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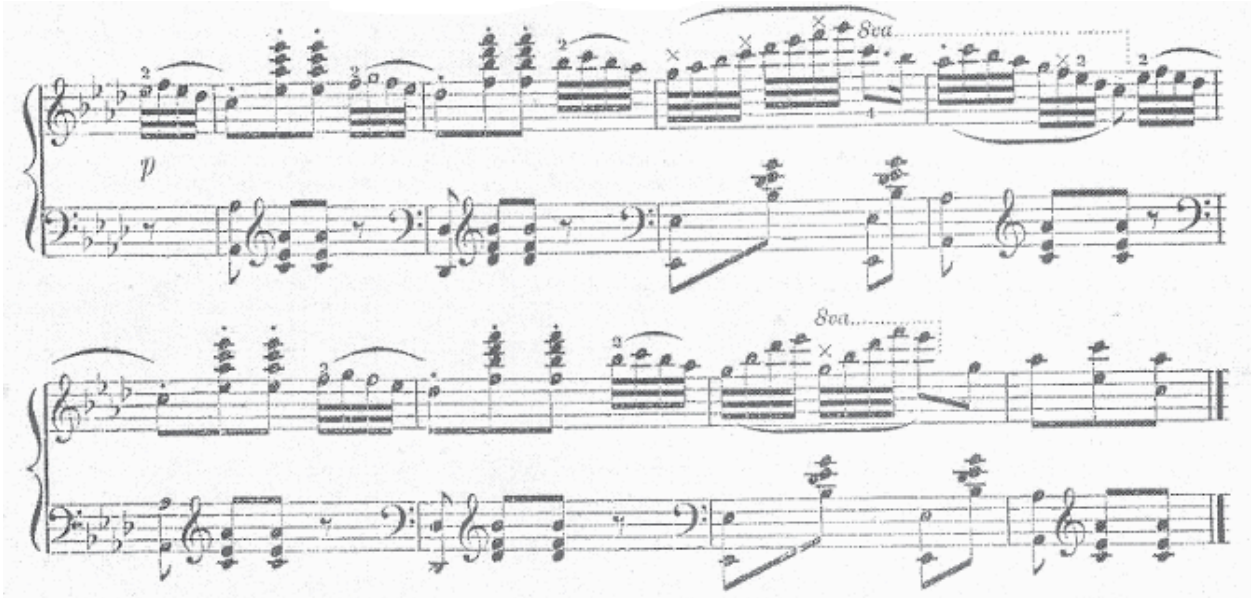
Literary and Musical Reception of Irving's Fantastic "Sleepy Hollow"

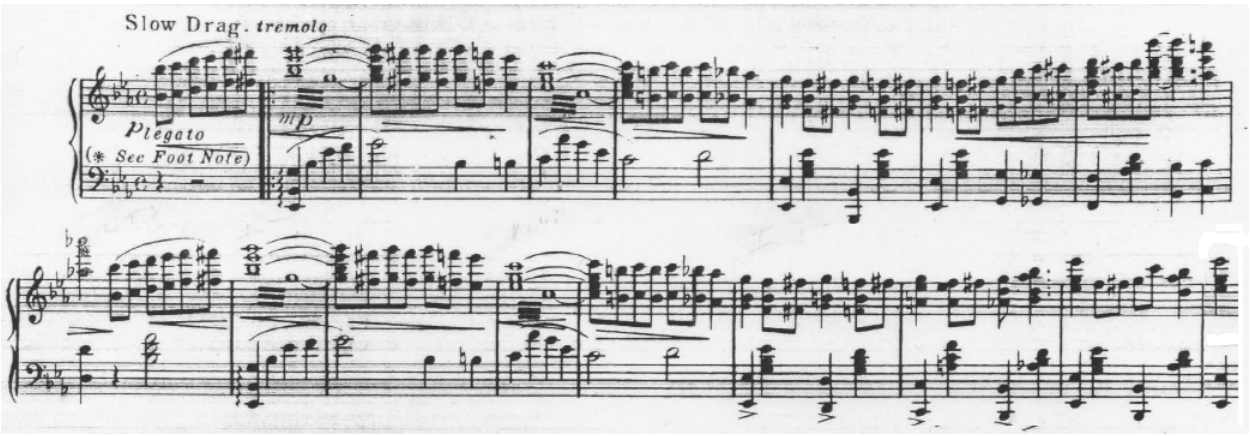
Plot summary: Outsider Ichabod Crane moves to the rural town of Sleepy Hollow, NY to work as an itinerant teacher. He has trouble fitting in, but falls in love (presumably unrequited) with local Kate van Tassel. One night, Ichabod attends a party at which he, to the chagrin of another of Kate's suitors, Brom Bones, dances with Kate and hears once again the local folktale of the "Galloping Hessian," or Headless Horseman. On his way home, Ichabod is chased out of town by the demonic-seeming, pumpkin-headed Horseman. At the story's end, it is unclear whether Ichabod's attacker was a supernatural figure that whisked him into the realm of the "other," or if it was Brom Bones in disguise, competing for Kate's attention.

