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Annie: Okay friends, I've got to tell you about an organization that I have loved for over a decade. If you're looking for some really cute fall items but also want to do some shopping that makes a real difference, you've got to check out Mercy House Global.

Seriously, their fall collection has some adorable pumpkins you can decorate with, fall candles you will love, and some super cute earrings too. Every purchase supports their mission to empower vulnerable women and families worldwide. There are a ton of women around the world who face economic hardships and have limited opportunities.

So Mercy House Global shop provides beautiful, handcrafted products and a pathway to self-sufficiency for artisans in need. When you shop with them, you're supporting real women, promoting fair trade and sustainable practices, and providing crucial income to those who need it most. Every item tells a story of hope and transformation.

Visit mercyhouseglobal.org to browse their fall collection and make a purchase that truly counts. And if you use the code ANNIE, my name, A-N-N-I-E, at checkout you're going to get 25% off. You guys, every item provides hope and a step towards a better future.

Mercy House Global, shop with purpose, change lives. Go to mercyhouseglobal.org and again use the code ANNIE at checkout for 25% off their fall collection.

[00:01:17] <music>

Intro: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm so happy to be here with you today. Listen, I've got to take a second and thank you for all your kind words about my knee surgery a couple of weeks ago, about my sermon from Cross Point from Labor Day Weekend.

Thank you so much. I've never gotten the amount of feedback that we have gotten over the story, particularly about my knee that you can see on my Instagram and about the sermon in general. We linked all that in Friday's AFD Week in Review. But you can always watch on Cross Point's YouTube or listen on their podcast. But I just want to say thanks. It's really kind of y'all to reach out and say when stuff matters to you that we do. So thank you. It meant a lot to me last week.

Today on the show, one of our favorites is back. Are y'all ready? Sophie Hudson, also known as Boo Mama, is here. You may remember her from Episode 51, Episode 228, or from our That Sounds Fun live tour.

Sophie's an author, a podcaster, and all around delight of a human. She's the co-host of the Big Boo Cast with Melanie Shankle, one of my favorites that I do not miss. And if y'all aren't listening to them, listen, they're the most ridiculous storytellers. And also they talk about college sports, which I love. You guys are missing out.

Sophie's latest book, *A Fine Sight to See*, comes out tomorrow. Y'all, it is a deep dive in a way only Sophie could do. That's all about women embracing their role as leaders. So you know we're going to talk about it today. Here's my conversation with my dear friend, Sophie Hudson.

[00:02:59] <music>

Annie: Sophie Hudson, welcome back to That Sounds Fun.

Sophie: Thanks, Annie.

Annie: I mean, thanks for sticking around town. But behind the scenes, we've been here for the Ryman weekend. You came to town for that.

Sophie: I did.

Annie: I mean, you haven't been home in, oh, five days?

Sophie: It's been a little bit. I was home for like 24 hours. But I had to do my audiobook last week, which I used to do in Birmingham. But now for whatever reason, they sent me elsewhere. I'm going to tell you, that's an interesting deal.

Annie: Yes, talk about doing an audiobook. People don't know. It's a wild experience.

Sophie: I mean, first of all, you're in a tiny little booth. There's really no ventilation at all.

Annie: No.

Sophie: It functions as a little bit of a sauna.

Annie: It's a health experience.

Sophie: It really is a health experience. There's some toxins that you purge out of your system as you read your words. I mean, it was sweet. You know, it's kind of fun. Because after you write a book, you kind of don't have much to do with it for about six months.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Sophie: So it was kind of fun to read it out loud. I had the best sound engineer. It was a great experience. But I would do that. And then you kind of have to be mindful about talking and your voice and all that. So I would just go back to the hotel and watch the Olympics. I don't know, it was just a strange kind of a little lonely stretch.

Annie: Where did they have you stay in Marietta?

Sophie: I actually stayed in Sandy Springs.

Annie: Oh, okay.

Sophie: So the recording studio was in Marietta but I stayed in Sandy Springs. It was about 15 minutes away.

Annie: You talk about this in the book. It is called *A Fine Sight to See: Leading Because You Were Made for It*. Yes. You talk about that sister moved to Birmingham.

Sophie: She did. My sister moved to Birmingham. They lived in Nashville forever, worked in Nashville forever and... I don't know. When I kind of started talking about what their lives would look like when they retired —my sister's 14 years older than I am — they really felt like they kind of wanted to come to Birmingham.

And so I don't know, a couple of years ago, there was a house on our street for sale. They drove over to look at it. But in the meantime, found a house that's just right up the hill from us. And they ended up buying it and moved two summers ago to Birmingham.

Annie: It's so fun.

Sophie: And literally like you can walk up the hill from our house and be in their backyard.

Annie: Oh my gosh. My brain got there because you were in Marietta where my family is. And I was like, Oh yeah, but I mean to ask her about sister moving to Birmingham.

Sophie: Yeah, so she's in Birmingham. I haven't seen them, ironically, in about three weeks, I feel like because I've been on the road. But they're just right there. And so we go to dinner every Friday night. That's kind of our thing.

Annie: Oh, that's fun.

Sophie: And, you know, kind of catch up depending on what the week's been. It's been really sweet.

Annie: When you're gone for a chunk of time like this from home... I mean, Alex is at Samford.

Sophie: Yeah.

Annie: Is he a senior?

Sophie: He'll be a junior.

Annie: A junior. That is crazy.

Sophie: Bananas. Because how old was he when you met him? He was-

Annie: They were in kindergarten. Him and Caroline were going to kindergarten.

Sophie: Yes. Because I remember we were at a Mexican restaurant and you were doing the color sheet with him.

Annie: Yes. Yes. That's exactly right.

Sophie: So he's 21 now.

Annie: That is wild.

Sophie: Isn't that wild? So-

Annie: What do you like about having a college student?

Sophie: Oh, I like so much about having a college student. I'll tell you what's been fun this summer because he's been home, but he had an internship. I like watching him process stuff as an adult. I like watching it. I like watching the part where he is kind of starting to figure out what motivates him, what does not motivate him, how is that going to work together when he, you know, finishes college and goes out into the world? I like watching him figure that out.

I like the part where he's talking through some of that stuff and where it's not like having a second grader where you have to like, all right, so here's what you're going to do. You know? It's more you just listen and ask questions.

Annie: How much do you see him during the school year? He's at Sanford, so he's in town.

Sophie: He's in town.

Annie: You said that publicly, right?

Sophie: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Annie: Sorry, I'm not like telling the world how to find your son.

Sophie: No, no. We don't see him that much. We try to pretend like he's far away. So he feels like he has, you know, boundaries.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Sophie: And so we have some boundaries. Now, his roommate, their freshman year, got the flu and just came to our house.

Annie: Of course.

Sophie: He lives in Texas. So there are times when I guess extenuating circumstances happen and so maybe we'll see him a little bit more. But for the most part, not very often.

Annie: All summer long, it feels like him and his buddies have been on your couch.

Sophie: All summer long it has really been, I don't know, just the sweetest thing. Yeah, they're grown people and they like to hang out. I don't know. It's a sweet time.

Annie: I feel I'm at such an advantage in this conversation because I'm such a faithful Big Boo podcast listener that I'm like, Okay, here's what else I want to ask you about. Because here are these things on the show that I just quietly... like I have more questions about that because I listen to the Big Boo Cast.

Sophie: Listen, I thought today, I thought, "You know what? We may talk about this, but we may not." And it's fine because listen, I'm good to just... we just need to catch up.

Annie: Well, I know. That's it. That's why like... Okay, so the kitchen renovation is going great. You just love it.

Sophie: Yeah, we love it. It's done. We wrap that up kind of early on in the summer.

Annie: Will you tell the coffee maker story that you all have two coffee makers. I think that is the dearest part.

Sophie: Do you really?

Annie: I love that. I love that like this really fancy, nice one.

Sophie: Well, David likes to make his coffee fresh every morning, but he likes a pot of coffee that he can go back to. I do not. I don't like old coffee. I want a cup of coffee that is hot and fresh. So when we redid the kitchen, we have a coffee bar and he has his coffee pot where he likes to make his pot of coffee every morning and I have my coffee maker where I like to go make my fresh cup of coffee.

It's very important to me that it doesn't sit for any period of time. It gets cold. It gets stale. I don't enjoy it. So we do. We have two coffee makers.

Annie: What's been the best part for you about the kitchen? That's my favorite part. What's your favorite part?

