



Bella vs. AI

I believe I have evidence that my 14-year-old beagle Bella may be smarter than AI. If you haven't met Bella, she and her sister Maisy were found as puppies on the side of the road in a box. I adopted them, and they have been the light of our house ever since. They are sisters in every definition of the word: always together, occasionally squabbling over nonsense, and bringing more joy and love than I can ever fully express. For the past year, they have also served as my faithful genealogy research assistants, though their research method consists mainly of snoring loudly beside me and looking offended when I disturb the archives.



Bella Kelly

The family genealogy project has expanded my use of AI from basic spelling and grammar checks to generating illustrations for children's books and teaching me, step by step, how to build a website to contain my research. There is much more I can use it for, and with help from my nephew Andrew, I am beginning to explore how AI can support the next phase of the project. Still, it is becoming increasingly clear that I am not the only one on the team experimenting with artificial intelligence—or, in Bella's case, artificial entitlement.

For my own amusement, I have been inserting Maisy and Bella into the illustrations of the children's stories of my ancestors. They have appeared in County Kildare dancing after a hard day's labor, frolicking in a yard in County Cork, and welcoming children home from school on a snowy winter's day in Corning, N.Y. At this point, I am not sure whether I am preserving family history or slowly building a beagle-led cinematic universe.



Maisy Kelly



Bella and Maisy as supporting characters in *Meet Sylvester and Jane*

Sometimes, when generating an image, I do not get the prompts quite right, so I have to regenerate them. The process has produced some funny "bloopers," but it has also revealed something more suspicious: without any prompting, a certain brown bear of a beagle keeps inserting herself as the central character rather than accepting a tasteful supporting role. Maybe that is just AI interpreting the prompt—or maybe Bella has learned to outsmart the machine, seize the spotlight, and demand billing above the ancestors.

I'll let you be the judge with the following exhibits...



Exhibit A

In generating a scene where the Sylvester Kelly family debates whether to go to America, Bella inserted herself in this historic decision.



Exhibit B

When I snickered at the image and the tenacity of her inserting herself in it, I generated a new image...only look closely at the little girl...she is human but with Bella's coloring...and her collar too!



Exhibit C

The five Deneen children returning home from school on a snowy day in Corning NY. Wait...the second child from right has beagle flooper flaps...son of a \$*!@# she's done it again!