Character Summary:
-Protagonist: Ichabod Crane
-Antagonist: Brom Bones
-Love interest: Kate van Tassel
-Demonic "other"?: Headless Horseman

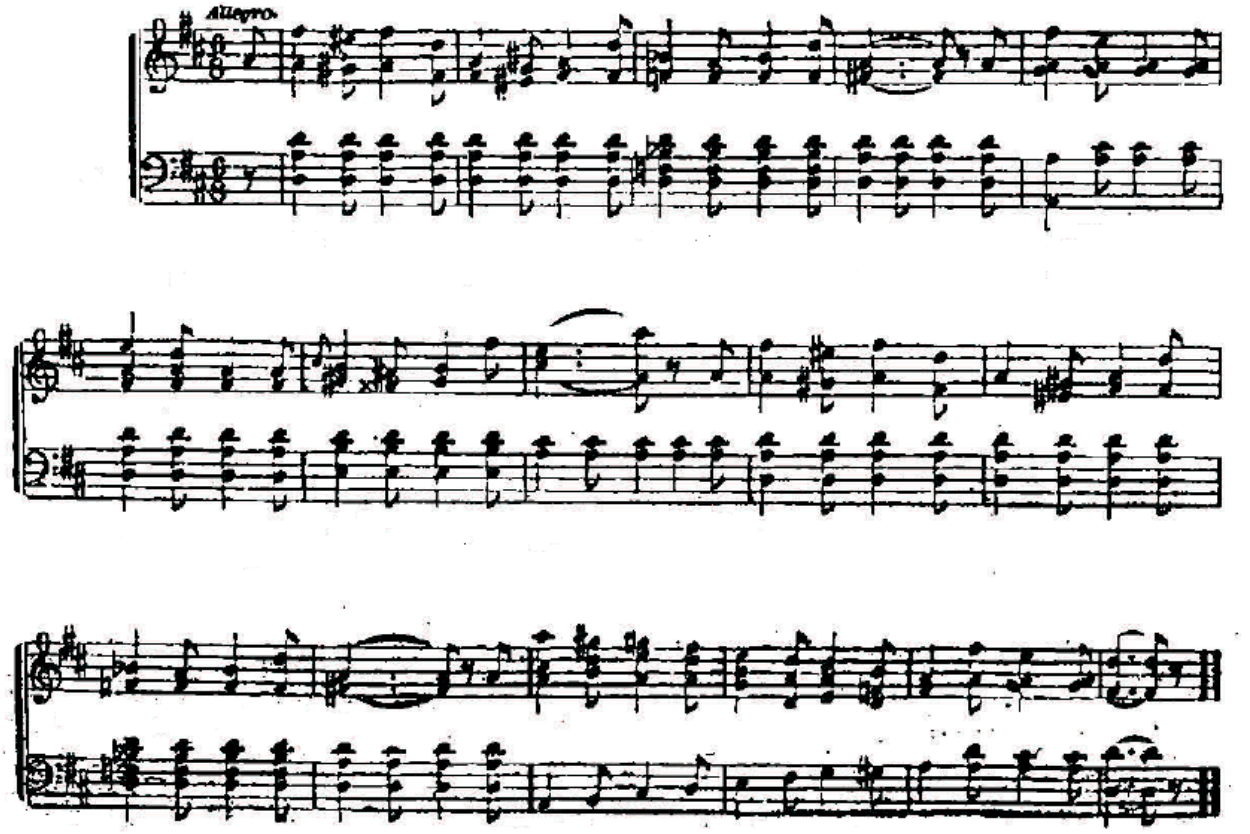
Ex. 1. Charles Kinkel, *Sleepy Hollow Polka da Salon* (1872), mm. 5-12. Kinkel's functional harmonies and dance rhythms do not overtly engage with the fantastic of Irving's "Sleepy Hollow."