Sophie: Oh, listen, that's a good part. My favorite part is probably I have a big oven now. I had a tiny oven for a really long time because our house was built in the 70s. It was this little bitty oven. And so now I have a great big oven and I can put full size cookie sheets in it. And that is just the height of kitchen luxury.

Annie: You didn't put full size cookie for 20 years.

Sophie: No. No. For 20 years. You could barely get a half size sheet in there.

Annie: Wow. How did you do? You're such a good cook.

Sophie: Oh, listen, just as industrious as you can imagine. It was just always a huge timing issue. So now I mean, I'll be like, Look, I'm gonna put this full size cookie sheet in and then I'm gonna put another full size cookie sheet in. Everybody watch me go. Watch me go. So it's been great.

Annie: You know that I am always going to publicly request that Weed a Wednesday comes back at some point.

Sophie: I know.

Annie: It was so much work for you.

Sophie: It was a lot of work and I ran out of things to cook.

Annie: Oh, okay.

- Sophie:** You know? Like I just... I don't know. How many different ways can I make cornbread?
- Annie:** Oh, your cornbread always looks so good. There were a lot of potato special things.
- Sophie:** Oh, listen, the potato is really one of God's great gifts. I mean, it's so good.
- Annie:** I love it. I'm so glad that you did. It's still a highlight on your Instagram.
- Sophie:** It's still a highlight.
- Annie:** Okay. So if you didn't get to watch it, go back.
- Sophie:** And I'll put all the recipes in one place. But I'm really glad I did it. And occasionally I'll remember something. And that's kind of what I did this summer. I did a couple. But it takes forever. Also, I don't know if you know this about me, Annie, but I'm not very gifted in the way of audio visual things.
- Annie:** I mean, that's what you say but you edit the Big Boo Cast.
- Sophie:** I do. But it's really just because I'm stubborn. I had to figure it out a long time ago. And keep in mind, when we started the podcast, it was 2007.
- Annie:** I was about to say, y'all are way early.
- Sophie:** Where was I going to go?
- Annie:** What are y'all going to do in '27 when you're in your 20 year anniversary?
- Sophie:** I mean, knowing us, we'll probably say, Hey, it's our 20th anniversary and then we'll just keep it moving, you know?
- Annie:** Y'all did do that for - what was it? 400th maybe?
- Sophie:** Oh, yeah. Just a couple of nines. We just don't put a lot of thought maybe into the things we should think about sometimes.
- Annie:** I mean, I feel like I know Melanie and I know you and I have always talked college baseball. I feel like college baseball has made a renaissance in her life.
- Sophie:** Annie, I do too. I feel like college baseball... something has happened.

Annie: Yeah. In the last two seasons, maybe?

Sophie: Maybe like the last two or three seasons. I feel like now it's really getting the attention it deserves.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, certainly.

Sophie: And people care about it. And it's the most fun.

Annie: They're dust up about their coach leaving to go to Texas.

Sophie: Oh.

Annie: I thought Melanie was going to become a private investigator.

Sophie: I really did too. I was actually in New York when that happened. And I was on the way... I was with my friend Casey, and we were on the way to... we were going to this thing at the car lot.

Annie: Oh, cool.

Sophie: And I was so excited. And so I'm all dressed up, we're in the car, you know, we're so excited about we're gonna have a fancy dinner and the whole thing. And I answered my phone and Melanie was like, "Well, the baseball coach left." I had no choice in the matter and wouldn't have chosen anything else than just to sit with her in that. Because it was deep, Annie. It was real, real deep.

Annie: She was like, Well, the chat groups are saying this and the bulletin boards are saying this. I was like, Oh, yeah. I mean, she was like, "Okay, y'all need to tune in to the Patreon podcast episode, because that's where we're gonna talk about all this." And the players DMing her. She couldn't read some of the DMs she was getting. I was like, She is in.

Sophie: Here's one of the things that happened was that over the course of the season, and particularly like in the regionals and the Super Regionals, she got to meet a lot of the players' families. And so she did have some good kind of behind the scenes info, but it was a whole thing. Listen, I was delighted to be along for the ride.

Annie: Same. Honestly, same. Tell me about getting to go to SEC Day. Y'all done this a couple of times now.

Sophie: We have.

Annie: That is so fun.

Sophie: So we have a friend in Birmingham who works for the SEC. And a couple of years ago, we were like, "We would really like to come. Can we come just like open doors or something? We would just love to see it kind of in action."

So we went a couple of years ago and didn't get to go last year. So we went back this year in Dallas. I mean, what on earth could be better than sitting in a room and these coaches coming in?

Annie: And it's only football coaches, right?

Sophie: Only football coaches.

Annie: This is like SEC Day is getting ready for college football.

Sophie: So every team comes through. There are four coaches, well, four teams a day. Each coach brings three players. The players, I mean, when I tell you they think about what they're wearing, I mean, they...

Annie: Really? Is it suits guys stuff?

Sophie: It's suits.

Annie: Cool.

Sophie: It's fantastic. The shoes are a whole deal.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Sophie: And then a lot of the media who cover the SEC go, and that's when they do a lot of their preseason interviews, a lot of the stuff that you see during the season, they filmed your media days.

Annie: Oh, interesting.

Sophie: But listen, Melanie and I aren't doing any of that, right? I mean, we're just like flies on the wall. We're standing up against walls, just trying to peep whatever we can peep. But it's fascinating. And it really is interesting, one, to listen to the coaches. So interesting to watch the dynamics between the coaches and their players.

Annie: Because can you tell like, oh, this feels tense or this feels like...

- Sophie:** Well, you can just tell who has a more formal approach-
- Annie:** Oh, got it.
- Sophie:** ...and who has a more like... I don't want to say relational, but like a less formal approach.
- Annie:** Got it.
- Sophie:** I mean, from what we can see. We don't really know.
- Annie:** Sure, but yeah.
- Sophie:** But it's just fun to be around it. It's fun to see all the media do their thing. That's really interesting to me. Like how they find the stories, how they cover the players and the coaches and all that. It's really a blast.
- Annie:** Did you learn anything from Kirby Smart for me about Georgia Bulldogs?
- Sophie:** They're going to be real good, Annie. They're going to be real good. Here's the thing about Kirby Smart. I think he's so personable. He, to me, is one of those people that there's so much going on underneath the surface, I think. To quote George Bush back in the day, some strategy.
- Annie:** Uh-huh. Yeah, yeah. I think so.
- Sophie:** I don't know if that was George Bush or if that was Will Ferrell.
- Annie:** Either way, we know.
- Sophie:** Anyway, strategy. And so he's really interesting to me because he comes off as just this really personable, you know, kind of Southern guy. But there's a genius back there.
- Annie:** Well, thanks. Well, a lot because he was born that way and he's worked really hard, but also because of Saban, because he worked under Saban for so long.
- Sophie:** Listen, if I were still in college and somebody asked me to write, if I were still like in psychology classes, I'm fascinated by Nick Saban. Fascinated.
- Annie:** He has de-aged by 15 years since he quit coaching.
- Sophie:** A hundred percent.

Annie: Wild.

Sophie: And one of the things that Melanie and I were so, I mean like just completely captivated by in media days is now that he's moved to the media side, you could watch him. I mean, like he's learning. He's immersed himself.

Annie: Yeah, because he was just a colleague of y'all's.

Sophie: Oh, for sure. Yes. And all our private conversations. We talked about like, golly, what a joy to be colleagues, Dale. No. I mean, he's one of those people. I'm so intimidated by him. I've never met him, but I'm kind of like, Don't look at it. Don't look at it. But it was interesting to watch him work, like really work at media days.

Annie: What's the new Alabama coach like?

Sophie: From all I understand, again, I have not met him, a delight.

Annie: Okay. What do you think watching Alabama Rush? Because we're kicking up again.

Sophie: Listen, we're kicking up again.

Annie: Have you seen the girl who's doing the cost of all the outfits?

Sophie: No.

Annie: She does her little... you know how people make reels where here's the video behind you and then her little face is in the bottom corner?

Sophie: Yeah.

Annie: She goes through and the girl says, "My shirt is from da da da," and the girl pops up the shirt and says, "\$500." "My skirt is from da da da..." and then goes through all the bracelets. There was a girl who had a \$15,000 outfit on. Can you imagine?

