



Sleepy Hollow: Children of the Revolution

By Keith R.A. DeCandido

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When Ichabod Crane, a soldier from the Colonial Army, is resurrected from his grave, more than two centuries after he was killed in battle, he partners with Lieutenant Abbie Mills of the Sleepy Hollow Police Department to fight the evil forces that have taken hold of the town.

It's a cold day in January, and Ichabod visits Patriots Park for a moment of peace. Instead, he receives a disturbing vision from his wife, Katrina, in which she delivers a cryptic but urgent message: he must retrieve the Congressional Cross that he was awarded by the Second Continental Congress for bravery in action. There's just one problem: Ichabod was killed before he ever received the medal, and he is unsure where it might be. Together Ichabod and Abbie set out to uncover the mystery of the cross and its connection to George Washington and his secret war against the demon hordes. They soon learn that a coven of witches is also seeking the cross in order to resurrect their leader, Serilda, who was burned at the stake during the Revolutionary War. Now they must locate the cross before the coven can bring back Serilda to exact her fatal revenge on Sleepy Hollow.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

KEITH R.A. DECANDIDO is the award-winning, best-selling author of almost 50 novels, among them books in such universes as Star Trek, Supernatural, Doctor Who, World of Warcraft, and many more. He also writes short fiction, nonfiction, and comic books. Visit him at DeCandido.net.

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ONE

Sleepy Hollow, New York

January 2014

The great contradiction of Ichabod Crane's life was that he was constantly surrounded by people, yet had never been more alone.

The number of things to which Crane had been forced to adjust since awakening in the early twenty-first century—subjectively mere moments after his death at the hands of an enemy soldier he'd beheaded in the late eighteenth century—were legion. At times, though, the adjustment that vexed him the most was the sheer number of people around him. In his previous life as a soldier, first for the British Regular Army and then for the Continental Army, he was an aristocrat. Rarely did he find himself surrounded by strangers, and such occasions were fleeting, and often on the battlefield.

Indeed, the number of people he could have been surrounded by was negligible. The entirety of the colonies contained barely more than two thousand souls at the time of his alleged death. As the calendar changed from Anno Domine 2013 to 2014, Sleepy Hollow alone had an order of magnitude more people in it than the colonies had had in toto, and it was one of the smaller of what Lieutenant Mills had once called "bedroom communities" that dotted the Lower Hudson Valley, north of New York City.

Once he could go a full half year without encountering a single person with whom he was not at least acquainted enough to shake hands and exchange pleasantries. Now every day he was awash in strangers, wearing absurd clothing, occupied with pursuits Crane found impossible to fathom.

He took only small solace from the fact that those same folk would find his own pursuits even more baffling.

On this cold winter day he found himself drawn, as he often was, to Patriots Park, which lay on the border between Sleepy Hollow and the adjoining village to the south, Tarrytown. The park had been constructed around a monument to John Paulding, one of three Continental Army soldiers who captured a spy named John André. Crane recalled the incident, though he'd been elsewhere at the time. He was fairly certain that the actual capture of André, a confederate of Benedict Arnold, was in truth a quarter of a mile from this spot. His months in the twenty-first century, however, had taught him that history only remembered his time dimly when anyone bothered to remember it at all.

The park was quiet on this winter afternoon, for which Crane was grateful. Snow covered much of the grass,

though the smoothly paved oval-shaped passageways were cleared. He heard the sound of children across the thoroughfare known as the Broad Way (an odd appellation, as it was not significantly wider than any of the other nearby boulevards). The Paulding School was just letting out, having apparently concluded the day's lessons.

Crane strode, lost in thought, past the monument and wandered around the pathway that took him onto one of the two stone bridges that overlooked the brook.

One of the few people in the park was a woman of Oriental descent, who was strolling with a very small dog of indeterminate breed. The woman wore plastic spectacles of the type that were fashionable in this era, and wore an animal-hide jacket that seemed insufficient protection against the cold, particularly given the number of frays and holes that dotted her dungarees.

Having learned the hard way that the people of this century did not always appreciate a simple greeting, Crane said nothing to the woman.

She was less restrained, to his surprise and delight. "I love that coat. Where did you find such a hot vintage piece?"

"This topcoat was a gift." It was, Crane had found, the easiest method of explaining his clothing.

"Ooh, love the accent. And I bet it keeps you warm—the coat, not the accent, I mean. This winter has been just awful." The dog chose this moment to make a detailed olfactory survey of the bridge.

"Has it?" Crane smiled. "I've endured far worse winters in this very region. Indeed, I find this particular season to be quite bracing by comparison."

"If you say so, but I just wanna go back home to Cali."

