

# **The Catwalk Killer**

**By Paul Falcone**

*It is a local charity fashion attended by one the world's most famous fashion designers François DuDrop. However he doesn't really want to be there, his PR misguidedly were booked by the local paper.*

*There is a lot of commotion as the show is about to start. The guests are entering and nothing is ready. Some of the models have not turned up. Julian is running about, very camp, clothes draped over his arms, dropping things and generally in a confusion. The models Trixie and Paulo are constantly pestering him for things. DuDrop is pacing and talking into his cell phone he eventually sits at the side of the catwalk area. He is impatient and muttering to himself. Snapper is pacing, one hand in pocket and his camera slung lazily over his shoulder. He has a drink in his hand and is gradually getting drunk. Julian eventually sits next to DuDrop. Donna is pacing, she is concerned that some of the models have not turned up. She has a mobile phone which she is shouting down.*

*Don't forget to leave a pair of dress making scissors and measuring tape where it can be seen*

*When the show is due to start.*

Donna: Ladies and Gentlemen. Welcome to little old...*(Town where play is being performed- said with contempt)* Still it's good to see poor people getting out of an evening. Now if I could have your attention please....

*Trixie enters and goes to Donna.*

Trixie: Mrs Donna. The other models have still not turned up. There's only me and Paulo here

Donna: I'll think of something Trixie. *(to audience)* Ladies and Gentleman. I'm afraid there's been a slight technical problem. Er... I'm afraid there will be a delay whilst we sort things out. Thank you.

*Donna exits hurriedly*

DuDrop: Oh for goodness sake! I might have known this would happen. *(Moves to snapper and pulls on his sleeve)* Martin, What is going on?

Snapper: The models van has broken down Mr DuDrop. Those two models came in with the witch.

*Donna enters.*

Donna: Ladies and Gentlemen, in order to carry on with the proceedings I wonder if we could have some volunteers from the audience? *(To assistants – or Trixie and Paulo if non available)* Can you choose some nice people please, nobody who grunts or swears, and mind they are not too smelly.

*Members are the audience are taken aside. They can be dressed up and paraded up and down the catwalk with Donna giving an insulting commentary. Or they can parade up and down in their own clothes whilst Donna insults what they are wearing.*

*Trixie and Paulo can be sent on first whilst the volunteers are changing. After each has finished they can change back so that they can get back to their seat without missing any of the show or distracting the audience.*

*NB: This is an extra ingredient to the show which has in the past gone down well but it can be omitted if it causes problems.*

*Here are a few examples of insults to use. (Or use your own)*

You have to admit *(name)* looks a million dollars– in used bank notes!

However she *(he)* doesn't so much wear the outfit as assassinate it.

Here's that Romantic Pheasant look.

I don't dislike the way he *(she)* dresses, but I do admire the courage.

It's amazing what you can buy in a charity shop these days.

This outfit comes with a government health warning.

This outfit was probably designed specifically to make the bum look big.

Ideal for the person who doesn't like a lot of friends.

This outfit is available from Beer Bellies R' Us.

This outfit fits where it touches however, it touches an awful lot.

This is the dress for the nuclear age.... all fall out.

I tried that outfit on but it looked cheap and nasty on me. It suits her though.

*After a few have paraded....*

DuDrop: This is pathetic. I do not know what possessed me to do one of these dire charity shows. You know I hate performing in towns that still point at aeroplanes. Who organised this and how did that woman get involved?

Snapper: Your PR arranged it with the local rag. They contacted the model agency. *(Pause to think)* So, you know Donna Christine do you?

DuDrop: I know of her. She used to be a famous model about seventeen or eighteen years ago but she went out of fashion. She has not yet realised it... that is the problem.

Snapper: *(Sensing something)* Oh I see. *(Pause)* I er... suppose I'll still get paid if this event doesn't go ahead?

DuDrop: Oh you will get your money and I will take the usual percentage.

Snapper: Look... I... I've been meaning to talk to you about that. Things are getting a bit complicated.

DuDrop: What is the problem, the price of drink gone up?

Snapper: No. It's not that. I just think that you're interest rates are perhaps a little demanding .

DuDrop: You are drunk. You would not dare talk to me like that if you were sober.

Snapper: No, no, I've only had a few. I just thought we might like to come to some sort of an arrangement.

DuDrop: The only arrangement we can come to is that you pay your debts. If you did not drink and gamble so much you wouldn't get into this mess. In fact I am doing you a favour.

