MASTERING CHESS TACTICS

Neil McDonald

Hello everybody!!
Hola a todos!

We are a group of chess fans who are producing new chess material. We have members from all around the world, belonging to different cultures and speaking different languages, all of us joined by our common love for chess! We hope you will enjoy our work!

Somos un grupo de fanáticos del ajedrez, que estamos tratando de producir nuevo material como este, desarrollando diferentes proyectos e ideas. Tenemos miembros de diferentes partes del mundo, provenientes de diferentes culturas, hablando diferentes lenguas, unidos por nuestra pasión por el ajedrez!. Esperamos que disfruten de esta muestra de nuestro trabajo!.

If you are interested in joining us, or send any comments drop us an email at: caissa_lovers@yahoo.com.
Si alguien estuviese interesado en unirse al grupo nos pueden escribir a: caissa_lovers@yahoo.com.

Best regards!!
Saludos!

Caissa Lovers

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Introduction

Making a successful combination is one of the most enjoyable parts of a game of chess. I still have the scoresheet of my first ever combination which was made when I was a relative newcomer to chess. It was a two move knight fork which won my opponent's queen. With all the modesty of youth I later wrote 'a brilliant finish, though I say it myself' in big red letters on the scoresheet. My sense of elation was understandable. Up until then I had been the victim of many combinations and here at last I had grasped the mechanics of preparing a combination of my own. It was a great moment and I felt very proud of myself.

The good news is that tactical skill can be learnt. There may be a lot of beauty and depth but there is no magic or mystery even in the most profound sacrifice.

I had three aims in writing this book:

—to show the reader all the archetypal tactical patterns

—to teach the art of combining two or more of these patterns in complex combinations

—to examine the strategical prerequisites for a successful combination

Thus you will find here every tactical device you will need in a game of chess, except those specifically aimed at the king. It is envisaged that a companion book in this series will cover all methods of attack against the king.

Some tactical ideas are simple to calculate, but difficult to see in the first place. If there is a win present in the position but you have never seen the necessary tactical idea your task becomes the chess equivalent of reinventing the wheel—a laborious and time consuming business, and you may not even succeed in doing it!

The player most famed for his combinations was Paul Morphy, who was the world's best player way back in the 1850s. I have a book of his best games by Philip Sergeant, written in 1916. This contains the advice:

'Morphy was an artist; and the best way to enjoy an artist is not to dissect him'.

This is an impressive statement, high sounding and full of authority; it is also wrong. After all, if

Sergeant had no wish to find out the secret of *Morphy's genius*, why did he write a book on him? We all want to know what makes an artist tick, whether he is a painter, a song writer or a sportsman. In this book I have made liberal use of the games of Garry Kasparov, the greatest star of our age, *who shows an absolute mastery of all forms of chess combination*.

Remember that some of the greatest chess minds in the world such as Kasparov himself, Shirov and Morozevich fall victim to the combinations given here. So don't worry if you don't understand everything the first time you read this book! It may well be that you will come back to it at different points in your chess career and each time you will understand a bit more.

I have tried to describe every single tactical operation that a player might face or need to use in a game. Whenever I couldn't find a notable example in the published games of the great masters or wanted additional material I have referred to my own humble games, both won and lost. I hope I will be forgiven for this indulgence.

Whatever our strength if we learn the basics of tactical play we can *sometimes carry out what would have seemed before to be a chess-board miracle*. I hope this book gives you a lot of fun and provides you with the ammunition to make some Kasparov-like combinations!

**Neil McDonald**
Gravesend, England

1   Knight Forks

With its bizarre and seemingly irregular movement, the knight causes the inexperienced player a lot of grief. It is far easier to keep track of threats from a bishop which *moves neatly along diagonals of the same colour* than the side-swerving, colour-hopping horse.