Sophie: Here's what I wonder though. Here's what I wonder. I just wonder sometimes when they go like, David Yurman, that's my official imitation of somebody going through Rush at the University of Alabama. When we hear like David Yurman, is it really David Yurman or is it like a knockoff David Yurman? I just, in my heart of hearts have to believe that nobody would trust a college student with a real live David Yurman bracelet.

Annie: I don't know what they-

Sophie: I don't know. Maybe they do. I don't know.

Annie: I think it is a facet that this is not what Rush was like when I was in Georgia.

Sophie: No, no. Or when I was at State. No, no.

Annie: No, no. I mean, people bought dresses, but I mean, I think people bought dresses at Old Navy.

Sophie: Oh, for sure. It was not a high stakes event. Here's what's happened with me in Rush Talk this year. I was thinking about this last night. One, I feel like for some reason I'm getting on TikTok in particular. I'm getting more Rush Talk commentary, you know, for people.

Annie: Yeah, like the girl with the outfits.

Sophie: I'm getting more of that, less of the actual girls.

Annie: Oh, interesting. Me too, actually. I haven't seen a single girl do it. I've only seen the girls-

Sophie: I think the girls maybe to some degree. I don't know. I think they're playing it a little differently than they did.

Annie: Interesting.

Sophie: I cannot even tell you how many recreations of the Thunderstruck dance I have seen in front of sorority houses.

Annie: A wild number.

Sophie: A wild number from a variety of schools. Just a whole array of sororities. So I've seen a lot of the sorority content, but not as much of the Rushie content. Or I'm sorry, I should say the... what do you call it?

Annie: I think you're right.

Sophie: P and M's. No, P and M's.

Annie: P and M's. Yes.

Sophie: Potential new members. So anyway.

Annie: I mean, I'm so happy college football's back.

Sophie: I cannot even begin to tell you however present it is in my mind.

Annie: I know.

Sophie: I'm delighted. I'm excited for what's ahead of us.

Annie: Same.

Sophie: I think Twitter, and I know I'm supposed to call it something else now, but it's always Twitter to me, is really at its best in college football season. It was great during the Olympics, but I really loved Twitter during college football season because of the memes. The people who will capture something that happens in a crowd and then, you know, caption it for us. I love it so much.

Now, I will admit I'm not as likely at this stage in my life to show up for an August or a September football game.

Annie: Oh, you won't see me at Sanford Stadium for nothing.

Sophie: I am not interested in that particular journey for myself in front of others.

Annie: Same. No.

Sophie: I'm not really comfortable with that level-

Annie: The amount of sweating.

Sophie: ...of sweating in public.

Annie: No.

Sophie: That is just not, that's not a place I'm going to land.

Annie: No. Those August games at Georgia were like sunburn, sweat. Oh gosh.

Sophie: Terrible.

Annie: Brutal. Brutal.

- Sophie:** Now, but when that first cool breeze comes through, I'm all the way in.
- Annie:** Man, that first college game day when you turn the TV on at 8 a.m. and it's cool outside, oh. I'm not sure there's anything like it, honestly.
- Sophie:** There's not, because you know you need a sweatshirt. You know you need a sweatshirt to go with your pajama shorts or whatever.
- Annie:** To go with your pajama shorts. That is a hundred percent it, Sophie. It's pajama shorts and sweatshirt.
- Sophie:** A hundred percent.
- Annie:** I can tell you the sound of my porch door opening.
- Sophie:** Yes, ma'am.
- Annie:** Because it's 60 degrees.
- Sophie:** That's it. That's it.
- Annie:** Oh, I cannot wait.
- Sophie:** The coffee on that first crisp game day is like nothing else.
- Annie:** You're exactly right.
- Sophie:** It's the best. And so I cannot wait for it. And then I love the part where there's always somebody who comes on strong that you never expect it.
- Annie:** That's exactly right.
- Sophie:** And I love it.
- Annie:** I love it too.
- Sophie:** I love to see it. I like it when it's outside the SEC because we're so inundated with the SEC in Birmingham.
- Annie:** That's right. How's Mississippi State going to be this year?
- Sophie:** Okay, here's my hope, Annie. Here's my hope. I don't know. My hope is just that we're gritty. I think we do our best when we're gritty. You know, we have a new

coach this year, Jeff Levy. And from everything I hear, he's a great coach of young men. So I'm really hoping that we'll fight, you know? Because we're not going to ever have the talent that Georgia has or Alabama has or, you know, even A&EM or, you know... I mean, we're always in competition with Ole Miss for the best players. So we'll see.

Annie: Well, I'll tell you something. This may be a bratty thing to say. So forgive me. I know you're not supposed to say ifs and apologies. But forgive me if. A thing changed when Georgia started winning national championships where now we expect to win every game. So you go into every game thinking, please don't let this be the one you lose.

Sophie: I know.

Annie: But when I was in college, we were like 10 and 2, 8 and 4. So you're kind of like, we're going to win most of these but there will be some we don't. There is a new pressure that I did not experience.

Sophie: A hundred percent.

Annie: I have joked a lot that I'm not married yet, but the best feeling I've ever felt was when Georgia won the national championship the first time. It was unbelievable.

Sophie: When state won the national championship in baseball a few years ago, I was like, "This is what Alabama feels like all the time."

Annie: All the time. But it's not. It doesn't keep feeling like that. It feels like that the first time.

Sophie: Right. That's what a friend of mine who's a big Alabama fan said. Like, you'll be surprised should this happen again how you kind of get used to it. And I don't know if it'll ever happen for Mississippi state again with baseball, but like, I can't even conceive of a world where state wins a national championship in football. That Dax junior year we went 8 and 0, I felt like I was living on pins and needles.

Annie: That's right.

Sophie: When's it going to fall apart? And then it kind of does fall apart-

Annie: And you go, okay, here we are again.

Sophie: "Okay. All right. I can breathe." Melanie every year when A&M, whenever they have their first loss, she's like, "Okay, I can breathe now."

- Annie:** That's right. That's how it used to be for Georgia in particular when I was in college. Again, I hope we win national championships. I think it's very fun. I think it's good for the school. Okay, we are going to talk about your book, but I'm like, this is the stuff I've been needing to do. I mean, put it out into the ether. I'm dying to do a sports show. If we ever want-
- Sophie:** Me too.
- Annie:** Do we do it?
- Sophie:** I don't know. I mean, what does it look like?
- Annie:** How are we doing?
- Sophie:** Melanie and I have talked about doing another Patreon level with sports.
- Annie:** Oh, if you do, that'd be great. I would just pay to be a part of your Patreon level.
- Sophie:** No. But what I'm saying is, I think there's... and that's why we need to talk about this. I think there's a place for, for women who love sports to talk about it. And it's been so fun because we talk about sports so much to like go to stuff. And when we meet listeners and meet their husbands, their husbands will listen to you when we talk about sports.
- Annie:** A guy I met yesterday said, you bro enough that I listened to your podcast because you talk about sports.
- Sophie:** But that's our whole like... I don't know. I have a whole thing about that. It's such a fun way to connect with all people, right?
- Annie:** Yes.
- Sophie:** Like sports is such a great bridge.
- Annie:** Yes, that's right.
- Sophie:** So I love that men will listen to us talk about sports. And I think it's not just that we love it. I think we're fairly knowledgeable about it. But it's a different angle because for us... I mean, I don't know about you, Annie, I've never played college football.
- Annie:** Nor I. Sadly. I think we'd have both been great at it.

Sophie: But there's a whole thing about the teamwork of it, about the leadership of it. Like there's a whole deal that's enjoyable apart from the wins and losses part of it.

Annie: That's right.

Sophie: The stories about... I mean, who among us has not wept at one of the behind the scenes stories.

Annie: One of those Saturday morning stories?

Sophie: Yes. Oh my goodness.

Annie: I know.

Sophie: You see the best of everybody. I mean, the Olympics were so fun for that reason. You see the best of everybody. There are so few spaces where we feel sort of corporately united with people. And unfortunately, it doesn't maybe happen in our churches as much as it used to. And that's a different deal. I mean, that's about a whole different topic. But I think sports and concerts are sort of our last two big public square activities.

Annie: Wow. That's really true. When Nashville's hockey team was doing a run for the championship, it was what everyone talked about in this whole town. For four games or something you didn't do anything else those nights.

Sophie: That's right.

Annie: And it was everybody.

Sophie: It was everybody.

Annie: And it was so fun.

Sophie: And you know what you're not doing? You're not arguing about it.

