

Standup – Falldown

A short play

Written by

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Cast of Characters

Woman of the Night	Sexy woman in a red dress. She should wear very stylistic makeup.
Arnie	The announcer dressed in black tuxedo and also has very stylistic makeup.
Douglas Fligg	Standup comic in his early 50s dressed in a white tuxedo or suit. At the beginning of the play, Douglas is close to a complete breakdown but does his best to try and keep things together. At the end he finally succumbs and totally falls into his psychosis.
Voices	The voices of various dead comedians, such as Groucho Marx, John Belushi, Bob Hope. These are voices only Douglas can hear and he should react to these voices in some way. It would be best if these could be recorded.
Setting	A bare stage except for a microphone on a stand downstage center.
At rise	A drum roll comes up and then a spot comes up quickly on Arnie.

ARNIE

And now, ladies and gentlemen, we are proud to present the one and only, Douglas Fligg.

(A drum roll and another spot comes up on Douglas and the Woman of the Night. He stares out at the audience and doesn't move. She wraps herself around Douglas.)

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

You can do it, big boy. Go ahead and make 'em laugh like you did that night in 'Vegas 20 years ago. Your jokes turn me on, baby.

(Douglas looks at her.)

Don't be afraid, Douglas. I'm with you, don't ever forget that. You're momma's little comedian. Step out there and give 'em hell, big boy.

(Douglas looks back out at the audience.)

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

Do it, baby.

(She kisses him and exits. Douglas looks at her as she leaves and then back out at the audience. Douglas slowly moves toward the microphone.)

ARNIE

That's right, ladies and gentlemen, the great Douglas Fligg, who is coming off a fifteen year engagement at the great Washington National Mental Institution and, best of all, he's off his meds. Let's see if he's still off his rocker. Put 'em together for Douglas Fligg.

(The spot on Arnie goes out and he exits. Douglas stares at the audience for a moment.)

BELUSHI VOICE (off)

Cheeseburger, cheeseburger, cheeseburger.

GROUCHO VOICE (off)

The secret word for today, Douglas, is screw-up.

DOUGLAS

Screw-up? Screw-up? (pause) I can't screw up tonight, or can I?

(Douglas leans toward the mic and taps it.)

Hello? Is this working? Hello? (pause) Is anyone out there? Hello? (pause) Why am I here? (pause) Hello?

(The Woman of the Night quickly enters and crosses to Douglas. She takes his hand and he looks at her.)

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

Tell a joke, honey. Everyone is waiting. You can do this. Go ahead.

(She kisses him again and exits. Douglas looks back out at the audience.)

DOUGLAS

A joke? Oh, yes, a joke. (thinking) A man..., no. A little girl, no, no. (thinking) Oh, oh, yes. A woman has twins. She gives them up for adoption. One goes to a family in Egypt. They name him Amal. The other goes to a family in Spain. They name him Juan. Years later, Juan sends a picture of himself to the woman. When she gets the picture, the woman begins to cry. She tells her husband that she wishes she had a picture of Amal. Her husband says, (pause) her husband says, (pause) "But they're twins."

BOB HOPE VOICE (off)
(singing)

Thanks for the memories.

(Douglas stares out at the audience for a moment, thinking.)

DOUGLAS

Okay, another joke. (pause) I was in Washington D.C. once or was it twice? Was I ever in Washington? I don't know. (pause) The joke. Yes, the joke. In Washington they have the Francis Scott Key bridge, named after the man who wrote the national anthem. It's often jammed with traffic. Everyone knows it as, as something, something. What? (pause) I don't know. I don't remember.

DANGERFIELD VOICE (off)

Hey, I don't get no respect here. You too, Douglas.

GROUCHO VOICE (OFF)

Say the secret word, schmuck. Say the secret word, schmuck.

DOUGLAS

Okay, okay, I've got one. A guy goes to a psychiatrist. "Doc," he says, "I keep having these recurring dreams. First I'm a teepee, then I'm a wigwam, then I'm a teepee, and then I'm a wigwam. It's driving me crazy. What's wrong with me? What's wrong with me? What's wrong with me?" The doctor says, "It's very simple."

BELUCHI VOICE (off)

Cheeseburger, cheeseburger, cheeseburger, you puetz.

DANGERFIELD VOICE

Douglas, you ain't ever gonna get no respect.

BOB HOPE VOICE (off)

Thanks for the memories.

(The Woman of the Night enters and crosses to Douglas.)

DOUGLAS

Thanks for the memories. Yes, thanks for all of the memories. (pause) So this comedian, Billy Bob Wilder, is heading toward his hotel one night. A hooker approaches him.

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

Hey, big boy.

DOUGLAS

Hey, yourself.

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

Wanna get laid?

DOUGLAS

How much?

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

Fifty.