***DuDrop goes to exit and bumps into Donna***

Donna: *(With contempt)* Oh it's you. That's a nice outfit. It suits you. It must be pig skin.

DuDrop: I see you still have your exquisite taste in fashion. Unparalleled by anybody. Not since Carmen Miranda passed away anyway.

Donna: There we go, hiking up Mount Ego again.

DuDrop: Unlike you I have made it in this business. Look at them all I only have to stand on the catwalk and people are open mouthed.

Donna: That's called yawning, deary.

***DuDrop decides to ignore that remark and exits.***

Donna: You know Snapper, you can do better. You have quite a reputation as a brilliant fashion photographer. Instead, you spend your time with him. You should spread your wings and not let him walk all over you.

Snapper: You think so. Perhaps I could do some photographs of your models then. Discount prices of course. You might even let me photograph you. Your quite an attractive woman yourself. In fact I think you've got everything a man could want.

Donna: You'd better believe it.

Snapper: You could be a model yourself you know.

Donna: I used to be *(To herself whilst glancing at DuDrop)* until *someone* ruined my career for me.

Snapper: Oh dear. Well I could perhaps help put together a portfolio to help you back into your career. I think there's more to you than meets the eye.

Donna: A lot more.

Snapper: And after the photographs perhaps we could...

Donna: *(Turning acidic)* ...Could nothing. Look you horrid little man, I have nothing against you, in fact I never want to have anything against you.

Snapper: There's no need to be like that. I thought that you and I...

Donna: Then think again. I was complimenting your photography that's all. And expressing some disgust at that man (*Point to where DuDrop went off*).

Snapper: But DuDrop is a self-made man.

Donna: Yes, and he worships his creator,

Snapper: (*Sensing something*) Ah ha! So there was something between the pair of you?

Donna: What?

Snapper: Nothing, nothing. I was just thinking out loud.

***Enter Julian***

Julian: Will someone please do something I'm just sitting around all evening in the closet with Percy.

Snapper: Oh here we go, somebody's woken the Queen of Sheba

Julian: Snapper, you're a big tease, you big butch hound dog you.

Snapper: Yer big Jesse.

Julian: (*Touching his arm*) If I throw a stick will you fetch it?

Snapper: Gerroff! (*Make this sound like a bark*)

***Snapper exits to the bar.***

Julian: Take no notice of him, he's just had a personality bypass operation.

Donna: You know Julian, you are a great hair designer. The world's your oyster and yet like 'snapper' you work entirely for DuDrop. Haven't you ever thought about going independent?

Julian: Well, funny you should say that, I have been thinking about it recently.

Donna: Now's the time, deary, before it's too late.

Julian: Dy'know I think I'll ask him tonight.

Donna: Don't ask him, *tell him!*

***Enter DuDrop in a mood.***

Donna: My cue to leave I think.

***Donna Exits.***

Julian: Monsieur DuDrop, may I have a word?

DuDrop: You can have two, the second one is 'off'.

Julian: There's no need to be like that, this is very important.

DuDrop: What is it? This is hardly a good time!

Julian: Now you know I've been a very loyal worker for you...  
***(Looks at DuDrop for response but there is non forthcoming)*** Well I think it's about time I went independent, worked for myself like.

DuDrop: What, and have you work for other designers. I could not let you go.

Julian: I want to expand...

DuDrop: Are you forgetting who I am?

Julian: No Monsieur, and I respect you very much. But I'm a very respected hair designer in my own right. It's just I feel the need to move on, advance my ideas and so on.

DuDrop: Not a chance. You contracted to me. Without me you would have been nothing. Where is your gratitude?

Julian: Very well, I thought it would be nice to ask you first. If that's your attitude then I'll pay off my contract and open up on my own. Become independent.

DuDrop: You might be a respected hair designer but I am a world famous fashion designer. I have the contacts, the resources you need, if I choose to make things difficult for you I can do. I can make or break you.

Julian: I am prepared to take that chance.

DuDrop: You forget one thing. I know about you. The truth you have been hiding. Step out of place and...

Julian: ...And what?

DuDrop: Do the initials *(Spell slowly)* W.W.F. mean anything to you?

Julian: You wouldn't?

DuDrop: I would. Think about it Norton-Smythe, think about it.

Julian: Why you...

*Julian exits bumping into Trixie then pushing past her.*

Trixie: Mr Julian I've come for my hair to be... *(Confused)* Oh Dear.

