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Ben: Hi, That Sounds Fun, listeners. Ben Higgins here. I'm the host of another podcast on That Sounds Fun Network called Hope Still Wins. We're hosting relationship series in October and November to celebrate me getting married to my beautiful fiancé, Jess.

Jess: That's me. Hi, y'all.

Ben: In this series, Jess and I will be sitting down with some of our favorite couples and singles to unpack what hope looks like in each season of the relationship journey.

Jess: Guests are going to share their personal stories and marital advice for Ben, myself, and for you. Will our parents make an appearance? Maybe a bachelor alum? You'll have to wait and see.

Ben: It's going to be a celebration for all, no matter what love looks like in this season for you. Subscribe today so you don't miss it. It's going to be awesome. And I hope, get it, you'll join us.

[00:01:05] <intro music>

Intro: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. I'm really happy to be here with you today. We've got a great show in store. Today on the show I get to talk with my buddy, Tyler Merritt. You may remember Tyler from when he came on the show in 2020, Episode 246.

Well, his new book *I Take My Coffee Black* is out now, and y'all you're going to love it. It's such a profoundly, personal, and beautifully honest look at what it feels like to be Tyler, a black man in America today. I count it a great honor to call him my friend and I'm so thankful for always teaching us so generously. I can't wait for you to hear from him, too. So here's my conversation with Tyler Merritt.

[00:02:04] <music>

Annie: I'm sorry, we'll for sure have you on at our end of the year this year.

Tyler: Hmm, we'll see.

Annie: We'll see how it goes?

Tyler: We'll see how it goes, Annie.

Annie: We'll see what happens?

Tyler: We'll see what's up.

Annie: Okay, so you were on last fall, right?

Tyler: Yeah.

Annie: It's just a little more official because... I don't know if he knows that I did a show, a really moving show where the guests kind of said things they'd never said before. And I was recording by myself in here and I lost their half of the recording. And at the end of that day, I called my team and I said, Never again. I will not record one more podcast without an engineer in the room. I can't. I can't.

Tyler: Wow.

Annie: I'm not gifted at this at all. And then that's why we have Craigory-

Tyler: Craigory.

Annie: Craig the man. He does it all for us. He's the best.

Tyler: See, here's what I'm concerned about. I don't think people ever get to see you. You're beautiful and tall. You're tall, gorgeous, curly hair, beautiful eyes-

Annie: I know. They see him sometimes. They see him sometimes.

Tyler: Nice chin.

Annie: He's great. I mean we got him a girlfriend out of it.

Tyler: Oh.

Annie: Yeah.

Tyler: Bro, last time I came it was only women that worked in here and it was kind of intimidating.

Annie: We're diversifying. So you were here last year. Between then and now, I didn't even know this was going on the background about cancer. You write about cancer in the book? Is that in? No, because the book happened before cancer.

Tyler: Because I turned in the book at the end of November, and then was diagnosed with cancer like five days later.

Annie: Will you tell that story? Whatever you want to tell.

Tyler: Yeah, sure. I appreciate you asking about it because it's a super rare form of cancer called liposarcoma. I'll try not to get too emotional about it because I'm better now. I was having some GI issues and I went to my normal care doctor and they were like, "Let's go and have you get an ultrasound. We'll send you to some people in smart access where I get my stuff taken care of."

And I went in and saw a guy and he was like, "Eh, something's weird here. We don't know. We're going to get some more tests." And I knew it was unusual when I went to go get the ultrasound. And typically when you get an ultrasound, the ultrasound techs are not supposed to tell you what's going on. They're just supposed to do the ultrasound, send it to your doctor.

But I was getting my ultrasound done and I was joking with the girl who's doing it. We were laughing, cracking up, and then she suddenly stopped, went into the other room, got somebody else, came in. And the first thing the lady said to me was, "So, so are you feeling okay?" And I went, "Ah, I mean, I'm okay. I mean, I'm fine."

Annie: You're like, "I mean, I'm here because I'm not feeling okay but..."

Tyler: Right. Right. Then I had to go get another MRI or something to that effect and it was the same thing. Somebody came out after looking at my scanner and went, "Hey, are you okay, buddy?"

Annie: Wow.

Tyler: And that's when I started going, "Oh man, this is not good." So then I got all my results back, I sent it-

Annie: You didn't ask them? You didn't say, "What...?"

Tyler: No, because they can't tell you anyways.

Annie: I'd have been like, "What would you feel?"

Tyler: What I do say though to them, I was like, "None of you are good actors in here. Because if you can't tell me what's going on, I need you to not walk in with this shocked face completely."

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

Tyler: And it just so happens that in the community of people that I know, I know a couple of doctors and sent my stuff over to somebody and they said, "You need to go to Vanderbilt tomorrow."

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Tyler: And so they helped me get-

Annie: How did you know who to call? Okay, they helped you. Because I'm like, "If someone says, "Go to Vanderbilt," I was like, "Do I just drive down and park off of Vivian way or whatever it is?"

Tyler: No, I'll tell you what happened, Annie. And this is crazy. But the friend who's my friend who works for the Predators, he's a shoulder doctor, and he works at Vanderbilt. And he looked at my scans and he said, "Hey, Tyler, I'm going to send you to a specialist for this thing at Vandy."

Annie: Got it. Wow.

Tyler: And so I went with my friend Shannon, and we drove to the place. I drove to a cancer center not knowing that that's where I was going.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Tyler: As we drove up, she went, "Did you know you were coming to cancer center?" And I was like, "No, no, no, I did not know." So I go into a room and this 100-pound tiny Asian guy from Australia, who I love, sits down with me and says, "I got good news and I got bad news. The good news is, is that you have a cancer that I can go in and I think I can go and get all..."

No, he didn't say cancer first. He said, "You have a tumor, it's 28 pounds in your abdomen. And it's likely that I can go in and probably take... we might have to take out a kidney and maybe have to take out some of your colon." And he goes, "Have

you seen it yet?" And I said, "No, I haven't." So he shows it to me and I'm like... I mean, when I was here... I was kind of Santa Claus thing since I just finished shooting a movie. And I just felt like, you know, I'm just gaining some pandemic way. And so he ends up showing it to me. And he said, "That's the good news." I was like, "What's the bad news?"

Annie: 28 pounds.

Tyler: He was like, "Well, you're going to have to have surgery." I said, "That's the bad news?" He's like, "Yeah, but I think I can get it all. But we just don't know what we're going to get once we get in there." And he also said it's really invasive, so there's a high risk factor.

Annie: I mean, that's three times the weight of a baby that a woman births.

Tyler: Exactly.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Tyler: I still didn't think it was cancer because the whole reason I ended up going and looking into it is... you know Melinda Doolittle?

