

A DAY IN PALINDROMIA

Our readers seem to love palindromes, words or phrases that are spelled the same forward and backward. So, on a recent trip to the BRI archives, we pulled out some of our favorite palindromes and used them to create this silly story. There are 52 hidden here (not including doubles). Can you find them all? (Answers are on page 518.) Good luck!

OTTO One day a zoologist named Otto paddled his kayak to Los Angeles, eating a banana sandwich. He had heard there was something amiss with the animals there and wanted to help. When Otto reached the shore, a familiar voice called out, “Yo, Banana Boy, what’s happening?” Otto looked up and saw his old friend Ed, a general, a renegade who had left the military. General Ed was standing next to his new race car—a Toyota with attitude.

“Wow!” said Otto. “Nice wheels!”

“Yeah, but if I had a hi-fi stereo with a DVD player, it would be perfect,” replied Ed. “Hey, want a ride?”

“Sure,” said Otto, and the two friends headed downtown.

“Pull up, pull up!” yelled Otto as they passed a newsstand. Ed got out and bought the afternoon edition. The headline read “L.A. Ocelots Stole Coal.” Otto read aloud: “Authorities believe the ocelots are being controlled by a giant mutant rat who calls himself King Ognik. Injected with a ‘pure evil’ gene, Ognik had grown to the size of a yak and escaped the lab. Whereabouts: unknown.”

GNU DUNG

The two men were pondering the story when Ed caught something out of the corner of his eye. “Was it a rat I saw?” he asked. Sure enough, there was a yak-sized rat waddling into the L.A. Zoo. “You’re on your own, Otto,” said Ed. “I’m outta here.”

Even though Ed is on no side, thought Otto, his military experience could help. “You have to stay. We must capture that oozy rat in a sanitary zoo and stop him before he infects the other animals!”

Ed paused, then remembered his duty. “I will help you, but we need a battle cry.” So Otto made Ed a motto: “Now, sir, a war is won.” The two warriors then followed the giant rat into the zoo.

When they were near the entrance, Otto warned, “Make very sure that you step on no pets.” Too late—General Ed walked into a pile of irradiated gnu dung. It started creeping up his leg. Ed screamed but could not move.

“Can’t go on,” Ed said, frothing at the mouth and babbling incoherently. “I am lonely. Tylenol won’t help me now.”

KING OGNIK

Otto, not knowing what else to do, left his friend and entered the zoo. It was the strangest place he’d ever been. Completely devoid of humans, the animals had free reign. To Otto’s right, there was a pride of senile felines fighting over a bird rib. One of the crazy cats looked at him and then ran away. To his left, he saw a llama mall complete with llama stores and llama customers. And down a dark pathway, Otto spotted King Ognik. It looked like some sort of laminated E.T. animal as it ran into a building marked “DNA Land.” Otto followed Ognik into a large room, where the rat sat regally on a throne made of stack cats. Behind Ognik were lots of ocelots holding stolen coal, fueling a cauldron.

“Aha!” said King Ognik, “I knew there would be at least one human brave—and stupid—enough to confront me. I have infected these animals to do my evil bidding. Now you are all that I need to enslave the human race!”

“You dirty rat,” said Otto. “You’ll never get away with it!”

“Oh yes I will. Meet my sergeant at arms, Sara Sim.” Out walked an armor-clad ewe with one giant eye. She was pointing a gun at Otto. “Now,” the king continued, “You will take this bar crab to the llama mall and go to a store called Strapgod’s Dog Parts. Then swap for I, a pair of paws. You either borrow or rob it, I don’t care. You see, after the dog paws touch human DNA, they will mix in with this lion oil, thus completing the creation of my vile virus, which will end your insignificant reign on this planet! Miss Sim will accompany you while I prepare a huge party to celebrate the end of humanity. Now go!”

STRAPGOD’S DOG PARTS

They left DNA Land just as all of the animals were gathering for the party. “Don’t make a peep,” ordered Miss Sim. Otto was led into the llama mall, past a store called the Tangy Gnat, and then

into Strapgod's Dog Parts. Once Otto's hands touched the paws, he knew it would be all over for humanity. *Dammit, I'm mad!*, he thought. He tried to run, but Miss Sim seized him, and Strapgod the llama trotted down from his top spot. Miss Sim told Otto to place the bar crab on the counter, as Strapgod pulled a pair of dog paws from a barrel labeled "Tons o' Snot."

Just as the paws were about to touch Otto's skin, a familiar voice shouted in from the store's entrance: "Yo, Banana Boy, need some help?" Otto and Miss Sim spun around. It was General Ed, and he had a huge shopping cart full of TNT! It was not a ton of dynamite, but more than enough to blow the zoo sky high. "Let him go, you ewe. If you refuse, I'll light this fuse right now!"

MAPS, DNA, AND SPAM

Miss Sim released Otto and ran toward the exit to warn the rat king, but General Ed captured her and tied her to the cart. Then Otto stepped up and said to her, "Go deliver a dare, vile dog. Tell your deified demigod that his diseased days of diabolical destruction are done! Not even a rat can live forever of evil."

Otto lit the fuse on the TNT, and General Ed pushed the party booby-trap into DNA Land as the two heroes ran out of the zoo. Just as they reached safety, a huge explosion rang out, ending the evil reign of King Ognik and his insane animal army.

"Wow! Thanks a lot, Ed!" said Otto. "But how? I thought you were finished when you stepped in that evil poop."

"Yes, my palindromic friend, it seemed I was done for, but then this senile cat came out of the zoo and gave me a strange gift: a shopping cart full of dynamite, maps, DNA, and Spam."

"He did, eh?"

"Yes. So I ate the Spam to give me strength, injected the DNA to counter the effects of the gnu dung, used the maps to find you in the llama mall, and you know what I did with the TNT."

Otto was so relieved. He could name no one man as brave as General Ed. Thanks to them, the world was safe again for both humans and animals. And so, their civic duty done, Otto and General Ed turned to more urgent matters—they were famished. With a hankering for banana sandwiches, they hopped into Ed's Toyota and drove off to the Yreka Bakery.

PALINDROMIA

Answers for page 420

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Otto | 27. stack cats |
| 2. kayak | 28. Aha |
| 3. Yo, Banana Boy | 29. ewe |
| 4. Ed, a general, a renegade | 30. bar crab |
| 5. race car | 31. Strapgod's Dog Parts |
| 6. a Toyota | 32. swap for I a pair of paws |
| 7. Wow | 33. borrow or rob |
| 8. If I had a hi-fi | 34. lion oil |
| 9. DVD | 35. Miss Sim |
| 10. Pull up, pull up | 36. peep |
| 11. L.A. Ocelots Stole Coal | 37. Tangy Gnat |
| 12. King Ognik | 38. Dammit, I'm mad |
| 13. Eye | 39. top spot |
| 14. Was it a rat I saw | 40. tons o' snot |
| 15. Ed is on no side | 41. TNT |
| 16. oozy rat in a sanitary zoo | 42. not a ton |
| 17. Otto made Ed a motto | 43. go deliver a dare, vile dog |
| 18. Now, sir, a war is won | 44. deified |
| 19. step on no pets | 45. live forever of evil |
| 20. gnu dung | 46. party booby-trap |
| 21. lonely Tylenol | 47. poop |
| 22. senile felines | 48. maps, DNA, and spam |
| 23. bird rib | 49. He did, eh |
| 24. llama mall | 50. name no one man |
| 25. laminated E.T. animal | 51. civic |
| 26. DNA Land | 52. Yreka Bakery |