Annie: No.

Sophie: You're on the same page about it. They're not a whole lot of spaces where that happens anymore. So I think that's one reason why I maybe enjoy sports more than I ever have, because it's a little bit of... just a little bit of a reminder of how fun life can be when we're kind of all about the same thing. Even though we're cheering for different teams, it's a delight.

[00:26:29] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Our Place](#). If you're cooking eggs in the morning, or maybe you're cooking them at night, live your best life, you get to do what you want to do, you've got to try Our Place's pans because they are the best for making your favorite eggs. They're the non-stick and non-toxic pans you need in your life. Plus all of Our Place's cookware is so cute too. There's so many fun colors to choose from.

Our Place is a mission-driven and female-founded brand that makes all kinds of beautiful kitchen products that are healthy and sustainable. Their products are made without PFAS and Teflon. For context, most of today's non-stick pans contains PFAS, which are also known as forever chemicals, which are under increasing global scrutiny for their impact on the environment and our bodies.

See why Our Place is in everyone's kitchen, from Selena Gomez to David Beckham. Cool. Crowd to run with. Upgrade to Our Place today and say goodbye to forever chemicals in your kitchen. Go to [fromourplace.com](#) and enter my code TSF at checkout to receive 10% off site-wide. That's [fromourplace.com](#) and the code is TSF, like That Sounds Fun. Our Place offers a 100-day trial with free shipping and returns.

That link and y'all know pretty much every other link you could ever hope for are in the show notes below, or just like my sermon from last week, we'll send them straight to you in Friday's AFD Week in Review. We hope it's the best email you get all week. You can get that by signing up in our show notes as well.

Sponsor: And one more incredible partner I get to tell you about, [Ritual](#). Did you know, you guys, this is unreal, women were excluded from clinical research policy by federal law until 1993, until I was in middle school. What? Women belong in scientific research. They are essential. We are essential, right?

Well, Ritual knows, and they conducted a university-led human clinical trial for their Essential for Women 18+ Multivitamin to assess how effective it is. The results, it increased vitamin D levels by 43% and omega-3 DHA levels by 41% in just 12 weeks. Y'all know I love data, and these stats back up why I love this multivitamin so much.

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Sponsor: Since 2017, [Prose](https://Prose.com) has transformed traditional hair and skincare with a made-to-order custom model that reduces waste, celebrates your unique beauty over one-size-fits-all beauty standards, and works better than off-the-shelf alternatives.

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Okay, now back to our conversation with Sophie.

[00:31:20] <music>

Annie: You are one of my most faithful concert-going friends. Do you have any shows coming up this year?

Sophie: I think the only thing right now I have on the docket is Samara Joy.

Annie: I don't know who that is.

Sophie: Listen.

Annie: Samara Joy?

Sophie: She is a brilliant, young jazz vocalist.

Annie: Oh, cool.

Sophie: I mean, like the word sublime comes to mind when you think about what she does. So gifted. I mean, she's young. So she's coming to Birmingham. I was so excited to see she's coming to Birmingham. So I'm going to that.

But we had a big spring because we had Tyler Childers in Birmingham, which was one of the most beautiful live shows I've ever seen. I will go see Need to Breathe. I don't even care when.

Annie: You write about it in the book. You write about missing a Need to Breathe show.

Sophie: I don't even-

Annie: Isn't that right? Was it to Need to Breathe?

Sophie: It was Need to Breathe. I don't even care. I'll go see them every time.

Annie: Same.

Sophie: Who else? Alex went to see Zach Bryan, which that was his-

Annie: Zach Bryan? What a unifier of people.

Sophie: What a unifier of people.

Annie: Wild.

Sophie: Right? Across everything. He gets it. And s-

Annie: I need to listen to his album. I haven't listened... I have a real weird trail of how I got to him because I pay attention to Dave Portnoy as a... not anyone I'm recommending on a podcast. But I pay attention to him as a business person and as someone who's built a podcast network. He has a podcast.

Sophie: Yeah, an empire.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. And I think they all are humans made in the image of God and also do not do work that brings light into the world. When we talk about who we compete with, quote-quote, we don't ever say anyone in the faith space because what a waste of energy. We're all doing the same thing.

Sophie: Right, right. But when I look at other networks who are not maybe doing as much work that brings light into the world, I go like, I want to watch them and be... I want to have more influence in that. Okay. So I watched Dave Portnoy. He has a podcast with Zach Brian's girlfriend.

Sophie: Oh, I didn't realize that.

Annie: I came to Zach Brian through seeing her, and when she met him and now she is his girlfriend.

Sophie: Okay.

Annie: Her name is Bree.

Sophie: I got to Zach Brian through Caroline. Melanie saw her when she was in high school. I think she started listening to him. Melanie told me about him.

Annie: Is his content of his music good?

Sophie: He's a poet.

Annie: Is he?

Sophie: He's a little bit...

Annie: Like Tyler Childers?

Sophie: Tyler Childers is a different kind of poet. Also a poet though. But Zach Bryan is a little bit more of a romantic maybe than Tyler Childers is. And so he's got a lot of really thoughtful songs. Now he's got a lot of feelings. I don't know Zach Bryan. I get some for energy. I don't know. I don't know. But just thoughtful, you know, and a lot of reflection about his own life.

Annie: But everyone wants to see him live.

Sophie: Oh yeah. But he's also fun. I mean, he's got some... But he's a great musician and he's surrounded by great musicians.

Annie: Yes.

Sophie: So from what I understand, it's a little bit like when you go see like John Mayer and you see people who are at the top of their game. Zach Bryan to me seems to be somebody who attracts people who are at the top of their game. And so I love that whole rising tide thing.

Annie: I do too.

Annie: Like everybody's like, you know, doing the best of what they're gifted at doing and then putting it out there.

Annie: I also kind of like that he isn't in the industry of country music.

Sophie: I respect it.

Annie: I do too. I kind of like watching him and Morgan Wallen though for very different reasons, obviously. But I like watching him just do his thing and go like, No, don't put that song on pop radio. I never wanted it there. I just like that he's kind of like, I see a vision for where I'm going and we will go there. Don't assume my vision is something else.

Sophie: Right. David and I talk about this a lot. That's my husband, not just a random person.

Annie: He's wonderful.

Sophie: This guy, David, we just chat. But we talk about how Zach Bryan has... I'm so fascinated by his creativity. And we talk about how he has in so many ways built a career that's not dependent on radio.

Annie: That's right. And selling out arenas.

Sophie: He caters to the people who listen to his music. He knows his audience. I don't know. I'm really fascinated by what he's done. I'm fascinated by anybody who kind of goes a non-traditional route to kill it at something. I look at a Zach Bryan or I even look at somebody like [inaudible 00:35:55], you know, who... how in the world? How did that happen? Here's what I think. I think there's a generation... I'm the Gen Xer, you're a millennial. I think our Gen Z-

Annie: And Zach and the people below us are.

Sophie: I think our Gen Z friends are courageous creatively in ways that maybe you and I didn't necessarily know we could be, or it took us a long time to learn that we could be. But they've grown up in this world where they have access to more people just because of the way that they've grown up in the middle of all the different forms of media and they have given themselves permission to really be brave in terms of pursuing their creative outlets. I don't know, it's just really neat to me to see kind of the fruit of that.

I even look at somebody like Simone Biles who had the wherewithal four years ago to go, "Not right now."

Annie: Yeah. Right. As a 23 year old or something.

Sophie: Not right this minute. That was so courageous. And then to address it in her own personal life and then to come back and go, "Okay, right now. I've continued to get excellent at this thing. I've continued to work at this thing. This is the time when I'm gonna run with it. Because I'm healthy on all the levels."

Annie: That's right. Speaking of generations, something you said earlier, you said, I saw this on TikTok and he said, football's best on Twitter. Talk to me about how you have boundaries and all that. I didn't fall asleep last night. I have a work phone and that's where Instagram is and I never bring it in my bedroom, but I did last night and I stayed up hours too late. And I'm only on Instagram. I just scroll far too long. How do you have healthy boundaries with having all the socials?

Sophie: I don't know. I don't know that I do. I think I'm not on any one thing for forever. I don't get any notifications on my phone.

Annie: Nor I.

Sophie: So I'm not alerted to things for one thing. I tend to look at everything maybe like once a day. So not Instagram.

Annie: Wow. Once a day.