DOUGLAS

Fifty. I can afford fifty, he says. So, he takes her up to his room and they take their clothes off. They start doing it on the bed and then a chair and then move to the window sill. Billy Bob loses control and falls right out of the window to his death. Smashes the crap out of a very nice Ford Crown Victoria.

(The Woman of the Night moves closer to Douglas.)

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

Can you imagine him humping and humping and the next thing he knows he's headed to the street below. Quite a sight, I can tell you that. And that poor Crown Victoria, totaled. That's a hell of a way to go, don't you think, honey bunny?

DOUGLAS

It's not a joke? It was real? Billy Bob is dead?

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

Maybe, my precious, little comedian. You're doing so good, Dougie.

(She kisses him and exits.)

DOUGLAS

I'm doing good. I'm doing good. (pause) Yeah, I'm doing real good. Hello? (he taps the mic) Okay. (pause) It's a real windy day in Chicago. This woman is walking down Michigan Avenue with a very short skirt. The wind keeps blowing her skirt up revealing a pair of red, white and blue panties. She tries to hold the skirt down but it's a losing battle. Soon a long line of men are following her down the street. She turns to the first guy and says...

(The Woman of the Night enters but she is now Douglas' young daughter. As she speaks , she walks around the stage as if lost.)

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

Daddy? Daddy, where are you? I've been looking all over for you. Mommy wants you to come home because she's sick. We need you, daddy. Please. Come home.

(The Woman of the Night slowly exits. Douglas looks at the audience for a beat.)

DOUGLAS

Where am I?

(He looks around.)

This doesn't look familiar to me. I think I must be lost. (pause) Wherever I am, I didn't want to come back. They told me I could do it, that I'd be funny again. But it's been so long.

(Arnie enters wearing a Groucho mask.)

ARNIE

(Singing)

If you knew Suzie, like I knew Suzie, oh, oh, oh, what a gal.

DOUGLAS

Who's there.

ARNIE

Douglas, I am here to help.

DOUGLAS

Who are you?

ARNIE

You don't recognize me?

DOUGLAS

Groucho, Groucho Marx? Is it really you? I thought you were dead?

ARNIE

Dead is for assholes, Douglas.

DOUGLAS

Groucho, I can't believe it.

ARNIE

I came here to see if you knew...

DOUGLAS

Suzie?

ARNIE

The secret word, schmuck.

DOUGLAS

Secret word, what secret word?

ARNIE

The secret word, goddamn it.

DOUGLAS

I don't know anything about a secret word.

ARNIE

You know the drill, Douglas, guess the secret word and win a nice prize.

DOUGLAS

What kind of prize?

ARNIE

Maybe I can make you funny again.

DOUGLAS

Really? Me? Funny again? Really?

ARNIE

Yes. People will laugh, you'll appear at all of the best clubs, and those late night TV shows, go on tour. But, first you need to guess the secret word.

DOUGLAS

I can be funny again if I guess the secret word. (pause)
Is it spaghetti?

ARNIE

No.

DOUGLAS

Zoloft?

ARNIE

No.

DOUGLAS

Prozac? (pause) Bananas? (pause) Darvon? Snickers?
(pause) Morphine?

ARNIE

You ain't gonna get it, kid.

(Arnie starts to exit.)

DOUGLAS

No, don't go. Whipping cream? Restraints? KrispyKreme?

(Arnie stops and turns back
to Douglas.)

ARNIE

What?

DOUGLAS

Restraints.

ARNIE

No.

(Arnie starts to exit again.)

DOUGLAS

KrispyKreme.

ARNIE

What?

DOUGLAS

KrispyKreme.

ARNIE

Son-of-a-bitch, you got it.

DOUGLAS

I got it. I got it. I can be funny now.

(Arnie takes off his Groucho
mask looks at Douglas.)

ARNIE

Sure kid. You can be funny now. Knock 'em dead.

(Arnie exits.)

BOB HOPE VOICE (off)

Thanks for the memories.

DOUGLAS

I have memories of some really funny jokes. I can be funny again. (pause) Two men walk into a bar...no, no. A man comes home from work and finds his wife...his wife...his wife. No, no. A dog chases a cat up a tree...a tree...

(The Woman of the Night enters dressed as a nurse and crosses to Doug.)

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

It's okay, Doug. It's okay.

DOUGLAS

A fish swims out of the water and walks to the... I can't remember, I can't remember.

WOMAN OF THE NIGHT

You're still my big boy, my comedian.

(Doug buries his head on the Woman of the Night's shoulder.)

DANGERFIELD VOICE (off)

Man, what's a guy gotta do to get some respect around here?

HOPE VOICE (off)
(singing)

Thanks for the memories.

(The Woman of the Night wraps her arms around Douglas. A drum roll as Arnie enters.)

ARNIE

(somber)

Douglas Fligg, ladies and gentlemen. Douglas Fligg.

(Another drum roll as the
lights slowly fade to
blackout.)

The End.