

HEADLESS IN SLEEPY HOLLOW

By Tim Kochenderfer

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HEADLESS IN SLEEPY HOLLOW

A Comedic One Act

By Tim Kochenderfer

SYNOPSIS: Sleepy Hollow is a troubled school district. There's a witch trying to change the math curriculum, the substitute teacher is a scarecrow and the new schoolmaster, Ichabod Crane, is hopelessly in love with the town's Rutabaga Festival Queen, Katrina Van Tassel. All Ichabod needs is a little luck, the ability to maintain his balance in high places and for Katrina's noncommittal boyfriend, Brom Bones, to step aside. When Katrina stokes the flames of romantic rivalry at the annual Van Tassel Halloween Frolic, Ichabod soon discovers an obstacle he hadn't accounted for—reliable transportation. Oh, and the Headless Horseman.

DURATION: 45 Minutes.

TIME: Autumn 1790.

SETTING: Sleepy Hollow School Board meeting, Sleepy Hollow Rutabaga Festival, School house, Downtown Sleepy Hollow, Hans Van Ripper's house, Van Tassel Halloween Frolic, The Hollow, The bridge.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(7-10 females, 8-9 males, 4-9 either)

ICHABOD CRANE (m)..... Sleepy Hollow's new schoolmaster. Book smart, but not scary-path-in-the-woods-in-the-middle-of-the-night-smart. In love with Katrina Van Tassel, as well as the prospect of marrying into her family's wealth. He's the only man in town who doesn't find Brom Bones intimidating. Has a healthy concern about witches.
(111 lines)

- KATRINA VAN TASSEL (f) Sleepy Hollow Rutabaga Festival Queen, third straight year. Tired of being taken for granted by her noncommittal boyfriend, Brom Bones, and is willing to risk the safety of Ichabod Crane to get him to shape up. *(65 lines)*
- BROM BONES (m)..... The cocky noncommittal boyfriend of Katrina Van Tassel. Loves a good party as well as hurling vegetables at senior citizens. Feels very secure in his relationship with Katrina and has a calm demeanor, until he meets Ichabod Crane. *(65 lines)*
- MATILDA (f) Katrina's best friend. Not a fan of Brom Bones. Tired of seeing him take Katrina for granted. *(24 lines)*
- GERTRUDE (f) Katrina's other best friend. Her mind tends to wander off into its own little world. She too is concerned for Katrina, but she's maybe a little more concerned that any threat to the power of the Rutabaga Festival Queen could lead to total chaos and world hunger. *(21 lines)*
- HANS VAN RIPPER (m)..... The cranky, crotchety old farmer who tends to the Sleepy Hollow schoolhouse. His blood absolutely boils at any perceived insult to his rickety old horse, Gunpowder. *(22 lines)*

MRS. VAN RIPPER (f)	Just as cranky and crotchety as her husband, Hans. However, she may let a few things slide if it means she can make fun of you later. <i>(10 lines)</i>
HAZEL (f)	A witch. Definitely a witch. Wishes to wreak havoc on the math curriculum of the Sleepy Hollow school district. <i>(11 lines)</i>
BALTUS VAN TASSEL (m)	Katrina's father. Owns the most prosperous farm in Sleepy Hollow. Loves a good ghost story and maybe a couple of bad ones. He's fun loving and easy going, but draws the line at birds who want to marry humans. <i>(21 lines)</i>
COTTON MATHER (m)	Puritanical judge in Ichabod's ghost story. Hates witches, except for this one witch. <i>(22 lines)</i>
WITCH (f)	Also definitely a witch. Very flirty. She seduces Cotton Mather in Ichabod's ghost story. <i>(10 lines)</i>
HESSIAN (m)	The German Mercenary in Brom Bones' ghost story. He's in love with a British nurse, but is about to lose his most attractive feature—his head! <i>(1 line)</i>
NURSE (f)	The love of the Hessian in Brom Bones' ghost story. She's interested in men who are smart, attentive and have a head. <i>(2 lines)</i>
BULLFROG (m/f)	Amphibian. Can croak in the English language. Hates being misquoted. <i>(7 lines)</i>

- SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT (m/f).....Leads the hiring effort in the Sleepy Hollow school district. Is tired of schoolmasters always resigning or vanishing. Hoping to find a schoolmaster with a pulse who can replace a scarecrow set up as the interim teacher. *(30 lines)*
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1 (m/f) Has a vote in the hiring of the new schoolmaster. Has a theory about what happened to the previous school master, but it's almost too terrifying to tell. *(11 lines)*
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #2 (m/f) Has a vote in the hiring of the new schoolmaster. Not as up on current events as his counterparts. *(8 lines)*
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3 (m/f) Has a vote in the hiring of the new schoolmaster. An opponent of the “new schoolmaster must have a pulse” policy. *(11 lines)*
- WOMAN (f).....Faints at the slightest potential of terror in Ichabod Crane and Brom Bones’ ghost stories. *(4 lines)*
- MAN (m) Woman’s husband. Is surprised every time she faints. *(7 lines)*
- MAN #2 (m) Accuser in Ichabod’s ghost story. Thinks his neighbor is a witch because he now finds her spellbinding. Wants justice. *(4 lines)*

- WOMAN #2 (f)..... On trial for witchcraft in Ichabod's ghost story. Her only crime is doing her hair differently. *(2 lines)*
- WOMAN #3 (f)..... Wants potential coven of witches investigated in Ichabod's ghost story. Seems to latch on to the minor details in her witchcraft claims while seeming to be oblivious to the blatant signs of witchcraft. *(7 lines)*
- CONSTABLE (m/f)..... The law in Sleepy Hollow. Can decipher clues by tasting them. Gives up easily. *(13 lines)*
- TOWNSPERSON #1 (m/f)..... Claims to have been decapitated by The Headless Horseman. Not good at following along with stories. *(11 lines)*
- TOWNSPERSON #2 (m/f)..... Claims to have encountered The Headless Horseman. Not good at following along with stories. *(8 lines)*
- TOWNSPERSON #3 (m/f)..... Claims to have encountered The Headless Horseman. Not good at following along with stories. *(5 lines)*
- HEADLESS HORSEMAN (m)..... Not really a talker, but pretty aggressive. Especially when he's trying to chop off your head! *(Non-speaking)*

DOUBLING SUGGESTIONS

- HAZEL can double as WITCH
- SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT can double as BULLFROG
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1 can double as TOWNSPERSON #1
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #2 can double as TOWNSPERSON #2
- SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3 can double as TOWNSPERSON #3
- MATILDA can double as WOMAN
- HANS VAN RIPPER can double as COTTON MATHER
- MRS. VAN RIPPER can double as NURSE
- MAN can double as CONSTABLE

SET

SCENE 1 – Sleepy Hollow School Board Meeting. A table where SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT and SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1, SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #2 and SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3 should be seated. A chalkboard with HAZEL’s ‘New Math’ problem prewritten. Chairs for members of the public to sit. ICHABOD CRANE and HAZEL should be seated there.

SCENE 2 – Sleepy Hollow Rutabaga Festival. Some signage reading ‘Sleepy Hollow Rutabaga Festival’, a cart full of rutabagas (if this ends up being an empty cart it’s ok). ICHABOD CRANE’s ‘fall from the sky’ could be pulled off a couple of ways. If there is a town backdrop, he could leap from a low point in a roof. He could also leap from off stage and tumble to the ground before KATRINA, MATILDA and GERTRUDE.

SCENE 3 – Inside the Sleepy Hollow Schoolhouse. There should be at least one bookshelf from which ICHABOD CRANE can remove a book. Desks for students, a large desk for the teacher and a chalkboard. A door upon which characters knock and can enter. (Note: if using a minimal set, characters could knock and enter from off stage).

SCENE 4 – The Village of Sleepy Hollow. Village backdrop.

SCENE 5 – The Van Ripper House. A farmhouse that will need a door and ideally a window through which ICHABOD CRANE can see HANS VAN RIPPER who is trying not to come to the door.

SCENE 6 – Inside the Van Tassel home. This is a Halloween ball and ideally should be decorated for a harvest party. Jack-o-lanterns are a nice touch here. During story time, bring lights down and leave room stage left to bring up lights on ICHABOD CRANE and BROM BONES' ghost stories.

SCENE 7 – The Hollow. Fill this with spooky trees in the backdrop. A covered bridge in the distance would make a nice touch.

SCENE 8 – The Hollow at the foot of the bridge. A covered bridge serves as the backdrop. ICHABOD CRANE's hat should lay on the ground along with a shattered jack-o-lantern.

COSTUMES

Colonial era fashion. Ichabod Crane should wear a hat that is fitting for the time period. Katrina should wear a sash that reads 'Rutabaga Festival Queen' as well as a tiara. A witch costume for Hazel and the Witch. The more stereotypical your witch costume is, the better. You'll need a frog costume for the Bullfrog. Choose a costume for The Headless Horseman that will allow the actor to see, while having the appearance of being headless. The judge, Cotton Mather, needs a robe and powdered wig.

