



Episode 221: There's a Gas Leak in Perrin's Subplot

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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: I tried to think of alternative titles for *Knife of Dreams*.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: But all I could think of was "Wife of Dreams" [laughing] for Perrin.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Erm. [valley girl type voice] Guess we'll just get right into this. This is Everybody Hates Rand, your friendly neighborhood *Wheel of Time* podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

SALLY: And I'm Sally Goodger.

EMILY: Heeey, Ed. Come to yell at us?

SALLY: Ed's also mad, because I was writing some thank you cards today for our Patrons and I traced the cat's paws on the back of them.

EMILY: [laughing] That's so good.

SALLY: [laughs] Tybalt does not care about this at all.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Tybalt is, for all of his flaws, extremely malleable ninety-nine percent of the time. He's just like, "Yeah, whatever." Ed would rather commit homicide than be told what to do. So, I was, like, [laughing] wrestling him slamming his – not slamming, you know.

EMILY: Trying to – trying –

SALLY: Holding his little paw on the –

EMILY: To get his little –

SALLY: So, Tybalt let me get, like, his whole arm and there's, like –

EMILY: [laughing]

SALLY: This much, a little inch of Ed's paw. It's pretty funny.

EMILY: Oh, Ed. You can sit on my lap. You just – you gotta stay. You gotta sit and stay. And I'm not getting up to feed you. This is devastating for you, I know. Okay.

[faint purring in the background]

SALLY: Talking about *Wife of Dreams*.

EMILY: Talking about [Borat voice] *Wife of Dreams*. We're here with, um, some of the – two worst people you know and then Egg.

SALLY: And then Egg.

EMILY: And then Egg. In the second half of this prologue.

SALLY: [laughing] Gross.

EMILY: Oh god, Ed. He just slimed – slimed her. Could you just sit?

SALLY: No. Live evidence of how un-malleable Ed is [laughing].

EMILY: [laughs] I know. He does not ever want to go somewhere that he has not already – he's like a toddler.

SALLY: Yeah. You have oppositional defiance disorder, too.

EMILY: You both do. Idiots. Um, the first point of view, in this half of the prologue, is Alviarin's. Um, and we last caught up with her at the pr – at the tail end of *Crossroads of Twilight* after she got – I was about to say evicted. She got fired by Elaida [laughs]. I wish she'd been evicted.

SALLY: She – they’re like, “Get the fuck out.”

EMILY: Just leave the White Tower. They just, like, push her out to the curb with her luggage.

SALLY: They’re throwing stuff out the window.

EMILY: Or with, like, a – one of those – a stick with a –

SALLY: Little bandana

EMILY: Little bandana [laughing] around it.

SALLY: All it has is three days’ rations [laughs].

EMILY: Like, “Get fucked.” The Aes Sedai would do that, I believe.

SALLY: Yeah. Elaida would for sure.

EMILY: Yeah. Anyway, Alviarin’s been fired. She’s been replaced as Keeper. She’s humiliated. She’s constantly having to go get penance, which just means that she’s been beaten every day. Which, like, okay. She’s like, “I have bruises on top of bruises.” And I’m like, “At some point this would become, like, debilitating.”

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You’re Aes Sedai. Like if – if – I don’t endorse beating someone every day, but if you’re going to, it makes sense that you would, like, heal them afterwards.”

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But whatever. The humiliation is part of it, obviously.

SALLY: Yeah. For sure.

EMILY: Um, and we also last saw Alviarin getting told off by Mesaana, but then Mesaana got told off in front of Alviarin by Myrddraal dude.

SALLY: Oh yeah.

EMILY: Who gave Alviarin the Mark of Cain.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: I know we’re joking and that it’s not really the Mark of Cain. It’s just, like, an invisible mark that, like, claims her as his property or whatever, but she keeps, like, touching her forehead. And I’m just like, “Maybe it is like the Mark of Cain. Like in *Supernatural*.”

SALLY: Is it invisible in *Supernatural*?

EMILY: No.

SALLY: [softly] I can't remember that season very well.

EMILY: No one can.

SALLY: Fair point [laughs].

EMILY: No one can remember much of *Supernatural*. It's just sort of a fever dream after they enter the bunker.

SALLY: Oh yeah. The bunker.

EMILY: The goddamn bunker.

[soft purring in the background]

EMILY: Because they got sick of redecorating their motel room set every episode. So funny.

SALLY: It is a pretty funny conceit that they have, like, a home base. And yet they're still going all over the country.

EMILY: Yeah, after, like – when one of the major themes of the show is their transience and their lack of home.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: They're like, "Have a bunker." Okay, this isn't about *Supernatural*.

SALLY: Why isn't it just a house? You know? Why does it have to be a bunk – whatever.

EMILY: Yeah, but Dean Winchester does have the Mark of Cain. He gets it from Detective Lassiter from *Psych*.

SALLY: Oh yeah! Wow.

EMILY: Slash the mean king – the mean, funny, dumb king in *Galavant*.

SALLY: What a career that man has had.

