

**EPISODE 1699**

**FT:** So Money episode 1699. Affording your pursuit of pleasure in Paris with writer and memoirist Glynnis MacNicol, author of, *I'm Mostly Here to Enjoy Myself*.

*“GM: I'm far from the only person living like this, like I represent, I look to my left and right and see so many women making similar choices and enjoying similar things and having similar trips and adventures. I'm like, I'm not telling an unusual story. I'm telling a fairly common story that only feels uncommon because we don't see it reflected back to us enough.”*

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:12]

**ANNOUNCER:** You're listening to So Money with award-winning money guru, Farnoosh Torabi. Each day, you get a 30-minute dose of financial inspiration from the world's top business minds, authors, influencers, and from Farnoosh, herself.

Looking for ways to save on gas or double your double coupons? Sorry, you're in the wrong place. Seeking profound ways to live a richer, happier life? Welcome to So Money.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:59]

**FT:** Welcome to So Money, everybody. I'm Farnoosh Torabi. What a weekend. Am I right? President Biden announcing he's no longer running for reelection. He's ending his campaign and endorsing Vice President Kamala Harris. If you have mixed feelings about this with you on the one hand, I think it was the right thing for him to do. It was the presidential thing for him to do, but it doesn't mean that the uncertainties of this year's election are more under control. We have a long way to go.

I know a lot of us, including myself, we're worried about many things, including our personal economic well-being. I mean, I'm also having existential questions and crises, but what do we do in these moments, whether it's an uncertain election, or I feel like we're back during like the early days of COVID too, where we just didn't know what was going to happen. So, how do we use what's happening in the world to inform our financial decisions? We can't. At least it doesn't seem so easy. So, I thought, let's talk about this. Let's dedicate an episode to this ASAP.

Stay tuned for Wednesday's show. I have a financial therapist, Aja Evans here. She's a friend of the show. She's excellent. She has a book coming out, but she's here to talk about how we can work through any of our financial anxiety or indecisions stemming from all of the question marks we have about November, and of course, the next four years.

Today, though, we're talking about pleasure, a hard left. We're going to just talk about fun and pleasure, and what it means to afford this as a woman untethered. Childfree, single, and on a quest to, as she says, mostly enjoy myself. Glynnis MacNicol is here. You may have read or seen her very much talked about new book. *I'm Mostly Here to Enjoy Myself: One Woman's Pursuit of Pleasure in Paris*. I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and I'm excited to finally connect with Glynnis after all these years of knowing about her, admiring her work.

She's a living legend in the world of journalism, and feminism, and memoirs. This is her second book, Glynnis writes about in her new book, *I'm Mostly Here to Enjoy Myself*. Glynnis talks about venturing to Paris during the summer of 2021 in the midst of the pandemic. She leaves her life in New York. What drives her? I mean, I don't really need a bigger excuse to go to Paris, but there was a very important and imminent reason for her to pick up and leave.

We talk about the economics of being Glynnis and other women in our forties. How she afforded her time away in Paris and some of the ways that she's afforded a lot of her rich experiences in life, which I was happy to hear, it doesn't have a lot to do with money. Why this book wasn't a fast sell? Many publishers weren't sure of the marketability of a book about a woman out to search for fun and pleasure. Is that all? They wondered. How aging can be an exercise in power. Here is Glynnis MacNicol.

Glynnis MacNicol, finally, I have been admiring your work from afar. We have many friends in common. I feel like this is such a homecoming for me. I get to actually have Glynnis in the house. Welcome to So Money.

**[0:04:06]**

**GM:** Yay. I'm excited to be here. Thank you for having me.

**[0:04:09]**

**FT:** I just finished your new book. I'm mostly here to enjoy myself. *One Woman's Pursuit of Pleasure in Paris*. While you were in Paris, August of 2021, I was probably crying in the shower. I don't know. It was a lot of things. We have different lives and yet so much of your work and your life experience and your time in Paris, I can relate to, I aspire to, I want for it. I understand it. Your book, though, it was interesting.

I was listening to some of the podcasts that you've done and your interviews. This book was not an easy sell, despite the fact that it's selling really well. Men and women are reading it with pleasure. Let's talk about the behind-the-scenes of even just bringing this idea to market that not a big spoiler for everybody here, but there's not like a big like romance at the end where you go off into the sunset with your true love. That maybe was part of the problem, right? The industry was like, and so, what's going on here?

