

SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

This sample is an *excerpt* from a Samuel French title.

This sample is for perusal only and may not be used for performance purposes.

You may not download, print, or distribute this excerpt.

We highly recommend purchasing a copy of the title before considering for performance.

For more information about licensing or about purchasing a play or musical, please visit our website.

www.samuelfrench.com

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

Samuel French Acting Edition

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Written by
John Heimbuch

Created in collaboration with
Jon Ferguson

Based on the story by
Washington Irving

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

SAMUELFRENCH.COM

SAMUELFRENCH.CO.UK

Copyright © 2016 by John Heimbuch and Jon Ferguson
All Rights Reserved

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional and amateur stage productions, recitation, lecturing, public reading, motion picture, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

ISBN 978-0-573-70573-1

www.SamuelFrench.com

www.SamuelFrench.co.uk

FOR PRODUCTION ENQUIRIES

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Info@SamuelFrench.com

1-866-598-8449

UNITED KINGDOM AND EUROPE

Plays@SamuelFrench.co.uk

020-7255-4302

Each title is subject to availability from Samuel French, depending upon country of performance. Please be aware that *THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW* may not be licensed by Samuel French in your territory. Professional and amateur producers should contact the nearest Samuel French office or licensing partner to verify availability.

CAUTION: Professional and amateur producers are hereby warned that *THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW* is subject to a licensing fee. Publication of this play(s) does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised to apply to Samuel French before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre. A licensing fee must be paid whether the title(s) is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged. Professional/Stock licensing fees are quoted upon application to Samuel French.

No one shall make any changes in this title(s) for the purpose of production. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. No one shall upload this title(s), or part of this title(s), to any social media websites.

For all enquiries regarding motion picture, television, and other media rights, please contact Samuel French.

MUSIC USE NOTE

Licensees are solely responsible for obtaining formal written permission from copyright owners to use copyrighted music in the performance of this play and are strongly cautioned to do so. If no such permission is obtained by the licensee, then the licensee must use only original music that the licensee owns and controls. Licensees are solely responsible and liable for all music clearances and shall indemnify the copyright owners of the play(s) and their licensing agent, Samuel French, against any costs, expenses, losses and liabilities arising from the use of music by licensees. Please contact the appropriate music licensing authority in your territory for the rights to any incidental music.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

If you have obtained performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW originally premiered on October 30, 2010 at the Rural America Arts Center in Plainview, Minnesota for a run of nineteen performances. It was directed by Jon Ferguson and produced by the Jon Hassler Theater, and staged with the following cast:

ICHABOD CRANE Ryan Lear
KATRINA VAN TASSEL Joanna Harmon
BROM BONES. Brant Miller
GEOFFREY CRAYON, PARSON VAN HOUTEN,
 RUPERT, ETC.. Tony Sarnicki
BALTUS VAN TASSEL, COUNTRY GIRL, ETC.. Sara Richardson
HANS VAN RIPPER, GUNPOWDER,
 SKELETON, ETC..... Kimberly Richardson
OLD MAN 1, COUNTRY GIRL, STUDENT, ETC..... Meghan Hernick
OLD MAN 2, COUNTRY GIRL, STUDENT, ETC..... Piper Lin Sigel-Bruse
OLD MAN 3, COUNTRY GIRL, STUDENT, ETC..... Ashton Schneider
HORSEMAN, OTTO VAN LANCKER, STUDENT, ETC..... Hans Hauge

The production team included sets by Erica Zaffarano, sound and music by Tim Cameron, costumes by Lori Opsal, lights by Kathy Maxwell, choreography by Kimberly Richardson, puppets by Joanna Harmon, and stage management by Jenna Johnson.

THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW was subsequently produced on February 9, 2013 at the Red Eye Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota for a run of fifteen performances. It was directed by Jon Ferguson and produced by Walking Shadow Theatre Company, and staged with the following cast:

ICHABOD CRANE Ryan Lear
KATRINA VAN TASSEL Joanna Harmon
BROM BONES. Brant Miller
GEOFFREY CRAYON, PARSON VAN HOUTEN,
 RUPERT, ETC. Casey Hoekstra
BALTUS VAN TASSEL, COUNTRY GIRL, ETC. Susanna Stahlmann
HANS VAN RIPPER, GUNPOWDER, SKELETON, ETC..... Suzy Kohane
OLD MAN 1, COUNTRY GIRL, STUDENT, ETC. Kenzi Allen
OLD MAN 2, COUNTRY GIRL, STUDENT, ETC. Piper Lin Sigel-Bruse
OLD MAN 3, COUNTRY GIRL, STUDENT, ETC. Ashton Schneider
HORSEMAN, OTTO VAN LANCKER, STUDENT, ETC. Hans Hauge

The production team included sets by Erica Zaffarano, sound and music by Tim Cameron, costumes by Lori Opsal, lights by Logan Jambik, puppets by Joanna Harmon, dialect coaching by Keely Wolter, and stage management by Callie Meiners.

