



Episode 268: Defund Paw Patrol
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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: Okay, so this is Everybody Hates Rand. And Elayne. And Mat. And –

Sally: Gawyn.

Emily: Gawyn.

Sally: And Perrin.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And Galad.

Emily: All of them, yeah. Um, at least in this book, baby. (laugh) Uh, your – it's your friendly neighborhood Wheel of Time podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

Sally: And I am Sally Goodger, and I want to apologize at the top of the hour. I had, uh, physical therapy today, uh, which is, uh, has a large, like, massage therapy component for me, given my specific issues, and she obliterated my muscles today. She's like, "Your neck is really stiff," and then proceeded to just, like, dig her fingers into the back of my neck, and I was like – I'm always laying down, and I sat up, and I was just, like – I made the most – (laugh) horrible noise. I was just like, "UGH." And she's like, "Yeah, you're gonna be pretty sore tomorrow."

Emily: Approximately once a month –

Sally: Thanks, Trina. (laugh)

Emily: Sally heads off to physical therapy, saying something along the lines of, "I can't wait for Trina to explode my bones."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: And then she comes back and is like, "TRINA EXPLODED MY BONES." (laugh)

Sally: It is what I wanted. But it does always hurt.

Emily: Yeah, it is a – it's just a – an amusing little ritual we have.

Sally: (laugh) Sorry, I'll stop being so pathetic –

Emily: (laugh) No, it's really funny.

Sally: When I come back. Ugh.

Emily: So Sally's bones have been exploded.

Sally: Well, I did have both a rib and a vertebra out of place today, so.

Emily: Oh, I'm sorry. And I – less extreme, but I did fall asleep literally in the middle of the day today, so.

Sally: Oh, yeah, Emily got in – Emily had a late night, being a partier.

Emily: Ugh, playing Dungeons and Dragons really feels –

Sally: Yeah, partying.

Emily: Like a nerdy way to –

Sally: To party.

Emily: It's like, my friends – hey, guys? Why are we doing this on Wednesday?

Sally: At seven.

Emily: At seven.

Sally: That's, like, when my brain stops working on a weeknight.

Emily: It's 'cause they're all these normal people who can just at – you know, 10:45 p.m., when we rounded off, they can just go right to bed and be asleep within five minutes.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And then I'm awake for two hours, because I have insomnia. Okay, sorry, yeah, Wheel of Time. And to make things worse, it was a very large chunk of pages, this, so.

Sally: It was almost seventy – I think it wasn't quite seventy pages.

Emily: Yeah, I – I was like, "Boy, that was long," after I finished it, and then was like, "Why did I do that to myself?" I need to –

Sally: You probably just, like, ripped the Band-Aid off, baby. It's quite a heinous section.

Emily: Yeah, there's a lot going on. Okay, so we're just gonna, like, try and get through it.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So, first –

Sally: No jokes this episode.

Emily: No jokes. Jokes has left the building.

Sally: Yeah, no jokes.

Emily: He's been banned. He's been canceled.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) What does Otis's mom call it? Deleted.

Emily: The other day – (laugh) I was gonna ... We start with, tragically, I know, Gah-win. Gawyn.

Sally: Gah-win.

Emily: Who is patrolling the White Tower, feeling useless because Egg has told him, "Don't guard my rooms at night." Very reasonable request. He's like, "But I keep, like, turning like a magnet toward Egg's rooms because I just can't stay away." As he's wandering, he comes across some of the Younglings who are just hanging out, like, with random soldiers, and he's like, "This isn't proper Warder behavior. People aren't gonna wanna bond you if you gamble or slut it up," I don't know what the – (laugh)

Sally: I think Gawyn is wrong. I think there are many Aes Sedai who are like, "The slutty Warder is the one I want."

Emily: Yeah, "I want – I want a fun guy."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Who I'm gonna be spending my whole life with."

Sally: Yeah. "I want someone who can hang, you know?"

Emily: Uh, but these guys are like, "Well, our problem is we maybe don't want to be Warders, 'cause we like the soldier life, and it's a different life than Warders," and Gawyn is, surprising both the readers and the people he's talking to, is surprisingly chill about this and is like, "Okay, I'll tell the – I'll go tell good old Chub –"

Sally: (snort)

Emily: "My friend Chubain –" (laugh) "The Chubster."

Sally: "Good old Chub."

Emily: Um. (laugh) "That you guys want to join the Guard."

Sally: Chumbawamba.

Emily: Chumbawamba. Callback, baby. They're like, "Okay, thanks, Gawyn." He keeps wandering around – it's, like, the dead of night, you guys.

Sally: It's like three in the morning, basically.

Emily: It's like, dude, what? Go to bed. Um, he ends up going to talk to Gareth Bryne, where Gareth Bryne, as has been the trend with every Gawyn –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Section involving Bryne up until this point, Bryne tells him what is probably the most reasonable –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And also gently worded advice –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Anyone could ever give him, and it just does not compute.

Sally: Yeah, and Gawyn is like, "Well, fuck that."

Emily: Yeah, he's like, "Gawyn, it's extremely creepy that you are so single-mindedly focused on Egg, and you're driving her away with it, because no one wants, actually, to have someone be obsessed with them."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like, dude, you have to have hobbies." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Is almost verbatim what he says.

Sally: Like – yeah. Yeah.