EMILY: I know, right? Anyway. Stay on target. Stay on target! [laughs]

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Um, Alviarin we just see going through the Tower after her daily beating to go to her room. She picks up a secret message hidden behind a tapestry. She goes to her room. She's, like, compulsively touching her forehead for the mark. Everyone she sees is, like, bullying her like girls in high school.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Which, like, it's the classic Robert Jordan conceit of "look how mean women get their just desserts, you know?"

[soft purring in the background]

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: It's hard to feel bad for Alviarin when she has bullied literally everyone she's ever met, but also, Robert Jordan stop.

SALLY: Yeah. Yeah. You're so right. Every group of women we see in the series act like they're in middle school.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Like, they have no concept of how to, like, treat a colleague.

EMILY: Yeah, it's like Robert Jordan has never interacted with an adult woman or something. I don't know what's going on with him. Back in her room she, like, decodes the message, which I think is just about how, like, this is now the day after the big Black Ajah meeting, so when T – Talene didn't show up and was seen leaving the Tower, in fact, with, like, her luggage. Her little kerchief on a stick. Which, I don't know if that's real or not, or if she's being hidden in the basement and that was just, like, an elaborate –

SALLY: Illusion.

EMILY: Façade of some kind.

SALLY: [laughing] She's being hidden in the basement.

EMILY: That's what they said they were gonna do to her [laughs]. Maybe they have a bunker down there.

[car loudly racing past in the background]

SALLY: Every week.

EMILY: Goddman. That dude [laughs].

SALLY: [laughing] I hate him. It's probably Erik.

EMILY: It is probably Erik. Our nemesis. [laughing] The listeners are like, "Who the fuck is Erik?" We don't know.

SALLY: Erik is potentially our neighbor.

EMILY: Who knows, though? His name might not really be Erik.

SALLY: He does have a vanity license plate that says Erik, but.

EMILY: And I persist it would be a very funny bit to have a vanity license plate that does not have your name on it.

SALLY: That's not your name.

EMILY: Like, imagine if I had a vanity license plate that said Britney.

SALLY: [laughs] That would be amazing.

EMILY: [laughing] And it was like, "Hey Britney." Be like, "Who?"

SALLY: "Who's Britney?"

EMILY: Who's Britney? It's my car's name.

SALLY: [laughing] That's his car's name.

EMILY: Yeah, maybe Erik is the name of the car.

SALLY: Well, that's my new – we'll start calling Erik the person "Erik's dad."

EMILY: [laughs] Erik's dad.

SALLY: [laughing] Erik is the – I don't even know what type of car it is.

EMILY: It's annoying is what it is.

SALLY: Yeah. Erik's dad – Erik's dad is a bastard.

EMILY: Anyway, the Black Ajah are like, "What's going on with Talene?" And Alviarin has her suspicions about the group, you know, Yukiri and Doseine, and now she's getting these messages like, "Yeah, they sleep in warded rooms." And Alviarin's like, "That basically doesn't mean shit, because I effectively ensured that everyone in the White Tower is paranoid and hates

each other, so everyone sleeps with wards.” But she’s just like, “But I’m really hoping to, like, kidnap one of them and interrogate them or something.”

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, hashtag prayers for Yukirie, Doseine, Pevara, Seaine. All the ladies. Saerin.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Um, we then switch over to Galina. Tragically.

SALLY: [sighs] This is...a point of view.

EMILY: It’s –

SALLY: This is a point of view.

EMILY: It’s sure something.

SALLY: It’s real, real rough.

EMILY: She’s on a little ride, um, on her horse. Just for recreational purposes. She’s like, “Yeah, I can go on my horse because I’m this privileged *gai’shain*, but also if I’m thirty seconds late, Therava will torture me.” So, you know. Freedom is relative.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, and she’s just, like, fantasizing about how she wants to kill everyone and make everyone pay. And it’s just like, okay. Whatever.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: How her life is miserable and she just – she like – she’s like, “I’m given this much freedom because they know I’ll come back, because they have the Oath Rod and I need to the Oath Rod to ever be able to channel without permission.” Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Galina’s life is so miserable, and I don’t care.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Not because Galina’s a bad person, because Robert Jordan has been slapping me in the face with the “Galina’s life is miserable” schtick for the last six books.

SALLY: [whispers] Yeah.

EMILY: And I don’t care!

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Anyway, Galina is riding along when Gaul steps out of the trees and grabs her horse. And is like, “Hewwo?” And she’s like, “How dare you? Don’t you know I’m Therava’s special bitch?”

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: “And I have this necklace and belt thing that proves it.” And Gaul’s like, “Eh?”

SALLY: Huh?

EMILY: “This seems like a strange – this is – ”

SALLY: Hmm.

EMILY: Hmm.

SALLY: Bunch of Shaído nonsense if you ask me.

EMILY: Yeah [laughs]. This seems stupid.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: I’ll just kidnap this woman and find out what’s going on.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So he basically, like, throws a sack over her head. Or her hood, I think, which I’m like, “Dude, nice big hood.” Because he also stuffs it in her mouth.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Anyway, then Neald shows up.

SALLY: What a dynamic duo.

