

Courage the Cowardly Dog

"Freaky Fred"

written by

David Steven Cohen

&

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FADE IN:

INT. BUS - DAY

POV SHOT of a shadow of a shadowy face reflected on the interior of a bus window, watching the landscape pass.

We are in the middle of nowhere headed towards an unknown destination.

ODD AND ANGULAR MUSIC PLAYS as we hear narration in a PROPER ANGLICAN MALE VOICE:

FRED (V.O.)

*Hello, new friend, my name is Fred
The words you hear are in my head
I say! I said, my name is Fred
And I've been... very naughty*

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

ANGLE ON MURIEL

smiling, in the bedroom, making the bed.

MURIEL

I can't wait for that wee lad
Fred to arrive.

The Farmer is crouching down by the bathroom door, working on the lock with a screwdriver. Courage is standing by, handing him tools.

FARMER

That freak's not settin' one
freaky foot in this house!

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Fred is lovingly holding a photo of Muriel.

FRED (V.O.)

*The story I'm about to tell
(I tell you I will tell it well)
Is of my dear Aunt Mur-i-ell
And just how I've been... naughty*

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE/BATHROOM DOOR - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Courage looks at the Farmer, concerned. The Farmer lays it on thick.

FARMER

(to Courage)

The freak's a barber. A freaky barber. With his own freaky barbershop. Where freaky things happen. Freaky barber things.

Courage cowers.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Through the window, the familiar farmhouse comes into view.

FRED (V.O.)

*Voila! The farm! My aunt lives here
With precious pup and husband dear*

FRED'S POV: The bus doors open. The farmhouse is revealed.

FRED (V.O.)

*My heart beat fast as I drew near
I felt so nice -- and... naughty*

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

ANGLE ON MURIEL

in the bedroom. There is a KNOCK AT THE FRONT DOOR.

MURIEL

(excited)

Oh! That must be Fred!

Muriel heads off to answer the door.

ANGLE ON COURAGE

peeking at the front door from the staircase.

COURAGE

(gulp)

Courage imagines (and we see in a thought balloon) a quick succession of different psycho-monsters waiting for her on the other side: a drooling freak in a rain coat, an insect man, Frankenstein's monster, a mime, etc.

Courage panics and shakes...

COURAGE (V.O.)

(whines)

ANGLE ON INT. FRONT DOOR

SLOW TRUCK IN on the front door during the following...

FRED (V.O.)

*I thought just how excited they
Must be that I would come today
They'd shout, "Come Fred!
Huzzah! Hooray!
Dear boy -- you look so...
naughty."*

The door begins to open...

ANGLE ON MURIEL

She is delighted.

MURIEL

Ah, Fred, me dear nephew. What
brings you to our cozy corner of
the world?

FRED is revealed to us for the first time -- a weird but (apparently) innocuous, tight little worm of a man.

FRED

Holiday.

He smiles a grin that would make a child cry.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Fred sits in the middle of the sofa, clutching his little travel bag in his lap, his legs pressed tightly together. Muriel is in her rocker.

MURIEL

(calling)

Courage, come and meet Fred.

ANGLE ON COURAGE

on the stairs, peering through the railing, frightened.

ANGLE ON FRED

staring at Courage. Fred is smiling -- real weird.

ANGLE ON COURAGE

bringing him closer with each of Fred's lines:

FRED (V.O.)

*That's when my tired eyes beheld
A doggy dog, like dog he smelled,
D-O-G is what he spelled
And that's how I spell... "naughty."*

ANGLE ON COURAGE

sitting beside Fred on the sofa, frightened. Fred grins at Courage.

COURAGE (V.O.)

(whines)

ANGLE ON THE FARMER

coming down the stairs.

FARMER

Gotta go t'the hardware store an'
get the, uh, to - y'know - fix the
bathroom door.

LONG SHOT OF LIVING ROOM

Everyone is looking at the Farmer. He heads toward the door.

FARMER (CONT'D)

Just don't try shuttin' it, 'cause
ya won't be able t'git it open.

ANGLE ON MURIEL

calling to the Farmer.

MURIEL

Eustace, our guest is here. Say
hello to Fred.

A beat of cavernous silence. The Farmer stares. Muriel makes a determined gesture with her head. Courage cowers. Fred sits, unmoving, staring straight at the Farmer. The Farmer reluctantly sits down on the other side of Fred.

FARMER

Yeah. Hiya...
(mumbles)
Freak.

ANGLE ON MURIEL

MURIEL

(pleasantly)
So, Fred. It's very nice that
you found time to visit. You
must be very busy.

FRED

(weird laugh; then)
Yes... I... got away.

ANGLE ON COURAGE

He notices something dangling from Fred's wrist under his coat sleeve.

