



## Episode 275: King Virgin and Queen Slut

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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: Could I have the book? I don't remember anything I've read.

SALLY: Oh! Sorry! [laughs]

EMILY: [laughs] Ugh.

SALLY: One time – it's all Gawyn and Galad, mainly.

EMILY: Oh yeah.

SALLY: But one time –

EMILY: It's the shortest Gawyn and Lan chapter ever. One time what?

SALLY: One time it's supposed to say Gawyn but it does say Galad so –

EMILY: It does?! [laughs]

SALLY: Yeah, it's on – [laughs] let me. Uhhh.

EMILY: The typos have been so egregious.

SALLY: The typos. "We'll work it out," Galad said. "You let me protect you, Egwene." Egg-wayne.

EMILY: Egg-wayne. Egg-wayne!

SALLY: So that really cracked me up, imagining the suddenly, like, switch. Like, suddenly it's Galad that Egg is bonded to.

EMILY: It's like *Sense8*. He just pops in.

SALLY: Yeah, it would be really funny. Yeah, suddenly it's just Lito.

EMILY: Ahhh!

SALLY: I see you, villain!

EMILY: I see you, villain!

SALLY: God, *Sense8* is really good.

EMILY: It sure is. Uh, this is Everybody Hates...Gawyn [laughs].

SALLY: Yes.

EMILY: Your friendly neighborhood *Wheel of Time* podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

SALLY: And I'm Sally Goodger.

EMILY: And if you caught it, the person who just sneezed was Tybalt.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Not sure if the mic picked that up. So, three chapters today. Quite short, so – and wrapping up some, um, long running subplots. So, might have a short episode today. I always say that and then it's the longest episode of all time. Uh, but we start with chapter forty-two. Jackie Robinson's number and, boy, would he be insulted to be connected with this particular string of words [laughs].

SALLY: Sorry, Jackie. You didn't deserve this.

EMILY: Sorry, Mr. Robinson. It's Gawyn recovering the day after...the, the fight in *tel'aran'rhiod* slash he fought a bunch of Seanchan assassins and won, of course, and Egg bonded him. And he's like, "Wow, it's so rad having this bond because now I know that even though Egg doesn't look emotional, she has emotions."

SALLY: [laughs] Can you believe she has feelings?

EMILY: It's, like – [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: She's not a mannequin, Gawyn.

SALLY: It's unbelievable. It's unbelievable. He's the stupidest person on the planet.

EMILY: It's like he has object impermanence, but for feelings.

SALLY: Yeah, he does have feelings impermanence.

EMILY: Yeah, he's like, "If I don't see them, then they simply don't exist."

SALLY: And it's, like have you seen anyone's feelings? You can't see feelings.

EMILY: You've been spending all this time with Aes Sedai. Aren't you aware, at least vaguely that, yeah, some of them have feelings? Not all of them, I'll say [laughs]. Speaking of Aes Sedai who are mannequins, um, one of them is now – one of them has been revealed to be Mesaana because they, like, scoured the Tower to find a person who was no longer, um, intellectually present. Um, and they identified it as Danelle of the Brown Ajah. Egg is like, "Yeah, she just kept to herself, so sort of hiding in plain sight." And I'm like – they're not really in plain sight, though...

SALLY: She was kind of just hiding.

EMILY: Yeah [laughs]. She just was sort of hiding.

SALLY: You just sort of missed her. You just couldn't find her.

EMILY: You just were like, "Yeah, we won't bother any of the social recluses."

SALLY: There's no way a bad guy could be doing that!

EMILY: Just hanging out in their rooms.

SALLY: No way!

EMILY: They can teleport, Egg! [screams softly].

SALLY: Sometimes Egg is a little dumb.

EMILY: Yeah, I mean, they're all a little dumb. Egg's like, "I don't know how to talk about how you came back and were sort of disobeying my orders to come back to the Tower. Like, I need to keep up my rep, you know? Like, my girlboss rep." And Gawyn's like, "Oh, you can just – you'll figure out a way to spin it." This is a pointless conversation [laughs].

SALLY: It really is.

EMILY: At one point, Gawyn's like, "We should get married." Um, because Egg is like, "Yeah, you'll have to move into my room, but you'll have your own separate little nook." And Gawyn is like, "Huh, she's so charmingly prudish."

SALLY: Which is, like, what a rude thing to say about your partner.