EMILY: [laughing] I know. Gaul and Neald. And is like, “Gaul, are you sure that, like, we should – shouldn’t we, like, capture some more people?” And Gaul’s like, “No, I think this one will probably, like, have some info for us.” And Neald’s like, “Why?” And Gaul’s like, “Well she’s an Aes Sedai.” And Neald’s like, “Okay. Well, she’s not channeling, so not a big deal.”

[soft purring in the background]

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Anyway, Gaul's like, "Take me to one of your holes." And I'm like, "What a pickup line" [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs] They would be a good couple, I think.

BOTH: Gaul and Neald.

EMILY: Would be verry funny. Gaul unionizes with Grady and Neald.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And they become a throuple.

SALLY: Oh! That's ideal. If Gaul's gonna enter a throuple. Bain and Chiad who?

EMILY: [laughing] It's gonna be Grady and Neald. Yeah. Gaul's doomed to be in a throuple.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But whether it's Bain and Chiad or Grady and Neald is a matter for –

SALLY: Debate.

EMILY: This history books, yeah.

SALLY: Bye, Ed.

EMILY: Bye, Ed. Um and Neald's like, "Yeah. I can make a gateway over there." So, Galina has no idea what's going on. She's, like, upended on – over her horse. But she is taken for a small distance. She's, of course, panicking already about getting back to Therava on time. She's like, "Oh my god. They're going to take me to their camp four days away or whatever, and then I'll be dead, basically." But then, like, thirty second later they're like, "We're here!" And she's like, "What the fuck?" [laughing]

SALLY: [spluttering] What?

EMILY: His magic holes.

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: [laughing] Neald's like, "That's my Grindr bio."

SALLY: That's his user name. MagicHoles69 [laughs].

EMILY: It's like Magic Mike, but Magic Holes.

SALLY: Yeah, Magic Holes.

EMILY: Um, and they, you know, have her hose be taken away and they take her to Perrin's tent, where Perrin is conferring with Berelain and the, like, main Ghealdanin guy. I think Alliandre's guard.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Can't even remember his name at this point. Arganda?

SALLY: Yeah, I think that's right.

EMILY: Yeah, not that Galina ever knows his name, either. I think Grady's also there.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Anyway, they roll up and are like, "Look at this Aes Sedai we found, but she hasn't been channeling at us and she claims she's *gai'shain*. We don't know what the deal is." And Galina's like, "*Perrin Aybara*? What the fuckening?"

SALLY: Yeah [laughs]

EMILY: "What's happening?" And he's like, "Yeah. Where's [Borat voice] my wife?" And she's like, "Your wife is under my protection." And he's like, "...Okay."

SALLY: That means nothing to me. Where is she?

EMILY: That means nothing to me [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Yeah. Your protection is meaningless to me.

SALLY: I don't even know who you are.

EMILY: Yeah, who are you, bitch?

SALLY: Why would that matter?

EMILY: She's like, "My name is...Alyse." Which I'm pretty sure is the exact same alias Moiraine used back in *Eye of the World* so just, like, is there like a – is there like a night school for Aes Sedai about how to pass in public, you know?

SALLY: Mm-hmm. They're like, "There are a million Alyses. Just use that."

EMILY: Yeah. They're like, "You're all named Alyse and you all are mean" [laughs].

SALLY: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

EMILY: “To the public [laughs] and to everyone.”

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: “And that’s the trick to getting people to leave you alone.” And it’s actually, like, people remember mean people more, actually.

SALLY: Yeah, like, unfortunately, but yeah. Someone’s mean to me that day I’m gonna think about it way more than someone who was nice to me.

EMILY: Yeah. Anyway, it’s just this, like, stupid conversation where Galina is like, “Yeah. I just need – I’m doing business in the camp.” She’s trying to, like, save face and not be like, “I’m a prisoner, please rescue me.” Because, for whatever reason, she just wants to get out of this on her own.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Because women are stupid.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um. And they just don’t ever want a man to save them, especially a man-hating lesbian like Galina.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Goddamn. And Galina this entire time is like, “I can’t wait to kill Faile the second [laughs] I have the opportunity.”

SALLY: I know. It’s so weird.

EMILY: And it’s like, duh duh duh duh. We have no idea how much Perrin believes her about any of this.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But he does both discreetly and not discreetly get some information from her that is information he needs and wants to plan this attack. For example, he asks like, “I’ve heard about, um, drunkenness in the camp. Do the Wise Ones also drink?” And Galina’s like, “No, the Wise Ones only drink water.” And Perrin’s like, “Check.”

SALLY: I shall poison the water supply.

EMILY: Yeah, my plan to poison the water supply is a go. And, like, he's asking about logistics. Do people go in and out of the city? Does she know where Faile sleeps? She lies and is like, "No." And it's, like, she's not very helpful. It's a little annoying. I mean everything about this entire scenario is annoying.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: We have no way of knowing whether Perrin, or I suppose we might have a way of knowing later in the book, but it is not clear to us whether Perrin is taking words at face value, whether he's fact checking with other random kidnapped victims.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Duh duh duh duh. It seems likely that if, like, they could kidnap a couple other *gai'shain*, especially the *gai'shain* who have been – like who were, who were villagers. Native – the native population of Malden. Like, if you could capture some of them and be like, "Give me all the info you know." They'd be like, "Yeah, fuck, just don't return me."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know? Like...

