

RIP VAN WINKLE

Written by

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Based on a story by Washington Irving

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EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

From a bird's-eye view, a shining river flows on the right, mountains rise on the left, and a small village nestles in between.

A view of the house: a yellow brick house with latticed windows and a weathercock as a rooster with a broken beak. A DOG is pushing through a fence with broken boards and entering the house.

INT. HOUSE OF RIP VAN WINKLE - DAY

RIP JR. (8yo) and JUDITH (6) are sitting on a floor near the stove, laughing and making the kite.

RIP(a man in his 40s, 5.6 height, wearing a beige rumpled shirt with patches on his elbows, a brown vest, short dark brown pants, and shoes made of rough leather) is sitting on a chair near a rustic wooden table. The Dog is coming under the table and pressing on Rip's legs.

MRS. VAN WINKLE (a woman at her 30s, 6.2 height, wearing an apron above her dress) is standing near the table in front of Rip and looking down at Rip.

MRS. VAN WINKLE

(shouting at Rip)

You lazy fool! How dare you spend all day in a pub when you have so many things to do here on our farm?!

Rip nods with his eyes up.

EXT.NEAR THE INN - DAY - FLASHBACK

A small inn made of wood with opened windows, above the entrance door is a portrait of His Majesty George II in a red coat. The inn is hiding under the massive oak tree with green foliage.

Rip is sitting near the entrance on the right side of a bench. PETER WANDERDONK (50) is standing near the tavern windows and leaning on the wall with crossed hands. DERRICK VAN BUMMEL (28yo school master, a learned little man, wearing perfectly pressed shirt and a long green vest, dark brown pants with knee socks and suede boots)is sitting on the bench's left edge and holding in his hands "The Boston News-Letter" printed on May 14, 1761.

DERRICK VAN BUMMEL

(reading slowly)

On October the twentieth of  
seventeen sixty-nine, after a  
sudden death of His Majesty George  
the second, the Prince of Wales had  
ascended the throne under the name  
of George the third.

RIP

Well, the King is dead - long  
live the King though!

PETER WANDERDONK is stepping in front of the entrance and  
staring at the George II portrait.

PETER WANDERDONK

Let's call Peter Wanerlin  
and ask him to paint a portrait  
of the new King!

NICHOLAS VEDDER (70) is sitting on a massive wooden chair in  
front of his companions with a pipe in his mouth and nodding  
in approval.

Mrs Van Winkle is approaching the bench and hangs over Rip  
and Derrick van Bummel.

MRS. VAN WINKLE

(shouting)

Hey you slackers!

(waving her hands to  
Nicholas Vedder)

Shame on you! You're distracting  
those failures from righteous work  
and making profits off their vice!  
For God's sake!

(to Rip)

Are you still here, bastard?!  
I don't want to see you around here  
anymore! Understand??

Rip, Derrick van Bummel, Peter Vanderdonk and Nicholas Veder  
are looking at Mrs. van Winkle with dread. Rip hides his eyes  
and looks on the ground. Then Rip stands up and follows Mrs.  
van Winkle who is moving forward from the inn.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HOUSE OF RIP VAN WINKLE - DAY

Mrs. Van Winkle is holding a towel in one hand, and has her other hand on her hip.

MRS. VAN WINKLE  
Why don't you ever talk,  
you idiot!?

Rip is getting up from the table, takes his gun, and lives. The Dog is getting up and follows Rip.

MRS. VAN WINKLE  
Damn you, lazy bastard!

Mrs. Van Winkle is waving the towel with a swearing that transforms to a grumbling noise. Rip is stepping out of the door, the Dog is quickly jumping out of the house. The wooden door is closing with a squeak.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

The village is set against the background of the mountains. Rip and the Dog are wandering along the wide road. Suddenly kids appear, coming closer and following Rip.

KIDS  
(shouting and laughing)  
Mr. Rip, please, give  
us a ride!

Rip gives the gun to the OLDEST BOY, then takes the SMALL BOY (3 yo, curly hair) on his shoulders and walks as a horse to the end of the street. Here Rip takes the Small Boy off his shoulders, takes his gun back, says goodbye to kids and keeps going toward the forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Rip follows a path to the forest. The Dog is running ahead of Rip.

CUT TO

Rip is walking through the woods, looking up at the mountains. Then Rip looks at the river that shines through the trees. Rip lies on the ground and looks at the sky. The birds are singing.

CUT TO

Rip stands up, brushing himself off and yawning.

