

"CHICKEN SURPRISE!"

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. FARM YARD - DAY

FRED, a farmer is walking through the yard by his house on the farm. He sees a small brown mushroom in the garden area next to his house. He bends over, picks the mushroom, holds it up and examines it intently.

INT. COMMUNITY CLASSROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

SUPERIMPOSE: "3 MONTHS EARLIER: WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED"

A small group of adults, mostly farmers, are taking a wild mushroom identification community class. Fred and his wife SUE are among the students. The class INSTRUCTOR is a man with a pony tail and a short beard.

INSTRUCTOR

Ah!! Well I'm glad you showed these to me before you ate them! These little brown ones that turn blue when they get bruised, they won't kill you, but they are highly hallucinogenic!

The students gasp, chuckle, and whisper among themselves.

INSTRUCTOR

That's right, so you probably don't want to eat them! (Students laugh) If you don't mind, I can take these. Yeah, I'll take them to the university to ah, you know, study. (Instructor fidgets nervously) Lab exams, microscope, tests. You know, it's highly scientific, very important stuff! (Instructor laughs nervously)

Fred's eyes are rolled back, and he is snoring quietly.

SUE

Fred, are you paying attention! This is important!

FRED

Huh? Oh yeah yeah. Mushrooms that stain blue, got it.

Fred stares off into space, his eyes roll back in his head, and he starts snoring quietly.

INT. COMMUNITY CLASSROOM - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "3 MONTHS EARLIER: WHAT FRED REMEMBERS"

Same classroom setting, characters, and time as previous scene.

FRED'S POV

INSTRUCTOR

Ah!! Well I'm glad you showed these to me...
(FADE OUT/FADE IN) These little brown ones that stain blue when you bruise them, they won't kill you... (FADE OUT/FADE IN) And you... (FADE OUT/FADE IN) Want to eat them!

END FRED'S POV

DISSOLVE TO

BACK TO PRESENT

Fred examines the mushroom for a moment. He shrugs, nods, pops the mushroom into his mouth, and eats it. He grimaces slightly while licking the inside of his mouth. He swallows, winces, shakes his head, and walks off.

INT. CHICKEN COUP - DAY

Fred enters his chicken coup, which houses five clucking and cackling CHICKENS. Fred is walking slowly, shuffling his feet and swaying ever so slightly. His face is flushed and sweaty, and he is moaning softly.

FRED'S POV

The chicken coup is seen through a blurry, motion-trailed haze, swaying side to side. The natural sunlight entering the chicken coup gets brighter, changes color, and flickers intensely. The shadows get darker, and the colors in the room become more intense. An eerie white noise is heard at first quietly, then steadily getting louder.

FRED

Oh man, I'm feeling kind of...funny...

Several Chickens approach Fred, look up at him, and squawk.

The chicken sounds are slowed down slightly and have an eerie echoing quality. The white noise continues to build, mixed with the altered chicken sounds. The squawking gets louder and more abrasive.

Suddenly, everything goes quiet and dark except for a spotlight on one Chicken, who starts singing the bass line of a dance pop song in a somewhat low-pitched (for a chicken) "bawk-bawk" voice. One by one, the rest of the Chickens join in and do a choreographed song and dance, singing in high-pitched "bawk-bawk" voices, while colorful lights flash around them.

FRED

Huh? Woah! What the?! Wow!! All right! Yeah! (Field of vision starts bobbing up and down in rhythm with the music)

END FRED'S POV

INT. KITCHEN - DAY [CONTINUOUS]

Fred's wife Sue and their DAUGHTER are in the kitchen. Sue looks out the window and sees Fred in the chicken coup dancing awkwardly while mumbling chicken noises.

SUE

What in the world is your father doing in there?

DAUGHTER

Looks like Daddy's really lost it this time! (giggles)

INT. CHICKEN COUP - DAY [CONTINUOUS]

FRED'S POV

The Chickens are well into an impressive song and dance routine while colorful lights flash around them. Without warning, the music abruptly stops and the lighting returns to normal.

END FRED'S POV

Fred's Daughter enters the chicken coup.

DAUGHTER

Whatcha doin', Daddy?

Fred stares at his Daughter with a dumbfounded expression, then looks around the room. Some chickens are standing and walking on the ground, while others are brooding in nest boxes. Clucking and squawking noises can be heard.

FRED

Uh, nothin...

(Furtively glances back and forth)

FADE OUT

THE END