



Episode 249: On This Episode of Supernatural...

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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 don't actually really know what to say about this sort of sitcom-ish –

SALLY: Yeah I was –

EMILY: Series of chapters.

SALLY: I really was reading it and I was like, "This feels like a late season episode of *Teen Wolf*."

EMILY: Or *Supernatural*.

SALLY: Oh! *Supernatural* is better. You're right. *Teen Wolf* is a classier version.

EMILY: Yeah, it's about that level of dialogue, too, I would say.

SALLY: Yo, it's so bad. And apparently Talmanes is now some sort of cartoon-esque, jaw drops when he sees a woman-esque figure.

EMILY: That was so offensive to me. I was like, "Talmanes is gay" [laughing].

SALLY: During Pride month? [laughs] During Pride month, Brandon?

EMILY: [laughs] But literally, we've never seen Talmanes express any interest in women before. And, like, maybe it's not because it's – he's queer coded. Maybe it's just because he's a very polite person.

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: But, like –

SALLY: But either way you have tanked a integral – [different pronunciation] integral, integral part of his character.

EMILY: Yeah, there's a lot of stuff like that in these chapters. So, this is Everybody Hates Rand. Everybody Hates Mat in this chapter.

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: It's rough. Um, your friendly neighborhood *Wheel of Time* podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

SALLY: And I'm Sally Goodger.

EMILY: And here we are to talk about...this episode of *Supernatural*.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Um, Dean Winchester, played by Mat Cauthon. Castiel isn't in this one, which means, which you know means it's gonna be a lame one.

SALLY: Yeah, a bad one.

EMILY: Like, literally, I've watched all of *Supernatural*, that's something I'm both proud and ashamed of.

SALLY: Sure.

EMILY: Because I think it says a lot about both my sense of commitment and my sense of commitment.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Um [laughs], both affectionate and derogatory. But it's, like, literally you'll be looking at IMDb and you'll be like, "Ugh, Castiel isn't in this one."

SALLY: Castiel isn't even in this one. Why am I watching?

EMILY: God, it's gonna be boring. Better pull out Twitter while I'm in this one. So.

SALLY: Yeah, I guess Talmanes would be Sam? Is that right?

EMILY: Yeah, he's kind of like, "I told you so!"

SALLY: I did some actual research while you were gambling!

EMILY: Yeah, I'm the common sense, ex-lawyer. [sound in the background] Tybalt. Tybalt's been having –

SALLY: Ex law student. Sam Winchester doesn't have a law degree.

EMILY: [laughing] Yeah, excuse me. Yeah!

SALLY: He acts like he does [laughs].

EMILY: He does have a Bachelor's degree, I assume, which is more than Dean can say.

SALLY: Yeah, Dean is illiterate.

EMILY: Dean might – I don't –

SALLY: [laughs] Have we ever seen him read?

EMILY: Is there like a Guns & Ammo magazine [laughs] that he could be reading?

SALLY: Yeah, probably. Busty Beauties or whatever the fuck.

EMILY: Ew!

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Busty Beauties. Joline.

SALLY: What is that from?

EMILY: That's Joline. [singing] Jolene! Jolene!

SALLY: Jolene!

EMILY: We haven't made a Jolene joke in quite a while. [page flips] Tybalt's being insane and it's because...we don't know why. But currently the only thing that soothes him, as well as the thing that makes him crazy, is our...is the giant tunnel.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: What's it made out of? It's like a –

SALLY: Oh, it's such a weird fabric. It's like a, it's like –

EMILY: It's, like, a collapsible little tunnel.

SALLY: [whispering] Yeah, what would that be?

EMILY: It's synthetic material.

SALLY: Yeah. And it, like, makes this little rustling sound that he loves. I feel like I – he is the Frankenstein's monster that I have created, because he was beating the shit out of Ed on the weekend [laughs] and Ed is sickly right now, so I was –

EMILY: Yeah, Ed's an ailing – Ed's like John Keats.

SALLY: [laughing] Yeah, Ed is a little boy with glass bones disease right now, so he can't exactly wrestle. So I was like, "Perhaps this will soothe your need for stimulation." Um, and he was like, "No, now this is my emotional support tunnel." [laughs]

EMILY: Yeah, you come downstairs and you're like, "Where's Tybalt? Surely, he can't be in the tunnel, which has been flattened."

SALLY: Yeah [laughs].

EMILY: And then you kind of get down on ground level and there his little eyes are, peering at you.

SALLY: So, he's lost his marbles. But, did he ever have them?

