

There's Snow School Today

by Jules de Jongh
Season 2 Episode 3

[opening theme music and strapline]

Nanny Bea: Why I'm Nanny Bea! Hello and welcome to my cottage I like to call Dave. You are just in time for a story. My neighbour Jules who will be here any..

[knock sfx]

Nanny Bea: minute now.

Nanny Bea: Hello, who is it?

Jules: Hi Nanny Bea, it's Jules and I've got you a story?

Nanny Bea: So it is! Come in and I'll make you a cup of tea.

Jules: Thank you, we can't have our tale without any tea?

Nanny Bea: What story have you brought for us.

Jules: Today we'll find out what happens when a massive snow storm arrives along with a mysterious friend. Are you ready for a story?

Nanny Bea: Yes please

Jules: Okay then, There's Snow School Today adapted for radio

It was an ordinary day, the sun rose, the dog barked, and everyone got to the breakfast table in time to fight for the best seat, that didn't include Dad the porridge maker as he was busy, you guessed it, making porridge. Joe asked for seconds while Seb was still on his firsts. Not that he didn't want seconds, he's just a slow eater and a frequent talker. In no time the countdown began, 'Leaving in 5,' Dad declared. His time keeping was fluid but unpredictably so better just run up stairs, brush your teeth, run back down, grab your coat, your bag, your shoes 'And your gloves! Don't forget your gloves!' Mom shouted. They forgot their gloves.

Seb was first into the car this time so nabbed the front seat. 'Hot Bot?' he asked Dad who was just pulling out. The answer to a hot bottom was always, 'Yes please.' So Seb popped on both seat heaters. Joe slipped in between them to adjust the radio to his liking but before they'd even reached the end of the drive, they stopped for out of the sky fell a blanket of snow and when I say a blanket, I mean a blanket, all at once, like a snowball the size of the moon had been dropped from the clouds. Dad adjusted the radio to his liking, the news, always the news. This time Joe was too stunned to object. 'Winter storm warnings across the southland today as storm Doris hits our shores, expect major disruption with snow reaching up to 3 feet in some areas.'

'I guess we're one of those areas?' said Joe as Dad tried to back the car up the drive. But derrrruh, derrrruh, the car was not complying, even with four wheel drive so Dad puuuuushed his door open and the boys scrambled out his side. The forecast was right, 3 feet or up to Joe's chin.

They started digging their way back up the drive to the front door until, bunk, they bumped into Mom digging her way down the drive. 'Welcome back, looks like you're having school at home today,' she said as Pip hip, hoppity, hipped over each family member and made her way back to the warmth of home and her bed by the fire. Oh the fire, that glowing beacon of welcomeness. The boys thawed their frozen fingers in front of the fire, too bad they had forgotten their gloves. 'Off with those wet clothes and I'll get you set up to learn from home today,' Dad said as he went to do the same.

All dry, the boys were ushered around the kitchen table and each given a laptop, Joe an old one they were trying to sell on ebay and Seb the new one that was supposed to be Mom's birthday present. Seb was thrilled, Mom was not. They were pointed towards the school website and left to make their way to virtual school.

Miss Hollybrook really wanted to be an actor so her virtual classroom was like watching telly. She'd put on funny voices, employ puppets, and stuffed toys, and lego blocks. Joe was set. Seb not so much. Mr Truman did not want to be an actor or a puppeteer or anything other than a teacher. He was an excellent teacher. He should keep his day job. Virtual school with Mr Truman was like watching telly, only with the screen switched off.

Every so often Mom would come in and say, 'Are you done with the (whatever was on her mind) yet?' She is very task focused. That didn't help much but it made her feel better. Seb started to wiggle and wriggle, squirm and worm. 'I'm so bore...?' Seb stopped mid sentence and waited...phew Mom did not hear the 'b' word, otherwise she would've said, 'Bored, and who's fault is that?' Again that didn't help much but it made her feel better. She would tell the boys that they are responsible for keeping their minds entertained. Seb had no idea what she meant, he just didn't want to be reminded. As he sat there trying not to work out what Mom meant, Buddy showed up. 'Hey Buddy! Just in time!' Seb said to himself. Buddy made everything fun, even History lessons. As Mr Truman spoke of the Warrior Queen Boudicca, Buddy started to draw a picture of what she must've looked like. He gave her a fountain of red hair rolling down her back, she had a cape and bands of gold around her arms, then Buddy drew a massive great spear for her to hurl. Just as he did that the spear flew across the room. Seb ran over to grab it, fortunately it didn't break anything along the way.

Buddy then took the picture of Warrior Queen Boudicca and stretched it out until it was as big as the room. Now Seb could see it all around him. They were in Britain or at least it looked like it could be but they didn't call it that. Boudicca was planning an attack. The Romans who already ruled parts of the country, were trying to take her part. They were cruel to Boudicca and her two daughters but that didn't stop her. Right now she was instructing her army who had already destroyed many Roman towns. Seb stood quietly and listened carefully. The Battle of Watling Street as it will be known was laid out on a chunky oak table inside a little hut. It was damp and cold but the fire in the corner was roaring. Men stood all around the table, all armed with spears and shields. Boudicca shouted her final order and the men followed her out. Then she jumped into a small carriage pulled by two horses. She stood in it and spurred the horses on.

Seb couldn't keep up with her so he hopped on a horse but the army was already being forced down into a narrow valley. They were trapped, Romans all around and Boudicca's army was defeated for good. Seb got off his horse and walked back towards the hut, as they walked he noticed tall buildings either side of them and a long river. Buddy urged Seb into the boat. They rowed down the river, under Westminster Bridge, which stretched across the water reaching over to a building made of stone on the water's edge, there must have been 10,000 windows with spikey spires and a massive clock standing on a tower of its own just waiting to strike. To the right of the bridge they could see Boudicca, her horses rearing and her two daughters crouched down in the small carriage as she stood tall with her spear in hand. As they got closer Seb could see she was solid brass, a statue but still fierce and

mighty. Before he could get close enough to touch it that massive clock struck 12 noon, bong, bong and so on.

'Lunch time!' Dad announced and Seb turned to see his dad taking a pizza out of the oven. Seb was going to offer some to Buddy but he'd already gone. Seb and Joe closed their laptops and opened their mouths. Mmm, mmm pizza for lunch and half the school day already done. Maybe this afternoon when Mr Truman tells them about glaciers in Antarctica where the penguins live, Buddy will come back and bring that story to life.

The end

Nanny Bea: Thank you Jules. Oh that Buddy reminds me of a friend of mine.

Jules: Do you have an imaginary friend?

Nanny Bea: No. I have a friend called Buddy but he does have an extraordinary imagination. He once told me that he was an eagle. Of course, he's nothing of the sort. As if a badger could fly.

Jules: I have never seen a badger fly that's for sure, but I've never heard one talk either.

Nanny Bea: Well you are missing a treat there. They have the most amusing stories. Speaking of, will you be returning next week with more tales and tea?

Jules: Of course!

Thomas: Go to NannyBea.com

Jules: Go there to find out about all our episodes. On NannyBea.com there's our entire collection of stories to listen to and to read along. As well as how you can be part of the show.

[Be on the Show jingle]

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