

= Spooks (series 1) =

The first series of the British spy drama television series Spooks (known as MI @-@ 5 in the United States) began broadcasting on 13 May 2002 on BBC One , before ending on 17 June 2002 . It consists of six episodes . Spooks follows the actions of Section D , a counter @-@ terrorism division of the British Security Services (MI5) . Among the storylines , main character Tom Quinn faces dilemmas living a double life with his girlfriend , who at first does not know he is really a spy , and Tessa Phillips is running phantom agents for monetary gain . Matthew Macfadyen , Keeley Hawes , David Oyelowo , Peter Firth , Jenny Agutter , Lisa Faulkner , Esther Hall , Heather Cave , Hugh Simon and Greame Mearns are listed as the main cast .

Kudos Film and Television developed Spooks after releasing Channel 4 medical drama Psychos in 1999 , though the company initially faced friction from television networks which saw no potential in a post @-@ Cold War spy show . The producers later successfully pitched the series to the BBC after the networks ' commissioning teams were replaced . Four episodes were being written when the September 11 attacks took place , and the some scenes were rewritten to take the event into account to show the audience Spooks 's goal of fighting terrorism . Throughout production , the producers were advised by former intelligence officers from the Security Service , KGB and Central Intelligence Agency . Filming took place from November 2001 to March 2002 .

The first series was seen by an average of 7 @.@ 49 million , and received generally favourable reviews from critics , with some comparing the series to American espionage @-@ based series such as 24 . The second episode attracted controversy after a scene which depicted the brutal death of main character Helen Flynn (Lisa Faulkner) attracted more than 250 complaints . As a result of the series , MI5 's website saw a surge in a number of applications to the organisation by viewers . Spooks was awarded a British Academy Television Awards (BAFTA) for Best Drama Series , and was nominated for two other BAFTAs and three Royal Television Society Awards . The first series was released on DVD on 16 June 2003 in Region 2 , 18 August 2003 in Region 4 , and 13 January 2004 in Region 1 .

= = Episodes = =

= = Cast = =

Ten main cast members are listed in the first series . Matthew Macfadyen plays primary protagonist and senior case officer Tom Quinn . Creator David Wolstencroft found Tom to be the most fun , yet hardest character to write for due to him being the main character . When portraying the character , Macfadyen did what he was told to do ; he did not want to create a backstory for the character as he did not find merit in doing so . Keeley Hawes plays junior case officer Zoe Reynolds . Hawes was attracted to the parallels between acting and spying . The actress described Zoe as " a feisty little number . She can be quite cold and you don 't really know her , " and the series sees " flashes of how she can be " . David Oyelowo plays fellow junior case officer Danny Hunter . Oyelowo first became aware of the show when his agent brought him the script , and was quickly intrigued by the project , and wanted a part to play in it . He downplayed his enthusiasm in order to get the part . Macfadyen , Hawes and Oyelowo were initially wary of playing the lead characters even though the actors were in their mid @-@ twenties , but eventually felt that they earned the right to be in the series .

Peter Firth plays the head of the counter @-@ terrorism department , Harry Pearce . Firth was interested in the series after hearing of Brenton 's involvement in the project , and thought Spooks was " special " and " different " from British television at the time . Firth would " pepper " the dialogue with quotations from famous classical works , with moral and religious philosophies . Jenny Agutter plays Tessa Philips , senior case officer for Section K. The actress described Tessa as " hard edged " and " not a nice person " , but straightforward and not initially expected to be corrupt . She realised that although Tessa would start off as a peripheral character , her role would build as the series

continued . Tessa 's story was described by a BBC press release as being about " the dangers of corruption from within " . Lisa Faulkner portrays admin support officer Helen Flynn . Esther Hall plays Tom 's girlfriend and restaurant owner Ellie Simm , while Heather Cave plays her eight @-@ year @-@ old daughter , Maisie . Hall felt that Ellie was the character the audience could identify with . The producers created Maisie because they believed that children are often " the best spies of all " . Hugh Simon plays technical officer Malcolm Wynn @-@ Jones , and Greame Mearns plays MI5 officer Jed Kelley .