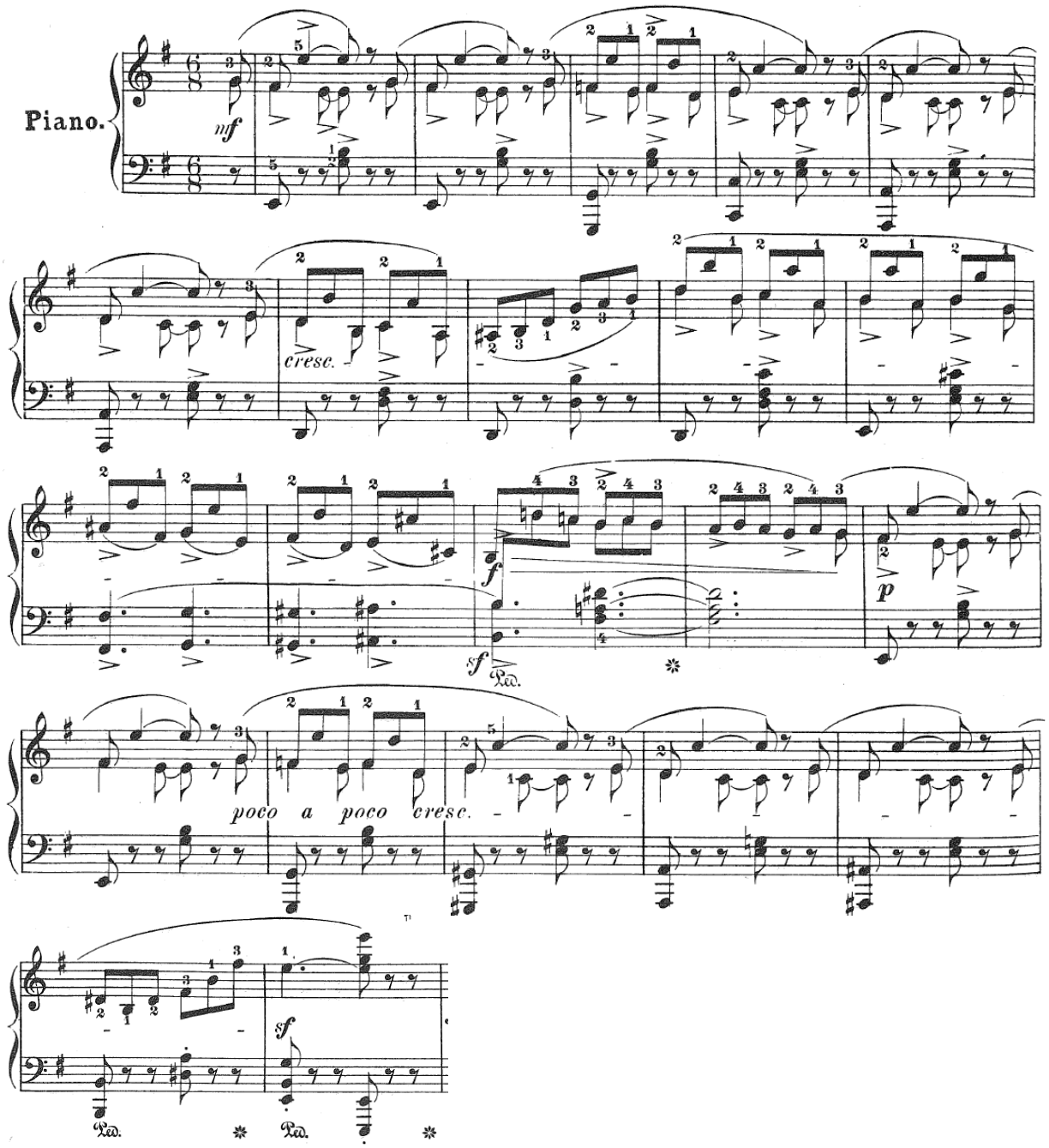
Ex. 2. Clarence Woods, *Sleepy Hollow Rag* (1918), mm. 1-16. Similarly to Kinkel's polka, the blues notes and dance rhythms of Woods' *Sleepy Hollow Rag* do not overtly relate to Irving's story.