"Who is this Cally you speak of?"

"Not who, hot stuff, where. California? That's where I'm from?"

"I'm afraid I haven't had the privilege of visiting."

The woman glanced at her dog, who was still attempting to sniff the entire bridge, then smiled back at Crane. "I adore the way you talk. Anyhow, I'm from L.A., and it's always summer there. Much better than this. I've been freezing my ass off."

Crane resisted the urge to glance at the woman's posterior to see if it was still attached, as the last time he heard that particular phrase his doing so had resulted in an open-handed blow to his cheek. Instead, he simply said, "It amazes me that the people of this time, with such wondrousness as central heating and insulation, still wax rhapsodic on the subject of how awful the cold is. But then it seems the denizens of this century are never happier than when they're complaining."

"This century? Dude, you can't be that much older than me."

Crane's smile widened. "You have no idea, miss."

The dog chose that moment to continue its examination on Crane's boots.

Chuckling, the woman said, "Guess Puddles likes your boots as much as I do. Were they a gift, too?"

"Indeed." Crane stared down at Puddles. "I hope your pet's name isn't indicative of how he intends to express his affection for my footwear."

"Nah, he only pees on trees. Only dog in the world that avoids fire hydrants. That's why I like to bring him here. Well, that, and it's a nice park. I love the history, y'know? The monuments to the people who died in the wars."

Crane nodded. Near another entrance to the park sat three monuments, one each for those local residents who died in the three of the wars that plagued the world in the previous century.

"Although I don't think it's entirely fair," the woman added.

The list of things that Crane considered unfair was considerable, but in the interests of politeness, rather than volunteer suggestions for what she meant, he instead asked, "What isn't?"

"Well, the brook—it's named André Brook. Why name it after the bad guy?"

"One wonders why it is named at all. The obsession with nomenclature is mind-boggling. I recall—" Crane stopped, reminding himself that actually stating he was from another time tended to send conversations in a direction that ended poorly for him. "There was a time when this brook had no name, nor had it need for one."

"Well, I'd rather it had no name. I mean, c'mon, André was the one who was the friggin' spy. Paulding gets the statue and the school named after him, and André gets the brook. What about Williams and van Wart?"

"I believe Militiaman Paulding receives the lion's share of the accolades because he was the only one of the three who captured Major André who was literate. It was he who read the papers André carried, and therefore found him out as a traitor."

"Huh." The woman considered Crane's words. "I didn't know that. Go fig'."

Puddles then decided to start running toward the other end of the bridge, eliminating the entirety of the slack on the lead the woman used to guide him. As she allowed herself to be pulled along, the woman waved with her free hand. "Well, it was nice meeting you! Happy new year!"

"To you as well, madam!" Crane even waved back to her, finding her conversation to be oddly stimulating, despite her unnecessary complaints about the cold.

Crane leaned on the side of the bridge, listening to the hypnotic rustle of the brook as it flowed across the channel that served as the border between the two townships.

For a moment, he closed his eyes, enjoying the noise of the water. With his eyes shut, he imagined the sound of meat as it cooked on a pan over a fire.

That, in turn, made him realize that he had not yet had his afternoon repast. His stomach made odd noises as

a further reminder. With a sigh, he opened his eyes—

—only to find himself no longer in Patriots Park.

He had not moved, yet he stood in an expansive forest. It was darkest night. No sign of the sun peeked through the gnarled, wizened trees that choked the landscape for as far as Crane's eyes could see. The air had transformed from the crisp cool of a Sleepy Hollow afternoon to heavy and thick. Taking a breath had gone from bracing to laboring, and he found it difficult to stand upright.

No stars dotted the sky, yet Crane could spy a full moon through one of the few gaps amid the branches. Not that Crane needed further proof, but it was early January and the next full moon wasn't until mid-month. This meant either he'd traveled forward in time—again—or this was a magical realm.

All things considered, the latter seemed the most likely. He'd received visions in dreams from Katrina, and both he and Lieutenant Mills had received waking visions from various sources, from Katrina to the evil Moloch to his friend the Sin-Eater, Henry Parrish. This was very much like those, and Crane was getting rather impatient with them.

“Whoever is responsible, show yourself!”

Crane considered exploring the region. But no, he'd been taken to this place for a reason. If this was the spot he was brought to, he was supposed to be here. If not, he was hardly about to oblige his host by stumbling about in the dark.

Again, he cried out, “Show yourself!”

Suddenly, he was no longer in the forest, but in the van Brunt mansion, sharing a drink with Abraham van Brunt. They were awaiting the arrival of a messenger who would provide them with their next task to perform on behalf of the Continental Congress.