EMILY: I know. I'm like, "Okay." He's like, "Why don't we get married?" And Egg's like, "I can't get married. My parents are – my parents would be pissed off." And I'm like girl you have burned that bridge. You became the Amyrlin Seat without sort of cc'ing them in that major life decision [laughs].

SALLY: Yeah. I do find this a really clumsy way to – I think it is intended to do accomplish a couple of things. One, it is supposed to be funny. Egg is this, like, crazy powerful lady, but she's still also nineteen or whatever.

EMILY: A village girl, yeah.

SALLY: Yeah, she's still got her village girl roots and she's still young and maybe a little idealistic about life and marriage or whatever.

EMILY: Romance.

SALLY: Romance. But it's also, like, it, it feels incredibly infantilizing to be like Egg has grown up in every way except sexually.

EMILY: Yeah, it also feels a little bit, um, like we're – I think we mentioned this in the last section or a couple of sections ago – that we're just trying to frantically cross off subplots before we get to the Last Battle, right?

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: And in *The Wheel of Time* world, um, a romance subplot is not complete unless the people involved are married and/or, depending upon if there's a channeler involved or it's a monogamous relationship – Rand can't marry three women yet [laughs].

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, like, if they can channel there also has to be a Warder bond.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: Um, and so, Egg and Gawyn have to get married in order for this to get checked off.

SALLY: Crossed off, yeah.

EMILY: Because otherwise we'd be enforcing a worldview where [laughs] loose women wander the streets, I don't know.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: We joke about Egg being prudish, but it's the author and the, um, ingrained, uh, worldbuilding that is incredibly prudish here.

SALLY: Totally! I think, I mean we're talking about it all the time, but I think we laid out in a previous episode, like, how every single female character goes from a place of being a quote unquote, "untamed woman," who's got ambition and maybe she's a little rude – and quote unquote "rude," some of them are quite rude.

EMILY: Some of them are just Grade A Bitches.

SALLY: [laughs] But, like, you know defying all these social norms according to this world and mostly according to our world about, like, what a good – again in air quotes – woman should be. They're powerful, they're ambitious, they've got their own things going on. And then one by one by one by one they get forced into a heterosexual, mostly monogamous, mostly, marriage. And this in many ways just kind of – it shouldn't have to be. Marriage does not have to be this way, but for many of these women, marriage kind of blocks their plots of in very specific ways. They almost get, like, bumpers put on them where they start to, quote unquote, behave better, because they're more sympathetic to men or they've got a man to control them or they're making all these decisions about how to protect the men in their lives and protect the men's feelings rather than going about their own ambitions and...

EMILY: Yeah and that theme – bleck! [clears throat].

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: That theme is continued in the rest of these sections where we get a culmination of Berelain's subplot as well as Morgase's subplot. We see Berelain and Galad interact, more or less one on one for the first time, and it's pretty bad!

SALLY: [laughs] If you've ever watched, like, eleven-year-olds try to flirt with each other, I think you'll probably get it [laughs].

EMILY: Yeah, I think we're supposed to find it a little charming, but it's like, the thing is that Berelain has been, throughout the series, set up as our, like, whore character.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: In the Madonna-Whore complex, Berelain is the latter. Um, and Berelain has to be redeemed now into the *Wheel of Time* worldview by having her paired off with a man. Um, you know, sort of swearing off her villainous slut ways.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: And also clarifying for the readers, just in case we were thinking ill of her that, don't worry, she was never really a sexually empowered woman who went after what she wanted. She was just sort of self-sacrificing for her country.

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: She was only every going after men who she thought would be able to provide a political advantage to her very small city state that she's trying to protect. So, okay, great. We have virgin-ified Berelain.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And we have set her up with King Virgin, Galad.

SALLY: [laughs] Yeah, the Virgin Overlord.

EMILY: Yeah [laughs]. Get it? he is dressed all in white and....

SALLY: In case you missed it.

EMILY: Is deeply – I know we joke about Galad fucking a lot, but Galad is very, like, asexual coded.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: He just has not really...he sort of awkwardly fumbled flirting with Egwene for a while, but it sort of seemed like it was just he was doing it because that's what you're supposed to do.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: And he hasn't really done much with women since then. [a noise in the background]  
Bye, Ed.

SALLY: Hey, Ed [laughs].

EMILY: Ed sometimes goes into the back of the bookshelves to sort of hide and...

SALLY: Have some Ed time.