Sophie: No. That's not true. I look at Instagram in the morning and then I'll look at Instagram at night, you know, or I might check messages or something. But I'm not so much of a scroller except on TikTok. I can get in a little bit of a rabbit hole with TikTok because that's the thing I like to do before I go to sleep. Because I like to scroll through TikTok. And so I don't know if that's great. I think we're not supposed to do screens right before we sleep, but you know. But I really only go to Twitter if something's happened.

Annie: Oh, got it. Got it.

Sophie: Like I don't really post on Twitter anymore. I don't interact much on Twitter.

Annie: We built our Twitters on the same day.

Sophie: Yes, we did.

Annie: Sitting at the same table in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Sophie: It's been a long time.

Annie: I don't even have it anymore. I mean, we have the Annie F. Downs account and we share from it, but... I mean, I haven't logged into it in two years and two months.

Sophie: Good for you.

Annie: I miss it when there's eight helicopters that go over town. I'm always like, Twitter would tell me right now-

Sophie: A hundred percent.

Annie: ...what those eight helicopters are about. I wonder if this is a unique to our age bracket problem because I think people, because we feel the tension of "I'm not doing this well. I like this, but I'm not doing this well." I think the generation below us either... I think they're extreme. They either "I don't care. I'm on it as much as I want to be on it. And this is actually my world and it doesn't feel unhealthy," or they're the 25 year olds who are going, "I have a flip phone. I'm all the way out on this entire thing."

And so I've found it really interesting that I think because we are the generation that didn't have internet growing up, but we got it in our 20s, so we've had a... I'm afraid I will straddle this balance beam my entire life.

Sophie: I don't know what it is because I know people who... I have friends who are like, "I'm off Instagram." I've never cut it out. But I wonder too, if part of that is just my personality. Like I have friends who have said, "I cannot be on, on Instagram one more second. It feeds this thing in me where I start to compare a lot." And that for whatever reason has never been my deal. I'm not a comparer. So I can kind of look and go, "Oh, that's fun." But I don't know. I don't feel it. And maybe that's because I'm a nine and I don't feel a lot.

Annie: As a seven, one of the things Suzanne Stabile taught me is they always feel like there's holes in the bottom of your bucket. And no matter how much you add content or anything, you always feel like it's going out quicker than you're adding.

Sophie: Oh, that's interesting.

Annie: And so that's what happens to me on is there's always more to take in. And so I keep going, going, going, going because I am enjoying it and I don't want to... I'm currently in like, I love weird deep ocean stuff because I don't get in there. And so I will just watch hours of deep ocean stuff because it never ends. And because the faucet never ends, I can't turn the faucet off very well.

Sophie: Okay. That makes so much sense.

Annie: The sevens always want more. We always feel like we're... we are never satisfied. So we always want more.

Sophie: That's helpful to me as a parent, Annie.

Annie: Oh, you're parenting a seven.

Sophie: I'm parenting a seven.

Annie: Yes, we always want more. That's why we can think about the next meal while we're sitting at it. We can always think of multiple jobs. I'm curious as Alex is deciding what to do. There's too many job options. It's very hard to decide what to do with your life.

Sophie: That's so tough with some of the discussions that we've had this summer.

Annie: Because I mean, there's so many options and you want to try them all because what if this one falls out of the bucket and there... So there's always holes in the bottom of our bucket. So the language instead for me, if this will help you in parenting, the language instead is like, you aren't losing anything. You're not losing anything. So

you can stop watching this because you're not going to miss anything. You're not losing anything.

I have to think about that when I'm going on trips. Like I was supposed to go to New York tomorrow and I'm not getting to go this week. I had to say to some friends, like New York is not dripping out of my bucket. It is not going anywhere. I have an apartment. I already have my next trip on the books. But just because this season... I mean, I have to do a lot of self-talk of like, you're not... That's how it feels like, oh gosh, this is... I'm missing, I'm missing, I'm missing.

Sophie: I want to thank everybody for joining us today. I'm going to need to get in my car and think about this. I really feel like you have unlocked something that I have not understood in the past. And I'm going to need to go get in my car and think about it.

Annie: Suzanne helped me so much by teaching me about holes being in the bottom of a bucket

Sophie: That's amazing.

Annie: Because it is like, no matter how much you fill up, it's dripping out. So there's always space.

Sophie: What about you at the end of a trip? At the end of a trip, are you happy because you just had this amazing time? Are you sad because it has to end?

Annie: I'm sorry that it's over. I'm like, at the end of a trip... Well, no, actually at the end of the trip, I am already curious about... I'm already thinking about the fun of the next thing. So I'm a little bit sad but I'm more... But anticipation is a big thing for sevens because we think our bucket may get filled. So could this be the one? And then as you get on day three and you realize it isn't, it's kind of like, Oh, maybe that will be the one.

Sophie: As a nine at the end of a trip, here's how I am. I'm tired. Like I need to go home and recover from this. I need some naps. I would like to hibernate for a little bit. So I never leave a trip sad. And of course I don't process anything in real time. It's only when I really look back on it that I make sense of it. But I almost always leave a trip like, That was so great. I'm so ready to go home.

Annie: I'm usually probably going like, I'm glad I'm going home because I'd like more of my clothes because my bucket-

Sophie: Oh, interesting.

- Annie:** So there are things that have run out that I need more of. So I'd like to go home to get more of, to get more of something, but I would like to think about what the next exciting thing is.
- Sophie:** Okay. Here's what's so fascinating about this, because we do tend to stereotype sevens as like glass half full people. I've never thought about the fact that glass always has a leak in it.
- Annie:** Oh, we wish it was full. That's the problem. You think we're half full. What we actually wish is we were all the way full.
- Sophie:** All the way full.
- Annie:** Yeah. Yeah. In my experience as a seven and have sevens around me, we do see the world as offering so much. The only time I have had anxiety that is not done by outside forces, the only internal anxiety I've ever had is I'm not going to get enough.
- Sophie:** Interesting.
- Annie:** We can do this a lot more.
- Sophie:** I know. I mean, I'm only going to process this for a minute. I don't have to drive home in silence.
- Annie:** Here you go. Here comes Birmingham. Okay, before you drive home though, Sophie, here we are.
- Sophie:** Here we are.
- Annie:** We've done it. Your new book, *A Fine Sight to See*, I just... we have to talk about it. I know that we could end the show and you would be fine. I finished reading this last week. I mean, you can see there are tabs all in this thing. This is so important.
- Sophie:** Thanks, Annie. And you cloak all your work in funny and green beans and Birmingham and you know....
- Sophie:** Can we use that as a blurb somewhere? Sophie cloaks all her work in green beans.
- Annie:** Yes, that's exactly right. I mean, you talk about what you made at a meal. But my gosh, you walk us through the entire book of Exodus and talk about Moses and your... As of mine, your belief system about women and leadership has changed pretty drastically in the last decade.

Sophie: It's changed a lot.

Annie: When would you say it kicked up?

Sophie: I mean, I think probably... You know, it's been a process. You and I grew up in the same denomination that didn't really focus a lot on like... they didn't argue about it.

Annie: That's right.

Sophie: You know, so I didn't really know that was a thing. But I would say probably over the last 10 years, I think I started... I was an English teacher for a long time. I started working with the girls at school. And I think it was kind of seeing the stuff that they were dealing with behind the scenes and then trying to figure out where all their gifts fit in the big capital C Church and how they could use those gifts. Just made me start thinking, you know?

Here's the thing. I very much understand and respect the fact that people are going to land all over the place in terms of women and leadership and what that looks like in a church.

Annie: You do a beautiful job of giving permission to that.

Sophie: Thank you. I mean, I'm not interested. Like, I'm not trying to win an argument about that. But I do think there's this thing that maybe I became more aware of because I was working with the girls where in our church spaces a lot of times we don't use the language of leadership for women. We use the language of service and the language of helping, which are to be clear, forms of leadership. But we kind of reserve the leadership pep talks for men. We need both.

Annie: We talk to boys about leadership and porn, and we got to talk to women about leadership and porn.

Sophie: I just think, you know, every single believer has been entrusted with very specific gifts and very specific ways that they can build up the kingdom of God and point a light towards the kingdom of God. I just feel that there are places where we don't talk about it enough.

And I think the bottom line is that women are leaders regardless... I'm like, and it's going to look different ways in different denominations and different spaces. So given that, how do we lead well? What's healthy leadership look like? Because I don't know that we've talked a whole lot about healthy leadership either.

