

# THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

*by Clay Presley*

*adapted from the story by  
Washington Irving*

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**STORY OF THE PLAY**

Tarrytown, New York comes alive in this delightful adaptation of the Washington Irving classic. Ichabod Crane is the new schoolmaster assigned to Sleepy Hollow, a small town by the Hudson River. He sets his eyes on Katrina, the eldest daughter of rich farmer Baltus Van Tassel. But Katrina is already “claimed” by Brom Bones, the biggest bully in town! As Ichabod woos the fair Katrina, Brom schemes to regain what he considers his rightful place. He blackmails four unwilling witches into conjuring up the infamous Headless Horseman. Add all the other eccentric and not so eccentric inhabitants of Sleepy Hollow, and you’ve got a comedy perfect for Halloween or for anytime someone wants to tell a classic tale of love, revenge and intrigue.

*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* was first performed in October, 2000, at the Yucaipa Little Theatre in Yucaipa, California. It was directed by Christine Presley.

**SYNOPSIS**

**ACT I**

- Scene 1: A Witches’ Brew
- Scene 2: The Arrival
- Scene 3: Sleepy Hollow
- Scene 4: A Touch of Class
- Scene 5: The Trappings of Love

**ACT II**

- Scene 1: The House Guest
- Scene 2: The Schoolmaster
- Scene 3: Time for an Invitation
- Scene 4: Time for a Party
- Scene 5: The Journey Home
- Scene 6: And Last

**Approximate Running Time:** 75 minutes.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS** (11 m, 13 f, extras)

**ICHABOD:** New school teacher in town. A nervous sort and very superstitious.

**BROM BONES:** Town bully, but gallant. He is “it” in this town and knows it.

**KATRINA VAN TASSEL:** A lovely young woman who has captured Brom’s interest.

**KRISTINA VAN TASSEL:** Katrina’s younger, bratty sister.

**HOLLY HAMHOCKS:** Villager and friend of Katrina.

**ROSE VANDERWELDE:** Villager and friend of Katrina.

**APRIL SANDERFOOT:** Villager and friend of Katrina.

**JARVIS WORRY:** Village banker.

**BALTUS VAN TASSEL:** Father to Kristina and Katrina.

**SABRINA:** A witch.

**SAMANTHA:** Another witch.

**HILDA:** A third witch.

**URSULA:** A fourth witch.

**BILL SANDERS:** Villager.

**HANS GILDUR:** Villager.

**BETTY GILDUR:** Villager.

**JEB:** Sleepy Hollow boy.

**OLTHO:** Sleepy Hollow boy.

**DWAYNE:** Sleepy Hollow boy.

**RODGER:** Student.

**MARY:** Student.

**SALLY:** Student.

**KATIE:** Student.

**GREGORY:** Student.

**EXTRAS:** As students and townspeople.

### **SETTING**

The play has four locations: the forest, the town, the schoolroom and the Van Tassel sitting room. The original production (in a small theater) placed the forest SL, the schoolroom SR, the Van Tassel house CS, and played the village scenes on the apron.

For the witches' scenes, a fogger in a cauldron creates the effect of the brew. An "Andre's tree" out of papier-mâché and chicken wire completes the scene. The Van Tassel house can be suggested with a couple of chairs and a sofa, and benches will serve well for the schoolroom scene. The original production had a latex pumpkin attached to a wire, and in the climax of the show, the headless horseman threw the pumpkin at Ichabod, who raced through the audience, so that the pumpkin flew over the heads of the spectators – a breathtaking effect!

### **COSTUMES**

Most of the inhabitants of Sleepy Hollow were Dutch, so knee breeches with stockings and loose shirts for the men and long dresses for the women will suggest the period well.

### **PROPS**

Witches' cauldron, ladle, wallet and handkerchief; cane whip, register, school primers and pencils, large book, apple, pie, plates, flatware, glasses, dinner rolls, paper ball, food basket, rabbit's foot and other good luck charms, coin, sword, pumpkin, large bullfrog.

**ACT I**

**Scene 1 – A Witches' Brew**

*(AT RISE: A forest clearing. Four WITCHES are around the cauldron; one witch is busy making a concoction.)*

SABRINA: Eye of newt, leg of bee ... let's see ... bat's brow ...  
what now ... hmmm ... hmhhh ...

SAMANTHA: *(Peering over shoulder.)* What are you making, Sabrina?

SABRINA: That wretched boy, Bill Sanders, spat on me today, so I'm going to make him into a toad. *(Cackles.)*

SAMANTHA: Oh my, you mustn't change the villagers into creatures, dear. If they find out about us, they will hang us or do something even worse. *(Pause.)* Let me think ... I know, why don't you just have something grow from his ear or something ...

HILDA: *(Overhearing.)* Give him a disease!!!

URSULA: *(Joining in.)* Make his fingers fall off!!!

