



The Last Apprentice: Curse of the Bane (Book 2)

By Joseph Delaney

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The Spook and his apprentice, Thomas Ward, rid the county of witches, ghosts, boggarts, and other creatures of the dark. And there's some unfinished business to attend to in Prieststown. Deep in the catacombs lurks a creature the Spook has never been able to defeat; a force so evil that the whole county is in danger. The Bane!

But the Bane is not their only enemy. The Quisitor arrives, intent on hunting down anyone who meddles with the dark. Thomas Ward and the Spook must prepare for the battle of their lives.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-7—In this second book in the series, Delaney chronicles the spine-tingling adventures of Thomas Ward, seventh son of a seventh son, and the last remaining apprentice of monster hunter Mr. Gregory, aka the Spook. The most dangerous monster of all, the Bane, has been imprisoned in the catacombs under Prieststown. He kills by squashing his victims completely flat, and he appears to be succeeding at controlling the minds and actions of some of the town's inhabitants. He needs to be dealt with once and for all. Prieststown holds its own dangers for Thomas and the Spook, however, as their work makes them subject to being declared witches and executed by the Quisitor. In the scary and dangerous events that follow, Thomas, accompanied by his friend Alice, faces the most difficult choices of his life so far, and learns to trust himself rather than simply follow his master's instructions. His first-person narration gives this truly spooky story an immediacy and a sense of reality that heightens the tension and impending danger. While part of a series, the story stands successfully on its own. Occasional eerily atmospheric woodcuts enhance the story's mood.—*Sue Giffard, Ethical Culture Fieldston School, New York City*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 6-9. When readers met Tom Ward in *The Revenge of the Witch* (2005), the first entry in the Last Apprentice series, he was a callow lad, apprehensively apprenticed to the Spook, who routs the Dark from the County. The malevolent forces that came into play last time seem almost mundane compared to the challenges Tom and the Spook face now: a violent, deadly bane growing in strength and power to become the embodiment of evil. Despite the blood and gore, this tale is more than a well-crafted horror story. Delaney infuses his characters with depth and emotion, but equally important, he grows his world by contributing significantly to the back story. Readers learn the reason the Spook has strong feelings about women in general and witches in particular, and Tom discovers something unexpected about his mother and her wisdom. Delaney also does an exceptional job of interweaving stories, with one plot point leading insistently to the next; at the book's conclusion, readers can go over all Tom has learned by leafing through his journal. Kids will breathlessly await Tom's next adventure. *Ilene Cooper*

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About the Author

Joseph DELANEY is the author of the internationally best-selling The Last Apprentice series, which is now a major motion picture, *Seventh Son*. He is a former English teacher who lives in the heart of boggart territory in Lancashire, England. His village has a boggart called the Hall Knocker, which was laid to rest under the step of a house near the church.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Luis Acosta:

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Barry Altman:

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