Annie: Yeah, yeah.

Tyler: She had a similar surgery, but it wasn't cancerous.

Annie: Yes, I remember.

Tyler: I happened to see her at this event and she told me what she went through. And I went, "Maybe I need to go do this as well." And she was like, "Yeah." So we kept in contact the whole time.

Annie: Man, ain't that the Lord?

Tyler: So much. To this day I tell her she saved me from cancer. So I went in, that doctor was sitting there across from me, Annie, and I said, "So wait, wait, do I have cancer?" And he goes, "Oh, yeah, you have cancer. You definitely have."

Annie: Wow.

Tyler: And I'm still sitting there not knowing what's going on. I'm just like, "I have a tumor." He's like, "Oh, no, this is all cancer. This 28 pound thing we're going to go get it." And it wasn't a week later I was in surgery-

Annie: Oh my gosh, you're kidding. It was a week later.

Tyler: It wasn't a week later. They were like, "We need to get this right now. Who knows how long you've been sitting on it?"

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Tyler: They went in, I ended up losing the kidney. I now have a scar from my chest to the bottom of my stomach. And my mom came down and slept on my couch as I recovered. I had to learn how to walk again. Some incredible people came out of the woodworks to show support for me. I just finished writing this book.

Annie: Yes.

Tyler: So this book runs through so much and it gets super personal, super intense. It's crazy how deep I get in here but there's no mention of cancer because I had just turned it in, and then cancer happened five days.

Annie: So they got the whole thing?

Tyler: They got it all. If you're listening to this podcast, we're in Nashville right down the street from Vanderbilt. So I go right down the street now every six months or so and have my little Asian friend check me out.

Annie: And they just think it was one tumor that kept growing. That is incredible.

Tyler: Usually cancer is really smart, super intelligent. Cancer is like, "Oh, I'm in your body. I'm going to go everywhere." We call liposarcoma though like kind of dumb cancer. They're like, "Oh, I'm just going to hang out here, guys. I'm just going to hang out here."

Annie: "I'm just going to keep multiplying right here."

Tyler: "I'm just going to keep multiplying right in this spot." So he went in and got it all.

Annie: Did you see it?

Tyler: I didn't want to look at it. But everybody in my life has seen it. If there's any friend with me right now, they would be like, "Do you want to see it?" Everybody saw it for me. We called it Fred. It was too hard for me. It's hard for me to look at anything that I feel like is now a part of my past. I want to just leave it. I want to leave it behind.

Annie: I mean, that's interesting. You just wrote a whole book about your past.

Tyler: Yeah. But when I think it's for the betterment... like if someone said to me, "Hey, Tyler, looking at Fred can help change the world a little bit," I might go, "Okay, cool. Take a look at Fred." It was hard. But I appreciate you asking you about it because a lot of people don't know liposarcoma exists.

Annie: Right. Is it only in your abdomen when it happens?

Tyler: It can happen anywhere really that there's any sort of fat on your body, basically. It just so happened in my abdomen is where it took place. If you go back even and look at the pictures from when I was here last time, I was wearing I think A Dot Ham hoodie. And I was like, kind of... I mean, I just looked chubby. It was all tumor.

Annie: My gosh.

Tyler: That was crazy, Annie. It was crazy. But God is good.

Annie: What do you know about God now that you didn't know last time you sat in this chair?

Tyler: I'll say this. There's a couple of things. I believe this kind of with anything as I get older. When people talk about their personal experience with God, we can have empathy. We really can. But I really do believe unless you've gone through, it's really hard for you to understand where they've been.

Think about how many of you know that have said, "I've had cancer." But there are very few... I had friends. My best friend's father passed away of cancer during COVID. But once you sit in a room across from a doctor and he tells you that you have cancer, there is a small group of us that know what that's like and have lived through that. And there's no explanation that I can give you that is going to allow you to know what that moment feels like.

That moment is a different moment than I've ever had with God. When somebody looks at you and goes, "There's a possibility you might not be here anymore," your idea of "God is faithful" is no longer just a statement.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Tyler: Are you following me?

Annie: Yeah.

Tyler: When someone says, "Oh, God is faithful," or "God is good, nah, nah, nah" now you're going, "God, you're faithful. You're faithful." Right? Right?

Annie: Right. Yeah. Yeah

Tyler: And then when you say, "God is good" and you're on the other side, it takes on a whole other meaning. It's not just "God is good, my bank account is a little bit better." It's "God is good, I didn't know if I was going to be here last week and I am today." This sounds super cliché. But when you will live through an experience like that, Annie, it makes you re-evaluate the impact that you have on people and what you're doing with your life.

Annie: Really?

Tyler: Because in my case, it was during COVID. So I was on the ICU in Vanderbilt during COVID. So I sat in a room sick, getting better while listening to people next to me who never walked out of that building.

Annie: Wow.

Tyler: I was hearing people cry and wives scream at doctors because they were never going to leave that building. And I'm sitting there going, "I'm getting better now and there's going to be a time where I'm going to walk out of this building. And when I walk out, what am I going to do?"

And I think that's something we all talk about when you hear people say, "Live your best life" or "go after and do that thing that you want to do." But when you don't know if you're going to walk back out of the hospital, when you finally take that step out and the drugs have worn off, you look around and kind of go, "Okay, I've talked about changing the world. Yeah, let's go do it now, shall we?" It's a different animal.

Annie: When you were recovering, when you're like getting your feet back under you and walking again... I mean, you were in bed for weeks.

Tyler: Yeah.

Annie: As I remember it.

Tyler: Hmm.

Annie: When you're doing all that, when you're between the surgery and changing the world, what are you thinking about then?

Tyler: For me personally, my mother was there a big chunk of it.

Annie: Yes. Straight from Vegas.

Tyler: Straight from Vegas. My mother mothered the heck out of me, man.

Annie: That's awesome.

Tyler: She slept on my couch in my apartment and mothered the heck out of me. With that in mind, though, I was in that healing process, and I had people coming to me... and here's the other thing because of the Tyler Merritt Project... okay, you and I we live in a very blessed, weird world where we have people that don't know us who feel an attachment to us. Right?

Annie: Yeah.

Tyler: So it's just a weird place to be.

Annie: There are people I don't know that I feel attached to. Tabitha Brown. Right?

Tyler: Right.

Annie: I don't know her [inaudible 00:15:09]. I feel so in love with her.

Tyler: Right, right. And so I had so much support from people sending me things, all these things. But there in the midst of being there with my mom, in the in-between, I felt almost like a boxer who was getting ready to go back out into the world and fight

that fight. It was an incredibly boring rocky sequence with my mommy, Sue. You know what I mean? It was like I was jogging on a beach.

Annie: Right.