The first series also sees a number of recurring characters and guest appearances . Rory MacGregor appears in two episodes as Colin Wells , an MI5 technical officer . American actress Megan Dodds appears in the first episode as CIA liaison Christine Dale . The producers were impressed enough by Dodds ' performance that they wished to see her return in the second series . Kevin McNally appears as Robert Osbourne , the antagonist of the second episode . The producers felt the actor was suitable for the role , as was the case with Debra Stephenson , who played his wife Claire . In the fourth and fifth episodes , Hugh Laurie appears as Jools Siviter , a department head of MI6 , an organisation depicted as " old school " compared with MI5 . Laurie based his performance on Barry Foster 's portrayal of the head of MI6 in Sweeney ! . Meanwhile , also in episode four , Anthony Head , best known for his work on Buffy the Vampire Slayer at the time , played Peter Salter . Despite his status as a former Buffy regular , Head still had to earn the role from his audition .

In episode five , Tim Pigott @-@ Smith plays Hampton Wilder , a character who was based on Richard Nixon and Jeffrey Archer . In the same episode , Naoko Mori appeared as a lover of Danny 's ; Mori previously appeared in Psychos , another series produced by Kudos . In the finale , Irish actor Lorcan Cranitch plays Irish splinter group terrorist Patrick McCann . Cranitch had previously appeared in several other dramas as Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) operators .

= = Production = =

= = = Crew = = =

The first series of Spooks was produced by Kudos Film and Television for the BBC . David Wolstencroft was credited as the series creator , Simon Crawford Collins as the producer , and Jane Featherstone as the series producer . The executive producers of the first series were Kudos director Stephen Garrett and Head of Independent Drama Commissioning for the BBC , Gareth Neame . The series includes three writers , and three directors . Wolstencroft wrote the first two episodes and finale of series one . Simon Mirren wrote the third episode . Howard Brenton wrote the last three episodes , co @-@ writing the finale with Wolstencroft . The producers hired Brenton for his " radical " and " provocative " style . By the time he was hired it had been sixteen years since he last wrote for television .

The producers from Kudos spent up to three months meeting several potential directors to work on the show , but none shared their views about the show 's style until Bharat Nalluri . The style the director used was inspired by Bollywood films , as well as American television . According to Wolstencroft , Nalluri " directs as I see . " Three directors were chosen , each working on two episodes ; Nalluri directed the first two episodes , Rob Bailey directed the next two episodes , and Andy Wilson directed the last two episodes . Sue Gibson and Sean Bobbitt served as the directors of photography , with Mark Goddard and Francesco Reidy serving as first assistant directors . Colin Green and Soren B. Ebbe were the series editors , while David Crozier and Andrew Sissions served as sound recordists . Leila Kirkpatrick was the line producer and Linda Stefansdottir was the production designer , while Andrea Galer was the costume designer , and Alison Davies was the make @-@ up designer . The casting director for the first series was Gail Stevens . Karen Wilson was the script editor , and Ralph Cameron and Malcolm Treen were the location managers .

= = = Conception = = =

Kudos began to develop the show after producing the Channel 4 medical drama series *Psychos* in 1999 . Kudos wished to explore series ideas that saw beyond typical " precinct @-@ based dramas " (crime and medical) . Stephen Garrett decided on developing a spy drama after coming across John le Carré novels at a Waterstone 's bookstore , and came to realise that MI5 or MI6 had not been featured as the setting for shows before . He felt the benefit of a spy show is that rather than in a crime drama where the protagonists take their work home with them , spies are given the added dimension that they cannot reveal their work even to their loved ones . In the meantime , Wolstencroft , who wrote *Psychos* , was also developing a spy drama , albeit as a film . When Kudos contacted him , they agreed they should work together to create a television series based on his idea , which was not to glamourise the world of spies , instead showing the audience that spies work in a " shitty job " . Kudos later pitched the show to all the major British television networks ; however none of them were as enthusiastic as Kudos , as they did not see the potential of a post @-@ Cold War spy series . After the commissioning teams from the networks were replaced , Kudos again pitched the show , albeit reinvented , and as a result Lorraine Heggessey , controller of BBC One , commissioned the show after planning to introduce " braver " , " dynamic " and " pacier " shows to attract a younger audience for the channel .