The most troublesome feature of all is the **knight fork**:
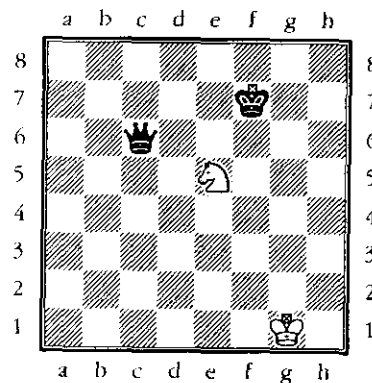
A knight fork occurs when two pieces are simultaneously attacked by a knight. In the diagram White has just played 1 ♘e5+. The black king has to move out of check and then White takes the queen.

In the next diagram, there is no *immediate knight fork but one can* be prepared.
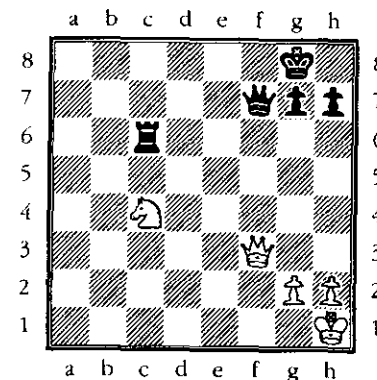
White would like to play 1 ♕xc6?? but then 1...♕f1 is mate. *Instead the queen exchange 1 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7 drags the black king* onto a square where it is separated from his rook by the distance of a knight fork. Now 2 ♘e5+ ♔e6 3 ♘xc6 wins the rook.

The knight's power to attack simultaneously pieces so widely apart makes it an enormous danger for the unwary. Here is an example from one of my own games that remains vividly in my mind twelve *years after it was played.*

N.McDonald - A.Stromer
Cappelle la Grande 1991
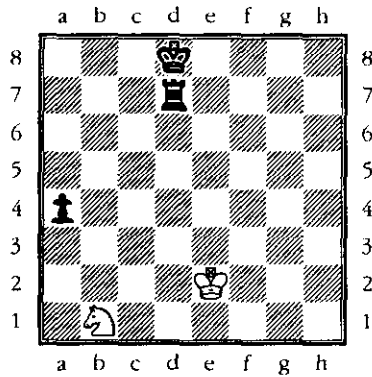
Black to play

I had lingered on many moves in this hopeless position. Black's rook cuts off the white king from the passed pawn, and after the correct 58...♔c8! followed by ♔b7 etc. all White can do is wait while Black advances his king and wins the knight for the passed pawn. In fact, I would probably have resigned immediately if Stromer had played this. Instead he picked up his king—and to my relief he put it on c7!

58...♔c7?? 59 ♘c3!

A *miracle has occurred*: the passed pawn is attacked, and if 59...a3 60 ♘b5+ *wins it*. Then the rook versus knight endgame is a book draw. My opponent preferred to allow another fork:

59...♖d4 60 ♘b5+ and a draw was agreed.

### Aronian - Beshukov
Hastings 2000/2001
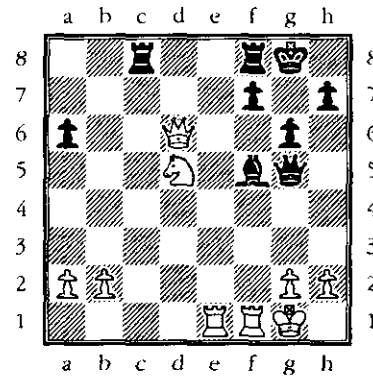
Black to play

In the diagram above you probably think that White plays 25 ♘e7+ forking the king and rook, but it isn't as easy as that! It is Black's move and seeing White's *idea* he played **25...♖c2** with the impressive threat of mate on g2. However, before he could get too excited White *unleashed another fork*: **26 ♘f6+ ♔g7 27 ♕xf8+! ♖xf8** and **Black resigned** as 28 ♘xh7+ regains the queen a rook and pawn up. *Tricky things these knights!*

Here is a more sophisticated example. It is the first of many extracts I shall give from the games of Garry Kasparov, the tactical genius *par excellence*.