CHARACTERS

ICHABOD CRANE – a Connecticut schoolteacher

GEOFFREY CRAYON – a New Yorker of distinction

BROM BONES – a roistering blade

KATRINA VAN TASSEL – a country coquette

BALTUS VAN TASSEL – a gentleman farmer

HANS VAN RIPPER – another gentleman farmer

PARSON VAN HOUTEN – a man of faith

RUPERT VAN BRUNT – a spiteful schoolboy

GUNPOWDER – a weatherbeaten nag

OTTO VAN LANCKER – a willing believer

OLD BROUWER – a willful disbeliever

HEADLESS HORSEMAN – a headless Hessian mercenary

VILLAGERS

STUDENTS

COUNTRY GIRLS

SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS

OLD MEN

A SKELETON

The play may be performed by a cast of ten. The roles of Ichabod and Brom Bones should be played by performers who identify as male. The role of Katrina should be played by a performer who identifies as female. These three roles should not double. All other roles may be played by anyone in the ensemble.

SETTING

On the continent of North America,
in the country of The United States,
in the state of New York,
in the region of Tarrytown
is the village of Sleepy Hollow.

TIME

Autumn, 1801.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The original productions included many improvisations and embellishments from the ensemble, which have been omitted from this script. You are welcome to devise your own within the context of the play.

The ensemble is responsible for creating the environment and atmosphere of the play. Scenic transitions should be achieved through the simplicity of the staging and the playfulness of the ensemble.

A heightened melodramatic style would be very appropriate.

Dutch accents for the villagers will add to the fun.

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow was originally commissioned by the Jon Hassler Theater in 2010, and further developed by Walking Shadow Theatre Company in 2013.

For Dean and Sally.

*(A long-vacant room. Leaves litter the floor. A table brims over with handwritten papers. There is a portrait of **ICHABOD CRANE** on the wall – looking haughty.)*

(Rattling keys. A door creaks open. Light spills in.)

*(**GEOFFREY CRAYON** enters, a New York gentleman of 1817 – modern in every way. He looks around the room, and makes his way to the table.)*

(He discovers a page.)

GEOFFREY. *(Reading.)* “If I can but reach that bridge,” thought Ichabod, “I am safe.”

(He puts it down. He picks up another.)

The papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker.

*(The portrait of **ICHABOD** smiles. Did he just see that?)*

*(**GEOFFREY** digs through the pages until he finds what he believes to be the beginning. He starts reading. The words are strange at first, but with growing familiarity.)*

In the bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappan Zee, there lies a small market-town, which is generally and properly known by the name of Tarrytown. Not far from this village, there is a little valley among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to a slumber.

(He flips pages.)

From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of SLEEPY HOLLOW.

(VILLAGERS emerge. They gather up logs and branches.)

A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land. Some say that the place was bewitched by a high German doctor; others, that an old Indian chief held his pow-wows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country. The dominant spirit that haunts this enchanted region is the apparition of a figure on horseback –

(The VILLAGERS use the branches and logs to enact the HEADLESS HORSEMAN riding through the woods.)

– without a head.

(ICHABOD's portrait becomes terrified!)

It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannonball, in some nameless battle during the Revolutionary War; having been buried in the churchyard, he rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head; and that rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to his hurry to get back to the churchyard before daybreak. And the specter is known, at all the country firesides, by the name of THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN OF SLEEPY HOLLOW!

(The rush of hooves.)

(The furniture is whisked away. Everyone disappears.)

(Two VILLAGERS enter theatrically.)

VILLAGER 1. In Sleepy Hollow, as in all such little retired Dutch valleys embosomed in the great State of New York, the population, manners, and customs of old remained fixed and constant.

(PARSON VAN HOUTEN and HANS VAN RIPPER enter theatrically.)

VILLAGER 2. Indeed, it would be no great surprise to find the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom as when its farms were first settled, still bearing such proud family names as:

(BALTUS VAN TASSEL and BROM BONES enter theatrically.)

