Bit-O-Thello
A Ten Minute Play by Melissa Snyder

Lights up. Othello is alone onstage.

Othello: Good evening. I am Othello the Moor—of the Mary Tyler Moores ... (laughs). Get it? Because I’m a Moor and her last name is—ok. Fair enough. Moving on. But seriously, folks, you are about to watch my tragedy. It’s got everything—intrigue, betrayal, murder. Now, I know what you’re thinking, “What about sex? I don’t want to sit through this guy’s life story if there’s no sex.” Am I right? Listen, I don’t blame you. I mean, I sure wouldn’t want to watch your life story unless there was some X-rated footage to break up the monotony, you know? Anyway, don’t worry, we’re not going to watch my whole life—just a few choice parts. You’re not going to watch my first date or when I learned to ride a bike. You’re just going to see the intrigue. And yes, there are some sexy parts. So, here goes. You’ll thank me later... and, uh...you. (winks and points at girl in audience) I’d like to see you after ... we could... discuss the bitter ironies of the show.

Lights out and back up again.
Othello sits reading MAD magazine, chuckling heartily. Iago enters—looking suspicious and waits a moment before speaking.

Iago: Hmmm. Funny.
Othello: Yes. Isn’t it? I don’t know where they come up with them.
Iago: No, no, my lord. I didn’t mean the magazine—although that was a very good one. I especially liked the—(gestures to page, the two share a laugh and nudge each other, etc) ... and then with the chimpanzee! Ha! Yes, very funny. But, no...I meant that I’d seen something funny—as in suspicious—just now.
Othello: What, good Iago?
Iago: Oh, sir... I don’t know how to—
Othello: Go on, my friend.
Iago: Nooo. It’s a very delicate matter.
Iago: Well, to be blunt, I just saw your wife Desdemona doing the horizontal tango with Cassio.
Othello: You mean they were playing to beat the band?
Iago: They were humping and pumping, my lord.
Othello: Good God. I feel so betrayed.
Iago: I can imagine. Also strange was—no, no. Never mind.
Othello: Tell me, honest Iago!
Iago: Well, do you remember those panties that you gave fair Desdemona when you courted her?
Othello: The ones with the strawberries on them?
Iago: Yes. The horny Cassio was wearing them on his head.
Othello: Geez. This is all so bewildering. I thought those panties were still in the hamper.
Iago: Evidently they have been laundered, sir.
Othello: Indeed. Are you sure then that it was Cassio? You can’t have seen his face. After all, the man did have panties on his head.
Iago: I am quite sure that the man was Cassio, my lord. I saw his birthmark.
Othello: The one on his bum that looks curiously like a fluffy bunny?
Iago: The very one.
Othello: Well, that confirms it. But—dear Iago—are you sure that it was my wife boinking Cassio?
Iago: Fairly sure, my lord. Not only did I see her, but also did hear Cassio crying out, “Desi! Desi! Oh, God, Desi!” Now, either he was boinking your wife, or he is strangely aroused by thinking of Desi Arnaz while boinking.
Othello: Either way Cassio is charged with a serious crime. The crime of boinking my wife, or the crime of desecrating the memory of Desi Arnaz in his lustful frenzies—both of which are punishable by death.
Iago: Would you like me to handle the matter, my lord?
Othello: No, it’s really my beef, good Iago. You know how much I love my wife. And you know how much I love Desi Arnaz.
Iago: But... my lord ... no man is an island. Let me be your tugboat. I will tug, tug, tug your anger to Cassio. You have yet to absorb the sordid nature of this discovery.
Othello: No, I think I’ve pretty much got it. My wife’s buck naked playing hide-the-salami with Cassio and he’s wearing her panties as a hat.
Iago: Right, right. But still, why don’t you go... finish your magazine, get a good chuckle and I’ll hose Cassio down.
Othello: Good thinking. I want him good and clean when I get my revenge on him. And I could use a few har hars. Back in a jiffy. (Exits)
Iago: Cassio! Cassio!
(Cassio enters, panties still on his head, wearing woman’s bath robe)
Cassio: Iago! How much longer do I have to stay in this ridiculous get up? This is the last time I strip buck naked, put on Desdemona’s clothes and play hide and seek with you. I’ve been hiding for over an hour and I don’t think you’ve even looked for me.
Iago: Shhh. Be patient. I looked. I just got tired. Tell you what ... let’s sit down right here and chat. Then we’ll play another round. Soooo ... (Obviously stalling) what’s your biggest fear?
Cassio: My biggest fear? Wow. There are so many. Well, I’ve always feared that
... my
nostrils are too large.
Iago: Really? That’s interesting.
Cassio: In fact, I often find myself worrying that people are talking about the
size of my nostrils behind my back.
Iago: Hmmm. I’m sure they’re not. But I’m glad that you felt that you could
share that with me.
Cassio: Are you kidding? You’re my best friend. I wouldn’t play naked hide-
and-seek just anyone.
Iago: Thanks ... that’s quite flattering. So, tell me ... have you considered a
nostril reduction?
Cassio: Every day of my life.
Iago: Not that you need it, but if it would make you feel better about yourself
(Othello enters)
Alas! I’m glad you’ve come, my lord. See how the bastard still sports the
panties?
Othello: Cassio! You have betrayed me! Betrayed me! God. I could pontificate
on that for a while ... explain how this betrayal feels and compare it to other
betrayals in history ... I could elucidate on how this betrayal is akin to the cruelty
of nature ... but what’s the point? What is the point of explaining all that to a
man wearing my wife’s panties on his head? I’ll have my revenge, though. Iago,
take him away. Put him on the nostril-stretcher!...
Cassio: Noooooooooooooo! (Iago drags Cassio away)
Othello: And now, I must have my revenge on Desdemona.

