

# LYCANTHROPUS PALINDROMIS

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Flow, Eridanus! Liven a red, nude dune-devil!  
Ill animus' nider, ill I will! A pall I will! It's ill? It's all I will!...

...All I kill, ill I will, ill! All I will ill!...

...A troll ill, I kine maim; a lobo lamia, men I kill!  
Ill or tall, ill I will all! Ill I will!  
Ill, I kill all I will--as, till I still, I will!!  
A pall I will, ired!...

...In sum, in all, I live,  
Denuded under an evil sun,  
A dire Wolf...

--Eris Flowerewer, A Bare Werewolf's Ire

The foregoing notwithstanding, the literary corpus of logology is heavily weighted with writings of a blithe and humorous turn. Works more reflective of the morbid and gloomy end of the emotional spectrum, by comparison, seem disproportionately scarce in belles-lettres logology. With a view toward addressing this imbalance, therefore, here are two palindromic poems on the dire topic of werewolves, those traditional staples of literary gothic horror. Hopefully, the werewolf in its palindromical incarnation can still inspire, if not quite gothic horror, at least a frisson of gothic consternation...

## TRAP ONE

In my beginning is my end.  
--T. S. Eliot

(In the following poem, only the opening stanza relates present action; all the rest is flashback. Hence Eliot's epigraph may thus be, as will be seen, trebly apt here.)

Both werewolves and hell-hounds are often depicted as possessing the same alarming feature, namely, incandescent red eyes. Might this shared trait be a sign that these two apparently distinct species are, in reality, just different manifestations of the same Hadean dog-demon? Well, it may at least be said, palindromically speaking, "'Wolf' fits a mastiff low..."

## SATAN'S SHEEPDOG

Rat-a-tat!  
 Oh-oh. God, a tap! Reg, or...  
 Deep's dog, malign?  
 I leery am; I won't nap, I--  
 O no!...O NO!!  
     Yare, red-net,  
     Fire-cinder EYES flower...  
 "Am-Amaryllis??"  
 O no, O no, O no...

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...O no, dire wolf! O no!  
 No "desserts," live demon, glean!  
 ...Ah, tan Evita! Go!!  
 Red eyes, flower ewe!  
 Liven!! O rise, yahoo Evita--go!!  
 Red eyes flower ewe!  
 Ride!! Mosey, ere--  
 "Ta-ta..."

Red now, dire, gory, mad Nat's  
 Red, nude wolf gorges on.  
 Murder: a red nullity, made...dire.

"Did a lone, mad-dog foeman murder smug flower-idyll aerator  
 Evita, gent?"  
 Len knelt.  
 "Negative!"

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...Rot! A 'really dire' wolf gums red rum??  
 Name of God, dame, NO!..."  
 Lad, I derided Amy  
 Till, under a red, rum nose, "grog" flowed...

"...Understand Amy?  
 Roger, I'd wonder at...at 'er eye,  
 Some dire werewolf's eye...  
 Derogative? Ooh!...Aye, sir,  
 One vile werewolf's eye!" derogative Nathanael Gnomedevil  
     stressed. "O no, no 'flower,' I'd--"  
 "O no. O no. O no!

"...O no," silly ram?"  
 A mare-wolf's eye, red...(Nicer if tenderer, ay!)  
 "O no??..."  
 "O no!" I pant. "Now I may--"  
 Reeling, I lam.



"Godspeed, Roger! 'Pat a dog,' ho, ho!"

"Ta-ta, tar..."

## TRAP TWO

*Ergo flow, Erewhon wolf! Flow ere we're  
wolf-flown, oh werewolf-ogre!*

--H. P. La Rue, I'd Add "Adieu," Ralph

Say that lycanthropy is alleged to lope in your lineage, but that you've always scoffed at such silly slaver. So you wake up one dull day with a furry mouth, a dogged headache, and no clear recollection of the night before. Evening comes and you're still feeling pretty beastly, so you decide to trot off to town for a nip of the old hair-of-the-dog remedy. This seems to do the trick, for as the night wears on and you dose yourself with more and more of your favorite medicine, your aches dissolve in a swirling haze of past and present, of memories repressed, imagined, or somehow foreseen, of lying bartenders, a skeptical cleric and a mellow dame, and even, after a while, of a two-faced red demon who floats in your drink and taunts you with sinister semordnilaps. All in all, it's a howl...

## THE DEVIL'S DYAD

Hoorah!...Ah, ah, ah, ah,

Ah!

Ah, flow, taps! Remit Roman red rum!

Oho! Flow on, wonder-red rum I saw!

Flow, ere war on, on...god, a semi-memory?--no, the liver!--  
is won, red, red rum!

Flow, ere Monday deride us...

"Flow on, O red rum!" I murmur, redder...

"Red rum!" I murmur, redder...

"A red rum!!"...(I, ah, murder red rum...)

"Red, now!" I murmur, redder. "Deliver red rum I--redder,  
non-wan I!--'murder,' Tim!"

...Ere Wednesday dare drum "Mur-der! Mur-der! Mur-der!..."?

Ah, rum! "Rum! I murder red rum!" I murmur...

"Ay, a red rum-flow deliver, O red rum-warder!"

(Red rum! Stiff, it's murder...Hah! Start a canon on a bender, ay!)

"O, flow on, O red rum! O slam in a wender's tender red rumen!"

..Ere Saturday dare drum "MUR-DER-RED-RUM, MUR-DUR-RED-RUM,  
MUR-DER-RED-RUM, MUR-DER-RED-RUM..."?

