



## Episode 68 - “Brad Pitt Didn’t Die For This”

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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, pause 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. In the context of this podcast, “everybody” refers to us and our cat. You are free to feel however you want about Rand, who is a fictional character. Don’t DM us.

(theme song by Glynna Mackenzie plays)

Emily: What’s up?

Sally: Not much. What are you reading, actually?

Emily: Aggghh --

Sally: These days. I know we’re not doing this anymore.

Emily: Well, I just finished -- I just finished the Beast Player. Um. I just finished the Beast Player by -- I’m afraid I don’t even recall the author’s name -- I just read it --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Without even looking at the cover, really.

Sally: I do that frequently.

Emily: Um. That was quite interesting. Um. Especially 'cause I think it was an adaptation of, uh, uh, a manga at one point. I think it has an anime too. We might want to look into that.

Sally: Amazing.

Emily: Like, from decades ago. But.

Sally: Oh.

Emily: Still. Yeah, it's an old book.

Sally: That's interesting.

Emily: I looked at the copyright, and it's like -- it was 2004. Just the translation is new.

Sally: Weird. That's wild. OK.

Emily: Yeah, interesting. But that was a really, uh, cool book about, like, animals and their relationships to us --

Sally: (whisper) I love animals.

Emily: And, like, what it means to be a caretaker of animals --

Sally: What. I love that.

Emily: And free will and a lot of other cool stuff.

Sally: Hell the fuck yeah.

Emily: I don't know what I'm gonna read next. Probably something from the stack of books that we just got. What are you reading?

Sally: Um, I'm reading Aru Shah and the Song of Death.

Emily: OK. I also just read that.

Sally: Which I just started. Um, but I just finished Dreadnought by April Daniels, and I really liked that.

Emily: OK, yeah, I saw on the Insta that you enjoyed it.

Sally: I know. I need you to read it so we can talk about robots.

Emily: That might be what I read next.

Sally: (laugh) I need somebody to talk to me about robots.

Emily: OK.

Sally: I'm also -- no one's -- nobody's asking for this, but eventually I will just have to write something about the sentience of Pokemon and Yugioh and robots.

Emily: Yeah, it's all very interesting -- robots are a topic I've, for whatever reason, just never been interested in.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, the premise -- where the premise is like "robots."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, Westworld? I was like, OK ...

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, I just -- it just isn't -- it's not like dinosaurs, y'know. If you tell me there are dinosaurs in it, I'm gonna be like --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Yeah. I'm fucking on that choo-choo train. Like, take me to dinosaur town.

Sally: Yeah. Um. I've never been particularly interested in robots either. Because I think that robot stories tend to lead into the, like, Ex Machina, if you saw that movie, which was garbage --

Emily: I didn't see that movie.

Sally: Don't see it. Where it's like, robots are this, like, weird exotic sexy thing that will inevitably turn on us. And it's like, well, gross.

Emily: Yeah, that's Westworld too, basically.

Sally: Yeah. But, like -- (laugh) ever since starting Yugioh, I have become -- becoming more increasingly interested in, like, the intersections of artificial intelligence and monstrosity.

Emily: Oh, yeah.

Sally: And how that, like, rhetoric collapses on each other. Or, like, it -- not collapses, but intersects.

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: That's really interesting to me. And Dreadnought has some, like, interesting things about that too. So. Now I'm just thinking about robots.

Emily: OK.

Sally: Because I -- and I have never been particularly interested in anything that's more in the realm of science fiction than fantasy. I just never got into it. I don't know why. But.

Emily: Yeah, I'm sure, like, space travel as opposed to, like, sea voyages -- I'll take the sea voyage every time.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Y'know?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's one of those weird things.

Sally: I don't know. But anyway. Just --

Emily: Where do you fall on the science fiction versus fantasy spectrum ... If you're here, I'm assuming a little towards fantasy, but who's to say?

Sally: Who's to say? Just thinking about robots. Expect, at some time in the future, a blog about robots.

Emily: OK. Yeah, enjoy. Hello. This is Everybody Hates Rand, your friendly neighborhood Wheel of Time podcast. I'm Emily Juchau.

Sally: And I'm Sally Goodger. And I am, yes, sick once again. So I apologize --

Emily: You don't sound sick, though.

Sally: That's good, because I feel like my throat is being sprayed with napalm at the moment, so.

Emily: I'm sorry.

Sally: If -- but I'm also starting to get a little cough-y and a little snotty, so apologize -- (laugh) just, like, a -- we should add to the beginning of our episode: apologies for any of Sally's weird mouth noises.

Emily: That's OK. I'm usually pretty good at getting them out.

Sally: Thanks.

Emily: Unless I'm still -- unless I continue to talk while you're coughing --

Sally: Mm.

Emily: Which I do sometimes for some reason?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I dunno, I'm just -- weird.

Sally: Just another bout of tuberculosis.

Emily: Yep. Here we are. Sally's got TB. Did you know tuberculosis used to be incredibly fashionable?

Sally: Yeah, because it made you wasting and pretty.

Emily: Yeah, to the point of, like, people would try and make themselves look wasting and, like, bloodless and et cetera, et cetera. I dunno.

Sally: Man, England was wild.

Emily: Fashion is just such a weird -- especially in Western Europe.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: And I say that mostly because I don't know about fashion in other places. I guess there is, like, foot-binding. I do know about that.

Sally: Yeah. That's fascinating.

Emily: Gnarly.

Sally: Yeah, really weird.

Emily: Um, but, yeah. Western Europe can --

Sally: (laugh) France. England.

Emily: Germany.

Sally: Germany.

Emily: All y'all --

Sally: I feel like France really got a little wild with the butt owies.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: The popularity of fistulas. (laugh)

Emily: The butt owies. That is true. One of our most iconic episodes, talking about King Louis' butt owie.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Oh my God, the French were insane. Have I also talked about the French king who thought he was made of glass?

Sally: (laugh) What? No!

Emily: (laugh) There was a French king who was -- he was the dad of the guy who Joan of Arc helped, y'know?

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: Uh, Charles. And he went crazy -- like, he had a mental illness. People think it was kind of like maybe paranoid schizophrenia --

Sally: Uh-huh.

Emily: But also some other stuff. But -- so he went mad and was, like -- had these periods of stuff where he was, like -- he didn't know who his wife was or anyone -- they would, like, bring his wife to him and be like, this -- like, "Hello. She's here to help you." And he'd be like, to the butler, (whisper) "Who is this woman?" (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) "Who is this bitch?"

Emily: And the butler would be like, "That's your wife," and he'd be like, "OK. Give her what she wants so she'll go away." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) And they're like, "Uhhh? OK."

