

# BOOKRAPT™

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## **Spooks: a new darkness by Joseph Delaney**

**Publisher: Red Fox, Random House**

**RRP \$19.99**

This is the fourteenth novel in the Spooks series that has a dedicated following of readers fascinated by the blood-thirsty creatures that stalked Britain and Europe in medieval times.

Apparently, most of the places in the Spooks books are based on real locations in Lancashire, and the inspiration behind them often comes from local ghost stories and legends. There's much to be afraid of out there!

Being a spook is a career not many young people would aspire to. A spook's job is to find the other-world beings who haunt people and cause havoc. The spook discovers what is holding the ghosts and spirits captive in this world and releases them into the light. It can be terrifying, dangerous work and many spooks have a short life-span.

Seventeen-year-old Tom Ward is a young spook who is left to carry on his master's work after his untimely death. Tom is unwilling to take on fifteen-year-old Jenny who wants to be his apprentice. A female spook is unheard of and he doesn't want the responsibility of training the gifted young woman. His life is further complicated by news from the witch Grimalkin of an uprising of the Kobalos nation in the North. The Kobalos are a fearsome, evil force determined to destroy humanity.

The author explores in clinical detail the physiology of the fierce beasts that hunt and kill people in gruesome ways. His rather matter-of-fact writing style helps to distance the reader from emotional involvement in the gory aspects of the carnage. Interaction between the characters often reads like scientists discussing the intricacies of newly discovered forms of life.

Readers will want to keep the light on at night and stay inside with the doors locked.

**Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett**

**Spooks series website:**

<http://www.spooksbooks.com/>

