PALINDROMIC PANGRAMS

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A palindrome that contains every letter of the alphabet is called a palindromic pangram. In Dmitri Borgmann’s book Language on Vacation (Scribner’s, 1965) there appears the following example by Howard Bergerson:

Oh, wet Alex -- a jar, a fag! Up, disk, curve by! Man Oz, Iraq, Arizona, my Bev? Ruck’s id-pug, a far Ajax, elate? Who?

As mentioned in the book, this 77-letter specimen offers three distinct challenges:

(1) To relate the sentence unambiguously to its purported subject, that of ancient Mesopotamian basket-weaving
(2) To devise a palindromic pangram exhibiting more grammatical and logical unity
(3) To devise, if possible, a shorter palindromic pangram

The first challenge would appear to be impossible, as the sentence cannot conceivably be related unambiguously to ancient Mesopotamian basket-weaving. However, there is at least one connection, in the form of the following anagram:

Jew hub had Rif; a crux gave a quick apex -- a jazzy array of old rural Mesopotamian basket-weaving

'Rif' is a variant of 'Riff', a Berber of the Rif district of Morocco, found in the OED.

The second challenge is answered by the following 85-letter palindromic pangram, which has the feature of not resorting to proper nouns. It tells of a 'monk' chiding someone for his timidity and distrust; and of that person’s reaction to this and subsequent 'cajoling':

Bewareth gifts; a pyre -- vex a tide;
Lo! Jack no mazes ... "You quoy!" sez a monk.
Cajoled, I tax every past fighter -- a web!

'Quoy' is a variant of 'quey' -- a young cow, a heifer (OED) used here to symbolize timidity. For another answer to this challenge, see James Rambo’s 157-letter palindromic pangram in the November 1976 Word Ways. It is interesting to note that his palindrome, as well as the two given above, all pivot on the letter Q.

And finally, a palindromic pangram with a difference. However, it is a palindrome of a different kind.

Dr. Angus McCallum's palindromic disorders, lying asleep, intelligent 'quoy' followed by Dr. Jean-François McCullum in the November 1976 Word Ways. It is, of course, interrupted by a small knock on the door, a jar out aloud, a quick apex a jazzy array of old rural Mesopotamian basket-weaving. Fortunately for the second challenge, it is to be put of the husband, Evan’s excited and interrupted excitement.

Press Lady drew her a quick apex a jazzy array of old rural Mesopotamian basket-weaving.

'Cwm, ... Pyl! (OED)

This final palindrome outside the outer realms:
And finally, to the third challenge. Devising a shorter palindromic pangram than Mr. Bergerson's original effort is no mean task. However, it is possible, with a bit of imagination, to achieve the ultimate of a 51-letter composition. First we must set the scene.

Dr. Angus McCullum, a Glasgow physician specializing in gastric disorders, is settled in his favourite armchair reading the newspaper. Lying asleep on a nearby couch is his humorously-named, but highly intelligent Scotch terrier 'Pylorus' -- called 'Pyl' for short. Dr. McCullum notices an unusual headline in the paper, describing the distress of an eccentric runologist on being unable to interpret the sculptured symbols found both in a rounded valley in Wales, and on a small knob rising out of the sea in a Norwegian fjord. He reads it out aloud, and starts to say something like 'I don't wonder!' but is interrupted by the arrival of his heart's desire, the attractive Lady Jean-Francis Stewart, known affectionately to him as 'J-F'. Unfortunately, not to be put off, he extols her beauty and asks her to renounce her husband, Evan. All the noise has awakened Pylorus, who lets out a playful yelp. Dr. McCullum tells him to be quiet, but the dog grows more excited and knocks a 'human skull off a small table by the couch -- it lands on the floor with a hollow thud. To quiet the dog down, and impress Lady Stewart with the intelligence of the animal, he asks it to draw her a picture of his water-closet.

'Cwm, fjard-knob glyphs vext quiz'. I -- U QT, 'x' Ev! Sh, Pyl! (G'bonk!) Dra' J-F m' W.C."

(To be spoken in a Scottish accent)

cwm a rounded valley (Welsh)
fjard variant of 'fiard', an arm of the sea, similar to a fjord, but occurring on coasts of lower relief
glyphs sculptured symbols, inscriptions
vext form of ' vexed'
quiz an eccentric person
U modern form of 'you', as in IOU and R U coming?
QT 'x' literally to blot out with an 'x'; used figuratively here as 'blot out of the memory, forget about, renounce'
Ev a contraction of Evan (man's name)
Sh be quiet
G'bonk the sound of a hollow thud
Dra' shortened form of 'draw', as pronounced in Scottish
m' W.C. my water-closet (cf. m'dear, m'gun, m'horse, etc.)

This final palindromic pangram is truly a journey into the esoteric outer realms of linguistic creativeness.