B.Gelfand - G.Kasparov
Novgorod 1997
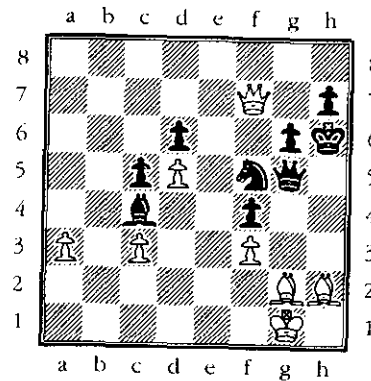
Black to play

Despite being a pawn down, perhaps Gelfand was feeling quietly confident about his chances here. After all, Black can't play 37...♘e3 or 37...♘h4 because of 38 ♗xf4, when White gets in a killer pin before the queen can mate on g2! If Black tries a fork with 37...♗xd5 38 ♕xd5 ♕xg2+ 39 ♔xg2 ♘e3+ 40 ♔h3 ♘xd5 then it rebounds after 41 c4! ♘b6 42 ♗xf4+ ♔g7 43 ♗xd6 ♘xc4 44 ♗xc5 and White has an *excellent endgame*. Nor does 37...♔h5 38 ♕xh7+ help Black.

Instead Kasparov came up with **37...♗f1!!**. After **38 ♔xf1** he had forced the white king onto a square where he could play **38...♘e3** *with check!* so that Gelfand had no time for ♗xf4. There followed

39 ♔e1

Or 39 ♔e2 ♕xg2+

39...♕h4+!

The point: Black's first target is the *dangerous dark squared bishop*, not the puny one on g2.

40 ♔e2 ♕xh2 41 ♔d3 ♘f5!

The most precise move which refuses to give White the slightest counterplay.

Not 41...♕xg2? 42 ♕xf4+. Neither does Kasparov give Gelfand any hope of battling on with a passed d pawn after 41...♘xg2 42 ♕f8+ ♔h5 43 ♕xd6. The game move securely defends d6 and the *white bishop is lost anyway in a couple of moves*: 42 ♗f1 ♕f2 43 ♗e2 (or 43 ♗h3 ♕xf3+) 43...♕e3+ 44 ♔c2 ♕xe2+. Therefore **White resigned.**

Going back to the diagram, I regard 37...♗f1 as one of those moves which is very difficult to *see* rather than calculate. As soon as you realise that Black is gaining time to attack the white king with the knight and queen with check, it becomes clear that it is a strong starting move. So watch out for these little moves!

L.Ftacnik - S.Conquest
Hastings 2001/2002
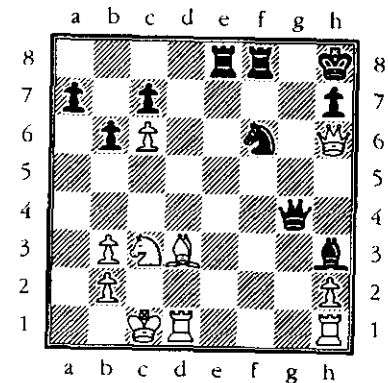
Black to play

Black played **30...♕h5** after which Ftacnik could exchange queens, but he was tempted by the idea of attacking the c7 pawn with **31 ♕f4?**. Only after **31...♘e4!** did he realise that 32 ♕xc7 would lose his queen to 32...♖f7. He tried **32 ♕e3** but, without any passed pawn on the queenside to give counter-play, the loss of the exchange proved fatal: **32...♘f2 33 ♕d4+ ♕e5 34 ♕h4 ♕f4+** Stopping mate on h7. **35 ♕xf4 ♖xf4 36 ♘d5 ♖f7 37 ♗c4 ♘xh1 38 ♖xh1 ♖g7** and **Black** eventually **won** the endgame.

G.Kasparov - J.Rodgaard
Simul, Torshavn 2001
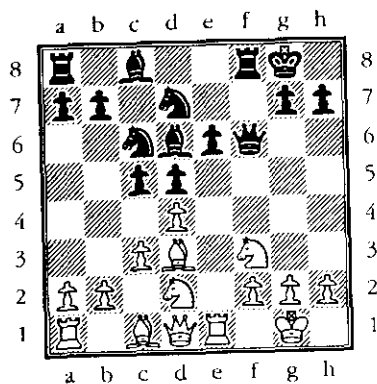
White to play

'So where's the knight fork?' you may be wondering. It appeared after

11 ♗xh7+!

Even in a 'simul' game Kasparov is alert to every tactical nuance.

