

## Rye Arts Festival Short Story writing competition

The Hex Factor by Holly Lepine aged 9

Winner of under 11 competition

The performer walked to the centre of the stage... my knees trembled and fear ran through me, shakily I said "Hello, Steve Dowell, Amilia Vixon, Anna Polden, David Calliams". To put you in the picture my Mum and Dad had always said how I was a talented magician but they didn't know that my skills were even greater than the card tricks I did at the Christmas dinner table last month.

I was practicing in my bedroom and Chip my cat vanished in a red puff of smoke. "Oh no! what have I done?" Where had Chip gone? I panicked but then I found him under my bed, but now as a tabby coloured fat frog with a croaky "Meow". Mum and Dad never knew. They just thought Chip had gone on one of his adventures and would return soon...

So now I find myself entered into this talent show face to face with Steve Dowell, Amilia Vixon, Anna Polden, David Calliams, ahhhhh!!! Help me! I could not remember any of my card tricks, the fear ran through me, it had made me forget everything, everything except the Chip disappearing trick.

Should I do this one?

"Wow" I thought, "This could be amazing". So I hurriedly asked Steven Dowell to come up onto the stage. Steven Dowell arrived on the stage and I got him to lie down on his back, like Chip had done. I closed my eyes. Silence fell in the theatre. The only sound I could hear was my own heart beating in my chest.

"Here goes" I thought. I gave three loud claps, which sounded like thunder, I opened my eyes and as the red smoke cleared I could see sitting on the floor another frog. Stephen Dowell had changed into a frog!

Now all I could hear was cheering and clapping. I felt so proud. Suddenly the clapping stopped and I realised they were all waiting to see Steven Dowell back in his seat.

Fear again ran through me. I had never brought Chip back from being a frog.

Oh no, no, no!!!! What am I going to do?