

LEVELED BOOK • 0

Little Red's Secret Sauce



Retold by Blane Jeffries
Illustrated by Nora Voutas

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Once upon a time in the Southwestern desert, there lived a coyote. He wasn't very big. He wasn't very small. But he was very, very mean. The Mean, Medium Coyote loved all kinds of yummy foods, but he was much too lazy to cook. He often stole food from his **neighbors**. But what he enjoyed most was tricking people into giving him the **delicious** meals they had worked hard to prepare.



One day, the Mean, Medium Coyote was walking down the trail when a delicious smell filled the air. "I smell chili!" he said, sniffing happily. "It has pinto beans, red onions . . . *sniff, sniff* . . . green peppers, and black olives. Only one person in the Southwest makes such a tasty chili." That person was Little Red. Her spicy chili was her best dish.

The coyote stopped Little Red as they passed on the trail. "Where are you going in the desert with a pot of chili?" asked the coyote. Then he thought to himself, *How can I get some?*

“I’m going to my granny’s house,” Little Red told the coyote. “She’s sick in bed with a fever. My spicy chili will help her sweat it out.”

The Mean, Medium Coyote’s mouth watered from the smell. He wanted that spicy chili. He needed that spicy chili. So he came up with a really mean plan. *I will take Granny’s place!* To make sure he would arrive at Granny’s house before Little Red, he told her about a shortcut through the desert. But the shortcut was really a *longcut!*



The Mean, Medium Coyote raced to Granny's house. He grabbed poor, sick Granny, shoved her into the toolshed, locked the door, and threw away the key. Then he put on one of Granny's nightgowns and jumped into her bed.

"The chili will be mine, all mine!" he cried joyfully. "I hope there is sour cream in the house."





Coyote's plan to trick Little Red might have worked, but he forgot that the toolshed was full of tools. Granny used the tools to break out of the shed. When Little Red finally arrived at Granny's house, Granny told her what had happened.

Little Red was **furious** when she heard what the coyote had done to her granny. She said, "If that Mean, Medium Coyote wants something spicy, he's going to get it!" Then Little Red poured a whole bottle of her secret hot sauce into the chili pot.



Now, Little Red's Secret Sauce was the **spiciest** hot sauce anyone has ever made. Her sauce was so hot that folks needed sunglasses just to read the label. Her sauce was so hot that it could burn

a hole in a hole. She had never put more than a dash of her hot sauce in the chili before. But no one had ever been as mean to her granny as the coyote had been that day, either.

Little Red went into the house and took the super-spicy chili to the coyote in her granny's bed.

"Leave it, Dearie. And close the door on your way out," said the coyote in a high-pitched voice, trying to sound like Granny.

Little Red said, "You sound awful, Granny" (which was true).

"It must be my sore throat," said the coyote.



"I thought you had a fever," said Little Red.

"That, too," added the coyote.

"And what happened to your feet?
They're so big."

"It's the heat. It makes them swell up like balloons."

"And what a big nose you have."

"The better to smell your chili with."

"And what a big mouth you have."

"The better to eat your chili with."





“Well, I hope you have a big appetite,” said Little Red as she spooned up a mouthful of her super-spicy chili.

The Mean, Medium Coyote smacked his lips. Then he thought of something. “Shouldn’t you heat it up first?” he asked.

“Oh, I think you’ll find it’s quite hot,” said Little Red with her sweetest smile.



The coyote grabbed the spoon and the pot of chili. He was too greedy and selfish to ask Little Red if she wanted any. Even though he was a coyote, he ate like a pig and **wolfed down** his food. “Yum, yum, yum . . . YOWEEEE!”

The hot sauce kicked in. The coyote’s eyeballs jumped out of his head, and the coyote jumped out of the bed.

“Ew bin muh ton!” cried Coyote. “Wawa! Ah nee wawa!”

“Huh?” said Little Red.

Granny came rushing into the room and **translated**. “He said, ‘You burned my tongue! Water! I need water!’”

“Yeth,” cried Coyote. “Wawa, pees!”



Being good **hosts**, Granny and Little Red took the Mean, Medium Coyote outside and gave him water. In fact, they gave him a lot of water. They dumped a bucket of water on him. The coyote dripped water from his head to his toes.

"I hope you will think twice before trying to trick people to steal their food again," said Little Red.

"You owe me a new nightgown, too," added Granny.





The coyote, his mouth still on fire from eating all that super-spicy chili, tried to run off. He slipped and slid through the mud and landed in a puddle with a big splash. The only thing he could eat now was mud pies. But at least they were cold.

As for Granny, she didn't get to eat any of Little Red's famous chili that day. But she felt much better after seeing what happened to the Mean, Medium Coyote. Laughter really is the best medicine.

Glossary

delicious (<i>adj.</i>)	having a pleasing or agreeable taste (p. 3)
furious (<i>adj.</i>)	very angry (p. 8)
hosts (<i>n.</i>)	people who have guests visit their homes (p. 14)
neighbors (<i>n.</i>)	people who live near each other (p. 3)
spiciest (<i>adj.</i>)	having the strongest taste or smell of spices (p. 8)
translated (<i>v.</i>)	took words from one language and changed them to another (p. 13)
wolfed down (<i>v.</i>)	ate greedily; devoured (p. 12)

A Southwestern-flavored retelling of *Little Red Riding Hood*

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Level O Leveled Book
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