EMILY: This is a total sidebar. It might go in the blooper reel. But I was reading this week about how Percy Shelley predicted his own death by drowning. Um, because he didn't know how to swim and refused to learn yet kept going out into the water. Didn't he die in a shipwreck? [laughs]

SALLY: He did. I think he died in some type of sailing accident or some other pretentious bullshit. It's, like, so on brand for one of the romantic poets to be like, "If I die out there, I die. But I'm not learning how to swim. It'll be nice and tragic if I drown."

EMILY: I know! He's like, "I'm fascinated by water, no one loves the ocean more than I do, but I refuse to learn even the basics of swimming." And it's like, "Bro. I didn't think anyone could get dumber than Lord Byron.

SALLY: Lord Byron. Go die in the Greek Revolution.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Athens has a statue of Lord Byron, which is pretty funny to me.

EMILY: Yeah, we sort of made derogatory noises at it every time we passed it.

SALLY: [laughs] I hate you, Percy Shelley. God.

EMILY: So, that's just your little Romantic Poets sidebar.

SALLY: They're –

EMILY: Brought on by me thinking of John Keats ailing away.

SALLY: They are both, like, the most – they are the most insufferable group of men and yet they compel me so much.

EMILY: Yeah. Coleridge, high as a kite.

SALLY: Just absolutely balls to the wall.

EMILY: Keats, coughing up blood [laughing].

SALLY: That poor little critter.

EMILY: Yeah, and then Percy Shelley and Lord Byron doing their absolute fuckboy shit.

SALLY: Yeah, there was also William Blake who used to, like, dance naked in his garden or whatever.

EMILY: Oh my god.

SALLY: [laughs] He was kind of –

EMILY: Just as the spirit moved him?

SALLY: [laughing] Yeah. He was kind of one of those dudes, is my understanding.

EMILY: [laughs] That's probably my favorite of the weird things. Like, just a little, just a weird little dude.

SALLY: Weird little guy. And there was Wordsworth, taking his fucking walks. Yeah.

EMILY: Wordsworth. Loving, loving nature. Probably the most normal of them.

SALLY: Yeah, he's like, "I'm just a guy that likes to walk around. William Blake is dancing naked in his yard and George – [laughs] George Gordon, Lord Byron is, like, sleeping with his sister and [laughs] -

EMILY: Do you think Wordsworth got invited to a lot of parties and then while he was there, they'd be like, "You absolutely cannot tell the *others* about this." He'd be like, "Oh, where's, where's Samuel?"

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Okay. We didn't –

SALLY: [laughs] Sam Coleridge did not get an invite to this one.

EMILY: Oh, not Percy either? Nope!

SALLY: No.

EMILY: Remember what he did last time. Swam in the fountain. Excuse me, pretended to drown in the fountain [laughs].

SALLY: God, I hate them and I love them.

EMILY: Okay, but actually we have to talk about the bad chapters.

SALLY: [sighs] I just, like, it's a really confusing – we'll get into it but it, like you said in previous episodes, it very much feels like Brandon making a mountain out of a molehill.

EMILY: Oh, like, with this situation?

SALLY: Yeah, with this entire situation. Like, it didn't really need to be...

EMILY: Yeah, this one is hard to, like, um, summarize in any particular plot order because it's so episodic. It's like this little event.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Mat and Talmanes and some of the other people go into this town called Hinderstap. They are told when they enter that they can stay for a couple of hours, but they absolutely must be out by nightfall. Everyone kind of doesn't take this seriously. Mat does some gambling tricks in order to get this town to give him some food to resupply the army. Um, and when night falls, as it inevitably does, and everyone's still in town, all of the villagers in Hinderstap kind of are zombie-fied.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: They start killing each other. They start trying to kill anyone who's in their path. It's just nonsensical violence. Um, luckily Mat and all the others escape and return to the town where they find out that this has been happening for a few months now. Everyone going feral at night and then not remembering it in the morning, and in fact waking up in their own beds, regardless

of whether or not they've died or, um, anything or, or were somewhere else entirely. Um, and Mat and everyone just kind of leave on that note and are like, "Oh, well."

SALLY: That's weird. Yeah, the other plot point of note is that there's a drawing of Mat being passed around because someone's looking for him.

EMILY: Yeah, there are actually two drawings of Mat and Perrin.

SALLY: Oh yeah.

