

Gordon Fox and the Three Hares

By Jules de Jongh

[title sequence-jingle with title]

Nanny Bea: Hello there, so good of you to join us. I'm Nanny Bea if you didn't already know and you've found me in bit of a muddle today. You see I'm, I'm both happy and sad, at the same time. Bittersweet. It's because my two little squirrels have flown the nest. Now all along I wanted them to go out into the world and make their way, build their own squirrel houses, drive their own squirrel cars but I miss them terribly and it's only been three days. I have been out in the garden trying to distract myself. Oh! That reminds me! We have a delightful contribution for our Poet Tree...

[poet tree jingle]

Elle: Hello Nanny Bea, my name is Elle and I have something for your Poet Tree. This poem is called Tumbleweed.

My mother's hairs are everywhere the human eye can see. Sometimes I'm sure I think they might just be following me. They form a bunch upon the stairs, in every corner here and there. They hide out in Dad's dressing gown, in my undies they are found. Her tumbleweed roams without care. It's a wonder her head's not bear.

Bye

[end of call bell]

Nanny Bea: Thank you Elle you have made my day with that little ditty, thank you.

[knock knock knock]

Nanny Bea: Oh, who could that be?

Jules: Hi Nanny Bea, It's Jules from next door.

Nanny Bea: To the east or two the west.

Jules: Uh, well from where I'm standing the east, so I guess it's your west?

Nanny Bea: What a relief! I don't have a neighbour to my east. Come in dear.

Jules: Of course I've got a tale for you today and some tea, Kuding tea which is supposed to be the most bitter tea in the world.

Nanny Bea: Oh, how, how, how very informative, thank you.

Jules: But...I also brought some honey to sweeten it, bittersweet.

Nanny Bea: Oh Jules, you are so thoughtful, let me pop the kettle on while you tell our listening friends about your story.

Jules: I'm sure you've probably heard of Goldilocks and the Three Bears but today I'll tell you all about Gordon Fox and the Three Hares. Are you ready for a story?

Nanny Bea: Oh yes, yes please!!!

Jules: Okay then, **Gordon Fox and the Three Hares, adapted for radio**

One windy winter's day Gordon Fox stopped at the motorway services for some Doritos and a Diet Coke when off in the distance he saw not one, not two but three hares in matching leather coats. Now rabbits in coats are almost commonplace but hares, no. They're like your mom's distant cousin she says you met but you know you never did, so Gordon was not going to miss this chance to see these elusive rabbit-like creatures up close. Forgetting his Doritos and forgoing his Diet Coke Gordon followed those hares into the scrubland.

It was a tough place, the scrubland, full of plants that either prickle or at least tickle. But this did not deter Gordon. He was conveniently wearing hiking boots, a purely for fashion purchase but now totally justified.

Gordon got closer, so close in fact, the trio of hares turned to look. Gordon nipped behind a mulberry bush and acted as berry as he could. The hares turned away and carried on. Gordon could breath again. He'd have to go into stealth mode from this point forward, too much was at stake but how stealth could one be in bright red boots with blue spotted laces? So off came the no longer justified hiking boots as Gordon tippy toed ten paces behind the hares, as quiet as a mouse, well as quiet as a moose given his size but either way he managed to avoid detection.

One minute the hares were in view, and the next they'd vanished behind a grassy knoll, which is the opposite of a dusty hole. Gordon climbed up one side of the knoll, paused to catch his breath, (not that he was out of it, he just liked to let it roam free sometimes and round it back up), then he marched all the way down the other side only to find....nothing. Nothing, absolutely nothing but dirt. Lumpy, bumpy clumps of dirt and what wasn't dirt was covered in dirt, a dirty stone, a dirty door knob, a dirty rock...'Wait a dirty what?' Gordon thought. A dirty stone, a dirty door kn...oh a dirty door knob! Gordon wasted no time and did what all knobs beckon you to do, he turned it and pulled. The door knob was unsurprisingly connected to a....well, I'm gonna call it a hatch, can you really call a door on the floor a door? Behind the hatch,