RIP  
 (to the Dog)  
 Time to go home, Wolf.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Rip is going by the forest path.

A VOICE OF AN OLD MAN  
 Rip van Winkle!

Rip turns around - and sees nobody. Rip is shrugging and taking a step.

THE VOICE OF THE OLD MAN  
 Rip van Winkle!

The Dog howls and runs closer to Rip. Rip turns around again and sees a figure of an OLD MAN (75, with messy hair and a long grey beard) with a barrel on his back. The Old Man is waving to Rip.

CUT TO

Rip is approaching the Old Man. The Old Man is wearing an old Holland suit: a heavy coat with a leather band and with a few pairs of pants. The top pants are very wide and decorated with rows of buttons down the side, and with bows on the knees.

THE OLD MAN  
 I know that you're very  
 kind man, Mr. van Winkle.  
 Could you, please, help me  
 to bring this bag to my  
 friends?

RIP  
 (carefully looking at  
 the Old Man then answer  
 slowly)  
 Sure, sir!  
 (to the Dog)  
 Let's do it quick and  
 then go home!

The Dog leans down his head, and Rip takes the barrel and follows the Old Man.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

The Old Man and Rip is climbing by the dry bed of a mountain stream. The sound of thunder in the distance. Rip stops and listens. Then Rip follows the Old Man to the basin surrounded by cliffs.

THE OLD MAN  
Mr. van Winkle, look,  
we're here!

Rip is looking around.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

A view of a forest amphitheater. Rip and the Old Man stop. In the center on a level spot, a group of bearded old men are playing nine-pins. The balls are rolling with the echoing thunder. Rip and the Old Man approach the flat surface. THE OLD GENTLEMAN, a strongly built man with a the weather-beaten face, dressed in a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, a high-crowned hat with a feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, adorned with roses, suddenly stops and turns his head towards The Old Man and Rip.

Suddenly everybody starts staring at Rip. Rip is going one step back, and accidentally steps on the Dog's paw. The Dog whines mournfully and jumps back. The Old Man is pouring wine into flagons, and nods to Rip pointing at the company. Rip is taking flagons and dropping them one by one. Everybody takes a sip, then puts flagons on a flat stone, and returns to the game. Rip is looking around, and then his eyes are stopping on one of the flagons. Rip takes the cup and sips hesitantly. Rip's eyes starts to light up. Rip drink from the cup again and again. Then Rip is sitting on the ground, closes his eyes, and his head gradually declines.

FADE OUT

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Rip (since that moment and till the end his 60 yo) is opening his eyes. The birds are singing. Rip is squinting at the blinding sun. Rip's face has a lot of fine lines. The eagle is flying in the sky. Rip touches his head and then his chin - he has long hair and a gray beard.

RIP  
(looking around)  
Oh, this strange old man with his  
wicked flagon! What excuse should I  
make to Dame Van Winkle?

Rip is looking at his gun and sees a rusty barrel with lock that's falling off and a stock worm-eaten.

RIP

(shouts)  
Wolf!

Only echo answers.

Rip is standing up slowly and holding his back.

RIP

These mountain beds weren't  
comfortable as it was before!

Rip is standing, but still staggers a little and tries to straighten his back.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Rip is getting down to the glen - we see a mountain stream foaming down with babbling murmurs. Limping, Rip goes to the amphitheater gate, but we see the huge waterfall instead.

RIP

(staring around)  
Well..  
(shouts)  
Wolf!

Sound of the crow's voice from above. Rip shakes his hand, puts his gun on his shoulder, turns and goes back.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Rip is going by the wide street. Kids follow Rip, point at his beard, and laugh.

Rip is reaching his house. The house looks old and has gaps in the wall, and a collapsed roof. Rip looks in the house through the empty doorway. An OLD DOG is slowly moving near the house.

RIP

(shouts)  
Wolf!

The Old Dog growls at Rip and goes out through the collapsed fence.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Rip is coming to the inn. We see the old wooden building with several broken windows. The glass on the windows are partially replaced with old hats and skirts. And over the door was painted "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle".

Instead of the great tree, there now was a tall, naked pole, with a fluttering flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes.

Instead of King George's portrait it was a portrait of General Washington in a blue buff coat with a sword in his hand and a cocked hat on his head. Near the entrance there is a crowd of people who are talking loudly discussing something. Rip looks among them and sees Rip Jr. (now he's 28) who looks like him in his youth.

Near the entrance a SLIM YOUNG MAN (18) stands with posters in his pockets.