CLOSER ON COURAGE

as he realizes he's looking at a manacle and chain - a medieval handcuff! A tag hangs from the manacle, reading: "HOME FOR FREAKY BARBERS." There is a PHONE NUMBER on the tag as well, but it's hard to read.

COURAGE (V.O.)

(worried whine)

Courage, alarmed, leans to Muriel, WHISPERING and acting out Fred's medieval wrist band.

COURAGE
(whispering frantically)

MURIEL
Courage, shush now.
(turning to Fred)
You must be exhausted, Fred dear.
Would you like to freshen up?

Fred rubs his face, producing a SANDPAPER-LIKE SOUND.

FRED
Yessssss... Been quite a trip,
it has...

MURIEL
(to Courage)
Show Fred the bathroom, please.

COURAGE
(terrified howl)
Nooooo000000oooooo000000oooo!

MURIEL
Such a fuss! This rudeness won't do.

ANGLE ON COURAGE AND FRED

at the stairs. Courage pointedly allows Fred to go first.
They head upstairs.

ANGLE ON THE FARMER AND MURIEL

The Farmer rises from the sofa.

FARMER
Okay. I'm goin'. Just don't
close that bathroom door.

The Farmer heads towards the door, muttering.

FARMER (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Freak... Freaky freak...

MURIEL
Eustace, dear...

Eustace stops in his tracks, but doesn't turn around.

MURIEL (CONT'D)

Couldja do me a favor? I forgot
t'give Fred fresh towels.
Wouldja bring him some?

Muriel holds out towels.

HOLD ON THE FARMER from behind. He shudders, then turns
around with a look of disgust on his face.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - UPSTAIRS - SIMULTANEOUS

Courage watches as Fred goes into the bathroom -- but
leaves the door ajar.

Courage waits outside. Silence. Then, the Farmer arrives
with the towels. He proffers them to Courage.

FARMER

You give 'em to the freak.

Courage shakes his head vigorously. The Farmer stares at
the dog, then drops the towels on his head, shoves him in
the bathroom and SLAMS the door closed.

FARMER

"Whoops."

COURAGE (O.S.)

(from inside bathroom)

OooooO000ooooooO0000Oooooo...

The door is being shaken; Courage is trying to open it
from inside, but cannot. It's stuck good and tight. The
Farmer points, snickering.

FARMER

Heh heh heh heh heh...

Muriel comes up the stairs.

MURIEL

I heard the door slam.

FARMER

The door slammed.

MURIEL

Oh...

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Courage does a slow turn to discover Freaky Fred, sitting on the toilet seat lid, (pants on, knees pressed tightly together) staring right at him... a slow grin forming.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

FARMER

Well, guess I'd better git.

The Farmer exits. Muriel KNOCKS on the bathroom door.

MURIEL

Now don't you boys worry.
Eustace will be back soon t'get
the door open.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Courage has pressed himself hard against a wall, petrified. He tries to act nonchalant, pushing the towels on the floor neatly to the sink with his foot.

ANGLE ON FRED

staring and grinning at Courage. Courage shivers in fear.

FRED (V.O.)

*Alone I was with tender Courage
And all his fur, his furry furrage
Which, I say, did encourage
Me, to be... quite naughty.*

FRED

Courage...

Courage begins darting his eyes over his body.

COURAGE

(strangled terror)
Uuuhhh...

FRED

Your hair...

COURAGE

Uuuhhh...

FRED

It reminds me of the first time I
knew just how -- I felt -- about --
hair.

SLOW PUSH IN ON COURAGE

as Fred begins his tale...

FRED (O.S.)

*It was a day I'd not forget
The day that I first met my pet*

CROSS-DISSOLVE TO:

DREAMY OIL-PAINTING STYLIZED FLASHBACK

FRED (V.O.)

*Oh, what a lovely gift to get
I'd never felt so... naughty*

An adorable little hairy hamster, looking happily off...

FRED (V.O.)

*My fuzzy friend is what he was
This darling little ball of fuzz
And oh, such fuzz, such fuzz, it does
Demand... that I... be naughty*

Suddenly, the hamster looks at us, terrified. The SOUND
OF A RAZOR is heard O.S. PUSH IN... slowly... slowly...

CROSS-DISSOLVE TO:

COURAGE with the same terrified look as the hamster.

FRED

*He looked at me, his fetching eyes
And fetching fur did hypnotize*

...he takes the shower curtain down and absently drapes it
around Courage as a barber's bib.

FRED

I filled with joy, I filled with sighs

Fred opens his little bag and removes from it a big
cartoony portable electric shaver...

FRED

And that's when I got... naughty

...and clicks on the shaver. BUZZZZZZZ...