= = = Writing = = =

The two main writers , Brenton and Wolstencroft , had different styles and influences in their scripts . Wolstencroft was influenced by American television to make the episodes pacier . His chosen writing style was a mixture of the " grittiness " of le Carré 's works and James Bond @-@ like fantasies . While writing the series , the writer introduced a set of " MI5 terminology " , terms used by the main characters in the series . According to Oyelowo , Wolstencroft 's scripts included more spy terms , stating " we curse David Wolstencroft often . His dialogue tends to be the most chewy , " and the actors had to learn them as if they spoke as such on a daily basis . Brenton , meanwhile , adopted the same writing style based on early episodes of *Taggart* , a Scottish @-@ based crime drama ; the writer was impressed by the show 's ability to add more to the plot halfway through . He also took inspirations from novels including le Carré 's *Tinker , Tailor , Soldier , Spy* . Mirren wrote " *One Last Dance* " , which he felt was difficult to write as he had to tie two main storylines together . Brenton and Wolstencroft collaborated to write " *Lesser of Two Evils* " due to timing constraints . Wolstencroft pitched the story , and then each writer wrote 30 pages of dialogue .

The pilot originally underwent 30 rewrites and four separate story ideas before the BBC was satisfied with it . Similarly , the second episode went through four rewrites . After four episodes were written , the September 11 attacks took place , resulting in three thousand deaths in the United States . As a result , the episodes were rewritten to take account of the events to assure the audience that the show is about fighting terrorism . According to Wolstencroft , the attacks " sidwinded " the show , " perversely made it as relevant as can be , " and " commuted a great sense of responsibility " on *Spooks* .

Throughout the writing , and also the filming stages of the series , the writers were advised by ex @-@ MI5 officers who gave insight into how the characters operate and how their personal lives would be affected by it . Among the advisors were Nick Day , who worked in counter @-@ terrorism in the Security Services , Viktor Abramkin , a UK @-@ based former KGB officer , and Mike Baker , an ex @-@ CIA agent . When including terrorists , the BBC often has the responsibility to portray people with as much balance as possible for both sides . The first series finale was heavily researched , as the episode was based on real life instances in which terrorists agreed to work with the authorities in Colombia . Meanwhile , a scene in which Tom and Patrick strip naked to ensure they are not bugged came from the producers ' sources . The sources also advised the producers how to tail targets without being spotted .

The second episode included the death of a main character . The idea was originally going to be used in the series finale . However , the producers did not know how to fill in episode two , so the death was moved up . According to Wolstencroft , the inclusion of Helen 's death was to give the

audience the message that " the world of Spooks isn 't the world where the cavalry always arrive , because in reality these people [MI5] do risk their lives on our behalf and they do get into sticky situations with genuinely nasty people . " The producers also wanted main characters to die on occasion rather than on a weekly or bi @-@ weekly basis ; otherwise it would show MI5 officers as not doing their jobs properly . Although Spooks is a serious show , the writers add occasional humour from the characters . According to Wolstencroft , he felt that anybody who works in such an occupation with high responsibilities tends to have humour around , and that those people make jokes even though they have seen " heinous things " . This became the basis for creating Jools Siviter .

The first series of Spooks saw various storylines involving the main characters . Among these were Danny 's obsession with money and spending , by hacking into a credit card database in order to fool it to give him a better credit rating , and the discovery that Tessa is running phantom agents to pocket their money . Those storylines were intended by Brenton and Wolstencroft to show the audience that the MI5 officers are tempted by money . A principle story arc is Tom dealing with the complexities of his relationship with Ellie , who at first does not know he is a spy . This storyline was based on Mike Baker , whose wife did not know he was a spy for the first six months they were together . As the series progressed , there were more difficulties with the relationship ; Brenton wrote Tom 's position as if the character did not see the problem . The same episode also introduced the sexual tension between Danny and Zoe .

