

“**Sleepy Hollow**,” by W. Adam Rinehart. Dresden Files RPG/FATE 3.0: Feet in the Water level introductory game (6 Refresh, 20 Skill points, Skill cap Great +4); 6 PCs.

### **The Opening:**

Recently George Carver, an elderly Yale alumni named who was an amateur archivist, passed away. As part of his will, he left the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale his entire collection of early American documents and papers. Amongst those papers was a letter written to publisher George Putnam alluding to an unfinished manuscript by Washington Irving, which was to be interred with the author on his death in 1859. Even more interestingly, the manuscript is reputed to contain clues leading to some treasure, lost by the British in the New York Colony during the Revolutionary War. The letter had been written by the executor of Mr. Irving’s estate, and noted that Mr. Irving wanted the manuscript hidden away, as “some secrets are better left buried, no matter how much gold is involved.”

The game starts in October with the party having been called to Yale University’s Rare Book and Manuscript Library by David Cerzzaleone, one of the archivists responsible for cataloguing and preserving the collection. He can be a friend, relative, colleague, or former student or teacher to one or more members of the party.

Once there, David asks the party to take a look at the letter. He has grown concerned since a wealthy individual by the name of Ezra Crane has contacted the archivists responsible for working on the Carver collection, seeking to purchase the letter. Mr. Crane has expressed a willingness to pay one of the

researchers (and NOT the library) up to \$10,000 for the letter. Naturally, the researchers have refused, but one of David’s colleagues, Katherine McGee, was recently mugged in a parking lot just outside of the library and put into the hospital, but nothing except cash was taken from her. Despite the entire contents of the purse having been dumped out on the ground. The mugger left her credit cards, watch, jewelry and purse.

What David is most interested in, is having the party investigate to determine if there is any truth to the contents of the letter, or if there is another reason why someone would wish to acquire the letter. The characters are allowed to examine the letter, but are not allowed to remove it from the library, or do testing which would damage or destroy it.

### **The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library**

#### **Aspects:**

Strange Lighting

A Library of Rare Written Works  
Part of Yale

The library is constructed of a translucent Danby marble. This provides the collection of books and papers, including a rare Gutenberg Bible as well as papyrus scrolls, protection from direct light. Inside, a sort of subdued, dim lighting is available. The lower level of the building has shelving for the archives, as well as some offices for the researchers.

#### **What’s really going on:**

Yes, the manuscript is real and others are interested in it. There is a rather disreputable group of treasure seekers led by Ezra Crane that are convinced (correctly) that there are

directions to a fortune in British gold, lost during the American Revolution in nearby Dutchess County, NY. Mr. Crane is also interested in redeeming his family's "Good Name," since an ancestor of his apparently served as the inspiration for the character Ichabod Crane, in Washington Irving's short story, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

The reason Washington Irving wished the manuscript to be buried with him, was that he had inadvertently found out and recorded the True Name of a fearsome Wyldfae known to the locals as "The Headless Horseman." The Headless Horseman will also be after the manuscript, if it is removed from where it has rested. Until the manuscript is removed, the Headless Horseman is confined to a nearby cave along with the moldering skeleton of a Hessian mercenary and the remains of a leather satchel containing approximately 500 guineas (gold coins) with the face of King George III struck in 1779 (total worth approx. \$250,000 at current prices) and an old Hessian saber.

Once the party is familiar with the contents of the letter, there are several different avenues of which they can pursue. If they first choose to research the history of Washington Irving, they would discover that he had a number of early American literary works, amongst them the famous short story *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, and that he also served the US as a diplomat for many years prior to returning to the US. On his death in 1859, he was buried in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery next to the Dutch Reformed Church.

The Dutch Reformed Church in Sleepy Hollow NY is a Dutch Colonial-era fieldstone and wooden church and churchyard. The Sleepy Hollow Cemetery is next to the churchyard. The

church is no longer regularly used for services, but might be on special occasions. The cemetery has been around for centuries and is still in use.

### **The Dutch Reformed Church**

(c. 1685):

#### **Aspects:**

Consecrated Ground

Little-used Historic Church

Old Bones

Threshold: 3

If the party immediately heads to the church and cemetery, nothing is going on at the cemetery. If they wish to find the burial plot of Washington Irving, after some time spent searching, they find his tombstone bearing the epitaph, "Disturb not my rest, for on your Head will it be the consequences." However, if they wait and observe the cemetery from concealment, at nightfall six men dressed all in black and appearing heavily armed enter through the gate in the wall encircling the graveyard, Crane having managed to steal the letter. They are carrying a series of equipment duffel bags, one of which is wriggling on its side as if it contains something alive inside. The rest have equipment for digging like picks and shovels, as well as electric work lights and a blackout tent, which they immediately erect around the gravesite.

At this point, the party has some different options. They can call in the local constabulary and let the police deal with the armed men equipped with digging implements in an old graveyard after dark. The party can attempt to intervene and stop the men by themselves. In which case, the men's stats are listed below. The third option is to wait and see what happens. If the party chooses

this option, after a couple of hours, the men will have dug down to the coffin, and once Crane has broken it open and extracted the manuscript, the Headless Horseman will attack and seize it.

### **Ezra Crane and the Mercenaries**

**High Concept:** Mercenary

#### **Skills**

Alertness: Fair (+2)

Fists: Good (+3)

Guns: Good (+3)

Intimidation: Fair (+2)

Stealth: Fair (+2)

Weapons: Good (+3)

Other skills default to Mediocre, with a few at Average.