Courage is terrified! Fred moves the razor closer and closer to Courage. Courage is about to bolt from the seat. Fred holds him gently. Courage notices Fred's cuff tag.

Courage strains to read the information, but stops when Fred starts to delicately shave Courage's fur on his head and continues telling his macabre tale.

CROSS-DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK

ANGLE ON THE HAMSTER

shaved hairless -- now a skinny, gaunt mouse of a thing.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Fred, leaning against the wall, blinks out of his reverie -- and notices that Courage is gone. He looks around...

FRED'S POV: THE TOILET SEAT LID

shaking madly. Fred opens it to withdraw a wet and shaking Courage - who now has a Mohawk right out of Taxi Driver.

FRED

Now, now... You shouldn't play
in the toilet.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - OUTSIDE BATHROOM DOOR - SIMULTANEOUS

Muriel is rocking in her chair, knitting.

MURIEL

Don't worry, boys. Eustace
should be at the hardware store
by now...

CUT TO:

INTERCUT - BATHROOM AND FLASHBACK - SIMULTANEOUS

...and Courage has the same look in his eyes as Fred's razor swoops down upon him... the razor dips like a gull pulling fish from a lake... hair falls, fur flies... the girl's eyes, Courage's eyes, both wide and trembling...

BACK TO FLASHBACK

FRED (O.S.)

*The look upon my young love's face
Was sweet as lace, but in this case
I re-a-lized, she "needed space" -*

THE ABOVE TIMED TO END WITH:

REVEAL THE GIRL, now shaved TOTALLY BALD. She looks up at her non-existent bouffant - and her expression is total anger. She looks at the camera with murderous rage:

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM

Fred (alone in the shot) stares off in reverie, concluding:

FRED

*I nevermore was naughty.
(breaking verse)
Well... maybe not never.*

Fred comes out of it when he notices a pair of kicking feet coming from the sink.

REVEAL Courage trying to escape through the sink, half his body stuffed impossibly into the tiny drain. Fred stares (as briefly as possible) at Courage's hairy butt sticking up out of the sink, then extracts him by the tail:

FRED (CONT'D)

*(amused, to self)
Playful little scamp...*

Now Courage looks like a hula dancer - his entire top half has been shaved bare; the fur around his waist looks like a grass skirt.

As Fred places Courage back onto the toilet seat lid in shaving position, a KNOCK comes at the door:

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE HALLWAY - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Muriel is knocking at the bathroom door, slipping some flat hotcakes, buttered and covered with syrup, under the door.

MURIEL

Is everything alright in there?

COURAGE (O.S.)

(a wail of the damned,
accompanied by feverish
scratching at the door)

ARRRRrrrrrrrOOOOOOOOOoooooooo!!!

MURIEL

Wonderful. And you, Fred?

FRED (O.S.)

(creepy rasp)

His fur is life to me.

MURIEL

Wonderful. I'm so glad that the
two of ye are gettin' acquainted.
Eustace should be back any moment
now --

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL BEACH - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

The Farmer is lounging on the beach in his bathing suit, his truck parked beside him, sipping a beverage, taking in the sun.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

MURIEL (O.S.)

-- but here's a bite t'tide ye
over.

Fred bends down to pick up the food.

ANGLE ON COURAGE

desperately trying to escape through the wall -- using a pick ax, a jackhammer, banging his own head against the wall, finally yelling:

COURAGE
BREEEEEEEEAAAAAAK!

Fred notices Courage's efforts to escape, shakes his head in bemusement. He simply picks up the dog and stuffs a hotcake into his mouth. He holds Courage up near his shoulder like a young child. He feeds him with his other hand while leaning against the sink.

FRED
No need for panic. Behold,
sustenance, hungry whelp!

ANGLE ON COURAGE'S EYES

as Courage notices Fred's wrist tag and tries to read it. It dangles under Fred's sleeve, reading:

"HOME FOR FREAKY BARBERS. HOW'S MY SHAVING?
CALL 555-123--"
(The last digit is hidden by fabric.)

Courage whips out his cell phone and dials 555-123 - he looks back at the manacle for the last digit, but Fred's arm moves! Fred shoves another hotcake into Courage's already overstuffed mouth:

FRED
(chewing)
Mmmm... delectable.

As Fred does this, Courage finally manages to stealthily yank the ID tag off of Fred's cuff!

Fred shoots Courage a sudden look -- Courage, terrified, tries to smile innocently. Half the hotcake is sticking out of Courage's mouth; the smile sends it drooping over his chin like a beard.

It works. Fred smiles back, then "shaves" the pancake beard with his razor -- and closes in on what remains of Courage's fur.

