



THE EVOLUTION OF DAVE

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN TWO GREAT MINDS COME TOGETHER? WHEN TWO MULTI-SKILLED CREATIVES COLLABORATE? BRILLIANCE OCCURS. ALAS, THAT'S A TOPIC FOR ANOTHER TIME. IN THIS ARTICLE THE TWO MINDS AND CREATIVE SKILLS OF JAY FORTUNE AND GRAHAM HEY COME TOGETHER AND, WELL, YOU GET MAGIC DAVE. MAGIC WHO? WE ASKED THE ARTY DUO ABOUT THEIR FIRST COLLABORATION FOR MAGICIANS.



JAY: 'We could all do with a bit of a giggle.'

GRAHAM: 'Indeed we can, now put some pants on!'

JAY: [Laughs] 'The pandemic has meant that most days are nothing but tales of woe and struggle. I was feeling particularly devoid of something to smile about one day, when Graham sent me some photographs to which he'd written comedy captions. He asked me to devise some as well. When I sent mine back, Graham said they were funnier than his!'

GRAHAM: 'Did I? Can't remember that.'

JAY: 'I have it in writing...'

GRAHAM: 'Yeah, your own! Nah, they were funny.'

JAY: 'Thanks to you asking me to do those captions, it got me thinking of maybe painting some scenes and adding captions to them. But my style of art doesn't lend itself to the sort of comedy cartooning I had in mind. So, I got thinking about cartoonists I know. And thought of Graham.'

GRAHAM: 'But I didn't know any did I?' [Both laugh]

JAY: 'After a night of brainstorming, I had an idea of this character called Magic Dave. Basically, he's just a real magic enthusiast and is eager to do his magic wherever he can. Unfortunately, Dave often selects the wrong trick for the wrong audience or he is so keen to rush out and do his magic, that he fails epically!'

GRAHAM: 'Jay sent me his ideas and I thought some were really good. They really made me laugh. Others weren't as strong, so after a bit of editing, I put my name next to the good ones and his next to the crap ones!' [Laughs]

JAY: 'Not many people know that Graham is a superb cartoonist. Like properly good. His CV is epic, having illustrated and been published in

daily newspapers with his own comic strips, magazines like VIZ and is widely published as a greetings card artist. [Pause] I think that was what you told me to say wasn't it?! [Laughs]

GRAHAM: 'Well, you got most of it right!'

JAY: 'We had about 10 or so ideas, so began developing Dave as a more rounded character. It's a strange thing to analyse comedy. I think it's important that it still makes you smile, even when you get really deep in working it through. Some ideas didn't fit Dave, so we had to dismiss them. Others needed tweaking. Once we had the gag in writing, with some pencil visuals, Graham began working up what Magic Dave would actually look like.'

GRAHAM: 'I had this idea of just your typical bloke, but he'd be in a dinner jacket – perhaps one he'd borrowed or had in the cupboard for years – and have some badly hand-drawn signs advertising his show. His props would be quite battered too. Also, I think it was important for Dave to be as enthusiastic as possible about magic.'

JAY: 'Yeah, he had to be a magic nut, the total magic hobbyist, buying everything but often not having much of a clue what he is actually doing.'



GRAHAM: 'And he had to be out there performing well before he was ready. Ultimately though, as you get to know him through the various cartoons, you'll find he's a lovable character. He's not malicious or offensive. He's just the world's most enthusiastic amateur magician and wants to perform at the drop of a hat.'

JAY: 'The first four Magic Dave cartoons we developed were Bed of Nail, where Magic Dave is doing his first...'

GRAHAM: '...and only!'

JAY: 'Yeah, his first and last, street performance of his Bed of Nail. I imagined Dave being really keen to start doing the 'Don't Try This At Home' stuff you see on the TV. But he'd ignore it and go and make his own. In this cartoon, Dave maybe didn't have the money, or the time or patience, to build himself a proper bed of nails so he could learn to distribute his weight across the whole surface of nail tips. Instead, he's rushed out and made his own using one nail through a bit of board. Eager as ever, he sets it up on the street and lays on top of this one solitary nail...'

GRAHAM: 'And that's where we discover him. With his tip box out and his hand-made sign.'

JAY: [laughing] 'It still makes me laugh! When Graham first sent me the rough artwork for this I laughed out loud. He turned the caption and idea into reality just brilliantly.'

GRAHAM: 'My favourite from the first set of prints we're releasing is Divorce Parties. It's the only one of the set that has a speech bubble. But the gag is just great. That one really made me laugh. I wanted to draw it straight away.'

JAY: 'I love that one too as it captures Dave in all his enthusiasm mid performance totally unaware how inappropriate the line is about the linking rings separating. I love how you drew the audience in that one!'

GRAHAM: 'Yeah, they were like 'er... how do we respond to this then?' How many times have we seen magic shows like that?!'

JAY: 'The other two from this first set is a Sawing in Half called Match.com. That caption came from one I had originally written for a different photograph Graham sent me when he was developing some comedy captions for actual old black and white photos.'

GRAHAM: 'The gag works really well. We changed the premise so Dave is sawing his first date with a lady he's met online in half. He's in his living room with this badly made prop. Typical Magic Dave!'

JAY: 'And the final one of the set is Which Cup. This was based originally on the shell and pea game. But, going back to how we had to work through the comedy, the shells just didn't look right on the final artwork. Not that Graham had drawn them wrong. Just that in the scale of the cartoon, they were unrecognisable. So, we changed it to a kind of shell and pea monte but with the three cups and a ball.'

GRAHAM: 'And again we see Dave's enthusiasm on his face and also learn about his short-sightedness, which means he once again thinks he's fooling the audience but he's quite clearly not. Once the artwork was drawn, I then inked the finals before sending to the one with real talent... Jay's girlfriend Jen!' [Laughs]

JAY: 'Yeah, years ago – maybe early 2000s, Jen and I ran our own graphics company. Although Jen has long since transitioned into being a fine artist, I managed to convince her – thanks to Mr. Jack Daniels – to work up Graham's artwork into colourful finished prints.'

GRAHAM: 'The first four in the set are red, yellow, green and blue. They look great!'

JAY: 'So, in the midst of the pandemic, it was good to begin developing these artworks as a fun side-project. We had a



right laugh working up Dave and thinking about all of the magic and illusions he could be involved in.'

GRAHAM: 'And there's more to come. We've written some comic strip style gags which will be in future editions of Magicseen. Not all of them will be made available, but we thought the first set would make a great collectable for magicians to have on show in their magic room.'

JAY: 'And you don't have to be a magician to find the gags funny. Dave works whether you know the magic routine or not. And we could all do with a laugh right now too, so grab your set of Dave's before he disappears!'

Magic Dave's first four prints are available as a complete set from store.jayfortune.co.uk for only £14.95 with FREE worldwide postage. Know of a magician who could do with a giggle? Buy two sets for only £22.95 with free postage and gift a set to a friend.