PARSON VAN HOUTEN. Van Houten.

HANS VAN RIPPER. Van Ripper.

BALTUS VAN TASSEL. Van Tassel.

BROM BONES. Or Van Brunt.

(Another VILLAGER enters theatrically.)

VILLAGER 3. Nor was the fearful propensity of its citizens confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but it is unconsciously imbibed by everyone who resides there for a time.

(A final VILLAGER enters theatrically.)

VILLAGER 4. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure to soon inhale the witching influence of the air, grow imaginative and see apparitions.

(Everyone listens. Footsteps in the distance. Whistling.)

VILLAGER 1. It was in this noted byplace of nature that there abode a worthy wight by the name:

(ICHABOD emerges – confident, eager, lanky.)

ICHABOD. Ichabod Crane.

(He gestures with dramatic flourish.)

(The VILLAGERS eye him suspiciously.)

Yes. Hello. Um. I'm the new schoolteacher. From Connecticut. Yale, actually.

VILLAGERS 1 & 3. An exceedingly lank fellow!

ICHABOD. They said I was a scholar of the first order. Well versed in religion, science, and language.

VILLAGERS 2 & 5. His hands dangle a mile out of his sleeves!

ICHABOD. One of a legion of country schoolteachers unleashed to teach the children of these towns.

BROM. Head like a weathervane!

ICHABOD. But I'm eager to make a happy home here in Sleepy Hollow.

VILLAGERS. Ah.

(The VILLAGERS go about their business.)

ICHABOD. Hello. A pleasure to make your – uh.

(KATRINA VAN TASSEL appears at a distance – a peculiar and beautiful young villager.)

(ICHABOD sees her. Instantly smitten.)

Oh!

(ICHABOD rushes through the VILLAGERS to reach her.)

Excuse me. Pardon me. Excuse me.

(KATRINA and BROM share a look.)

(ICHABOD and KATRINA share a look.)

(ICHABOD and BROM share a look.)

(KATRINA and BROM exit in opposite directions.)

(The VILLAGERS enact the descriptions of ICHABOD.)

VILLAGER 5. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering

about him anyone could mistake him for the spirit of famine descending upon the earth.

VILLAGER 4. Or a scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

*(**ICHABOD** claps his hands. A schoolroom assembles.)*

*(The **VILLAGERS** become attentive **STUDENTS**.)*

*(**RUPERT VAN BRUNT** stands in the corner, dunces cap on his head.)*

ICHABOD. In matters of education I shall be most attentive to the minds of my students, taking great care to instruct them in matters sure to be of use in their lives.

*(To the **STUDENTS**.)*

According to Cotton Mather's treatise on the peril of witchcraft in New England, we are at all times beset by the devil and his minions. Ghosts and demons of the netherworld ever seek to impart their mischief upon us, and if one does not exercise suitable caution they may turn their attentions to you.

STUDENT 1. Aaah!

ICHABOD. Or you.

STUDENT 2. Aaah!

ICHABOD. Or you!

STUDENT 3. Aaah!

ICHABOD. And whisk you off to hell at once!

STUDENTS. Aaaaah!

*(**ICHABOD** silences them. He turns away.)*

ICHABOD. Now who can tell me what must be done with the devil at your back?

*(The **STUDENTS** look at each other, mischievous.)*

*(He turns around. The **STUDENTS** prank **ICHABOD**.)*

(He falls back in fear.)

Aaaaah!

*(The **STUDENTS** laugh uproariously.)*

(**ICHABOD** *stands.*)

ICHABOD. (*Cont.*) Quiet! Quiet I say!!

(*The STUDENTS are immediately silent.*)

(*Except RUPERT, who just laughs louder.*)

Rupert. Rupert. Rupert Van Brunt. Come here!

(**RUPERT** *stops. Filled with dread. He steps forward.*)

Well, young scholar, your parents have paid me to provide your education, and so I must do my duty by them to see that you get it. But I assure you, you will remember this and thank me for it on the longest day you live.

(**ICHABOD** *pushes RUPERT to his knees.*)

(**ICHABOD** *holds out his hand.*)

(*Another STUDENT hands him a birch branch.*)

Children, we call this the Golden Maxim:

RUPERT. The Golden Maxim!

ICHABOD. Spare the rod and spoil the child. And I'll have you know, young sir, that Ichabod Crane's scholars are certainly not spoiled.

