



**Sample Pages from
Ten Minutes, Ten Minutes, Ten Minutes, Ten
Minutes**

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TEN/TWO

TEN PLAYS FOR TWO ACTORS BY
Lindsay Price



..... Welcome!

Welcome to *Ten/Two!* 10 two-hander scenes, all of which are inspired by the numbers 10 and 2.

The plays can be performed together for a full evening of theatre. Appendix A (p.79) contains Intro/Intermission/Extro sections to add if you are doing all ten plays in an evening. Appendix B (p.81) has a set arrangement.

You don't have to perform all ten plays. You can do eight or two or six or any of the other wonderful numbers between one and ten. You're even welcome to change the order of the plays. Each individual play, however, must be performed as written.

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..... The Plays / Characters

Many of the plays are gender flexible. Below is the gender breakdown for each play. If the play calls for "2 Either" feel free to change the genders to suit your group.

1. Quippage (1M 1W)
2. The Big Lie (2 Either)
3. Pretty Girl Plain Girl (2W)
4. Santa Runs a Sweat Shop (2 Either)
5. Ms. Spitspot's Spick and Span Play Place (1W 1 Either)
6. My Father Went to Switzerland and All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt. (1W 1 Either)
7. Time, What Is It? (2 Either)
8. The Last Dance (1W)
9. Ten Minutes, Ten Minutes, Ten Minutes, Ten Minutes (2 Either)
10. The Itsy-Bitsy Spider Or Else (2M)

Ten Minutes, Ten Minutes, Ten Minutes, Ten Minutes

ONE and TWO are students. Both could be either gender.

ONE and TWO sit side-by-side. They are in class. ONE has his eyes clenched tight and he has his fingers crossed on both hands. TWO watches ONE with curiosity.

ONE: Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes. *(breathes in and out)* Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes. *(breathes in and out)* Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes.

Finally TWO can't hold out any longer.

TWO: Hey. *(She taps ONE on the shoulder.)* What are you doing?

ONE: *(still with eyes closed)* Nothing. Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes. *(breathes in and out)* Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes.

TWO taps ONE on the shoulder again.

ONE: What?

TWO: What are you doing?

ONE: If you must know, I'm doing my mantra. Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes.

TWO: I didn't know you were Buddhist!

ONE: Ten minutes – what?

TWO: I didn't know you were a Buddhist. How cool is that, I've been sitting next to you all year and you haven't said anything and I haven't said anything and here we could have been talking the whole time! You learn new things every day. *(she chants a Buddhist mantra, with expertise)* Om mani padme hum. Om mani padme hum. Om mani padme hum.

ONE: What are you doing?

TWO: A Buddhist mantra. Om mani padme hum. You know it, right?

ONE: Uh, right. Look, why don't you do yours and I'll do mine and we'll all be happy campers. Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten

—

TWO: (*interrupting*) But aren't mantras supposed to be soothing? "Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes" doesn't sound very soothing.

ONE: It doesn't have to sound soothing to you. It has to sound soothing to me.

TWO: Does it?

ONE: What?

TWO: Sound soothing.

ONE: It's incredibly soothing. It is the soothingest soothing mantra in the whole wide world.

TWO: Wow. That's pretty soothing.

ONE: Ten minutes, ten minute, ten minute, ten minutes. (*breathes in and out*) Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes.

TWO taps ONE on the shoulder again.

ONE: What?

TWO: Why?

ONE: Why what?

TWO: Why is that your mantra?

ONE: Why do you care?

TWO: Because now we're talking —

ONE: We're not really talking.

TWO: I'm curious about you. I have an inherent curiosity. I am curious about everything.

ONE: You should get that checked out.

TWO: Why?

ONE: Because it's not good to be curious about everything. Curiosity killed the cat. Ever hear of that one?

TWO: Of course I have. There's silly curiosity and there's perfectly normal curiosity. For example, I don't have any curiosity toward whether or not bulls are colour blind. They wave red capes at bulls, but it's apparently the movement and not the colour that makes them charge. But I have no desire to find that out for myself, and so, that is silly curiosity and not something I'm interested in pursuing.

ONE: How did we manage to go the whole year without speaking?

TWO: You're insular.

ONE: And you're bizarre.

TWO: You might think I would take that as an insult. But I do not. Bizarre equals unique and I think unique is the new red. It's the "in" thing. Unique is riding the "what's hot" wave.

ONE: Swell.

TWO: So are you going to tell me?

ONE: What?

TWO: Why "Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes" is your mantra.

ONE: Are you going to leave me alone if I don't?

TWO: No.

ONE: It's my mantra because it's the start of class and the teacher's not here.

TWO: So?

ONE: If the teacher doesn't show up in ten minutes, we get to leave and we won't get penalized. I am channelling all my energy into moving the clock to that magic moment where I can get up and get out.

TWO: (*very sceptical*) Where'd you hear that?

ONE: Everywhere.

TWO: From who?

ONE: Ask anyone! Ask Jimbo, or Krissy, or Wease, or Ace, or Tina Tina Bo Beena.

TWO: All very reliable sources.

ONE: Everybody knows it.

TWO: I've never heard of it.

ONE: And you've heard of everything?

TWO: Pretty much.

