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***Detective Gordon: A complicated case* by Ulf Nilsson illustrated by Gitte Spee**

Publisher: Gecko Press

RRP \$19.99

This finely-illustrated chapter book has a mystery that will keep young readers guessing.

Kind-hearted Detective Gordon and his police assistant, Buffy, are puzzled by the sadness that has descended on the animals in the forest. They are being teased about embarrassing worries they keep secret and they're reluctant to name the culprit in case their fears will be made public. Even Detective Gordon and sweet-natured Buffy are targeted by the mean-spirited felon.

However, some special cakes fortify the two sleuths as they set about uncovering the cause of the problem. The wise toad and the clever mouse are a well-matched pair. Their tolerance and understanding of each other is a study in caring, kindness, and good humour. Witty dialogue lightens the serious nature of the bullying. While Detective Gordon's rewriting of the law is a masterstroke of simplicity and common sense.

Softly-coloured illustrations add visual delight to the storyline. Detective Gordon's thoughtful personality shines through his large eyes. Hardworking Buffy is seen to be a valiant character determined to prove her worth as a police assistant.

A valuable tale for discussion with children about inclusive play, consideration for others, and how what we say can affect people.

Author's website:

<http://tinyurl.com/nmvh5xk>

Illustrator's website:

<http://www.gittespee.nl/en/home-2>

**Reviewed by children's book author,
Jean Bennett**