or door if you insist, there was a winding staircase of polished oak disappearing deep underground. Gordon tippey toed down the stairs, but with socks, albeit very dirty socks on his feet, that soon became more like, slippy toed, 'Whoh hoo,' he tried to stifle it. Once at the bottom of the stairs he heard voices, small rabbit-like voices (yes hares are not rabbits but when they talk, they all sound the same). The voices were coming from a room glowing with candle light. Gordon peaked through a crack in the door. The three hares were seated around a table covered in felt. In each of their paws was a selection of playing cards, the biggest hare threw something down and said 'I'll see your acorns and raise you a turnip.' Gordon watched in awe and total boredom. 'Really, I've done all this just to see some hares in leather jackets playing poker in a secret lair!' Gordon can be a little hard to please. In frustration he walked back to the winding stairs and nearly walked up them but... 'What is this smell?' thought Gordon and it wasn't the stench of the three hares with questionable hygiene, no this was the scent of...[sniff, sniff]...the scent of...[sniff] brown sugar..[sniff, sniff] and warm milk..[sniff, sniff] with just a hint of cinnamon. Oh, this piqued Gordon's interest. I mean that packet of Doritos he left behind was meant to fill the now even bigger hole in his stomach. And what better to fill a bigger hole than a bowl full of porridge. Those slow release carbs will keep you going all day. Mmm, mmm, mmm. 'Just a little sniff and then I'll go,' he said unconvincingly, then followed his sniffer, (sniff) all the way (sniff) to the kitchen table where he found, not one, not two but three bowls of porridge. Porridge just begging to be eaten. 'Just one little bite and then I'll go,' Gordon tried to convince himself so he went to the big bowl and took a big bite. 'Ho, ha, ho,' Gordon replied, 'this one is too hot.' He quickly recovered and then moved over to the mid sized bowl and with a bit more care this time, took a mid sized bite. 'Blah, this one is too cold!' he said disgusted, So as a last resort, he slid over to the little bowl and took a little bite. 'Oh,' Gordon said, surprised, 'this one is just right, mmm,mmm.' And for Gordon that was quite a compliment given how hard he is to please. Then he promptly ate it all up. 'Mmm, mmm, mmm yeah.'

With that big belly hole filled up, Gordon thought he'd take a load off and sit for a bit before facing that long and winding staircase. Just around the corner he spied a big billowing chair. 'Just a little sit and then I'll go,' he said convincing himself, so he plopped himself right down and sunk right in, and in and in. 'This chair is too soft,' Gordon Fox said as he wriggled his way out of it. He went over to the mid sized chair and plopped himself right down. Only to complain, 'Ah, this chair is too hard.' Nearly ready to give up, Gordon tried the little chair, 'Oh, now this chair is just right.' That would've been enough for Gordon if he hadn't filled his big belly hole quite so full. All that porridge was weighing him down. I mean really weighing him down. So much that, 'crunch' he broke the chair. Okay Gordon did feel really bad about that but not so bad 'cause round the corner he spied a big comfy bed. Gordon said, 'Just a little nap and then I'll go,' as he waddled over to the big bed and flopped right into it and into it and into it. 'Ah this bed is too soft,' Gordon spouted, annoyed that he now had

to get out of it. Gordon made his way over to the mid sized bed and flopped right into it. 'Ah, this one is too hard. I mean call this a bed, why even bother!' Gordon was getting grouchy and grouchier as sleepiness consumed him. Only because he was too tired to fight it, Gordon tried the little bed. Ohhhh, 'this one is just riiii [snore.]'

Gordon Fox knew that someday his exceedingly loud snoring would be his undoing. When his brother heard his snoring, he slept out in the hall. When his neighbour heard his snoring, she built a garden wall. And when three hares playing poker heard his snoring, they ran ready for a brawl. Now have you ever seen hares fighting? Ah, you've gotta see hares fighting, you can pause this and go google it and come back and then I'll tell you the rest of the story. And I'll just entertain myself....[the girl from Ipanema]. Oh you're here, sooooo those hares come rushing in, first to the kitchen and the big one said (you might know how this goes, say it with me if you like) 'Someone's been eating my porridge!' The mid sized one echoed, 'Someone's been eating my porridge!' And the little one added, 'Someone's been eating my porridge and ate it all up.' Huh! The three hares in leather jackets were shocked, 'I mean who eats another man's porridge!' As they continued to discuss the deterioration of standards in society, the big one caught sight of his chair all scrunpled. He ran in and said (say it with me)... 'Someone's been sitting in my chair!' The mid sized one echoed, 'Someone's been sitting in my chair!' And the little one added, 'Someone's been sitting in my chair and they broke it.' Huh! The three hares in leather jackets were shocked, they were dismayed, 'I mean who eats another man's porridge and has the audacity to sit in his chair?' This normally would've led to an even bigger rant about the state of the world if it weren't for the big hare seeing what he thought was his bed all crumpled. All three ran into the bedroom. The big one said, 'Someone's been sleeping in my bed!' The mid sized one echoed, 'Someone's been sleeping in my bed!' And the little one added, 'Someone's been sleeping in my bed and there he is!' Huh! The three hares in leather jackets were shocked, they were dismayed, they were....too late. Gordon Fox had jumped out of bed and scrambled as fast as he could up the stairs and out the door, or the hatch. He didn't even stop when he ran past his no longer justified hiking boots. All the way back to the petrol station he ran, with that boost of energy one gets from a hearty bowl of porridge and a good afternoon nap. Oh and Gordon Fox and the three hares, never met again.

The end [book close]

Nanny Bea: Why thank you Jules for a most unexpected tale. I must google fighting hares again, it's a sure fire way to hit my giggle button. Will you kindly join us next week with more Tales and Tea?

Jules: Tale and Tea and me will all return next week.

Thomas: go to [www.nannybea.com](http://www.nannybea.com)

Jules: Go there to find out more including how to be on the show like Elle.

[Be on the Show jingle]

Announcer man: This has been a Toad in the Hole production for NannyBea.com