**[0:05:23]**

**GM:** Right. I think you've hit on two points, which is saying that we don't have similar lives, but you could relate to some of it. I still think we think of women's stories as having to be relatable or having to be thought of as like a pair of shoes I'm handing to you for you to walk around in as supposed to we've all spent our whole lives reading stories by and about men. No one has once said, "Oh, can I relate to this Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir about a man who spends his whole life surfing?" I'm like, "No, I just enjoy hearing about his experiences or can I relate to this story about a man that has no women in it?" No, but I'm reading it anyway, because it's good storytelling.

I think we tend to – I have a theory that we as women are almost for maybe a century now have almost exclusively been handed stories about other women through the platform of women's magazines, which are simultaneously trying to sell us something. All of these stories have a I did this to get this. You can do this to get that. I think it becomes difficult sometimes less so than with the last book for women to approach stories without it being like could I do this as supposed to, I just want to know that someone else did this, because I can't boil an egg, but I can't get enough of cooking books or like Ruth Reichl or how to cook a fox. All of these MFK Fishers.

I mentioned that, because I do think still when women are writing about themselves to sell that, editors and publishers are looking at it through a lens of how do we pitch this? What is the story resolution? How do we know that she's happy? We want people – do will the audience relate to her? Speaking to your second point about the big romance at the end, I still – we think that we have a very hard time understanding women's lives outside of the narrative of it ends with the wedding or it ends with a baby and that trying to tell a story outside of that regardless of the ups and downs or it ends with death.

It becomes a challenge when you're talking about how do I describe this? So, this book went out to, I want to say something like 22 or 24 editors, which is not abnormal and 17 of them turned it down, which in and of itself is not abnormal. It was just the rejection letters we were getting, instead of being the usual [f 0:07:55], or with my agent, they would send my agent like a nice letter being like, "Thank you so much for thinking of us. This isn't for us at the moment, but let's have coffee soon."

We were getting back these like paragraph long emails of, I changed what I did this weekend based on this book, or this really has me rethinking things, or I can't get it out of my mind, but we don't know how to sell it. What is the instigating incident? What's the hook here? How do we – so what's the narrative arc? What's the challenge she's going through? It was so fascinating. It would drove my agent insane, because it was not – there wasn't a single one that was like, there was a few that were just like, "It's not for us." But it was a lot more of like, "We don't know how to sell it."

The fact that it has been selling so well is feels doubly good. But I do think just culturally, we just don't, we still – women being able to exist to function financially and have agency over their finances, pertaining to this podcast and also their body is still so relatively new. I mean, both those things only legally became possible in 1973, 74 and I was born in 74 and I'm 49. It's like that's for all of culture and storytelling to catch up in such a short period of time feels unlikely and subsequently.

It's not shocking we don't have these stories, but it is definitely frustrating, because I'm far – and I'll finish, but like I'm far from the only person living like this, like I represent, I look to my left and right and see so many women making similar choices and enjoying similar things and having similar trips and adventures. I'm like, I'm not telling an unusual story. I'm telling a fairly common story that only feels uncommon, because we don't see it reflected back to us enough.

**[0:09:37]**

**FT:** You bring up fear. You know that's part of the reason why there is a trepidation or whatever, whatever the block is that it doesn't – publishers don't want to publish or people, magazines don't want to sell it. You write this pursuit of pleasure. This untethered woman who has agency and does what she wants. This is the thing that we're taught to fear.

**[0:10:05]**

**GM:** Right.

**[0:10:06]**

**FT:** Because why? We want to keep women in place? You mentioned earlier, like the magazines, they are selling us these stories and it's like – it's not the skincare or the cosmetics. It's also they're trying to sell like a box that they want us to live in.

**[0:10:20]**

**GM:** Yes. A box that serves capitalism. I don't know. I saw it. I'm not on TikTok, so it's probably on Instagram the other day that said, all these love stories of the scarcity of love or you have to earn it or the rarity is really just capitalism, retold is a love story, but I mean, I can't personally think of a mainstream story. I think I mentioned two in the book of a, that ends with a woman on her own and told as a happy ending. We have Thelma and Louise. We have lots of narratives of terrible things happening to women on their own. All of the horror industry. Our entire 80s childhood. Oh, I don't know that you are telling the 80s, I shouldn't assume.

