

PALINDROMIC FANCIES

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Palindromes are words or phrases endowed with a quirkish trait. They read the same frontward or backward, thus possessing unique linguistic symmetry.

This symmetrical structure creates difficulty for the palindromist. He is very restricted by consonantal collocations in which words can be employed. This is particularly true for someone writing palindromes in English; many common English words such as the or and just don't work when reversed.

The challenge in writing palindromes is in striking a balance between length and meaning. There is an inverse ratio between a palindrome's size and its sense; the longer the palindrome, the more likely logic will be sacrificed.

I have expressed my long palindromes in poetry form. The mysterious nature of this medium obfuscates the deficiency in logic inherent in lengthy palindromes. The palindromic unit is the totality of the poem. Each poem is titled, and each title is a palindrome in itself.

STRESS, ED? NOT ON DESSERTS!

On red rum, lager did I live.
Defaced & stressed was I ere
I saw desserts & decaf, Ed.
Evil I did; regal murder, no!

The preceding verse borrows from two famous palindromes. One of them is the well-known "Able was I ere I saw Elba" attributed to an ensiled Anglophile Napoleon. The other verse was written by John Taylor in 1614. It is the earliest documented palindrome in the English language: "Lewd did I live, & evil I did dwell."

NAME CAR WAS A TOYOTA SAW RACEMAN

Top not on name car?
Fine designing is Eden
if raceman not on pot.

RAMSES MAR

Go!
Desire not a tart.
Six Ramses?
Order red roses, Marxist rat.
Atone.
Rise, dog.

RENO LONER

Reno led a general life of evil,
 never odd or even.
 Live foe, fill a renegade loner!

T. ELIOT'S SELFLESS TOILET

To last, Eliot (top bard pilot)
 strafed ode farts to lip
 drab pot toilets a lot.

This palindrome is a derision of one of the 20th century's most famous poets, T.S. Eliot. Two of Eliot's poems, "Gerontion" and "Burbank With a Baedeker: Bleistein With a Cigar," display a virulent anti-Semitism. This great poet [wrote] limericks that scorned Blacks and Jews, referring to them as kikes and niggers.

NOBEL, LE BON?

Egad, Nobel a model leper?
 Now draw a one-ton TNT dud.
 TNT? Note no, Award won!
 Repelled, O male bondage!

There is some irony in the fact that the most coveted awards in the world (especially the Peace Prize) should be named after the discoverer of dynamite, Alfred Nobel. This palindrome paints a scenario where the recipient of an Award discovers Nobel's dubious discovery, and his conscience is troubled.

STAR COMEDY BY DEMOCRATS

I maim foe Gary.
 Democrats are not lovers.
 Alas, revolt on era star;
 Comedy rage of Miami.

The preceding palindrome is about the crown prince of American politics, Gary Hart. Alas, for him the incident described above was tragic comedy.

EVE DAMNED EDEN, MAD EVE

"Now deliver deified dog."
 Evil did Eve.
 "Reviled did I live,
 Evil I did deliver."
 Eve did live,
 God deified, reviled, won.

The preceding is a Biblical parable. The devil incarnate, the snake, deifies Eve, and she becomes the apotheosis of evil. All ends well, however, as the forces of good prevail.

ON SUEZ? A MAN APT AT PANAMA? ZEUS, NO!

No, it is open if a man apt,
 a "raw" Noriega won.
 No! Wage iron war at Panama.
 Fine position!

The inspiration for this palindrome is the exquisitely crafted palindrome by Leigh Mercer, "A man, a plan, a canal: Panama" which honors George W. Goethals, the engineer who devised the Panama Canal. My palindrome portrays a think tank at the Pentagon in the 1970s concerning the Panama Canal. One person believes that the Panama Canal will stay open if the anticommunist Noriega is in power. The position that prevails, though, is more bellicose.

EMIT NO EVIL; LIVE ON TIME

Live not on evil,
 I do, O God, live on time.
 Viva! Let's do go.
 Are we not drawn onward, we Jews,
 drawn onward to new era?
 O, God's Tel Aviv,
 emit no evil, do good!
 I live not on evil.

The fourth and fifth lines of this poem is one of the palindromes Leigh Mercer provided Howard Bergerson for his book, Palindromes and Anagrams. Its authorship, however, is uncertain, as is the origin of many palindromes. Leigh Mercer stated "The question is difficult - many were started by A and improved by B."

SEX AT NOON TAXES

Naomi, Warsaw & Roma & sore sex
 indeed nixes Eros & Amor
 & was raw, I moan.

NOW, DRAB BARD WON

Live data: Murder foes! Academia drab?
 A bard aimed a case of red rum
 at a devil.

LEPERS REPEL

Ergo, raw Yvan, a leper,
 did repel a navy war ogre.