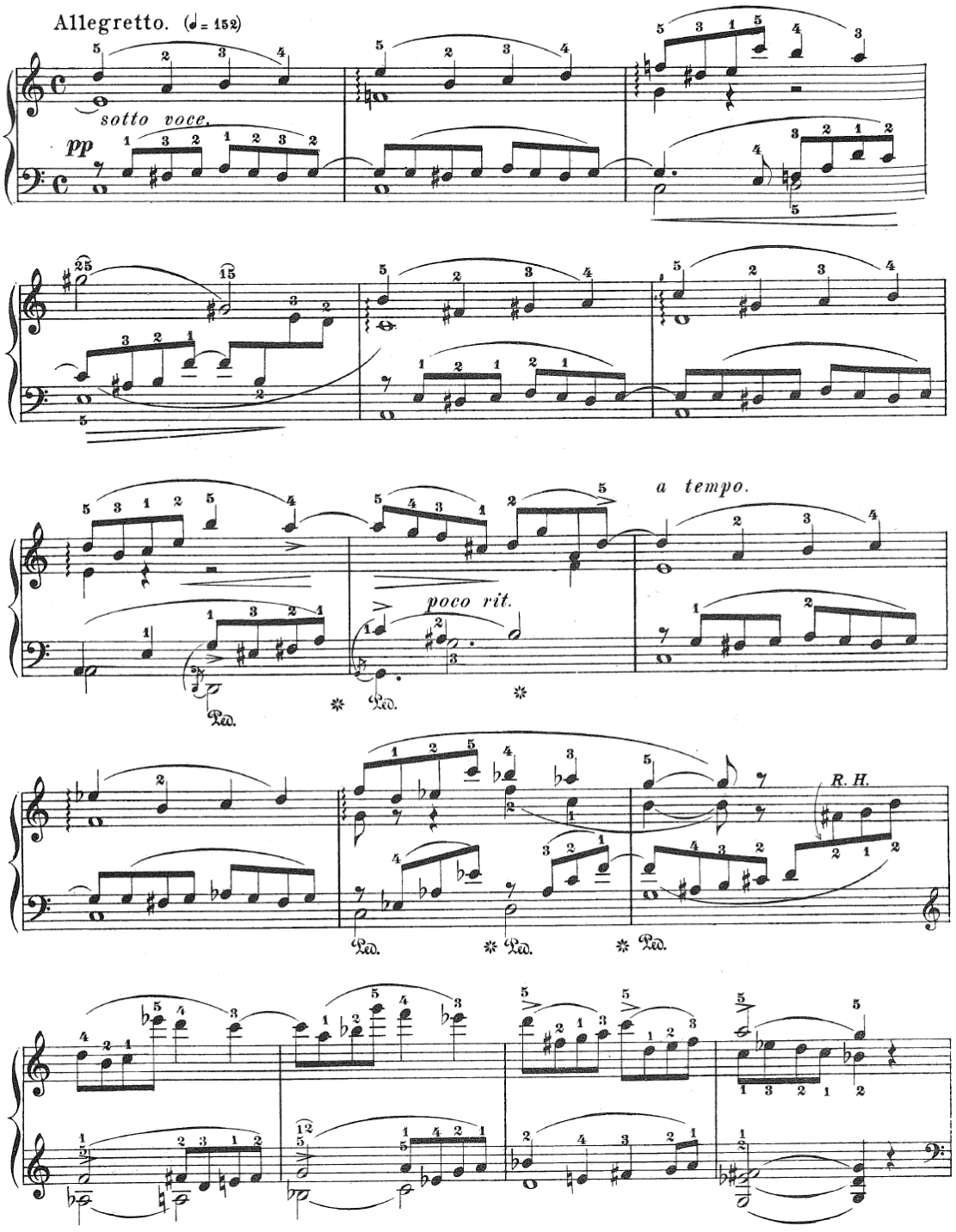
Ex. 3. Max Maretzek, *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (1879), "A Witch, a Witch," Act I. Maretzek's writing features balanced, periodic phrasing and generally functional harmonies.