Emily: And Gawyn's like, "I don't get it." And Bryne's like, "Oh my God." He leaves, inevitably ends up near Egg's room, where what should he spot but near her door, someone in the shadows. He has this little altercation with what we know is one of these creepy magic assassins from the Seanchan.

Sally: Bloodknives.

Emily: Bloodknives. Um, someone do that in one of those, like, really funny, you know, goth fonts that are just, like, so spiky.

Sally: Yeah, you can barely read them?

Emily: That you can't read them, yeah.

Sally: Bloodknives.

Emily: Bloodknives. Um, Gawyn fights them and then they run away. And Gawyn is like, “Oh my God, what if they were leaving Egg’s room and she’s dead in there?” So he charges in and is like, “Egg!” And of course because she’s, like, a good channeler, magic person, she has set up all these, like, magic traps in her room, so immediately he gets, like, strung up by his ankles.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And Egg’s like, “Ugh. This is exactly why I didn’t want you hanging around. Can you just, like, not follow a single order?” He’s like, “I just don’t get why you don’t want me to protect you.” And she’s like, “Cause I had set this trap for Mesaana or literally any of her underlings – anyone who wants to kill me, I would rather have trapped –”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: “Than just dead, you know, so I can get some information from them.” And Gawyn’s like, “Wah wah wah wah wah.” Um. So they kind of have this fight, and then she, like, dismisses him, and he, kind of in, like, this emotional tantrum, storms off – he does go tell Chubain that he’s got some guys and he ends up with one of the knives from this assassin that got thrown at him, so he has that, I guess. Um, and then he goes down and is like, “I’m gonna go see my sister,” and we’re like, whoa, revolutionary.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It is actually creepy, though, that Bryne’s like, “Get some hobbies,” and he’s like, “My sister is the only other hobby that I have.”

Sally: Yeah, Gawyn can’t, like – like, take up gardening.

Emily: Knitting, my man.

Sally: Beekeeping.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Fishing.

Emily: Something besides swords and misogyny.

Sally: Yeah, he –

Emily: That’s his Tinder profile. (laugh)

Sally: Is, like – this is, like, peak misogyny chapter. I can’t wait to hear what he has to say about Elayne’s pregnancy.

Emily: Oh, yeah, he’s gonna be like, “You big old slut.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I actually can’t remember what he says about it, but I think we’ll have some – boy, I need to actually find the Egg conversation ...

Sally: You're right, it is really weird when she's like, "I – you're bugging me," and Bryne's like, "Get a hobby," and Gawyn is like, "Perhaps another woman I can –"

Emily: Be – I can protect.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it's like, Gawyn, you sort of missed the window, you know? Like, Elayne did really want you there for quite a while when Andor was under siege, and now she's kind of like –

Sally: Now she's got it under control.

Emily: Yeah, "I've got it."

Sally: Well.

Emily: Mm. (laugh)

Sally: I take my words back. (laugh) Just, like, Gawyn has this one line where he's like, "Egg's trying to take what was a reasonable personal mistake and make it, like, a moral –"

Emily: "Into a personal affront."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Mostly at Egwene for turning an honest mistake into a personal affront." He's like – like, dude. That's not what happened.

Sally: Yeah, like –

Emily: It's a pattern that she is, um, condemning you for.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So.

Sally: That's Gawyn.

Emily: That's Gawyn.

Sally: Stupid little shit.

Emily: Um, Mat has this extremely funny debriefing session – or, rather, briefing session – with, um, Noal and Thom where they're just talking about, like, okay, what's our gameplan, boys? Lads? What are we gonna do for the Tower of Ghenjei? And they're like – Mat's like, "Okay, well, we know where the Tower is; I'm gonna get a gateway; we know how to open it, 'cause you do the little squiggle and the line –"

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "From the beginning of the game. Um, and then once we're in there, we know we've gotta cheat, using the stuff in the rhyme." And Thom's like, "Well, I've been thinking, like,

maybe we should just try and make a deal with them.” And Mat’s like, “Did Moiraine tell us to make a deal?” and Thom’s like, “No,” and Mat’s like, “Then we’re not making a fucking deal. We’re just gonna –”

Sally: “We’re gonna cheat.”

Emily: “We’re gonna cheat. ‘Cause that’s the only advice we have that’s any good.” Um, to – to remind you, the little rhyme that you say at the beginning of Snakes and Foxes is, “Courage to strengthen, fire to blind, uh, music to dazzle, fire – uh, iron to bind.”

Sally: Iron.

Emily: That’d be kind of a fun tattoo.

Sally: I was just thinking that.

Emily: Or just “Courage to strengthen.” That’s cute.

Sally: Yeah, “Courage to strengthen.”

Emily: Um. I just love the Tower of Ghenjei subplot.

Sally: “Fire to blind.”

Emily: So they’re like, “Okay, well, courage? We got that.” (laugh)

Sally: Yeah, they’re like –

Emily: “We’re just brave. Powerful. Men.”

Sally: Yeah. No big deal.

Emily: They’re like, “We’ve got fire,” in that Mat went to Aludra and was like, “Babe, I need fireworks,” and she was like, “I’ll give you anything ‘cause I’m getting my cannons made, so here, have this bag of fireworks,” and Mat is just carrying around – (laugh)

Sally: Just carrying it around.

Emily: Which is the first in-character thing –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: (laugh) Mat has done this entire book.

Sally: Just got his little satchel full of fireworks, and Thom’s like –

Emily: Thom’s like, “It’s right next to the fireplace!” and Mat’s like, “Eh, it’s not a big deal.”

