



Video Story Transcript

Penny for Your Thoughts

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Link to YouTube Video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LejOI4IlyTs>

Note : The following is a transcription of a spoken story performance and may not reflect textbook perfect English. It will guide you as you listen (or read) along.

Hi, I'm Diane Ferlatte. I'm a storyteller. I'm gonna tell you a small excerpt from... a longer story but it's a true story.

I was going to a school to tell stories. In the morning, I had two assemblies, had a quick lunch break, two assemblies in the afternoon. Well, I finished my two assemblies, rushed to a restaurant nearby and I told them I was in a hurry.

“Oh, don't worry. We'll seat you right away, ma'am.”

She brought me in, set me at a booth, gave me my menu. I made my order and I sat there to wait. While I'm waiting, I get a little warm. Whoo! So, I get up, I go to put my coat down on the seat opposite my booth. And when I do that, uh, I looked up and I see an older white man sitting in his booth, facing me and his eyes look blank. You ever see folks like that. He looked very worried and very sad.

So, I say to him, “Penny for your thoughts!”

And he kinda comes out of it and he said, “What did you say to me?”

I said, “Penny for your thoughts.”

He said, “Aah!”

And when he did that, I sat down with an attitude! All the little prejudices we all have, begin to bubble up. And I said to myself, “Mean old white man, why does he have to be so rude and so grumpy. I'm just trying to be friendly. Uh huh, mean old white man.”

But the more I sat there, I thought, “What are you doing? Why did you have to say, ‘mean old white man?’ Why even think that. You don’t even know what’s going on in that man’s mind. Why he might be looking so sad or worried. Chill out!”

So, I did. And I always bring a book to read looking for another story. His food comes first and then my food comes. So, I’m sitting there, you know, reading and eating, and reading and eating, reading and eating.

He finishes first and he gets up to go pay. But to go up front to pay, he has to pass my booth and when he gets to my booth, he stops. And I think, “Oh, oh!”

And then he leans over and he said, “What did you say to me?”

And I said, “Penny for your thoughts.”

He said, “Young lady, if you only knew. My wife died three weeks ago and I don’t know what to do.

I said, “I knew something was wrong but I didn’t know what to do. I thought maybe I should say something.”

He said, “Well, you sure got that right. You believe, we were married 61 years!”

I said, “What! You were married 61 years... to the same woman!”

And that made him smile. Then he came really close to my face and he said, “You believe, I’m 90 years old?”

I said, “What? You’re 90 years old? Let me touch you. I want to live to be that old.” I said, “You’re 90 years old, married to the same woman 61 years.” I said, “You are blessed; you are blessed. You don’t have to worry about a thing. Everything’s going to be all right.”

That old man tapped me on my left shoulder like this and he said, “Thank you, young lady. Thank you.” And he left.

But, you know, that old man didn’t have to stop and say anything to me. But he did. I didn’t have to say anything to him. But I did. Two cultures coming together in that one little moment of life. Two generations really, coming together in that one little moment of life. But you know what they say, “The most important person in this world is the one you’re with right now.” It’s a true story from my life. We all got ’em, ha!