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Why would you ever, at this point, trust the word of an Aes Sedai? She's like, "You have to believe me because of the Oath Rod." And I'm like, "Every time I've seen an Aes Sedai be like, 'You have to believe me because of the Oath Rod' she's Black Ajah."

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: None of the other ones are like –

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Just believe me.

SALLY: Just believe me. I can't lie.

EMILY: As they lie.

SALLY: [laughing] She said, like a liar.

EMILY: I can't lie, she lied [laughs].

SALLY: Yeah. Um, no it's, like, it's – this whole thing is very frustrating one, because it continues this very poor characterization of Galina as just, like, [sighs] a lesbian coded or

canonical, I can't remember at this point, character who is so egregiously masculine that she can't ask for help, or whatever. You know? Like, it's ridiculous. It also puts her back in the hands of her torturers, which seems silly. Like, I – I know – I really don't understand why Galina needs to get out of this on her own. I guess to try and avoid being outed as Black Ajah or whatever. But, like, if you were being that violently abused, it kind of – unless you have very intense Stockholm Syndrome – it kind of seems a little unbelievable to me that she would go back under any circumstances.

EMILY: Yeah. She's like, "I – you just need to give me a few more days because I'm close to finishing my business." Which is getting Faile or one of the others to get the Oath Rod for her. And it's like you're now with this guy who, like, you know for a fact led or was part of the attack on Dumai's Wells that absolutely wrecked your shit.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Even if you underestimate him and you're like, "There's no way he can do this." I would be like, "Hmm. There's maybe a chance he could do this." And if I tell him, "Here's where your wife is. In exchange I need you to get the fucking Oath Rod for me." He'd probably do it.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Or do as – or do it as well as anyone else could, you know?

SALLY: Yeah. It also like – I know Aes Sedai pride is, like, a really big deal, but Berelain is like, "Do you want to talk to the other Aes Sedai in the camp?"

EMILY: And she's like –

BOTH: No.

EMILY: I don't want them to know my business.

SALLY: But it's like if you told any Aes Sedai that one of the Shaido made you swear on a different Oath Rod, I think they would all be extremely upset about that and willing to help rectify it? Like, the Oath Rod is apparently such a big deal that Egg's decision to make people un-swear on it nearly Romanda an aneurysm, you know? Like.

EMILY: Oh Jesus, yeah.

SALLY: Apparently, it's a really big deal. So, I just don't really get it. It's more decision making, particularly in Perrin's plot, that doesn't make a lot of sense to me, and only really serves to drag the plot out for...the rest of this book.

EMILY: Yeah, it – like – and it's more middle school girl behavior.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, Galina's main motivation for not wanting to talk to these people seems to be that they are on the different side of the White Tower schism.

SALLY: Oh yeah.

EMILY: But it's like at this point why would that matter to you?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, who cares? You've been fantasizing about throttling Elaida with your bare hands, so why does it matter to you? But, yeah, it's legitimately just like there's a gas leak in Perrin's subplot, you know?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Everyone's behaving absurdly.

SALLY: Mm-hmm. [laughing] There's a gas leak.

EMILY: [laughs] Except Grady and Neald, who are doing their best. Um, and yeah. It's just the usual. I don't know.

SALLY: Yeah, it just is – it's not worth, you know, beating the dead horse any further, but it – you're right. There is a gas leak. Everyone is behaving really irrationally and so we continue ever onward.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Towards the – the eventual attack on Malden.

EMILY: [sighs]

SALLY: We have not yet made our deal with the devil, aka the Seanchan, so why would we make any forward progress?

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Until that has happened.

EMILY: As Galina walks in she, like, hears Perrin or Arganda or someone being like, "Jesus, how hard is it to get a meeting with these people?" And I'm like, "Maybe the first time it didn't go through, you should have stopped."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: This is just telling me that you keep trying, which is even more humiliating for you.

SALLY: Yeah. How deep can your grave be?

EMILY: Yeah, and Perrin is just like, you know, there's nothing new about Perrin. He's dressed fancy, he's got his wolf eyes, he's like [dramatic voice], "Tell Faile that on the day when the wolves howl [laughing] or whatever, I'm coming for her."

SALLY: When the fog hits and the wolves howl.

EMILY: Yeah. And Galina's like, "Yeah, of course I'll tell her." And it's like, Perrin, your wife's not stupid. If she can hear wolves howling, she'd be like –

SALLY: That's my husband.

EMILY: [valley girl voice] That's my husband!

SALLY: My wolf boy husband.

EMILY: [valley girl voice] My wolf boy husband is on the way!

SALLY: Also, like, I know Galina is a total asshole, but Perrin is such a dick to her.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: [laughing] It's, like, unbelievable. Like, not saying she deserves, like, a modicum, necessarily, of common courtesy, given what she's done, but Perrin is basically like, "Fuck you immediately."