**[0:11:03]**

**FT:** I am.

**[0:11:03]**

**GM:** Yeah. You know, like every story of a woman, all of the loner, SVU, CSI, all of those. It's like it starts with the corpse of a dead young woman, because she was out on her own, walking alone at night or doing all of these things. I think it's difficult to not look at the news in the last 48 hours, let alone the last six years, let alone whatever, and not really understand the drive to remove every support system or legal support system around women being able to make choices about their bodies or their finances on their own.

We're seeing one of the, see, I can turn anything into politics or money in a second, but like just thinking of one of the foundational ideas in this Project 25 is to roll back no fault divorce, like we see it coming at us in every way. We see it coming at us in every narrative. Little red riding hood in the woods by yourself. All of this stuff is the fear of a woman by herself. Once you are a woman by yourself, and I think the experience for me, and I don't think I'm alone in this, it's so powerful and so impossible to imagine being otherwise. You're like, "Oh, I think these narratives might not be reflecting the truth. I think they reflect there, it's like a gaslighting, because this fear of women going off and doing things on their own would shake up a lot of power structures.

**[0:12:33]**

**FT:** I want to revisit power and money with you. Yeah. I want to also – I feel like the listener is like, whoa, we got heavy real fast.

**[0:12:40]**

**GM:** No. I know, I mean, it's very hard. It's funny we're like – in this moment, it's hard to not get ahead quickly. Women's pleasure is not frivolous. It is very, very radical to a degree that the person who has just nominated the VP for the Republican Party is famously quoted as saying all these sad cat, single cat ladies who want the rest of the world to be as unhappy as they are, are running the country. This is not a frivolous endeavor. It's not arriving in a frivolous moment. It is an enjoyable and the fact that we attach frivolity to women's enjoyment in and of itself, I think speaks volumes, but like it's difficult not to immediately get serious on this topic, because it's rare for women to have this degree of agency and it feels very under threat, actually.

**[0:13:33]**

**FT:** Yeah. You in the middle of the pandemic, it was post lockdown. There was an opportunity now to finally get on an airplane and you had a community in Paris. You had a place in Paris that you had gone to before, so you had a set up there and you thought, I want to go. Tell us about the impetus for wanting to go and just get out of New York City, which I love. I think like nothing against New York City, but it was the pandemic and you were living by yourself. So, that led to this wanting.

**[0:14:06]**

**GM:** Yeah. I stayed in New York during all of lockdown. I was alone in my, as I am right now. A very small studio apartment on the upper west side. I think, it's not really a joke, but say that we all experienced the most extreme version of our life decisions during lockdown. People who were married were like I did not sign up to be this married or I did not sign up to spend this much time with my children. I was like, I did not sign up for solitary confinement for what turned out to be the better part of a year and a half.

Being that alone for that long is really punishing in ways that are hard. I went untouched, literally untouched for 14 months or whatever, whoever long it ended up being. I wasn't seen by many. I was seeing people the way I see you, but as we all know, two-dimensional interactions from the shoulders up is not quite the same thing, or smelled. So, that May, after the vaccine started rolling out and everything in New York sort of felt like, "Oh, it's over. We can finally go back to normal."

I on a whim emailed a friend who was an apartment in Paris and said, where I'd staged many times before, and said, "You open to the summer? Do you want to get out of Paris?" He said, yes. I bought a plane ticket thinking for that August and I thought, well, if it takes off, I'll be on it. if it doesn't take off, then like one more thing that you can't rely on that turns out to be not –

**[0:15:48]**

**FT:** We're used to disappointment. Yeah.

**[0:15:49]**

**GM:** Yeah. It was like, okay. It did take off and I was on it. I just thought I was like whatever I'm risking in this moment feels less of a risk than any more time by myself, like I really started to feel I was doing, like damage was being done to my emotional stability. There's some philosopher that talks about like spending that much time alone. Your brain starts to eat itself the way your body starts to eat itself during starvation. It's just, it was a lot.

**[0:16:21]**

**FT:** I think per Google, you wrote that touches the only thing essential to human life that in a study, there was one species that like preferred touch over food.