Sally: “They hardly ever explode.”

Emily: Yeah, “Except when I do it on purpose.”

Sally: “On accident.” Yeah.

Emily: Like, Thom, I don't know why you're surprised. This was the guy you caught crouching over –

Sally: Cutting one open.

Emily: Cutting open back in book three. Um, and then they have music in that Thom's got – of course he's a skilled musician, but he's also got, like, little, you know, maracas –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: That anyone could use, and he's like, "And I've got a flute for you, dumb fuck."

Sally: Yeah, Thom's a one-man band.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Got a drum. He doesn't. I wish he did. That'd be funny.

Emily: They do have, like, little hand cymbals.

Sally: Yeah. Thom has an accordion.

Emily: Um, and Noal has acquired some, like, weapons that are made of iron, so he's – they're like, "Okay, that seems good." They're just like, "Okay, we're just waiting, but we've got our gameplan."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Mat kind of leaves this feeling like, "Ah, I don't really know if it's enough, you know, I wish I just had more intel." Um, as he's walking along, he encounters someone getting robbed. Mat's, like, extra paranoid right now because he doesn't have the foxhead medallion – Birgitte has it – so he's walking around, like, in disguise, blah blah blah blah. He encounters someone getting robbed, dispatches the people robbing them, just some extrajudicial murder.

Sally: Yeah, he just kind of kills people.

Emily: And then that guy, who he rescued, tries to kill him 'cause he recognizes him as wanted. Um, and Mat kills him too. And it's just kind of, like, a useless action sequence. I – it serves no narrative purpose.

Sally: And it's – it's quite violent too.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: So what are you doing, Brandon?

Emily: I just – yeah, I just feel like sometimes they're like, "Just as a reminder, Mat's a badass," and I'm like, I don't – I knew that.

Sally: I don't need that, thank you.

Emily: Yeah. And I only want fight scenes that serve a narrative purpose. Sorry. Anyway, Mat – it occurs to Mat that the only information he’s ever got from – about the Tower of Ghenjei was from Birgitte herself. So he’s like, “I should go talk to Birgitte. She’s in the same city.”

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: So he heads up to the palace. Smash cut to Birgitte, who is standing guard over Elayne while Elayne is with a bunch of noble people, watching a fucking, like, opera?

Sally: Yeah. A French opera.

Emily: Yeah, a French opera, yeah, from –

Sally: A Cairhienin opera.

Emily: A Cairhienin import, as it were. Birgitte and all the guards are like, “This is the worst thing that’s ever happened to us.”

Sally: Yeah. Which is, like – I guess if you’ve never heard opera, it would be, like –

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Really wild, but it feels a little needlessly, like, dividing the classes.

Emily: Yeah. (laugh)

Sally: Like, nobody else except for the nobles seems to be enjoying the opera.

Emily: Yeah, like, we see Elayne later, and Elayne’s like, “Oh, yeah, this is beautiful, and of course I’ve heard this ballad many times.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: You know, and it’s just like, okay. It would be so funny if one of the guards – one of Birgitte’s guards was just, like, weeping.

Sally: Yeah, just riveted.

Emily: (laugh) Overcome with emotion.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But instead, they’re all, like, cool girls, you know?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: All of Elayne’s guards women, so.

Sally: Cool girls don’t go to the opera.

Emily: Yeah. Cool girls ... whatever the whole monologue is from Gone Girl. Anyway, one of the guards reports to Birgitte, “Hey, someone was trying to get in at the gates, so he’s been delayed over at the guardhouse.” Birgitte goes, finds that it is Mat, that he came deliberately to

see her. They go off to have a drink, um, at a nearby bar, and Mat's like, "I want to talk to you about the Tower of Ghenjei." And she's like, "Okay. Don't go to there." (laugh)

Sally: "Easy. End of list."

Emily: "End of advice." And he's like, "Unfortunately, I have to go into there because I can't abandon Thom." Um, and she's like, "Okay, well –" They have this long conversation, but here's what she tells us, essentially. Um, a) Birgitte herself has this experience because in one of her many lives, she entered the Tower of Ghenjei through this, like, side entrance with Gaidal Cain, and they had this very, like, Theseus in the labyrinth experience of just getting lost and eventually dying in there. Like, it's very tragic.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And interesting, I think. I always think it's fun to hear about Birgitte's past lives.

Sally: Sure. I wish she didn't go into the Tower of Ghenjei because, uh, Gaidal Cain sustained a head injury that made him nonverbal and nonresponsive and, like, her whole thing is to heal him of that.

Emily: Oh. Yeah. Just, like –

Sally: It's just – maybe I'm being needlessly sensitive because Wheel of Time has such bad disability politics, but I was like, this feels a little aggressive.

Emily: Um –

Sally: But I do love a labyrinth.

Emily: Yeah, fuckin' love them. Um, the Tower of Ghenjei, according to Birgitte, is not, like, a physical – like, it is a physical location, but when you go into the tower, you're not entering a tower. It's just a doorway to the realm, the way the ter'angreal doorways are. Um, and what it does is allow you to sidestep the treaties –

Sally: Mm.