11...♔xh7

First of all the king is enticed to a forking square...

12 ♖xe6!

...and now the queen. If 12...♕xe6 13 ♘g5+ wins, so Black refused to take the rook. Trouble is, the queen can't remain defending the bishop on d6, for if 12...♕f4 13 ♘f1! and not only is the queen obliged to give up defending the bishop but she is also in mortal danger herself, for example 13...♕f7 14 ♘g5+ (a fork) or 13...♕g4 14 ♘g5+ (discovered attack). Best would be 13...♕f5 when 14 ♖xd6 is simple and strong.

12...♗xh2+

A desperado move. As the bishop is doomed Black sells it for a pawn and a check.

13 ♔xh2 ♕f4+ 14 ♔g1 ♕f5

Getting out of range of a discovered attack with 14 ♘e4.

15 ♘f1!

Excellently played. There is no need to move the rook on e6—you know the forking pattern by now! So Kasparov brings his knight to g3 to bolster his kingside.

15...♘f6 16 ♘g3 ♕g4 17 ♖e1

White can't win material with the discovered attack after 17 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 18 ♘g5+ ♔g8 as the black queen is defended by the bishop on c8.
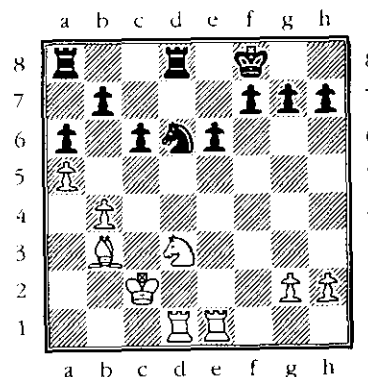
17...cxd4 18 ♘xd4

I guess Kasparov made the pragmatic decision to simplify, as it was a simultaneous. Instead he could have played for the attack with 18 cxd4.

18...♘xd4 19 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 20 cxd4 ♗d7 21 ♗d2

And White, who is a pawn and 462 rating points up, made short work of the endgame and won after another 16 moves.

A.Shirov - A.Motylev
FIDE World Championship,
Moscow 2001

Black to play

Black has three pawns for a knight and a solid position. However, this was one of the tiebreak games in the FIDE World Championship and the pressure got to the young Russian. Anxious to liquidate the tension Motylev played **23...b6** and there followed **24 axb6 ♖ab8** when Black was ready to regain his pawn with 25...♖xb6. Naturally, the arch tactician Shirov wasn't going to waste the chance to punish his opponent for the weakening manoeuvre. He pounced at once with **25 ♘c5! ♖xb6**.

Black has little choice for if 25...♔g8 White can exploit ideas of a back rank mate with 26 ♖d3! ♖xb6 27 ♖ed1 winning a piece.

Meanwhile, if 25...♔e7, White can win in the following elegant style: 26 ♘xe6! fxe6 27 ♖xe6+ ♔f8 28 ♖f1+! (the simple approach is 28 ♖exd6 when White will be left a piece up for a pawn) 28...♘f7 29 ♖xc6! (uncovering an attack on f7 by the bishop) 29...♖d7 30 ♖c7 and Black is defenceless for if 30...♖b7 31 ♖xf7+! ♔xf7 (forced) 32 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 33 ♗xf7 ♔xf7 and, after all the action by the pieces, the pawn slips quietly through with 34 b7.
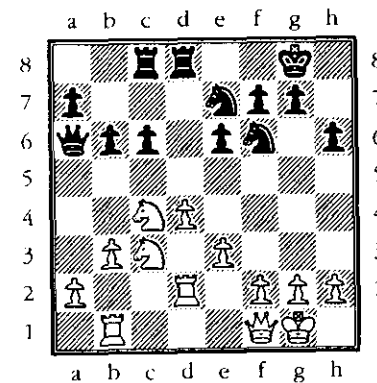
26 ♗xe6! ♖xb4

Trivial is 26...fxe6 27 ♘xe6+ ♔e7 28 ♘xd8+ ♔xd8 29 ♖xd6+.

27 ♘d7+!