**[0:16:30]**

**GM:** I can't remember if it's a, I might say in the book, but it's either monkeys or chimpanzees when they were restricted from food and touch. Then given the choice, they would choose touch

over food is how fundamental. There are studies done in orphanages in Russia about infants, babies who aren't touched enough, and the long-term damage it does and there's a symptom called skin hunger. Obviously, I was not experiencing things to that degree, but after a year and a half, I did start to feel a little like this is, I need to fix this. If we're going to – if I have to look at a winter of lockdown again, like these needs to. Yeah.

**[0:17:08]**

**FT:** Yeah. Pleasure in Paris. I mean, it seems effortless, but there was effort. I gave you a lot of credit for the journey. I was like, well, this is going to be so simple and easy for Glynnis, but there wasn't easing into it, obviously. Especially because the pleasure you were seeking in addition to friendship and food was a touch from men.

**[0:17:30]**

**GM:** As much as possible.

**[0:17:31]**

**FT:** As much as possible. So, yeah, by the way, the Fruits app. If they haven't called you for a brand partnership yet, I don't know what they're waiting for.

**[0:17:41]**

**GM:** I know. I thought that it had disappeared. I thought that it like, but people have been sending me photos from the Paris Metro that it suddenly re-emerged in time for the –

**[0:17:50]**

**FT:** Ah. I mean, time to buy a stock. It's time to buy stock in the dating app.

**[0:17:55]**

**GM:** Exactly.

**[0:17:57]**

**FT:** There was this initial question, this query that you had. I think is important for a lot of people and women to consider. It's like what does pleasure mean to me? How do I go about achieving this? You write, it feels nearly impossible to separate myself from the pervasive voice of how women should be going back to like the fears and the expectations, but how did you ultimately separate yourself? How did you – and it took weeks, I think towards week three, you sort of felt like, okay, I've arrived and I know what.

**[0:18:28]**

**GM:** It might have been week two and it might have been, it just felt – it's so funny, because the book covers five weeks. It's like you're a hundred pages, but also time felt so stretched. I think I was surprised. I think I landed and I was so just like, oh, every pleasurable thing possible, but then it's like, it's a little bit like being stationary for a year and then deciding you want to run a marathon. It's like you just – for me anyway. It didn't quite – I needed to figure out how to be in the world again and how to interact with people.

In the beginning, it was like – and I do have a French group, they're a very close one, so that was easy to slide back into. I did not have any problems sliding back into like the cheese and wine situation, but meeting people I didn't know and like meeting men, I really, at first I was like, “Oh, I'm being inundated with all these messages. Maybe that's all I need. Maybe I just need the like sensation of attention.”

Then I was like, “No, I think I need a little bit more.” Then there was, one scene I was dancing – sounds so ridiculous, but it's true. Which I went dancing on the SEN one night, with all of Paris, it felt like it ended up dancing with this very handsome young man who came home with me. I was like, “Oh, I want more of this.” Then I was like, and more, and more, and more. It was like the, in an avalanche, that one little stone that goes down and then a few more go down. Then it's just like, the whole thing starts going.

At the beginning of it, and even in writing the book. The inclination is to even just justify to yourself why you deserve pleasure and why. I think that's a very North American. I'm Canadian, so I don't attribute this just to the States, but it is very American to say, I have to earn pleasure. I don't just, you know like it's something financially that I have to earn enough to deserve it. I think, and as a woman, this idea of like, oh, here's why I deserve this massage or this like the whole rosy phenomenon that was happening a few years ago, like why do I deserve to enjoy myself?

I really wanted to, as I was thinking it through, I was like, I really just – I want to get away from that. Who, who am I explaining myself to? Why do they deserve my explanation? Like who has done enough for me that they deserve me telling them why I deserve this? So, there's a bit of a chapter there where I'm thinking through all of this. Then by the time I got rolling, I was like, I don't care. I just want more. I just, at that point, I went full animal instincts. I was like, no more thinking.

**[0:21:14]**

**FT:** I mean, you, it seems like you had a lot of great luck too, because like all these men, I mean, even the one at the end who was like very mean.

**[0:21:23]**

**GM:** He wasn't mean so much as – he definitely wasn't mean, but he was, I mean, he was very transparent and very honest.