EMILY: I don't blame you, Ed. I wish that I had some Ed time. And, of course, we get Morgase pairing off with Tallanvor, finally. They make up, which is just Morgas being like, "I changed my mind and actually I do want to be with you." And then they go and have Perrin marry them, which, because it's Perrin, is just, like, them swearing their oaths in front of... and, you know, they've had thirty seconds to prepare, but they're incredibly eloquent [laughs].

SALLY: Yeah, they're just – whatever.

EMILY: It's really the authors scrambling to be like, "Oh, yeah. These two characters do have reasons to love each other. Here they are."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And don't worry, we noticed that.

SALLY: It's just a waste of page space honestly. I don't care.

EMILY: Yeah, we've railed against the Morgase and Tallanvor relationship enough probably, but just so you know that's been set up. So, Egwene and Gawyn is just kind of like a continuation of...

SALLY: Yeah, and just to, like, hammer in our point, Morgase and Tallanvor – speaking of hammering, they just cannot stop hitting the nail on the head here about how Morgase is more powerful than him, but it's *not actually* lowering herself to marry someone of lower social status. Which is true, because social status is made up. But in the world of this book it is not true, you know? She is sacrificing the potential of maybe having a more politically um, savvy marriage for the sake of Andor or anything like that. And Morgase goes on her whole empowerment thing about how she's had to sacrifice in marriages before so she should get to do one for love, and it's, like, that's fine. Feels a little random. Morgase has never really seemed to care about that and she's also, though she seems to hate them, she has also claimed to love both Gareth Bryne and Thom at the same – [laughs] so I don't really know what's going on there. I'm not articulating this point very well, but it's just the same thing. Morgase basically gets nerfed as, like, an ambassador.

EMILY: A political actor, more or less.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Yeah, Tallanvor is like, "You can't marry me because you're going back to help Elayne and she might need you to marry someone to cement a political alliance." And I'm like, boy, first of all, what an awkward mother-daughter talk that would be. Hey mom? I need you to, um, get me a new step-daddy.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And he will be a step-daddy. Wait until you hear about how I treated Thom in the early stages of our relationships.

SALLY: Ugh. Ugh.

EMILY: [gagging noises] But Morgase is like, “No, I had a terrible marriage when I was young that was arranged. And then I refused to get married because I was traumatized by my first marriage, and so now my marriage is just going to be for me, not Andor.” And I’m like it is totally fine to be like, “Uh, I am actually not going to do that. I have personal autonomy over whom I marry. “

SALLY: Mm-hmm.

EMILY: But the way it’s set up is just like so – we’re also framing this in the same moment where Morgase is like, “I am going back to Elayne, but I have to be extremely careful not to supplant or surpass Elayne. I will literally put myself out to pasture if it becomes too possible that people are rallying around me as a differently leader, you know?” So, it’s, like, this weird retirement marriage.

SALLY: Yeah, the whole – the whole thing just feels like we’re taking Morgase off the table, off the chess board as a character, as a political actor is the perfect way to put it. So.

EMILY: I mean, she’s basically been a non-political actor this entire time and, in fact, ever since she ran away from the palace in Andor, we have been more or less dangling on the thread that, at the point she does come back, maybe she will be a political actor. You know? Why would we follow the queen in her dramatic escape from one of the Forsaken if she wasn’t going to be relevant at some point? On the same sort of political on which she has been relevant in the past.

SALLY: And, you know what the end of that plot was? She’s not going to be relevant.

EMILY: No, she more or less should be dead. Morgase has been a useless character throughout the entire series. She was taken away from Andor so that Elayne would basically have an open slot to fill. And everything she’s done since then – I mean, she hung out with the Whitecloaks, who we didn’t ever need to be around with, or we could have had Galad’s point of view if we needed insight into what’s going on with the Whitecloaks.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know, the guy who actually joined them. And then, she hasn’t done anything that couldn’t have been done by someone else since then.

SALLY: Right.

EMILY: So.

SALLY: Useless!

EMILY: And, of course, they have to get *married*, because –I

SALLY: God forbid they just –



EMILY: For some reason their lives are dictated by an eight-year-old woman, Linni.

SALLY: Yeah. Who's like, "You have to get married. It's improper."

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And it's, like, Morgase has had sex outside of wedlock before. It's not a big deal.

EMILY: Yeah, also, can someone please just tell Linni to shut up.