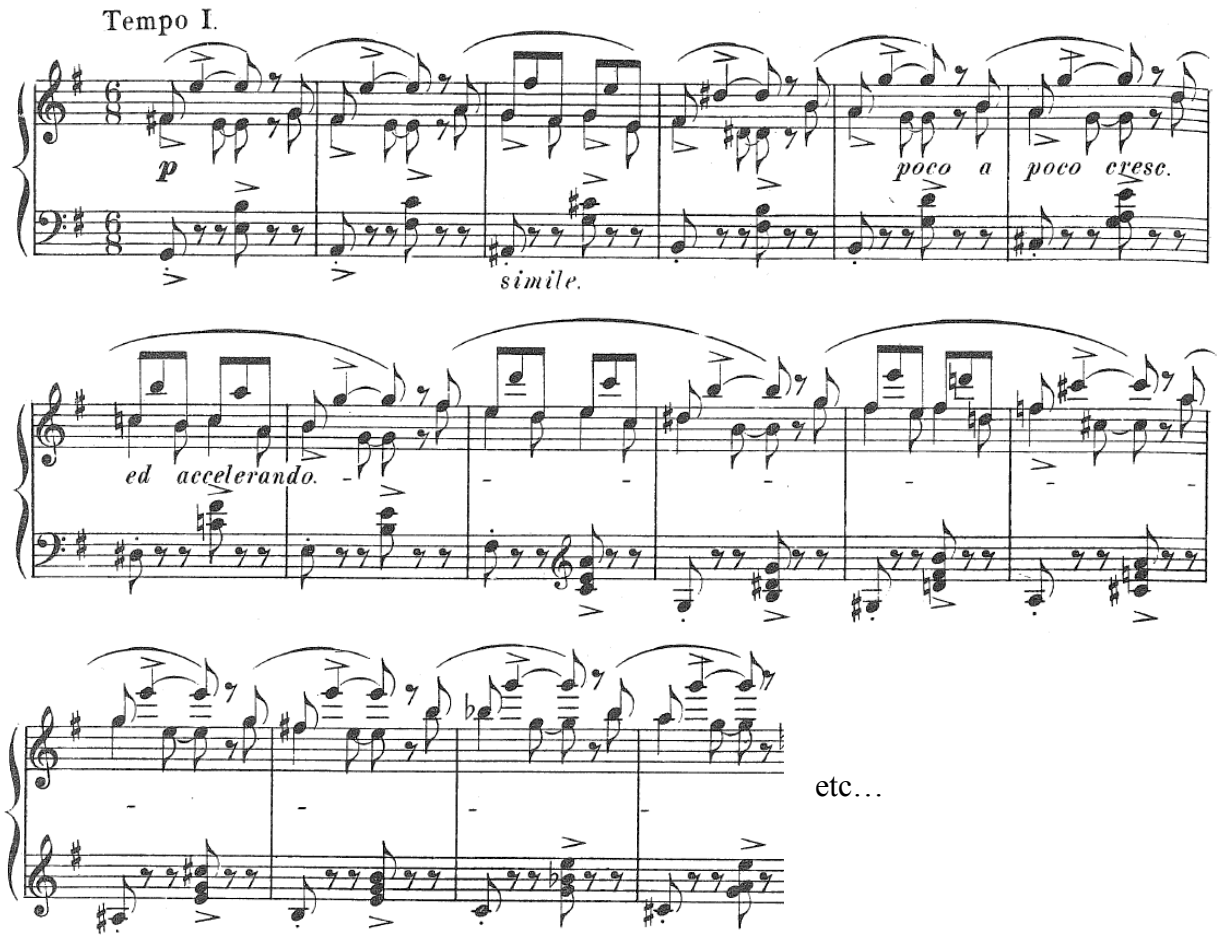
Ex. 4. Edgar Kelley, *The Headless Horseman*, op. 2, no. 3 (1891), mm. 1-22, A section, the first statement of the "Ichabod" theme. Kelley's writing in this case is generally grounded in E minor, but features imbalanced phrases and no singable melody.



Ex. 5. Edgar Kelley, *The Headless Horseman*, op. 2, no. 3 (1891), mm. 90-97, B section, first statement of the "Headless Horseman" theme. Kelly 'voices' the Horseman using a soft melody, periodic phrasing, and chromatic sequences.



Ex. 6. Edgar Kelley, *The Headless Horseman*, op. 2, no. 3 (1891), mm. 1-22, A", the final statement of the "Ichabod" theme. In this case, "Ichabod's" typical motives appear in a transformed harmonic setting comprised entirely of the "Headless Horseman's" chromatic sequences.



etc…