MUSIC & SOUND

- colonial violin music for the Van Tassel Halloween Frolic dance.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

This play is a comedy, but probably is funniest if the actors approach the script as they would a drama. Approaching the lines earnestly, playing to the characters' wants will highlight the ridiculous in the dialogue. From a production standpoint, this play is intended to be flexible in many aspects as well. Make the set as elaborate or as minimal as you wish.

PROPS**SCENE 1**

- chalkboard
- gavel

SCENE 2

- cart with rutabagas

SCENE 3

- books
- pie

SCENE 6

- gavel

SCENE 7

- sword
- jack-o-lantern

SCENE 8

- shattered jack-o-lantern

SCENE 1

AT START: *The Sleepy Hollow School Board's monthly meeting. The SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT sits at a table with SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1-#3. HAZEL sits in a chair opposite of the table. She wears a long black robe, a pointy hat and has green skin. She is clearly a witch. Sitting in the same section is ICHABOD CRANE.*

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: *(Bangs a gavel.)* Six PM. The Sleepy Hollow school board meeting is officially underway. First order of business, public comment.

HAZEL walks up to the podium.

HAZEL: *(Cackles.)* Hee hee hee hee hee hee! *(Clears throat.)* Ahem. Hazel Wormwood. I live at 6265 Skeleton Lane in the gingerbread house. I would like to propose a change to our school's math curriculum.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Proceed.

HAZEL: I would like to change how children learn and perform arithmetic. Behold! *(Pulls out a chalkboard with a complicated version of $10 + 10$ written on it.)* Take this problem. Ten plus ten. Rather than telling students to simply add the numbers together, we tell them to break the number apart, identify its number bond, create a numerical line and decompose the answer using the “base ten.” I call it—New Math!

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: I don't understand what any of that means.

HAZEL: Hee hee hee! No one does!

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Then how are students expected to do this “new math?”

HAZEL: Exactly!

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1: How are parents expected to help?

HAZEL: Hee hee hee! Oh, they'll try! They'll try! Hee hee hee!

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: I don't understand. What's the point of this?

HAZEL: (*Sobers up.*) What do you mean? Think about it. You're a parent coming home after a hard day's work. Now you suddenly realize, you can't do first grade math! Hee hee hee!

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1: So the point of it is to demoralize parents?

HAZEL: I mean, students are at the center of the whole thing.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #2: Ms. Wormwood, do you actually have any children in the Sleepy Hollow school district?

HAZEL: If you count little Johnny Mackleroy... no.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1-#3 and SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT whisper among themselves quickly.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Ms. Wormwood. There are some school board members here who believe that you may be a witch.

HAZEL: (*Offended.*) Why? Because I wear dark robes and a pointy hat, and I'm trying to make life harder on people? Is it because I know a couple of spells?

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3: Yes. All of those things.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: All in favor of adopting Ms. Wormwood's New Math say Aye!

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1, #2, and #3: Nay!

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Let the record show that the school board rejects the idea of this "New Math."

HAZEL: (*Angry.*) What's the point of even having school if you can't make kids miserable?! I'm out of here.

HAZEL exits, storming off stage.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: (*Bangs gavel.*) Next order of business, the new schoolmaster.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #2: New schoolmaster? What happened to our old schoolmaster?

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1: She disappeared.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #2: Disappeared?

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1: Vanished. In the middle of the night.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #2: What happened?

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1: It's believed she was likely spirited away by a goblin. That it snatched her right from the school house. I personally believe it may have been a witch or a werewolf. (*Changes to spooky tone.*) But... there's a legend being whispered around campfires and shared among the old women at sewing circles that our schoolmaster got fed up with class sizes and took a job in a better district. (*Tone returns to normal.*) Of course, that's pretty outlandish.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3: What about the interim schoolmaster? The one we put in place when the last schoolmaster vanished?

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: The children are starting to doubt he's real.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3: That is a problem.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1: I mean, he is a scarecrow, so...

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3: Still, I did like him.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Well, our new schoolmaster is twice as smart and just as handsome. And he's here with us today. Mister Ichabod Crane, would you please stand up?

ICHABOD CRANE stands and nods to everyone in the room.

ICHABOD CRANE: Hello.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Mister Crane comes to us from Connecticut. He was educated at university and speaks nearly two languages.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1, #2 and #3: (*Impressed.*) Oooo

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Mister Crane, will you please introduce yourself.