SALLY: Yeah, it's also not your business.

EMILY: Yeah. It's insane who this character has [laughing] been in this plot for so long.

SALLY: I think I just need – no offense to Basel Gill, but I need the whole crew from Andor to just be done.

EMILY: Just go away. I need Linni – Linni's up there with fucking Jofferey Baratheon for most annoying characters.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Most hated [laughs]. I mean Tallanvor beats her but.

SALLY: Tallanvor is such an insufferable bastard.

EMILY: [sighs]

SALLY: He, like, lays his sword at Morgase's feet and is like [groaning noises].

EMILY: Yeah, just to really cement this image of vassal swearing to lord, you know. It's so – ah! Anyway, back to what we were initially talking about, which was Gawyn and Egg. Um, Gawyn and Egg were like, "Yeah, maybe we'll get married." Gawyn's like, "Don't worry about it. I'll contact your parents and make the arrangement for our wedding."

SALLY: Imagine you're Egg's parents, running the inn in the decimated and then rebuilt Two Rivers, and you get a letter from the Prince of Andor, who's like –

EMILY: Or, more likely, an in person visit. Since you can teleport.

SALLY: [laughing] That's true.

EMILY: He, like, waltzes in. Remember, way back in *The Shadow Rising* when Perrin came to the Two Rivers, accompanied by, like, Gaul [laughs].

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And Gaul was like, “Here, Roofmistress” and presented Egg’s mom with, like, some incredibly fancy treasure he’d [laughing] looted from the Stone of Tear.

SALLY: Yeah! Yeah.

EMILY: And she was like, [delighted] “Thank you!”

SALLY: Thank you!!

EMILY: That’s so nice!

SALLY: God, Gaul –

EMILY: Wouldn’t you be like, “I wish this guy would marry my daughter.” Instead you get Prince Loser over here.

SALLY: Yeah. Ugh, you’re so right. How could you ever believe in the value of any man ever again after Gaul, the six-foot-nine incredibly sexy Aielman –

EMILY: Shows up and gives you –

SALLY: With treasure!

EMILY: Yeah, treasure. You’d be like, “Wow. I want this son-in-law. Big time.”

SALLY: Yeah, or, she could just be like, “Why don’t you be my…second husband?” [laughs].

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: And then Egg’s mom has –

EMILY: [laughs] One night she’s talking to Bain and Chiad about Aiel customs and is like, “Ooooh worm.”

SALLY: Oh. Hmmm.

EMILY: Now, darling, [laughing] referring to her first husband.

SALLY: [laughs] I have proposition for you.

EMILY: He’s like, “Oh, I’m in!”

SALLY: Yeah, how could you not be? Gaul is the best! But, yeah, instead you get Prince Loser, who walks in –

EMILY: Riding in on his high horse being like, “I’m marrying your daughter.” And they’re like, “Ugh.” [laughs]

SALLY: Yeah. “No you’re not.”

EMILY: He’s like, “I’m from the royal house of Andor, which has neglected your sort of whole county for generations.”

SALLY: Yeah. You think local municipal governor whatever his name is?

EMILY: I know. What can’t I remember his name?

SALLY: Bran.

EMILY: Bran. Bran al’Vere. It’s, like, Brandlewine or something.

SALLY: [softly] Brandlewine.

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: [laughing] This book is so ridiculous. Anyway, he’s politically active and he will not stand for this type of nonsense.

EMILY: He’s like, “You loser.” Anyway, Egg’s like, “Get some sleep. I have to go talk to the Hall of the Tower about all the shit that’s happened.” Gawyn’s like, “Great.” Gawyn does say to Egg in this conversation like “I promise I’ll, I’ll – except for your protection, which I am in charge of, I will obey you in all things.” And Egg just, like, takes that at face value, I guess. Then Gawyn goes and immediately sort of...skirts that line by investigating the bodies of the Seanchan assassins. Like, he’s been told by whatever Seanchan *sul’dam* that they are powered by these *ter’angreal* rings, so he finds them and just pockets them...So, like, hmm. What’s happening here? Gawyn himself notes like, “Oh, clearly the Tower didn’t notice that these were *ter’angreal*.” And he clearly knows if they knew, then they’d take them away. And if he told Egg, probably she would want to take them away. So, he doesn’t tell Egg. He hides them.

SALLY: And I know he didn’t *directly* disobey an order there, but this is some real lie of omission type shit.