Black resigned. If 27...♔g8 (or 27...♔e7 28 ♘e5!—setting up a big fork, though 28 ♗f5+ also wins on the spot—28...fxe6 29 ♘xc6+ ♔f6 30 ♘xd8 and wins) 28 ♖xd6 fxe6 29 ♘f6+ gxf6 30 ♖xd8+ with an extra rook.

A.Morozevich - V.Kramnik
Astana 2001

Black to play

In the play of Vladimir Kramnik we find a wonderful synthesis of tactical and strategical ideas. His genius especially comes into its own in semi-simplified positions. From the diagram Kramnik played **18...♘ed5!** which is highly awkward for White. He doesn't want to give Black control of the c file after 19 ♘xd5 cxd5 20 ♘e5 ♕xf1+ 21 ♔xf1 ♘e4. Perhaps best is the defensive 19 ♘e2 ♘e4 20 ♖db2 when Black doesn't seem to have any telling continuation. Instead Morozevich played the natural **19 ♖c2?!** but was hit by **19...♘xc3 20 ♖xc3 c5!**.

Not 20...♕xa2? 21 ♖a1 trapping the queen, but the hanging a2 pawn becomes a factor once the situation in the centre has clarified.

21 dxc5

Losing the exchange but if 21 ♖d3 cxd4 22 exd4 b5! (White escapes with a draw by repetition after 22...♕xa2 23 ♖a1 ♕c2 24 ♖c1 ♕a2 25 ♖a1 etc.) 23 ♘e5 ♕xa2 and Black wins a pawn whilst keeping the initiative, for example 24 ♖a1 ♕b2 25 ♖xa7 ♖c1 26 ♖d1 ♖xd1 27 ♕xd1 ♖xd4.

21...b5! 22 ♘e5

Not 22 ♘d6 ♖xd6 23 cxd6 ♖xc3.

22...♘e4 23 ♖d3 ♘d2 24 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 25 ♖d1

Rather than give up the exchange White gives up his queen to try for a swindle with the passed c pawn.

25...♘xf1 26 ♖xd8+ ♔h7 27 c6 ♕a5! 1-0

If 28 ♖d7 ♘xe3! 29 fxe3 (or 29 h3 ♕e1+ 30 ♔h2 ♕xf2) 29...♕e1

mate. Meanwhile if 28 ♖d1 ♘d2 brings the knight back into the game and heads off the passed pawn, e.g. 29 ♖c1 (hopeless is 29 b4 ♕c7 30 f4 f6!) 29...♕c7 30 ♘xf7 ♘e4! winning easily but not 30...♕xf7? 31 c7.

At the start of this chapter a couple of simple positions were given to demonstrate knight forks. Remember, however, that in real life, unless your opponent makes a complete oversight or is a beginner, most of the time you will have to work hard improving your position before a combination becomes possible. For example. in his game above against Gelfand, Kasparov had strengthened his position until —as a culmination of his winning strategy—a knight fork appeared. Something similar happened in the next diagram.

G.Kasparov - J.Timman
VSB, Amsterdam 1994

White to play
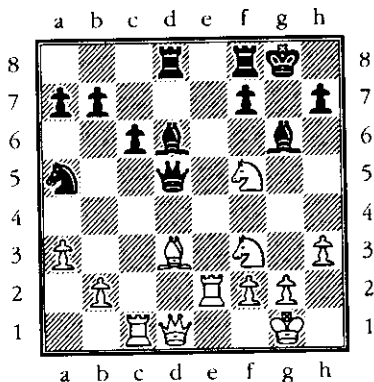
Kasparov played **24 ♖e5! ♗xe5**

Black drops the knight after 24...♕a2 25 ♖xa5. The best chance was 24...♕xd3 25 ♕xd3 ♗xe5 though after 26 ♘e7+ ♔g7 27 ♕e2 ♗f6 28 ♘xg6 hxg6 White has a queen for rook and knight with good winning chances.

25 ♘e7+ ♔g7 26 ♘xd5 ♗xb2

If 26...♖xd5 27 ♘xe5 ♖xe5 28 ♗xg6 hxg6 29 b4 and Black loses the wayward knight.

