Gellert

This is an old Welsh folk story, which tells the story of the dog Gellert. His name is remembered in the town called Beddgelert.

One day, Prince Llewellyn went hunting in Dovey forest. He was cross because his favourite hunting dog Gellert was nowhere to be seen, and even crosser when, without Gellert, the whole day went by without the huntsmen catching anything.

When it grew dark, Llewellyn and his men rode home. As they went into the stable-yard, the dog Gellert slunk out to meet them. His ears were flat against his head, his tail drooped, he cowered along the ground on his belly, and his muzzle and jaws were red with blood.

With a sinking heart, Llewellyn remembered his baby son, one year old. He'd been playing happily in his cradle when the huntsmen left. Llewellyn ran upstairs to the baby's bedroom, and the dog Gellert cringed after him.

The room was a shambles. The cradle was overturned, rugs and curtains were torn and scattered, and everywhere was stained with fresh blood. Llewellyn rounded on the dog. "You murdered my son!" he shouted, and in a single stroke drew his sword and stabbed Gellert to the heart.

The dog gave a last, dying whimper. There was an answering, gurgling laugh from under one of the torn-down curtains. Llewellyn snatched the curtain away, and found his baby son alive, playing happily with a handful of bricks.

Beside the baby was the blood-stained, torn body of a wolf. It had crept into the baby's bedroom in search of prey, and Gellert the hunting-dog had fought it and killed it to save his young master's life.