

Excerpt from *Iago* by Georgia Symons, Dave Kelman and Edge Ensemble.

IN THE RING (II)

MC In the blue corner, from the Northern suburbs, Big Yusef and in
the red corner, from the West, the Samoan Cyclone, Othello!

Othello seems slow, the intensity isn't there
Big Yusef has a long reach
The jab, jab, jab of his punches wears him down
The sickening thud of the bodyshots into his ribs
Into his heart

He swings wildly, his discipline gone
Soaking up the punishment
Oblivious to pain
Until the final punch
The right hook from nowhere
Smashes into his face and,
Lays him low

3, 2, 1

MC The winner is Big Yusef!

After the Fight

Where marked with // before their names, EMILIA and DESDEMONA speak in unison.

DESDEMONA: They say a fighter's meant to conserve energy before a fight.

BIANCA: Abstinence.

//DESDEMONA: Oops

//EMILIA: Oops

BIANCA: What did you do?

//DESDEMONA: He grabs me from behind and pulls me in tight.

//EMILIA: He grabs me from behind and pulls me in tight.

BIANCA: Do you like it?

//DESDEMONA: Yes.

//EMILIA: Yes.

BIANCA: And then he...

//DESDEMONA: Throws me down on the bed

//EMILIA: Throws me down on the bed

BIANCA: Hard?

EMILIA: Hard.

DESDEMONA: Not too hard. Hard enough.

BIANCA: For what?

//DESDEMONA: He's on top of me and he's pinning my hands by my sides.

//EMILIA: He's on top of me and he's pinning my hands by my sides.

BIANCA: Do you fight back?

EMILIA: A little.

DESDEMONA: I wanna touch him, I wanna run my hands all over him.

BIANCA: Does he let you?

DESDEMONA: He lets go.

EMILIA: No.

//DESDEMONA: He picks me up and pushes me against the wall.

//EMILIA: He picks me up and slams me against the wall.

BIANCA: Does it hurt?

//DESDEMONA: Not really.

//EMILIA: Well yeah, it's a wall. Wait, what?

DESDEMONA: He's careful.

//DESDEMONA: He presses his nails into my skin.

//EMILIA: He presses his nails into my skin.

BIANCA: How does it feel?

//DESDEMONA: It feels... there, it feels alive.

//EMILIA: It feels...

EMILIA: We don't stop until he says so.

BIANCA: When do you say stop?

DESDEMONA: When I'm done.

EMILIA: I don't.

BIANCA: But you want to?

EMILIA: But I don't.

//BIANCA: Why don't you say stop?

//DESDEMONA: Why don't you say stop?

EMILIA: Because... I don't know. Because it would be awkward? I don't know.

DESDEMONA: Why is it her job to say stop?

EMILIA: Why can't he tell?

//BIANCA: Does he like the power?

//DESDEMONA: Does he like the power?

EMILIA: What power?

//BIANCA: What does he make you do?

//DESDEMONA: What does he make you do?

DESDEMONA: He tells you what to wear

BIANCA: When you can come, when you can leave.

EMILIA: He doesn't make me do anything.

//BIANCA: So you like it?

//DESDEMONA: So you like it?

EMILIA: I...

//BIANCA: Why do you let him?

//DESDEMONA: Why do you let him?

Pause.

DESDEMONA: It's not your fault.

//BIANCA: Can't you see what he's doing?

//EMILIA: I don't see what he's doing wrong.

Pause.

//DESDEMONA: You're just having fun.

//EMILIA: I'm just having fun.

EMILIA: No harm in that.

BIANCA: No harm? Des, are you gonna let her say that? Are you gonna let her believe that?

//BIANCA: New hickies every day,

//DESDEMONA: New hickies every day.

BIANCA: New stories to explain each one away,
But why?

I don't wanna lay blame,

DESDEMONA: It's not your fault,

BIANCA: But take control,

No one's forcing you to stay.

You can't just let this happen.

Zip your lips and cross your fingers,

You think your Dad was too controlling?

Just look at Iago.

//BIANCA: You need to learn the word "respect".

//DESDEMONA: He needs to learn the word "respect".

BIANCA: Be honest with yourself.

It's only been a few months,

How's it gonna be in a few years?

How's it gonna be once he sees he can do whatever he wants

And you'll still be trying to please him?

Heavy pause.

EMILIA: Are you done?

BIANCA: Yeah, I'm done.