EMILY: It has been thirty second flat and you are already, like, finding the gray areas around that.

SALLY: Yeah, like, don’t make a promise you’re just going to break. You could have just said nothing.

EMILY: Yeah. I mean, you – but he only said it so she’d fucking sleep with him slash marry him.

SALLY: So, he’s a manipulator.

EMILY: You two are impossible.

SALLY: He's a bad guy.

EMILY: Then we switch to Lan, who –

SALLY: For no reason.

EMILY: Gathers more men. He does – he tells us one, he's pretty sure the bond is, the Warder bond has changed and now Nynaeve is in charge. He's like, "Because [laughs] it's more anger than before."

SALLY: Someone back there is real pissed.

EMILY: Real pissed [angry noises]. Hi, Tybalt.

SALLY: [laughs] Are you stuck?

EMILY: But, he accumulates yet more people, including the grandsons of two current Borderland rulers. He's like, "You guys should probably stay with your people, since you are, you know, heirs to the throne. Like, in the line of succession." And they're like, "No, we want to go with you on your man quest." He's like, "Alright!" And finally is like, "I give in and will let anyone who wants to ride with me." It's just – I'm sick of this shit.

SALLY: These princes are also named, like, Kaisel and Kendral and there's something really wrong with me because I was like, "These sound like [laughing] Kardashian names."

EMILY: Kaisel Kardashian and Kendral Kardashian.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And they, too, are not doing much to improve the world.

SALLY: I guess they do kind of sound like Kylie and Kendall, don't they?

EMILY: They do.

SALLY: Kaisel and Kendral [laughs].

EMILY: I was like, "They must be siblings because they both have alliterative names." But they appear to be grandsons of different kings.

SALLY: They're just besties.

EMILY: They're just besties, yeah. Then we switch over to Perrin and Galad as they're wandering around the battlefield, kind of talking about what went down. Perrin's like, "Um, here I have a proposition for you. You can get to Andor in thirty seconds flat if A) you can get your army to use gateways, which viola, Grady and Neald, my besties. And you have to essentially swear fealty to me for the duration of the Last Battle, like, you have to suborn yourself to my command." Um, in the middle of this, they find, like, a wounded guy and [laughs] Galad has like a swooning moment where he's like, "Perrin's so compassionate and brave as he cares for this wounded man."

SALLY: You're like, "Okay?"

EMILY: [laughs] You're like, "Okay?"

SALLY: Is this the start of a porno?

EMILY: Keep it in your pants, dude.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Um, but Galad's like, "Yeah, I'll do that." And then he's like, "Whoa, that was weird." And Perrin's like, "I know. It's because I'm *ta'veren*. He he he!" And runs away [laughs].

SALLY: [laughs] Once again, the consent issues around being *ta'veren* and willfully manipulating that are really just left...up for discussion.

EMILY: Yeah. Just sort of be like, "We don't want you to look too closely at that ethical gray area."

SALLY: Don't worry about that.

EMILY: Whoo! We then switch over to an exceedingly rare Alliandre point of view.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: As she is, like, working to make bandages or something. Women's work, classically. Faile and Berelain are nearby, chatting and Alliandre kind of eavesdrops on them about stuff and she's just like, "This is so weird. I feel like they're acting like friends." She's like, "I know they were faking at first, but now I feel like [laughs] they've actually become friends, which is *whack!*" Then Perrin comes and sits down and so Alliandre goes over to Berelain, they talk about marriage. Then Galad comes up and he had Berelain have the most awkward fliting sesh of all time. And Alliandre, in the background, watches this and is like, "This is nothing but good for me, because it will get the Whitecloaks out of my freaking country."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: So, that's another subplot checked off.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Good for Alliandre. You're the only one I can celebrate in this [laughs] chapter.

SALLY: I know. She's like, "You take him."

EMILY: She's like, "I didn't even have to do anything. I just had to put Queen Slut in front of King Virgin and ba-boom!"

SALLY: [laughing]

EMILY: [laughs] Problem solved! Domestic terrorists? Gone.

SALLY: I think the plot would be funnier if Berelain was actually Queen Slut.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And just was actually, like, a very, like you said, sexually empowered woman and she meets the biggest loser of all time.

EMILY: And is like [sighs].

SALLY: And is like, "Unfortunately."

EMILY: God dammit.

SALLY: "That's the one for me."