Tyler: But there was this preparation. And for me, and I'm sure you can get this too because I feel like we are kindred in so many ways, is sometimes it takes things to make you slow down. You know what I'm saying?

Annie: Yes.

Tyler: And I was just running, running, running, running, running. And I stopped. I had a forced stop. In that forced stop, it allowed me to restructure some of my intentions, and think about things that are important, and think about things that are petty. It's crazy once you finish... you know this too from writing a book and all the things that come immediately following. And I was right there in the editing process but I had to stop. So that rocky sequence is kind of what happened there in the middle.

And then once I started feeling like I got my bearings again, I felt like I breathe differently. I literally did because I wasn't carrying a 28 pound cancerous tumor. But there was another part-

Annie: And a kidney.

Tyler: And a kidney.

Annie: That's probably another two pounds.

Tyler: And the kidney. Which I'm going to say this right now because-

Annie: Do you miss it?

Tyler: I miss my kidney. Some people are going to really care about this, some people aren't. Sarah Hyland from Modern Family, dates Wells Adams, she reached out to me and was one of the cool... I'm saying this on your podcast because if anybody's ever been curious to what she's like, she reached out to me because she has had some kidney problems throughout her life.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Tyler: And she was like my kidney guru.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Tyler: She reached out to me and was like, "Let me tell you about what you need to do." When I started being able to eat pizza again, I literally texted her I was like, "Can I eat pizza?" And she's like, "Look, dude, you're going to be anything you want at some point. Just take it slow." All that to say it was just amazing the people that came out of the woodworks that were like, "I see you. I see what you're walking through. I don't only have empathy for you but I've been there. So feel free to lean on me." Annie, it was a beautiful, beautiful thing that I can look back on now and... I feel like book two just needs to be called "And then I got cancer."

Annie: Right. It could be. Our friends listening know that we postponed our tour that I should be on right now when they're hearing this. One of the things that weekend that I would love to hear you speak into a little bit is, in all my life God say something to me, say anything to me about this decision we had to make, I was reminded of John 15 where he says, "Everything that's fruitful God prunes."

Tyler: Mm-hmm, yeah.

Annie: And so I'm feeling that in a couple of different areas currently of where I go, "I thought that was working." And then He goes, "Yeah, yeah, I'm not cutting back what doesn't work. I'm not cutting back what ain't good. I'm cutting back what's good." And I feel that on my calendar now. Because my calendar got pruned when the tour got pruned. And your calendar got pruned-

Tyler: When my life stopped. Right. Right.

Annie: So what does it look like now that it's blooming again? What is that change in the world? Is it releasing *I Take My Coffee Black*?

Tyler: Well, let me say this first because I think it's important. I don't know how many other people are going to get an opportunity to say this to you on your podcast. So I want to say this to you now. When I saw, like the rest of the world did, you postponed your tour in my stories, me understanding what it's like to want to connect with the people that you are a part of and all the plans, and also understanding the business part of it and all the people, that's something that a lot of people don't understand. When you cancel a tour, people lose jobs.

I saw that and I exhaled this breath of "Annie, I am so sorry, but thank you for being so brave." Some people that might think, "She canceled the tour. How brave

is that?" No, there are people you cancel their jobs. But for somebody like me who now has some immunity issues, when I see people take big steps to go, "I feel like I need to do this thing that in my gut I feel like is the right thing," which I don't think people understand. You didn't have to do it. You didn't have to cancel your tour. Nobody's came to you and said, "You must stop. You had to make a decision.

Hear it from me, your friend. For someone like me, I felt sad, but I was also cheering your heart on because it's brave. And what's fantastic is you have people that love you and they're going to wait. And not only are they going to wait, they're going to come back with a fire. It's like when Broadway came back and there was standing ovations every time-

Annie: I was there.

Tyler: Yeah, I saw. ...standing ovations every time someone stepped on stage. That's going to come back for you. But thank you for being brave like that. It's a statement. You doing that was a statement to a lot of people. That's just not you ideally standing by in silence going, "I see what's going on over there." That's you having an active thing that cost you something to say, "This is more important."

So know that there are thousands of people out there that are screaming at you in the best way possible going, "You do the darn thing, girl."

Annie: Thank you, Tyler.

Tyler: What was the question again?

Annie: That was very kind. I'm very teary about it. The question was now that you've been pruned back, talk to me about... because I'm not on the other side of the pruning. I'm smack in the middle. You're on the other side where things are starting to grow back.

Tyler: It is a little difficult to still... Like my book tour is pretty much non-existent. I got to go do an in-person in Las Vegas.

Annie: I saw that. It looked awesome.

Tyler: And my parents were signed with me.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Tyler: Once you dive into the book, there's so much of my mom, my dad in this book that people lost their mind that they were able to be a part of that.

Annie: Yes! Yes! And it meant a ton to them too.

Tyler: It did. It did. And then I was able to do an in-person here in Nashville at Parnassus. And I did Politics and Prose-

Annie: The line was out the door at Parnassus.

Tyler: It was insane. It was insane. But it was good. They were super sweet in trying to continually tell me, "It filled up quicker than..." I was like, "I appreciate I live here."

Annie: Yes.

Tyler: So that was great. We did a Politics and Prose thing with Michael Steele, which was super dope. But I have a ton of people who were all over now United States going, "When are you going to come here?" And my answer is, "I can't." Maybe one day?

So trying to find new ways to impact people. And this is my first book. So all the traditional ways that my publicist or people would go, "This is what you want to do have changed." So I'm just trying my best to get the word out. And because I think it is so important and it's not just a book about cats, though I love cats, and I think that would be beautiful, but because I think it's important, there's a little bit of stress of trying to figure out the best way to get out into the world. Not because of sales reasons. I mean, don't get me wrong, New York Times bestselling author, Annie F. Downs. But you just feel like you want to get things in the people [inaudible 00:23:07] as important. So that's kind of where I'm at.

[00:23:09] <music>

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And now back to our conversation with Tyler Marin.

[00:24:32] <music>

Annie: I want to read your author note that you wrote because it is my favorite author note I've ever seen. This is what you wrote. "People, if you're reading this, then you done shows well." I was like, he's not playing. He knows it's a gift that we all get this book. Congratulations.

"So first, I want to thank you. Second, I want to warn you that as you get deeper into the pages of this book, things are about get real real. So as a courtesy, I've changed the names and identifying details of a few people who appear in this book. Got it? Be Cool. Dope. Let's go." Tell me what you mean when you say... why did you have to warn us about it getting real? Let's go.

Tyler: So a couple of things. One, I knew I was going to write a book about my black experience.

Annie: Before Tyler Merritt Project, or just in your life you knew that would happen at some point?