Emily: "OK." Um, he also would just, like, run around the palace screaming and trying to get out? So their solution to that was the horror movie move of boarding up all the doors and windows.

Sally: No.

Emily: Because the French were buck wild. Especially in the 1300s.

Sally: Yeah. But he thought he was made of glass?

Emily: Yeah, for -- it -- it was a famous delusion that he, uh, believed he was made of glass. Especially, like -- so he would -- he would just, like, stay huddled up in his bed, like, "No one touch me, 'cause I'm made of glass and I could break," and, uh, he had, like, iron rods sewn into his clothes, like a little exoskeleton so that even if someone did touch him, it, like, would protect him.

Sally: Oh my God.

Emily: Um. Yeah. Pretty wack. Pretty wackadoodle.

Sally: That's fascinating.

Emily: It's kind of, like, beautiful, metaphorically speaking --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: When you think about it. Because glass was fairly new technology at the time.

Sally: That's true.

Emily: Um, and it's actually been, like, repeated throughout history. I mean, there were other people who did think they were made of glass, particularly one guy who thought his butt was made of glass.

Sally: (laugh) Hero.

Emily: Yeah, hero. (laugh) But then the doctor -- supposedly, I don't know how real this was -- the doctor just, like, spanked him and was like, "Did that hurt?" and the guy was like, "Yeah," and he was like, "Well, then, you're made of flesh, not glass, you asshole."

Sally: (laugh) Doctor's just like -- clunk.

Emily: Yeah. Doctor's like, "I know how to solve this problem." But you couldn't do that to the king of France. (laugh)

Sally: No.

Emily: I guess, or you'd get beheaded. But it's been, like, repeated through history, like, when cement started to be a new thing, there were cement delusions --

Sally: Huh.

Emily: Like, people thought they were made of cement and stuff.

Sally: That's really interesting.

Emily: And also, I dunno, he was the king and everyone was watching him constantly. He must have felt like --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like a display.

Sally: Little panopticon-y. Have I told you the story of how, like, the technology of mirrors was, like, kept really secret?

Emily: Huh-uh.

Sally: On the --

Emily: This is a history podcast.

Sally: This is a glass-themed episode.

Emily: Here we are. There's absolutely no glass in the, uh, chapters we read.

Sally: Yeah. Wheel of Time's relationship to glass is actually really interesting and is something I would, like, love to talk about at some point.

Emily: OK, yeah. Tell me your mirrors, and then I have something to add.

Sally: (laugh) OK.

Emily: About glass.

Sally: And this is something I read on Wikipedia, so, I mean, take that with a grain of salt, though I think Wikipedia is usually pretty on it, so.

Emily: Uh-huh.

Sally: But, um, I was reading about mirrors because of who I am as a person --

Emily: Yeah, of course.

Sally: Naturally, I'm interested in the history of glass-blowing because it's always been -- like, the technology of, like, hot-shop glass-blowing, which is what you think of when, like, the, um, the glass-blowers have the rods and they're, like, blowing into --

Emily: Uh-huh.

Sally: That's hot-shop glass-blowing -- um, has not really changed a whole lot in, like, the whole thousand-ish-plus years? Like, they pretty much use the same tools today that they used back then. But, like, various techniques have been kept really secret and so, like, the island of Murano, I think, off of Venice, um, is, like, huge in, like, the world of glass-blowing. And it's all really, like, you know, heritage-based and blah blah blah --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: But anyway, it was on one of those islands around Venice where they, like, discovered the process of, like, making mirrors. Um, and so for a long time, they kept that really secret, which is why mirrors were such a luxury item in Europe, and you, like, see them all over the palaces while, like, the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles was --

Emily: Versailles, yeah.



Sally: Like, such a big deal. But then, through some glass-blowing espionage --

Emily: (gasp)

Sally: Some Brits stole the process and began to, like, mass-manufacture mirrors --

Emily: Mirrors.

Sally: Um, in, like, factories and stuff, so they became, just, more commonplace. So.

Emily: Damn.

Sally: Yeah. There's apparently, like, a lot of espionage in glass-blowing.

Emily: I distinctly remember the first time that I realized that mirror were, like, a technology --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Rather than just, like, an everyday item, y'know, like forks or something.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: I was reading a book where it was, like, describing something that was supposed to be kind of, like, I dunno, early 19th century Britain, maybe late 18 -- uh, late 18th century. But, like, they described, like, having just, like, a pane of really polished silver --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Rather than an actual mirror. And I was like, "Oh."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "What the fuck." Anyway, back to glass. I think glass can be used aesthetically in fantasy for really cool things. One time, I was reading a children's series of books called Pendragon, which I do not recommend --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Because I believe it's terrible, but when I was 12 I was really into it.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And there's this one scene -- like, I have this distinct memory of this thing where they're, like, wandering around, like, a ruined cathedral, and it's kind of like in the same instants that they're realizing that the place that they are is, um, a different place, just in the future?

Sally: Mm.

Emily: 'Cause the premise of the book is that you can travel to all 10, um, worlds.

Sally: Ohhhh.

Emily: And they know that there's, like, future Earth, present Earth, and past Earth, but then there's, like, this idea -- oh, one of the worlds is also another of the worlds but in the future.

Sally: OK.

Emily: And they're just realizing that. Anyway, someone, like -- like, one of the bad guys shoots a gun, like, up at this, like, ceiling of stained glass, and it, like, topples on one of the characters and kills them.

Sally: Damn.

Emily: Which was gnarly for me as a 13-year-old or whatever, but I just -- that's a very, like, fascinating visual.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It still is striking to this day.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So what I'm saying is: more glass in fantasy, please.

Sally: Yeah. No, and again, Wheel of Time's relationship to glass -- especially in the Fires of Heaven, where, like, a huge plot point is telescopes --

Emily: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Sally: When, like, the actual process of, like, making telescope lenses --

Emily: Curved glass.

Sally: Is really interesting and would require, like, a significant infrastructure of glassblowers. So.

Emily: Yeah. Glass is something that doesn't get spoken about in Wheel of Time --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Except as a matter of course.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, there's never an implication that windows are anything but glass.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Or anything like that. But there's also not a whole lot of -- actually there is some, like, mirror play.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: There's that scene in, uh, the -- the Shadow Rising? When, you know, all the boys have, like, their weird things --

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: And Rand's is, like, mirror stuff.

Sally: Yeah. 'Cause he hates himself or whatever. Yeah.

Emily: I think he ends up shattering the mirrors. Yeah. So anyway. Just, like, an interesting ...

