

Penny for Your Thoughts

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Scott Haan

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DEDICATION

For Jerry “Mongo” Thompson, with love, respect and gratitude.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Penny Ramsey is a young woman who, like all of us, has different sides to her personality. They are personified in the story by comically stereotypical characters, collectively known as the Egos. The five Egos make up her decision-making process, which gets a lot more complicated when Penny overhears only one side of her boyfriend Matt’s phone conversation and believes he has betrayed her. It’s a stressful time for Penny, made even more confusing by the introduction of a potential new suitor named Rick and the nosy involvement of Penny’s mother (and Matt’s boss) Mrs. Killian. Maybe things could get straightened out if the people in Penny’s head could just get along, for once!

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

February 19-22, 2015 by the Clinton County Civic Theatre in Frankfort, IN. Director: Brian Nichols. Assistant Director: Larry Price. Cast: Kayla Bennett, Erin VanEmon, Chelsea Hubbard, Elizabeth Fink, Jean Warren, Andy Best, Griffin Hundley, Linda Benge, Luke McLaughlin, and Kelsey Lukasik. Crew: Janeen Burrows, Terry Reck, and Wendy Thompson.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m and 7 w)

(With optional extended ending: 7 m and 8 w)

PENNY RAMSEY (f): A kind and independent woman. Dating Matt, daughter to Mrs. Killian.

BUFFY (f): An Ego. The beauty queen who has a big heart but just isn't all that bright.

JESSICA (f): An Ego. The casual girl, sarcastic and moody, most at home in sweatpants and a t-shirt.

MYRTLE (f): An Ego. The nerdy brains of the operation, who is intellectual and overly cautious.

GERTRUDE (f): An Ego. Sweet old grandmother type who always has a warm smile on her face, even when talking disparagingly about someone.

ADAM (m): An Ego. Male who likes puns and juvenile humor, and represents Penny's masculine side.

MATT LANE (m): Penny's boyfriend, sweet but a little socially awkward, and too humble for his own good.

MRS. JANET KILLIAN (f): Penny's mother and Matt's boss, all-business and more than a little frightening.

RICK WINTERS (m): Matt's bigger and taller co-worker, intimidatingly handsome and confident.

DARLA (f): Rick's sister, pushy and clever.

Optional: Five Egos for Matt (4 m, 1 w) who are counterparts to Penny's Egos can appear at the end, if desired. The actor who plays DARLA could also double as ROSE, if needed. See the optional extended ending.

A NOTE ABOUT THE EGOS

The Egos – Buffy, Jessica, Myrtle, Gertrude and Adam – are not real. They are merely aspects of Penny’s personality, the components of her mind. Although their actions sometimes directly influence her, Penny will never acknowledge their presence in any way, nor will the other real people. The Egos are invisible to everybody but each other. Also, Penny should never physically touch any Egos, or any Ego props (such as Gertrude’s rocking chair) because they don’t exist, either.

Note: The only exception to this rule is ACT II Scene 1, the dream sequence. In that scene, Egos and real people fully interact as if they can see each other.

SETTING

The modest first floor apartment of young Penny Ramsey, who lives alone. There are 3 entrances on the set. On SR is the front door with a peephole. The CS doorway supposedly leads to Penny’s bedroom. The SL doorway supposedly leads to the kitchen and to the back door. DSC is a couch, with a table in front of it. Next to the SR door is a small table or dresser with at least one drawer. There is also a shelf with DVDs on it. USL is a rocking chair, frequently used by Gertrude. Please see props and costume list at end of play.

SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1	Saturday morning
Scene 2	Thursday morning, five days later
Scene 3	Later that day, after work
Scene 4	Friday morning, the next day
Scene 5	Later that day, after work

ACT II

Scene 1	Later that night
Scene 2	Saturday morning, the next day

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: The apartment of Penny Ramsey on a Saturday. BUFFY stands alone onstage, holding a camera. She has taken great care in her appearance, with impeccable hair and make-up and a fancy, glamorous dress. She is very likeable, despite not being very bright. She is holding the camera at arm's length as if filming herself, but it is turned both upside-down and backwards. She speaks directly to the wrong side of the camera.)

BUFFY: Hello out there! Please allow me to, like, introduce myself. My name is Buffy...and in case you can't already tell, I am, like, super smart. One time, I took an I.Q. test, and the lady was REAL impressed. She said she was SHOCKED because I scored in, like, the positive numbers, and she didn't think I could do that. So I was WAY smarter than she thought. Let's see, what can I tell you about myself...Oh! For one thing, I'm not REAL. See, there's this girl named Penny, and I'm just one part of her brain. Five of us live in Penny's head, like, helping her make decisions and stuff. I am responsible for her fashion sense, obviously... *(Tapping one finger on her skull.)* ...And, as I'm sure you can tell, her intelli-gentle-ness. The others have different roles, but just like me, they aren't real either. We are all just pigments of her imagination. The rest aren't as smart as me, but they all know it. *(Proudly.)* That's why they call ME the "airhead" of the group. You know, because, like, air is mostly oxygen, which is what runs the brain, so, like, "airhead" means "smartest." *(Thinking hard.)* At least, I THINK that's what that means. *(Back to pleasant and friendly.)* Anyway, I'm really proud to be part of the team. The five of us working together inside Penny's head is what makes Penny...Penny!

(JESSICA enters from CS and joins BUFFY. Jessica is dressed more casually than Buffy, wearing sweatpants and a t-shirt or sweatshirt.)

JESSICA: Hey, Buff.

BUFFY: *(To JESSICA.)* Oh, hi! *(To the camera again.)* That's Jessica. She's also in Penny's head.

JESSICA: What are you doing, she asks, already regretting the question.

BUFFY: Oh, I'm taking a selfie, but like, as a MOVIE.

JESSICA: Uh-huh. And why?

BUFFY: I just wanted to record myself for, like, posterity.

JESSICA: Okay. First of all, I hope you mean "posterity." Second... *(Silently, SHE turns the camera around so the lens is facing BUFFY; then, in a separate move, she rotates it right-side up. Now it is in BUFFY'S hands the correct way.)* And third...this isn't a VIDEO camera.

BUFFY: It isn't?

JESSICA: No. Which is a shame, because I'm sure you have fascinating insights to share with future generations of non-existent people. What inspired this?

BUFFY: *(Putting the camera down.)* Just bored, I guess. I never know what to do with my free time when Penny lets her mind wander like this.

(PENNY enters from her CS bedroom door carrying three outfits on hangers, and drapes them all over the back of the sofa.)

JESSICA: Speak of the devil.

BUFFY: *(Excited.)* Penny's up! And look, she has wardrobe choices! Yay!

(BUFFY puts the camera down, runs over to PENNY and stands next to her, looking intently down at the clothes. JESSICA follows, but in no hurry. During this conversation, Penny picks up various outfits and holds them against herself, debating.)

JESSICA: I'm glad we're finally—

BUFFY: *(Interrupting.)* Shh! Shush! I must have, like, obsolete silence here! It's the moment of tooth!

JESSICA: "The moment of TOOTH"?

End of Freeview

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