Tyler: No. It hit me after. I took a two-year sabbatical, and I talked about it in the book. After that two-year sabbatical, I was walking a lot. And as I was walking, I was dreaming. So I built the book in my head on a walk. You know?

Annie: Yeah.

Tyler: Jay Z has a thing where he raps. He used to talk about he would walk the streets of Brooklyn, and he would have all these ramps in his head. And so then he would go

to the microphone and just spit him out because he had him. That's how I felt about the book. Like I had written this book in my head. And it was done from beginning to end. And I toiled over it.

Of course, there's a black experience piece in here where I give history and humor and all of that stuff. But I knew that I wanted... And I'm so glad I'm on your podcast talking about this, because I do a lot of interviews with people that aren't believers and they don't completely get this piece of this.

I knew that the secondary theme to this book was going to be how many people have fallen, have failed, and how many people have we lost because they never got back up?

Annie: Wow.

Tyler: How many people have we lost because we either as believers sometimes we can be cannibals and we eat our own, and we're like, eh. And we just get rid of you or we go, "Your failure is too big that you can't go on to do anything else great." I knew that in this book I was going to shatter a lot of Christian male author things.

Listen, we have some pretty brilliant women authors. And let me be very clear. I'm not hating on any male Christian authors. But a lot of female Christian authors got it unlocked. They write their truth honest. And they're like, "Here's all my thing." A lot of male authors, Christian, they ain't trying to mess with that because it affects their money-

Annie: They're teaching in it.

Tyler: They're teaching. It's so many things. I didn't have anything to lose. I had even said to my publisher, I was like, "Look, if I'm going to do this, you need to know I'm going to be really honest. I'm going to talk about some things that people, especially believers, don't like to talk about in real... that we hide." It's not going to be that fake kind of hiding where it's like, "Here's a couple of things about myself that you'll find interesting." No.

Chapter seven is literally called never going to be president now, aka, my husband found your pictures.

Annie: Oh, gosh.

Tyler: Right?

Annie: Right.

Tyler: And I started off the chapter by saying, "I want you to imagine one of the worst things you've ever done, and then imagine Netflix had a special where they projected it on the screen for everybody to see. How would you feel? I'm going to let you into this moment.

And this is the penultimate chapter. I'd already given you some things. I talk about how I got fired from a church that I call Nashville Christian Church down the street and why I got fired from it. And I don't hold back. Let me be clear, I didn't put that out there as shock value. In this book—and this is the part that gets me so excited—in this book, I bet on proximity. I put all my cards on proximity.

Annie: I love that.

Tyler: And went, "This isn't going to be a book about all the things I've won. This isn't going to be a book about how I killed it [inaudible 00:29:07]. This is going to be a book about brokenness. And brokenness recognizes brokenness. And I'm going to let you walk with me. I'm going to let you walk with me in a way that is so, so close, that almost at the end of this book, you can't help but to have empathy."

I had a friend who read the book and texted her friend, was like, "You have to read this." Her friend read it and send a text back and said, "I feel like I've worked so closely with Tyler that it's almost uncomfortable." And she wrote back and said, "Like in a bad way." She's like, "No, no, no, not in a bad way. It's just I have friends that I'm not this close to."

Annie: Wow.

Tyler: She was like, "I know more about his struggles than I do about some of my closest people." And that kind of proximity, which could only be reached in my world by me being real and honest and truthful-

Annie: And writing it down. handing it over.

Tyler: And handing it over. An audiobook too sounds like everybody is like tripping on this audiobook because they're like, "Dude

Annie: Is it you?

Tyler: It's me. It's me. My mom and dad are on it.

Annie: Yeah, good.

Tyler: So all of that to say there's just this closeness to it that when you're done, you put down the book and you're like, "I have to talk to somebody about what just happened here." It's special. Annie. It's really, really special. And it was hard.

The most text messages that I get right now say two things. One, your mom should write a book. And the second is, is how do your mom and dad feel about what you say in this book? Are they okay with you talking about all the things that you struggle with? Are they cool with that? And my answer has been this, is my parents know their son. They know who I am. It was also fun having people like Jimmy Kimmel involved. I'll tell you why. I'll tell you why.

The reason why it was fun having Jimmy Kimmel involved is because I tend to kind of swim in this Christian guilt. And Jimmy's a believer. He's Catholic. But I would finish these huge chapters and I would be exhausted and be like, "Oh, my gosh. This is the worst thing. And I would send them over to Jimmy because he was a part of my early reader group. And Jimmy would write me back and go, "This isn't that bad, dude. You're fine. You're good.

Annie: He's like, "Compared to..."

Tyler: I'm like, "Jim, but do you see what I said here?" And Jimmy was like, "It's good, dude. You're fine really."

Annie: His forward was really kind. And also I love that he talked about y'all both growing up in Las Vegas. I mean, it's sweet because when he writes it and he's like, "I mean, we're real friends. You're like a real friend of mine."

Tyler: Yeah. And we established that over a good two year period. During the pandemic, essentially. He called my mom when I was in the hospital.

Annie: Wow.

Tyler: He was fantastic. And he told me he wanted to write the foreword. He read the first chapter and wrote me and went, "So can I write the foreword?" I was like, "It's only one chapter, bro. The rest of this book sucks."

Annie: Right.

Tyler: It was kind of a beautiful thing. What's also great about this book is to be completely transparent. I did not specifically write it... Let me be really clear. I did not write it for a Christian audience. In fact, just to warn everybody, there's a handful... I cast in my personal life. So there are a handful of cuss words in there. Not a ton, but there's some in there.

But Chapter 7 is called I was doing perfectly fine then dammit, here comes Jesus. In that chapter is 100% my testimony, Annie. Like in the midst of this book. I purposely didn't talk about God for the first however many chapters because He wasn't a part of my life. And then I have this conversion experience.

Annie: The bio said... I thought this is great. You said how Jesus barged in uninvited.

Tyler: Yeah, yeah. So much of the stories in the book have to do with my obsession with women. My mom kind of conned me into going to the summer camp. And I tell this story. And it ends up reading like a full-on testimony. So you're reading this book with all this other stuff, but in that chapter, I get to go into the importance of the black church, I get to go into lynching, I get to go into the role of pastors within the black community, all in the midst of me talking about how God grabbed hold of me unexpectedly smack dab in the middle of this book.

So here's this very, very, very like Jesusy chapter smack dab in the middle of this book. And, you know, I'm having people like Jimmy Kimmel read it, and I'm thinking like, "At what point are you going to jump off this ride?" But what happens with his book is because I'm so honest with you about every other aspect of my life, you're able to take my Jesus story the same way how you're able to take my story about struggles of me being in fifth grade and this girl not like me.

Annie: Sure. Totally.

