Bessie

and the Secret of Loch Garve



A kelpie, a hidden hearth and a missing star...

STORY • COLOURING • PUZZLES • FOLKLORE

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A glow beneath the loch



Bessie loved the old stories told around Highland fires. One winter evening, she visited Loch Garve, where a strange amber glow shimmered beneath the water.

Plip. Plip. A little trail of bubbles rose beside her.

Then the glow flickered and faded.

Through the mist appeared a black horse with a dripping mane.

"Something is wrong with our chimney," he said.

What could make a light shine beneath a loch?

The kelpie's secret



"I am the kelpie of Loch Garve," said the water-horse. "Long ago, a builder made a magical fireplace for our home. It keeps my wife warm."

Bessie followed him down to a little enchanted dwelling beneath the loch.

His wife waved from her snug, magical room.

"The fire still glows," she said, "but the chimney's golden sparkle has almost gone."

Which part of the home should Bessie investigate?

The star-shaped clue



Bessie looked carefully at the tall stone chimney. Near its top was an empty star-shaped space.

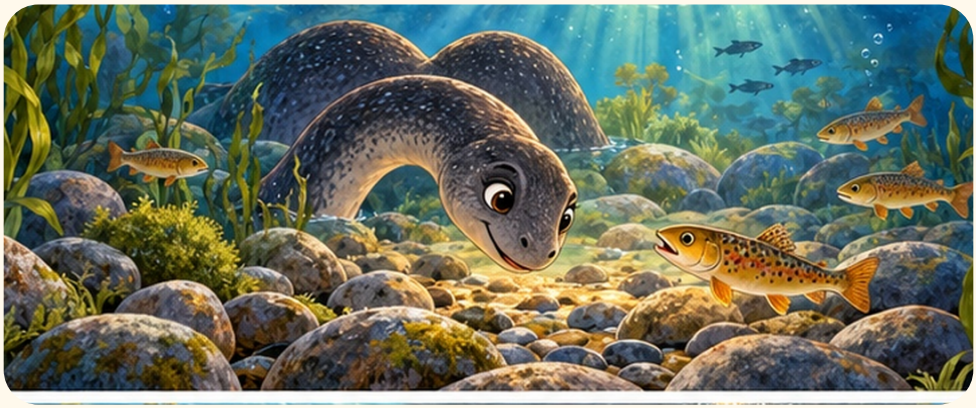
"A special stone belongs there," said the kelpie. "Its magic carries the glow through our home."

Bessie counted the little points around the gap.

"Then we need to find a star," she said. "A stone star, rather than one from the sky!"

What shape should the missing stone be?

A sound among the stones



Bessie searched the smooth pebbles on the loch bed. There were round stones, flat stones and stones shaped rather like potatoes.

A little trout swam over. "I heard a tiny tap near that waterweed," she said.

Bessie paused and listened.

Tap... tap...

A loose stem was brushing against something hard. Beneath the waving weed, a small golden point gleamed.

Which two senses helped Bessie follow the clues?

Five points of golden light



The trout gently parted the waterweed. There lay a little stone star, tucked between two pebbles.

Bessie counted its points. "One, two, three, four, five!"

"That matches the gap," said the kelpie.

He lifted the fallen stone carefully. It shone softly in the blue water.

"A small clue can lead to a wonderful discovery," Bessie said.

Can you draw a five-pointed star with your finger?

A warm Highland ending



The kelpie fitted the star-stone into its place. In a twinkle, its magic sent golden light curling through the chimney.

His wife smiled from the warm little room. "Our home feels like itself again!"

Bubbles danced upwards, and Bessie's two humps glimmered as she rose towards the surface.