Sally: Yeah. So it's just really fascinating. Especially 'cause there's, like, such an emphasis on guilds and craft.

Emily: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Sally: Like, when we're in Ebou Dar, that's like the whole thing, and, like, a huge plot point is, like, the craft of making fireworks. And, like --

Emily: Yes.

Sally: What that means. Um. So -- and especially, like, also the emphasis on, like, clothing and what that means as a craft, and, like, when the girls have to find seamstresses to make new dresses or repair dresses or whatever. So it's just really interesting. I mean, I think I've only noticed it 'cause I have, like, a connection to glass, having worked at a glass-blowing studio --

Emily: Yeah, I don't think I've ever noticed it.

Sally: And so it's one of those things that's been, like, defamiliarized for me because I've had a relationship to it in a different setting, and so when I read Wheel of Time, I'm constantly, like, really intrigued by the relationship of glass because it's so specific in its creation and, like, delicate and expensive and weird and ...

Emily: Yeah, of course.

Sally: Et cetera, et cetera. So anyway. That was your glass sidebar. Welcome to the episode proper. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Welcome -- welcome to -- hope you haven't been pressing the "skip" button for the last --

Sally: Mmm.

Emily: Five minutes, but --

Sally: We learned a lot about glass butts. So.

Emily: Yeah. We did. And mirrors and stuff. Espionage and mirrors.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um. OK, I'm gonna try and keep this straight, 'cause I accidentally read an extra chapter. So.

Sally: That's OK. If we talk about that chapter --

Emily: We'll figure it out.

Sally: I just won't know what's going on.

Emily: We will figure it out.

Sally: What else is new?

Emily: OK, pick up with the girls on a ship going down the river between --

(noise of someone's elbow hitting glass)

Sally: Ah, fuck.

Emily: I can't fucking remember what this river is named, not that it matters 'cause rivers are never named in Wheel of Time world. Um. It's between Cairhien and Andor --

Sally: Mmm.

Emily: So you've kind of got, like, this civil war wasteland on one side --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And then prosperous green old England on the other side.

Sally: Wack.

Emily: Like, they're -- as the chapter --

Sally: It's like the English Channel. (laugh)

Emily: Honestly. (laugh)

Sally: During the -- the French Revolution.

Emily: Ah -- yeah. The English are just, like, standing over there on Dover, like --

Sally: "You good?"

Emily: "So ..."

Sally: "What's happening over there?"

Emily: "Are you guys cool? There's a lot of smoke."

Sally: Have you read the Scarlet Pimpernel?

Emily: Huh-uh. I've seen the play, though.

Sally: Oh, yeah, I forgot it was a play. I thought that book was actually really interesting.

Emily: I mean, I saw it as a high school play, so take that as a grain of -- with a grain of salt.

Sally: I mean, I read the book when I was in high school, so take MY opinion with a grain of salt.

Emily: OK.

Sally: Because who has good opinions when they're 16?

Emily: Sure.

Sally: But I really enjoyed it.

Emily: OK. Yeah. I'd be interested in it.

Sally: About rescuing French aristocrats. It was some dashing English man of mystery who would rescue French nobility --

Emily: No, yeah, I vaguely recall that.

Sally: From the brutalities.

Emily: There was a lot of queer-coding with him.

Sally: Yes.

Emily: At least, the way the high school student played him. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Well, I mean.

Emily: Which, I was like, bold of you in Utah County.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: 2005 or whatever it was.

Sally: Deeply bold of you.

Emily: Um. (laugh) Then again --

Sally: We will stay on topic in this episode.

Emily: Uggggghhh. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Yeah, so they're, like, literally floating past, like, a -- a --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

(phone chimes)

Emily: Ruined city as they go --

Sally: Oh my God. I am so sorry.

Emily: Right into the microphone. (laugh)

Sally: I know. (laugh) Nooo!! OK.

Emily: Silence your cell phones, please.

Sally: I'm sorry.

Emily: It is --

Sally: Usually my cell phone is on silent.

Emily: OK. I'm joking. I'm joshin' with you.

Sally: You could not be joshin', you could smack me, and that'd be OK.

Emily: I'm not going to smack you. That's abuse. Um.

Sally: Eh. I mean, categorically, yes. (laugh) But.

Emily: OK.

Sally: (wheeze)

Emily: Uh -- what's he doing? Just lurking by the toaster box in his little --

Sally: Oh -- no, I'm gonna save that for our sign-off because that was a wild way to wake up this morning.

Emily: OK. OK, cool. (laugh) Keep the mystique going for a little longer.

Sally: (laugh) Better stay tuned, motherfuckers.

Emily: Uh, anyway, we're in Egwene's point of view. She is kind of just standing there, telling us -- like, recapping what's already happened --

Sally: Mm.

Emily: They got on this ship. They, uh -- there's, um, several asides to the fact that Egwene and Nynaeve have been seriously, like, at each other's throats, like, various arguments that they've had and one of them has won. Uh, their clothing, for example. Egwene, uh, argued that they should wear, like, silks --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Really fancy stuff befitting an Aes Sedai. And Nynaeve was like, "No. Practicality over, y'know, beauty --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, "Just because we're Aes Sedai doesn't mean we can't wear wool." Et cetera.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And then the idea that all three of them are masquerading as Aes Sedai, which Nynaeve argued against but Egwene argued for --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And apparently won, because they all three are masquerading as Aes Sedai, albeit young ones.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um.

Sally: Sorry, it's really interesting, this -- like, I wish -- I kind of wish we would have seen that particular argument, because that decision of theirs, to masquerade as Aes Sedai, is something that impacts the three of theirs plot so heavily for the next, like, ever. Basically. (laugh)

Emily: Yeah, it was, like, the decision --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Then, basically, none of them goes back on it. They're all --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Pretending to be Aes Sedai for the next -- until they're actually Aes Sedai.

Sally: Until they're raised, but even then, there's always people being like, "Well, what -- how are we gonna punish them for pretending?" And there's this, like, weird threat.

Emily: Yeah, and Egwene -- yeah. Like, Elayne and Nynaeve, when they're in Salidar, are constantly like, "Oh, fuck, what if someone finds out that we, y'know, were having this ruse --"

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: They -- "We'll definitely get punished." Egwene chooses to tell the Aiel.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's pretty interesting. She doesn't give a fuck, really, about the Aes Sedai themselves. But she's like, "I have made friends with the Aiel, and ..."

Sally: Yeah. Honor and ... (mumbles)

Emily: Honor and honesty, et cetera.

Sally: Honor!

Emily: Honor! Zuko. (laugh)

Sally: I know. So it's just, like, I -- it's really interesting to not see an argument that has such far-reaching implications.