Tyler: It falls into this whole rhythm.

Annie: You've already earned our trust in the first six chapters.

Tyler: I've earned your trust. So then when this super heavy, really... I cannot wait for your readers to read it out of the sheer joy I get to feel when I hear people's testimonies. But I tell them in pretty funny way, but it's pretty moving. It's pretty moving. And it's smack dab in the middle of this book that is about so much more than that.

Annie: When you write a book like this, where it covers the first 30-some odd years of your life, it covers everything. I mean, you really have told... I mean, is the next one really a cancer book. What happened? I mean, are you done writing? Because you make so much content in so many different ways, which is so your library won't just be a library of a shelf of books, your library if we could pull a video and put it there...

I mean, you're in movies that we're all about to get to see. I mean, you're an actor first and singing. You're like a trivial pursuit wheel of how you tell us things. Are there more books? Well, there is definitely 100%. I have a kid's book coming on.

Annie: Yeah, I can't wait. We'll read it on Mini BFF.

Tyler: I'm going to text you the illustrator. Can we just confirm it illustrate?

Annie: Oh, yeah.

Tyler: It's dope. But I have a kid's book coming out next year. So that's a book too.

Annie: Which is a totally different part of the Tyler pursuit wheel.

Tyler: Right. Right. I have more stories to tell.

Annie: Will it be a book? Will it be a screenplay? Will it be a play?

Tyler: If you are at a book reading of mine, I'll do a Q&A. In the first Q&A, the first question is always this: is this going to be a one-man show? Because I read chapter one, and because of the way I read chapter one-

Annie: You perform it.

Tyler: ...it feels Broadway. And my answer to that has been: my Broadway friends work way too hard.

Annie: Eight shows. Eight shows in six days.

Tyler: Eight shows a week. I just want to put it on... I'll do a film. We are easy.

Annie: Yes. Yes.

Tyler: But I do think that there will be another book because I love this format.

Annie: Okay, that's what I was thinking.

Tyler: I underestimated, which you get completely because you have books and books and books out, how radical readers can be. Readers are their own grouping of people

Annie: Because they've put so much time into it.

Tyler: Right, right. I see one in the future. But I also don't want to write something for writer's sake. Yeah, if I'm going to write something... I had a very particular vision on this of exactly how I wanted to start the book, how I wanted to end the book. Let me explain a little bit about that.

Annie: Okay, I want you to.

Tyler: When you read the book, I opened with a chapter called "If She Only Knew Part 1." And it's my experience of meeting this older white woman on the street while I'm walking. And I talk about how I took down my hoodie, so she could see my face, I took off my bandana, I took off my headphones so she could see that I could hear. I took off my sunglasses so that she can see my eyes. And I tell her about how I made myself smaller so that she-

Annie: She won't be afraid.

Tyler: ...would not be afraid. And with everything I did, she still ended up being scared. And I talked about how that affected me. But in that first chapter, I also started to give you all these little hints. Like I talk about me listening to bring it on the musical. And I talked about me wearing Alabama's hoodie because that's what my parents... how they raised me. So I give you all these hints in this first chapter.

Annie: Which I hate that part. You know I'm a Georgia fan. In January when we're playing each other in the national championship, I hope-

Tyler: We'll have to cover-

Annie: Yes.

Tyler: So I give all these hints about who I am in this very first chapter. And I talk about if she only knew, if she knew everything that I had to do to get to this moment, then maybe she would love me. And then I take you through the book and then I bring you back to the last chapter, which is If She Only Knew Part 2.

And now you get to walk through it after reading 16 chapters about me. And now you're reading this chapter going, "Of course, he has Alabama hoodie on because his family is from Eutaw, Alabama. Of course, he listen to musical because..." And now you're going, "I know this guy."

Annie: "I know this guy." Yes, that's it.

Tyler: "And how dare her be afraid of you? You are a beautiful black king." Then I end the book, I say "And arguably as Dale Sel."

Annie: There you go.

Tyler: But you get, as a reader, to the end of the book and go, "Oh my gosh, not only was she mistaken, but if she knew who this guy was, she would have jumped out of that car and said, 'Hey.'"

Annie: Right.

Tyler: I talk about how I made myself less. You would understand why I made myself less because that's what kings do. They serve in love. So Jesus did. Oh, it's good, Annie.

Annie: I'm thinking about our friends who want to write books that are listening and they've been out on a walk and they've seen the whole thing.

Tyler: Sure.

Annie: How close to what you saw out on a walk did this actually turn out?

Tyler: It's close, man. It's really close. The only thing in the book that isn't it... I felt like I owed some people some responsibility because I create content and everything. People will smell out my fakeness in a second, right?

Annie: Sure. Yeah.

Tyler: So the only thing that is kind of off in my book is stuff that I didn't want to get sued over.

Annie: Sure, certainly.

Tyler: Genuinely. Names that I had to change and stories that I had to alter just a little bit so that, you know-

Annie: Everybody has to do that.

Tyler: Everybody has to do this.

Annie: Because also, when I'm writing books, I'm not trying to tell his or her story. I'm telling my story. And so I need to change their part of the story a little bit because they didn't sign up for this—just by being in my life.

Tyler: I haven't talked about this on any of the podcasts or anything that I've done. So there's a chapter where I talk about getting essentially fired from a church for having a relationship with a consenting adult. And some of my friends that are really close to the story are like, "Why did you let that person off the hook? Why didn't you go in on what really..." This was your opportunity to go look at this big picture?" And I say, "No, this was not my opportunity to go in on anybody. This story isn't about them."

Annie: They're an object lesson for me.

Tyler: They're an object lesson for me. This story is not about them. This story is about me. And somebody said in that story, they end up coming off like, "You almost forget the person was there." And I said, "That works for me." Because I'm not trying to ruin anybody's life, for people that do know the story, but I do think it's important to tell my story.

And so if you're a writer, and you are listening to this, the thing that I would encourage is lean into truth. And I really do feel this way. If it doesn't scare you a little bit what you're writing, I would ask, Is it worth writing? Does it scare you a little bit, especially if you're telling your story? Does it scare you a little bit? And I'm not saying you have to go and put all your world out there. But is there some fear in your pen? Because if there is, you're probably writing something that's going to stick to somebody else's bones.

Annie: Yeah, that's right. I always say if I'm crying when I'm writing, they cry when they read. That's always what people say. "When I read that chapter." I'm like, "Yeah, no, because I cried the whole way through typing it. So I know what you did."

Tyler: Annie, listen, I read the audio book down the street at Spotland Studios. Every time I would drive to go read a book, I would think about you guys. Walking distance

down the street, I read it, I wrote the book, all of those things. When I finally listened to the audiobook, Annie, I was out in walk listening to chapter 15, which is called the Tyler Mayer Project and I was bawling. And I'm going, "I wrote that. I know what's in here. I know what's in here."