*(THEY all cackle with laughter, except SAMANTHA.)*

SAMANTHA: Hilda, Ursula! This is not funny business! If the townsfolk of Sleepy Hollow suspect us of anything, anything at all –

SABRINA: Oh, Samantha! You're so worried about everything. What could they possibly do? We are far more powerful than they.

SAMANTHA: Nevertheless, I heard from a coven down in Salem and they said they tested for witches. They would throw a person suspected of witchcraft in the lake, and if they sank and drowned they were innocent. If they floated they were a witch and then burned at the stake!

*(ALL gasp.)*

HILDA: How evil they are!

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SABRINA: We must be careful. *(THEY all nod their heads in agreement.)* I know what must be done ... Bill Sanders will get a visit from ... *(Pauses for effect.)* the Headless Horseman.

URSULA: *(Gleefully.)* The Headless Horseman!!!

*(THEY all cackle.)*

SABRINA: Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble  
I call for evil on the double!  
Dragon's tongue ... I have brung ...  
Blackjack, no change back,  
Angel feathers, devil's breath  
Black magic ... how tragic!!!  
I call for the one that is dead ...  
I call for the one without a head!!!!  
Ride your steed, ride tonight  
And give Bill Sanders quite a fright!!!!

*(SABRINA laughs hysterically. LIGHTS fade down on the WITCHES. LIGHTS up SR as BILL SANDERS is walking to his home. Bill is whistling when he hears the SOUND of a horse. He stops.)*

BILL: Hello ... who's there? *(No sound, so HE continues until a HORSE is heard clearly.)* Who goes there? Is it you, Brom ...? *(To HIMSELF.)* Who could it be, no one is out tonight? *(HE peers ahead into the darkness and sees something that frightens him.)* Leave me alone, minion of hell!!!! I have done nothing to you.

*(The SOUND of a horse galloping is very clear. BILL screams and runs off screaming. LIGHTS fade to black.)*

**End of Scene**

## **Scene 2 – The Arrival**

*(AT RISE: LIGHTS up on ICHABOD CRANE strolling along the path on his way to Sleepy Hollow. He is whistling merrily, when HANS and BETTY GILDUR approach him.)*

ICHABOD: Good day, good day, my friends.

HANS: Good day to you, sir. You are a stranger to these parts.

BETTY: Don't get many strangers here.

HANS: Why we certainly do, just last week I recall a traveler ...

BETTY: That was no traveler, you nincompoop, that was my mother!

HANS: Ah, just as well she was on her way.

BETTY: *(Ignoring the comment.)* Where would you be headed, sir?

ICHABOD: I am looking for Sleepy Hollow.

HANS: Wonderful, you are in Sleepy Hollow now!

BETTY: What brings you to our town, sir?

HANS: You are certainly quite nosy, what business is it of yours?

BETTY: I might ask the same of you, you doddering idiot!

HANS: Hag!

BETTY: Brainless donkey!

*(While this fighting continues, HANS and BETTY surround ICHABOD. During the back and forth, Hans lifts Ichabod's wallet.)*

HANS: I must be brainless to spend my days and nights with you!

ICHABOD: It is no bother. My name is Ichabod Crane. I am to be the new schoolmaster.

HANS: The schoolmaster!

BETTY: A schoolmaster! I didn't know that we needed one.

HANS: How would you, you never went to school!

BETTY: Maybe if I'd have gotten an education, I wouldn't have wound up with you!

ICHABOD: Perhaps I will be teaching your children.

HANS: Children? We have no children. I wouldn't have children with the likes of her!

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BETTY: Good thing! Lord knows how they would come out with your blood in them. Chances are good they would keep me up at night, howling at the moon!

ICHABOD: Is the village nearby?

BETTY: Just down the road, sir, you'll come into town on this path.

ICHABOD: Well, I must be on my way. The woods in these parts are no place to be at dusk.

BETTY: That is certainly true. Strange things haunt these parts. You best be on your way.

ICHABOD: Good day to you then.

*(HE exits. HANS and BETTY wait until he is out of sight and begin laughing.)*

HANS: Howling at the moon! *(Laughs.)* That was simply marvelous! You simply are so clever with the line, my dear.

BETTY: I must be quick on my feet to keep pace with you! I don't think he knew what hit him.

HANS: *(Holds up wallet.)* Well, he'll do well without this. Let's see what the take is. *(THEY look inside: Not so much as a coin.)* What does it take for an honest man to make a living anymore?

BETTY: Well, let's call it a day then. Don't think the chances are good of catching another stranger on this road.

HANS: And I'd rather not get caught out here after dark. Well, even though our catch came up dry, I rather enjoyed the chase. Well done, my dear.

*(HE leans over and kisses HER cheek. BLACKOUT.)*

**End of Scene**

End of *Freeview*