# 

ADAPTED BY STEPHEN DELANEY THE SERIES THAT INSPIRED THE MOVIE SEVENTH SON

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### About the Book

#### WARNING: NOT TO BE READ AFTER DARK

'Someone has to stand against the dark. And you're the only one who can.'

For years, the local Spook has been keeping the County safe from evil. Now his time is coming to an end, but who will take over?

Joseph Delaney's worldwide hit, *The Spook's Apprentice*, tells the story of Thomas Ward, apprenticed to the local Spook to help keep the County safe from the dark. The novel is the inspiration for the movie *Seventh Son*, starring Jeff Bridges, Ben Barnes and Julianne Moore.

Now for the first time, the story has been adapted for the stage by Joseph and his son, Stephen.

This play script edition is suitable for casts large and small, and ideal for use in drama groups, English lessons and schools.



ADAPTED BY STEPHEN DELANEY ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID WYATT

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### With special thanks to RUSSELL WOODHEAD



## **CHARACTERS**

THE SPOOK	Tom's new master; protects the County against the dark
DAD	Tom's father, a farmer
TOM WARD	The Spook's new apprentice
SNOUT	A slaughterman
JACK	Tom's elder brother
ELLIE	His wife
MAM	Tom's mother
ANDREW	The Spook's brother, a locksmith
PRIEST	
GHAST	
THREE BOYS	
ALICE	A young witch
VILLAGERS:	
GROCER	

BAKER BUTCHER SEAMSTRESS

## TEACHER

## MIDWIFE

#### MESSENGER

MOTHER MALKIN	A witch
BONY LIZZIE	A witch
TUSK	An abhuman
TOMMY	A young boy

# ACT ONE



## **SCENE ONE** OUTSIDE THE WARD FAMILY FARM

Stage left, the front door and windows of the house; stage right, the fence separating the house from a lane. A path comes round the corner of the house and towards the gate. Downstage there is a low, wide tree stump. Upstage, we can see some small hedges and, in the distance, Hangman's Hill.

THE SPOOK, DAD and TOM are standing in the front garden of the house.

THE SPOOK:	You're sure he's the seventh?
DAD:	Aye, that he is.
THE SPOOK:	And you were a seventh son too?
DAD:	Aye, just like I told you. The eldest of my boys got the farm, and I've found trades for the other five. That just leaves Tom here – number seven.
THE SPOOK:	How old is he?
DAD:	Thirteen come August.
THE SPOOK:	Bit small for his age.
DAD:	Aye, but he's strong. His six brothers have given him plenty of practice at

	fighting. And when he grows up, he'll be as big as me!
THE SPOOK:	That may be, but mine is a hard enough life for a man, never mind a boy. Can he read and write?
DAD:	He can do both, and he knows Greek – spoke it before he could walk. His mam taught him.
<b>THE SPOOK</b> ( <i>turning to Tom</i> ):	How do you like school, lad? Enjoy your studies?
TOM:	They hit me, sir. I don't go any more.
THE SPOOK:	And why would they do that?
TOM:	I write with my left hand. When the teachers saw that, they tied the pen to my right one and tried to beat it out of me. That's when Mam brought me home to teach me herself.
	Nothing wrong with being cack-handed, Tom. A boggart doesn't mind which hand it's caught with.
DAD:	How much to take him on?
THE SPOOK:	Two guineas for a month's trial. If he's up to it, I'll be back again in the autumn, and you'll owe me another ten. If not, you can have him back and it's just one more guinea for my trouble.

<b>DAD</b> (fishing a pouch of coins out of his pocket):	Seems a bit much to me, for a job that won't gain him any friends. If I hadn't run out of favours to call in—
THE SPOOK:	Seventh sons of seventh sons are easier to find than you'd think. If you'd rather I found another one
<b>DAD</b> (eagerly pressing the purse into the Spook's palm):	No no, Mr Gregory, let's not be hasty. And besides, it's what the boy's mam wants for him.

DAD wipes the hand that touched THE SPOOK on a trouser leg.

<b>THE SPOOK:</b> I've some business close by but I'll be back for the lad at first light. Make sure he's ready. I don't like to be kept waiting.
---

The SPOOK exits.

Noise of a horse and cart from behind the house.

DAD:	That'll be Snout, coming to look at the pigs we've been fattening Listen, son, before I go and talk to him, I've got something for you.
TOM:	What is it, Dad?
DAD:	I've never had a lot to give you, Tom, and you would never have had a farm to grow up on if it wasn't for your mother's

money. But part of me wishes you weren't going. You'll be missed, that's for sure.

DAD takes a tinderbox from his pocket and gives it to TOM.

DAD:	It's my old tinderbox, from when I was a lad. You might find it useful one day, if you're in need of a fire, and every time you hold it I want you to think of how proud I am of you.
TOM:	I will, Dad. Thanks.
DAD:	There are many things you will discover on your journey, but you must always remember you're ours. It's a new life for you now, son

DAD trails off, overcome by emotion. He tries to conceal it by coughing.

SNOUT enters, wearing an apron covered in blood stains.

DAD:	Snout! I hope you're feeling generous – I'm looking for a good deal today.
SNOUT:	You all right, Mr Ward?
DAD:	Fine, Snout.

**SNOUT:** So, Master Tom! I presume the appearance of old man Gregory means yer time has come. Off to get the ghosties, eh?!

SNOUT staggers towards TOM like a monster. TOM steps back, annoyed.

DAD:	Leave him alone, Snout! My boy'll do well.
SNOUT:	Good luck, lad. You'll need it from what I hear. Now, I hope you've been feeding them pigs properly, Mr Ward. Last lot didn't have enough meat on them for a bacon sandwich

The conversation fades as DAD and SNOUT exit.

*TOM is left alone onstage. He smiles and looks at the tinderbox.* 

Just as TOM turns to leave in the opposite direction, he is surprised by JACK and ELLIE, appearing from behind a bush. ELLIE is pregnant and has a small bump.

JACK: I don't believe it!

Laughing, JACK gets TOM in a playful headlock.

JACK:You, apprentice to a spook! How can you<br/>do a job like that when you still can't<br/>sleep without a candle?

**ELLIE:** Let him go!

JACK does so.

ELLIE:	Well done, Tom. I'm really pleased for you.
JACK:	Me too. You'll make a fortune doing that job. And that's lucky
TOM:	Why's that?
JACK:	Because the only friends you'll have are the ones you buy!
ELLIE:	Oh, Jack! Don't be cruel!
TOM:	He's given me a month's trial. Maybe I won't be any good at it.
ELLIE:	Oh no, Tom! That means you won't be here when the baby's born.
TOM:	I'll come back and visit as soon as I can.
ELLIE:	You'll always have your family right here if you need us.
JACK:	Just leave the ghosts on Hangman's Hill!
MAM enters.	
MAM:	Is your brother giving you trouble, Tom?
JACK:	Just teasing, Mam.
MAM:	Why don't you go and give your father a hand with the pigs, Jack.