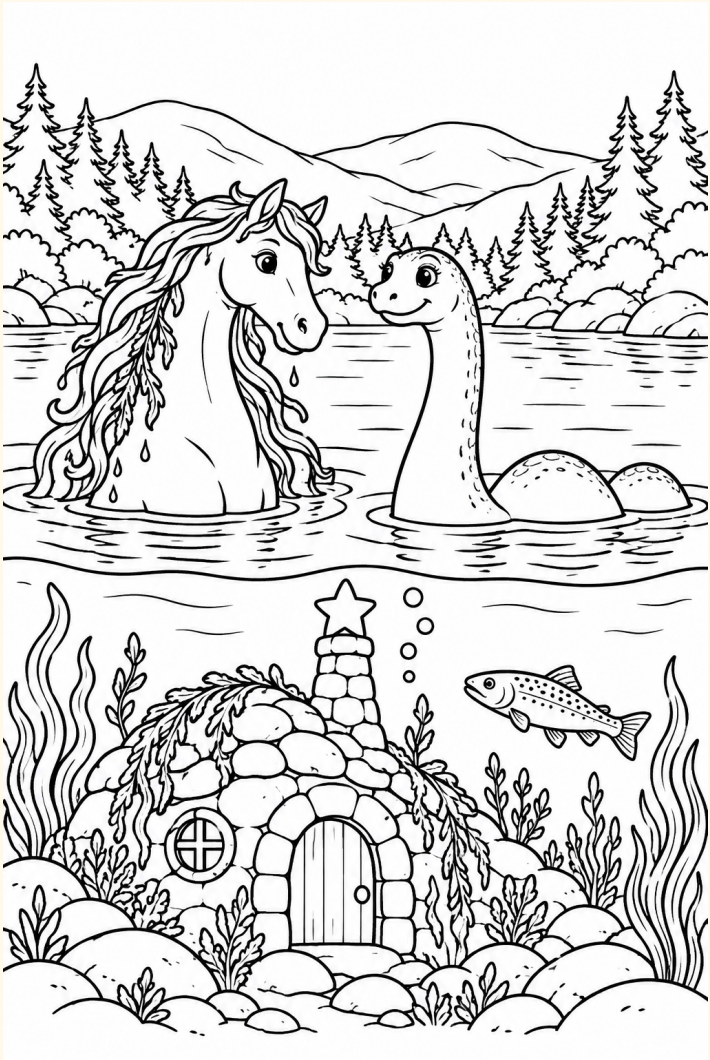
"Thank you, Bessie," called the kelpie.

"Thank the trout too," she replied. "We solved the mystery together."

Why was the trout an important part of the team?

Colour the kelpie's home

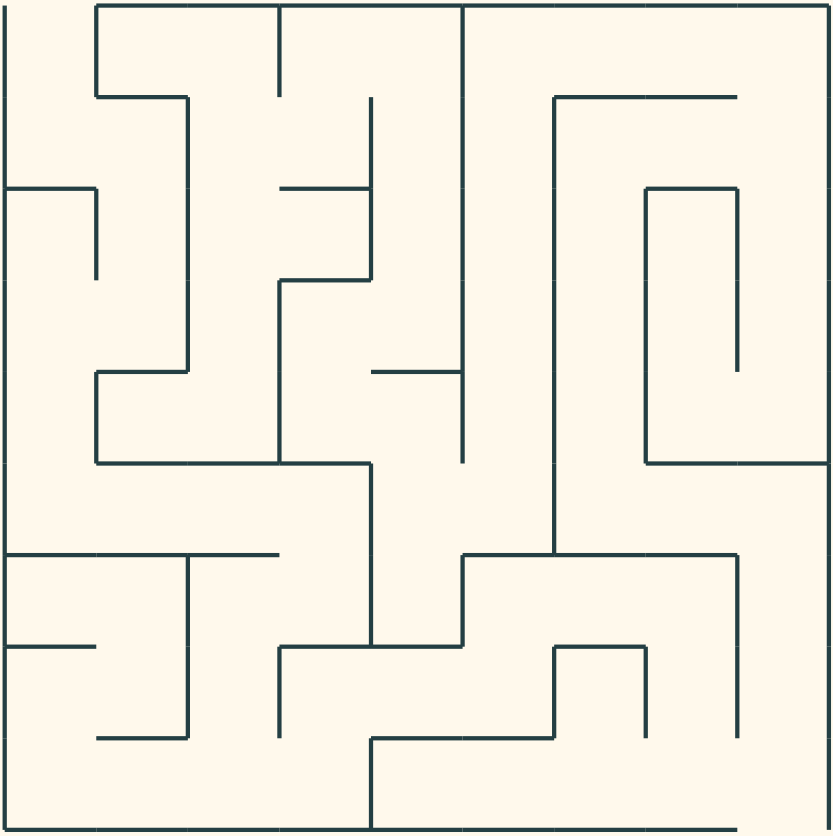
Give Bessie, the water-horse and their magical world some wonderful colours.