Lights out. Up again.
Desdemona is asleep on bed, bottom in the air.

Othello: It is the cause. It is the cause. I never should have married such a hotty.
I should’ve married someone like Iago’s wife. A blind man wouldn’t screw her.
But Desdemona ... the ample breasts, the pert bottom ... (leans in) Geez. Even her
breath smells good—like a tic tac. If her breath smelled like dung or her hair
weren’t so fall of body and bounce—anything would make it easier. Nevertheless,
she must die. Die, die. And yet that makes my eyes dewy. I must kill you!
Smother you with these cold cuts. But once I cut off your oxygen supply with
this pepperloaf I cannot give you vital fife again. I could lay the cold cut on this
table and lift it up again, and the table would retain its shiny luster. See? Lay
down the cold cut, pick it up. Lay down the cold cut, pick it up. But once I lay
this cold cut on that fair face of yours ... you’re screwed ... which makes me sad.
Yet you must die ... else you let more men wear your panties on their heads. Just
... let me slap your bottom one last time, the way I did on our wedding day. Sure,
your dad didn’t like it. He smacked the side of my face with the wedding pheas-
ant. But we didn’t care—oh! How we laughed! (Weeping, begins to sing, “we had joy, we had fun, we had seasons in the sun” while slapping Desdemona’s bottom)

Desdemona: (waking) Coming to bed, my lord?
Othello: No, why do you ask?
Desdemona: Well, I—

Othello: I suppose you think that because I’m standing by the bed and its night time and I’m slapping your buttocks that I’m coming to bed, huh? Well, you’re wrong this time, harpy.

Desdemona: Oh, here we go again. More role playing. Alright, let me guess—you’re the virile circus master and I’m the unruly tigress who must be tamed. No? Ok, then you must be the sexually frustrated chimney sweep with a fetish for—

Othello: Silence, tart. You were unfaithful to me with Cassio.

Desdemona: Cassio? Never. With those huge nostrils?
Othello: Huge nostrils? I hadn’t noticed.

Desdemona: Of course. Everybody talks about them. We keep sneaking brochures for nostril reductions into his pockets. I think we’re this close!

Othello: Nostrils aside, I find you a liar. The panties that I gave to you, you gave to Cassio.

Desdemona: The one’s with the strawberries on them? Those panties are still in the hamper.

Othello: No they aren’t. Cassio was sporting them on his head.

Desdemona: Well, he must have stolen them. Perhaps he was trying to conceal his nostrils—by using my panties as an impromptu mask.

Othello: So you claim you didn’t give the panties to him?

Desdemona: Of course not. Why would I be wearing these ill-fitting panties if I had a choice in the matter? He must’ve stolen them from the hamper.

Othello: Hamper-Shmamper. It’s time to say goodnight. I hope you laundered my underpants. (Comes at her with cold cuts. She dodges him)

Desdemona: Actually, no. I hadn’t gotten around to them yet.

Othello: That’s just like you. I suppose I’ll have to borrow Iago’s again.

Desdemona: Oh, Othello, please believe me! I have never made sweet sweat with Cassio. You must ask him yourself.

Othello: It’s too late for that, Desi.

Desdemona: Really, why?

Othello: Honest Iago took him away. His nostrils are the size of pizzas by now.

Desdemona: Cassio’s nostrils are enlarged and I am undone!

Othello: That’s right.

Desdemona: Please, Othello, let me explain. Give me time. Smother me tomorrow, but let me launder underpants tonight.

Othello: It’s too late now. I’ll have the cleaning woman do them. Goodnight, fair Desdemona.

ANALECTA
(slaps several cold cuts on her face. She struggles and then goes limp.
Othello weeps ... but then stands and regards the audience)

Othello: The grim reality of this story is that I goofed up. Evidently, Iago tricked Cassio into wearing my wife’s panties. That prankster! So I stretched Cassio’s nostrils for boinking my wife, when all he’d done was raid the laundry hamper...and I snuffed my wife for boinking Cassio when she was just trying to get some z’s. I was so embarrassed when I found out the truth. Boy! Did I have egg on my face! That trickster, Iago. He sure got a tongue lashing. But ... you know, he apologized and fixed me up with this new babe—huge cahoonas—so live and let live. People call my story a tragedy. Well it wasn’t fun—sure sucked for Cassio and my wife ... that’s the truth. Personally, though, I think it’s a helluva lot better than that guy who killed his father and boinked his mother. I mean, geez ... how do you say schmuck in Greek?