EMILY: Being passed around and Mat finds out about this in Hinderstap and is told there is a town a little bit further along the road where someone is looking for him. That's the main thing. So, um, yeah. It's, uh, I'm not gonna go line by line because most of it is just dialogue and as we've referenced, most of the dialogue is pretty silly.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, it's not dialogue that particularly advances the plot or particularly advances our understanding of any of the characters. Um, which is not always necessary, you know. It's perfectly reasonable to have kind of, like, rest periods or slices of life.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: In a way. With characters, um, but when we're working with characters who have been so much changed by the author shift it is grating rather than comforting.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: At least to us. So, um, yeah, to your point, which I guess is to my point.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: [laughs] That I made a couple of episodes ago, the whole Hinderstap episode is not terribly necessary in terms of the plot.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Like, spoiler alert, this, this drawing that's being passed around of Mat is going to lead Mat to Verin.

SALLY: Mm.

EMILY: Who has some information for him and will get him to Caemlyn faster. That is, I would say, plot relevant, but you could get to Verin in other ways, obviously. Mat could have, you know, they could have an, an uneventful supply stop, and just found this out.

SALLY: Still seen it, yeah.

EMILY: Or they could have sort of stumbled on Verin, because Mat is *ta'veren*.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And that makes total sense.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, Hinderstap will come back in the Last Battle, where Mat will use the sort of unkillable quality of these people as, like, um, a, a, sort of force in his army. It's a little weird, but, um, that's supposed to be our kind of like, *The Prestige*. Mat remembered Hinderstap and went back and got those people to fight in the Last Battle, because everyone's fighting in the Last Battle.

SALLY: Sure.

EMILY: So, it does come back, but it's in a way that doesn't need to come back. It's not terribly necessary.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: That they be there in the Last Battle. So. Um, not necessary. So, what's the point of this episode? Becomes the question.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And I can't think of what the answer [laughs] is.

SALLY: Yeah! Um, I was trying to think of that, too, because, as we've, we've said before, um, this book has been, like, it's a very, like, uh, steep curve in the amount of, uh, bubbles of evil we've been getting. We've been pretty much plodding along, uh, for the last couple books with, like, a steady increase and this one has just, like, exponentially increased. We seem to get one almost every set of chapters that we've read so far. We seem to get one in some form or another. Which, is, again, a kind of, like, nice, um, mechanic if it was being used a bit more – to me, it doesn't necessarily feel strategic. It feels, like, um, we're just kind of using it for flavor at this point. Like, it's almost a way to sort of get between incidents.

EMILY: Yeah, like, "Oh, I need to have something happen in this chapter besides people just talking to each other."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: "So, cockroaches in the tent it is."

SALLY: Yeah. Um, so, I don't, I don't really understand. This is one of the most, like, extended sequences of a bubble of evil, or Thom calls it a "snag in the Pattern." Maybe that's different. I don't know. Um, it's one of the most extended sequences that we've got. Um, like, the longest in terms of page, length, um, except for maybe that town where everyone is seeing ghosts or whatever. What's that town called? Perrin was there.

EMILY: Oh, the one where Perrin goes for resupply. Yeah, that was a couple chapters, too, but also not, like, action packed.

SALLY: Yeah, and this one is very, like, it's an action sequence. We're fighting the whole time. It's very disturbing. Um, there are, like, children fighting in the streets, sort of blood crazed. So, um, like, I guess mechanically one function could be to make those stakes feel even higher. Like, the bubbles of evil – quote, unquote, whatever they are – are getting more intense. The Dark One is having more of a presence. Um, I just, again, I don't feel like this was necessary to convey that to me. I feel like I've been feeling that for the last couple of books. Um.

EMILY: Yeah, it doesn't make sense tonally, either.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: There's some real wild tonal shifts in this. Like you said, it's a very disturbing sequence.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And I do want to say, like, as a bubble of evil, or as background flavor, if this was somehow more relevant to the plot, or if something relevant to the plot was happening in tandem, I think Hinderstap would be a very interesting...

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, event. As you said, it's – Thom kind of distinguishes it from a bubble of evil by calling it a snag in the pattern, presumably referring to the sort of, like, reset.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Of, like, time.

SALLY: That keeps happening. Yeah.

EMILY: Um, that's interesting. It is incredibly troubling and disturbing, but Mat does not handle it as though it is disturbing or troubling.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Or rather, he does in, like, little, these little bursts of moments where he's like, "Ugh, this is horrendous," but then he kind of goes right back to joking.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: You know. And, like, popping off with these silly little one-liners. With, that are overloaded with *Wheel of Time* swear words.

SALLY: [laughs softly] Yeah.

EMILY: In really [sighs] grating ways. So, um, yeah. Like, it's sort of, I sort of put it in contrast to the last major bubble of evil, I guess I would say that Mat interacted with. When we saw that, like, town –

SALLY: Oh yeah.

EMILY: That sunk into the earth.

SALLY: Yes.