27 ♘f4 ♗xd3 28 ♘xd3 ♗xc1 29 ♕xc1 ♖xd3 30 ♕g5+ 1-0

The knight has finally fallen after 30...♔h8 31 ♕xa5.

It is the badly placed knight on a5 which provided the positional justification for the combination, NOT the fact that the black queen and king were separated by the distance of a knight fork. If you remove the black knight from a5 and put it on, say, b6 you will see that after **24 ♖e5** Black could play **24...♕a2**


(hypothetical position with knight on b6)
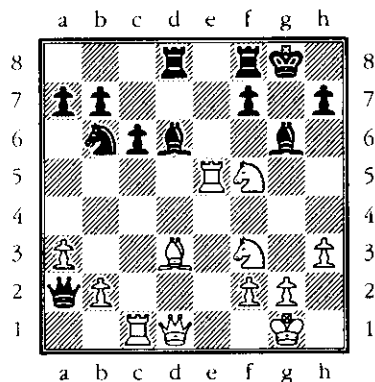
Then both 24...♗xe5 and 24...♕xb2 are threatened and if 25 ♘xd6 ♖xd6 falls into a nasty pin along the d file, while 25 ♖e2 ♗xf5 26 ♗xf5 ♗h2+ drops the queen, and 25 ♗b1 ♗xe5 also loses material. So 24 ♖e5? would have been a bad move, as the black pieces wouldn't have been sufficiently disorganised to justify a combination. So the moral is: always be alert for a combinative possibility—for yourself or for your opponent!—but don't actively search for one until you have gained a positional advantage.

The power of a threatened combination

A wise man once said that a threat is more powerful than its execution. For every knight fork and other combination that actually occurs in a game between good players, there are countless others that are fended off at the cost of a positional concession of some kind. The following excerpt is a good example.

H.Klip - V.Korchnoi
Dutch Championship 1992

Black to play
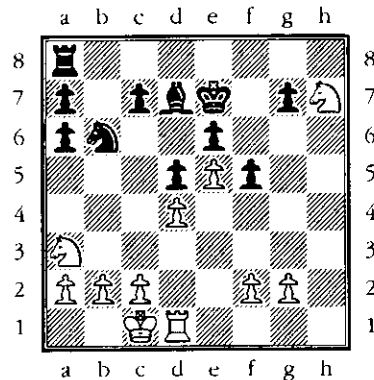
If Black does nothing active then White will centralise both his offside knights and then begin to *exploit his superior pawn structure.* Viktor Korchnoi, with his vast experience of defensive play, found an excellent way to fight back on the dark squares: **18...c5! 19 dxc5 ♘a4!** when the knight shows its versatility. Now White dare not support his pawn with 20 b4? because of 20...♘c3! when if 21 ♖d4?? ♘e2+ while otherwise Black will pick up two pawns with 21...♘xa2+ and then 22...♘xb4. So he settled for **20 ♖d3** with equal chances: **20...♖h8 21 ♖h3 ♘xc5 22 ♘g5 ♖xh3 23 ♘xh3 ♗b5 24 ♘xb5** Straightening out Black's pawns looks unaesthetic, but 24...♗f1 was difficult to meet and besides White wants to get rid of his passive knight. **24...axb5** and the game finished as a draw in another 17 moves. The threat of the knight fork, though never carried out, saved Black from a difficult position.

Other tactics with the knight

So much for the knight fork. I shall end the chapter with two other tactical curiosities concerning the knight.

It should be remembered that if the knight is in the centre, it is controlling as many as eight squares of the OPPOSITE colour to that on which it is sitting. So if you think you have a bind on squares of a certain colour, be careful: maybe your opponent's knight is going to upset your plans! Here are two old games, but they illustrate this point dramatically.