**[0:21:35]**

**FT:** That was not my interpretation, but, okay, go.

**[0:21:37]**

**GM:** No. It's just funny. I think the thing with him was more like, because I think mean suggests like bad intentions. He was very clear with his intentions. I think I was just surprised by him that

sometimes people with certain kinks, so called that it's a kink. With him, I think it was his entire personality, which was you know. For the purposes of a writer, I was like – even for the purposes of me in that moment, it was a very good experience for me in the sense of like, oh, you know, like maybe I've hit my limit on where I'm interested in going. But I did have good luck.

I think one of the reasons this book came about is when I got back, I kept thinking like it's only a good story. We have no stories about women where everything goes right. It's always about like, oh, you've taken this risk and here's how it goes wrong. Now, you need someone to come get you. I was like, everything went right. That's not always going to be the case. Subsequently we went back into lockdown. The following summer, my father was dying. I was fairly aware that this was not like a permanent state of being, but I was like, when everything started going right, I had to make that decision.

I just thought like I'm just going to go with this for as long. I'm not going to second guess it. I'm not going to think it. I'm through it. I'm not going to worry about, “Oh, what's the thing that can go wrong?” I was like, it's all going right. I'm going to ride this wave as far as it goes. Then when it turns, I'll deal with it then. I did have a lot of good luck. But to be clear, Farnoosh, like Paris had been in an equally severe lockdown. There was not a lot of convincing needed for anyone.

**[0:23:13]**

**FT:** Then we're going through the same calculus in their head. You never had these conversations with them. You never were – that was never the point to like talk about your journey and your exploration of things. But like, I guess, had it ever, do you ever wonder what goes through their minds? I think you get into it a little bit with one of them. I think it's a soccer player.

**[0:23:33]**

**GM:** Do I wonder what goes through their minds? In what sense? Do I wonder what men think? Not as much anymore.

**[0:23:40]**

**FT:** There was at least like in the beginning, there was maybe some overthinking or –

**[0:23:44]**

**GM:** Yeah.

**[0:23:44]**

**FT:** You know. Just even in terms of like, you talked about like, do I deserve this? What is pleasure for me? I wonder is that very much a feminine thing, or is that a Glynnis thing, or was it like –

**[0:23:57]**

**GM:** I mean, I can't speak for men. I don't think it's just a Glynnis thing based on, I mean, one of my friends who read an early version said the lovelies for me felt lovely when she said clearly one of your pleasures is thinking. I think the woman who reviewed it in the Washington Post said something similar, which is like the ability for women to just think through thoughts to the end. A reader said to me, they thought the most erotic thing about the book was my ability to spend an afternoon doing what I wanted, which was nothing.

I think that we rarely see those sorts of things portrayed as to what men are thinking. I don't know what men are thinking most of the time. I don't know that they are thinking through about women, the way we would like them to think about us at all. I think for me, and this has to do with age as much as anything, I truly think almost all men are really just happy that you took your clothes off. Well, no, I think we're so conditioned as women to think that we have to deserve love physically, like we have to make our bodies physically perfect in order to deserve sexual attention.

I think the male experience is mostly just like, “Oh my, God. I can't believe this person is taking their clothes off for me.” I think the divide between those two is filled by people trying to sell us things, but it's quite funny you asked that, because that summer, I think women very easily slip

into the role of being the therapist for many men. I think that speaks to male friendship, the absence of male friendship, which I think we're culturally talking about a lot more, but I was really adamant that summer, I was like, I'm not anyone's therapist. I'm not. I don't want to hear about your ex-girlfriends or your family.

I have been the emotional therapist for many friends for the last 18 months. I was like, I am here to receive pleasure, not so, and to be clear, none of these relations – I'm actually in still in touch with a number of people, but yeah, that was not the goal that summer.

**[0:26:05]**

**FT:** Yeah. To be psychoanalytic. You dedicate a number of pages, let's talk about money to the economics of being Glynnis MacNicol. You are a professional writer. You've written about and have made a brand out of being like child free, unmarried in your mid-life, exploring womanhood in your mid-life. You talk about the success and the luck that you had in France, but I would say you even set yourself up for that a little bit to the extent that you could control for it, because you have relationships there, right? You had a built-in community, which you write about as an asset. I love that you wrote that that relationships that you have invested in over all of your years has really been bountiful.