“I have to say, Ichabod, this brandy is simply awful. Where did you find it?”

Without thinking, Crane responded now as he had then: “Your liquor cabinet, Abraham.”

“What a pity, I was hoping I had better taste than this.”

Crane shook his head, trying to force himself to speak to his best friend once again. They had shared this drink several nights prior to when Katrina van Tassel broke off her engagement with van Brunt and declared her love for Crane. That action sundered their friendship, and led to van Brunt selling his very soul, allying himself with evil to enact revenge on Crane and Katrina both.

But van Brunt and his sitting room disappeared then, replaced by General Washington and an outdoor location. Crane stood now with the general and several of his aides at the site of a massacre near Albany, New York, surrounded by torn tents, ruined fires, rotting food, broken weaponry, and corpses that had been burned in a manner not possible by any weapon Crane was familiar with.

“I have been expecting something like this since Trenton,” Washington said. “We both won and lost that day.”

Before Crane could even respond, the vista altered yet again. This time it was the Masonic cell where he, Lieutenant Mills, and Captain Irving had trapped Death, the Horseman of the Apocalypse, who was embodied by van Brunt after he felt himself betrayed. Mills's deceased comrade, Lieutenant Brooks, was speaking for the Horseman, taunting him.

"I took you! I took you on the battlefield! I slayed your Mason brethren, I hung their heads like lanterns! I killed her partner, and I will kill you."

Another change in scene, this time standing over the golem that Katrina had given to Jeremy. The doll had been imbued with tremendous destructive power in order to fulfill its mission to protect their son. Crane had been forced to kill the creature with a blade stained with his own blood.

Again Crane spoke the words he spoke to the golem as it died on the sands of the strange carnival, while holding its misshapen hand: "You have endured enough pain. Bear it no more."

Then another change, to a bitter cold winter day at Fort Carillon, which had just been taken by the Continental Army. Crane stood with Caleb Whitcombe and Henry Knox, tasked with moving several of the fort's cannons to Boston.

Whitcombe was saying, "Are you sure this is wise, Knox? This place was hardly a model of efficiency before old Captain Delaplace surrendered. Shall we make it less fortified by taking their cannon?"

"We've been over this," Knox replied now as he had in 1775. "Boston is of far more import than Two Lakes."

Crane smiled at the use of the English translation of the region, which the Iroquois called Ticonderoga—and then the scene changed yet again, to a meeting of the Sons of Liberty in New York, led by Marinus Willett. Crane sat in the gallery, surrounded both by members of the Sons and those like himself who were sympathetic. Next to him sat van Brunt.

Willett was speaking: "The regulars are tearing down the liberty poles almost as fast as we may put them up. Perhaps it is time to attempt a different tactic."

Another man, whose name Crane never did learn, said, "No! Our poles of liberty will be like the heads of the hydra! If they tear down one, we put up two to take its place!"

Willett smiled. "Very well."

Then he was back in the forest, alone. A half-moon now illuminated the night sky through the gnarled trees.

Crane's pulse raced when he saw that Katrina now stood before him. The red hair and magnificently steely features of his wife was the most glorious sight he could imagine. For months, he had suffered through life in a bizarre new century, conscripted to fight a war he barely even understood, while the one thing that grounded him, that kept him from completely succumbing to utter madness, was the knowledge that Katrina was trapped in purgatory and there was a possibility that she might be freed and they would, at last, be reunited.

He'd seen visions of her before, caught glimpses, been given messages, and every time it happened, his heart broke a little bit more.

Like so much of what he'd seen since coming to this place, Katrina was ever-changing. At first she was dressed in the elegant gown she wore the night she ended her engagement to van Brunt, but then that changed to the simple Mennonite dress and bonnet she wore when first they met, and then the nurse's raiment she was clothed in on the battlefield, including the day of his fateful encounter with the Horseman.

She stood a yard away from him.

"Katrina!" He moved toward her, but always she remained a yard away.

Urgently, she cried out, "You must retrieve the medal you were awarded!"

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Walter Miller:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be change about what going on or facts even knowledge to make these keep up with the era which can be always change and progress. Some of you maybe will update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know what type you should start with. This Sleepy Hollow: Children of the Revolution is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Christopher McCrady:

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Sallie Farris:

A lot of people always spent their own free time to vacation or go to the outside with them family members or their friend. Were you aware? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, as well as playing video games all day long. If you would like to find a new activity honestly, that is look

different you can read any book. It is really fun in your case. If you enjoy the book that you read you can spent all day long to reading a reserve. The book Sleepy Hollow: Children of the Revolution it is very good to read. There are a lot of people that recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space to develop this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore very easily to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not too expensive but this book offers high quality.

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