Emily: Yeah, I mean, though, that's kind of one of Wheel of Time's weird things --

Sally: That's true.

Emily: Is that we often have, like, decisions made that happen off-screen and then just, like --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Don't -- like, they impact the characters' arc for the rest of it --

Sally: That's true.

Emily: But.



Sally: Yeah, and I guess, in a way, that's kind of interesting. The other day, I was just thinking about, you know, a not-very -- this isn't any great philosophy -- but, like, the way that your life is made up of these, like, seemingly really small choices --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: That have these huge impacts. And isn't that, like, a theme of Wheel of Time? Like, all the threads --

Emily: Yeah, I guess.

Sally: Are significant, blah blah blah blah.

Emily: OK.

Sally: Yeah. Choices.

Emily: Um. Anyway, uh, Egwene and -- oh, Egwene's kind of ruminating about her various dreams. She tells us she's -- they've been going back to Tel'aran'rhiod, uh, through the ring. Mostly Egwene, but the others have taken a turn. Um, and she -- it's been different every time, so not a lot of ground broken there. But Egwene tells us she's been having more of her symbolic dreams. Um. Rand, kind of the usual: he's on a chessboard, people are trying to crush him. Perrin's got the falcon and the hawk thing. He jumps off a cliff and is like, "I've gotta learn how to fly before I reach the bottom."

Sally: What's that all about?

Emily: I think it's about Tel'aran'rhiod.

Sally: Mmm.

Emily: The idea that he is, like, just diving headlong into it --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: With no, like, idea --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Of how dangerous it is, really. Um, although he tends to do that with a lot of stuff, which is an interesting character choice for him.

Sally: Considering he's our thoughtful, quote unquote --

Emily: Yeah, he's a very practical character; he's just like, "I have to do it, and so I guess I have to figure it out on the fly."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's just odd. Um. There's ones of Mat being pursued by, like, a man who is not actually a person, she says?

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um. One where he's with an Illuminator, making fireworks. That one's obvious. There's stuff, uh, that she's kind of like, "I don't know what this means," but, like, puppets in the hands of puppets in the hands of puppets, which is just your basic political machinations --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: With the Forsaken also in the mix.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Yeah, she has one about, like, people breaking out of a cage and then doing something. I can't remember what it is.

Sally: Yeah, she's got something -- she's like, there's something with Perrin connected to the Aiel and there's --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: People breaking out of the cage, and it's a lot of, like, classic Egwene dream metaphors.

Emily: Yeah. She has a moment where she's talking to Elayne, and Elayne and she are just arguing about the, like, political nuances --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Of Andor caring about Cairhien. 'Cause Elayne's like, "Oh my God, don't you just feel for the peasants?" and Egwene's like, "I mean, yeah, I do, but I can't do anything about it, so."

Sally: Yeah.

Egwene: "Like, here -- here, we're going," and also, like, "Haven't you been at war with their country for, like, nine hundred years?"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Elayne's like, "I don't believe in history." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) I mean, basically that's what she says.

Emily: Elayne's like, "After the Aiel War, we've actually been one of their bigger, like, helps. We've been feeding them."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Selling stuff to them." And I'm like, OK, still. Monarchy is evil. Goodbye.

Sally: So. Monarchy is ass.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: It's -- (laugh) and this is one of the charming moments where, um, they talk about how the Two Rivers folk don't believe they're part of Andor. (laugh)

Emily: Yeah, 'cause Egwene's like, "You," referring to Andor.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Elayne's like, "You're part of Andor," and Egwene's like --

Sally: She's like, "Who? I've never heard of her."

Emily: "Literally didn't know you existed --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "Until I met you. So."

Sally: "So. Bye."

Emily: "Think about that."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Anyway, in the middle of this, Egwene's like, "Ah, it's a Gray Man," and Elayne's like, "Where?!"

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) And Egwene's like, "No. It's -- uh, it was one of my dreams. A Gray Man's chasing Mat." And we, who have already been in Mat's point of view, are like, yeah. Been knew.

Sally: Been -- we been knew, buddy.

Emily: We been knew. And also, Gray Men will be after Mat for, like --

Sally: I know, that's a --

Emily: One hundred percent of the plot.

Sally: Interesting -- again --

Emily: Mat always attracts the really weird assassins.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: The Gray Men, the *gholam* ...

Sally: Yeah. We've talked about Mat's proclivity towards being almost-assassinated --

Emily: Everyone just loves to almost knife --

Sally: And it's very weird.

Emily: Mat for him to escape. Yeah, why is -- like, Perrin almost never gets assassinated.

Sally: (laugh) Well, I --

Emily: Almost assassinated. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) If only.

Emily: I know. Perrin doesn't have many close calls with that --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Unless it's, like, his axe turning against him, and then it's like, "Symbolism."

Sally: Blegh. But, yeah, Mat's constantly on the verge of getting ganked. (laugh)

Emily: I guess Mat's kinda, like -- (laugh) Just moving around -- moving through the world with very little protection.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Perrin's almost always surrounded by, like, good guys.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Quote unquote.

Sally: He's got Gaul, and ...

Emily: Yeah. And Rand is more or less always surrounded by guards, some of whom, like, turn against him eventually, as we see with the Asha'man in that one, uh, sequence, but y'know, for the most part, Rand's bad decision-making is to blame for his near-death encounters.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: When he's like, "Fuck my guards." And the Maidens are like, "Literally, you deserve to die for this stupidity."

Sally: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Emily: And then there's Mat, who's just, like, strolling around, like, no guards. He at one point has an army, but, like --

Sally: It's kinda different. (laugh)

Emily: Kinda different. Yeah, he still almost gets assassinated in his tent.

Sally: Oh, yeah. (laugh)

Emily: Yeah. Fuck.

Sally: Rolls out, and he's like, "Talmanes, what the FUCK was that?"

Emily: "Talmanes, what?! Why?"

Sally: Um, yeah, it's just Mat and his, like, 47 knives, and that's -- (laugh)

Emily: Mat's 47 knives and his 47 almost-assassinations.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Everyone just wants to stab Mat, I guess.

Sally: I mean ... it's stab and stab alike.

Emily: Yep.

Sally: What is it --

Emily: He's a stabby boy.

Sally: What's -- oh, what's that one? Oh, I can't think of the -- Newton's Laws of Motion in time to make a joke about -- (laugh)

Emily: (laugh)

Sally: Oh, every action has an equal and opposite reaction.

Emily: Yeah. Every time --

Sally: Every knifing has an equal and opposite knifing.

Emily: Ha.