**[0:26:45]**

**GM:** Yes.

**[0:26:46]**

**FT:** But also, you have a sensibility around money. I mean, you talk about having a four-month emergency, although financial experts want six months. I think four months is great as a –

**[0:26:56]**

**GM:** Can I say four. I try and do six, but –

**[0:27:00]**

**FT:** Even when you went to France, you had a project that you were – so you have, your successful is what I want to say financially and career wise. I think like you said you wrote, you would want to write a guide about what it's like to live in New York city. I just want to know what are your tips, because I think that's something that everybody wants to aspire to.

**[0:27:22]**

**GM:** I mean, I don't know that I would write a guide to living in New York city. I think my friend Nina in the book is writing a guide to enjoying when you don't have a lot of money. How to enjoy not having a lot of money, because the flip side of being a freelancer in New York is I am quite successful at what I do. Still, there's a few dollars left over at the end of every month, because it's so New York right now, it feels breathtakingly expensive. I've been here almost 30 years at this point.

I think it's more, I don't know, honest to God in the last year. I think I've lost my ability to even understand how I can survive in New York. I think it's reached stratospheric levels in a way that I'm just watching people, I think of us all trying to climb up a glass building and watching people fall off as we go and just wondering how much longer I'm able to hold on much that has to do with health care.

I do think, speaking of finances, because it's every, I do think it's very a measure and another thing we don't see enough. It's a measure of age that at some point, so many conversations with friends turn from say fertility to mortgages and health care and spending so much time in France and also being Canadian and understanding the degree to which not having socialized health care makes it impossible to survive here in a way, especially when you're outside. We financially benefit from being in a partnership just from paying bills and for health care and such and such, like having to pay for health care.

It's always one of the reasons I walked through my finances. So, specifically in the book is I wanted to be very clear both how accessible these decisions I was making are generally speaking. I think I spent \$2,000 to cover that those five weeks, including airfare, which might not

be possible at the moment. \$2,000 is not nothing for a lot of people and it's not necessarily nothing for me either, but I actually just wanted to say, like here's how this pans out into your point.

I like thinking of my friendships as assets, financial assets, because I was tapping into long term relationships, which I have invested it in thinking about friendships as investments the way we're conditioned to think of marriage financially and many aspects I think is, is important too. What would I say – I am so sad to say that after 27 years of New York, I don't know how I would tell someone to live here. I don't have any idea. I don't know how to live here anymore. It's a real –

**[0:29:59]**

**FT:** It seems like you had multiple streams of revenue. You worked, like you hustled. You had –

**[0:30:05]**

**GM:** I do. I think the problem – yes, now is those streams of revenue, like don't exist as businesses anymore. It's this con, which I think we're all feeling, like I talked, I have these conversations with many people on many different industries. It does feel like a time of huge transition. I don't know. I could tell you, how to live in France, because your healthcare would be covered.

**[0:30:24]**

**FT:** Right, right, right. Do you think your friend group, RT and your other friends that you would write a lot about, all your meals together and hanging out, walking through Parc Monceau, and all that good stuff? I wondered about them and are they experiencing pleasure? Like did you talk a lot about your pursuits with them and what were their reactions or their offerings in those conversations?

**[0:30:49]**

**GM:** Yes. I mean, they've all read the book and waited on it long before it went to publication. I think that, so I didn't go there that summer with the intention of writing a book. I didn't go there that summer with the intention of doing anything, but literally, having as much pleasure as possible and seeing my friends and like being out of New York and experiencing movement. So, I don't know that we ever go into conversations as like, how do you experience pleasure?

I think we all are very satisfied in our lives as much as anybody is satisfied in their lives. It's almost a common language where we recognize, we take such pleasure in each other's achievements and successes and decisions. Some of the pleasure of this friendships, these friendships are not having to explain yourself of leading similar lives as the people you're around, so there's a real community around that that doesn't need translation.

Always, I think good decisions, which is the name of the chapter. Also **[inaudible 0:31:47]** letter I started comes from traveling with so many of these women and being on a trip or doing something and be like, good decision, like we made a good decision. I don't know that women are, especially on their own or ever congratulated for their good decision making. I think in those ways, we're always looking at each other and thinking, "Wow, we've really made a lot of good decisions." We're so grateful to be in each other's company. This was such a pleasurable evening. It's more in those ways than it is sort of an intellectual, how do you have pleasure? I mean, I know how all my friends experience pleasure at this point, because I've known them for decades. But like in general, around the gamut.

