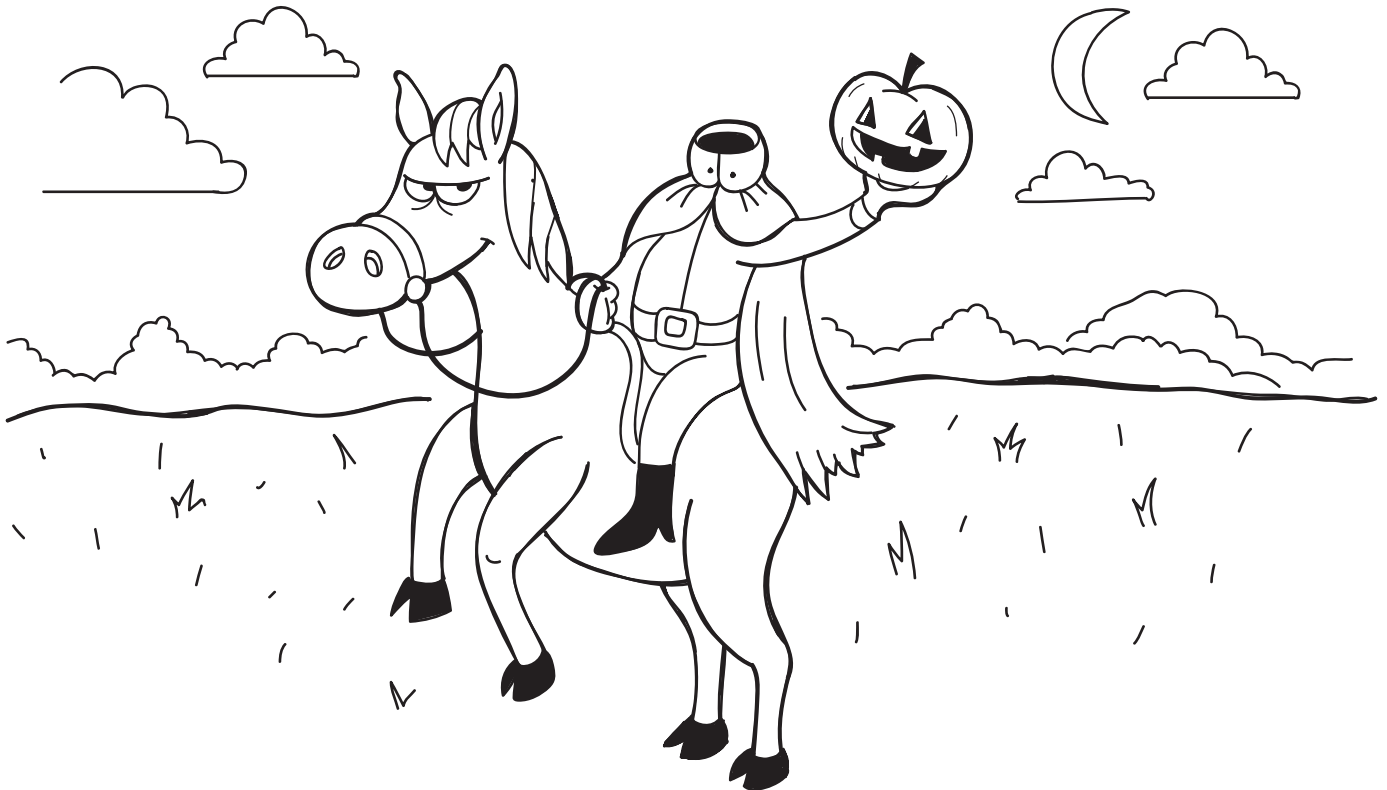


The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

What do you know about the legend of Sleepy Hollow?

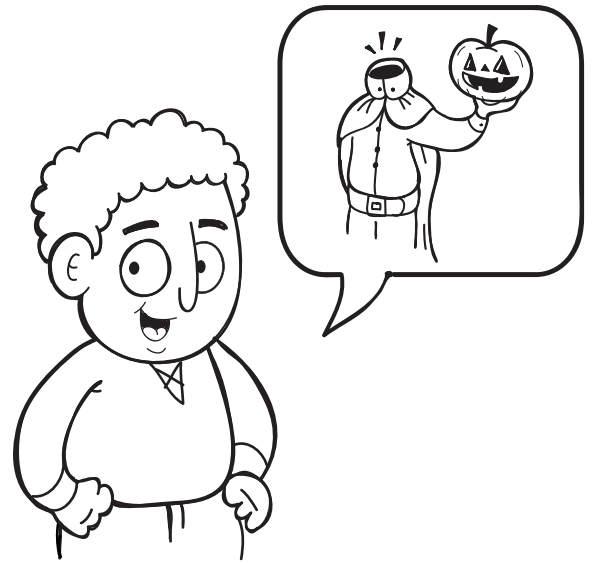


The story goes that a man lost his head in the Revolutionary War and now haunts the woods of his hometown of Sleepy Hollow. Called the Headless Horseman, he seeks to take the heads of others. He throws his pumpkin at poor souls in the woods and smashes their heads. Unless the person can reach the churchyard bridge before dawn, he can be sure that the Headless Horseman will get him. That was the fate of Ichabod Crane, who encountered the Headless Horseman one night and was never seen again.



Why do you think the Headless Horseman haunts the woods?