I love Moses and I kind of felt like I wanted to write about him, but I didn't know what. And so just one day I was flying to Houston, I was like, I'm going to read through Exodus and see what's there. And what's there, particularly in the first 20 chapters, is really like an incredibly instructive account of what it should look like if we're going to really lead well and if we're going to lead selflessly and compassionately.

I've written some books. This one is so down deep in my heart. It's really special to me because it was not just instructive, it was healing.

Annie: Oh, wow. To get it all down?

Sophie: To get it all down I think. To just be reminded of how the Lord just in our darkest moments is still paving a way, you know, literally for Moses, you know, how his time in Midian that a lot of people might have considered punishment when he exiled himself, that that was such preparation for like... that's where he learned to tend to sheep and what was he about to do, you know?

So it was the sweetest thing to just be reminded of not just how God gifts everybody, but how deliberately He makes a road for us to walk up those gifts. And I don't think we talk about that a lot in terms of women, you know, because we couch it in other language

Annie: Instead of being direct.

Sophie: Instead of being direct. I was even thinking about this at your show the other night and about watching you, you know, all those years ago, say, I think I want to move to Nashville. Back when, again... you know, I'll always go back to taking a step towards my dreams. What you were really doing was like you were moving yourself... because of the prompting of the Holy Spirit, you were moving yourself into a position where you were free to lead. Like not just serve, not just help, not just write, not just teach, but lead.

To me, what the show was the other night really was a celebration of that leadership and the way that leadership has rippled into other people's lives. But unfortunately, a lot of times in church spaces, we don't call that leadership. We'll say, you know, Annie, she loves people.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Sophie: She's such a helper. And there's nothing wrong with being a helper. It's just let's call a thing a thing.

Annie: Well, I think when the Bible gives all the like, here are the different offices of the church, right, or whatever that section is called, I think a thing that would have served me when I was growing up is if there would have been language around leadership for women. Because I didn't feel like I fit when they would talk about serving. I was always like, "I think I'm the worst person in this youth group because this isn't interesting to me at all.

But I am the student body president of my high school. But that doesn't feel like the same thing that the church was telling me was what leader... Well, they weren't saying leadership. They were saying serving. And I was like, "I will happily scoop the potatoes on Wednesday night supper or like go.... But none of this feels easy to me and it looks easy to every other girl."

Sophie: I'm going to tell you, you've never seen anything as painful as me in the two year old nursery at church. You've never seen anything, anything-

Annie: I'm loving this book where you talk about how you're like little ones are not my-

Sophie: I am not interested. Your child is precious and made in the image of God and I am zero percent interested in changing your child's diaper. The precious parts of the language a lot of times that's used around women, particularly in church spaces, I don't relate to that.

Annie: Me neither.

Sophie: I don't relate to that. The language of leadership, I absolutely relate to that. Not because I'm such a great leader, but because I think so many of us, if we're going to do something, we want to do it with everything we have. We want to do it as well as we have. But that's hard to do sometimes in church spaces. When there are a lot of parameters about you can do this and not that, you can stand here, but not there, we're going to have to put you down on a platform because we're not going to necessarily let you be on the stage. Like all that kind of stuff gets to you after a while.

And not to mention, I think we could do a better job of letting people hear women's voices even in our Sunday morning services. There's a whole thing about not hearing the voices of women. But all that to say, regardless of where somebody lands in terms of church leadership roles, what I hope this book will do is remind them of the opportunities that they have to walk out the things that they're passionate about and the ways that they know that they're gifted. Because the other thing that happens too with women is this false humility. Oh, no. Uh-uh. I think we could own it a little bit better.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

[00:53:42] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends, just interrupting this conversation one more time to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Thrive Causemetics](#). Thrive Causemetics is one of my faves, and I know a ton of y'all love it too. Their ingredients are clean and their products are foolproof, so it makes it easy for any skill level to apply.

And whether you're going for full glam or a more natural look, they have everything you need. They have thousands of five-star reviews, so it's really no wonder that you see their makeup trending literally everywhere.

My absolute favorite product of theirs is their Liquid Lash Extensions Mascara. If you're watching on YouTube, you can see it. It's the tubing mascara that instantly creates the look of lash extensions. There's no clumping, flaking, smudging. Seriously, it is so easy to remove. It slides right off with warm water and does not leave any smudges. It's wild. It's like a magic trick.

All of their products are certified 100% vegan and cruelty-free. Thrive Causemetics donates to eight major causes, including those impacted by cancer, domestic abuse, and veteran and education organizations. Refresh your everyday look with Thrive Causemetics, beauty that gives back.

Right now, you can get an exclusive 20% off your first order — oh, that is dangerous. Y'all go do it — at thrivecausemetics.com/TSE. That's [Thrivecausemetics.com/TSE](https://thrivecausemetics.com/TSE) for 20% off your first order.

Sponsor: So I'm headed to New York, and it is time to get my [Thrive Market](#) order ready. It is legit one of my favorite things. I've got some of my favorite snacks and pantry essentials. I want them on my doorstep when I arrive. Y'all know I don't love grocery shopping, but I love Thrive Market because I can easily shop for healthy groceries without actually leaving my couch.

Thrive Market has a filtering system on their website to make it easy for you to find what you're looking for. Low sugar, high protein, gluten-free, nut-free. Plus, I save so much time and money, and I find exactly what I'm looking for, all while having it delivered right to my door.

They have some of my favorite snacks. I love all things Siete brand. I'm sure you do too. We were just snacking on their chips and salsa at lunch. It's so good. And if you're in Single Purpose League, you know we bring a cracker snack to every chapter meeting this year. And Simple Mills has some of my favorite crackers.

Save time and money by getting it all in one place with Thrive Market. Go to ThriveMarket.com/ThatSoundsFun for 30% off your first order, plus a free \$60 gift. That's Thrivemarket.com/ThatSoundsFun. ThriveMarket.com/ThatSoundsFun.

And now back to finish up our conversation with Sophie.

[00:56:19] <music>

Annie: I have a thought to share with you, but I'm going to read you to yourself. This is page 15. "Managing my own walk with the Lord is a full-time job, so I'm going to trust that your personal perspective is rooted and grounded in love, and I'm going to trust the work and conviction of the Holy Spirit in you." I just thought, can we put that on a t-shirt? Because there are so many of our friends listening who don't land necessarily where I land on women's roles in the church. And I'm okay with that. But I'm with you because I'm trusting that they're doing their best.

Sophie: Absolutely.

Annie: Of course everyone listening to this is doing their best to follow God-

Sophie: Absolutely.

Annie: ...and obey what the Bible says. I mean, that is one of the best parts of arguments on the internet in my little space is I'm always like, Well, here's what I know. You're not unhappy with me because you think I'm not trying, and I'm not unhappy with you because I think you're not trying. We're all trying.

Sophie: We're all trying.

Annie: And so when people end up on different sides on this... sides isn't the right word, spots, because there's multiple. There's not A or B. There's a bunch. What does it look like for women to lead when your theology says that... you're in a church where it's men leading everywhere? What do you do when your husband is the music minister? Y'all can't up and go somewhere else.

Sophie: No. Listen, I think you try as best you can to find ways to call people higher, better, in whatever capacity you can.

Annie: Oh, got it.

Sophie: I think that maybe it's in more of a small group context. You know, maybe you're not going to be the person that they asked to speak a four-part series this summer.

Annie: That's right. That's right.

Sophie: But there are spots where... And listen, I have friends who are maybe more conservative theologically than I am, who are in spaces where, you know, maybe you're not going to hear a woman's voice on Sunday morning, but-

Annie: You'll hear a woman's voice singing.

Sophie: But here's what I'll say. But they're doing amazing outreach in their communities and mobilizing people in their communities. And the thing is they just wouldn't say like, so-and-so is our leader. They would say, She's our committee head.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

Sophie: And I would just like to see us use more language of leadership to empower the women in whatever capacity they are equipped and gifted to lead in the spaces where they are leading for us to call it that and give them some freedom to run with it.

Annie: I also love that in the book... You do this beautifully and I think our friends listening are going to love this part. It's almost like, okay, when we give permission to start using this language, it does not mean those who are really called to serving and who really connect with that, we are not removing that. We're opening the door wider.

Sophie: No, absolutely not.

Annie: I loved that about your book.

Sophie: No, absolutely. I would never want to diminish that in any way. I think the deal is to recognize, Oh, like service is my heartbeat, that is where I lead.

