

A DETECTIVE



GORDON STORY

# A Case with a Bang



Ulf Nilsson

illustrated by GITTE SPEE

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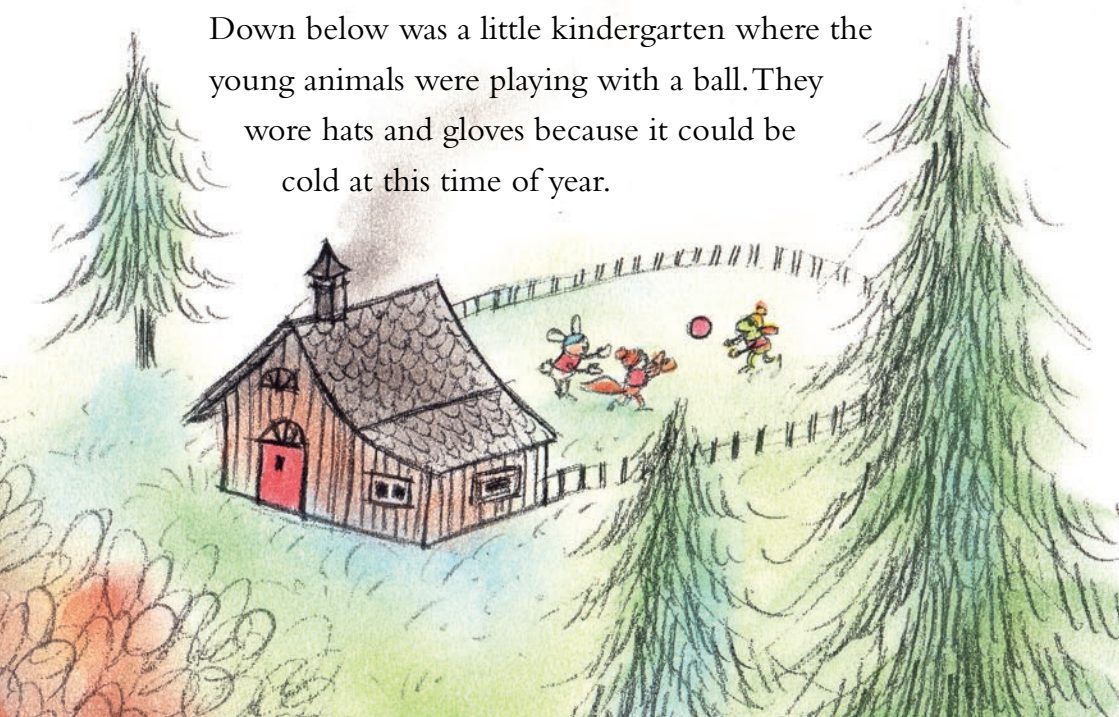
**Nothing terrible  
has happened. Yet.**

High in the sky, the crow was flying. “Cra-aak,” she called.

She flew up over bare mountain cliffs. Then over the forest where leaves were turning yellow and red.

How beautiful it all was, seen from above!

Down below was a little kindergarten where the young animals were playing with a ball. They wore hats and gloves because it could be cold at this time of year.



Further on, a river wiggled. A summer cottage perched on its bank. And over by the big oak tree was a newly built house.

The crow swooped towards the badger's tidy cottage.

Ha! The trash can had been overturned and completely smashed. Terrible, but it served the old grouch right!

And then the crow landed by the forest's little police station. She stepped up to the door and pecked at it.  
“Cra-aak!”



The door opened at once and a police officer peered out.

It was the mouse called Detective Buffy.

She was Chief Detective.

“Good morning, Crow,” she said nicely, with a salute. “Chilly today. I think winter is on its way...”

“Has something terrible happened?” asked the crow.  
“I’m pretty sure it has!”

“No, I’ve just been doing my reports. Only one report—of noise in the night.”

“Noise in the night?”

“Yes, Badger said someone tipped over his trash can with a great crash.”

The crow nodded.  
That’s what she’d seen.

“So nothing terrible has happened,” Buffy said. “Yet...”

They said goodbye and Detective Buffy sat again at her large desk.

She looked down at her paper.

“Night noise” was what it said in the report.  
Someone had banged on the lid of Badger’s trash can,





then finally tipped it over. It was absolutely forbidden to make noise at night. This would have to be investigated.

“Hmm,” Buffy said quietly to herself. Maybe a deer happened to push over the can. Or it might have been that crow looking for something edible.

Who, who? Hmm.

Detective Buffy had a friend called Gordon, an old toad. He used to be Chief Detective but he was now retired. Gordon still lived in the police house—and could help when necessary.



Although lately he had mostly been lying in bed reading books. He'd cleaned out his attic and found a whole box of books about trolls.

Gordon had become so engrossed in the troll stories that he'd soon read them all.

Now he lay in bed like a round lump.

He was also humming.

"Hmm, I think it must be Bang," he said. "Ha! I always figure out what's going on..."

"What?" said Buffy, looking up from her report.

"Bang is the richest troll," Gordon explained to his friend.