ICHABOD CRANE: Certainly. As stated, my name is Ichabod Crane. I am well educated in mathematics, language arts, the sciences and I am well-versed in the supernatural, especially the identification of witches. I knew right away that woman earlier was a witch. I just didn't want you to think I was showing off. I do want to clarify one thing—I am *considering* the position as your new schoolmaster, but I am also considering schoolmaster positions in neighboring villages.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: I understand perfectly Mister Crane. Let's open it up for questions.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1: We all can see, Mister Crane is well-educated, but I would like to know if he meets our top requirement for this position. *(Pause.)* Does he have a pulse?

ICHABOD CRANE: A pulse? Well, I most certainly...

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: An excellent question.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3 walks up, grabs ICHABOD'S wrist and listens intently for a pulse.

ICHABOD CRANE: This is highly unusual! I must...

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3: I'm sorry, no pulse.

ICHABOD CRANE: What?! I can assure you that I do most indeed have a pulse.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3 holds ICHABOD'S wrist up and listens again for a pulse.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: I'm sorry, Mister Crane, but our ideal schoolmaster must have a pulse. I am afraid that's a nonnegotiable...

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3: Wait! *(Pauses dramatically as if a pulse is heard, but instead lowers ICHABOD'S wrist.)* Why do we need our ideal candidate to have a pulse?

ICHABOD CRANE: I do have a pulse!

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3: Our children are getting dumber by the moment. The other day, I told my son to add two plus seven. He thought for a moment, then clutched his brain in pain and fainted.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: That's an excellent point. And besides, Mister Crane also meets another very important qualification. He showed up.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1, #2 and #3: Here, here.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Mister Crane, you're hired!

ICHABOD CRANE: Now wait a minute. I'm not sure I want to work here. As I stated, I am looking at other offers and this has already been a very strange experience. I...

Enter KATRINA VAN TASSEL, peeking into the room.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Excuse me. Is this the women's choral society?

ICHABOD'S jaw drops. He is mesmerized by her beauty.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: No, I'm sorry. The women's choral society is down the hall, second door on the right. Head out the door and down the street about two hundred yards until you hear an awful noise. That's the women's choral society.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Thank you kindly. *(Exits.)*

ICHABOD CRANE: *(Enchanted.)* Who was that?

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #2: That was Katrina Van Tassel, daughter of Baltus Van Tassel, the richest farmer in the county.

ICHABOD CRANE: She's the most beautiful woman I've ever seen.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: You should say hi to her. She'll be at the Sleepy Hollow Rutabaga Festival tomorrow. Being crowned queen. She'll probably be looking for a king. Of course, whoever marries her will be as rich as a king, with all of the money her father has.

ICHABOD CRANE: You know, after careful consideration, I'll take the job.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Excellent Mister Crane! We'll have the scarecrow that's been teaching the children in the interim removed from the classroom immediately. In the meantime, enjoy your weekend in Sleepy Hollow.

ICHABOD CRANE: Thank you and good evening to you all. *(Exits.)*

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #3: Do you really think you should have encouraged him to approach Katrina Van Tassel in a romantic manner? Everyone knows she's courting Brom Bones, and he does not take kindly to romantic rivals. I mean, think of what he will do to our poor schoolmaster.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER #1: Also, I'm concerned that Mister Crane seems more interested in Katrina's beauty and wealth than in her as a person.

SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. I agree, it will all be very entertaining to watch. Meeting adjourned.

SCENE 2

AT START: *Sleepy Hollow Rutabaga Festival. KATRINA VAN TASSEL paces back and forth. She wears a tiara and a sash that reads "Rutabaga Queen." Nearby is a cart filled with rutabagas. Enter GERTRUDE and MATILDA.*

MATILDA: Katrina! There you are! They're looking for you.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: *(Upset.)* I'm not going out there.

GERTRUDE: But you've been crowned "Rutabaga Festival Queen!"
Three years in a row! The festival can't go on without its queen!
It will be chaos!

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Brom said he'd be here, by my side.

GERTRUDE: *(Moves forward towards the audience and begins speaking to herself anxiously. KATRINA VAN TASSEL and MATILDA are not paying attention to her.)* There will be no rule of law! Commoners, not knowing what to do with their rutabagas!

MATILDA: *(Angry.)* Brom Bones! Katrina, when will you realize that boy is stringing you along? Brom Bones wants nothing more than a life of rambling and roughhousing and making trouble with the Sleepy Hollow Boys!

GERTRUDE: *(To self, feverishly.)* Pretenders, seizing the throne!
Imposing their cruel laws on the rutabaga festival!

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: I know Brom has a wild side, Matilda, but he loves me.

GERTRUDE: *(To self.)* Then one of the commoners realizes, "Hey, maybe we don't need a rutabaga festival. Maybe we don't need to grow rutabagas. Nobody likes them. They're disgusting."