Annie: Yes, yes, yes.

Sophie: And I had this whole epiphany, and this is not in the book, but I had this whole epiphany when I was writing about my mama, because she would have never called herself a leader. That was just not the language of the silent generation.

Annie: [Ouida? 00:59:46] that we spoke of already.

Sophie: Yeah, this is Ouida. But I'll tell you what my mama did, because she would say, I just love to be at home. And she did. And she would say, I love to make pound

cakes. And she did. But my mama had a knack for she could spot a woman who was maybe new to our community or new in our church who was away from family. And she had an ability to sort of invite that woman into her life, where really what was happening, I think, we would maybe call mentorship. But she would have never called it that. She just became a safe place.

And so there's this string of women that I can remember from the 70s on in mama's life who were just in need of somebody to keep their kids when they went to doctor, you know, that kind of stuff. So mama would have absolutely identified with that service thing. But what I'm telling you is she was a leader.

Annie: Yes, that's right.

Sophie: She was a leader. And she was a leader in terms of how she led younger women. I wish she were alive so we could talk about it.

Annie: We'll wrap up with this. I think there is a group of women who are moms listening who think, it's all I can do to keep my kids fed, clothed. And how is this leadership?

Sophie: Oh, listen, a hundred percent. I mean, it's such leadership. One, if you have influence over another person, you're a leader.

Annie: Jesus had 12. And everybody listening has more Facebook friends.

Sophie: That's right. So I think the thing about motherhood, particularly to littles is that you don't necessarily see a huge payoff in the moment for what you're doing. It's a long-term leadership road. So I would say, absolutely, women with young kids are leading. They're using all the things that they've been gifted with and the ways they've been equipped to impact and affect the lives of their children for good.

But I would also say this. There's probably something else in their lives that makes their heartbeat a little faster. And it's okay. It's okay to keep going back to that thing. It's okay if in the dark of night and you've had this idea for this novel for a really long time, or you've low-key been writing songs, you know, since you were six, or if you are never more at peace than you are when you have a blank canvas in front of you and a bunch of paint, it's not selfish to indulge those things because it's a part of how you're gifted.

It's going to get connected to your leadership at some point. I believe that with everything in me. So keep practicing it. Whatever those things are that light you up apart from that very immediate leadership role that you have in your house, continue to feed those things in little doses whenever you can. And just remember that you're not...

I think we hear this idea that we're selfish sometimes if we want to practice the ways we've been gifted. And sometimes you do have to lay stuff aside. You can't, you really can't do everything at once. But I cannot tell you how grateful I am that in that phase of my life when I had a little kid that there were just little ways that I found to keep writing, you know? And Melanie and I started a podcast. We found ways to keep talking. And so I would just say, remember you're probably not made just to lead with one thing.

Annie: That's true for all of us. I think sometimes my version of leadership gets celebrated more than mom's leadership because it looks more... It looks easier to celebrate.

Sophie: Well, you have an office.

Annie: And, yeah, there's immediate results.

Sophie: I can't get over this office, everybody. You'll need to know. It's the fanciest thing. There's an office, it has rooms. There are desks.

Annie: You said, "I have to go to two doors down."

Sophie: I have to go two doors down. It's fantastic. But yeah, I think because motherhood can be... it's so fun, but it can be such a drain.

Annie: And it is a marathon. You're doing this for a long time.

Sophie: It's a marathon. Now, for some people, it's the very best way to utilize the ways that you just feel hardwired to love the world and lead. But for some people, it's not. I don't know that I really fired on all cylinders with motherhood. I loved it, but it never felt like maybe the most natural fit for me. That's okay. We all have to lead at times in places where we don't necessarily feel like, you know, maybe we're the most qualified. But you get to keep practicing the things that you love. I don't know.

One thing that I love so much about about Moses, and I think where he is all of us, is the amount of time he tried to spend convincing God that he was actually not the man for this job. Let me just tell you, God, all the ways why I'm not the one. I am not the one you want. And God was so patient with him. You know, so patient with him.

Eventually he found his way and he found his voice. And it wasn't perfect and people got on his nerves. But man, he was faithful. So I think just the

encouragement to remain faithful and to know that remaining faithful with the ways that you are gifted and with the things that you love, that's leadership.

Annie: Yes, that's right. I feel like what you... we haven't even mentioned the mother of us all, Beth Moore. But I think one of the things Beth has done for us, Beth... I would say this is. Priscilla, Kay Arthur, Joyce Meyer. There's some women of that generation. I know that's multiple generations. But when we were coming up in this as bloggers, there was one path. You are a Bible study teacher.

Sophie: A hundred percent.

Annie: And what has happened in the last decade is suddenly we went like, Oh, they just opened a gate and we thought they opened a gate to a path and they opened a gate to a field.

Sophie: Oh, that's good.

Annie: So like the first couple of years, everybody was writing Bible studies and teaching like that because that's all we saw leading ahead of us. But now once we've all fallen into our actual giftings... And so literally *A Fine Sight to See*, 15 years ago, this would have been a Bible study with six weeks of teaching. But instead it's a Sophie book.

Sophie: I would have been in a field in front of an old truck.

Annie: That's right. And instead, this is a Sophie book that does that depth of teaching that we do in a Beth Moore Bible. I mean, this is deep work, but it is you.

Sophie: Thank you.

Annie: I think that's awesome. That's one of my favorite things. I thought she has bamboozled me into reading a Bible study. I thought I was reading something different, but you bamboozled me into reading a Bible study.

Sophie: I think you're exactly right about the generation before us. And I think if I... this will probably make me cry and I'm not a crier. But that's exactly, I think why I wrote this book is because I want the young women behind us to run free. Like in any direction they feel like they're gifted to lead. I want them to run free.

I'm not saying there won't need to be guardrails around things from time to time. And certainly there are guardrails in place depending on what denomination you might belong to or whatever. But I want those young women to know that God has gifted them so purposefully for the exact spaces that He's going to call them into.

And I don't want them looking over their shoulder feeling like they need to ask somebody permission to use those gifts.

Annie: That's right. That's right.

Sophie: I think what Moses reminds us of is the sufficiency of God's leading and the sufficiency of the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Yeah, that's good. So I want to see them go. I want to see them run fast. And I want to see them run on purpose.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. And what we get to do now, what Beth and those other women did for us... maybe the analogy continues with where they worked insanely hard to open doors for us and open gates for us. Now we get to help build the fences around the field and go like, you're not going to want to come all the way over here. You're not going to like... y'all can get faster if you will stay inside the fences that we had to build with our mistakes. So now y'all can go as far as you want to go. But just here are the fences because I don't want in 10 years there to be documentaries about women pastors blowing up like we see documentaries about male pastors.

Sophie: Right, right.

Annie: Because we got to help them be healthy in this.

Sophie: A hundred percent. You got to be healthy. You got to be healthy. You got to be healthy.

Annie: That's right. You can try with all your might to manipulate your way into something that you think looks like what you want to do, it is not sustainable.

Annie: Nope, nope, nope, nope. Here's what I'll say to our friends listening. You and I are not building a course. We're not going to start having cohorts, but you can... if you are a female leader looking for help, there's Christine Cain's Propel. There is Joe Saxton Leads Women, Jess Connolly. I mean, there are women that you and I really trust who are... I think that's fair to say, right?

Sophie: Yeah.

Annie: ...that are helping women leaders be healthy. I'm not building a cohort.

Sophie: No, I'm not either, Annie. I'm not interested. That is not my journey. But for some people it is their journey.

Annie: But please go find a cohort. If you want to be healthy in leadership in the church, then we also need to do what the men are doing. And the alarm that is going off

with men in church is pastors want to quit because no one's helping them be healthy. Can we pay attention to that alarm that is not for us?

Sophie: That's right.

Annie: And go ahead and build it different.

Sophie: Well, you know, one of the things that I loved in going through Exodus was, and I'm not going to get the chapter right. Maybe it's Exodus 18. I'm not sure. But it's when Jethro, Moses' father-in-law comes in to celebrate all that God has done, crossing the Red Sea, the whole deal. They celebrate and they make offerings and the whole deal. The next day, Jethro watches Moses and Moses is settling disputes with the Israelites. And Jethro goes, "Hey, you can't do this. This is not going to go well for you. This is not going to go well for them." And then he helps him figure out a better way to do it. I think that's what we get to do for each other.

Annie: That's right.