EMILY: Perrin doesn't know what she's done!

SALLY: Yeah, that's true.

EMILY: He's just like – for all he knows this is a random captive.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: I mean, unless he really does take her at face value that she's just an Aes Sedai wandering through this subplot, but also happens to be wearing the uniform of all of the captive population. Like, how stupid would you have to be, Perrin?

SALLY: Yeah, to be like –

EMILY: To believe this. You'd just be like, "Okay, there's something clearly fucked with this woman."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: She's not polite to him, either. But that's –

SALLY: Sure.

EMILY: Par for the course with Aes Sedai. Perrin, at this point, it's interesting that his new strategy for that is just that I'll be as rude as possible to them in return.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And I'm like, "Oh great. Yeah, that will improve the situation."

SALLY: Yeah, it's just like – yeah. I think in general – in general, Aes Sedai are extremely rude to the general public so you kinda reap what you sow, you know?

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: But, like, Perrin you want to ask this woman for help. She is, even if she is, like you said, taken at face value she elected to be a prisoner of war, that does not mean she doesn't get treated like a prisoner of war.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: [laughs] Like, she's obviously been going through it if she's held captive in this camp where you know they are committing human rights violations whenever they want.

EMILY: Yeah, and also you just kidnapped her and had her thrown over the back of a horse.

SALLY: That's true.

EMILY: Blindfolded and gagged, so, like, you're not on the moral high ground very far up. You know, you're about three centimeters higher on the morality mountain.

SALLY: Yeah. Yeah, like Berelain has –

EMILY: Which is left of candy mountain.

SALLY: [laughs] Which is left of candy mountain. Berelain is the only person acting sort of...decent, where she's like, "Hey, Aes Sedai, can I, like, get you some fucking water?" Like [laughs]. I don't know.

EMILY: And Galina's like, "No, no, no." The is like, Galina is like, "I need you to punch me," to Perrin for some reason. Like, again, it's just people behaving so stupidly.

SALLY: And Perrin is like, “I will be extremely rude to you, but I draw the line [laughing] at domestic violence.” Or whatever.

EMILY: [laughs] I know, but also she’s like, “This is a big man.” She says that. So, like, if you’re in a tent full of people and you’re like, “I need someone to hit me hard enough to leave visible marks. I’m going to choose the person who’s not also likely to shatter my skull.”

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know?

SALLY: Yeah, it’s ridiculous.

EMILY: Like, “Hey, Neald.”

SALLY: Hey, Neald.

EMILY: You flimsy motherfucker [laughs]. Could you punch me?

SALLY: With your limp wrists?

EMILY: He’s like, “Do do do do do.” But then Berelain steps up and is like, “I’d love to punch an Aes Sedai,” [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, and almost knocks her out, basically.

EMILY: Yeah. Hashtag iconic Berelain moments.

SALLY: Yeah, good for her.

EMILY: God, she vacillates wildly between being the worst character in the book and the best.

SALLY: I know.

EMILY: It’s so frustrating.

SALLY: How does she do it?

EMILY: So, Galina, of course, goes back to camp. She’s late. Therava doesn’t care about her bruises. Therava tortures her. End of –

SALLY: I just feel like – I know this is like – speaking of Pe – the gas leak is hitting me, because I know this isn’t logical, is a llogical – is *not* a logical thing to say, but the amount of torture that Therava does, like what is fun about that to you?

EMILY: What is – does she – like, how many hours – ?

SALLY: That's another good point! How many hours a day do you have to just torture people? Everyone that upsets you?

EMILY: We all have the same twenty-four hours in a day –

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: As Beyoncé, as Therava [laughing].

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: Torturing Galina non-stop. But, like, seriously. She's like – she's like Jigsaw, constantly coming up with new and inventive, terrible ways to torture Galina. And I'm like, "I simply don't believe Galina is the first victim of hers."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, has Therava, like, left a wake of dead bodies behind her?

SALLY: Yeah, like, what type of sociopath is running through the Shaido?

EMILY: Stupid.

SALLY: It's really bizarre.

EMILY: Anyway, we then switch over to Egg who, like, wakes up, drugged, in a carriage.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Between a bunch of Aes Sedai who have successfully kidnapped her and are taking her to the White Tower. This is a long point of view, but it doesn't really, like, need to be.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, because Egg is mostly just confused by the things she's encountering in the White Tower that we, the reader, are already familiar with.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Like Egg is like, "Jesus, everyone is at each other's throats. The Ajahs are, like, afraid of each other. This is super fucked up. What's wrong with Elaida that this is happening?" And it's like yeah, we already know all about that.

SALLY: Yeah, we – yeah.

EMILY: We lived through it unfortunately.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Anyway, they're all like – the Red Ajah is kind of, like, in charge of her and they're like, "Yeah, obviously Elaida is going to have you executed immediately." And Egg's like, "Okay!" And they're like, "Um, you're supposed to be crying or something." And she's like, "No."

SALLY: No. I will not give you the response you want.