EMILY: Um, which was handled both to be plot relevant, because it was in the path of, um, the carnival at that time. The circus, excuse me. Um, and it led to more conversation about leaving the circus, sort of prepped us for that happening. Um, it was relevant in people's characters. We got to see how the Seanchan reacted to that. We got to see how common folk reacted to that, as opposed to Mat, who's kind of used to it.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Mat himself was terribly disturbed by that and, like it was something he had a hard time getting past. He wasn't as scared of it as the circus goers were, but it, like, psyched him out.

SALLY: Sure, yeah.

EMILY: Um, so that I would say was handled pretty well. It was very spooky, it was very disturbing. And here we just have kind of, like we said, a *Supernatural* episode, where it's, like, gory but not scary. Um, there's this sort of horrifying set up, but because of the tone of the characters, it's not actually horrifying.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: We don't lean into any of the elements that make horror a compelling genre.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Obviously you can have funny horror, but, um, you need to do it a little more light handedly, I would say, than is done with Mat's jokes in this series of chapters.

SALLY: Yeah. And we keep referring to this as, like, a *Supernatural* set up, because it has that sort of monster of the week vibe.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Where it's, like, a group of people that we're following enter a place that is unfamiliar to them. They encounter a sort of supernatural thing that they have to fight, and then, perhaps what is really lacking from this, is that there's no resolution. Like, in every monster of the week type episode, the monster is killed or the curse is broken or something happens. Even if, as in things like *Supernatural* and *Teen Wolf*, there's that sort of overarching season plot. In every episode you have *some* type of resolution. Which is part of what makes monster of the week type stories really satisfying. It's, like, yes. We have set out to do a thing and we do that thing.

EMILY: Yeah, it's a vignette that's resolved within itself. Which, like, a lot of people have said of *Supernatural* specifically that the monster of the week episodes in the early seasons are some of the strongest.

SALLY: Yes.

EMILY: And that's totally true. Like, it is nice to take a step back from the overarching plot occasionally as long as you are doing something compelling with this miniature episode. I think also the *Supernatural* vibes come from this being, like, a town in the middle of nowhere. The guys in *Supernatural* are often traveling to small towns in middle America and dealing with spooky things there. This is a very, like, isolated setup, it's effecting the whole town.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, the only thing missing is, like, a hot blonde to fall in love with Dean.

SALLY: Yeah, and ultimately die tragically or something.

EMILY: Yeah, ultimately get fridged.

SALLY: But what I think might redeem *Hind* – not to constantly play in the space of “how would we do this differently.” But I think what might be missing from *Hinderstap*, or what might make it feel functional, is if, like, Mat and company learned something significant about how the bubbles of evil are operating beyond just the fact that they are really random. Like, if we're pairing these random bubbles of evil against Mat's random luck powers, what could potentially happen. That might have been interesting and tied into what Mat is doing perhaps more significantly than bringing back a town of people that are under some sort of terrible...curse type thing as his sort of trick.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Instead of getting, getting, like, a piece of information about how these are functioning. Or, like, something.

EMILY: Yeah, like, you bring up something interesting about Mat's sort of trickster prowess, which is that one of the other mechanics going on in these chapters, um, is that Mat is gambling for the opportunity to even buy food. Um, and he does that first by losing intentionally. Sort of what is, what is *good* for him is losing initially. You know, winning a couple of times, but getting other people confident. Um, and then he manages to, like, use his luck powers when someone else is tossing the dice.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And so, that's sort of meant to be like, "Look at how his powers are expanding." But I agree with you that it would be far more interesting if Mat was using any sort of like trickster, his trickster nature, his luck powers, to actually gain something from this plot besides food.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, and, like, using his luck powers in a setup that did not involve money.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: I think would be a far more interesting step for him than, um, just going back and back to this gambling in taverns scene that we're constantly in. Like, it would be so much more interesting if we got to see Mat trick the Dark One in interesting way.

SALLY: Yeah! Yeah.

EMILY: Sort of in preparation for us going to the Tower of Ghenjei where we'll also see his sort of trickster powers.

SALLY: Yeah, especially because, like, this scene has that framework of the dice in his head rolling. Like, it starts rolling when he enters Hinderstap and it stops rolling when night falls.

EMILY: When he decides to stay.

SALLY: Yeah, when he decides to stay. And it's, like, "Okay, Brandon, but why?" Like, I don't understand in this particular instance why the dice? Like, it's not, like, he really got anything out of it, except being like, "Well, that fucking sucked."

EMILY: Yeah, the dice roll as a mechanic for showing us that something is important to the narrative and the plot. And this, as we [laughs] have just said, at length, is not.

SALLY: Is not. So, um.