DuDrop: *(Calling her over)* Do not worry about him, he is highly strung. It's Trixabelle isn't it?

Trixie: *(Timidly)* Yes sir.

***Paulo enters during the next lines and watches silently.***

DuDrop: You are a fine model you know. You could go far in the fashion world. But you are with the wrong agent. How long have you been with Donna Christine?

Trixie: About three months sir.

DuDrop: You are wasting your time there. Stick with me and I will help you with your career (***puts arm around her shoulder***) Donna Christine is past it. I can help you go far in the fashion business. (***Caresses her cheek***) Think about it.

***She starts to exit. She bumps into Paulo and they are seen to be talking silently yet excitedly . Trixie exits Whilst this is happening DuDrop gets out his cell phone. While he is waiting for it to answer Donna briefly enters to pick up the scissors. She wraps the measuring tape around them in full view of the audience.***

Donna: Is that your mother on the phone? Say oink for me.

***Donna goes to Trixie and Paulo to see what they are getting excited about. She joins in the silent conversation. Paulo is seen trying to break away from the group and approach DuDrop but Donna keeps pulling him back. During DuDrop's next lines he pulls away. Donna tells Trixie to go to the dressing room.***

DuDrop: Hi. John, it is me. Can you get me some background information on a Trixabelle Finch. Yes, Trix – a – belle – Finch. Get back to me.

***He puts the phone down as Paulo approaches him.***

Paulo: What's the big idea? I've watched you slobbering over Trixie. You be careful mate that's my girlfriend.

DuDrop: (***Patronising***) Ah! Paulo you are so young, so naïve. (***Angry***) Look sonny boy, I think you had better go back to the nursery if you know what is good for you. Watch yourself, I eat people like you for breakfast.

***Donna is trying to calm Paulo Down but he is not taking any notice.***

Paulo: Then you'd better start getting used to bigger breakfasts.

DuDrop: Run along little boy and I will pass you my leftovers.

Paulo: ***(Lunging at DuDrop)*** You don't scare me.

***Donna intercepts, there is a scuffle Donna pulls Paulo off in a very masculine manner. (Lifting him over her shoulder if possible)***

Donna: ***(In a deep masculine voice)*** Whoa there Lion King!

Paulo: ***(Kicking and screaming)*** I'll kill you when I get my hands on you.

***Donna puts Paulo down and screams in a deep voice for Paulo to calm down. She 'reverts' to her femininity and pulls herself together.***

Donna: ***(To Paulo)*** Don't let him worry you dear. He has no scruples, no morals – and no reflection.

***Paulo exits. Enter Camara and Snapper.***

Camara: There appears to be a little dissention in the ranks.

DuDrop: Who the hell are you?

Camara: Camara Fortesque. Fashion editor for the ***(Local town)*** Chronicle.

DuDrop: You're from the rag that set up this farce. No self respecting fish would be seen wrapped in your newspaper. I will bet you had a hand in all this!

Camara: Well everybody likes a good party don't they.

DuDrop: I will see my lawyer about this!

***DuDrop exits hurriedly.***

Donna: Something ought to be done about that man.

Snapper: Like what? He's a swine, and a powerful one at that.

Donna: Well, if you're not man enough to stand up to him, I am.

***Donna exits.***

Snapper: You *did* set this evening up didn't you?

Camara: I don't know what you mean.

Snapper: Those two go back a long way don't they?

Camara: ***(About to move off)*** Go away, you bother me.

Snapper: Don't play the innocent with me you know more than you're letting on. Correct me if I'm wrong. They once had an affair and he dumped her didn't he? She used to be a famous model. I suspect until...

Camara: ...Your drunk and you stink. Now if you don't mind I've got a story to write.

***Camara exits***

Snapper: And I've got a story to tell. ***(Pauses and looks at audience and indicates to Camara)*** Do you know, I think I'm in there.

***DuDrop rushes on ranting and raving on the phone.***

DuDrop: Thanks for that information John. I need some background on the others. They do not know who they are dealing with. I will finish them.

Snapper: I don't think so.

DuDrop: ***(Surprised at this insolence)*** What!

Snapper: I'm not going to ask for much. Just to clear my debts, perhaps a little reparation and I'll call it a day.

DuDrop: *(Almost spitting)* What are you blithering about you pathetic little man.

