

Red Hot Chili Cookoff

Ray Stevens

I write to you for the last time
From my deathbed, oh, dear mother
My health is gone, I'm fading fast
And I fear I'll not recover
I've lost 100 pounds, my hair, my sight
And this illness had its nexus
The day I judged the red hot chili cook-off in Jalapeño, Texas

Well, as you know, in Tennessee, you fed us normal things
Yeah, like Tabasco-seasoned barbecue and spicy chicken wings
But I've got a friend down here in Texas who's a chili cook-off judge
And on the day of the statewide cook-off, he lay sick and could not budge

"I'm sicker than a dog", he said, "you'll have to take my place"
"Now all you do is pick the chili you like after givin 'em all a taste"
So of course, I did what I had to do to help out my old friend
But that decision ruined my life and brought me to this sorry end

Do not eat Texas chili, mama, or you will surely die
(You will surely die)
Don't even mention Texas chili to me, I will tell you why
Just the thought will fire up memories that will wreck my solar plexus
Of the day I judged the red hot chili cook-off in Jalapeño, Texas

They led me to the judge's stand and sat me in my place
Put three bowls of chili in front of me, just to sample, just to taste
Number one was "Dragon's Breath" and it had such a nice aroma
I took a big ol' bite, heh, nearly slipped into a coma, oh

Oh, sweet Lord, what is this stuff? My uvula's on fire
My ears are ringing and my nose is running and my feet are starting to perspire
Then number two was called "Flamethrower" and it was not misnamed
One taste, my eyes, ears, nose and throat all shot out long blue flame

"Help, somebody, call 911! I don't think I can breathe!"
"I can't seem to catch my breath and all I can do is wheeze!"
Then I heard somebody screamin', screamin' uncontrollably
I turned to see who it was and Lord, have mercy, it was me

The winner was simply "Charlie's Chili", sounded innocent enough
But it knocked me backwards off the stand with one taste of the stuff
I got up runnin', lookin' for a doctor or, or an ice-cold bottle of water
I downed a keg of beer and six snow cones and it only made me hotter, ah!

It's been a year now and I can only sip a smoothie now and then
If I try some solid food, the flames flare up again
Oh God, it burned and blistered from my mouth down to my colon
And what little skin that's left at all is inflamed and badly swollen

So I write to you, dear mother, just to say goodbye
And to warn you and the family of one thing before I die
Do not eat Texas chili, it'll put you in the ground
And even if you should survive, you won't be able to sit down

Do not eat Texas chili, mama, or you will surely die
(You will surely die)

Don't even mention Texas chili to me and I will tell you why
Just the thought will fire up memories that'll wreck my solar plexus
Of the day I judged the red hot chili cook-off in Jalapeño, Texas
Ha!