(**ICHABOD** *uses the switch on RUPERT. Three sharp strikes.*)

Corner.

(**ICHABOD** *pinches RUPERT's ear and deposits him back in the corner.*)

(**RUPERT** *rubs his backside. ICHABOD strikes his hand.*)

(**RUPERT** *starts to cry.*)

(**ICHABOD** *hands the switch back to the STUDENT.*)

Now, who would like to read the next section?

(*All the STUDENTS raise their hands.*)

(**ICHABOD** *points at STUDENT 2 and exits.*)

(**STUDENT 2** *stands. The other STUDENTS scatter.*)

STUDENT 2. But Ichabod Crane was no grim authoritarian. Indeed, on holiday afternoons, he would even convoy some of the smaller boys home. Especially those who happened to have pretty sisters, or plentiful farms, or doting mothers noted for the comforts of the cupboard.

(**RUPERT** *runs off, shouting:*)

RUPERT. Brom! Brom!

STUDENT 2. Given the peculiar character of the inhabitants, it should be no surprise that there were some who were known to play tricks upon the frightened minds of the townsfolk.

(**STUDENT 2** *is whisked away.*)

(**KATRINA** *enters with several COUNTRY GIRLS.*)

(*They look around.*)

COUNTRY GIRLS. He's not here yet.

KATRINA. No, he's not.

(*The SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS swagger in. A rowdy bunch of country hooligans.*)

COUNTRY GIRLS. These charming rowdy fellows were known as the Sleepy Hollow Boys.

SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS. Ja!

(**BROM BONES** *enters. Proud and powerful.*)

COUNTRY GIRL 1. The most formidable of which was a burly, roaring, roistering blade, of the name:

BROM. Abraham Van Brunt!

COUNTRY GIRL 2. Known to his friends as:

SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS. Brom Bones!

(**BROM** *does a secret handshake with the other SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS.*)

COUNTRY GIRL 1. He was foremost at all races and cock-fights.

COUNTRY GIRL 2. And well renowned throughout the valley for his superior strength, horsemanship, and hardiness.

(One of the SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS challenges Brom to a leg-wrestling contest.)

SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS: Brom Brom Brom!

(BROM defeats his challenger easily.)

(BROM helps him up and embraces him.)

BROM. Brother.

COUNTRY GIRLS. Braaa-m.

(BROM points at them. Boom. The COUNTRY GIRLS faint, leaving KATRINA standing alone.)

BROM. But even the mighty Brom Bones had one challenge he couldn't overcome.

KATRINA. Brom.

BROM. Katrina.

KATRINA. Enjoying yourself?

BROM. Well enough.

KATRINA. Still playing with the boys?

SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS. Ja.

BROM. No.

(BROM dismisses the SLEEPY HOLLOW BOYS. They exit.)

We only live so long. Better enjoy it while we can.

KATRINA. Hmm.

BROM. What?

KATRINA. Nothing.

BROM. Right. Uh, say, Katrina – I was wondering...

KATRINA. Be careful what you ask, Brom.

BROM. All right.

(BROM takes her hand and goes to one knee. Mockingly.)

I wonder if a pretty young girl like you – and a rough, uncouth, unmannered country swain like me –

(KATRINA pulls her hand away.)

KATRINA. Let me know when you're ready to grow up.

(She exits.)

(BROM shouts in frustration.)

(RUPERT enters, now carrying the dunce cap.)

RUPERT. Brom?

BROM BONES. What!?

(He softens.)

What? Rupert, what is it?

(RUPERT whispers in BROM's ear.)

(RUPERT gestures three times. Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!)

(BROM's eyes narrow.)

I see.

(BROM puts an arm around RUPERT. They exit.)

(A gnarled old man appears. This is HANS VAN RIPPER.)

HANS. According to country custom the schoolmaster would board and lodge at the houses of the farmers whose children he instructed. Going the rounds of the neighborhood each week with all his worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

(ICHABOD knocks on the door.)

(HANS opens the door.)

(ICHABOD enters with his bundle. He looks around.)

ICHABOD. Hans Van Reaper?

HANS. It's Van Ripper! Well, you might as well come in, since you're in.

(Hoofbeats race by in the distance.)

ICHABOD. Goodness. What's that?

HANS. Ay, there goes Brom Bones and his gang!

(HANS closes the door.)

(BALTUS VAN TASSEL opens the door theatrically – the village's most prosperous citizen.)

BALTUS. Hans.

HANS. Baltus.

(They bow to each other in the old style.)