EMILY: Yeah, no. I am dignified. I am dignity incarnate. And they're just like, "Okay. That's frustrating." And they're like, "What did you fucking do to the harbor chains?" And she's like, "Oh, I turned it into *cuendillar*, so good luck getting past that."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And she also finds out that Leanne has been captured, that Leanne successfully, uh, transformed half of the harbor chain.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Not the full one, so that only, they assume, very small vessels will be able to get through. Um, Leanne was, was able to do this basically because she inverted her weave so they wouldn't, like, see what she was doing, or that she was channeling. Which, I think, is something they learned from Moghedien. And of course – [laughs] she's like, "I'm Leanne Sharif. I'm of the Green Ajah." And they're like, "No, you're not!"

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: "That's identity theft."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: What the fuck?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: She's like, "No, no, no. Really." And when they mention it to Egg, Egg's like, "Yeah, that really is Leanne. She was stilled and now she's been healed. You could easily verify this by asking questions only Leanne would know and they're like, "Oh. We don't have a working brain in our heads, so. Okay."

SALLY: Interesting. No one thought of that one.

EMILY: No one thought of that. Somehow.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Um, but they bring Egg into the Tower, where they're greeted by Nicola [laughs] who is now a Novice in the White Tower and is like, "Oh, this is awkward."

SALLY: Yeah, and Nicola is like, "I'm so sorry, Mother." That's what she calls Egg and gets basically flicked on the nose.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And they're like, "Don't call her that." She's like, "I'm so sorry. I thought they would let me do more channeling and, um, oh how the turn tables."

EMILY: And –

SALLY: And now she's like a messenger.

EMILY: Yeah, now she's just a stupid Novice still.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And Egg's like, "Did you think that we didn't pick up our practices from somewhere, you know?" Like?

SALLY: Yeah, like there's a reason.

EMILY: Yeah. It's, like, worse at the White Tower. Anyway, Egg's like, "Whatever, Nicola. You stupid asshole."

SALLY: "Get fucked [laughs]. I'm not sparing you another thought."

EMILY: Um, but they are told that, um, Egg is supposed to be taking to Sivliana, who is the new Mistress of the Novices. Maybe not new. She might have been the Mistress of the Novices this entire time under Elaida. I can't remember.

SALLY: I can't either.

EMILY: Um. I guess she must have been. We haven't heard of any replacements.

SALLY: She's new for Egg, anyway.

EMILY: New for Egg. Yeah. And Egg is taken to see her. Um...sorry just trying to remember.

SALLY: You're fine.

EMILY: I remember Egg takes out her handkerchief to, like, wipe some blood away and I was like, “Where’d the blood come from?” I can’t remember.

SALLY: Oh, she gets slapped really hard a couple of times.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Is that it?

EMILY: Maybe? I don’t know.

SALLY: Like, slapped hard enough for your mouth to bleed is pretty fucking hard.

EMILY: Yeah, this is Katherine, who was also at Dumai’s Wells, I believe.

SALLY: Oh yeah. She’s a real fun time.

EMILY: Yeah. Just a delight.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Anyway, Silviana is, um, Red Ajah. We don’t know much about her thus far. She seems, um, to be...more reasonable than Elaida, you know? She at least has a head on her shoulders and isn’t acting in an unhinged way. It is unfortunate that she is the disciplinarian in a system which Robert Jordan has built to humiliate women.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: But, you know, she takes her job seriously. She’s like, “I will beat you very hard, because it reduces the amount of time people have to come into my office, if they’re afraid to be beaten again.” Which, like, yeah solid logic. Silviana’s in the unenviable position, in my opinion, of being the principal, you know?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And it’s, like, you shouldn’t have to be a principal in a, like, in a society of adult women.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: That’s stupid, but Silviana is not the type of character to question her position or anything like that. Not that anyone in *The Wheel of Time* really would. So, all that said, I think the system is gross. I think Silviana herself is fine. I think it’s interesting to watch her and Egg come to a sort of understanding and mutual respect.

SALLY: Yeah. No, that's a good point. I've never thought much about Silviana as a character. Um.

EMILY: Yeah, she's kind of bland. I only think of her at all, because she's, like, slightly more important in Egg's arc as the books go on.

SALLY: Mm.

EMILY: As she was described I was like, "If I was going to cast *Wheel of Time*, I would [laughing] have her be cast as the me – [laughs] the mean nun in *Derry Girls*."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: [laughing] I think that would be so funny. Egg comes in and she's just, like, sitting there, unimpressed.

SALLY: Unimpressed. God, I love the mean nun. Sister George-Michael.

EMILY: [laughing] Sister George-Michael.

SALLY: [laughing] Um.

EMILY: Sister Michael is the funniest character.

SALLY: She really is the best.

EMILY: On television.

SALLY: Um, yeah No, I'm just gonna be thinking about her. That is a really interesting sort of quandary. Not really a quandary because she doesn't seem all that upset about it, but it is an interesting position to hold as – just what you said, like, the disciplinarian of adult women is just, like, a – like the Mistress of Novices is, of course, supposed to only be dealing with *Novices*.

EMILY: But the Novices themselves are, at the very youngest, like, what? Fifteen or sixteen?