= = = Filming = = =

The first series began filming in November 2001 , and continued until March 2002 . Shooting took place almost entirely in London , with many rural scenes filmed around South East England . Each episode took approximately 12 to 14 days to shoot , although they do not follow on the order of the script ; the production crew would film all scenes set at a certain location first , and then move on to the rest . Between 40 and 50 cuts were made in the first 10 minutes of the pilot episode to quickly introduce the main characters . Filming was usually done with long lens cameras , which proved difficult for the crew as many filming location were short on space . The scenes where Tom reveals he is a spy to Ellie in " Traitor 's Gate " were filmed using hand @-@ held cameras , the first time they were used in the series . By the time the crew filmed the series finale , hand @-@ held cameras were mostly used . The cameras allowed for more intimate filming as opposed to shoulder @-@ operated cameras . The downside to the hand @-@ held cameras was that they can only shoot four minutes worth of footage from each film stock . In addition , the operators at first hated using the cameras .

The episodes of the first series were not filmed in the order they were broadcast ; " Traitor 's Gate " was the third episode to be filmed , while " One Last Dance " was the fourth . While filming " One Last Dance " and " The Rose Bed Memoirs " , Macfadyen had a bloodshot left eye . To cover it , sometimes Macfadyen had to hide the left side of his face from the camera . At other times , the actor wore sunglasses . The series made use of real firearms that were decommissioned from service . Certain cast members , including Oyelowo , handled firearms at some point in the series . In order to maintain gun safety , two weapons experts were on hand to train the actors during rehearsal .

The producers chose the exterior and some interior of Freemasons ' Hall in Camden as the stand @-@ in for Thames House , the real @-@ life headquarters of MI5 , as they felt both buildings shared a similar architecture . However the Grid set , the offices of the protagonists , was filmed in a closed medical school in Kensington . Sometime after filming concluded for the first series , the building was demolished . Several other locales around London were used as filming locations . The scenes leading up to Mary 's apprehension in " Thou Shalt Not Kill " were filmed at Borough Market in Southwark . The same episode made use of Covent Garden . " One Last Dance " had scenes filmed in Roehampton and New Zealand House . In the latter 's case , the actors were filmed on the top floors , where the wind forced the actors to raise their voices so the sound unit could hear them . Scenes were filmed in Hampstead Heath in " Traitor 's Gate " , while one scene was filmed in

Trafalgar Square and at London Bridge for " The Rose Bed Memoirs " . The last two episodes held several scenes filmed at a high @-@ end house in Highgate owned by a silk merchant , in particular the opera house and bar Jools frequents , and the DG 's (Director General of MI5) office . Rural scenes were filmed across the South East of England , including in areas in Surrey , and outside Maidstone in Kent . In the series finale , the exterior of Sizewell nuclear power stations in Suffolk was used as a double for the fictional Sefton B power station .

= = = Post @-@ production = = =

Each episode took approximately two months to edit , and editing usually began as the episodes were still being shot . The editors would work on two episodes simultaneously . Following the completion of the episodes , Musckett added the score for them . The episodes include split screen sequences . Although the sequences were presented in a similar vein to the American action series 24 , the split screen idea did not come from the show itself ; Nalluri thought of it independently after visiting a pub one night after filming wrapped up . The series also introduced the premise of not including any production credits . The producers agreed that adding credits would be a waste of time , and that the viewers would pay no attention to them . However , they also saw this as an opportunity ; as Spooks is a spy show , Wolstencroft had the idea that it would be " cool " to have a show that was anonymous , and it would fit the spirit of the series .

= = Broadcast and reception = =

= = = Broadcast , ratings and impact = = =

Before broadcasting began , the BBC considered airing the show on a Saturday night timeslot as its research found that any potential viewers were less likely to watch television on Saturdays than most other nights of the week ; the BBC hoped that Spooks would boost its timeslot . However , the series instead broadcast on Mondays . The series began broadcasting on 13 May 2002 on BBC One during the 9 to 10 pm timeslot , and continued on every Monday night until 17 June 2002 , with the exception of the fourth episode , which was viewed on Tuesday 4 June starting at 10 pm , due to an overrun of the coverage of Elizabeth II 's Golden Jubilee . The episodes were also repeated on the digital channel BBC Choice . In the US , the first series aired in mid @-@ 2003 on A & E . However , each episode had approximately ten minutes edited out in order to accommodate for advert breaks . The DVD release of the series in America contained the uncut episodes . The first series was later repeated on BBC America , alongside the second series starting in June 2007 .