Emily: Which Birgitte sort of references as, like, if you enter either of those ter'angreal doorways, you're essentially under protection of these ancient treaties. You know, where the – they have to answer your questions, they have to grant your favors, um, and, you know, they can't shed blood. They can, of course – she says – has this really chilling line about, um, traps with ropes.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Mat, of course, is like, "Eugh."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: You know, with his hanging scar. I don't know, I just – like, it's a really good line for some reason.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I really enjoyed it. Um, she's like, "Overall they probably won't, like, do things that will make you bleed; they'll try and trick you and trap you and, um, confuse you." She's like, "The thing about the Tower is you can just go on and on and on and on forever and never get where you're going because it's a weird alternate crazy dimension."

Sally: Right.

Emily: She's like, "But if you get to this one specific, like, chamber," which is, like, this, um – I can't remember what she calls it. Anyway, if you get to this, like, one specific room, then they'll, like, make a deal with you. So she's like, "Your best bet is to get in, get to that room, make a deal, and they will make you, like, give up something."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "You'll have to make a sacrifice; you'll have to actually make a bargain." Um, and – um, she's basically like, "It's impossible. You can't – the chances are one in a million." And he's like, "I don't know – you're talking to me, mister luck man."

Sally: Yeah, chance boy himself.

Emily: Chance boy himself. It's pretty good odds. And she's like, "Eh, fair enough, I guess."

Sally: "Okay." Um, I think my favorite part of this is Birgitte – (laugh) mentions that she and Gaidal Cain were in there for two months –

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And Mat's like, "Two months?!" And she's like, "Yeah, like, that's when my provisions ran out," and he's like, "Oh my God."

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: "We didn't think about provisions at all." (laugh) "I just have a bag of fireworks."

Emily: "We just –" (laugh) Like, shoves his bag of fireworks a little farther under the table.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: He's like, "Food? I forgot about food and water."

Sally: "Food? Water? Oh, man."

Emily: "Oh God."

Sally: It's so funny to me.

Emily: Yeah, he's like, "How long were you in there?" She's like, "Well, I had provisions for two months, and then when those ran out, I don't know how long we lasted," and he's like, "Jesus fucking Christ."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Ah, they're funny.

Sally: Ah, Mat.

Emily: Anyway, then Birgitte gets her Warder senses pinged and is like, "Ah, fuck it, Elayne." So, Elayne, over at the opera, or rather after the opera. Or rather at the opera, while she's examining the foxhead medallion and is like, "Yes, I have made some copies, but they're not as good," 'cause, like – now I can't remember why they're not as good, but they're not as good.

Sally: Yeah, she says it's just, like, a surprisingly complicated ter'angreal, which is not – it's actually not surprising.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um. She's been able – she's not been able to mimic the effect that weaves don't impact the wearer. She's almost, like, inversed it so that, like, the wearer – or, if you're holding it or touching it, cannot channel. So.

Emily: Yes. Like, weird.

Sally: And it'll deflect, like, some basic weaves but not, like –

Emily: The big ones. It's not –

Sally: Anything really valuable.

Emily: The ultimate invulnerability –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: That the original has.

Sally: Which ...

Emily: So she's like, "Disappointing, but I do have to give this back to Mat." Or, actually, she's like, "Mm, maybe I won't give it back to Mat," and then she's like, "No, Elayne. I have some ethics," and I'm like, barely.

Sally: Barely.

Emily: Um, they leave. She and the other nobility, like, retire to a parlor to –

Sally: I – to have –

Emily: Have their little salon. She has an extremely creepy interaction with Sylvase, who's one of the nobility who's like, "It's me. I'm a sociopath."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Based on all of the, like, true crime podcast signs.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: She just gives off weird vibes, and she has an expressionless face –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And she has a traumatic childhood, so she must be a serial killer. ‘Course, she is, but. And she’s, like, set up this whole thing to get Ellorien, who – it doesn’t matter. She’s doing political shit that I don’t care about. Anyway. Elayne then is struck by this idea. She’s like, “And Birgitte’s not here to stop me; it’s perfect.” So Elayne goes up to her rooms, disguises herself as one of the, like, you know, just, like, a shroud – a woman shrouded in darkness, with a big booming voice, to pretend to be one of the Forsaken. And she, like – she’s like, “I have the for – I have the medallions to protect me.” So she goes down to her dungeons, like, weaves a gateway into one of the cells, which is extremely funny to me because, like, seven books ago, Elayne was like, “We can’t possibly Travel straight to Ebou Dar, because what if we cut open some sheep?”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: “With the gateway?” but she’s like – (laugh)

Sally: “Cutting open a woman is fine.”

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: “If she’s evil.”

Emily: “If she’s evil. Crimes? What about the sheep, though?”

Sally: What about ‘em?

Emily: What about ‘em? Anyway, she Travels straight there. As you may recall, like six Black Ajah got captured and put in the dungeons in the last book. Not in the last book literally; a couple books ago. At the climax of the Caemlyn plot. Um. And I thought that also so did – what’s his name?

Sally: Hatchet face.

Emily: Hatchet face.

Sally: Yeah. Me too, I was really –

(cats meowing loudly)

Emily: Oh my God.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: You guys suck. But apparently not? Or maybe he was in a cell and got – released.

Sally: Released, yeah.

Emily: It’s very confusing.

Sally: Yeah, it's hard to say.

Emily: And all we know is that they're down there and they've been being questioned by Sylvase's torture secretary. And it's like –

Sally: But Elayne won't let him actually do torture.

Emily: Yeah. She's like –

Sally: Which is where she gets this stupid fucking idea.

Emily: Yeah, she's like, "I have to trick them into revealing information." And it's like, yeah, that's exactly what a Forsaken would do, is go in and be like, "So, what – what are your plans?"