SALLY: Yeah, and so that is also a little ridiculous. Like they are, um, late teenaged. They should be behaving a little – a little better.

EMILY: Yeah, and they're also being given corporal punishment, which is just, like, ridiculous.

SALLY: ...Yeah. Um. Don't hit anybody.

EMILY: Yeah.

BOTH: Don't do a hit.

SALLY: Especially don't hit children, but so the idea – the whole idea of it being, like, if we take the corporal punishment and just, like, put it on the side for a second, it's not unbelievable that there would be a principal for the fifteen- to eighteen-year-olds or whatever.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: But the fact that Elaid is using this woman to routinely beat adult women is so bizarre.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: And everyone's like, "That's Elaida, haha!"

EMILY: That's Elaida! Ha! It's just Alviarin. And Egg, I guess.

SALLY: Yeah. Um, but importantly they – Elaida is taking the stance that Egg has been used as a figurehead and therefore they are just going to treat her like she's never left and is still a Novice.

EMILY: Yeah. She's being re-entered into the Novice books.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Her Aes Sedai ring has been taken away and Egg is like – without really articulating that this is her strategy, she hasn't really, like, named it a strategy yet – she's kind of like, "I'm not going to – I'm not going to adapt to this situation by conforming to what they want me to be." You know?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: "I'm going to continue to behave as though I am the Amyrlin Seat, just the Amyrlin Seat in captivity."

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Which she recognizes immediately is going to get her in a lot of trouble.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: With Silviana included and everyone else who comes in contact with her and is like, "God this is annoying." [laughs]

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But it just becomes, like, ludicrous at some point, because Egg will be getting sent to the Mistress of Novices like eight times a day.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And Silviana's just like [sound of hands slapping legs], "Again? I have other people I have to see."

SALLY: Yeah. And so...one, I mean, it is a relatively effective strategy, you know? Egg's like, "I'm not going to let them sort of discredit the rebellion by saying I'm not a true Amyrlin Seat." You know?

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: She's like, "I'm going to hold that line. That's very important." And I guess, you know, it is politically. [laughs] It also becomes a way to just like completely fuck the internal workings of the White Tower when she's just like being kicked out of every class, being sent to the Mistress of the Novices like eight times a day, where Silviana's just like, "This is untenable. I cannot *beat* you eight times a day. This is ridiculous."

EMILY: Yeah, and Egg's also just like, "What are you going to do? Beat me again?" Like, at a certain point it stops mattering.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: She's like, "I'm gonna do the Aiel way of embracing the pain." And I'm like, "Okay, whatever. I don't care about that." But I do believe that if you're being spanked nine times a day that after a certain point you'd be like –

SALLY: What's ten times a day?

EMILY: Yeah, alright! Whatever.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know? It becomes a little bit meaningless.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So yeah. Egg is just ma – waging psychological warfare on the White Tower.

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: Which is pretty fun.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And will be fun to watch. Um, as she leaves – Silviana also informs her like, "You're going to be given a very small dose of forkroot, like, every hour on the hour to ensure you can't

do big channeling. But, you know, you still can do enough to, like, be in Novice classes and whatever. And you're going to be supervised pretty routinely. Um, because we're supposed to take you seriously." And Egg is like, "Well, you're the highest authority here so I need to warn you that I'm a Dreamer and I had a dream that the Seanchan are going to attack." And everyone's like [buzzes lips], except Silviana, to her credit, is like, "Noted." [laughs]

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: I will pass it up the chain. The Seanchan are a serious threat. I don't know how they would get here, but sure.

SALLY: I'll tell Elaida.

EMILY: Yeah, fair –

SALLY: For what that's worth.

EMILY: For what that's worth, seriously.

SALLY: Might as well tell the dirt.

EMILY: And then Egg is taken to, like, a Novice room and she's back – right back to *The Great Hunt*. Here we go.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Except she's not roommates with Elayne, or whatever. Um and she gets ready to sleep and dream to alert Siuan to what has happened.

SALLY: [singing] Getting right back to where we –

BOTH: [singing] Started from. Oh oh.

EMILY: [humming a few more bars] So, that's the prologue [laughs].

SALLY: So that's the prologue. I'm sorry if you've heard my knuckles crack a bunch in the background. My hands are sort of falling apart as the cold strikes.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Um. That's the prologue. We did it.

EMILY: We did it!

SALLY: It's a little less painful, I think, than the *Crossroads of Twilight* prologue. Um.

EMILY: I can't even remember the *Crossroads of Twilight* prologue.

SALLY: I can't either, except for Ituralde.

EMILY: Yeah, Ituralde. Bashere is in it, too.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Dobraine almost dies.

SALLY: [sighs] Oh, that's right. That's why it's so painful. Dobraine, my beloved. Um.