MATILDA: I'm sorry, Katrina, but Brom Bones is interested in nothing but gallivanting and carousing.

GERTRUDE: *(To self.)* Then someone says, "Hey, farming's stupid too, let's stop doing that!" What would we eat?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: I know Brom is still sewing his wild oats...

GERTRUDE: *(To KATRINA VAN TASSEL.)* We can't live off of wild oats!

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: ...but he loves me.

GERTRUDE: *(Grabs KATRINA VAN TASSEL.)* You have to get out there and command those people to eat those rutabagas!

Enter BROM BONES.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Brom! *(To MATILDA.)* See? I told you he'd be here.

BROM BONES: Hey babe. Can't stay and talk. Me and the boys just came to score some rutabagas before we head over to the McGregor farm.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: *(Upset.)* Brom Bones! You promised you would stand by my side as they crowned me Rutabaga Festival Queen!

BROM BONES: Did I? I didn't think this thing had a queen. People out there act like they've got it under control themselves.

GERTRUDE: Oh my gosh, it's starting!

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Brom Bones! I am tired of...

BROM BONES: Gotta run, babe. Gotta go deliver some rutabagas to Old Man McGregor. He can't get out of the house.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: I... Well, that is actually pretty nice of you.

MATILDA: Wait for it...

BROM BONES: He can't get out of the house because we keep chucking vegetables at him every time he tries. Gotta run!

Exit BROM BONES. KATRINA VAN TASSEL is upset.

MATILDA: You need to forget about him, Katrina!

GERTRUDE: Yeah. You're Rutabaga Queen. You could have any man in this town.

MATILDA: That boy has taken you for granted for too long. He needs to see what life would be like without you by his side. He needs to be taught a lesson.

GERTRUDE: That's right! Have him date one of us. See how he likes it.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: *(To MATILDA.)* What do you mean?

GERTRUDE: I'll teach him a lesson. A lesson in love. I'll take him by those big burly muscles, look him in those dark mysterious eyes and say, "Listen you big sexy...."

MATILDA: I'm saying you need to make him jealous. That boy needs a competitor.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: And who do you think that would be? Every time a man shows interest in me, Brom picks him up by the back of the neck, rides him down to the river and drops him in. Everyone in this town knows that. What do you think some mysterious stranger is just going to fall from the sky?

ICHABOD CRANE enters, suddenly falling right in front of them as if from the sky.

ICHABOD CRANE: Ahhhh! *(Falls to the ground, gets up and dusts himself off.)* Pardon me ladies. The name's Ichabod Crane. I'm the new schoolmaster. I was just on the tavern roof trying to catch a glimpse of the Rutabaga Queen when I leaned a little too far forward. I tried to counterbalance by moving my.... Well, I won't bore you with the physics of it all.

MATILDA: *(Points to KATRINA VAN TASSEL.)* This is the Rutabaga Queen.

ICHABOD CRANE: *(Falls to his knees.)* Your majesty! Your beauty exceeds the worthiness of any rutabaga crop.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Why thank you. *(Holds out her hand.)* Katrina Van Tassel.

ICHABOD CRANE: Katrina Van Tassel. Such beauty in that name. *(Stands.)* Tell me, would it be too forward if I asked if I could escort you along the riverbank one evening for a stroll?

GERTRUDE smacks ICHABOD CRANE across the face.

GERTRUDE: I don't know what kind of girl you think Katrina is, but there are societal norms to be followed! First, you have to ask her father if you may walk in a parallel line with her. Then, you must go to the blacksmith and purchase a pair of horse blinders so that you don't accidentally gaze upon her during said stroll. And then....

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Gertrude! What she means is that I would be delighted to accompany you along the riverbank for an evening stroll.

ICHABOD CRANE: Wonderful! Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a new school year to prepare for and I must get the schoolhouse in order. Until we meet again. *(Bows politely and walks off.)*

MATILDA: Good for you, Katrina! The new schoolmaster. A guy with some brains and some manners.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Brom Bones is about to see what it's like to have some actual competition.

ICHABOD CRANE stumbles and crashes into the rutabaga cart.

ICHABOD CRANE: I'm okay! *(Exits.)*

MATILDA: I'm proud of you, Katrina. I think this is going to give you a chance to see how a man should treat you. And it will give Brom a chance to see how a real man acts.

ICHABOD CRANE enters, running back on stage being chased by bees.

ICHABOD CRANE: *(Screaming.)* Ahhhhhhhh!! Bees!!!

KATRINA VAN TASSEL, GERTRUDE and MATILDA watch as ICHABOD CRANE runs across the stage and exits on the other side.