Sally: Yeah

Emily: "So –"

Sally: "Who have you killed?"

Emily: "Who have you – could you just lay out for me your crimes?"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "And sign right here?" Say – this never works. Come on, guys. Um, but she goes in there and then is, like, having this conversation with this lady who's kind of suspicious but not really. And then she is surprised by, um, the cell opening, and it turns out Sylvase's torture secretary – I know you guys aren't going to believe this – but he's evil. Go figure.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: People who do torture for a living? What a shocker.

Sally: Not upstanding citizens as a whole.

Emily: Yeah. Whatever the U.S. government tells you. Um, so he's, like, released some of the Black Ajah and is like, "Come on in, we're gonna go see what this is about."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So he's like, "What's this?" and are like – it's Elayne, obviously.

Sally: Do they make the jump that it's Elayne?

Emily: No, they're like, "Who the fuck is this?"

Sally: They're like, "This is not one of the Forsaken because why would one of the Forsaken be like, 'Remind me ...'"

Emily: Yeah, it's like, Elayne shields a couple of them, then the secretary, like, um, tackles her, um, and she, like, basically gets it under control. You know? She's like, "Okay, I've got – the three Black Ajah ladies are either unconscious or shielded –"

Sally: Shielded.

Emily: “And this guy’s tied up,” and so she kind of just, like, lets it drop because –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: She’s like, “Okay, I’m not fooling anyone anymore.” Then Hatchet face comes up and stabs her in the back all of a sudden. And it’s like, Elayne’s also been shoved into a wall, and now she’s getting stabbed in the side –

Sally: Yeah, like, her – one of her arms breaks or dislocates or something.

Emily: Yeah, hurts her shoulder or something. And she’s like, “Oh my God. Birgitte was right. I can still get hurt.” And, readers, I don’t know what to tell you. She really is that stupid.

Sally: Yeah, like, it’s such a surprise to her – like, when she gets stabbed in the back, of course her first thought is like, “Oh my god, what if the babies –”

Emily: “My babies!”

Sally: “Get hurt?”

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And it’s like, yeah, like, you – prophecies are so tricky. Like, saying you’ll live until your babies are born could basically mean – doesn’t guarantee the safety of your children, you know, like –

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: What if it’s like you never have children and therefore you just live your whole life – you know. Not to, like, belabor the point, but it’s just like, Elayne, you are ridiculous.

Emily: Queen idiot.

Sally: Like, this whole plot – this whole idea of hers is beyond stupid. Just above and beyond idiotic. And so, yeah, when she’s finally like, “Oh, dang, I sustained some serious bodily harm in this –”

Emily: You’re like, God, I don’t feel any sympathy for you at all.

Sally: No, I was like, I hope both your arms get broken.

Emily: Yeah, like, Hatchet face comes up and is like, “Hello, my queen –” (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. Freak.

Emily: “Wheeee.” And I’m like, okay. Like, I’m not – I’m not even vaguely – I’m grossed out by this guy, but I’m just like, yeah, stab Elayne, it’s what she deserves at this point.

Sally: Yeah

Emily: Um, so now Elayne's, like, fucking bleeding out. Some of her shields fall off, so one of the Black Ajah ladies, um, heals her, 'cause they're like, "We wanna take her alive." And they're basically getting ready to, um, run away with her – oh, first, Hatchet face just fucking murders the others. Like, these three Black Ajah ladies. He just murders them and then is like, "Byeeee."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um, he also ends up with the – with both medallions, both the original and the copy. And Elayne is so – she doesn't want him to get away with the original, of course. Um, so she, like, channels and causes, like, a little earthquake or something. Like, a bunch of rocks fall. So he gets away, but she – with a copy of the medallion, but she still has the original.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And now these three Black Ajah ladies are dead and so is the secretary guy. Um, and they find out later that the – there were a few other Black Ajah ladies in the dungeons who escaped also.

Sally: And, like, killed all the Kinswomen who were supposed to be watching the dungeons.

Emily: Yeah, like, there were guardswomen in there who got killed. So. Overall it –

Sally: Elayne, body count of, like, seven for this shenanigan.

Emily: Some of you may die –

Sally: Yeah, exactly.

Emily: But that's a sacrifice I'm willing to make.

Sally: Exactly! She's the worst!

Emily: Net loss.

Sally: Yeah, and, like, your – one of your bad guys got away.

Emily: Yep.

Sally: So what did you – and you didn't even learn anything.

Emily: Multiple of your bad guys got away. Yeah.

Sally: She's, like, learned vaguely – like, someone alludes to a plan to, like, invade Andor.

Emily: Someone is like, "We're out to assassinate Mat," and she's like, "Why does anyone give a shit about Mat? I'm the queen." And I'm like, girl, your obsession with your own relevance to the plot is misguided, to say the least.

Sally: Delusional.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Delulu.

Emily: Um. (laugh) Obviously Birgitte and Mat then get there and are like, “Hello, Elayne,” and she’s like, “I fucked up,” and they’re like, “No freakin’ way.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Jesus Christ.

Sally: Birgitte should just kill her at this point.

Emily: Yeah, Birgitte should be given a gun with a single bullet.

Sally: Yeah. As soon as those babies are born –

Emily: Pfft. (laugh) Goodbye.

Sally: Goodbye. These are my babies now. You don’t deserve them.

