

MADAM, I'M ADAM (SIR, I'M IRIS)

HOWARD RICHLER

Cote St. Luc, Quebec, Canada

Given names figure prominently in palindromic utterances. There are two main reasons for this. Many are quite short, and thus easy to manipulate palindromically. Also, a higher percentage of given names than ordinary English words end in the vowels A or I which serve as excellent palindromic connectors.

Some palindromic name sentences can be quite long. One of my favorites is "The Orgy", penned by Clement Wood which I first espied in *The Word's Gotten Out* by wordsmith Willard R. Espy:

Di, Al, Togo, Boll, Edna, Todd, Adolf, Sir Obadiah Turner, Ollie, Nora, El, silly Rama, Yma Sumac, St. Toby, Cal, Mike, Graf Alfie, Leila, Roz, Owen, Gallos, Reg, Nina Noyes, Mary, Lionel, Lana, Essex, Rex, Dr. Olim, Sal, Isobel, Ed, Axel, Ann, Odile, Leon, Bill (a Pole), Ginger, gay Ogden MacColl, Ewen, Enid, Ansel, Gore, Lady Block, Cindy, Sam, Ronny, Llewellyn, Norma, Syd, Nick Colby, Dale, Rog, Les, Nadine Newell, Occam, Ned, Goya, Greg, Nigel, Opal, Lib, Noel, Eli, Donna, Lex, Adele, Bo, Silas, Milord Xerxes, Sean, Allen, oily Ramsey, Onan, Ingersoll, Agnew, Oz, Oralie, Leif LaFarge, Kim, Lacy, Botts, Camus, Amy, Amaryllis, Lear, O'Neill, Oren, Ruth, Aida, Boris, Flo, Dad, Dot and El Lobo got laid

Another naughty variation of libidinous group activity is found in *Language on Vacation*:

Dennis, Nell, Edna, Leon, Nedra, Anita, Rolf, Nora, Alice, Carol, Leo, Jane, Reed, Dena, Dale, Basil, Rae, Penny, Lana, Dave, Denny, Lena, Ida, Bernadette, Ben, Ray, Lila, Nina, Jo, Ira, Mara, Sara, Mario, Jan, Ina, Lily, Arne, Bette, Dan, Reba, Diane, Lynn, Ed, Eva, Dana, Lynne, Pearl, Isabel, Ada, Ned, Dee, Rena, Joel, Lora, Cecil, Aaron, Flora, Tina, Arden, Noel and Ellen sinned

The following collection features a variety of given names, one per palindrome. Many are classic (identified as originating with Leigh Mercer, Dmitri Borgmann, J. A. Lindon or Howard Bergerson). Some (asterisked) are my creation; others are by Jon Agee or by Steve Chism (in *From A to Zotamorf*).

A daffodil I doff, ADA (HB)
 Madam, I'm ADAM
 Last egg gets AL! (JA)
 Flag ALF
 So may AMOS (SJC)
 ANNE, I stay a day in Sienna (LM)

ART names a base mantra*
 DNA, BART - no contraband (SC)
 No bra, BARB, on? *
 Submarine, BEN? I ram bus*
 BORIS, I rob*
 CORA sees a roc (JAL)
 Poor DAN is in a droop (LM)
 An adherent raps partner, eh, DANA? *
 DANIEL did idle in ad*
 Evade no one, DAVE*
 DELLA called (SC)
 DENNIS sinned
 An aid, o DIANA
 DON did nod*
 Go, DONNIE - rein no dog! *
 DORA sees a rod*
 Stress ED? Not on desserts*
 Too far, EDNA, we wander afoot (LM)
 ELI, bomb Mobile*
 Sail, ELIAS
 Allegation: no, I tag ELLA*
 EMIL's niece, in slime (JA)
 EMMA, I am me
 EVA, can I stab bats in a cave? (DB)
 EVE damned Eden (mad EVE!) (HB)
 Stressed, FLO? Wolf desserts*
 Airy, snide GARY raged in Syria
 E.g., roe, GEORGE*
 An igloo pool, GINA (JA)
 Draw, o HOWARD*
 Sir, I demand - I am a maid named IRIS (LM)
 'Tis IVAN, on a visit (LM)
 Ma, JAN is in a jam*
 "Ma," JEROME raps pot top, "Spare more jam!" (HB)
 Pa, JON's no Jap*
 Rise, take lame female KATE, sir
 KAY, a red nude, peeped under a yak (JAL)
 Anal was I ere I saw LANA (SC)
 We'll led Dad tell LEW (DB)
 MARGE, let's telegram
 Ah, tramp MARTHA*
 MARY bred a Derby ram (HB)
 MAX, I stay away at six A.M. (HB)
 Aha, MAY - a Yamaha!
 Revenge my baby, MEG? Never! (HB)
 MEGAN, I win a gem*
 O desirable MELBA, rise - do! (JAL)
 "NAOMI, sex at noon taxes," I moan
 Ah, Satan sees NATASHA (HB)
 God, NATE bit a Tibetan dog (DB)
 Now, NED, I am a maiden won (LM)
 NEIL, an alien (JA)
 A tin mug for a jar of gum, NITA?

A global radar lab, OLGA (SC)
 Evil OLIVE
 Sit on a potato pan, OTIS (DB)
 PAM, draw a ward map
 Murdered? No, PETE pondered rum*
 Go date PIERRE; I pet a dog*
 RENA, orgy-groaner*
 Go, revive ROG*
 RON, I'm a minor*
 A new order began, a more Roman age bred ROWENA (DB)
 "Not New York?" ROY went on (LM)
 Harass selfless SARAH! (HB)
 Ah, SASHA! (SC)
 Anile SELINA
 Eros? SIDNEY, my end is sore
 No mists or frosts, SIMON (LM)
 STELLA wondered: no wallets? (DB)
 STEVE, were we vets?*
 TED? a cadet (SC)
 Sh! TOM sees moths (HB)
 TRACY, no panic in a pony-cart (HB)
 A nude, red UNA

Finally, a selection of palindromes involving two or more people.

DEB, BURT and NAT rubbed*
 "SAL is not in?" RUTH asks. "Ah, turn it on, SILAS" (HB)
 NORA asks AARON*
 OTTO made NED a motto (JAL)
 DEB, smash SAM's bed! (SC)
 Draw DELLA too tall, EDWARD
 NOEL, let's egg ESTELLE on (HB)
 May RON dine on eels, LEE? No, ENID, nor yam
 "Did IONE take KATE?" "No--I did" (DB)
 AL lets DELLA call ED, STELLA (DB)
 LEW, OTTO has a hot towel (DB)
 ROG is as selfless as IGOR*
 EMIL asleep, HANNAH peels a lime (DB)
 GERT, I saw RON--or was it REG?*
 Go date MYRA--MARY met a dog*
 Did DEAN aid DIANA? ED did (DB)
 "NORAH's moods," Naomi moans, "doom SHARON" (HB)
 "Arise, RUSS," assures IRA*
 NORMA, I am RON
 Air OLGA, GLORIA*
 No, HAL, I led DELILAH on (SC)
 No, Miss, MARK rams SIMON*
 GORDON did nod, ROG*
 Ma, promote TOM or PAM*
 OLEG, NADIA laid ANGELO*
 SUE, TOM smote us (LM)
 Dense KAREN (odd one) rakes NED*
 Sat in a taxi, left FELIX at ANITA's (JAL)