MATILDA: Well. I wouldn't worry about Ichabod. I'm sure he's just getting the lead out.

ICHABOD CRANE enters, falling off the roof in front of them again.

ICHABOD CRANE: Ah! Sorry about that. Fell off the roof again. *(Tips his hat.)* Good day. *(Exits.)*

MATILDA: Well. We'll just keep him out of high places.

SCENE 3

AT START: *The School House.* ICHABOD CRANE is wistfully arranging his classroom and dusting bookshelves.

ICHABOD CRANE: *(Singing.)* Katrina, Katrina, no fairer word than Katrina. Van Tassel, Van Tassel, your father's farm shall be my castle. *(Talks to self.)* Ah, but how shall I capture your heart? *(Thumbs through books on a bookshelf.)* Let's just see what the classics have to say. *(Reads titles.)* Hmm, algebra... Cotton Mather's World of Witches... Ah! *(Pulls out book and reads the title.)* How to Woo a Woman! *(Opens book and reads aloud.)* How to woo a woman, chapter one. Turn to desired woman and shout 'woo!' At her.... *(Thumbs through the rest of the book.)* The rest of the pages are blank. *(Pulls out another book.)* Ah! Love poetry. *(Reads aloud.)* The evening sunset is overwhelmed by your beauty. That's perfect! *(Rehearses.)* The evening sunset is overwhelmed by your beauty. The evening sunset is overwhelmed by your beauty. The evening.... *(There is a knock at the door.)* Ahhh there she is!

ICHABOD CRANE dances towards the door. He opens it without bothering to look. It is HANS VAN RIPPER, a grizzled old farmer. Enter HANS VAN RIPPER.

ICHABOD CRANE: *(With eyes closed.)* My darling, the evening sunset is overwhelmed by your beauty.

HANS VAN RIPPER: *(Offended.)* Excuse me?

ICHABOD CRANE: *(Startled, opens eyes.)* Ah! Who are you?!

HANS VAN RIPPER: Hans Van Ripper. I'm the keeper of these facilities. I'm here to drop off your effects, not to be catcalled by some untamed hoot owl who sees me as nothing more than an object.

ICHABOD CRANE: *(Embarrassed.)* My apologies. Please, come in.

HANS VAN RIPPER: I'm supposed to show you around, but you've obviously made yourself at home. I can see you've used our school's few works of literature to harass me.

ICHABOD CRANE: I apologize, Mister Van Ripper. I was just cleaning up this old school. The previous owner really left it in disarray. Cobwebs everywhere, bats in the rafters and take a look out the window there. Someone plopped a pile of old rugs down on school grounds and put a saddle on it.

HANS VAN RIPPER: (*Instantly furious and offended.*) That's not a pile of old rugs! That's my horse, Gunpowder!

ICHABOD CRANE: That's a horse? It looks like a blanket that blew off a clothesline, got struck by lightning and landed on a pile of sticks.

HANS VAN RIPPER: You take that back! I will not have you mock Gunpowder. That horse is a war hero!

ICHABOD CRANE: That horse is a war hero?

HANS VAN RIPPER: You better believe it! We were outnumbered by the Redcoats three to one when Gunpowder snuck behind enemy lines and took out the entire regiment with nothing but a musket rifle and a bayonet!

ICHABOD CRANE: What, a horse did that?

HANS VAN RIPPER: Yes, a horse did that! He once rescued a canoe full of fur trappers stranded fifteen miles out at sea in a storm!

ICHABOD CRANE: I don't believe you.

HANS VAN RIPPER: Doubt it all you want, you elitist scarecrow! That horse served two terms in congress! He's read more books than you!

ICHABOD CRANE: He did not serve in congress. None of that's true. Look, if you're here to show me around the school house, show me around the school house but...

Enter KATRINA VAN TASSEL, carrying a pie.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: (*Knocks on door.*) Knock, knock!

ICHABOD CRANE: Katrina! The evening sunset is overwhelmed by your beauty.

HANS VAN RIPPER: (*To ICHABOD CRANE.*) You use that line on everyone?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: You're too sweet. I know you're just getting settled in. I thought I'd bring you a fresh rutabaga pie.

ICHABOD CRANE: Rutabaga pie... I... so... thoughtful.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Oh, it's nothing special. I just took a basic crust, put a rutabaga inside and covered it in another pie crust. *(Pause.)* I don't know how to cook.

ICHABOD CRANE: I will savor every bite.

HANS VAN RIPPER: You two are making me uncomfortable. *(To ICHABOD CRANE.)* Your provisions are outside. If you need anything, please hesitate to ask. I don't like to be bothered.