Snapper: *(Pretending to be shocked)* A little respect please. I know about you and Donna and the... *(He was going to say 'affair')*

*DuDrop grabs his lapels and shakes him.*

DuDrop: Do not push your luck. If you dare say a word about me, Donna or the baby I will kill you myself.

Snapper: *(In a surprised squeaky voice)* Baby?

DuDrop: I have some pretty mean contacts you know.

*Enter Trixie, walking into an argument again.*

Trixie: *(Shocked)* Sorry.

*Trixie is about to exit. Snapper pulls himself free. Despite his previous bravado he is a little shaken and exits to the bar. DuDrop takes her arm and pulls her to the centre.*

DuDrop: Do not worry about that little spectacle. We are the best of friends. We will laugh about it all later. Trixabelle I am glad your back I'd like a little word.

Trixie: *(Nervous)* I'm sorry about Paulo Mr Gumdrop.

DuDrop: Do not worry your pretty little head about trivial matters now. I have a little offer for you – to help you with your future.

*He reaches his arm around her. She is very nervous.*

DuDrop: Please Trixabelle do not panic, but I know who your parents are.

Trixie: *(Now in a state of fear)* My parents! No! No! *(She pulls away)* They're dead, they're dead I tell you.

DuDrop: I think we know different do we not? Trust me I will make sure nobody finds out. I will help you.

*He tries to put his arm around her again. She pushes him off and backs away.*

Trixie: Leave me alone, leave me alone.

*Trixie runs out sobbing and wailing. Donna and Julian enter.*

Donna: *(Shouting to him)* Can't keep you hands to yourself can you. What's this all about?

*Donna approaches him.*

DuDrop: I think you know full well what this is all about.

Donna: I know that the cracks are beginning to show. Maybe the worm has turned

DuDrop: You will pay. I will get you for this. I will see you in hell...

Donna: You've done enough damage to me. You can't hurt me any more. It's time you got what you deserved

*She exits dramatically with as sweeping gesture. There is a pause. Julian faces up to DuDrop and frantically and campily waves his finger at him. He too exits dramatically. Camara has been watching.*

Camara: Oh this will make a wonderful story. This could become a book or even a play. *(Looks at audience)* Perhaps not a play. *(Gleefully to DuDrop)* . This is Pulitzer prize stuff this is and at my age as well.

DuDrop: No woman has ever made a fool of me!

Camara: Who did then?

DuDrop: You set this up didn't you?

Camara: Why, I'm an investigative journalist deary. I find out things.  
Now if you'll excuse me, I have to hold the front page.

*She exits cheerfully. DuDrop grabs his phone and dials frantically.*

DuDrop: John, John. Damn, where are you?

*In a fit of rage he exits. Just inside the exit he stops. He has seen someone out of sight of the audience.*

DuDrop: *(Moving out of sight himself)* You! What do you think you are doing. You would not dare!

*He screams and drops out of sight. If it is possible try and leave DuDrop's legs showing from the door. When the cast enter they can then file out stepping over the legs totally oblivious of the body. Inspector Foot has been sat quietly in the audience.*

Foot: *(Suddenly standing)* Wait a moment! I'm Inspector Foot of the Yard. Let me through.

*He goes to the dressing room the fetch the cast. The cast enter. Muttering 'What's the commotion', 'Will someone please explain what's going on' etc. Foot enters behind them.*

Foot: It appears Monsieur DuDrop has been murdered. Stabbed through the heart with a pair of scissors.

Julian: He always was a cut above the rest.

*They all have a chuckle except Inspector Foot.*

Snapper: Hey, that's very sharp of you.

*They chuckle as before.*

Paulo: And straight to the point.

*More chuckles*

Foot: If I may continue.

*They calm down.*

Foot: I'm afraid I arrived halfway through the proceedings and therefore need the help of you the guests to solve this heinous crime. You six are all suspects so I suggest none of you leave the building.

Snapper: Suspects. How can I be a suspect I was a good friend of his.

Donna: Oh behave. You a respected photographer whose career was held back by him. *(Turning to Julian)* And he wasn't the only one.

Julian: I wasn't the one who threatened him.

Donna: Yes you did, you wagged your finger at him.

*All gasp aloud.*

Camara: Oh this story gets better.

Foot: Enough of this. I'm going to take the suspects to a featureless room and gather some more evidence. I will return them shortly for questioning. In the mean time if you good people could think of some questions whilst enjoying your refreshments.

*All exit.*