It made me also super excited for anybody who doesn't know the story that they're about to get into. And we did something really special with the audiobook too. Hachette allowed me to... as soon as they assigned me the engineer, I called the engineer. And she was like, "Authors don't call me." And I was like, "Yeah, I know. But listen, we're going to do something special." Yeah, she was like, "Okay." So I kind of sold her the idea. So her name is Jen. I make her a part of the audiobook.

Annie: Oh, cool.

Tyler: She ends up playing a character in it.

Annie: Oh, wow

Tyler: My mother and father, there's parts of the book where I call my mom on the phone and she comes on and she reads. Like she tells her story.

Annie: Oh, that's awesome.

Tyler: But the sound effects. Like I said, Jimmy Kimmel is on it, James Monroe Iglehart who's a Broadway guy.

Annie: Don't let go. I let it. He's a genie.

Tyler: He's on it. I actually texted him earlier and I was like, "Hey, man, I'm going to be on Annie's podcast. If you're free let me know. We'll give you a call." Because he lost his mind last time. He's recovering from the Tony's last night.

Annie: Listen, that was fun to watch. Did you love it?

Tyler: I loved it. Did you see how he performed?

Annie: Yes.

Tyler: He was on the Freestyle Love Supreme.

Annie: Yes, I saw him. The fact that at the end of the Tony's, they spent four minutes recapping the Tony's, I was like, "This crew is the most brilliant." Their ability to think on their feet is unparalleled.

Tyler: And what James did is he trolled anybody who's been listening to podcasts I've been on. I did a thing with him, Megan Hilty-

Annie: Yeah, live. I love it.

Tyler: Live on Instagram Live, which is on my page. So if you're a Broadway fan, go check it out. Super fun. He likes to troll me with people that I love. I have an undying love for Lea Salonga who starred in Miss Saigon. In fact, you know how edits work. I had like three pages devoted to Lea, and my editor was like, "No, man."

Annie: "No, we got to take that out"

Tyler: "Nobody cares this much about this except you and like four other people." But he sent me a picture yesterday from the Tony's with him and Lea.

Annie: Oh, that's so-

Tyler: Just to troll me. Like anytime he has an opportunity-

Annie: I love it.

[00:45:02] <music>

Sponsor: Hey friends! Just interrupting this conversation one more time to tell you about one of our incredible partners, [Green Chef](#). It's pretty common among our group of friends here at That Sounds Fun to want to pursue being good friends to ourselves, and to become healthier versions of ourselves. But life is busy and there's so much to take care of. Why not allow Green Chef to take care of what they're experts at?

Green Chef is a USDA certified organic company so you can enjoy handpicked organic veggies and premium proteins in their meal kits without having to worry about where they came from. Green Chef is also the most sustainable meal kit offsetting 100% of their plastic use and 100% of their carbon footprint and emissions. Enjoy your greens while being green. You know I love that.

Green Chef is America's number one meal kit for eating well, meaning they're the best meal kit whether you're keto or paleo, vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, pescetarian or you just want to eat more balanced meals. Here's why I love Green Chef.

First of all, the selection. See the expert chefs curate every recipe and offer over 30 meal choices every week. There's tons of flexibility to switch plans and it just means you get restaurant-quality dishes in the comfort of your own home.

Second, the food is amazing. The Moroccan beef and sweet potato chili was a hit last week. So delicious and I love how it pushed me out of my rut of cooking the same old things.

And third, the way everything is pre-portioned and comes with clear easy to follow instructions saves so much time, y'all. No menu planning or long lines in the grocery store on the way home from work. Just fresh premium ingredients delivered right to my door. Yes, please. Let Green Chef simplify your life while also helping you be healthier.

Go to greenchef.com/thatsoundsfun100 and use the code **THATSOUNDSFUN100** to get \$100 off, including free shipping. My gracious, you guys. Again that's greenchef.com/thatsoundsfun100 and use the code **THATSOUNDSFUN100** to get \$100 off, including free shipping on the number one meal kit for eating well.

And now back to finish our conversation with Tyler.

[00:47:06] <music>

Annie: Okay, speaking of characters, tell me the movies we get to see you in the rest of this year? Where should we look for you?

Tyler: Two things that are coming out. Oh, no, three things. So *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff*, which stars Heather Locklear and a guy named Jason McDonald. It's a Christine Carlson story. She had a really popular book called *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff* that came out. It comes out on Lifetime in October. I think October 10 maybe.

Annie: So it's out by the time people hear this.

Tyler: Yeah, yeah.

Annie: Okay.

Tyler: Which stars Heather Locklear. And then there's a movie called the *Inspection* which got stopped because of COVID. But it will be out eventually. It stars Gabrielle Union and a Broadway actor by the name of Jeremy Pope who is incredible. I get to play a really fun role in that.

And then also there's a new show on Apple called *Swagger* that's coming out. It's produced by Kevin Durant. I'm in an episode of that show and I can't wait for that to come out because there's some really cool people. Ice Cube is in it, my boy Tristan Mack is in it. It's a story of basketball from like high school kids growing up to go on profession. It's good. So I have a couple of things coming out that are fun.

Annie: Do you get to go film anything anytime soon? Do you have any coming up?

Tyler: Um, fingers crossed. There's a project coming up that's on Paramount Plus, but a project I can't talk about yet.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, yeah. But we hope.

Tyler: We hope. You know what's so funny is last time I was here, I was in the middle of writing the book. So I kept saying this. I know you have a million podcast-

Annie: No, I remember you kept saying you can't talk about that.

Tyler: "I can't talk about this right now because I'm in the middle of it." It feels so good to be able to come back and be like, "All that stuff..."

Annie: "I can tell you everything."

Tyler: "I can tell you everything now."

Annie: "You can find me on TV. You can find me in the book store. You can find me on the internet. Anywhere you want me." Tyler, is there anything we didn't talk about that you want to make sure we cover?

Tyler: Um, let's see. I'll tell you. There's a piece in the book that... I just want to say this, that if people don't end up reading the book, and they just start still listening to this podcast, I've been trying to communicate this thought as many chances as I have.

I just want to encourage your listeners. That when I talk about this in the book, and so I'm saying it if you don't read it, listen, there are things that only you, only you can do. You are significant. You are special. You are bright. You are beautiful. You are smart. And you are you. And nobody else is you.

We live in a society right now where it's so easy to feel like you get on social media and you go, "Oh man, I wish I was that," or, "Oh man, one day I will be that." The simple truth is, is that only you can do that special, significant, unique thing that only you can do. And we need you right now more than ever. I need you. For me to be able to tell my next story successfully, I need you to step into the gap and be that significant you. So I just want to encourage any of your listeners who are out there right now who have been debating or thinking about if they should do that thing or-

Annie: Do the thing.