EMILY: "I'm a morosexual."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Except she didn't fall in love with Mat. We know she's not a slut because she didn't sleep with Mat.

SALLY: And who wouldn't?

EMILY: Yeah. Oh, speaking of marriages, plots that have to culminate in marriage: Mat.

SALLY: [sighs] Yeah.

EMILY: Mat was King Slut.

SALLY: You're right!

EMILY: And had to get married.

SALLY: Mat was King Slut. Um, Mat also – oh. Next chapter.

EMILY: Um [laughs] yeah, then we get Morgase's point of view as they're preparing to go back to Andor, but they reunite, she reunites with Tallanvor, they decide to get married, and are like, "Okay, we'll hold off until tomorrow so we can have a fucking wedding night in the grass, I guess." Like, guys.

SALLY: Why don't you go to Caemlyn and get married where you can, you know, fuck on a bed?

EMILY: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

SALLY: You freaks.

EMILY: You guys are so weird. Um, Perrin is inspecting a bubble of evil that has turned all the wood in, like, a nearby stand of trees just super dry and dead. And everyone's like, "That's whacky." And he's like, "Yeah, what are you going to do?" He chats with Faile about how all they're problems are being solved." Um, then Morgase and Tallanvor come up and are like, "We're getting married. Please marry us." And Perrin is like, "Okay. Well...married."

SALLY: Yeah [laughs]. Sign of the cross, holy water, holy water.

EMILY: He almost literally says, "Shoo!" [laughs].

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Okay, now shoo.

SALLY: Now go. Off with you.

EMILY: [in a Southern accent] Now get!

SALLY: Get!

EMILY: Go fuck or whatever.

SALLY: [in a New York accent] Get outta here!

EMILY: And everyone's like, "Oh, that was incredibly bad."

SALLY: Faile's like, "You'll do better next time."

EMILY: [laughs] Perrin's like, "What? That was good." And she's like, "It fucking sucked, my dude."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: [laughs]

SALLY: Sometimes Perrin and Faile are such a funny couple.

EMILY: I know they are funny. Um, Perrin then gets hit in the back of the head and is like, “Oh my god. Assassins at every – around every corner.”

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: Keeps getting hit in the head, until he finds out that someone is throwing acorns at him, so he goes into this little stand of woods. Relevant is the fact that there is, like, currently a gateway open next to Caemlyn, so just in case you’re keeping track of the age old argument that we can’t open gateways next to the cities in case of the sheep...Perrin doesn’t, Perrin don’t give a fuck.

SALLY: [laughing] The age-old argument.

EMILY: Well. [crosstalk] That has been my biggest [laughing] beef with this series.

SALLY: Yeah. What about the sheep?

EMILY: [softly screaming] What about the sheep?!

SALLY: Um, we’ll track Perrin on the side of anti-sheep for this type of behavior.

EMILY: How dare he? Anyway, he goes into the woods and finds Mat, who has caught a badger to recreate his iconic introduction in *The Eye of the World*. It’s less iconic now. It’s just cringey.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You’re like, “Okay, guys.”

SALLY: Like, we could have just left it at throwing acorns at Perrin. That was pretty funny.

EMILY: Yeah, that was incredibly funny. Just like, “Hey, loser.” [shooting noises]

SALLY: [laughs] Spitball.

EMILY: He’s got a spitball. He he!

SALLY: [laughs] That would be funny, but the badger – and also, why is there conveniently a badger. This is dumb.



EMILY: Yeah, Perrin's like, "You actually caught a badger?" And Mat's like, "Yeah."

SALLY: [valley girl voice] What like it's hard?

EMILY: [laughing] How do you just catch badgers?

SALLY: [laughs] I don't know. Badgers are super mean and really big.

EMILY: They're scary. Yeah. It would be way more hilarious if Mat was just [laughing] covered in claw marks.

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: He was like, "I got rabies for the bit."

SALLY: [laughs]

EMILY: That would be a little more in character [laughs]. Um, Perrin's like, "Oh, this is so great to see my old friend Mat. I'm so glad that I don't get my swirly colors when I see him. Now we're just vibing." Um, they hug and Mat's like, "I just came to tell you that there are [laughing] so many assassins after us, so watch yourself."

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: "And I'll, I'll see you later. I need to borrow one of your Asha'man." And Perrin's like, "What?" [laughs]. Mat's like, "Later! Come find me at this inn!" And Perrin's like, "Okay? Goodbye." He's like, "How'd you get by Grady?"