Sally: That wasn't very funny. That was a joke that didn't land.

Emily: (laugh) It was beautiful.

Sally: No, it wasn't. It wasn't very good. It's OK. I'm just trying to bring some science into this motherfucker.

Emily: We already talked about glass innovations --

Sally: That's true. The science of glass is really interesting.

Emily: We can't go -- we can't do this again, Daniel. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) But I just think glass is really interesting.

Emily: I just think it's really neat. (laugh)

Sally: I just -- (laugh) Literally. I just think it's really neat.

Emily: OK --

Sally: Let me go get my giant fishbowl thing, and I'll just cradle it while we -- (laugh)

Emily: Oh my God. (sing-song) Dreams, dreams, dreams, and then, uh, the boat crashes into a -- it's what I think turns out to be, like, a sunken ship or something?

Sally: (laugh) Yeah.

Emily: Basically, the boat crashes --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And everyone's like, "What the fuck?" And Nynaeve comes up and talks to the captain and then is like, "Alright, we're disembarking."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And the ladies are like, "Are you for shizzle?"

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) And Nyaneve's like, "Yes, I am fo shizzle. Because, like, he -- we're just gonna be waiting here for another boat for God knows how long."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "But we could walk and for sure get there in a couple hours."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Or, like, get to the next town, where there will probably be a boat.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And they're like, "OK, yeah, that makes sense," although -- yeah, there's still the underlying tension between Egwene and Nynaeve.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Blah dee blah dee blah. Um. There's also, uh, the idea that, like, on the Cairhienin side of the river, the next town is only six miles away. On the Andoran side of the river, it's, like, 13 miles away.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So they're like, "We'll go with the unsafe side of the river." And the captain's like, "I wouldn't do that if I were you. There's, like, brigands." And they're like, "Ha, ha. We don't care about brigands." Spoiler: in two chapters, they do get captured by brigands. So, just keep that on the backburner.

Sally: Our girls are dumb.

Emily: Our girls and Rand have the exact same decision-making capacities, which is they have this belief that they're invincible.

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. Who has the brain cells?

Emily: It's very teenage -- it's just Mat, weirdly.

Sally: Yeah. That's true.

Emily: Like, Perrin -- it doesn't cross his mind.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Mat is constantly thinking about who might want to kill him.

Sally: Mat's like --

Emily: I mean, he has the most experience with it -- (laugh) But, still.

Sally: Yeah, but -- yeah. Two Rivers kids only had two brain cells, and Mat ended up with both of them. (laugh)

Emily: Mat's also, as we know, the most fragile of -- like, he has the fewest natural defenses.

Sally: Yeah, he's a small, weak boy.

Emily: He's a small, weak boy who's very good with a stick.

Sally: Brittle bones --

Emily: Brittle bones.

Sally: Probably.

Emily: Yeah, avian bones. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) My avian bones!

Emily: That would be Faile, actually.

Sally: Oooh.

Emily: Avian bones.

Sally: Do you get it? 'Cause it means "falcon."

Emily: Yeah. Ha.

Sally: Oh my God.

Emily: Birds -- what?

Sally: One -- this is a -- we've gone from glass to birds now. I apologize.

Emily: Sure, yeah.

Sally: But one of the bird show birds at the Aviary's name is Achilles --

Emily: What?!

Sally: I know, isn't that funny? He's, like, our --

Emily: Is he gay?

Sally: Probably.

Emily: Ha.

Sally: Um, he's a falcon or a hawk -- he's a -- a falcon. I think he's a -- some type of falcon. I don't fuckin' know. But the, uh, marketing people wanted to, like, post about him --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: And so, all of a sudden, I hear someone's phone playing the Wikipedia page for Achilles. And I was like, "Did you motherfuckers not know who Achilles was?"

Emily: They didn't know who Achilles --



Sally: I don't -- I don't know if they --

Emily: He's the twink icon. (laugh)

Sally: Yeah, I was like, really?

Emily: He's literally the role model for twinks everywhere. Like, come on.

Sally: It was just really interesting. So I -- and I didn't want to call them out because I'm trying not to be a literary douchebag.

Emily: Still.

Sally: It's very hard for me because that's sort of a cornerstone of my personality. (laugh) But.

Emily: It just offends me on a personal level that someone wouldn't know who Achilles is.

Sally: Yeah. It just felt very strange. Like, he's like a significant part of Western culture.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Like, the Iliad is very important. (laugh)

Emily: He was Brad Pitt in that movie.

Sally: I know.

Emily: Come on.

Sally: If nothing else.

Emily: Come on.

Sally: People should know, because Brad Pitt -- Brad Pitt didn't die for this.

Emily: Brad Pitt did not die for you to forget who Achilles was.

Sally: (laugh, snort)

Emily: Given, Brad Pitt also portrayed Achilles very poorly in that movie.

Sally: I know, Brad Pitt was a choice.

Emily: Yeah. That was a choice. I -- he was, like, not young enough to be Achilles. Maybe if he was, like, I dunno.

Sally: Maybe if it was, like, early Brad Pitt, who did modeling.

Emily: Very early Brad Pitt, yeah.

Sally: Yeah. But also, I was like, you have Orlando Bloom right there.

Emily: Yeah, oh my God.

Sally: And HE'S not playing Achilles?

Emily: Yeah, what the fuck. OK --

Sally: I mean, Paris also -- I mean, Orlando Bloom was a good choice for Paris.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: If we could've just duplicated Orlando Bloom -- (laugh) and had him play both roles.

Emily: Orlando Bloom kills Orlando Bloom at the end --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: With an arrow to the ankle. (laugh)

Sally: Kay. It's the Iliad, but everyone is played by Orlando Bloom. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Wearing various wigs and beards.

Sally: (laugh) Yeah. Exactly. Patroclus, Odysseus, Hector --

Emily: Helen. (laugh)

Sally: Helen! (laugh)

Emily: OK. OK, OK, OK, we have to get through these chapters. (laugh)

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: So the girls get off the dang boat ... Leonardo DiCaprio -- young Leo DiCaprio.

Sally: Yeah, that would've been perfect.

Emily: He would have also been a good choice. Sorry, Titanic came into my head.

Sally: He would've been a good choice for Paris too.

Emily: Yeah. UGH. OK.

Sally: But, like --

Emily: OK, OK, OK.

Sally: Leo in Romeo plus Juliet, where he's got that, like, soft lesbian energy.

Emily: I know, he really just looks like a beautiful lesbian.

Sally: OK. (laugh) OK. OK. OK, OK, OK. OK. OK. Wheel of Time. (sing-song) Wheel of Fortune.