EMILY: And this prologue does – this prologue has the usual Robert Jordan prologue flaws. The stuff with Egg, for example, and to a lesser extent Galina, are not necessarily good fits for a prologue.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: They're just sort of first chapter, second chapter material.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: We're now just getting into the book. Um, everything prior to that, I think, it's fine to have Ituralde routinely positioned in the prologue.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Fucking up the Seanchan, because he's so far removed from everyone else. But, like, the other stuff doesn't need to be. Pevara's just a classic White Tower point of view. Every time we're there I expect a point of view from her. Same with Alviarin.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Galad, I think is a fine prologue, because again, we're not returning to the Whitecloaks –

SALLY: We haven't seen him in a hundred years.

EMILY: Yeah, but for the most part this prologue should have been much shorter. Robert Jordan is just a criminal. So.

SALLY: That's true.

EMILY: It wasn't.

SALLY: He is a criminal. I'm gonna write up a rap sheet for him.

EMILY: [laughs] For your crimes.

SALLY: For your crimes. We'll hang it right above us and put little tally marks as we record.

EMILY: Writing crimes. Jesus, well we should have started that eleven books ago.

SALLY: I'll have to go back through all of them.

EMILY: [laughs] Stop.

SALLY: It'll be a nine-hundred-page rap sheet.

EMILY: Terrifying prospect.

SALLY: Torturing women: six hundred pages.

EMILY: Torture porn.

SALLY: Of crimes.

EMILY: But yeah, you guys.

SALLY: We did it.

EMILY: That's the prologue.

SALLY: That's *Knife of Dreams* [laughs].

EMILY: [laughs] That's *Knife of Dreams*. The end. We're just gonna – we'll summarize Malden in five seconds or less. Um, Perrin wins. The end.

SALLY: Perrin wins, but at what cost? [laughs]

EMILY: But at what cost?

SALLY: Um.

EMILY: Not that big of a cost [rest is unclear].

SALLY: Yeah, apparently it's not that big deal to just sort of like –

EMILY: NBD. Aram's dead? Who cares?

SALLY: [slowly] Oh yeah.

EMILY: [cackles] Spoilers.

SALLY: [laughing] I forgot about that. That's so random.

EMILY: Forgot about Aram. He wasn't in the prologue.

SALLY: Yeah, he's been kicked out of the tent for his psychological instability.

EMILY: This cover is at least, um, accurate.

SALLY: Mm.

EMILY: Except – because I guess Grady is there. It just doesn't show Neald or Berelain, who I assume are behind –

SALLY: [laughs] Gaul.

EMILY: [laughing] Gaul. Hiding behind Gaul.

SALLY: Neald is just like –

EMILY: Du du du.

SALLY: Neald would fit perfectly behind Gaul. He's just – I imagine him so slim.

EMILY: They call him "reedy," which I think is such a funny –

SALLY: That is funny.

EMILY: Um, word.

SALLY: He's all muscle and very skinny.

EMILY: Just a skinny little mustachioed man.

SALLY: I love you, Neald. [laughs] What a good character.

EMILY: Okay. We'll be back next week.

SALLY: You betcha.

EMILY: With the first couple chapters, um, as we deal with basically more White Tower and also, like, rebel Aes Sedai stuff. We'll be with Siuan and, you know, Elaida. People like that. Um, and then I think we'll get a point of view from all of the bad guys. Morridin.

SALLY: Mm. Bad guy check in.

EMILY: Bad guy check in. Yep. So, that's on the agenda. Until then, thank you for listening. Thank you to Glynna Mackenzie for our theme song. Thanks to our patrons on Patreon and our followers on social media.

SALLY: Yeah! You guys are the best!

EMILY: Yeah. Anything to add?

SALLY: No.

EMILY: [in a very bad Australian accent] Naur.

SALLY: Naur!

EMILY: Naur. Um, great. Do you have a sign off?

SALLY: Yeah! Um, today – I have a work cell phone, which I hate. Do not...call me.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: [laughs] Do not reach me. [laughs]Do not beep me.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: And I'm doing some, like, grant monitoring so, like, somebody called me today and I didn't know the number, so, like, I answered, you know? Thinking it was the person that I'm monitoring asking questions. And it was *the* most random phone call. It was a woman who worked at another, um, County agency who was like, "I need to talk to you about a client in crisis at one of our properties." And I was like [frantic whispering], "How did you get my number?"

EMILY: [laughs] What the fuck?

SALLY: "I work in the grants department. I can absolutely not assist you with this?" And she was like, "Oh, I was just going down the employee directory on your website and just calling numbers until somebody picked up." And I was like, "Did you call property management?" And she was like, "Yeah, they didn't answer, which is why I'm just calling whoever I can." And then I, like, looked at our employee directory. I am, like, two-thirds of the way down the page.

EMILY: AHHH!

SALLY: So, I do not know [laughs] how many of my colleagues she called who were just like, "No." [laughs]

EMILY: I mean in this day and age.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Political calls left and right.

SALLY: Yeah, so I spent, like, twenty-five minutes helping this woman and I could not help her. I was just like, “You have to call this person.”

EMILY: Jesus.

SALLY: And she was like, “Okay!”

EMILY: That’s so sad and funny. Two-thirds down –

SALLY: Yeah! I was like, “How [laughing] many people did you call?”

EMILY: Okay, everyone. Have a good week!

SALLY: Bye!