BALTUS. Is this him?

HANS. Yep.

BALTUS. Mynheer Crane. Welcome to Sleepy Hollow. I am Baltus Van Tassel.

ICHABOD. Yes sir, hello. And a pleasure it is to be here!

BALTUS. Yes. You have been hired by the town council to educate our children, is that not so?

ICHABOD. Oh yes. I am well versed in arithmetic, geometry, Latin, swimming –

BALTUS. Singing?

ICHABOD. Swimming.

BALTUS. Singing!

ICHABOD. What?

BALTUS. We hear your infernal whistling all through the valley. I can only imagine you must know a song or two.

ICHABOD. Oh, yes. Thank you.

BALTUS. I suppose you could instruct my daughter Katrina on the finer points of the art? Katrina! Katrina! Katrina...

(KATRINA appears in the doorway.)

(ICHABOD sees her and gasps.)

She is young and eager to learn. Isn't that true?

KATRINA. Yes.

BALTUS. Better than spending all of her time with that incorrigible Van Brunt boy. But as Parson Van Houten

is too busy to instruct her, you will have to do. The pay won't be much, but I will see that you're well provided for come harvest time. Will you undertake this?

ICHABOD. Oh. Yes. Gladly.

BALTUS. Katrina, Mynheer Crane has agreed to be your singing teacher.

KATRINA. I heard.

BALTUS. How soon can you begin?

ICHABOD. Oh, immediately. If you wish.

BALTUS. You've finished all your other work for the day?

ICHABOD. Oh, I expect I can find the time in my schedule.

BALTUS. Then I hope you will join us at our farm this evening.

ICHABOD. Of course. Is it very far from here?

BALTUS. A few miles down the road, near Major Andre's Tree.

ICHABOD. Major Andre's Tree?

BALTUS. You don't know it?

(They all turn to look at ICHABOD.)

ICHABOD. No...

BALTUS. A great tulip tree that towers over the rest of the wood, and which has grown twisted and gnarled on account of its age.

(HANS gnarls and twists.)

Running along its eastern side is a streak of white where it was scarred by a thunderbolt!

HANS. Kaboom.

BALTUS. It was under this tree where the fateful Major Andre was caught transporting secrets for the British during the war. And after his execution, it's said that the tree creaked and groaned as though under great duress.

(HANS creaks and groans.)

BALTUS. (*Cont.*) And ever since there have been all manner of troublesome sightings in its vicinity – phantom funeral processions, unearthly music, and vile apparitions! It's even said that John Andre's hanged body is sometimes seen dangling from its branches – which any old wife knows is a sure sign that the viewer will die within ten days time.

KATRINA. Oooooo.

ICHABOD. And you live near this tree?

BALTUS. Oh, yes. Very close. I'll expect you there just after sunset.

ICHABOD. I'm not entirely sure that I should –

BALTUS. There will be all manner of cakes and pies.

ICHABOD. I shall be there.

BALTUS. Don't be late. Her education is in your hands.

ICHABOD. I will do my best!

KATRINA. See you tonight, Mynheer Crane.

BALTUS. Good day Hans!

HANS. Meh!

(**BALTUS** and **HANS** bow in the old style again.)

(**BALTUS** and **KATRINA** exit.)

ICHABOD. ...Katrina Van Tassel...

HANS. Eh?

ICHABOD. What?

HANS. Nothing. Let's get you settled.

ICHABOD. Yes, thank you. And if you need any help around the farm, my hands will make light work of your tasks.

(**HANS** looks at **ICHABOD**'s smooth hands.)

HANS. Ja. Right! No thanks!

(**HANS** takes **ICHABOD**'s bundle and exits.)

(Several **COUNTRY GIRLS** enter and surround **ICHABOD**.)

COUNTRY GIRL 1. The schoolmaster is generally considered a man of some importance in the female circle of a rural neighborhood.

ICHABOD. A touch of culture in the rustic setting, a kind of gentlemanlike personage, of vastly superior taste and accomplishments to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson.

(More COUNTRY GIRLS surround ICHABOD.)

COUNTRY GIRL 2. Ichabod Crane was known to pass at least a few of his idle hours in the smiles of the country damsels.

COUNTRY GIRL 3. Reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs on the tombstones:

ICHABOD. "In Lives Full Joys And Virtuous Fare of Bloom
Untimely Check and Hurried To The Tomb
Life How Short, Eternity How Long."

COUNTRY GIRL 1. Or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent mill-pond.

