



**Sample Pages from
The Big Lie**

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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)

The Big Lie

ONE is a teacher, TWO is a student. Both characters can be of either gender. Mr. Montgomery becomes Miss Montgomery, Mrs. Nelson becomes Mr. Nelson.

ONE is at a table organizing some papers. She is extremely prim with a ramrod straight back. TWO sneaks onstage and tries to get into a seat without ONE seeing. ONE looks up with a frown and narrowed eyes, TWO dives to the floor. After a second, ONE goes back to her papers. TWO slowly crawls along the floor. He gets to his seat and slowly starts to crawl into place.

Just as TWO gets into an awkward mid-crawl position around his chair, ONE looks up.

ONE: (slowly) Mr. Montgomery.

TWO freezes.

TWO: (wincing) Yes?

ONE: Are you trying to sneak into my classroom?

TWO: No.

ONE: It looks to me like you are.

TWO: Does it?

ONE: Indubitably. Are you going to sit?

TWO: Can I?

ONE: Of course. Who am I to deny the youth of today a seat? What kind of human being would I be if I let you crouch there? What kind of cruel person would I be if I made you squat for the Whole. Entire. Class?

TWO: Is that a yes?

ONE: Sit.

TWO: Thanks.

TWO sits. ONE slowly approaches TWO with a certain amount of menace.

ONE: What time is it, Mr. Montgomery?

TWO: I don't know.

ONE: Well, look at the clock. We're very lucky here to have been provided with timepieces in every classroom. It's the wave of the future. The time, please?

TWO: Ten o'clock.

ONE: Look closer, please. What time is it?

TWO: Ten-oh-two.

ONE: Ten-oh-two. Very precise. Thank you. And what makes you think you can waltz into MY class at ten-oh-two?

TWO: (*blurting out*) I just wanted –

ONE: You wanted? You wanted something? Someone call the presses! A teenager wanted something. That's certainly never happened before. What about me? What about what I want? What do I want, Mr. Montgomery?

TWO: I don't know.

ONE: (*mocking him*) I don't know. Pathetic. Mr. Montgomery. You have entered my classroom at ten-oh-two in the morning. Could you please tell me what time class starts?

TWO: Mrs. Nelson, if you'd just let me –

ONE: What time does class start?

TWO: (*very dejected*) Ten fifteen.

ONE: What was that?

TWO: Ten fifteen. Class starts at ten fifteen.

ONE: Precisely. Ten fifteen. Not ten, not ten-oh-two, but ten fifteen. Why have you come to class early?

TWO: (*as if this is a bad thing*) It's just that we're studying The Depression and I think it's a really interesting time and I thought I would come early... and ask... you... some... questions.

ONE: (*circling around TWO*) Are you having me on? Pulling my leg? Pulling the proverbial wool over my proverbial eyes?

TWO: Um, I don't think so. That last one confused me.

ONE: Are you actually saying the reason you came to class early is because (*with disgust*) you're interested in learning?

TWO: I didn't know that was wrong!

ONE: Don't be smart with me!

TWO: (*sincere*) Sorry!

ONE: Do you want to give your fellow students a bad name?

TWO: No.

ONE: No one comes to class early, and they certainly don't ask questions. Haven't you seen them? All slouching, glowering, doodling on their textbooks. Don't you know how you're supposed to behave?

TWO: I guess not.

ONE: You're throwing off the entire learning curve!

TWO: I didn't mean to.

ONE: Are you trying to give me a bad name? Make me look like I care about my students?

TWO: (*blurting out, frustrated*) But you're a good teacher!

There is a long pause as ONE slowly gives TWO an evil look.

ONE: What did you say?

TWO: (*getting more confident*) You're a good teacher.

ONE: Be quiet.

TWO: You make history fun and exciting –

ONE: Don't say that.

TWO: And I know something else, too –

ONE: (*looking around with panic*) I can't believe you're doing this, someone will hear.

TWO: This whole tough guy thing is a sham, an act!



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