

ONE HOT THANKSGIVING

By: Warren Swenson

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Everyone knows Big Tuson
The famous Texan Gator.
Big Tuson's so big and strong
There is no gator greater.
And everyone knows little Boudreaux
The bright red Cajun crawfish.
Together both of them help
Papa Noel every Christmas.

Big Tuson leads the gator team
That pulls Papa Noel's skiff
Through the bayous on Christmas Eve
To deliver all the gifts.
Little Boudreaux, as everyone knows,
Shines so very bright
He lights the way so they won't get lost
On a dark or foggy night.

Everyone knows Tuson and Boudreaux
Are the best of friends, you see
But, as everyone knows
Best friends can have a friendly rivalry.
But very few know that the rivalry
Between little Boudreaux the crawfish
And Big Tuson almost caused
The cancellation of Christmas.

It happened down here in the bayous somewhere
Though no one knows where the place is,
Where each year I'm told, Papa Noel will hold
The Thanksgiving Day Gator Races.
Somewhere down here on Thanksgiving each year
Gators gather chasing a dream
Of winning the race that will earn them a place
On the Christmas gator team.

When all of the races are finally run
To celebrate with all the winners
The reindeer, the gators and Papa Noel
Cook a great Cajun Thanksgiving dinner.
Tuson and Boudreaux and Papa Noel
Are all excellent chefs, guaranteed.
They can cook anything but like every great chef
They each have their own specialty.

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As a confectionaire extra ordinaire
Papa Noel loves to cook sweets.
Pastries and pies and cookies and cakes
Chocolate candies and all kind of treats.
Now Boudreaux, of course, has a Cajun hot sauce
That is spicy and hot as can be.
Tuson's claim to fame is a dish with his name,
Called Tuson's Hot Texan Chili.

So obviously their whole rivalry
Began when they couldn't agree
But would rather contest as to which was hottest
Boudreaux's sauce or Tuson's hot chili.
"Tuson," said Boudreaux, "my sauce, you should know,
Would burn a hole right through your tongue."
"Ha, just sniff my chili," said Tuson, "and you'll see,
It will burn a hole right through your lungs."

"Well I guess now we know," teased little Boudreaux,
"Why you are so full of hot air.
You sniffed too much chili." and that's when Tuson
Gave Boudreaux his mean gator stare.
"Boudreaux I suggest," growled Tuson, "a contest
To settle our small rivalry.
Bring your hottest sauce so I can try it Boudreaux
And I'll bring my hottest chili.

We'll bring three gallons each and the other must eat
It all or as much as they can.
The first one who quits without finishing it
Will lose and the other will win.
Papa Noel will be the judge because he
Will make sure that the contest is fair".
So with the date set for the hottest contest
Ever held both began to prepare.

When the day finally came to see who would lay claim
To preparing the world's hottest dish
Everybody was there, alligators, reindeer,
Papa Noel and all the crawfish.
With a sweep of his hand the chow down began
You could feel the heat in the air.
Tuson's whole face and head started glowing bright red
And smoke poured out of both Boudreaux's ears.

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But determined to win neither one would give in
As they both ate every last drop
And I am quite sure had there been anymore
Neither of them would have stopped
But with six gallons gone still Boudreaux and Tuson
Failed to settle their small rivalry
And they still didn't know what was hotter, Boudreaux's
Cajun sauce or Tuson's Texan Chili

They both were, of course, disappointed because
Neither of them had won
But they had always been and were still best of friends,
Little Boudreaux and Big Tuson.
Boudreaux, late that night, was still shining bright
And the glow was still on Tuson's face
When together the two swam on down the bayou
To relax at their favorite place.

While resting out there in the cool bayou air
Boudreaux the bright little crawfish
Had an idea so bright it would light up the night,
So bright it almost ruined Christmas.
"Tuson," said Boudreaux, "you should see your face glow
And do you see how bright I'm still shining?"
"What do you suppose would happen to the nose
Of each reindeer if they started dining

On my Cajun hot sauce or your Texan chili?
Do you think their noses would start glowing?
"I don't know Boudreaux," said Tuson, "but if so
I can see exactly where you're going.
But to sell your idea to the reindeer I fear
Will not be so easily done."
"Now don't you worry, you leave that part to me,"
Said Boudreaux to Big Tuson,

"Every reindeer I know would like their nose to glow
And the brighter the better of course.
And after today, I've no doubt we can say
That by eating my Cajun Hot Sauce
Or your Texan chili very obviously
Their noses will all start to glow.
The hotter the food the brighter the nose
And that's how we'll finally know

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Whose dish is hottest by whose nose is brightest.
The brightest nose wins, naturally.
So what do you say to deciding this way
Who will win?," Said Tuson, "I agree."
So the following night, Boudreaux, still shining bright,
Held a meeting for all the reindeer.
Donner and Blitzen, Comet and Cupid
And Dasher and Vixen were there.