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: [laughing] Because Mat was the only one coming the opposite direction.

SALLY: [laughing] Coming the other way. Mat's like, "Don't worry about it!"

EMILY: Mat probably smooched him or something.

SALLY: Yeah, if you were Grady and you saw this hot man walking into camp, what would you do?

EMILY: You'd be like, "Oh."

SALLY: Welcome.

EMILY: Hello.

SALLY: Grady – again, Grady and Neald should have been with Mat. That would have been more fun.

EMILY: [softly] That would have been so iconic.

SALLY: If they were just traveling with the Band, instead of traveling with the Wolf Guard or whatever Perrin's loser army is calling themselves.

EMILY: Yeah, the Wolf Guard. But yeah, it's a pretty anti-climactic reunion. Um, I don't know how it would have been more climactic really. It's just, like, trying to recapture some of the nostalgia factor, which is literally cited in the text. Unfortunately, um, I don't think nostalgia particularly works for these characters anymore, because it has been so long since they've interacted. A more appropriate reaction would be to be incredibly weirded out by each other.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Um, and I don't like that. I think I have long argued that the boys, along with – the girls have sort of been involved a little more with the boys, but, like, the Two Rivers people should have been in closer contact throughout the entire series. Not necessarily having their subplots intersect all of the time, but at least, like, in communication with each other at different points. So, just, like, having these people interact after two years apart and just be like, "Wow. Mat looks so weird. But he's the same old Mat." It's like, that's just a fallacy.

SALLY: Yeah, especially, I think we've hit on this, for Mat in particular, like, Mat is so eldritch and fey these days. Like, Mat is – gives off the weirdest vibes. Like, if you, especially if you knew Mat pre-memory loss, pre-dagger – and again Perrin hasn't seen Mat since Book 4, so that's basically all...even if he didn't, he knew him maybe a little bit post-dagger, he did not know him post-doorway.

EMILY: Mm-mm.

SALLY: So, Perrin to just be like, "Mat's such a goof." And not be like, "What the fuck happened to him?"

EMILY: Hey, what?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: And, in all fairness, Perrin's in the eldritch category himself these days.

SALLY: Yeah! That's a good point.

EMILY: He's toting around a four-foot hammer.

SALLY: Golden eyes.

EMILY: He's constantly gazing off in the middle distance to communicate with wolves.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: He's got a little bit more self-confidence these days.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Just, like, variously, like, you guys have been through some shit.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Having us just be, like, recapture the vibes of their youth, sort of, um, I guess lessens the impact of what they've been through.

SALLY: Yeah, I think so, too.

EMILY: You're just kind of like, "Oh, well, nothing's really changed." When, in fact, everything has changed, so, and I would like the text to reflect that in some substantive way.

SALLY: Yeah, it's also, like, a really crucial part of the Hero's Journey that you return to the same place, but you are not...

BOTH: The same.

SALLY: Person.

EMILY: Yeah.

SALLY: And even if they're not literally returning to the Two Rivers, them coming together is a sort of symbolic return to their past and they are both incredibly different, so for them to just, like, be lads is just, like, it rings not true for the text and just not true for the archetypes and mythologies we're playing with, so it feels very out of place.

EMILY: Yeah, agreed.

SALLY: Can't unring the bell, boys.

EMILY: Mm-hmm.

SALLY: And by boys I mean Brandon and Robert.

EMILY: [clears throat] Well, I don't have anything more to say about those chapters, do you?

SALLY: Nope!

EMILY: That was a short episode, especially once I cut out all of the chat about zombies and vampires. Heh heh! Blooper reel.

SALLY: It's not my best articulated argument about zombies, so you guys aren't missing anything.

EMILY: Um, our next segment of chapters will be about, like, Elayne, Perrin, Morgase all sort of interacting and there will be, like, the Two Rivers as a political entity will be resolved. Aviendha will get to Rhuidean, though not necessarily – we'll get a longer segment with her going through the arches in a little bit. Um, we will go back to Tuon, tragically.

SALLY: [softly gags, whispers] Disgusting.

