YO, GET A MATE, GOY!

RICHARD CANTY
Sonoma, California

The following is a chess fantasy which describes the progress of a game using palindromes. Here and there, a narration explains the various episodes. The subtitles throughout the piece are themselves palindromes and prefigure the coming developments. First, we'll see the two kings introduce themselves in the following vignette. The White King's name is Ra; the Black King signs in as Karma the First.

Kingrik

WK : I am Ra, King.
BK : I sign, "I, Karma I"

The two players now sit down and open the game. Imagine too that there are a few kibitzers watching and enjoying the proceedings. From the dialog, it's clear that White (nicknamed Boz) is expecting Black to set up a Pirc defense formation. But Black, devising an "L.A. Ploy," fools White by transposing into a different defense. White expresses his annoyance. Black is defiant and militant.

B : Boz, minatory ol' pal, no tic: Riposte, so!

After the initial moves, White regains his poise and gets adventurous. Black is suitably chastened. After a series of moves, Black's King Rook is threatened. Black is taken by surprise.

W : No! Omit safe sortie. I fork, nip, pin KR.
B : O, fie! It rose fast. [I moon?]

Black has parried the threat, and now the middle game is fully developed, with both sides fantasizing about the game's twists and turns. White keeps up the pressure. Black anticipates a threat on the H File (g pawn takes h pawn), and takes steps to nullify it. The players ruminate and taunt each other. White invokes Caissa, the Muse of Chess.

Spoor, Troops

W : Tact I nix. I mass, I act. I march, grab it (net, rope). Tone we now.
B : A sign! (I, Karma, am raking.) I saw one; we note portent: I bar
gh.

W : Cram it, Caissa!
B : Mix in it, cat!

White manages to establish a Bishop on the sixth rank. This is very inconvenient for Black. He doesn't realize yet that White intends to sacrifice the bishop.

B : Draw, Ra, ere fink B at six I fix, I stab, knife rearward.

Now Black gets it, and Castles instead. He whispers to a kibitzer:

Ed, I Hide

B : Now castle (felt sac won).

But the threat persists. It looks like a desperate situation for Black. He decides to gamble on the prospect of a Pawn promotion (a passed pawn, or "passer"). White mulls over his options, alert to pitfalls.

KO or Rook


White sees through Black's stratagem and takes the Black pawn en passant. Black, as they say, is busted. He hopes his genius friends at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory may lend assistance.

B : Help!
W : JPL, eh?
W : Baloney, eye no lab.

Now White's true identity is revealed: It's the present writer, who now proclaims:

Now cry, "RC won!"