Tyler: Do the thing. Take that step forward and try to shake away all of the fear because we need you. And I'm trying to let everybody know that because as people begin to step up... we're seeing so much beauty in this time because people are stepping into that.

Annie: People ask me a lot like, what do you think about the explosion of podcasts and how many people are starting shows, and how many people are writing books? All the things I do. And I'm like, "Yeah, we need all of them. We need everybody to do their thing, everybody to do your thing. Everybody doing their thing does not hurt me doing my thing.

Tyler: Right. That's a really big thing for you to say that, Annie. Not everybody feels that way.

Annie: Right. And I don't feel this way every minute of every day. There are moments. But the overarching truth is that if I'm running after what God has for me, and you're running after what God has for you, we are not going to miss.

Tyler: This is true.

Annie: Right?

Tyler: Oh, that is so big. And I think that's something that people need to understand.

Annie: So write your book. Start your podcast.

Tyler: Write your book. Start your podcast. And this is coming from a guy that had a book come out the same day as Gabrielle Union and Carmelo Anthony.

Annie: Yeah, right.

Tyler: Do you know what I mean?

Annie: Right. But I mean there are people who are waiting to go back to college. Go back to college.

Tyler: Go back.

Annie: There are people waiting to have a kid, go on a date, get married. Do it. Like do all the things. Step forward. We need you to do your thing.

Tyler: And I would encourage you to not just do it because it's the next thing you should do or it's the next thing. Do you, live because what you do matters, what you do really is important.

Annie: That's good.

Tyler: The simple fact, Annie. And we know this and Craigory back behind us knows this... By the way, I want to throw this out there. Those of you who watch this and listen to this podcast religiously, Craigory is a beautiful man with a chiseled chin, with curly hair at top. I believe he has a girlfriend now, tall. What is he? 6'2?

Annie: 6'4.

Tyler: 6'4. Ladies?

Annie: Ladies, you got to line up behind Hannah.

Tyler: Ladies, line up behind Hannah. Hannah, my bad. I'm not trying to come at you, Hannah.

Annie: We love Hannah. We all feel like we're dating Hannah. We like her so much. We like think the world-

Tyler: Oh, okay.

Annie: So it's great.

- Tyler:** The moral of the story is, is that, Annie, if years ago you didn't step out in your own truth to pen your own story. People look at you now and they go, "Of course you did." But people don't understand that you started. You started.
- Annie:** And then Craigory have a job. You wouldn't be sitting here for us to have this conversation.
- Tyler:** I wouldn't be sitting here. And right now people are like, "This was the best podcast ever, Annie. Thank you so much for having Tyler."
- Annie:** And I wouldn't have done it if I wouldn't have been listening to the Relevant Podcast or listening to This American Life or listening to Beth Moore. I was watching other people do their thing and I thought I could do my thing.
- Tyler:** Right.
- Annie:** And then we watch you, we go, "Okay, well, Tyler is rich in every spot of the... you're making art for us and everywhere. How can I change the world? How can I change the world because Tyler had cancer?"
- Tyler:** Right. That's what I'm talking about.
- Annie:** We don't all got to have a 28-pound tumor to learn from your 28 pounds tumor.
- Tyler:** This is the truth and I would not wish it on anybody.
- Annie:** Right, right.
- Tyler:** Maybe a couple of people.
- Annie:** But we won't say their names.
- Tyler:** Right, we won't say their name.
- Annie:** Not yet. Not yet. The last question we always ask. Because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you? What's fun right now?
- Tyler:** Oh, man. I'll tell you what sounds fun to me. I want all of the Broadway people that I know, all the Broadway people. And I'm not talking about on the like, kind of Broadway people that know like a Broadway song. I want to get a full-packed

house of *Hamilton* fans together and let the *Hamilton* cast go, "Yo, y'all, you're here, this is a singalong. A live-

Annie: I thought that when I was sitting in *Wicked*. Why did they never let us do a singalong?

Tyler: "This is a live sing along." From the moment we start, we're going to sing along. I want to get every single hardcore, because I have like 50 *Hamilton* references in the book, I want to get everybody in the room and I want them to go din drin din din. Everybody at the same time just go, "Oh, right."

Annie: Or say, "My friend Joseph is such a good King George, I've got your King George for you."

Tyler: There you go. But we can have multiple King George because we control the whole theatre.

Annie: That's it. But if you just need a leader, if every section needs a leader... well, I'm going to sing all the parts but I'm for sure doing Guns and Ships because they see the thing.

Tyler: Right. Right.

Annie: So you'll see me do the first part of Gun and Ships.

Tyler: Not the second part?

Annie: I don't want to say. I don't have a very good friend, Jackson. So I can't rap it, friends.

Tyler: This is what I'll do. My boy James is currently playing Thomas Jefferson Lafayette.

Annie: On Broadway?

Tyler: He's currently at Broadway until November 14.

Annie: Are you going up to see it?

Tyler: I think so.

Annie: You should.

- Tyler:** Because Megan Hilty is also doing this show that we can try to go and see. Anyway, we're going to try to go. But can you imagine how fun that would be? Annie, think about it for a minute. A whole room full, a theater full of just every-
- Annie:** Loading. Just thinking about it.
- Tyler:** The whole... Oh, come on, man.
- Annie:** Because then here's what else gets to happen. All those people who think they are actually Angelica or Eliza, and they will sing, burn with their- we'll laugh at them. Like have your moment. Have your moment. This is you performing, have your moment. Can we get back to the show?
- Tyler:** Yeah.
- Annie:** *It's Quiet Uptown*. You think I'm not going to come hard during *It's Quiet Uptown*? You ain't met me. I will.
- Tyler:** You're going to come hard.
- Annie:** I'll come hard on *Guns and Ships* and *It's Quiet Uptown*. I'll let everybody else handle the rest. We got people for all the rest stuff.
- Tyler:** Oh, man.
- Annie:** I'm telling you.
- Tyler:** Yeah, I know that's crazy but that sounds fun.
- Annie:** How do we do this? How do we do a fundraiser where it doesn't even have to be... like it doesn't have to be Lynn. In fact, I respect him hugely. I don't need him to be that in my *Hamilton*. We could just get people to act it at TPAC and let everyone sing along.
- Tyler:** I know some people. I know some people.
- Annie:** Who would you want to be?
- Tyler:** George Washington.

Annie: Yeah, of course.

Tyler: Easily. George Washington.

Annie: Sit under your own vine.

Tyler: Yeah, exactly. Annie, I love you so much right now.