Emily: Yes. Um. So they're walking along, arguing, I think. Um. Yeah, blah blah blah blah. When suddenly, from the underbrush, pops Aviendha.

Sally: (laugh) I know.

Emily: (laugh) She just, like, pops out. And Egwene, who's trigger-happy as always, is like, "Ah! The One Source!"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And Nynaeve's just, like, standing there. (laugh)

Sally: I know.

Emily: Like, it takes them a minute to realize, oh, it's an Aiel, and also, oh, it's a woman --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And then they kind of ease up a little bit, but Egwene's like, "I'm not a fool. I know women can still kill women."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And everyone's like, "OK, Egwene, we understand. Trauma."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Et cetera. Um, but Aviendha's like, "Hello." (laugh) "Ollo. I see that you are, uh --"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: She's like, "Are you Wise Ones?" And they're like, "Uhh. Well, we are from the White Tower, but whether we are wise is kind of up to you." And she's like, "OK. OK. Good one, good one."

Sally: She's like, "Alright. Slick, slick, slick."

Emily: "She's like, "Alright. I'm into it."

Sally: "Appreciate it."

Emily: "Appreciate it. Heeey, we've got -- one of my buddies got stabbed. Could you maybe come and heal them?"

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And everyone's like, "Oh. Well -- OK. Sudden --" It's all very, like, Aiel stuff upon Aiel stuff.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's the exact same thing that happened with Perrin in, like, the last book, when an Aiel popped out and everyone was just like, "Whoa! Aiel!"

Sally: Yeah. And the Aiel are like, "Sup. G'day." (laugh)

Emily: (Australian accent) "G'day, mate." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) What if all the Aiel had Australian accents in the show? It would kind of --

Sally: That would be --

Emily: Make sense.

Sally: Iconic. Honestly.

Emily: If the Aiel Waste was just Australia.

Sally: Yeah. Like, the Mad Max desert.

Emily: Yeah, exactly. G'day, mate.

Sally: And out pops -- (laugh) Out pops Chris Hemsworth, playing Gaul.

Emily: "Crikey." (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) Anyway. Egwene is also like, "Oh, wait, Aviendha is actually the most beautiful woman I've ever seen in my entire life."

Emily: I know, it's a HUGE lesbian moment.

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: Aviendha smiles, and Egwene's like, "Damn, she's pretty."

Sally: Yeah. "Damn."

Emily: And it's -- everyone is like, "OK, yeah, we all get it. Egwene and Aviendha should have been together."

Sally: Yeah. Honestly.

Emily: They made so much more sense.

Sally: They really do have an incredible amount of affection for one another.

Emily: Yeah, and it's just, like, they're insta-friends ...

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: They instant -- like, Egwene talks about having an affinity for Aviendha right off the bat.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And she, uh, attributes that to, uh, Aviendha looking like Rand -- which, by the way, gross and creepy.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um, but she's just like, "Oh, yeah, it's just 'cause, like, Rand has been my childhood friend, and this gal looks like she could be related to him." And I'm like, wh-what? I've seen people who, like, could be related to many people I know.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: 'Cause all white people look the same, y'know? And it's like -- I'm -- that's not like I'm like, whoo. Insta-friend. Y'know?

Sally: Yeah. It's just one of those, like, weird subversively racist things about the Aiel.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Where it's like, there's this hyper-fixation on their coloration --

Emily: Otherness, yeah.

Sally: And their otherness. Um, so yeah, it's kind of weird for Egwene to be like, "Oh, well, she looks like my one 'exotic' childhood friend."

Emily: Yeah. Yeah. Exactly.

Sally: It's just kinda weird.

Emily: If you, like, look at it -- at it through a queer lens --

Sally: Mm.

Emily: It makes, like -- it would make sense, y'know, if she didn't apply that, um -- apply that explanation to it, if she just was like, "I'm -- like, feel, like, a strange affinity with this woman."

It's like, yeah, lesbians in the wild generally feel that for each other. Like, gay people -- y'know, gaydar is a --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Uh, is an outdated, y'know, term, but it's more or less true that, like, we have weird -- like, your spidey senses tingle.

Sally: Yeah. Or it's just, like, 'cause -- yeah. Yeah. You, like, understand how you behave --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And so you can kind of see it in other people.

Emily: I dunno, yeah. It's just, like, queer recognizing queer.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like -- like recognizing like.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's a thing. Um. So anyway, uh, I repeat, Egwene and Aviendha should've ended up together. Fuck Gawyn, and fuck Rand.

Sally: Yeah. Well, and, like, I would be interested if she talked about her affinity for Aviendha because she looked like Rand if Egwene was like, "This is my type." (laugh) "Tall and ginger."

Emily: (laugh) Tall and ginger.

Sally: So, anyway.

Emily: Damn. Egwene, you could've been so ...

Sally: Could've been so gay.

Emily: Could've been so gay. What a failure.

Sally: But instead, you get the straightest boy on planet Earth.

Emily: (gagging noises)

Sally: Gawyn --

Emily: Don't make me think about Gawyn.

Sally: Causes me -- it was, like, irritable bowel day --

Emily: He gives me ulcers.

Sally: Irritable bowel disease awareness day the other day, and I was like, ah. That's what I feel about Gawyn.

Emily: Ah, yeah.

Sally: Irritable bowel syndrome.

Emily: Irritable -- IBS day.

Sally: Yeah. Not to make light of irritable bowel diseases, 'cause those -- that shit sucks.

Emily: Yeah, they suck.

Sally: But Gawyn is an irritable motherfucker.

Emily: Um. What -- oh, so they're walking along with the Aiel for a little while. Bain and Chiad, like, pop out and hand Aviendha her weapons back --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So clearly, she, like, went into this encounter, like, "I'm not even gonna be armed --"

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "Just to, like, show them how non-threatening I am." Uh, but Bain and Chiad introduce themselves, and it's like, ah, here it is, all the Aiel we will know --

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: And come to love throughout the rest of the series. (laugh) Um, but what follows is basically just conversations between all of them where we are kind of, like, info-dumped Aiel culture.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Which isn't a bad thing. Info-dumps, for all that that's a word with negative connotations, aren't necessarily bad.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Especially with, like, cultural stuff. Like --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: I'm fine with just, like, people explaining it to me right off the bat rather than having to stumble along figuring it out.

Sally: Well, and especially 'cause Aiel culture is so confusing that even this, like, little info-dump doesn't fully --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Give me -- like, I still am on -- about to start book eight, and I'm still super confused by everything that the Aiel do. So, like, it doesn't bother me so much, 'cause it's still, like, you get all these pieces and you still kind of have to wade through it.