EMILY: I also think it could have been interesting if this had any sort of tragic consequences beyond just, like, having to leave this village here, which, clearly Mat doesn't feel too terribly about.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, if say, I don't know, what would happen if Thom died in Hinderstap and then joined the village?

SALLY: Yeah, and then had to stay there. *That* I think is a really interesting Hinderstap mechanic. If somebody –

EMILY: If somebody dies there then they get incorporated.

SALLY: They get caught up in the, the loop.

EMILY: So, then you would have to fix the loop in order for Thom to get into the Tower of Ghenjei. Or, like, what if it's Talmanes? Then do you just have to decide we're leaving Talmanes here?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Like, it would be interesting if you actually had to make hard decisions or do anything beyond just saying like, "Okay, well. [laughing] Sucks for you guys."

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: "We're talking all your food now."

SALLY: Yeah, I mean, it literally is almost exactly the same plot that Perrin encountered in that other town, whose name I'm totally blanking on.

EMILY: Nothing.

SALLY: But, all he did was come in to a town of people who are suffering both, like, very intense psychological consequences of this, like, horrifying bubble of evil around them, steal their food, and then refuse to leave an Aes Sedai there with them to help. Although, the Hinderstap town did refuse that, so, whatever. And then just be like, "Well [sound of wiping hands together], too bad!"

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: So, it's just kind of a repeat plot is my other problem. Like, with Perrin's plot, um, we, in that episode, talked a lot about what it means to leave the small people behind in the, in the course of the apocalypse or in the course of a plot, and how do you wrestle with the decisions of who gets food when there's a famine going on and stuff. And we've already – the narrative didn't necessarily wrestle with it, but if you're, like, the type of reader who's thinking about that stuff, then you already have and by this point in the series, we've all pretty much settled into the space

of, like, everything that's happening around our main characters is irrelevant. Like, we're not obligate – it's not a series that asks us to care about whether or not people are starving off screen.

EMILY: Yeah, exactly.

SALLY: So, what? Why are we just doing it again? Is my beef basically.

EMILY: Yeah. Yeah.

SALLY: Um, so, uh, kind of a swing and a miss for me, personally. Here in Hinderstap. And not only because Mat is just *horrific* to read in these chapters in particular.

EMILY: I mean, I know everyone knows this already, but it can't be overstated that he is insufferable.

SALLY: Yean, and, like, even [laughs]. It is, like, every character. It's, it' – in my Mat's plot. Like, it's leaking out from Mat into Talmanes in a really rancid way. It's leaking out into Thom who's suddenly just like –

EMILY: Spouting the weirdest metaphors.

SALLY: Yeah, and –

EMILY: He's like, "I'm doing my best to do an Ian McKellen impression in *Lord of the Rings*."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: By doing these, like, convoluted metaphors that no one would say in their real life.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Where is the one – "I feel old these days, Mat, like a faded rug hung out to dry in the wind, hinting of the colors that once showed so vibrantly." *Who says that?*

SALLY: Yeah. That's, like, a, a, a thing for internal narration. People don't speak that way.

EMILY: Yeah! You just say, "Man I feel old. Like a rug."

SALLY: Fuck, I feel old.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: I don't know. Maybe some people speak that way, but they're not fun to be around.

EMILY: Yeah. And Thom, for all his faults, is kind of fun to be around.

SALLY: Yeah, he's just kind of, he's that silly old guy.

EMILY: He's just a wierdo.

SALLY: He's just a weird old man that's in my crew.

EMILY: And Thom has like four lines that are just like that, so that's what we're talking about. Speaking of Thom, like these two chapters are bracketed by Thom conversations. Mat and Thom conversations. In the first one we just have Mat and Thom [laughs] weirdly, like reminiscing about the good old days.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: [laughs] The only interesting thing about that, I think, I mean it's not interesting, it's another missed opportunity, is that Mat's like, "Oh, yeah, I don't really remember that." And Thom isn't like, "Oh, worm?"

SALLY: Yeah. What?

EMILY: "Tell me more about your memory problems." Because Mat has pretty much skated by with not letting people know how little memory he has.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Up until this point. We've never had him – to see him confront the reality of that with everyone.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, because we haven't had him, like, meet up with his family and be like –

SALLY: Oh, I didn't recognize my dad, you know?

EMILY: [laughs] Or, like, have Bode be like, "Ah, remember that time with Mom?" And him have to be like, "No."

SALLY: No.

EMILY: She'll be like, "It was three years ago." And he's like, "I know. I just don't remember."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And that's something that I would be interesting in seeing Mat confront. And, like, if I was gonna let anyone in on the secret of his dead people's memories, it would definitely be Thom.

