

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

The valley known as Sleepy Hollow hides from the world in the high hills of New York state. There are many stories told about the quiet valley. But the story that people believe most is about a man who rides a horse at night. The story says the man died many years ago, during the American Revolutionary War. His head was shot off. Every night he rises from his burial place, jumps on his horse and rides through the valley looking for his lost head.

Near Sleepy Hollow is a village called Tarry Town. It was settled many years ago by people from Holland. The village had a small school. And one teacher, named Ichabod Crane. He was tall and thin. His shoulders were small, joined two long arms. His head was small, too, and flat on top. He had big ears, large glassy green eyes and a long nose.

One night, after a party, people were telling stories. The most feared story was about the rider looking for his lost head. One farmer told how he raced the headless man on a horse. The farmer ran his horse faster and faster. The horseman followed over bush and stone until they came to the end of the valley. There the headless horseman suddenly stopped. Gone were his clothes and his skin. All that was left was a man with white bones shining in the moonlight.

The stories ended and time came to leave the party. Well, Ichabod began his long ride home on the hills that surround Tarry Town. He thought he saw something white move in the tree. But no, it was only the moonlight shining and moving on the tree. Then he heard a noise. His body shook. He kicked his horse faster. The, it stopped.

There was an ugly thing. Big and black. It did not move, but seemed ready to jump like a giant monster. "Who are you?" The thing did not answer. Ichabod asked again. Still no answer. Ichabod felt his heart sink. For a moment the moon shown down and to Ichabod's horror he saw it was a horse. And it had a rider. But the rider's head was not on his body. It was in front of the rider, resting on the horse.

He saw the man pick up his head and throw it with a powerful force. The head hit Ichabod in the face and knocked him off his horse to the dirt below. They found Ichabod's horse the next day peacefully eating grass. They could not find Ichabod. The only other thing they found was lying near Ichabod's hat.

It was the broken pieces of a round orange pumpkin.