The star-stone maze

Help Bessie find the missing star-stone.
Draw a path without crossing a wall.

START



STAR-STONE

Try using your finger first, then a pencil.

Words beneath the water

Find the six words. They go across or down.
A loch is a Scottish word for a lake.

LOCH HORSE STONE FIRE STAR HOME

B	S	T	O	N	E	P	T
C	W	G	L	B	H	D	L
H	O	R	S	E	Y	U	O
N	U	W	W	Y	E	A	C
F	S	H	Y	N	E	N	H
I	V	S	T	A	R	I	G
R	R	M	E	P	O	R	N
E	R	H	O	M	E	C	I

Circle each word as you find it.

Find the missing stone

Which stone fits the gap? Count the points.
Circle A, B, C or D.



THE GAP



A B C D

Bessie's clue: the missing star has five points.

A kelpie from your story

Invent a water-horse of your own. Draw its flowing mane and the home where it lives.

My kelpie is called:

Its secret is:

BESSIE'S

Kelpie Clue Finder

This certificate belongs to

_____

For looking closely,
listening to little clues
and helping Bessie solve
the secret of Loch Garve.

Date: _____

With a golden ripple from Black Water River

The legend behind the story

Loch Garve has a traditional tale about a kelpie, a magical water-horse, and his wife living beneath the loch. A builder makes a fireplace and a tall chimney to warm their home. In return, the builder's family is promised a lasting supply of fish.

The tale says a patch of the loch remains free of ice above the chimney. This is a detail of the legend, rather than a verified claim about ice or water temperature.

Most versions feature one kelpie and his wife. Bessie's visit, the helpful trout and the missing star-stone are new inventions for this book. Older kelpie tales can be frightening; ours gives the water-horse a gentle role.

For real visits, keep children supervised and safely back from the loch or river. Never go onto loch ice to look for signs of the story.

Folklore sources

Garve.org - The Kelpie's Chimney

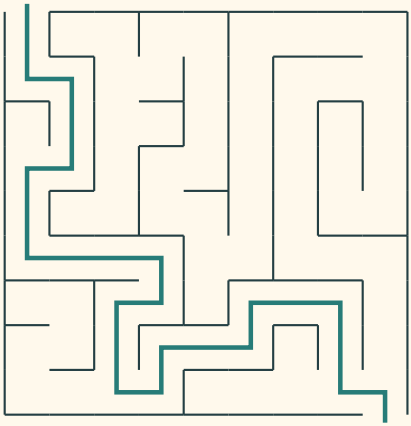
Folklore Scotland - The Kelpie's Chimney

Hidden Scotland - The Kelpie of Loch Garve

Research checked: 23 October 2026 • Source titles are clickable.

Clues & answers

Maze route



Missing stone



B

The five-pointed star fits.

Word hunt answers

Rows run from the top; columns run from the left.

STONE: row 1, columns 2-6
LOCH: column 8, rows 2-5
HORSE: row 3, columns 1-5
FIRE: column 1, rows 5-8
STAR: row 6, columns 3-6
HOME: row 8, columns 3-6

Story chat: Bessie used sight and hearing.
The trout noticed the sound and found the stone.

More Highland secrets...



A hidden home. A golden glow.
A friend who notices the smallest clue.

There is always another story waiting
for Bessie at Black Water River.



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