**[0:32:33]**

**FT:** Yes. There was a scene. One of my favorite chapters was it was a short chapter, but it was, you were in Parc Monceau with one of your friends and you encountered a 23 old woman named Emily, maybe the facts wrong, but I should –

**[0:32:45]**

**GM:** No. You're right.

**[0:32:46]**

**FT:** Am I right? Okay. She's a self-proclaimed writer. You're very, what's the word? Like you don't brag into anybody about your accomplishments, because there's something in you that says like, don't tell this young woman, like who you are, because it might shatter her self-esteem, because you were like, when I was her age, I wouldn't called myself a writer, right? You were an aspiring writer. Anyway, this is all just background, but what I what I took away from that encounter was that you're fascinated by her. You're having this internal dialogue about like how am I supposed to feel about her?

You walk away ultimately feeling, I think, pretty powerful in yourself, like it was almost a reminder of like I've got it going on, whereas maybe society wants you to be a little jealous or envious of this. Also, we should mention Emily has financial support from her parents. I think she's got that going on. She's got her youth and all of that and her life ahead of her, but she's very anxious too, like she's dealing with stuff. It's not to say that this generation has it made out for them.

**[0:33:55]**

**GM:** Oh, God, no. I wouldn't be that age. I would die feel nothing but pity for anybody. I think under 20 right now seems to have like gotten the reins in hands and it was like much more in control. Yeah, that's my impression. I mean, I can't speak for the entire generation, but like there is that generation, not millennials, whatever comes after millennials that have come up with the brunt of social media and no filter and they are all in my experience.

My producer on the Wilder podcast was also 26, so some of that was informing my feelings of like this deep indecision, and anxiety, and recognizing where it comes from. Also, being frustrated by it, but there was so much going on in that chapter and I have to credit my editor, Amy Sun, because I wanted to cut that chapter. Then she refused to let me do it. She loved that chapter. She's younger than me. I think on the one hand, it was she's a young woman who's like, "Oh, I'm a writer." I thought, like how? She was like, "I write in my journal." I thought on the one hand, I would never have had the guts to declare myself a writer if I just wrote in my journal.

On the other hand, there was part of me that was like you'll get paid to be a writer, like it was so easy in that moment. It's not like, it was just so easy to be like, oh, here are all the things I write and get paid for. I was like, "Why do I need to be an asshole?" I don't need this girl's self-idea or idea of herself. How she identifies as a writer is none of my business. It doesn't harm me in any way. Then I think, too, one of the broadly speaking discoveries, then it shouldn't be, I mean, it should be discovery, because there's nothing in the culture that really suggests otherwise, but like this sense as you age that you're only ever envious of younger women, I think the narratives around age are almost exclusively negative.

There are negative things about aging, but there's so much great about it. So, this idea of being – the older I get the absence of envy of younger women towards younger women has been notable to me. I never think, "Wow, I wish I was 20 years younger." I just think, "Oh, my God. You have the world that you have been thrust into at this age is awful." Which no one likes to hear anyway. That's not helpful. Also, I love the age I am and I love how I feel. I wouldn't want to be younger. I end up taking it as a happens in that chapter, depending on who I'm with. I take a a position of like exhaustion, because I find a lot of young people are unable to make decisions. I recognize why in many cases.

Sympathy and like how can I help you? They're at war with each other, which is what happens in that chapter. This is like less about Emily than me being like, "Oh, I should help you. You seem like you're a stuck person in need of some handholding." Also, I want to murder you can't you make up your mind about anything? Which is how I find I interact with a lot of people in their 20s. It was partly me making fun of myself too. I do think growing up with social media has done enormous damage to the psyche of an entire generation and seeing that play out is infuriating in the moment, but also, just incurs such sympathy and also just pity and like, can I help you? Because this feels awful.