Emily: Like, this is a very rich scene for things going on in the background --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: In terms of, like, Aviendha is having a whole other conversation with Bain and Chiad --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: While it's happening. In terms of, like, they're side-eying her whenever they talk about the Wise Ones and the process of a Maiden being chosen to be a Wise One, and Aviendha's kinda like, "Back off." Y'know, like, the implication -- as we learn more about Aviendha being, like, the Wise Ones have already tried to approach her --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: About her power to channel. Aviendha reacts when the various girls embrace *saidar*.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Um, et cetera, et cetera. But we learn, uh -- let's see, we learn about the notion of first sisters and adopting each other.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Like, the idea that you can go through a ritual to become first sisters. Um, we learn about the notion of the Maidens themselves. Uh, Elayne is like, "I just know that you guys fight like the men and that you don't like men." And Bain and Chiad are like, "What? We don't like men?" Bain and Chiad are like -- (laugh)

Sally: "I LOVE men."

Emily: Bain and Chiad are like, "We fuck constantly."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: "Sometimes each other, but also, like --" like, their explanation for first sisters is that, like, and if a man comes to you, then it's with both of you.



Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Which is a very, like, oh -- not oh -- is opaque the right word? Not-clear way of saying --

Sally: Oh, yeah.

Emily: That, like, there is some, uh ... I don't want say kinky sex, but just, like, not-vanilla sex going on.

Sally: Mmm.

Emily: Like -- I dunno. I dunno how much that's intended, but what I took away from that was, like, Bain and Chiad have threesomes with men rather than just one-on-one.

Sally: Good for them.

Emily: Which then becomes interesting when we get Gaul, who's like, "I'm not really into threesomes," and they're like, "You will be."

Sally: Yeah. Which is kind of like, oh, Gaul, I hope -- wish -- I don't want you forced into sexual situations --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: That make you uncomfortable.

Emily: But again, it's so, just, like, on the backburner. We're never given an explanation through an Aiel -- Aiel, like, character's point of view. Like, the whole Bain, Chiad, and Gaul thing only ever comes to us through Perrin's point of view or Faile's point of view.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And they're, like, as confused as the rest of us.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: So we never get, like, a one hundred percent of an explanation of what the nuances of this relationship are.

Sally: Yeah. If it's, like, is he sleeping with both of them?

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Separately? Is he sleeping with both of them at all? Do they all sleep together?

Emily: What -- and it's just, like --

Sally: And it's -- it's -- and it's fine. Like, whatever.

Emily: I know, like, it's just -- it -- it is another brick on the, um, building of Robert Jordan being afraid to talk about sex unless it's straight sex between people who are, like, endgame relationships.

Sally: Yeah. There's no room for, uh -- I hate this word -- (laugh)

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Promis--like, promiscuity.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Um, of, like, any type.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: And also, like, we've had this conversation before about Robert Jordan, like, skirting -- and other authors who, like, skirt around overt sexuality --

Emily: Mm-hmm.

Sally: Like, it doesn't leave a lot of room for queering things.

Emily: Yes.

Sally: Like, even between relationships between men and women, like, when you're not talking about, like -- and it's a fine line to walk between becoming, like, pornographic and just, like, sort of, like, exploring sexuality and what people are doing in relationship to each other's bodies and, like, an exploration of what happens between Gaul, um, and Bain and Chiad would be, like, interesting to explore polyamory versus polygamy and, like, group sex and, like, all of this stuff. Like, it could be really interesting. But we just, like, have no concept, and therefore it is othered and is kind of, like, oh, it's, like, kinky, but it's also weird, and, like, this isn't how people are supposed to function, and it's another way of othering and exoticizing the Aiel by putting them in this sort of, like, notion of a harem.

Emily: Yes.

Sally: Um. Quote unquote. So.

Emily: Yeah. Let me just say, if you are a writer who is interested in writing about sex and sexuality explicitly without being pornographic, there's an easy way to do that, and it's having your characters talk to each other.

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: About their bedroom activities. I mean, it doesn't need to be sexy. People, like, talking and agreeing to things and discussing things --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Is an important aspect of relationships and consent. So.

Sally: And not something you'll probably ever see in porn.

Emily: Yeah. Exactly.

Sally: So. But you should be seeing in real life. (laugh)

Emily: (laugh) Anyway, that's our, uh --

Sally: That's EHR sex ed. One-oh-one.

Emily: PSA. Public sex announcement.

Sally: Fucking talk to your partners.

Emily: Augggh! And have your characters talk to their partners. Like --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: It's not hard.

Sally: That's the dang deal.

Emily: Yeah. Um.

Sally: (laugh) Why do we always get here?

Emily: I don't know. (laugh) Why do we always end up here? Daniel, we can't keep doing this. Um. Uh ... oh, there's also a lot -- it's -- it's odd, because we're having actual explanations from the characters and then also Elayne's weird asides to Egwene based on what she knows --

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: You know, Egwene -- uh, Elayne's like, "Well, my understanding of the Aiel War is that they don't even think of it as a war." Y'know?

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: "They just think of it as, like, execution." And there's actually some, like, good history here about the, uh, lead-up to the Aiel War and how the Aiel, like, really extended the hand of friendship to the Cairhienin and gave them all these, like, allowances and protection through the Waste --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And, like, trading and all this stuff, and then that one dude burned a tree, and the Aiel were like ...

Sally: "I beg your fucking pardon?"

Emily: "I beg your fucking pardon? What are you fucking doing? Burned our magic tree."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Um. Uh, but eventually they come to this, uh, woman, who has indeed been stabbed, um, and Nynaeve goes about starting to, like, give her herbs and, uh, help with the process of healing her. There's a whole thing about water, uh, wherein the Aiel are clearly skittish around water --

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: And we've just barely seen this with Gaul, so we already know the deal --

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Egwene, though, is like, "Didn't you have to cross rivers to get here?" And Aviendha's like, "Yeah. Some we could cross a bridge, and some we could wade across, and then there was one that was too deep, so we, like -- luckily, someone remembered that wood floats --" (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) They're so charming.

Emily: I know. They're so adorable. (laugh) Aaaaghh. And so they, like, made a little raft and got across the river.

Sally: (whisper) They're so funny.

Emily: And Egwene's like, "That's so badass, 'cause you're all so clearly terrified of water."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: She's like, "Don't you ever swim?" And they're like, "Swim?"

Sally: "Are you fucking joking?"

Emily: "SWIM?" (laugh)

Sally: (laugh) "Girl. No."