THE SLIM YOUNG MAN

On that Christmas night,  
a thousand and seventy-six,  
despite everything,  
General Washington and his valiant  
warriors successfully crossed the  
Delaware and won the Hessians the  
next morning.  
Moving forward with his great plan,  
Washington has reviewed freedom and  
a new life into the revolution and  
independence!

Suddenly the crowd stops talking, turns to Rip, and surrounds him.

THE SLIM YOUNG MAN

(squeezing to Rip)  
On which side will you vote, sir?

Rip is staring blank at the Slim Young Man. A NIMBLE MAN (35) pulls Rip's hand.

THE NIMBLE MAN

Sir, are you a Federal or Democrat?

RIP

I'm not quite sure who I am now.



The crowd begins to exchange glances, winks, and twists fingers at their temples. Judith (now she's 26) with a TODDLER in her hands coming to Rip through the crowd. The Toddler starts crying near Rip.

JUDITH  
 (calming the Toddler)  
 Hush, Rip, this old man will  
 not hurt you!

RIP  
 (looking closely)  
 What's your name, my good woman?

JUDITH  
 I am Judith Gardenier.

RIP  
 And your father's name?

JUDITH  
 Ah! Poor Rip Van Winkle was  
 his name, but it's twenty years  
 since he went away from home with  
 his gun, and never has been heard  
 of since - his dog came home  
 without him.

RIP  
 (with a faltering voice)  
 Where's your mother?

JUDITH  
 Oh, she too died, but a short time  
 since.

Rip breaths a sigh. Then Rip caught Judith and The Toddler in his arms.

RIP  
 Judith, I am your father!  
 (looking at the crowd)  
 Does anyone know poor Rip Van  
 Winkle?

AN OLD LADY is coming through the crowd.

THE OLD LADY  
 (staring at Rip's face)  
 Sure enough! It is Rip Van Winkle -  
 it is himself! Welcome home again,  
 old neighbor!

The crowd exchanges glances and sighs.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Rip sits on the bench near Rip Jr.

RIP

Twenty years ago I helped a  
stranger to carry his barrel.  
I couldn't resist and drank wine  
which I shouldn't do -  
and then I fell asleep until  
morning.

The crowd glances silently, the Nimble Man draws back his  
lips and shakes his head. The crowd also shakes their heads.

From the distance Peter Vandendonck is coming.

PETER WANDERDONK

It's hard to recognize you, my old  
friend, but I'm sure, it's you! You  
know, my ancestor the historian,  
wrote in his book that the  
Kaatskill Mountains had always been  
haunted by strange beings. Also he  
wrote about the Great Hendrick  
Hudson, who was the first  
discoverer of the river and  
country.  
He's kept a kind of vigil there  
every twenty years, with his crew  
of the Half-moon. And also he  
wrote, that his father had once  
seen them in their old Dutch  
dresses playing at nine-pins in a  
hollow of the mountain; and that he  
himself had heard, one summer  
afternoon, the sound of their  
balls, like distant peals of  
thunder.

The crowd looks in amazement at Peter Wanderdonck.

A MAN FROM THE CROWD

Welcome back home, Mr. Van Winkle!

The crowd breaks up, and goes in different directions.

INT. HOUSE OF JUDITH - NIGHT

On a long wooden table are many plates with cheese and bread, bowls with porridge, and a platter with vegetables around a large piece of meat.

Judith sits near the table with the Toddler at her knees, and feeds the Toddler with porridge. JUDITH'S HUSBAND (27) sits near Judith with a piece of bread, looks at Rip with a smile.

RIP  
(looking at Judith's  
Husband)

Do you remember, I gave you a  
horseback ride when you were a  
child?

Judith's Husband nods.

CUT TO

Judith stands near the door to the room where Rip sits on a bed.

JUDITH  
Good night, father!  
Judith closes the door.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Rip sits on a bench near the inn, surrounded by a few men.

RIP  
And that's exactly what happened. I  
fell asleep for twenty years and  
missed all the Civil War!

A STRANGER  
Unbelievable! I wouldn't mind  
having a drink from that flagon  
either!

Rip smiles sadly at him. Rip and the Stranger are sitting on the bench. A MAN is exiting the door, ANOTHER MAN is talking to The Man - we cannot hear it. The Young Man is passing by the inn with a broom.

Moving away from the inn, the view from a bird's-eye perspective shows the inn and small houses surrounded by mountains and a river.

THE END