(ICHABOD and the COUNTRY GIRLS saunter.)

ICHABOD. Oh look, a bird.

COUNTRY GIRLS. Ooo.

(BROM enters. He lurks at a distance.)

ICHABOD. While the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying my superior elegance and address.

(The COUNTRY GIRLS laugh.)

BROM. Ichabod Crane!

(BROM points at the COUNTRY GIRLS. Boom!)

(They faint, leaving ICHABOD at the center.)

ICHABOD. Yes? Hello?

BROM. You're the new schoolmaster.

ICHABOD. That's right.

BROM. I'm told you're renowned throughout the valley for leaving a mark of knowledge on your students.

ICHABOD. Thank you, yes. I certainly try.

BROM. So I hear. I thought I'd like to see you with my own eyes. Determine what sort of mettle makes this man.

ICHABOD. Yes, well, here I am, in the flesh.

BROM. What there is of it.

(The COUNTRY GIRLS giggle.)

(BROM silences them with a gesture.)

(The COUNTRY GIRLS scatter.)

ICHABOD. Sorry, do I know you?

BROM. No. Abraham Van Brunt.

(BROM raises his hand. ICHABOD steps back.)

(A handshake. BROM has a very strong grip.)

ICHABOD. Ah. And what do you do, Mr. Van Brunt?

BROM. I've been known to do any number of things in my time.

ICHABOD. So you're a renaissance man!

BROM. Is that what they call it?

ICHABOD. Yes.

BROM. Then I'm one of those.

ICHABOD. How reassuring to know there are some other enlightened fellows in this little burg. I have begun to feel quite like an island in this valley. The character of the inhabitants is quite resistant to knowledge, and just between you and me, too many of these country folk are content to never let their minds wander beyond the confines of their farms. My work is all the more difficult for it.

BROM. What work?

ICHABOD. Shining the beacon of knowledge into the darkest recesses of the mind. It is a perilous task, of course, apt to be misconstrued by the ignorant as pompous, high-minded rhetoric. I'm even told that schoolmasters have sometimes been known to suffer the most mischievous pranks by the bullies of their

town who, for whatever reason, object to the pure edification of the soul.

BROM. Imagine that.

ICHABOD. But I am determined not to let such waggish behavior thwart me.

BROM. Do you plan to remain in Sleepy Hollow?

ICHABOD. Yes. Though my rustic patrons are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden, by hook and by crook, I shall make a name for myself here. I've already been hired as a singing instructor to supplement my daily bread, and am determined to find yet more ways of rendering myself both useful and agreeable to my miserly hosts who understand nothing of the labor of headwork. I'm sure it's only a matter of time before I find some marriageable young woman with a well-appointed farm and settle down properly.

BROM. Any prospects?

(They pause while KATRINA crosses upstage.)

ICHABOD. One, perhaps. But it's far too soon to say. Are you married, Mr. Van Brunt?

(They pause while KATRINA crosses back.)

KATRINA. Oh, I forgot something.

(And she's gone.)

BROM. Not yet, but maybe soon, God willing.

ICHABOD. Well, I wish us both the best of luck, though I very much doubt we'll need it. The rest of these Sleepy Hollow folk can scarcely compete with men of our character.

BROM. As you say. I'm glad to have met you, Mynheer Crane.

ICHABOD. You as well, Mr. Van Brunt.

BROM. And don't worry about any of those meddlesome country ruffians. I'll be more than happy to keep my eye on you.

ICHABOD. Thank you, sir. Always good to have another friendly face.

BROM. Good. I hoped you would think so.

(BROM laughs. A little too long.)

(ICHABOD starts to laugh with him.)

No! Only me!

(BROM laughs even harder.)

(BROM races out.)

Daredevil! Away! Hyah!

(Hoofbeats.)

(And with a whoosh of wind, BROM is gone.)

(KATRINA appears in the picture frame.)

KATRINA. That evening, as Ichabod walked down the long country road, he barely noticed the cold twinge in the air or the crisp crunch of leaves underfoot. Instead his mind raced with thoughts of the beautiful Katrina –

KATRINA & ICHABOD. A blooming lass of fresh eighteen, cute as a partridge, ripe and melting and rosy cheeked as one of her father's peaches.

ICHABOD. Yet she is a bit of a coquette, as might be perceived in her dress, though it certainly sets off her charms. And a provokingly short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round! But how to turn her affections toward me?

(ICHABOD approaches the picture frame.)

(KATRINA pushes him away.)