T.Petrosian - D.Bronstein
Candidates tournament,
Amsterdam 1956
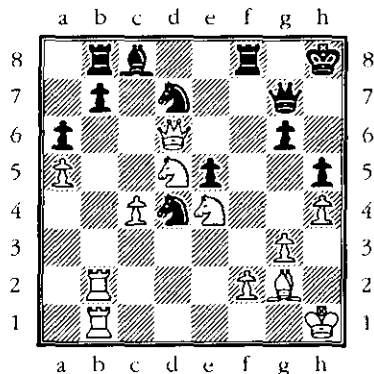
Black to play

White appears to have total control of the dark squares: it seems inconceivable that any harm can come to his pieces on any of these squares. Nevertheless, he lost his queen on a dark square after **35...♘f5 36 ♘g5?? ♘xd6 0-1**

J.Capablanca - N.Riumin
Moscow 1936
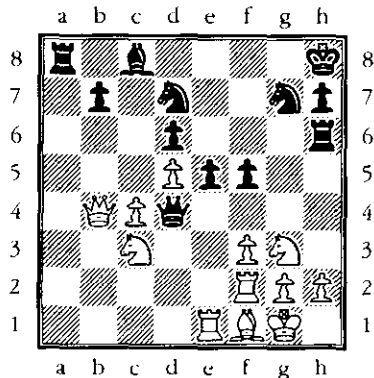
White to play

Here it is Black who has nice dark square control. After **26 ♘ge2** he tried to increase it with **26...♘c5??** with the threat of 27...♘d3 or 27...♕xf2+. You can probably guess how the game ended!

Another human weakness is to miss backward moves by a knight: we have already seen Petrosian, in the example above, miss the retreat from f5 to d6. In one of my own *games my opponent left his queen en prise to my knight but neither of us saw it!*

N.McDonald - C.Duncan
Hampstead 1998
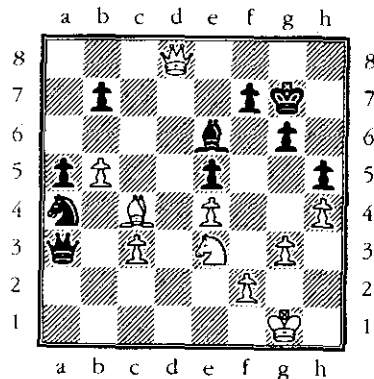
Black to play

The game continued **37...♗xc4 38 ♘xc4 ♘xc3?? 39 ♘d6??** and after this crazy interlude normal play resumed.

If you put together the two weaknesses—a player thinking that he is invincible on squares of a certain colour and backward knight moves are difficult to see—then the following blunder by a player rated 2695 *becomes completely plausible:*

M.Gurevich - R.Kasimdzhanov
Wijk aan Zee 2002
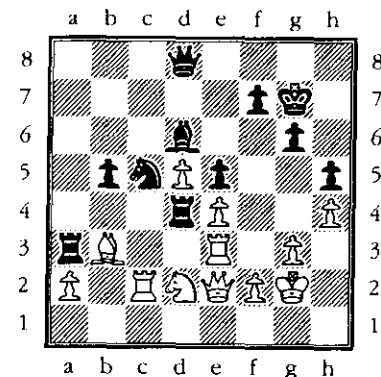
Black to play

Black is a pawn down but he has good dark square control. Wanting to increase his initiative it is no surprise that he played **39...♕a5??** *and resigned after* **40 ♘b1! ♘xb3 41 ♘xa3 1-0**

2   Knight Fork Puzzles

Puzzles

The puzzles that follow all feature knight forks. Remember that when it comes to a combination, there may only be one 'right answer' whereas there may be several equally good ways to, say, convert the advantage of a pawn in the endgame. Good luck in solving them!

1
G.Kasparov - J.Piket
Zurich 2001
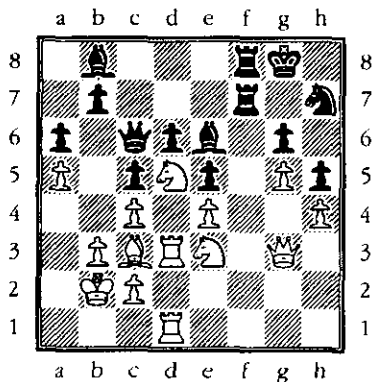
Black to play

Garry Kasparov plays a lot of brilliant combinations in this book, but here is something simple to get us started. Black is rather tied up but he spotted a way to get some free-dom with **30...♖f4**, aiming to answer 31 ♘xf4 with 31...exf4, when he forks the white queen and knight. Unfortunately for Piket the subject of this chapter is knight forks, not pawn forks! What had he missed?