Emily: Yeah. Uh, then our next little – we cut to – Birgitte, uh – Elayne, like, in bed with, uh, Birgitte standing by and one of – like, her midwife has come to give her an examination to make sure the fetuses are still healthy.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um, she’s still so – so early on in her pregnancy, by the way, that, like, her midwife has not recognized the fact that she is bearing twins.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, still assumes that it is a single baby.

Sally: Yeah. It’s also weird to me that Elayne doesn’t tell her that she knows it’s –

Emily: She might have told her, and then she’s just like, “I won’t believe it until there’s actual scientific evidence, such as two heartbeats.”

Sally: Of two – yeah. That’s – that’s valid. (laugh)

Emily: But whatever.

Sally: She’s a woman of science.

Emily: Yeah, and as a woman of science, she’s like, “You’re on bedrest for a week because you’re so stupid,” and Elayne’s like –

Sally: And you just got stabbed. Like, you need to rest.

Emily: Elayne – Elayne’s like, “I can’t rule a country from bed,” and she’s like, “You will.”

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: “Bitch.”

Sally: This midwife's my favorite character.

Emily: Yeah, I love this lady who's just like – Elayne's like, "I'm the queen!" And she's like, "Yeah, and I'm your doctor. No one's gonna –"

Sally: Yeah, "You think the guards won't listen to me?"

Emily: Yeah, "Everyone's gonna – I am – I precede you, not in matters of state but in matters of you."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So. Should've prescribed nine months of bread – of bed rest.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh) Yeah, Birgitte says something similar. Like, it's like, "So you're just gonna lock me away?" and she's like, "If I could for the next six months, that would be ideal."

Emily: "That would be ideal." Mat, hilariously, is just outside of the room at this point –

Sally: Yeah. Just sitting in the waiting room, basically.

Emily: Yeah, Dad in the waiting room.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Just awkwardly.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Not even Dad; just Dad's weird friend.

Sally: "This is your weird uncle Mat."

Emily: (laugh) Mat's like, "Eugh."

Sally: "Don't call me that."

Emily: "Ugh, I hate that. And I don't even like your mom, so."

Sally: "I don't like your mom or your dad, so."

Emily: Yeah, "They both suck. You guys could get there, but it'll take some time."

Sally: "You're – guilty until proven innocent."

Emily: Yeah, "The gene pool isn't on your side here." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Weird little ginger freaks.

Emily: Anyway, uh, the –

Sally: God bless 'em. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) The midwife leaves. Mat, like, pokes his head in. He's like, "You decent?"

Sally: "Are you in there?"

Emily: He's like, "You wearing clothes?" Elayne's like, "Yeah, come on in." And Birgitte's like, "Did you even, like, get anything from that?" and Elayne's like, "Something about an invasion and also, Mat, they're out to kill you," and Mat's like, "There literally couldn't be any more people out to kill me."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "There's – this changes nothing."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: She's like, "Here's your medallion back." He's like, "Oh, cool, did you do anything with it?" She's like, "Ah, I made some copies, but they're not as good." And does not tell him that that one guy got away with it. Um, and we kind of cut off on this scene, with Mat being like, "Okay, well, by the way, I've had an idea about the gholam, so – but I need some help." We're like, ohhh. Plan incoming.

Sally: Oh, worm?

Emily: Um. In these chapters, we also get a Lan point of view where he's getting more guys. Then we get an Ituralde point of view where he's now in the city of Maradon. He goes with Yoeli to meet the, like, rulers of this city, who are now under house arrest, 'cause Yoeli's, like, faction has taken over to assist. Ituralde's leggy is fine, by the way; he got healed. And they just meet with these guys, and it's like, they're just a couple of dumb rich people. Um, it's like, okay, this isn't really – this wasn't really a scene worth having. Um, uh, oh, and Yoeli's like, "I'll be executed when the queen returns," and Ituralde's like, "Probably not. Like, you did the right thing."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And he's like, "No, I'll demand to be executed," and Ituralde's like, "Borderlanders are so fucking stupid."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: And I'm like, Ituralde? King shit. (laugh) Honestly.

Sally: Yeah, he's like, "This code of – weird code of honor that you have isn't really working for you."

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: "Why would you demand to be executed when you saved a bunch of lives and are gonna help us prepare for the Last Battle?" and Yoeli's like, "You wouldn't get it."

Emily: "You wouldn't get it."

Sally: "Sorry."

Emily: "It's just, like –"

Sally: "You just wouldn't get it."

Emily: "You just wouldn't – duty's heavier than a mountain," or whatever the fuck. Smash cut to Perrin, who literally walks – this is Perrin's first line: "Perrin entered their tent to find Faile brushing her hair. She was beautiful." This is, like, second grade writing shit.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "She was beautiful." That's literally the only thing he ever thinks when he looks at Faile.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah.

Emily: "God, she's beautiful." Ugh.

Sally: I'm really over the whole motif of women brushing their hair.

Emily: He's like, "I got her this hairbrush special by trading for it –"

Sally: "With Gaul."

Emily: "With Gaul," which is hilarious.

Sally: Gaul just had a silver comb.

Emily: He's like, "For some reason, she thinks our anniversary celebration is important, so I'm gonna – I'm gonna meet her at her level."

Sally: Yeah –

Emily: And we're like, husband of the year.

Sally: Yeah. Wow.

Emily: Wow.

Sally: Wow.