**[0:37:20]**

**FT:** Well, it goes back to what you said earlier about just feeling really good about making decisions that you see through. I'm sure in your life, there have been decisions that you've made. You were like, "Oh, that was not a good." But then you make it work. Then you parlay, or you pivot, or you –

**[0:37:36]**

**GM:** Or you just live with your decisions. I actually think aging is sometimes is just like living with the decisions you made and not and looking at them. I mean –

**[0:37:47]**

**FT:** Yeah. That's called being an adult.

**[0:37:48]**

**GM:** Living with the decision, not knowing to put a down payment on an apartment in 1998, not that I was in the position to, but literally somebody asked me to read the other night. They're like, "Any men you've met in your past and do you regret it?" I was like, "Oh, my God. My only regrets are real estate based." It was just like a result of not knowing enough at the time. I do think like aging is sometimes just living, learning to live with the decisions you've made in your life, like just learning to live with them and not letting them do damage to you.

**[0:38:20]**

**FT:** Finding whatever value there is in that. I mean, again, it's cliché, maybe like there's value in your failures and there's growth and failure, but it is really how you choose to look at it. I love how you encourage everybody like your readers. I've heard you say many times how aging is an exercise in power. It's just like a reinforcement of how powerful your relationship is to your brain, body, as well as your friendships, and your relationships, and your career, and your passions, but I loved your book. I don't read a lot of books from cover-to-cover these days, because –

**[0:38:59]**

**GM:** Oh, thank you.

**[0:39:00]**

**FT:** I really don't. I'll be honest. I did. I read yours. I have a seven and a 10-year-old in the house. I know that your cover has been shadow banned on.

**[0:39:11]**

**GM:** I got out of Instagram jail.

**[0:39:12]**

**FT:** You're out of that now. Oh, good.

**[0:39:13]**

**GM:** I appealed it to the algorithm, like on a daily basis for about three months. I was released from Instagram jail. But yeah, also CBS was going to cover it up when I was on CBS mornings. Then we sat down and Gail held it up –

**[0:39:28]**

**FT:** Oh, good.

**[0:39:30]**

**GM:** I was like, "Thank you so much." Because it's a 200, 250, 300-year-old painting that hangs in the loo –

**[0:39:34]**

**FT:** In the loo. Right?

**[0:39:37]**

**GM:** Yeah.

**[0:39:37]**

**FT:** Why can't it be on Instagram? I really –

**[0:39:39]**

**GM:** I think, my theory is I think, it's just the butt, combined with the word pleasure. Woman's pleasure. I actually think that's what's triggering, which speaks to the purpose of the book. I guess, in some meta way that I'm not terribly interested in it.

**[0:39:52]**

**FT:** Well, I mean, come for Glynnis's story, but stay for just the history that you share of these incredible women, like Collette, my daughter's name is Collette. **[Name inaudible 0:40:03]** we call this like –

**[0:40:05]**

**GM:** Oh, your French is so much better than mine, Farnoosh. I mean –

**[0:40:07]**

**GM:** Oh, thank you. No, no, no. I get afraid in France to speak French, even though I studied it. I just always feel like I'm going to, and I always do, because what you bring into the conversation is usually what manifests.

**[0:40:20]**

**GM:** Yeah.

[0:40:21]

**FT:** It's terrible.

[0:40:22]

**GM:** I find sometimes, but I do feel, that my French is abysmal and it should be better considering how much time I spent there and the fact that I grew up in Canada. But I did feel like the audiobook, which I recorded, should have come with some sort of like asterisk on it that was like you're getting like a lived version of what it's like to be beside me when I attempt to speak French because it's –

[0:40:43]

**FT:** Authentique.

[0:40:44]

**GM:** Yes. I was like, this is really what it's like.

[0:40:47]

**FT:** Well, I'm going to hold it up, even though, I don't know who's going to see it, but I loved it. I really did. I want to go back and read your first book. *No One Tells You This*. Thank you. Please keep writing more memoirs.

[0:40:59]

**GM:** Thank you so much. This was so fun.

[0:41:02]

**FT:** Thanks, Glynnis.

[OUTRO]

**[0:41:05]**

**FT:** Thanks again to Glynnis MacNicol. Pick up her book. It's called, *I'm Mostly Here to Enjoy Myself*. I read it in three days. I don't get a lot of time to read, so that just tells you how interesting and well written this book was. It really made me want to go back to Paris. Stay tuned for Wednesday's show where we'll talk about how to navigate financial uncertainty and anxiety right now with Aja Evans, Financial Therapist. I hope your day is so money.

[END]