



Ghost Knight

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~~Not a Choice:~~

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BfK Rating:

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With many books on supernatural themes pushing gore and hard-core action in order to be entertaining, it's refreshing to see the more traditional elements of a ghost story unearthed ? unsettling curses, oaths carried over into death, important family bloodlines, eerie graveyards, unusual buried treasure, difficult decisions ? let alone underpinned with real depth. The roots and effects of fear, courage, friendship and love sweep through this tale as strongly as the misty layers of history revealed through its ghosts.

The story is steeped in all this and more, alongside another level of horror ? dealing with your mother remarrying, and the beginning of secondary school. Alongside effortlessly delicious prose, it all combines into the classic feel that hallmarks so many of Funke's novels.

Eleven-year-old Jon is worried about ever living to see being twelve after he is hounded by four ghosts at his new boarding school. His disbelieved story spreads round school and reaches the strong-willed Ella, who tells him of William Longespee, a knight whose tomb is at nearby Salisbury Cathedral, and whose ghost is said to come to the aid of those who ask his help. They summon him, and he despatches the ghosts, but there is far more to the haunting, and to William, than it first appears. There's a good involvement of adults too in this adventure, with a superb grandmother and emerging relationship with Jon's stepfather, known only to him as The Beard.

While older readers might find the details a bit light, this novel will satisfy young appetites for chilling adventure and triumph, and might even spark an interest in history.

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