ONE: It's the ten minute rule. Teacher doesn't show up, we don't have to stay. End of story. Period. Full stop. Stamped it no erasies.

TWO: You just get up and leave?

ONE: Yes.

TWO: Right at the ten minute mark.

ONE: Right on the nose.

TWO: And you won't get in trouble.

ONE: 'Cause it's a bonafide rule.

TWO: That's ludicrous.

ONE: It's not. It happens all the time.

TWO: Since when?

ONE: Since forever. Ten minutes go by, you pick up your books and leave.

TWO: That's just, that's – that's absolutely ludicrous. I'm not going anywhere.

ONE: Why not?

TWO: The teacher will be here any second.

ONE: But what if she's not?

TWO: She will be.

ONE: Maybe not.

TWO: I'm sure she has a perfectly good reason why she's late.

ONE: Or maybe she's not coming at all. Maybe ten minutes will go by and she won't be here. This whole class is going to leave and you'll be the only one left.

TWO: I'm sure I won't be.

ONE: Yes you will. You'll be all alone. Alone in your bizarre little world. Like always.

TWO: What does that mean?

ONE: I've got your number.

TWO: You do not. We've never exchanged one word before today.

ONE: I don't need to. You, like the cheese, stand alone. You do your homework, you're never late for class, your hair is very neat, and your shoelaces are never untied. You eat fruit voluntarily, don't deny it, I've seen you. I'm glad you won't be leaving with the rest of us. We don't want you to leave with us. We don't want to be associated with you. The cheese stands alone for a reason.

TWO: I don't follow some stupid non-existent rule and all of a sudden I'm a what, a what, an outcast? A cheese outcast? Mold who eats the occasional apple? That is downright hogwash, and I won't be bullied by you, you, fake Buddhist. I won't be bullied by you at all. I'm glad we've not spoken all year. I'm glad this year is almost up and this is the one and only conversation you and I will have to have. Go back to your fake mantra and your untied shoelaces.

TWO turns away. She's clearly steamed. ONE didn't mean to go quite that far.

ONE: Hey.

TWO: *(holds her hand up – as if to say “don't talk to me”)* Pfft.

ONE: I'm sorry.

TWO: *(holds her hand up – as if to say “don't talk to me”)* Pfft. Pfft!

ONE: Really, I'm –

TWO: *(clenching her eyes tightly shut)* Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes.

ONE: What are you doing?

TWO: Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes.

ONE: What are you doing?

TWO: *(louder)* Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes –

ONE: Cut it out! Stop it. (*TWO stops*) What are you doing?

TWO: If you must know, I'm doing my mantra.

ONE: It's my mantra.

TWO: I don't see your name on it. You can't copyright a mantra, you know.

ONE: Fine. It's your mantra. Have it in good health.

TWO: Thank you. I will. Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes – Don't you want to know why it's my mantra?

ONE: No.

TWO: Fine. (*breathes in and out*) Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes. (*Breathes in and out. Louder.*) Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes. (*Breathes in and out. Even louder, directly at ONE.*) Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten –

ONE: OK, OK, OK! Why is "Ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes, ten minutes" YOUR mantra?

TWO: Who's the cat killing now?

ONE: All right, you win, hooray for you.

TWO: It is my mantra because in ten minutes, you will follow your stupid rule and you'll be out the door. That is why it's my mantra.

ONE: It's not ten minutes anymore anyway.

TWO: Two minutes and twenty seven seconds doesn't have the same ring to it.

ONE: Is that it? Really? You wouldn't lie to me, would you?

TWO: What, with us being lifelong friends and everything?

ONE: I'm sorry. I'm truly sorry. I didn't mean to upset you.

TWO: I'll bet you're not so different than me.

ONE: Of course I am!

TWO: (*fast and furious*) Pop quiz! Have you ever removed the tag off a mattress that says, "Do not remove under penalty of law!!"

ONE: (*taken off guard*) Of course not, it says not to!

TWO: Ah ha!

ONE: That's not fair!

TWO: Your subconscious answered loud and clear.

ONE: You caught me off guard.

TWO: I'll bet you eat apples by the dozen.

ONE: I do not!

TWO: Do too.

ONE: Do not!

TWO: Do too.

ONE: Do not, do not, do – look, in a few seconds, the ten minutes will be up and I'll go and next class we can go back to not speaking to each other and everything will go back to normal.

TWO: You mean in ten seconds?

ONE: Yes, yes!

TWO: Nine seconds, eight,

ONE: Come on,

TWO: Seven, six, five,

ONE: Five more seconds...

TWO: Four, Three, Ten minutes and two seconds and –

ONE: (*leaping up and jumping up and down*) YES! YES! YES! That's it! Let's go! Move 'em out everybody! Moooooove it! Mooooooove it!

TWO: (*looking up*) Why hello, Mrs. Hynick!

ONE: (*freezing in mid-jump*) Mrs. Hynick?

TWO: (*to teacher*) We were just wondering where you were.

ONE: (*sitting down, slowly and painfully*) Yes we were. I was just jumping up and down... for the pain... of not knowing where you were. In pain... 'cause we weren't... being... taught... every last second of class. Yep, that's it. Good to see you. Glad you're not lost or under a bus. Or something.



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