Emily: "Girl, no. Look at it. Look at it all. It's horrifying." Um, but. (laugh) Nynaeve eventually manages to manufacture enough anger to --

Sally: I know. It's actually really charming.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: When she's like, "These motherfuckers, walking around stabbing each other."

Emily: She's like, "SWORDS?"

Sally: "The fuck are you doing?!"

Emily: "Agghhh!" And then just heals this woman --

Sally: Yeah. Which is -- (laugh) I really do love Nynaeve so much.

Emily: I know. Nynaeve's delightful. And then everyone's like, "Oh -- okay. That was -- that was weird. But."

Sally: "Alright."

Emily: "Good for you."

Sally: "Cool."

Emily: "That was fun." Uh, and Egwene, before they part, is like, "So what are you guys even, like, fucking doing here?" And Aviendha's like, "Oh, we're all, like, coming across to see -- uh, to try to find this He Who Comes With the Dawn."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: Dah dah dah dah dah. And she tells us, "And I was actually one of the last people across, and I only -- like, these people are only with me because they stayed behind to, like, make fun of me."

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: It's so -- it's kind of funny and charming.

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Like, these are her best gal pals, and they were like, "Ah ha! Aviendha! Fuck you." (laugh)

Sally: Yeah. (laugh)

Emily: She was like, "FINE. Are you coming with me or not? While I run away from my responsibilities?" And they were like, "Yes, obviously."

Sally: "Duh."

Emily: "We love you, and we have your back."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: Anyway. Girls are good.

Sally: Girl power.

Emily: Umm. But as they're leaving, Elayne's like, "Yeah, do you think He Who Comes With the Dawn is Rand-o?"

Sally: I think you're getting into the next chapter.

Emily: Am I? Fuck.

Sally: A little bit.

Emily: When do they get -- when's the -- when's the chapter end? They just leave?

Sally: No, I think it just kind of -- I mean, I don't remember any of this conversation about He Who Comes With the Dawn, so --

Emily: Oh. OK.

Sally: I think it ends before then.

Emily: It probably is in the next chapter, then.

Sally: I mean, we can talk about it.

Emily: We've crossed that line. No, it's totally fine.

Sally: I just -- we're getting close to 45 minutes, so I don't want you to feel like you need to --

Emily: Nope. We are, um -- I, like -- I think they just all part ways, basically?

Sally: I genuinely don't remember how the chapter ends.

Emily: Aviendha's like --

Sally: But, like, they're still together, I think.

Emily: Aviendha's like, "Thanks for the help, homies."

Sally: Yeah.

Emily: And the girls, like, are like, "OK, we're headed out --" Oh. Nynaeve's like, "Do you know if there's a ship at the nearest town?"

Sally: Yeah, that's right.

Emily: And Aviendha's like, "Yes. There was when I scouted yesterday." And Nynaeve's like, "OK. Great. See y'all later."

Sally: "Byeeee."

Emily: It's a very, like, amiable -- like, when you think of it from the Aiel perspective, it's just, like, their friend got stabbed, and they were really, like, panicked about that, and then suddenly they see three ladies who they're like, "Oh. These are Aes Sedai, 'cause they have those rings. So."

Sally: Mm-hmm.

Emily: "We know what that means. Maybe they can help us." And just, like, pop out of the bushes and are like, "HEY."

Sally: (laugh) "Can you help?"

Emily: (laugh) The ladies are like, "Medic! Medic!"

Sally: "Pls."

Emily: And the three gals are like, "Yes, and we will be your friends for life, also."

Sally: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Emily: Um, and that is how the chapter ends. Approximately there.

Sally: Meh.

Emily: So. We'll, uh, be back next week with kind of the round-up of that sequence, with the girls again. More Aiel stuff. More brigand stuff on the wrong side of the river. Uh, and then I think we get into Mat and co.

Sally: (whisper) Yes. Thank God.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: Survived all those Perrin chapters.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: At least Gaul was there.

Emily: Eh, we're getting back to Perrin in a minute --

Sally: (gasp)

Emily: But we'll have a good Mat chapter --

Sally: Gaul won't be there.

Emily: To buffer us. Um.

Sally: (whisper) What's the point if Gaul's not there?

Emily: Yeah. Do we have any housekeeping?

Sally: Um, my housekeeping is that I need to extend an apology, 'cause I'm just realizing right now that I didn't update our website for the episode that came out last week, which actually came out today, the day we're recording --

Emily: Oh. Well.

Sally: So it's all just the episode -- I don't know if anybody even goes to our website, period. The stats do not indicate that. But if you were looking for it there, I apologize. Also, as, um, promised -- not as promised, I mean, you guys still have to earn it, but if we do get to 5,000 downloads in May, there is a possibility that we could be playing a certain, uh, role top -- role table -- role top? Tabletop roleplaying game. (laugh) So. It's a possibility.

Emily: Yeah, we'll find out.

Sally: We'll find out, but first --

Emily: Deets to come.

Sally: You have to get us to 5,000 downloads --

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: In May. So, now -- now it's just, uh, in your hands.

Emily: When this comes out, you'll only have a few days.

Sally: Yeah. This will be the last episode in May, so you guys only have a few days to make, um, everybody at your workplace download EHR.

Emily: Tell your friends.

Sally: Um, other than that --

Emily: Thanks.

Sally: Just support us on Patreon if you can.

Emily: Yeah.

Sally: 'Cause we love it.



Emily: Uh, thanks to Glynna MacKenzie for our awesome theme song. Thank you, Glynna. We are so grateful.

Sally: We love it.

Emily: Yep. Do you have a sign-off now? (laugh)

Sally: Uh -- (laugh) Yeah. My sign-off -- not very exciting, but it was a wild way to wake up this morning -- um, is that, like, a maintenance man came (laugh) and woke me up at, like, 10:30, 'cause I was sleeping in today, and so I, like, come into the kitchen, and our cat, Tybalt, is fully freaking out because he hates strangers. And I start making breakfast, and I look over, and Tybalt has his paw just, like, in the toaster.

Emily: Oh my God.

Sally: Like, up to his little kitty elbow. And I was like, "OK. So this is how we're gonna start the morning." (laugh)

Emily: So stupid. It's literally like having a toddler.

Sally: Yeah. I told Emily and I was like, "I unplugged the fucking toaster --"

Emily: (laugh) We have to unplug everything!

Sally: "So that our cat doesn't electrocute himself."

Emily: Unplug it all. Robots.

Sally: Robots! So anyway, that's your sign-off slash cat update.

Emily: We know you were waiting eagerly for that one.

Sally: Purr-fect.

Emily: Oookay.

Sally: (laugh)

Emily: Gonna end there.

Sally: Goodbye!

Emily: Bye.