EMILY: Mat and Perrin will have a longer chat about what's been going down and, crucially, chapter forty-six is a single point of view, and this is where we'll be introduced to Brandon Sanderson's fave, Androl, who is one of the Asha'man at the Black Tower and sort of our insider point of view for this book and the next book. And it's really weird to me that he only has the, like, the one point of view in this book because he feels like such a, um, major addition to the cast, but I think it's just because in *A Memory of Light* they – we switch to Androl a lot. He is, like, in it a lot. Because the Black Tower subplot we cannot wrap up before the Last Battle, so it is going to be one of the very few subplots that is still getting returned to throughout. But Androl, I think, will at least be interesting because we'll get to see what's going on inside the Black Tower and it won't be through a woman who's being sexually coerced or anything like that, so we'll at least [laugh] not have to wade through that misogyny to understand what's going on.

SALLY: That's nice.

EMILY: Yeah. Androl's a very, like, classic Brandon Sanderson type character, so if you like Brandon Sanderson characters, you'll like him. If you don't, you won't. But, um, overall I, at least, am like, "Sure I want to know what's going on in the Black Tower."

SALLY: Sure, the Black Tower is one of the more interesting things that's happening in this world and we continuously leave Mazrim Taim and his cult behavior to the side.

EMILY: Which, in some ways, I think works.

SALLY: Sure.

EMILY: It leaves a level of just, ominousness on the horizon. Like, what's going on in that freaky place?

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: You know, it's, like, a walled off cult.

SALLY: Yeah, sure.

EMILY: Somewhere. You're just, like, something's happening in there. And something is happening in there.

SALLY: Dun dun dun!

EMILY: Dun dun dun! Probably not anything that we don't already know about, but, you know, the scale will become more evident. Um, so that's what's on the horizon, but thanks for listening. Oh, wait. What's my mood?

SALLY: What's your mood, Emily?

EMILY: I don't know. What's your mood?

SALLY: Um, I feel quite apathetic about everything. So, dead inside, maybe.

EMILY: Yeah. It, like, doesn't make me mad, all the marriage stuff just makes me like –

SALLY: [laughing] I forgot what this color was supposed to be. I'll have to listen to the last week's episode.

EMILY: Maybe, just apathetic.

SALLY: Yeah, all the marriage stuff. Sorry, go ahead.

EMILY: Yeah, just all the marriage stuff I'm too tired to feel angry about it, really.

SALLY: Yeah.

EMILY: Just, like, yeah another day.

SALLY: Another day.

EMILY: Another dollar.

SALLY: I think I've already spent all the anger I have to spend at Robert Jordan and Brandon Sanderson's, by proxy, insistence –

EMILY: We'll see about that.

SALLY: That women get married.

EMILY: Oh, yeah [laughs].

SALLY: Just about that. I've not expended all my anger at Robert Jordan.

EMILY: Yeah [laughs]. I was like, “Oh, you wait!”

SALLY: Yeah, no. I’ve got plenty of that left.

EMILY: Wait until Moiraine marries Thom.

SALLY: [sighs angrily]

EMILY: Yeah, you’ll –

SALLY: Luckily I knew about that one in advance or I would just, like, throw the book out the window and be like, “Podcast over.”

EMILY: Feel like quitting the podcast. Yeah, yeah, I would say I’m pretty dead inside slash resigned also.

SALLY: Alright. Yeller.

EMILY: But thank you for listening, thanks to Glynna MacKenzie for our theme song, thanks to our patrons on Patreon, and our followers on social media. Um, do you have a sign off?

SALLY: Ugh [sighs]. Yes. You guys, there’s something wrong with me. I’ve been acting like a total idiot at work. I don’t know what’s happening. Today, we – I am a grants manager for those of who you do not know. Not that it matters, but – we’re working on a grant application and for government grants, which is what I work on, typically you have to attend pre-application meetings, [clicks teeth] where you get to ask questions and hear what the requirements are. It’s, like, a federal requirement sometimes. Um, and, in my defense, this office in the past has done things like this, where they just don’t post something. So, I was like, “Hey, I’m having trouble finding the appendices that I need to fill out for this application.” And they just scrolled to the bottom of the webpage and there they were, and it was so humiliating. Um, I felt like the biggest idiot in the entire world, especially because on that call was the new director of the office that funds not just this program but other programs at my agency, and our new contact for our contract. So, I’m going to be leaving the planet and I’ll see you guys later. Consider that your dumb coworker might be me [laughs].

EMILY: Stop!

SALLY: [laughing] How would you treat them?

EMILY: [laughs] Alright everyone. Have a good week!

SALLY: Bye!

EMILY: Bye!