Emily: Um. Anyway, she's like – he's like, "Well, I guess we're gonna have to fight the Whitecloaks tomorrow. Big bummer." And Faile's like, "Honestly, I think it's great."

Sally: She's like, "Is it, though?"

Emily: She's like, "Kill those – kill the bitch." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah, those guys gotta go.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: They're – we're done with them.

Emily: She's like, "Let's just move the fuck on." Perrin's like, "Ahh." Goes to sleep. He goes to the wolf dream and hangs out with Hopper a little bit. Um, he learns how to follow people when they teleport in Tel'aran'rhiod, which seems like a –

Sally: Yeah, good skill.

Emily: Yeah, and Hopper kind of is like, "You can only do this if you're a wolf guy." Like, 'cause you have to have the wolf sense of smell.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And I think that's pretty true. I don't know if we ever see any other characters who are able to do that. Um, so yeah, Perrin learns that cool skill. He's still, like, a novice at it, obviously. And Perrin's also, like, awakening to the fact that the things that he believes in Tel'aran'rhiod are – end up being, like, real.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like, at one point he has this, like, memory or this imagination involving chickens, and, like, a bunch of chicken feathers –

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Float around? And it's like, remember, what you do in Tel'aran'rhiod, like – you gotta keep your brain under control. Which just, like, made me think – it, like, gave me pause 'cause I was like, I feel like when Egg and the girlies first came to Tel'aran'rhiod, it was like they couldn't go a millisecond without being like, "God, everything's changing so fast 'cause –"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "My little woman brain is moving so fast and just, I can't settle on one – I can't concentrate."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "I just – I'm always thinking of myself in different clothes; my clothes are always changing; my hair's always changing; oh my God, I'm hysterical."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "My womb is wandering."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: And Perrin's just – that's never been a fucking issue for Perrin. The only, like, change that happens in the wolf dream for Perrin is that he turns into a wolf –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Which kind of seems more related to the wolf thing than the Tel'aran'rhiod thing.

Sally: To Tel'aran'rhiod, yeah.

Emily: So the fact that it's being introduced now for Perrin is, like, wild to me.

Sally: Yeah, it has one of those things that feels like it could've been, like, an editorial oversight on Brandon's part or the editors at Tor, which very much could be the case. However, I don't want to make assumptions or excuses for that type of editing, because the ultimate effect, um, is a very, um, misogynist rendering of how the different genders operate in Tel'aran'rhiod. It's very much the, like, women are chaotic, unstable, volatile, versus men –

Emily: Emotional.

Sally: Emotional, versus men, who are rational, stable, steady, dependable, and it's just, like, such an egregious –

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Example of that philosophy, which does infiltrate the entire text. So.

Emily: Yeah, it is – and it seems to be, like, an effort to correct that is happening now with having Perrin encounter that, but it's, like, way too late in the game for that, yeah.

Sally: Yeah. Too little, too late, yeah.

Emily: Um, as he's in Tel'aran'rhiod, Perrin – like, he's running with a pack of wolves, and kind of one of them sort of snuffs out, gets killed. So Perrin is like, "Ahh, it's Slayer. I hate that guy, who I haven't seen in eleven books."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Or whatever the fuck. Goes and teleports over to him. Hopper, this entire time, is like, "Absolutely do not do this."

Sally: "Nope."

Emily: "You are not ready –"

Sally: "Nope."

Emily: "Young padawan." And – (laugh)

Sally: "Nope."

Emily: Perrin's like, "Fuck you. Fuck you, old man." (laugh)

Sally: "Fuck you, dad. What do you know, wolf dad?"

Emily: "I can do shit." So he goes and confronts Slayer. Um, and they have just this little altercation where it's like, oh, Slayer's a little surprised 'cause Perrin's, you know, learned a couple things in the last two days. (laugh)

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: But then is ultimately – like, has been in Tel’aran’rhiod and wandering around, doing shit, for the last eighty years, so experience trumps –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And he, uh, outclasses Perrin very quickly. Perrin flees back to Hopper, and Hopper’s like, “What did I fucking tell you, bitch?” And Perrin’s like, “I thought I could take him,” and Hopper’s like, “You can’t. You gotta learn more shit. Just go –” He’s like, “Get out, I’m done with you.”

Sally: Yeah, the other, um, thing that Hopper tells Perrin is that, like, “You’re here –” He’s, you know, saying it in wolf terms, but he’s like, “You’re here too strongly, and that’s not just in Tel’aran’rhiod; like, that’s in your real life too. Like, you get too single-minded and too focused.”

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: And Perrin begins to wonder for the first time in his life if he’s responsible for his own actions. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Oh my God. If things don’t just happen to him but maybe, like, he does things?

Sally: Yeah. He’s like, “Maybe this kind of, like, wolf rage that I’ve been talking about is maybe just, like, a me thing.”

Emily: An inherent part of my personality and not just –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like –

Sally: A thing that happened to me.

Emily: Yeah, that – by some twist of fate, I’m inflicted with this berserker rage –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And it’s like, maybe that’s just my real life. Like, he’s like, “It wasn’t like that in the Two Rivers,” and it’s like, yeah, you weren’t getting attacked by Trollocs on the daily in the Two Rivers.

Sally: You never had to fight, yeah.

Emily: Yeah, so –

Sally: You were a blacksmith.

Emily: Yeah. And he’s like, “Oh, I do have kind of, like, a – a hyperfixation, as it were, on my work, so. Oh, God, maybe I do just have this personality.” Yeah, it is truly a shocker that – (laugh)

Sally: Yeah –

Emily: It's taken this long.