SALLY: Yeah! That's the person, especially as you go towards the Tower of Ghenjei plot where you will meet your arch nemeses again.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: The Eelfinn and the Aelfinn, I mean.

EMILY: Um, and then at the end they have this sort of conversation where Thom is like – where Mat is like, “God, it sucks that the Dark One keeps hunting me and this is all about me and it's just never going to stop.” And I'm like this is such a weird conversation to be having in Book 12.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Like, what?

SALLY: Yeah, I – it also, not to, like, keep berating the point, but it feels really just, like, out of character for Mat to say that to somebody. Like, um.

EMILY: Yeah, to be, like, complaining. Mat, I think one of the interesting things about him, was such, like, a crybaby in the early books. He was whining constantly. And pretty much after Book 3 he keeps it to himself.

SALLY: Yeah, again, it's one of those things he might say internally, but to, like say to another person, “Oh I – ” Basically in the format of, like, a therapy session, “Oh, I have come to the realization that this thing I've been avoiding confronting directly is a truth I can no longer avoid.”

EMILY: Yeah. He doesn't really, he, he's still complains, I would say, about small things, um, but he's generally not really talking about his place in the plot. The example that comes to mind is, um, right after he left Ebou Dar and was really kind of hung up on his role in the Sea Folk uprising. How he first let some of the Sea Folk loose and that led to a lot of escapes, but also a lot of deaths and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. We saw him really thinking about that and struggling with it in a way, but we did not see him talking about it to anyone.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, so yeah, there's some disparities there. There's just so much misogyny. Like, this, this series – this episode opens with Mat being like, “Bloody women. They don't make anything easy.” And then it's just these little asides every single time. Thom, in the vein of his insane story about one time he tried to wescue a woman – [laughs] wescue a woman!

SALLY: Wescue a woman!

EMILY: [laughs] Rescue a woman from her abusive husband, but [masculine voice] she didn't want to be rescued! Remember that?

[pause]

EMILY: It was way back in, like, [laughing] Book 6.

SALLY: [laughing] No, I don't think I do.

EMILY: It's insane. It's after Mat – it's because I just read it in *Lord of Chaos*. Mat's like, "I wish Egg and everyone would let me help them."

SALLY: Oh. Oh, yeah! And he's like, "Sometimes you just can't help them."

EMILY: Yeah, it's almost a feminist statement where he's like, "Have you considered just doing – like, helping them? The way they want to be helped?" But then he also has to have this insane story about this woman who was lying about being abused. Or who really liked it secretly.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Anyway, Thom says, "Lies never make these easier in the long run. Unless they're to exactly the right person, usually a woman, at exactly [laughs] the right time." Like, guys. Guys!

SALLY: Yeah. And the, like, scene with Talmanes that I mentioned at the beginning is so egregious. Like, the Aes Sedai are bathing when shit goes down in Hinderstap, so they have to get them. So, all them are, like, in the bathroom or hastily dressed and Joline's robe isn't, like, fully crossing her chest.

EMILY: Yeah, it's, like, Teslyn and Edesina, the not hot ones, are dressed hastily, but of course Joline's was the dress they used to tie up some people and so she's in a bathrobe that's a little bit open. How sexy!

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And it's, like, it's not really – bathrobes aren't – it's a bathroom. I assume it's not like a silk kimono.

SALLY: Yeah [laughs]. It's not like a lingerie robe. It's, like, probably a terry cloth robe.

EMILY: [laughing] It's like a grandma robe, I imagine.

SALLY: But it's, like, showing a little bit of titty.

EMILY: A little bit of cleavage.

SALLY: And Talmanes is like –

EMILY: Talmanes *whistles*, which is insane.

SALLY: Yeah, like? Are you joking? First of all, Talmanes would never. He – like, he – I feel like no Cairhienin would.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: Like, it's a cultural thing almost, beyond being, like, a character thing.

EMILY: Yeah, the Cairhienin are, like, famously repressed on festival days where they'll just make out with everyone.

SALLY: Just making out in the street.

EMILY: And also, like, he would not do that because he has a sense of self-preservation.

SALLY: Yeah, Joline should have whooped his ass!

EMILY: Yeah. And also, he's polite.

SALLY: He's just, like, a nice guy. Not in a nice guy, derogatory way, but being like a genuinely pleasant person most of the time.

EMILY: Yeah, we've seen him interact with Aes Sedai before. He was at that hilarious meeting with Egg. I guess we, as in we and you the audience weren't there because that was [laughing] in *Path of Daggers*.

SALLY: [laughing] Oh yeah! But it's a good scene. When he's just, like, chilling.