The Spooks producers were hoping the ratings for the pilot would achieve at least six million viewers ; at the time this was considered acceptable ratings by the BBC , as it would allow them to further consider Spooks ' future . The first episode ended up with an overnight rating of 9 @. @ 2 million viewers , with a 41 per cent audience share , easily winning its time slot , and nearly doubling the numbers of ITV1 's Helen West , which was viewed by 4 @. @ 8 million at the same slot . The second episode dropped to 7 @. @ 8 million , but was still the most seen series in the timeslot . Although the series won its timeslot again in the third episode , " One Last Dance " faced competition from The Kumars at No. 42 on BBC Two , and was down to seven million . The different timeslot for episode four meant that it dipped below six million ; however , ratings recovered to over seven million by the series finale . With consolidated figures factored in , the first series was seen by an average of 7 @. @ 49 million viewers . After two episodes aired , the BBC began considering renewing the show for a longer second series as it had proved popular among the key demographics of viewers aged 16 to 34 years . The renewal was officially announced by the BBC 's Head of Drama Commissioning Jane Tranter in December 2002 .

Within the fortnight of the show 's launch , MI5 noted a surge in a number of applications to the organisation as a result of the series . Out of the 10 @, @ 000 @-@ plus applications per week to MI5 's website , more than 2 @, @ 500 people applied following the end of a Spooks episode , while

before the episodes broadcast , only a handful of new applications were entered . MI5 welcomed the show 's impact on the public , despite the officers ' views that Spooks was " unrealistic and far @-@ fetched " , and could give viewers a false impression of how the organisation operates .

= = = Critical reception = = =

The first series received generally favourable reviews . Joe Joseph of The Times stated that it " bears a closer resemblance [to] 24 , " which " shaded the pleasure of this opening episode " , but felt that by the end of the episode , Spooks had " established a voice of its own . " Gerard O 'Donovan of The Telegraph thought that the series " proved thoroughly entertaining " , and praised Wolstencroft 's writing , which O 'Donovan felt was " confident enough to be playful with its subject ? especially regarding Britain 's poor @-@ relation relationship with America . " Alison Graham of the Radio Times called the first series " a tremendous pieces of hokum , which is only slightly po @-@ faced (but in a knowing kind of way) and which manages to stay just on the right side of self @-@ parody . " Thomas Sudcliff of The Independent felt it was a " different kind of spy drama " with " a literal description , derived from the sort of rueful story you could imagine being told at an MI5 staff social " , and " a lot of bullshit too , naturally . This is one of those dramas where colleagues never make small talk but instead launch straight into an urgent purposive shorthand . "

Nancy Banks @-@ Smith of The Guardian stated the series is " one of those shiny and insubstantial series , " adding that " all that leaping out of bed at dawn on the pretext that you have to go and sell a house tends to wear thin . " Banks @-@ Smith also called the story " slightly unexpected " and stated , " Spooks appears to plume itself on its authenticity , and there are moments , well one moment , so stupid it has to be true . " Fellow Guardian reviewer Gareth McLean stated that Spooks is " so good it makes you want to be a spy . " Dennis Landmann of MovieFreak rated the series eight out of ten , calling it " thrilling , dramatic , and fast " , while " much more concise " than many American series . Landmann added ; " Each story is complex and convincing , plus the scripts are very well written . A lot goes on in each episode , and it 's detrimental for a show like this to keep the action and tension going as fast as possible . " The reviewer also noted that having only six episodes worked as an advantage over American television , stating " while this seems incredibly short , the idea is actually very good . This ensures that each episode is strong in content and execution . American shows tend to run for 20 ? 25 episodes a season , and while developments occur , there are always the filler episodes . With [Spooks] there is nothing like it , no filler material at all . In fact , the first season sees a lot of development . "

Matthew Millheiser of DVD Talk agreed . Of the series , Millheiser called it a " great show , " with " plotlines that are fast @-@ paced and gripping throughout " , adding , " It lacks the slick , candy @-@ coated escapism and romanticism of Alias , or the white @-@ knuckled , thrill @-@ a @-@ minute intensity of 24 . [Spooks] is its own beast altogether : a smart , thrilling series that pulls no punches and maintains a consistent level of quality and intelligence throughout its running time . " Bryan Byun of DVD Verdict had an issue with the storylines , stating , " At times it takes the entire length of an episode to figure out precisely what 's going on . While that frenetic pace makes for challenging viewing , it might prevent the show from reaching a broader audience . " However , Byun thought the first series was a " solid , gripping entertainment that pulls few punches . While it 's a little talkier and more reliant on suspense and mystery than trigger @-@ happy American action shows , [Spooks] should please any fan of cloak @-@ and @-@ dagger antics . " Michael Mackenzie of The Digital Fix rated the series eight out of ten , stating that although Spooks " may not be perfect " , " it is an imaginative and intriguing series . "