Exit HANS VAN RIPPER.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: I believe you owe me an evening stroll. Tonight seems like the perfect night.

ICHABOD CRANE: Tonight will indeed be the perfect night. I'll put all of my lesson plans on hold. And really, what does it matter? These kids are never going to learn math.

Enter BROM BONES, walking through the door.

BROM BONES: Oh, hey babe.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Brom! What are you doing here?

BROM BONES: Your girlfriends told me I should come down to the school house. That I would see something that would knock my socks off.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: *(Fake shock.)* Oh my! My ex-boyfriend and my potential love interest in the same room!

BROM BONES: *(Confused.)* Ex?

ICHABOD CRANE: *(Excited.)* Potential!

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Yes, ex!

BROM BONES: *(Cocky.)* No. No, we're not exes.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Yes, we are. We broke up when you skipped out on the Rutabaga Festival.

BROM BONES: No. You gotta say, "I'm breaking up with you." We're not broken up.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Fine. I'm breaking up with you.

BROM BONES: Nah, you're not.

ICHABOD CRANE: Excuse me, I believe the lady said she's breaking up with you.

BROM BONES: Who's this weather vane on top of a flagpole?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: That's my potential love interest.

BROM BONES: Him?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Yes.

BROM BONES: Nah. You're crazy.

ICHABOD CRANE: I'll have you know you're talking to the Rutabaga Queen!

BROM BONES: (*To ICHABOD CRANE.*) Wait, you're the Rutabaga Queen?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: I am! That's why we're breaking up! You weren't there for my big moment.

BROM BONES: Babe, I'll be there next time. Just have them have it on a Tuesday and have them have it wherever I'm at. And have them make it like five minutes long, and I'll be there.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: We're through, Brom! I'm going to find a man who makes me a priority.

BROM BONES: And I'm saying I'll do that. I just need to do a bunch of other things first.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Well, you can do whatever you want whenever you want. Ichabod and I are taking a walk.

BROM BONES: Together?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Yup.

BROM BONES: In the same direction?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: You better believe it!

BROM BONES: No. Let's just save us all a bunch of time... (*To ICHABOD CRANE.*) Let's fight.

ICHABOD CRANE: No.

BROM BONES: No?!

ICHABOD CRANE: No.

BROM BONES: How am I supposed to prove that I'm better than you?

ICHABOD CRANE: You're not.

BROM BONES: Yes, I am! I'm Brom Bones! Hero of the countryside!

ICHABOD CRANE: I've never heard of you.

BROM BONES: What?!

ICHABOD CRANE: Come Katrina. (*To BROM BONES.*) Lock up when you leave.

Exit ICHABOD CRANE and KATRINA VAN TASSEL.

BROM BONES: Hey! Hey come back here! Hey! Oh yeah?! Well, I'm not gonna lock up! And not just because I don't know where the keys are! I'm gonna leave this school wiiiiiiide open! Anybody's gonna be able to come in here and learn whenever they want about whatever they want! That ostrich on stilts is about to learn who the king of Sleepy Hollow is. (*BROM BONES begins to exit but stops suddenly and addresses the audience.*) It's me by the way. (*Exits.*)

SCENE 4

AT START: Downtown Sleepy Hollow. GERTRUDE and MATILDA are talking. Enter KATRINA VAN TASSEL.

MATILDA: There she is.

GERTRUDE: Katrina!

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Hi ladies!

GERTRUDE: We've been looking for you all over. We've been dying to know....

MATILDA: How was your walk with Ichabod Crane?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Oh, it was marvelous. Did you know that he's quite a singer?

MATILDA: No, I did not.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Yes he is. He sang for me.

MATILDA: Oh, that sounds lovely.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: He sang for forty-five consecutive minutes.

MATILDA: That... that seems like a lot.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: No. I mean, yes. It didn't help that he kept repeating some songs. Or that I couldn't wrap him up before he would burst into another song. Did you know he's an ardent believer in witches?

MATILDA: Most folks in Sleepy Hollow are.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: He sees them everywhere. We walked past an owl perched on a low hanging branch. He said he thought it may be a witch in disguise watching us.

MATILDA: Well...

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Then a few minutes later, we walked past old Mrs. Von Houttenbottom working in her yard and he said, "I think that's the witch who disguised herself as an owl." Well, old Mrs. Von Houttenbottom must have overheard, because she looked up. And then she asked, "Who?" And Ichabod bolted off in terror.