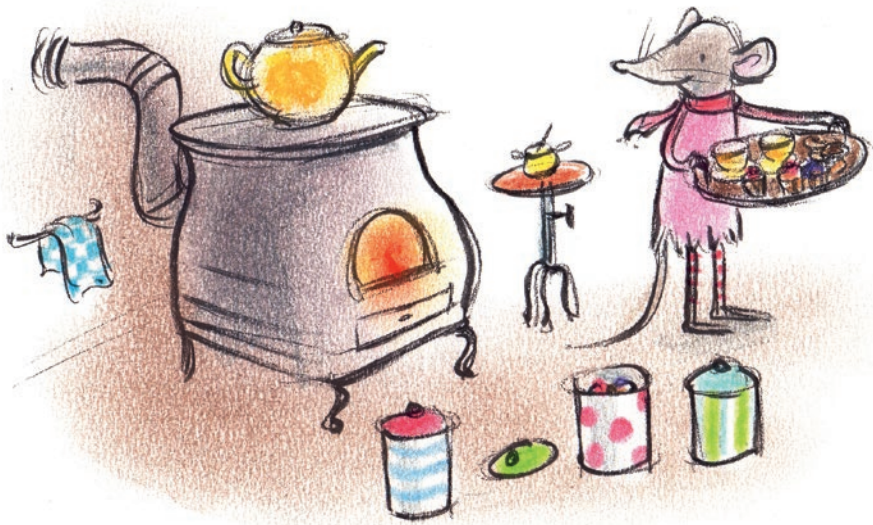
The two police looked at each other.

"You're not talking about Badger's trash can, are you?" said Buffy.

"No, I'm reading an adventure story about trolls. And I think Bang has hidden all the gold in question," said Gordon. "I've read all the troll books now and I'm beginning to understand how trolls think. Long before the end of the story I figured out what would happen..."

Buffy jumped down from her swivel chair and stretched her arms wide.

"No one thinks the same as oneself," said Gordon.



“Everyone is different. We must understand that, otherwise we make mistakes in our police work. You and the crow, for example, think completely differently.”

“In what way?” Buffy asked.

“You always want to solve problems. The crow looks for terrible things she can tell others about.”

Buffy put on water for tea and took eight cakes from the cake tin. Two for herself and six for Gordon, as usual. Gordon went on reading.

“Ha!” he said. “It was Bang. I knew it! You have to watch those trolls.”

Buffy poured them each a cup of tea.

Gordon climbed laboriously out of bed. His legs creaked and he had to adjust his ample stomach.



Gordon was a very wise toad who thought a lot. There was no one who thought exactly the way he did.

“Trolls don’t exist,” said Buffy.

“Do mice?” said Gordon, and he laughed.

“Mice do!” said Buffy.

“Of course,” said Gordon. “It’s easy to deduce that mice exist. You only have to talk to one to find evidence of it.”

Buffy nodded, pleased. She was a police officer and she liked evidence.

“We have not seen any trolls *to date*, but that doesn’t prove anything. We haven’t ever talked to a monkey either. Do monkeys exist?”

“Well,” said Buffy. “Swallows often talk about monkeys when they come home from Africa. That’s a form of evidence. But I still don’t think there are trolls!”

“Ha, but what do we know about the future? Maybe we’ll meet a troll, tomorrow even. Or tonight, because trolls can’t be out in the daytime. You have to be prepared for the unbelievable.”

“Who would like the last nut cake?” Buffy didn’t want to talk any more about trolls.

Gordon chuckled.

“Of course, *you* should have the nut cake because you love nuts, dear Buffy.”

Gordon looked admiringly at himself in the mirror. A bulging stomach with slender legs and flat feet. Bald head with large eyes and a wide mouth. Exactly what a wise old toad should look like, he thought with pleasure.

He took a strawberry tart and pushed it into his wide mouth. And then another. There’s a lot of goodness in that stomach, he thought. Who knows how many cakes are in there!

Buffy jumped up on the desk chair again, swung her feet a little and nibbled at the nut cake. She always saved the nut until last.



“Hrrm,” said Gordon, “trolls are interesting. I myself am nineteen years old and tired in the legs. You’ll soon be two years old and as lively as any mouse. Trolls, on the other hand, can be more than a thousand years old, according to my books.”

“Aren’t they just story books?” Buffy asked carefully.

“And the troll called Bang is 1300 years old,” Gordon went on, pretending not to hear the question. “Trolls are older than the largest trees, almost as old as stones, I think. They can’t be out in the daytime, it says in my books. If the sun shines on them, they crack. Hoo!”

“Poor things,” said Buffy.

“Furthermore, trolls are terribly rich,” continued Gordon. “You and I have just our police station, our two beds and the cakes we need. But these trolls have been digging for gold deep in the mountains. And saving the gold in large caves...”

“How much gold?”

“Bang has enough to fill our entire police station!”

Buffy looked around the room. She was glad it wasn’t filled with gold and was just an ordinary police station with room for two police officers.

Gordon took two cakes and squished them together.



A lemon cake with a chocolate cake as topping.  
He put them into his mouth. These two went well  
together.



“What do trolls eat?” asked Buffy.

“Nobody knows!” Gordon answered as he chewed.  
“It doesn’t say in the books. But since trolls are as big  
as houses, they may not need to eat every year.”

Buffy had nibbled the entire nut cake and now  
she spun the top nut between her fingers. Once she’d  
eaten the nut itself, she was alert and ready for work.

Now she popped it into her mouth and closed her eyes in pleasure.

“So!” she said, hopping to the floor. “Thank you for the story, but now I must get to work. It’s time to discover who made all that noise in the night at Badger’s cottage. And who turned his trash can upside down.”

She put on her police hat and took the magnifying glass with her. Sometimes it is best to investigate first, before you do too much thinking.

“By the way!” said Buffy. “The squirrels asked if we could look after Helmer till tomorrow. They’re going to see friends and they said that Helmer is very interested in police work.”

Gordon finished his tea. He layered a pineapple ringlet onto a chocolate brownie. They went well together, too.

“Helmer is a lively child,” he said to himself. It would be fun to teach him all about police work. And trolls. Imagine if they came across a real troll. That would be unexpected!



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asked the crow. “I’m pretty sure it has!”

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