EMILY: But that is the only good scene in *Path of Daggers*, when Egg goes to a meeting in an ice field and Talmanes is there.

SALLY: Talmanes is there.

EMILY: Leaning sexily on a tent pole. Yeah, yeah.

SALLY: Um, so it's just, like, so silly and Mat has to be like, "She's an Aes Sedai not a woman," basically. Um.

EMILY: I'm like, "What is this rhetoric? It was so tired –

SALLY: Like –

EMILY: Six books ago.

SALLY: Yeah, and then Talmanes has to, like, pick his jaw up off the floor like a fucking *Family Guy* character.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: It's so rancid. So, I don't – I don't – [laughs] I don't know why Brandon really picked up misogyny and was like – as we talked about last time, Emily made the good point that most of *Wheel of Time* humor is misogyny based, so he's trying to be like, "It's so funny." But it's, like, Brando. Or maybe Robert Jordan wrote this and Talmanes just had a big character arc change in this book.

EMILY: I think we can safely say that Robert Jordan didn't write this [laughs]. And I'm not saying that because Robert Jordan is such a better writer than Brandon. They're different. There's not a qualitative difference, um, but this obviously does not read like Robert Jordan. The misogynistic jokes would be different [laughing] if were Robert Jordan wrote them.

SALLY: They would just have a little different flavor. Little different.

EMILY: Mat would certainly not sound like this. Like you're sort of backwards hick, who doesn't know anything. Like, it's almost like Brandon Sanderson is writing him with this sort of, like, country boy accent.

SALLY: [laughing softly]

EMILY: I can't get past it. It's like the constant swearing.

SALLY: [laughing softly]

EMILY: Mat says, when they go back to the town, they're like, "Come on. We'll get you some tea." Mat says, "I'm not going anywhere with you, spirit." And I read that as [country accent], "I'm not going anywhere with you, spirit." [laughs]

SALLY: Yeah, it's got the, like, *Letterkenny* fucking accent.

EMILY: [laughing] Yeah. Oh, man, you guys.

SALLY: Also, like, we – this is really nitpicky – but we have not been told that, like, *spirits* are a thing in *Wheel of Time*.

EMILY: Mat's seen ghosts before, but they have not interacted with him in that way.

SALLY: So.

EMILY: Sooooo.

SALLY: I don't really know what's going on here.

EMILY: I apologize for my mistake of having us do three chapters last time and these two chapters this time, because there's nothing more to say and we still have some time, but I guess it will be a short one. Because, you guys, what else is there to say?

SALLY: Hinderstap was silly!

EMILY: Hinderstap had potential, like a lot of things.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But it was misused horribly.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: There's also some egregious typos in this chapter.

SALLY: Oh, really? I didn't notice because I can't read [laughs].

EMILY: No, uh, I should say that I'm a copy editor by trade.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, um, noticed a couple of those. That was pretty wild.

SALLY: What must it be like to have a book published – every time I see a typo in a published book I'm like, "How?"

EMILY: I guess with a book this big, how could there not be, you know?

SALLY: Yeah. Fair.

EMILY: But I'm also like, "We haven't seen a lot of typos in the earlier *Wheel of Time* books," so it does feel like these ones were in some sense, rushed.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Which I think explains a lot of that. I think the – books one through eleven suffered from having little to no editorial oversight and books twelve through fourteen suffered from a perhaps egregious amount of editorial oversight as people were trying – there were a few too many cooks in the kitchen.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: But that is, uh, speculation perhaps.

SALLY: Yeah, we'll never know unless the drop the documentary. Harriet drop the lost footage.

EMILY: God, could you imagine a documentary about the writing of the *Wheel of Time*?

SALLY: It would be wild.

EMILY: It would be so boring.

SALLY: [laughs] I think it would be kind of interesting. I'm very interested in the project of picking up another writer's work after they die. I think that's, like, conceptually very interesting to me.

EMILY: I agree. I think that part is interesting, but I think – it's so difficult, because Bradon Sanderson, because he's a polite person, will never tell us what he really thought.

SALLY: Yeah [laughs].

EMILY: About the whole thing.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: He's never gonna be like, "It's –" I think he has, in the past, been like, "*Wheel of Time* was hardest to write and I did not enjoy writing it."

SALLY: Yeah, I believe it, Brando.

EMILY: Which is, like, thank you for that honesty, but he's never gonna be like, "It sucked, because Robert Jordan wrote an impossible series of books with so many loose ends that it just was never going to be good."

SALLY: Yeah, and I mean, also just the misogyny and the fascism and...

EMILY: It's all bad. Okay, guys. So, next on the docket, um, first of all, we are more than halfway through. Thank fuck.

