



NORTH WALES TALES

Gelert the Brave: The Faithful Hound of Beddgelert

Beddgelert, North Wales

Long, long ago, in a green valley deep in the mountains of Snowdonia, there lived a prince called Llywelyn. And by his side, always, padded the bravest, kindest dog in all of Wales. His name was Gelert.

Gelert had soft brown eyes and ears that flopped when he ran. He could chase the wind across the hills and still come home in time for supper. But more than anything, Gelert loved the prince's little baby, who slept in a wooden cradle by the fire.

Every day, Gelert curled up beside the cradle to keep the baby warm and safe. "Good dog," Llywelyn would whisper. "My faithful friend."

One misty morning, the prince called his hunting horn. *Toot-toot-tooooo!* But this time, Gelert did not come bounding over.

"Stay, Gelert," said Llywelyn gently. "Stay and watch the baby for me." Gelert wagged his tail and lay down by the cradle, as good as gold.

While the prince was away on the misty hills, a hungry grey wolf crept down from the rocks. It slipped through the open door, sniffing towards the sleeping baby.

But Gelert leapt up at once! He stood tall between the wolf and the cradle, growling low and brave. "You shall not pass," said Gelert with his eyes.

There was a great tumble and a chase around the room. Tables wobbled. The cradle rocked right over onto its side. And brave Gelert chased that wolf out of the door and far, far away, until it never dared come back.

When the wolf had gone, Gelert flopped down, puffed out and dusty, beside the tipped-over cradle. He had saved the day.

Soon the prince came home. He saw the muddle. He saw the cradle on its side, and no baby in it. He saw Gelert lying there, tired and untidy.

"Oh no," gasped Llywelyn. His heart went cold. For a moment, just a moment, he thought something terrible had happened, and he felt cross and afraid all at once.

But then, "*Waaah!*"

A tiny cry! Llywelyn lifted the cradle, and there underneath, snug and safe and not hurt one bit, was his baby, blinking up at him. And nearby were the paw-prints of the wolf that Gelert had chased away.

The prince understood everything. Gelert had not made the muddle. Gelert had saved his child.

"My faithful, brave Gelert," said Llywelyn, kneeling down and hugging the dusty dog. "I should never have doubted you, not even for a heartbeat. You are the best friend a prince could have."

Gelert thumped his tail and licked the baby's nose, and the baby giggled.

From that day on, everyone in the valley told the story of the brave hound who guarded the prince's child. And do you know what? People say the little village there, called Beddgelert, is named after that very dog.

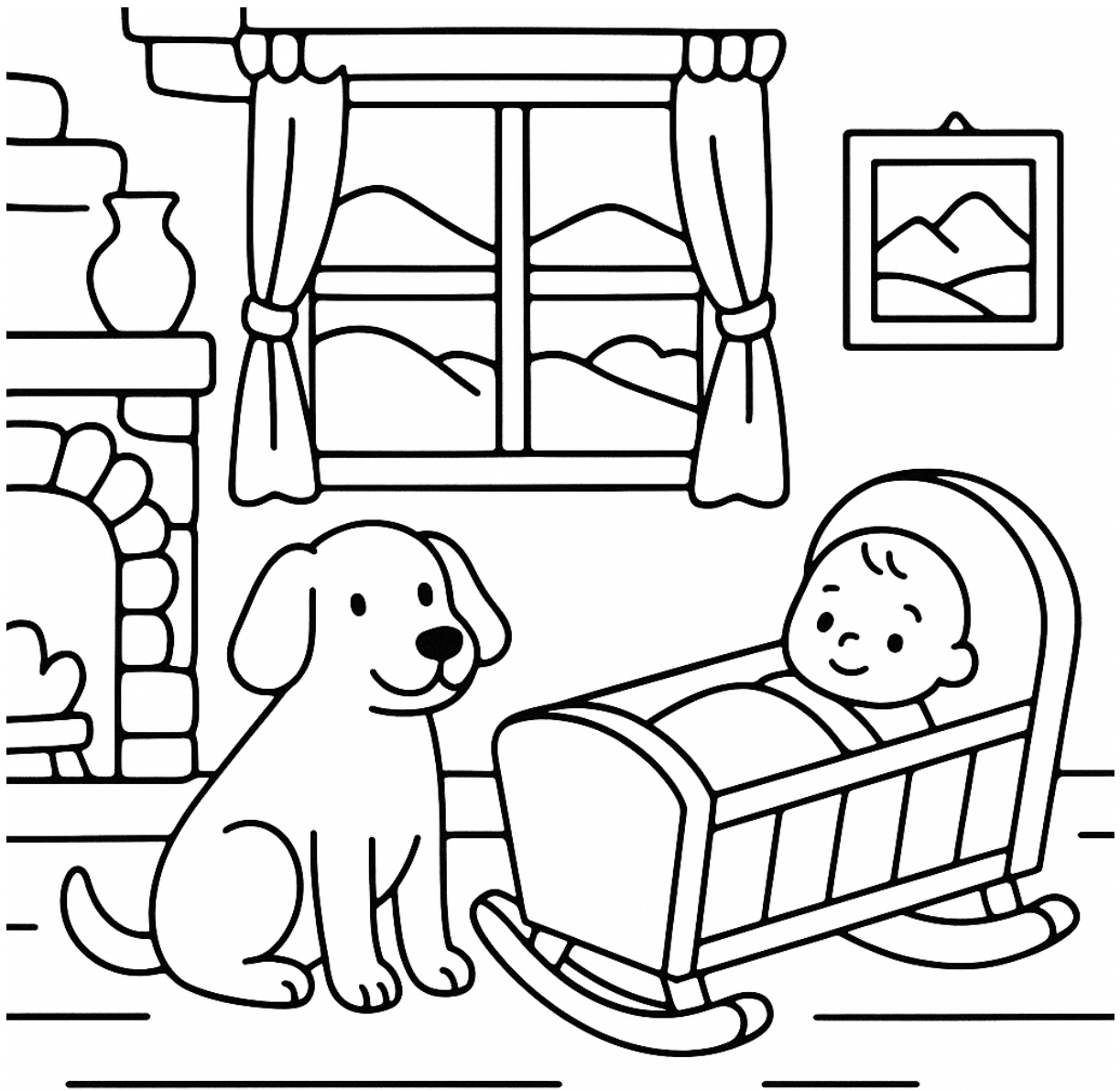
(It isn't, really, Beddgelert is named after a kind man called Saint Gelert, who lived long ago. But the story of the faithful hound is far too lovely to forget, so we tell it still.)

And if you ever visit Beddgelert today, tucked among the green Snowdonia mountains, you might just feel a brave, soft-eared dog wagging hello.

What's real?

- Beddgelert is a village and community in the Snowdonia area of Gwynedd, Wales.
- Although Beddgelert is reputedly named after the legendary hound Gelert, it is actually named after Saint Gelert, an early leader in Celtic Christianity.
- The population of the Beddgelert community was 460 at the 2021 census, including Nantmor and Nant Gwynant.
- The Beddgelert community covers 86 square kilometres (33 square miles) and is large and sparsely populated.

Now colour it in!



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