FRED (O.S.)
*Dear cur, your fur and fleece remind
Of nothing found in humankind
But for one fellow, who did find
Me -- to be... in a certain mood...*

A SLOW ZOOM on Courage's face becomes:

CROSS-DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. FRED'S BARBER SHOP

as Fred falls back into his life story.

WHISKERS McCOY is standing in front of a barber chair.

FRED (V.O.)

Into my shop he walked one day --

PAN THE FACE OF WHISKERS MCCOY -- the hairiest western varmint since Yosemite Sam! His beard is so full, all we can see of his face is two eyes.

FRED (V.O.; CONT'D)

*With bush above and beard bouquet
That's no toupee, I pray... No way
I could help but be... you know...*

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - MOMENTS LATER - REAL TIME

(NO LONGER AN OIL PAINTING)

FRED'S POV as the bearded hirsute fellow is lying back in Fred's barber chair:

WHISKERS MCCOY

(gruff)

Just a trim, pardner.

The guy leans back, closes his eyes. We see Fred's hands come into the shot and start to shave -- just a little...

FRED (O.S.)

*I'd never seen such hair before!
Oh, facial forest! Unshorn shore!
It wanted freedom, begged for floor
How could I be -- but naughty???*

And we see it: Fred just can't stop shaving this guy.
A MAD SERIES OF SHOTS follows; we can go very Fleischer here, showing the hair up close as the razor plows through like a great dozer plowing the veldt:

FRED (O.S., CONT'D)

*His bangs, they sang!
His neck, it beckoned!
Eyebrows, armpits, all were reckoned!
Soon I figured, "What the heck" and --
Guess how I was... naughty...*

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

COURAGE looks down in amazement as the razor buzzes his own hair.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Muriel, still outside the bathroom, is now watching TV.

COURAGE (O.S.)
 (from inside bathroom)
 OooooO000ooooooO0000Oooooo!!!

Muriel doesn't seem to hear, looking impatient, wondering where the Farmer is...

INT. BATHROOM - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

REVEAL FRED, shearing the last of Courage's hair from the dog's toes.

PAN UP to find Courage, cell phone in hand, dialing a number he's reading off of Fred's cuff tag. Then:

COURAGE
 (on phone; whispering
 like mad)
 Muh muh muh muh ooh ooh ooh pss
 pss pss oooooh...

CUT TO:

INT. MOVIE THEATER - SIMULTANEOUS

The Farmer is seated in the theater, asleep, popcorn scattered across his lap -- we HEAR the movie soundtrack in the BG --

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY - SIMULTANEOUS

REVEAL Courage -- he is a bald doggie now! The only part of him left with hair is his tail...

Fred is now sitting, legs together, staring his Tony Perkins stare. He's gotten so excited telling his stories, he had to sit down.

He smiles at Courage, razor in hand, then crooks a bony finger and pats his lap.

COURAGE

Ooooo0000oooooo000000oooo!!!

Courage takes his tail in his hands and shields it from Fred, yammering fear and protest. Fred LAUGHS GENTLY, shaking his head:

FRED

Sweet pooch -- afraid I'll shave
your tail? Why, no!
(then an odd look)
That would be weird...

FROM OUTSIDE, WE HEAR A TRUCK PULLING UP, DOORS SLAMMING,
ANXIOUS VOICES:

VARIOUS AUTHORITIES (V.O.)

Surround the area! Cut the
power, we don't want anyone
getting shaved in there!

Fred goes to the window and peers out; he sighs.

FRED

Ah. So ends our little story...

COURAGE

(deep sigh of relief)

Suddenly there is the SOUND of a hair pin working in the lock -- and the bathroom door opens!

Muriel has picked the lock. She stands there flanked by TWO BALD MUSCLEMEN IN UNIFORMS -- obviously workers from the Home for Demented Barbers.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Fred is in a straight jacket being led out of the house by the two men. Muriel and Courage stand watching from the porch as they load him into the rear of a white van:

FRED (V.O.)

*But then my landlords did presume
To free me from that porce'lain tomb
And ferry to a private room
Your hero, ever doughty...*

Fred stares out through a window as the van door closes and the van begins to pull away. Muriel and Courage wave from the porch:

MURIEL

(to Courage)

What a lovely visit. Too bad Eustace didn't get to say goodbye.

As the van makes its way up the road, we stay on Muriel and Courage as we hear:

FRED (O.S.)

*Goodbye dear aunt,
I'll miss your farm,
And Eustace's ebullient charm,
And farewell, Courage!
What's the harm,
If I was slightly... naughty?*

And at that, we're suddenly treated to:

REAR ANGLE ON COURAGE

PAN DOWN to reveal a MESSAGE shaved into the fur on Courage's behind as we hear the message spoken...

FRED (V.O.)

"With Love, FRED!"

FADE OUT

THE END