Annie: So you're George Washington. Here's the idea. I'm just fleshing it out.

Tyler: Let's flesh it out. Let's flesh it out.

Annie: We call TPAC and we say, "Give us one of the small rooms, give us Andrew Jackson.

Tyler: There you go. I was just going to say-

Annie: A thousand?

Tyler: Yeah, yeah.

Annie: And we will get a cast together to act out *Hamilton*-ish. I mean, we're not going to build two levels.

Tyler: No, no.

Annie: We need *Hamilton* to drop a book from-

Tyler: I know. I will provide the cast and the set in the real-life and we will do the actual-

Annie: John Adams... he's going to drop it?

Tyler: It's going to be the whole night?

Annie: Okay, okay.

Tyler: But in a smaller room. And it's a singalong.

Annie: Why is this not already happening? Why is this not the next thing you do? A *Hamilton* singalong?

Tyler: Yeah.

Annie: What would it take? Do we have to get permission from Lynn?

Tyler: I think all the permissions we can work out. I'm not concerned about all that. Like that's what I'm saying, I come in like... I know some people.

Annie: You're a producer, you can produce this. What are we going to raise money for?

Tyler: With all like my cancer.

Annie: Yeah.

Tyler: That's a good question.

Annie: It needs to be a fundraiser because we need to charge \$500 a seat. Because if you can't afford to sit here, I don't want to hear you sing.

Tyler: This is true.

Annie: And then scholarships some people because we need some good singers.

Tyler: No, we want 100% scholarship. In fact, I would pay out of my pocket for those people. Similar like how they deal with rent. We need a rent sing along.

Annie: Okay we do need a rent sing... in a weekend sing along.

Tyler: We need a weekend sing-along.

Annie: Listen, at some point, I don't think it's anytime soon, at some point like your friend they will be done. At some point, my friends will be done with it because you can't play *Glinda* till you're 67. And so Ginna Claire is from Brentwood. so we'll just get her back down here. What if there's just a new series at TPAC that you start of singalongs? I can't. I can't-

Tyler: Can I tell you the other one that we need?

Annie: I don't want to sit in the front by the way. I want to sit at the back.

Tyler: I want to sit in the back because I want to feel the energy. Because even when I'm at *Hamilton* in New York on Broadway, watching the people in their chairs not being

able to contain themselves is one of the funnest parts. Like watching people shaking because they can't help with singing the words.

Annie: I know.

Tyler: We need another one for *Jagged Little Pill* too.

Annie: Okay, yeah, I would sing along to all of that. I mean, that's a whole album.

Tyler: That's a whole album. Have you listened to the soundtrack for *Jagged Little Pill* yet?

Annie: Should I?

Tyler: Tonight. Tonight.

Annie: Okay, done happening.

Tyler: I'll try to see if I get you the 12 inch... the record. Because you're using the record.

Annie: Yes, yes.

Tyler: I'll see if I get it. Y'all, it's great, Annie.

Annie: It's going to be on Spotify, right?

Tyler: Oh, it's out. It's out.

Annie: I just need you to really do this. This is like a 2022 goal. Let's do it.

Tyler: Let me get this book out in the world.

Annie: Sure, sure, sure.

Tyler: I got priorities right now.

Annie: I mean, this could be a moneymaker for you. This doesn't have to be a nonprofit at all. You can actually just... people will pay a lot of money to sit in there and sing along. How many people are in the cast of *Hamilton*? 15?

Tyler: A lot.

Annie: 30?

Tyler: Yeah.

Annie: If you brought us two big deals, people are going to pay a lot of money to sing along with them. I cannot wait. You are going to get so rich over this.

Annie: You just turn your "what sounds fun to you?" into a full-on new event.

Annie: Event that I'm attending. Yes, yes. Your "what sounds fun to you" just became something that gets blocked on my calendar in 2022. That is unbelievable.

Tyler: And I love all the people that are listening to this right now, who are sitting there with their mouth wide open like, Yes. Why has this never happened? Somebody is taking notes right now trying to put together the-

Annie: And I'm like this to them. Start that. If you don't know the *Hamilton* soundtrack, you need to start now. Because I need you ready.

Tyler: Yeah, I need you ready.

Annie: I need you ready next year when we announce this date because... I mean you don't have to do every word to show up. You may enjoy sitting there and not singing.

Tyler: Sure.

Annie: You will like it better when you hear me do Guns and Ships if you know Guns and Ships.

Tyler: And I think this is a fair time to say, for everybody who has said, "I saw *Hamilton* on Disney," and then you think you saw *Hamilton* because you saw it on Disney Plus, it doesn't count. It doesn't count.

Annie: Not quite. Not quite. But that does leave in my mind that worst-case scenario, we go to the Belcourt and we put it on the big screen, and we just sing along to the big screen.

Tyler: That can happen.

Annie: That feels too easy.

Tyler: That feels not only-

Annie: That's a phone call on board. We're going to TPAC.

Tyler: You said that's just a phone call. I think the energy that's going to take place... I think what's going to happen is because someone else is singing it and you're singing with him. It's like going to a concert when you're singing with whoever. You know what I mean?

Annie: Whoever plays Aaron Burr isn't ready. He's already not ready for our response.

Tyler: They are not ready.

Annie: Oh, I can't wait!

Tyler: Man.

Annie: It could be a one-man show. You could do the whole thing.

Tyler: Yeah, this is true. Well, no, too much work.

Annie: Yeah, that's fair. That's fair.

Tyler: That's a lot of work.

Annie: Lafayette is hard.

Tyler: Yeah, Lafayette alone is hard.

Annie: You're going to actually have to just call Devi because he's probably available for that.

Tyler: I'm going to show you some of these pictures.

Annie: I'm really into this. That made my actual day. I can't wait. As soon as you have a date, will you just let us know so we can block it.

Tyler: Sure. Sure.

Annie: It's happening.

Tyler: Let me just get on it.

Annie: Oh, I can't wait for people to read *I Take My Coffee Black* and show up for us to sing on *Hamilton*. Let's go.

[01:02:35] <music>

Outro: Oh, don't you guys just love him? What a great dude. And listen. How soon can we all get tickets for that *Hamilton* singalong? How soon? I want to do it right now. Be sure to pick up a copy of Tyler's new book, *I Take My Coffee Black*, and make sure you're following him so you can tell him thanks for being on the show.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), all the places you may need me, that's how you can find me. And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same. And today that looks like putting my *Hamilton* record on the record player when I get home from work. I cannot wait.

Y'all have a great weekend. Have some fun, get some rest. We'll see you back here Monday, celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day with a fascinating interview with my friend and founder of the redroad.org, Charles Robinson. Y'all are absolutely going to love him. Oh, I can't wait! See you guys then.