So were Dancer and Prancer, the whole reindeer team
Except for Rudolph because,
As you already know, his nose already glows
So he doesn't need Boudreaux's hot sauce
Or Tuson's Texan Chili to make his nose glow
And that's why he wasn't invited
But the other reindeer were all glad to be there
And they all were very excited.

"And now," said Boudreaux, "As you already know
The reason I've asked you all here
Is because I propose to make your noses glow
So you'll all become famous reindeer.
And right about now you're asking yourselves how
I propose to do what I say?
You can see what happened to Tuson and me when
We held our contest yesterday.

He's still glowing tonight and I'm still shining bright
But we still don't know whose dish is hottest.
And so I propose to make you noses glow
By holding one more little contest.
Four of you, of course, will dine on my hot sauce
And four on Tuson's Texan Chili
The brightest nose wins this contest and ends
Our longstanding hot rivalry.

Now I know what you're thinking" said little Boudreaux,
"Our chili and sauce are too hot.
But the question you need to ask yourself is,
Do you want your nose to glow or not?
If your answer is yes then you join the contest
And your nose will glow, I guarantee."
After talking it out, though they still had their doubts
All eight of the reindeer agreed.

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So the contest was on and Boudreaux and Tuson
Had brought plenty of hot sauce and chili.
Each of the reindeer began eating their share
Though at first they all felt rather silly.
Then they saw a faint glow that started out low
And with each bite their noses got brighter
Till they all glowed so bright that it lit up the night
And the swamps looked like they were on fire.

So blindingly bright glowed their noses that night
That Tuson and Boudreaux could not see
Whose was the brightest so who won the contest
Will always be a mystery.
But, it didn't last long, by the following morn
Their noses were all cold and sore
They all had bellyaches and some had the shakes.
Every reindeer was sick, and what's more

Who of them would tell poor Papa Noel
Why his reindeer could not pull the sleigh?
And what would he do stranded in the bayous
With Christmas just four weeks away?
Knowing they had done wrong, Boudreaux and Tuson
Decided that it should be they
Who told Papa Noel the reindeer were not well
And how it was they got that way.

They came clean and confessed, were completely honest
Telling everything just as they should.
Papa Noel didn't get nearly quite as upset
As both of them thought that he would.
But he did scold them soundly and told them both roundly
They never should do that again
Then he gathered some herbs and roots from the swamp
And he cooked up some strange medicine

Though it tasted real bad all the reindeer were glad
To take it so they could get well.
After a day or two they all felt good as new
And that is when Papa Noel
Sat down with the reindeer and said, "Please, listen here
There is something that you need to know
Now, without a doubt I cannot do without
Rudolph and his bright red nose.

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But if all of your noses were shining at night,”
He said in a soft southern drawl,
“I fear that the light would be so very bright
I still could see nothing at all.
I need only one light on a dark foggy night
To help all of us see the way
But I still need your help because by himself
Rudolph simply cannot pull a sleigh

Full of presents and toys for the good girls and boys
Not to mention how much that I weigh,”
Said that jolly old elf while patting himself,
“Now there’s one last thing I’d like to say.
We’re all part of a team delivering dreams
To the children on Christmas day
So what do you say we pack up the sleigh
Cause it’s time that we got on our way.

Now, Tuson and Boudreaux both of you know
Exactly what you have to do
My skiff must be ready and waiting for me
When I get down here to the bayous.
So they packed up the sleigh and headed on their way
Back home to the North Pole
And Christmas I hear went real well that year.
One of the best I’ve been told.

So the lesson you see is be all you can be
But don’t try to be who you’re not
And don’t drink Boudreaux’s sauce or eat Tuson’s chili
You’ll get sick because both are to hot.