Brom Bones and The Headless Horseman



My name is Brom Van Brunt, but everyone calls me Brom Bones because I'm so big and strong. Some even say that I'm like Hercules. I'm tall, I have broad shoulders, and my hair is short and curly. My greatest skill is horsemanship. Nobody is better than me with horses. I learned everything from my father who passed away when I was younger. My father taught me to take care of myself and to take care of others. The town of Sleepy Hollow considers me a hero. I am always available to fix and build things or help with their horses. I have four friends who are always with me and they all agree that I'm the leader of the group. Even though everyone in town considers me a hero, the one person I really care about is the beautiful Katrina Van Tassel. Until Ichabod Crane came into town, I always thought she cared about me, too.

The Van Tassels really liked me and I enjoyed spending time with them. From time to time, Katrina's father, Baltus Van Tassel, would ask me to come over and help him with his horses. I took these opportunities to say hello to Katrina. She was always very sweet but very shy. I liked to impress her with my strength by lifting heavy objects whenever she passed by. She would always pretend not to notice, but I'm almost sure that I saw her giggle.

Katrina liked to help at the schoolroom, and one day I heard that there was a new teacher by the name of Ichabod Crane. I didn't think much of him. He was scrawny, had a small head, long nose, and huge ears, and overall looked



like a scarecrow. The children seemed to like him and so did the parents. I noticed that he had begun to talk to Katrina. He was very awkward, but he made her laugh nonetheless. It made me furious. How could he be funnier than me? And why would Katrina even waste her time with this man? I tried to let it go, but every time I saw Ichabod near her I only grew more and more jealous.

When the Van Tassels threw a party at their farmhouse, I never thought that Ichabod would be invited as well. I was determined to make a better impression on Katrina. I arrived with my great horse, Daredevil, a creature that only I could manage. I made quite an entrance. My friends followed and joined me inside. I looked for Katrina, hoping to invite her to sit at my table. I was certain that she would choose me over Ichabod, but to my surprise, she was already dancing with him! I felt my face redden with anger. I couldn't believe that she was dancing with him. When the song was over, everyone clapped and told him how great a dancer he was. Not only was she choosing him over me, the whole town seemed to have chosen him as well. I had to put an end to it.

I gathered everyone around and told them the story of the Headless Horseman. I made sure to look right at Ichabod as I told the story. He began to seem a bit nervous and suggested that perhaps people would like to hear a more cheerful story.

"Why, are you scared?" I taunted.

He responded nervously, "No. Not at all."

So, I continued with the story until everyone, especially Ichabod, was quivering in their boots. When the party ended and I saw that Ichabod was on his way out, I reminded him to watch out for the Headless Horseman.

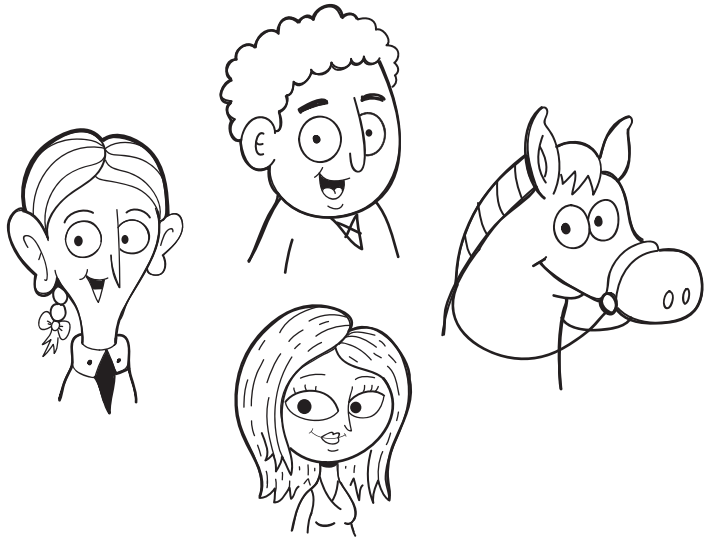
There was no Headless Horseman, of course. That story is just a story. Before the party, I had gathered my friends and made a plan to get rid of Ichabod once and for all. After the party, I disguised myself as the Headless Horseman and rode my horse into the forest, waiting for Ichabod to show up. My head was covered by a large coat, so it looked like I had no head. I knew which route he would take to get home, so I took off and waited there for him. As he rode his horse through the dark forest, I hid behind the trees with my horse. He was scared before I even had the chance to jump out at him, which made me want to laugh. He whistled as he rode his horse. Perhaps he was trying to calm himself. I began to make my way towards him. He heard me coming because he began to pick up speed. So I went faster, too. When Ichabod slowed down, so did I. He was so afraid and I knew I had him where I wanted. The poor fool even tried to shoot me, but he was so scared that he missed! I continued to chase him until we got to the bridge where he thought he would be safe. I held a pumpkin in my arm so it looked like I was ready to throw it at his head. I threw it, but not at his head. I knocked over his hat and the pumpkin smashed to the ground. He covered his face with his arms and quivered. At that point, I let out a loud laugh. I approached him slowly and told him to leave this town and never come back. He took off as fast as he could. No one ever saw him again.



The next day, his hat was found along with the smashed pumpkin. The townspeople assumed that the Headless Horseman got him after all. Katrina was devastated. I knew it was my chance to finally get her attention, but she was so sad. I didn't want her to be sad anymore so I told her that it was all a prank but that Ichabod would never return to Sleepy Hollow. Besides, Ichabod couldn't protect her the way I could. To my surprise, she was furious and told me that she never wanted to see me again. I don't understand what I did wrong.

Who is telling the second story?

- a. Ichabod Crane
- b. Katrina Van Tassel
- c. Brom Bones
- d. None of these



Talk About It!

Why did Brom Bones tell everyone at the party the story of the Headless Horseman?

What did Katrina think about Brom Bones's behavior?

What do you think about Brom Bones's behavior?