MATILDA: More importantly, how's Brom Bones taking this?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Brom's having a tough time with it. He tried secretly following us. He attempted to hide behind a tree, but he was on horseback, so that didn't work out. Ichabod won't fight him, which drives him crazy, so he's resorted to pranks. Last night Ichabod returned to the schoolhouse to find everything in shambles. Clearly the work of the Sleepy Hollow Boys, but Ichabod blames it on witches. Brom was offended and even took credit for the vandalism, but unfortunately, it was in front of the constable and now Brom is being investigated for witchcraft.

MATILDA: Wow. Sounds like Brom is being bested at every turn! Funny how he's paying attention to you now.

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: I have a plan that should really shake things up. I am inviting them both to the Van Tassel Halloween Frolic!

GERTRUDE: Ooo, and when they show up it turns out they're the only guests and they have to dance with each other!

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: No! We find out how badly Brom Bones wants my hand.

MATILDA: Are you concerned at all that someone may get hurt?

KATRINA VAN TASSEL: Well... I hadn't thought of that. (*Pauses to think.*) Yeah, I probably won't think about that.

SCENE 5

AT START: *Hans Van Ripper's house. Enter ICHABOD CRANE. ICHABOD CRANE walks up and knocks on the door. Enter MRS VAN RIPPER, who answers the door. She's just as cranky as her husband.*

MRS. VAN RIPPER: Who are you? What do you want?

ICHABOD CRANE: Good evening, ma'am. My name's Ichabod Crane. I'm here to see Mr. Van Ripper.

MRS. VAN RIPPER: Hang on a minute. (*Shouts.*) Hans! There's an Ichabod Crane here to see you!

HANS VAN RIPPER: (*Heard off stage.*) Tell him I'm not here!

MRS. VAN RIPPER: (*To ICHABOD CRANE.*) He's not here.

ICHABOD CRANE: I just heard him say that. And I can kind of see him.

MRS. VAN RIPPER: (*Shouts.*) It didn't work! He said he can hear you!

HANS VAN RIPPER: (*Shouts.*) Try something else!

MRS. VAN RIPPER: Um....

ICHABOD CRANE: Look...

MRS. VAN RIPPER: He's sleeping. Come back later.

ICHABOD CRANE: I just heard him tell you to try something else.

MRS. VAN RIPPER: Hans! It's not working! He's too smart!

HANS VAN RIPPER: Doesn't sound like the Ichabod Crane I know.
(*Enter HANS VAN RIPPER. He comes to the door and sees ICHABOD CRANE.*) Oh, great.

ICHABOD CRANE: Mr. Van Ripper, I've been invited to the Van Tassel Halloween Frolic, and I would like to ask you for the use of your horse, Gunpowder.

HANS VAN RIPPER: Well, well, well. Just a few days ago you compared old Gunpowder to a pile of rugs. Now you want to show off to a girl, so you need use of the finest steed in the land.

ICHABOD CRANE: I don't need the finest steed in the land. Gunpowder will do just fine.

HANS VAN RIPPER: Shut your mouth! That horse raced from Connecticut to Kentucky and back in a single night on a dare and still had it in him to plow thirty acres in the morning.

ICHABOD CRANE: Okay. Well, I don't believe that....

MRS. VAN RIPPER: Ichabod Crane? The schoolmaster? The one smitten with Katrina? That ladies in the sewing circle say she's just using him to get back at Brom Bones.

ICHABOD CRANE: That's not true!

MRS. VAN RIPPER: The ladies in the sewing circle say that you're just as attracted to her father's wealth as you are to her. Some say that you are more smitten with her father's farm.

HANS VAN RIPPER: I bet you even tried to hold hands with it, you sick....

ICHABOD CRANE: Can I borrow the horse or not?!

HANS VAN RIPPER: On Halloween night? You just happen to want to borrow Gunpowder on the one night when you know that all of the ghosts of those British soldiers Gunpowder shot will be roaming about.

ICHABOD CRANE: He shot them?

HANS VAN RIPPER: Don't question his heroism!

ICHABOD CRANE: No, no. I'm sure he was quite the horse back in his day.

HANS VAN RIPPER: This is his day!

MRS. VAN RIPPER: Oh Hans, let him borrow the horse. The boy's in love and he needs to get to the ball. Also, the sewing circle needs something to make fun of.

HANS VAN RIPPER: Fine! You can borrow Gunpowder. But if that horse comes back any less spirited than he is now, it's your hide!

ICHABOD CRANE: Thank you, sir!

ICHABOD CRANE exits, walking quickly off stage.

HANS VAN RIPPER: *(Shouts after ICHABOD CRANE.)* Hey! Hey, slow down! Hey! Watch how fast you're going! You're gonna wear him down!

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