= = = Helen Flynn controversy = = =

The first series attracted controversy for its second episode , which saw the demise of a main character after her hand and head were forced into a deep fryer . The scene attracted over 250 complaints , 154 of them to the television watchdog , the Broadcasting Standards Commission , the highest number of complaints for a television programme in 2002 . Following the complaints , the

BBC admitted that the scene " clearly disturbed " several viewers , but defended it as it was showing the audience " the kind of threat which might be faced by agents engaged in the fight against terrorism . " The Broadcasting Standards Commission stated the scene was shocking , but " in the context was acceptable and important for the later narrative " . However the watchdog still criticised the BBC for failing to warn viewers of the violence to come in the scene . The controversy sparked a response from comedian Charlie Brooker in his Guardian column , stating : " The moment her head was forced into the deep @-@ fat @-@ fryer , viewers reared on the formulaic , it 'll @-@ be @-@ alright @-@ in @-@ the @-@ end blandness of cookie @-@ cutter populist dramas like Casualty and Merseybeat sat up and blinked in disbelief : here was a major BBC drama series that actually had the nerve to confound expectation . "

= = = Accolades and viewer polls = = =

The first series of Spooks was nominated for six awards , one of which it won . It was nominated for three British Academy Television Awards (BAFTA) awards , two of which were Craft nominations . The series won the Best Drama Series category over Clocking Off , Cutting It and Teachers . Colin Green was nominated for his editing work , and Jennie Muskett for Original Television Music in the Craft awards , but lost to Daniel Deronda and The Forsyte Saga respectively . The first series was also nominated for three Royal Television Society Awards , including Drama Series , although it lost out to Clocking Off . Howard Brenton and David Wolstencroft were nominated for the Writer award , but lost to Peter Bowker 's work on television film Flesh and Blood . In the Craft awards , Julian Slater , Nigel Heath , Michael Fentum and Dan Morgan were nominated in Best Sound in Drama .

The first series was well received by fans . At the end of 2002 , the BBC released a " Best of " viewer polls on its website . Spooks was voted the third best drama , beaten only by lesbian period drama Tipping the Velvet , which starred Keeley Hawes , and American action series 24 . However , Spooks was also voted the third worst drama . Firth and Macfadyen were listed in the " Best Actor " category , being voted twenty @-@ first , and fifth , respectively . Macfadyen was also voted the sixth " hunkiest male " . Meanwhile , in the " Best Actress " category , Agutter and Hawes were voted twenty @-@ sixth and second , respectively . Agutter , Faulkner and Hawes were also respectively voted the thirtieth , sixteenth and second " most fanciable females " . The Tom and Ellie relationship was seen by viewers as the fourth best couple in television for the year , and Patrick McCann as the sixth best villain . The closing scenes of the series finale were voted the second " Favourite Moment " , behind the reveal of Nina Myers as a mole in 24 .

= = Home video release = =

The first series is available on DVD box set . It was first released in the United Kingdom (Region 2) on 16 June 2003 . It was later released in Australia (Region 4) on 18 August 2003 , and in the United States (Region 1 , where it is known as MI @-@ 5 : Volume 1) on 13 January 2004 . The box set consists of all six episodes of the first series over three discs and 1 @-@ 78 : 1 Anamorphic PAL widescreen format . The box set includes an array of special features . Each episode has its own audio commentary track . In addition there are numerous interviews with the cast and crew members of the series , discussing the origins and development of the show and the purpose of the main characters . There are also deleted scenes , image galleries , an explained list of MI5 terms , series credits (Spooks is a programme that does not include credits in its episodes) , and scripts of the episodes , the latter of which are found on DVD @-@ ROM . In the United Kingdom , the box set was released with a " 15 " British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) certificate (meaning it is unsuitable for viewing by those under the age of 15 years) .