Oh these country girls! These country girls!

KATRINA. But as the sun set in the west, Ichabod's thoughts slowly turned away from such delightful possibilities, until he reached the towering Major Andre's Tree.

(ICHABOD stands in awe of the tree.)

And seeing no ghost in its lanky branches...

ICHABOD. Whew!

KATRINA. ...he turned down the path to the Van Tassel family farm. And oh, there on that path what did he smell?

(**ICHABOD** *smells something wonderful.*)

ICHABOD. Apple pies, sweet cakes, smoked ham, roast goose.

KATRINA. As he approached, he saw that the stable was filled with horses – including a dark one far more spirited than the rest.

(*Whinny of a horse.*)

And the farm itself was a-bustle with friends and family.

(**VILLAGERS** *prepare the house.*)

For to judge by the warmth of the home and the lay of the food, Baltus Van Tassel was a most generous host.

(**BALTUS** *unveils a table of cakes.*)

BALTUS. Mynheer Crane!

(**BALTUS** *opens the door. ICHABOD enters the house.*)

Katrina will be along shortly.

ICHABOD. Ah. I see you have any number of cakes.

BALTUS. Yes, there are five of them. Though I'll understand if you wish to keep the voice clear for the lesson.

ICHABOD. No matter, no matter.

(**ICHABOD** *reaches for a cake...*)

(*But* **PARSON VAN HOUTEN** *emerges and takes his hand.*)

PARSON VAN HOUTEN. Mynheer Van Tassel, is this the new schoolteacher?

ICHABOD. I am sir.

BALTUS. This is Parson Van Houten.

ICHABOD. Ah, Parson, I owe you my thanks.

PARSON VAN HOUTEN. For what?

ICHABOD. Bringing me here as the schoolmaster, of course.

PARSON VAN HOUTEN. I've done you no favors. And you owe me no thanks but your duty. Your task is nothing short of God's work. Mynheer Crane, as schoolteacher for this valley it is expected that you will be a role model for the parish youth – illustrating by example the value of literacy, sobriety, honesty, and civility. Now, I know you are from Connecticut.

(Laughter.)

So I hope you will appreciate what dangers such worldliness can spark in our students. I'm sure you have already found that our parishioners are no strangers to cussing, pranking, tall tales, and all manner of devilry in their lives. You must stand tall against such things, and show them that though myths and ghostly suppositions may run rampant within their minds, as a matter of course, such things will gain no traction against upstanding members of the church. For the faithful should have no cause to fear the devil's tricks. Right?

ICHABOD. What?

PARSON VAN HOUTEN. You are a believer?

ICHABOD. Oh. Yes.

PARSON VAN HOUTEN. Many of our former schoolteachers have seen the position as one of idle repose, enjoying the comforts of the cupboard and acting as some sort of town gossip, sharing whatever tidbits they acquired around the hearth, using their position for their own betterment rather than the betterment of the students. Is it then any wonder why they no longer hold this post?

ICHABOD. No. Of course.

PARSON VAN HOUTEN. I trust you will do your duty with patience and diligence. Now, if you'll excuse me, the road is long, and I have a sermon to prepare. Good day Mynheer Van Tassel. I shall see you at church tomorrow morning.

(BALTUS escorts PARSON VAN HOUTEN out.)

(**ICHABOD** *grabs a small cake.*)

(**KATRINA** *enters. BROM follows her.*)

(**ICHABOD** *eats his cake, oblivious.*)

BROM. Katrina, please, listen to me.

KATRINA. Not until you ask. Why will you not ask?

BROM. Because, Katrina... I have very strong...feelings...
but...

KATRINA. Brom, you are hopeless. If you will not ask, what
am I to do? I cannot wait forever! Or shall I wither on
the vine while you decide what to do?

BROM. No.

KATRINA. I've a good mind to turn my attentions elsewhere.
How would you like that?

(**KATRINA** *looks pointedly at ICHABOD.*)

BROM. I wouldn't like it.

KATRINA. No you wouldn't, would you? Not that you'd get
any say in it. And even if you tried I'm sure my new
friend will be quick to defend my honor.

ICHABOD. (*Eating, unaware.*) What?

BROM. What new friend? Is there someone else?

ICHABOD. (*Eating, unaware.*) What? Mmm.

KATRINA. I don't know. Maybe. Perhaps there is.

BROM. Who?

KATRINA. No one you'd know. Someone quite unlike any
of the other men of the valley.