#### **Stunts (Pick One)**

On My Toes (Alertness): Gain +2 to Alertness when using it to determine initiative.

EMT Training (Scholarship): +2 when using Scholarship to administer medical care.

Shoot And Move (Guns): When using small firearms penalties to rolls due to movement are reduced by up to two.

#### **Stress**

Physical: OOO

Mental: OO

Social: OOO

#### **Notes**

These guys all have the following:

Glock 17 9 mm pistol (Weapon: 2)

ASP extending baton (Weapon: 2)

Boot knife (Weapon: 1)

2 also have AR-15 5.56 mm rifles

(Weapon: 3)

1 has a Winchester Model 12 shotgun

(Weapon: 3)

1 has an HK MP-5K 9 mm SMG/pistol

(Weapon: 2, does Spray attacks)

They are also wearing bulletproof vests

Armor: 2 (Physical) v. guns

**Total Refresh Cost:** +1 (Pure Mortal)

### **Wyldfae: The Headless Horseman**

**High Concept:** Faerie Fetch

**Other Aspects:**

Headless Horseman

#### **Skills**

Alertness: Good (+3)

Athletics: Good (+3)

Discipline: Good (+3)

Endurance: Good (+3)

Intimidation: Superb (+5)

Might: Good (+3)

Weapons: Great (+4)

Other skills default to Average or Fair.

#### **Stunts**

Smell Fear (Investigation): +2 to Investigation rolls to home in on or locate a source of fear.

#### **Powers (Headless Horseman Fetch)**

Greater Glamours [-4]

Emotional Vampire [-1] (Fear)

Physical Immunity [-8]

The Catch (Stacked) [+5] is that it's only immune to magic, and only when the creature using magic is afraid of the fetch (determined by the fetch using its Intimidation v. the caster's Discipline; if the caster doesn't beat the roll, the immunity is in effect). Unlike the lower-powered fetches listed so far, Hellfire does not appear to pierce the immunity this one has.

Inhuman Speed [-2]

Supernatural Strength [-4]

Supernatural Toughness [-4]

Supernatural Recovery [-4]

The Catch [+3] is cold iron and the like.

#### **Stress**

Physical: OOOO (OOOO)

Mental: OOO

Social: OOO

Armor: 2 (Physical)

Has a Weapon: 2 Hessian Cavalry saber. Uses Greater Glamour to create a True Seeming of a living, breathing cavalry horse from a set of old horse bones.

If the party opts not to investigate Washington Irving, and/or his final resting place, then things go differently. The party can go to the hospital to see what they can find out from Ms. McGee about her mugging. Or they can try and locate Ezra Crane so they can talk to or tail him, to see what is going on.

On leaving the library, the party is immediately tailed (which they may or may not spot) by one of Crane's mercenaries. At this point, Crane is looking to either have the letter stolen, or have someone tell the basic contents of the letter.

If the party goes to the hospital, on examining Ms. McGee's purse and personal effects, Ms. McGee and the party discover that some of Ms. McGee's keys, specifically those which would give her access to portions of the library, are missing. If the party heads back to the library at this point, they discover that they are too late. Someone has already broken in and stolen the letter. Whoever did so did, however, leave some traces of themselves behind in the form of blood from smashing a glass case, and a piece of nylon belt webbing. If someone in the party is capable of using Divination, either the blood or nylon belt will lead them towards Tarrytown NY, and the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.

If the party chooses to split up, then once one party member is by themselves, then the mercenaries will attack using stun guns and pepper spray in an attempt to stun, subdue and capture the party member for interrogation. If this member provides the information on the content of the letter, then the mercenaries will bring the party member to the gravesite. If they refuse, or don't have the information on the contents of the letter, the mercenaries will end up

dumping the party member off in an abandoned lot somewhere while some of the other mercenaries arrange the theft of the letter.

### **Game wrap up:**

Assuming things go as written, by the end of the Case File, the players should be at the cemetery in Tarrytown, NY. Depending on the players actions, they might be right outside, looking in, they might be within the cemetery walls observing the gravesite or they might be right at where the grave is.

Unless something is done to stop the mercenaries, they will succeed in retrieving the manuscript from Washington Irving's coffin, at which point the Headless Horseman appears, first attacking those around the desecrated grave, and then anyone else within the cemetery. Also while the Headless Horseman is attack those around the grave, he will be attempting (and probably succeeding) to Intimidate anyone who can see him. Please note, there is nothing about the Headless Horseman which would indicate that they are Fae and potentially vulnerable to iron.

After a number of minutes, the authorities will begin to arrive, in response to gunfire from the mercenaries when the Headless Horseman attacks. Unfortunately for the mercenaries, their combat skills are not up to facing an apparent legend from beyond the grave, so their efforts have little effect. As long as the party makes it outside of the cemetery and doesn't have the manuscript with them, the Headless Horseman isn't interested in them. If however they remain inside the cemetery before the Headless Horseman can seize the manuscript from Ezra Crane, then

the party is subject to being attacked by the Headless Horseman.

Once the Headless Horseman leaves after retrieving the manuscript, or even less likely after being vanquished by the party and/or mercenaries, the players can investigate, at least until the local police arrive. If they choose to take or open the wriggling canvas duffel bag which is padlocked shut, they find a small child (about ten years old) who had been kidnapped, bound and gagged before being stuffed into the bag. The child had been kidnapped by Ezra Crane for some unknown reason relating to the manuscript. If the child is questioned after being calmed down and recovering from the ordeal of being kidnapped and restrained, the child can relate to what Ezra Crane and his mercenaries were intending to do.