Sally: And it's like, you love to see someone overcoming their own victim complex, I guess, but.

Emily: But, boy, has it been an agonizing road to get here. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) So stupid.

Emily: Perrin wakes up, goes for, like, a little walk. Uh, Gaul goes with him, which I think is just, like, cute.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, Perrin gets some wood and is like, "I'm just gonna go do something useful and chop wood while I think about my feelings," and Gaul's just, like, sharpening his little –

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Spear. Just hanging.

Sally: Just –

Emily: They're like two guys hanging – playing their – what's that – what's the phrase? I can't remember, but it's like they both have their handheld video games –

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: In the same room.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Very charming. Um, then Elyas comes to talk to him. Um, and Perrin's like, "Did you ever try to not be a wolf?" and Elyas is like, "Ah, wasn't really an option for me 'cause, you know, it happened while I was a Warder, and then I had to, like, flee being a Warder and then it was like the wolves are nothing, so –"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Sort of just leaned in."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: In a feminist way.

Sally: (laugh) Lean in.

Emily: Lean in. Girl, wash your face.

Sally: Girl, wash your face.

Emily: Um, and Perrin's like, "I'm just so worried about it, 'cause I knew this one guy who just became a wolf, basically, and it really disturbed me," and Elyas is like, "Yeah, I don't know what to tell you about that."

Sally: He's like, "Yeah, it sounds pretty disturbing, but –"

Emily: "Sounds fucked up."

Sally: Perrin says something like, he – it just had – it had to happen to him or whatever, and Elyas is like, "Did it, though? Again, you make choices."

Emily: Yeah. Meh.

Sally: Perrin's like, "No."

Emily: Perrin's like, "Well, thanks for being here, I guess. Daddy." And Elyas is like, "Yeah, no problem. I always forget that, like, I do like to hang out with people every once in a while." It's like, okay, a heartwarming conversation. They're like, "At dawn, we ride to fight the Whitecloaks."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And, you guys, I bet they won't. I don't know, just some crazy feeling I have.

Sally: (laugh) It's almost like you've read the book.

Emily: I just – well, a shocking amount of things I don't remember.

Sally: Well, there's – this is a long book, and a lot of things happen.

Emily: Yeah. Anyway, our next section will not have quite so much point of view shifting. We will get Min and Rand going back to Arad Doman. Then we'll get the sort of climactic chapter of Galad and Perrin meeting face to face for the first time, and we'll see what comes of that. Then we'll get an Egwene point of view, um, in the Tower. And I think that's our next section.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Much – much more bearable than this one. So not a lot of conversation because honestly, you guys? We've talked about all this shit before.

Sally: Yeah. We're just –

Emily: You know? Gawyn's misogyny, Elayne's stupidity, pretty old turf.

Sally: Yeah, Perrin's indecision.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And unwillingness to take responsibility. Wow.

Emily: I guess I'd say my mood is –

Sally: Oh, fuck.

Emily: Resigned. Apathetic.

Sally: Yeah, same. And kind of angry.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Just always kind of angry.

Emily: Yeah, just whenever there's a Gawyn point of view, I'm like, "Ah!"

Sally: "Ahh! The wolf rage!"

Emily: Yeah, the wolf rage overcomes me, and it's totally nothing to do with me or my personality at all. It's just insane how bad things happen to good people like me. Good, reasonable people.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: So anyway. (laugh) Thanks, everyone, for listening. Thanks to Glynna MacKenzie for our theme song. Thanks to our patrons on Patreon and our followers on social media.

Sally: We love you guys and, um, it's been so fun – it's Spotify Wrapped season, and it's been, uh, so fun and so rewarding to see, uh, Everybody Hates Rand, this silly little ding-dong podcast, be on so many people's top five podcasts of the year. That's so fun. Thank you so much for listening.

Emily: Yeah, that's sick. Um, anything else? Do we have anything else?

Sally: Uh, no.

Emily: Don't think so. Okay, do you have a sign-off?

Sally: I do. You guys –

Emily: Okay.

Sally: Um, unfortunately, my five-year-old nephew is really into Paw Patrol.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: RIP. And on Thanksgiving, I had to watch –

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) The new Paw Patrol movie, and on any other occasion I would've just been like, "This is a family activity that I will just be sitting slightly in the other room –

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: You know, doing something else, but my cute little nephew Declan was like, "Aunt Sally, come sit with me," and it's like his favorite movie, and he really wanted to show it to me, and I was like, "Oh, Declan, fine." And, you guys. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: The movie is so bad. It's just – like, I was telling Emily, the theme is basically like, “Little girls can be cops too.”

Emily: Yeah. Police brutality ... for her.

Sally: (laugh) Lean in.

Emily: Lean in. Girl, wash your face. Girl, wash your gun.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Um. I'm gonna get you a T-shirt that says “Defund Paw Patrol.” (laugh)

Sally: I would wear it every day. I hate those stupid little bastards. Chase the Paw Patrol dog is my arch-nemesis. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Oh, it's so good. Oh, hi, Ed.

Sally: Ed's in his little Buddha pose.

Emily: Yeah, we love that pose.

Sally: Meditating.

Emily: Alright, everyone. Hope you have a good week.

Sally: Don't watch the Paw Patrol movie.

Emily: Yeah, for fuck's sake.

Sally: Bye!

Emily: Bye.