SALLY: Yeehaw.

EMILY: Yeehaw indeed. But when you turn the page from the Hinderstap chapters you get, um, a map of the capital city of Arad Doman, Bandar Eban, which just sounds insane that these two –

SALLY: Arad Doman.

EMILY: It sounds like the letters were just scrambled a little bit. Um, so the promised, long awaited [laughs] Arad Doman section can finally begin. Let's get to the war crimes!

SALLY: Oh, let's not.

EMILY: Well, they're coming whether we like it or not [closes a heavy book].

SALLY: Ah dangit. Ah shoot.

EMILY: Ah dangit!

[both in increasingly sillier country accents]

SALLY: Ah beans. I ain't going anywhere with you, spirit.

EMILY: Ah blood and bloody ashes!

SALLY: I ain't going anywhere with you.

EMILY: I ain't going anywhere with you, spirit.

SALLY: [sighs loudly]

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: Hey, next week is our 250th episode of Everybody Hates Rand.

EMILY: Yeah, how about that!

SALLY: Yeah!

EMILY: How about that!

SALLY: How about that! Maybe we will celebrate by just not reading *Wheel of Time*.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: [laughing] And we'll just talking about whatever we want to talk about.

EMILY: Uh, we haven't watched any good, um, shows recently.

SALLY: We [laughing], we could just drop our *Hunger Games* analysis in the middle of a podcast.

EMILY: Oh yeah. We've been rewatching – or watching for the first time in my case *The Hunger Games* movies.

SALLY: Yeah, *The Hunger Games* movies.

EMILY: Yeah, we should.

SALLY: That would be pretty funny.

EMILY: [laughing] Episode 250, it's not about *Wheel of Time*. We just skip these chapters entirely.

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: Same as *Path of Daggers*.

SALLY: Yeah, same as *Path of Daggers*. We're just like, "No, um." So maybe we'll do something fun, if we can think of anything. Maybe we'll just continue business as usual. To be determined, but either way I think you should do something to celebrate!

EMILY: Yeah, bake yourself a cake.

SALLY: Oh, yeah. Bake yourself a really tasty cake. Or buy yourself a really tasty cake if you're not about that baking life.

EMILY: As the case may be. Yes. So, thanks to, um, all of you. Thanks 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. Um, lots of exciting content popping off on the Patreon these days. Um, so go check it out if you're interested. If not, uh, don't have to support monetarily, just listening is lovely.

EMILY: Yeah. Do you have a sign off?

SALLY: Um, sure. This isn't, this is maybe not the cream of the crop, but, um, I am on an allergy medication that comes – it's just, like, a very weird format. It's, like, a liquid medication that comes in little individual doses. Um, and I can only pick up, like, 90 day supplies at a time, because [laughs] probably when I pick them up, they come in these enormous boxes and the pharmacist has to give me, like, a grocery sized paper bag to carry them home in. And it, like, shouldn't be, because it doesn't matter what medication I'm on, but I always feel so silly walking out of the pharmacy with just, like, the biggest bag. Like, I have to carry it like I'm a character in a sitcom.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: [laughing] Carrying their groceries around. Just, like, walking around.

EMILY: But instead of, like, apples and lettuce coming out of the top, it's just –

SALLY: It's just my medication. So, I had to do that today and everyone around me was picking up their, like, petite and dainty medications. And I roll out with –

EMILY: The big boy.

SALLY: The big boy. And they're all – just, in my head, I'm like, "They must all be thinking [laughing] 'what the fuck is wrong with that bitch?'"

EMILY: [laughs] "Oh god!"

SALLY: "Oh god! She's like *sick sick*."

EMILY: Whatever's wrong with her, I'm glad –

SALLY: I'm glad I'm not her! Yikes!

EMILY: It's just bad medicine okay! I mean, the medicine is fine, I guess.

SALLY: The medicine is fine, it just could maybe come in a more useful format.

EMILY: Yeah, have you heard of pills? [laughs]

SALLY: No.

EMILY: [laughs] These people are like, "Never. We're innovating."

SALLY: We're innovating. Instead you have to carry around eight bottles of liquid every single day.

EMILY: Yeah. Every day in Greece, Sally had to pull out her little, little liquid.

SALLY: I know! And then I'd be making – it's like making a little potion [laughing]. It makes a silly little sound.

EMILY: It does sort of, like, you're milking a cow with only one udder [laughs].

SALLY: My cows! [laughs]

EMILY: It was like [dripping noises].

SALLY: Yeah, it makes a silly little plopping noise. Oh man.

EMILY: Okay, everyone. Now you know [laughs].

SALLY: Goodbye!

EMILY: Bye!