

SALLY: Is that what the note says?

EMILY: I believe?

SALLY: Okay, when I first read it I thought she was being informed that *saidin* was cleansed.

EMILY: Oh.

SALLY: But I never looked up on the Wiki to see anything.

EMILY: I didn’t either. That would be really interesting, though.

SALLY: That was what I was assuming as I was reading it, but I don’t know if it would make sense with the timeline? But, when – because, like, Tarna’s going on this monologue of, like, we’re trained to deal with men who can channel and as they go sort of mad and x,y,z and that’s why the Red Ajah needs to do this. And Pevara’s like, “Well, this might change the game a little bit, if they’re not going mad.” Um, and Tarna’s like, “No, it doesn’t change anything at all,” and Pevara’s like, “It actually changes a whole bunch.” But that could equally be related to Toveine and company having been bonded against their will.

EMILY: I think it’s Toveine and company because I have a vague memory of, like, Pevara’s group actually arriving at the Black Tower and them all – and the Asha’man being like, “Well, it’s no big deal anymore,” and them being like.

SALLY: I don’t know, we haven’t gotten far enough – I haven’t gotten far enough into that plot.

EMILY: Well, I don’t know. I think you’re right. Either way, it works. Either way, it’s interesting. So, we leave Pevara perhaps about to embark on this mission, which will take her away from Black Ajah hunting, not that she was ever instrumental in that to begin with. But.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, [sighs] there she goes. [singing] There she goes.

SALLY: [singing] There she goes again. Racing through my brain.

EMILY: Next, we’ll get, unfortunately, Cadsuane, who is in [laugh], with Rand at, like, house arrest, basically. They’re all just in a manor retreat.

SALLY: It’s so weird. I don’t know why they’re there.

EMILY: It’s very confusing, but we’ll get into it. But that’s what’s on the docket.

SALLY: That's what's on the docket.

EMILY: So, thanks, everyone, for listening.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Thanks to Glynna MacKenzie for our theme song and to our followers on social media and our [stumbles] patrons on Patreon. Boy do I always struggle not to say [laughing] our Patreons on Patron.

SALLY: It's really hard not to. Patreon and patron is a very unfortunate –

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Smashing together of sounds. It always messes me up to.

EMILY: [clears throat] Anything else?

SALLY: ...Nooo.

EMILY: Okay. Do you have a sign off?

SALLY: I'm trying to think.

EMILY: All I can think of for me is that [laughs] my nephew briefly went missing. I'm laughing because this isn't – [laughs] this is actually funny, there is a happy ending to this.

SALLY: Oh, okay.

EMILY: But we were all in my parents' house on Sunday to have, you know, the pot roast dinner, and my nephew Will has a habit of crawling through the dog door into the backyard.

SALLY: Champ.

EMILY: Yeah. Classic. Um, and he did that, and after a minute – I'd seen him go out and had been, like, tracking him, so I was, like, okay he's no longer in my line of sight. I was like, "I'm going to go get Will. So, I go get Will. Later in the evening he, again, disappeared and then we all had to go on a search for him, only to find that he'd gone upstairs to the playroom.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: So that was an example of more people should look at Will.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: He's very quiet. But in this instance, I followed him out. He asked me to open the gate so we could go out into the garage. He got on his little scooter, and we just spent about fifteen minutes scooting down the sidewalk, around and around, duh, duh, duh, duh, duh. But at some point, when we were about half a block away, we start hearing these...noises from back [laughs] at my house. Like, just this sort of cacophony.

SALLY: Huh?

EMILY: And, through it all, a recorder, like, badly playing.

SALLY: What in the world?

EMILY: Music. And Will and I finally turn around and we, we, we get back and see that they have a box of, like, musical instruments, you know, like little – like a little triangle.

SALLY: My god.

EMILY: My nephew Jack had these little, like, bracelet things with bells on them, but he'd put them around his ankles.

SALLY: Excellent.

EMILY: And my brother-in-law Collins was playing the recorder.

SALLY: Okay.

EMILY: And Jack had just assigned everyone a musical instrument and was just sort of demanding that we all play.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: So we were heralded on our return.

SALLY: Excellent.

EMILY: By this absolute nightmare.

SALLY: Yeah [laughs].

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: Horrible combination of noises. A recorder. A triangle.

EMILY: Jack informed us that the song was called – he'd made – he was like, "This is the song." It was called "Wish You Were Here."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: And Sarah, his mother, my sister, muttered to the rest of us, “I wish I wasn’t here.”

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: So, Juchau shenanigans. Musically.

SALLY: Oh, I can only imagine.

EMILY: It was – I’ll show you a video later.

SALLY: Walking away and just hearing a recorder in the distance.

EMILY: It was haunting.

SALLY: Yeah. [laughs] Like a horror movie.

EMILY: Yeah. Okay everyone, have a good week

SALLY: Bye!