Sophie: So if we have a little bit more experience under our belts, we want to be a Jethro. And listen, Moses was real old at this point, right? He was not a spring chicken. But put yourself in a place where you can be the healthiest version of you. That you can be... Listen, we need men and women. We need brothers and sisters. We've just gotten weird about some of it.

Annie: That's right. That's right.

Sophie: And that's a whole other discussion. Stay tuned for when we come back to talk about the Billy Graham rule.

Annie: That's right. And listen, there are friends of ours listening whose denomination has had women leading for a long time.

Sophie: Absolutely. They settled it.

Annie: The thing they need to hear us say is we are both in the last decade of understanding this. So this is new for us.

Sophie: It's newer for us. And I think I spent a big chunk of the last decade trying to figure out how... because I worked with younger women, kind of looking at things going, huh? Huh?

Annie: That's right. That's right.

Sophie: Now that I'm outside of that space, I feel like I have the freedom to talk about what I learned a little bit.

Annie: All right. I've kept you way longer than I promised I would. I'm so sorry. I know you got to drive.

Sophie: I don't care. This has just been-

Annie: This is how we get to see it forever. This is how I feel when I listen to Big Boo Cast, which there's also a Patreon people should look up because I love the Patreon. The Patreon episodes are my favorite for y'all and for a podcast.

But my favorite last question we always ask that you got to answer is because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Sophie: I will tell you I've actually been thinking about this.

Annie: Okay, good.

Sophie: I will tell you what, it's adjacent to what we were talking about earlier. I'm gonna tell you what sounds real fun to me right now. Dips.

Annie: Oh, it's dip season. People don't know. People don't know. Again, we are the denomination that's been doing this for a while. So if you're newer to college football, let us build your cohort.

Sophie: I've already started thinking about it, Annie. I'm like, Okay, so the first game is happening here. Well, it will have happened by the time this episode comes out. And I've really thought like, what are the dips going to be? What are the top tier dips going to be that are going to make their way into this new season celebration? I haven't completely settled on it yet.

Annie: Do you lean a corn or do you lean a meat or do you...?

Sophie: Actually, I don't lean meat.

Annie: Okay, really?

Sophie: But I personally just don't lean that way in general.

Annie: Oh, okay, as a person.

- Sophie:** I don't know. I love a corn dip. I love a corn dip. I love it. I love it. You know, some sort of cheese board situation. It's really my best life. But I love a corn. I love a black bean situation. But I really got to do some research. I will tell you the low key MVP right now for me in terms of dips is in the grocery store.
- Annie:** What? Pre-made?
- Sophie:** Uh-huh. It's the Daisy, the sour cream people. It's their French onion dip.
- Annie:** What? Is it as good as...?
- Sophie:** It's next level.
- Annie:** Excuse me as I take a note. Samara Joy, Daisy onion dip.
- Sophie:** Daisy French onion dip. They have a ranch dip too. That's not my deal.
- Annie:** No.
- Sophie:** But their French onion dip is like the French onion dip of my youth.
- Annie:** Wow. French onion dip with ruffle, ruffle potato chips.
- Sophie:** Listen, there's this little kid who keeps showing up on TikTok. He's probably like a year and a half. And all he does is take a ruffle and dip it in the French onion dip. And he eats that French onion dip and he puts that ruffle back in there.
- Annie:** Oh, great, great.
- Sophie:** So we can feel real good about the generations behind us. But the Daisy French onion dip is... it's going to restore...
- Annie:** I'm going to buy it today. Do you know there is... I think you have a copy of the Pam Downs cookbook.
- Sophie:** I do have a copy of the Pam Downs cookbook.
- Annie:** My friend Chad Markley said, "I've never seen a cookbook with more mayonnaise and shrimp." Which is true.
- Sophie:** I will tell you, if you have any objection to a cream of soup, you need to stay away.

- Annie:** This isn't the one for you. Mom used to make this shrimp dip, but the shrimp are as small as the top of your pinky.
- Sophie:** I know exactly.
- Annie:** Those mini, I'm jonesing for that.
- Sophie:** That's it. I haven't thought about that in forever.
- Annie:** That's my dip that I'm bringing to game one as I'm bringing tiny shrimp dip.
- Sophie:** I haven't thought about that in forever. My mama had a similar situation.
- Annie:** It was such an old school dip, man.
- Sophie:** It was so fancy in the 80s.
- Annie:** Oh, the shrimp are so small. They're amazing. I just need everybody to picture a picture of shrimp. The size of your pinky fingernail.
- Sophie:** Where are those shrimp?
- Annie:** I don't know.
- Sophie:** Where do they come from? I don't know.
- Annie:** They cannot be ethically harvest.
- Sophie:** I don't believe that they are... I don't know what that is.
- Annie:** They're sea monkeys, practically. They're so small. I can't imagine. But I'm going to look for... I'm going to get the Daisy onion dip and I'm going to get tiny shrimp today at the grocery store.
- Sophie:** Okay.
- Annie:** Okay. Dips, yeah, that may be your next internet sensation is just dipping us through football season.
- Sophie:** Maybe so. I think it's the finest of the food groups.

- Annie:** It's the best. You're right. Nothing, nothing makes me feel... I mean, even as we've been talking, I've been laughing in my head of like, man, I am equal parts so grateful to be where we are in the church and I deeply miss 1984.
- Sophie:** Oh. A family night supper-
- Annie:** Family night supper. Wednesday nights at First... Well, you were just at First Methodist Marriott.
- Sophie:** I was just at First Methodist Marriott. And let me tell you, that had a spread for that event. The family night supper deal. See, this is a rabbit trail we could really spend some time on. But what I loved about it, in addition to the fact that we all showed up and everybody just brought a casserole dish and you just dug in, is that there were certain people's dishes, you know, just continue on down the line. That was not maybe one person's particular area of leadership.
- Annie:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's right. That's right.
- Sophie:** But they felt good about it. They felt real good about it. But the array of congealed salads was really one of my favorites.
- Annie:** It was so good.
- Sophie:** I know.
- Annie:** So good.
- Sophie:** Sometimes I crave jello. Isn't that weird?
- Annie:** No. I'm with you. There is something to it. There's a church in New York I'll shout them out. Central Presbyterian. Every Sunday after church, they do like an outside hang with like lemonade and stuff to help people get to know each other. And I'm like, Brilliant. Brilliant. Brilliant. That is what the church did in the 80s and in the... where it was like, just stick around for 10 minutes and meet each other.
- Sophie:** I love that.
- Annie:** With lemonade. I know. Okay, dips.
- Sophie:** Dips.
- Annie:** I can't wait. Dips for the year. So I love you. Thank you for doing this.

Sophie: Thanks for having me. It was a delight as always.

Annie: Yeah, I can't wait for people to read this book. And y'all just stay tuned. We may have a sports show in the future.

Sophie: I know. You never know.

Annie: Never know.

Sophie: I know. What might the Lord have for us, Annie?

Annie: Where's our leadership in sports? It's coming.

Sophie: That's right. That's right.

[01:17:01] <music>

Outro: Oh, you guys, isn't she the best? Oh my gosh. I'm telling you, this book [wowie zowie] is a wowie zowie. It's like Sophie wrapped this deep theology in like a casserole. In like a casserole. It's so good.

Go grab your copy of *A Fine Sight to See* and go follow Sophie Boo Mama on social media. Tell her thank you so much for being on the show. The way y'all think our guests matters so much. We really appreciate every time you take time to do that.

If you enjoyed this episode, go back and listen to any of our previous episodes with Sophie. Again, it's 51 and 228. Or listen to Episode 204 with her Big Boo Cast co-host, Melanie Shankle, also known as Big Mama.

If you have any questions from this episode, you can drop them in the Q&A box on your Spotify app, if you're a Spotify listener like me, or send them to us on Instagram @ThatSoundsFunPodcast. Make sure you are following there. There's a lot of fun stuff going on there. We'll try to answer your questions as well.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, New York City. Anywhere you may need me, that's where you can find me.

I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you, and I will do the same. Today what sounds fun to me is meeting up with my friend Danielle Walker and doing some good eating in New York

before we go to her live event this week. Oh, I cannot wait. If y'all haven't checked it out, her book is fresh out as well. A new cookbook. It's awesome.

Y'all have a great week. We'll see you back here on Thursday with author, podcaster, tour mate of mine, and one of my dearest friends, Carlos Whitaker. See y'all Thursday.