(**BROM** *finally gets it.*)

ICHABOD. (*Eating, unaware.*) This is the best traditional
small cake I've ever had.

BROM. You aren't serious.

KATRINA. What if I am?

BROM. Then I will do something very bad to him.

KATRINA. And hurt the one I love?

BROM. How can you do this to me?

KATRINA. I'm sorry Brom, it's not my fault. You brought it on yourself. Mynheer Crane?

(ICHABOD turns, his mouth full of cake.)

I am ready for my singing lesson now.

(ICHABOD swallows the cake.)

ICHABOD. Mmm yes, Miss Van Tassel, nothing would give me greater pleasure.

(BROM gasps. He turns to go, and stumbles.)

(Anger and embarrassment fill his face.)

(As he is about to leave, ICHABOD finally notices him.)

Ah, Mr. Van Brunt.

BROM. WHAT?

ICHABOD. So good to see you!

BROM. Goodbye Katrina.

KATRINA. Goodbye Brom.

(BROM clutches his hat and leaves. Slam.)

BROM. DAREDEVIL! HYAH!

(Hoofbeats.)

(And with a whoosh of wind, BROM is gone.)

(KATRINA turns to ICHABOD.)

KATRINA. Well?

ICHABOD. Well, what?

KATRINA. Are you going to teach me singing?

ICHABOD. Ah yes, well – it all starts with the voice.

(ICHABOD sings a single note. Nasal. Long.)

Go ahead.

(KATRINA sings a single note. Ouch.)

Very good, Miss Katrina. Now, I wonder if I might ask –

(ICHABOD takes her hand and bends to one knee.)

(But BALTUS stands him back up.)

BALTUS. Many thanks for your lesson, Mynheer Crane. But now I fear you must go.

ICHABOD. Go? But I was about to ask a question.

BALTUS. I fear it shall have to wait. For you must journey home at once. And do beware as you do!

ICHABOD. Beware?

KATRINA. Father –

ICHABOD. Beware of what?

KATRINA. The Horseman.

ICHABOD. The Horseman?

BALTUS. The Hessian Horseman!

ICHABOD. Hessian? What, you mean a German?

BALTUS. And a savage German he was, for even death itself could not hold the fury of this man, for he is ever and anon seen riding upon our roads in the gloom of night!

KATRINA. Do not frighten him, father!

BALTUS. It is for his own good that I tell him, Katrina. Are you a fearful man, Mynheer Crane?

ICHABOD. No. No. No. Just...cautious.

BALTUS. Then you had best heed what I say. Not far from here was the site of a great battle in the Revolution. Amongst the dead of this fray was a Hessian mercenary in the service of the British who was laid to rest in our churchyard. Most of him, anyway. There was one part they never found.

KATRINA. His head.

ICHABOD. His head?!

BALTUS. Yes, his head, which, with glinting blade in hand, he seeks anew each night!

ICHABOD. Have you ever seen him?

BALTUS. Oh, not I. But he has been heard several times of late, riding forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head. One cannot mistake the fearsome rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along

the Hollow, like a midnight blast, owing to his being in a hurry to get back to the churchyard before daybreak!

(They all turn around, and suddenly we're outside.)

(Nightfall.)

(KATRINA and BALTUS stand at the door.)

And so good night Mynheer Crane. I expect to see you at church tomorrow.

ICHABOD. Oh. Yes. Good night, Katrina.

KATRINA. Goodbye, Ichabod.

(BALTUS slams the door.)

(Darkness. The sound of the woods.)

ICHABOD. You see, Ichabod? It's only a story. And so, homeward.

(ICHABOD walks. The sinister glint of predatory eyes appear behind him. ICHABOD turns. They wink out.)

Just the candleglow from some distant windows!

(He keeps walking. A white-shrouded form flits across his peripheral vision. Then it's gone.)

A shrub...covered with snow.

(He keeps walking. The clomping of a horse behind him.)

Simply the echoes of my own feet upon the hillsides.

(ICHABOD stops walking, but the clomping continues.)

(A flash of lightning and the roar of wind.)

(A glimpse of the HEADLESS HORSEMAN behind him.)

Or the galloping Hessian on one of his nightly scourings?

(ICHABOD turns, but the HEADLESS HORSEMAN is gone.)

FINISH READING THIS SCRIPT

Visit our website to purchase the full script or to explore other titles.

www.samuelfrench.com

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

To stay up to date on all that we are doing, follow us on social media:



*Titles for licensing are subject to availability depending on your territory.