Murder, sides reversed, is...

Red.

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Rum-red now, I wonder:

"Was it I, Tim, dallier I--no, benign I, Lupe Garew!--I saw  
... red?"

Dastard!

"Lob red rum, dastard! Red rum!..."

Sad, I'm tired now...ired now!

Ired!...

Rum-fired, nowise tired (it never is...),

Murder's wolf gorges on.

Murder?

A red nullity alive,

A mire made dire...

Did I--protean I, dog-faced, dog-poor, dog-odontoid I--  
murder Art Lupus'

Paly flower-idyll aerator Sue?...

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Torpid, I do oscillate: Moss Mees' "Red Rum Tub"? Or, eh...

Midas Levin's "Die Tür"?

Buttered rum? Or, um...rum toddies?

"Repair onward! Murder Wolf's Rum!

Rum-ward, ho!..."

(Murder??...Wolf??...)

"Oh, I saw 'twas I, Rev. Edna!

Now was I--god!--a dog! A wolf aflow! A live devil!

...Aye, 'hoodoo-voodoo'!!...Help!!"

Mist I was...In a morose, mad murder-fog of animus,  
live I did flow,

A fog of a dog!

And ever, I saw--god!--paws aflow...

...Rug of a loo (felt?), tile, carpets: in I flow,  
as a live fog of evil, as a wolf--a red, rum, dadgum  
anima of a wolf!--as a gas, a gas aflow, a foam in  
a mug. Dad!!

Murder aflow!

As a live fog of evil, as a Wolf, in I step!

Race, little fool, a fog Ur-wolf!

"...A swap-dog was I, Rev. Edna!"

(God! A fog of a wolf, did I evil sum,

In a fog of red rum?)

"...Dame so Roman, I saw it!...'Simple hoodoo--voodoo,' hey?

A 'live devil,' a 'wolf aflow,' a--"



God...A dog, I saw, won; and ever,  
I saw 'twas I...

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Ho! Flow, red rum! (Oh, draw murmurs!)  
Flow, red rum drawn--  
Or I--a Perseid dot!--murmur, "O, murder!..."  
(Et tu, brute Id??...)

(Snivels a dim hero: "But 'murder' seems so...  
metallic, so...)"

O, did I??  
Proteus??

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"...Rot! A 'really dire wolfy' laps up ultra-red rum?? Idiot!  
NO!...Do go, droop! God!...DECAF?? God, I--Nae!!"  
Torpide, I deride Dame Rima--evil, ay?--till,  
Under a red, rum nose,  
"Grog" flows...  
"Red rum, sir! Eventide rites..."  
I wonder.

(If murder, I wonder...)

"I wonder it, Midas, murder..."  
Drat!  
"Sad, murder,' bold rat?? Sadder was I!!" we rage.  
Puling in ebon ire--I'll admit it!--I saw red!...

Now I wonder...  
Murder?  
Sides reversed, is red rum murder?...  
Red rum...Murder. "Red rum, murder! Red rum, Murder! Red  
rum, murder! A dyad rut!..."

A serene Murder: "Red nets red, new animal--so murder  
on, O 'wolf'!...Oy! a red neb anon on a cat, rats!...  
Hah! 'Red rum,' stiff? It's murder--red, raw murder,  
O reviled wolf! M, U, R, D, E, R..."

"Ay, a rum!...Rum, I murder red rum!" I murmur...

"Ha! 'Red rum'!! Re-drum red, rum murder a dyad's end!"

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"Ewer, emit red rum I--Naw! Non! Redder! I murder reviled  
redder rum!..."

Rum...I wonder.  
 Murder?...Red rum? (Ha! I "murder" a redder rum!)  
 Rum! I murder...  
 "Redder"...rum?  
 Rum??  
 I "murder"--??  
 O, no!!  
 "Wolf," "Sue"...

...Dire dyad?

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"No mere wolf murder'd 'er. now, sir...Evil, eh?"  
 Tony Rome mimes a dog...  
 "No? Nor a ...werewolf?"

(Was I--murder-red, now--no wolf?)

"Oho! Murder, 'n' a..." Mortimer spat, "...wolf?? Ha!!"

HA!

Ha, ha!

Ha, ha, HAROOH!...

"Haroooh," indeed. And thus it is that this palindromical dance with the wolves of the dark side of the psyche fittingly ends (and begins anew) with a baying, not with a simper...

## NOTES

Trap One Ever since classical Greek times, "Amaryllis" has been the stock name for a shepherdess, in bucolic and pastoral poetry; Virgil and Spenser, among others, have perpetuated this tradition. It seems a neat coincidence, then, that "Amaryllis" should be concealing in its reverse a "silly ram"... "Grog" was watered rum, originally...By "marewolf" is meant here a nightmare wolf, not some lupine centaur or sea-wolf.

Trap Two Semordnilaps (which also go by several other names) are two different words which, when reversed, spell each other (e.g., trap and part)...It would have been phonetically preferable to have the narrator's name be "Llewe Garew" ("loup garou") rather than "Lupe Garew" (and hence have him "welling" rather than "puling"), but alas "Llewe" seems a bit improbable, even as a diminutive of "Llewellyn"...A "Perseid dot" would be a meteor (bright but brief); the allusion is to the annual Perseid shower...Proteus of course was the Greek sea god noted for his changeableness of form...A neb is an animal's snout.