2
V.Ivanchuk - F.Vallejo Pons
Linares 2002
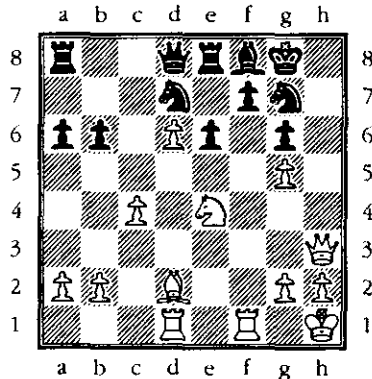
Black to play

Ivanchuk had sacrificed a piece for serious pressure on the kingside. Here Vallejo Pons decided to make some space for his pieces with **22...e5**, which clears the e6 square for the knight. What happened next?

3
E.Sutovsky - M.Chandler
Hastings 1999/2000
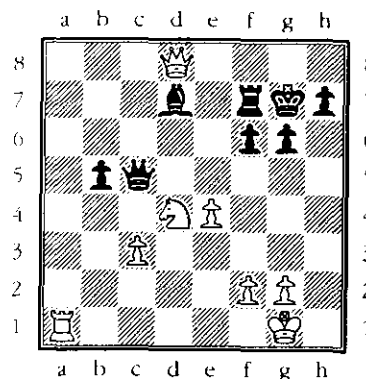
White to play

This position was reached in the last round of the Hastings Premier tournament. The Israeli Grandmaster Emil Sutovsky needed a win to get first place, £2,000 and a fine Castle-ham carriage clock. How did he do it?

4
I.Sokolov - M.Adams
Eurotel Trophy, Prague 2002
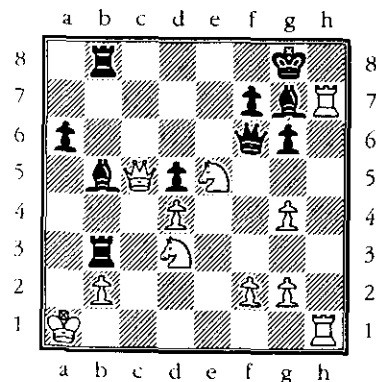
White to play

After **31 g5** Black played **31...♕d8** when the white knight on d3 is hanging and Black is ready to attack with 32...♕a5+. What should White do?

5
P.Johansson - N.McDonald
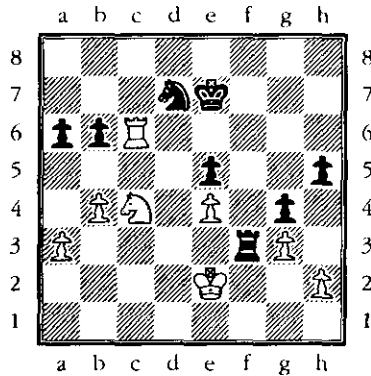Arnold Cup, Gausdal 1990
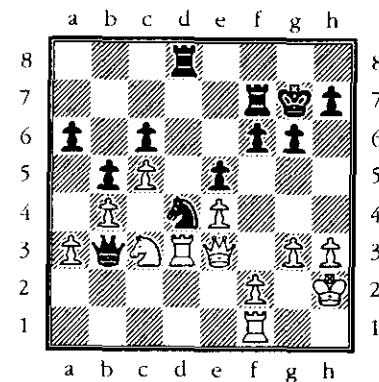
White to play

Can White win a pawn with 38 ♘xb5, uncovering an attack on Black's queen? The game actually continued **38 ♔g2 ♕c4 39 ♖fd1** Now what is Black's best move?

6
G.Kasparov - A.Karpov
World Championship,
London/Leningrad 1986

White to play

Kasparov had Karpov under heavy pressure in the second game of their 1986 World Championship Match, but Karpov managed to slip out and somehow scrape a draw after 39 ♘e3 ♘f6 40 ♖xb6 ♘xe4 41 ♖xa6 ♖f2+ thanks to his active pieces and passed pawn. The story goes that Kasparov was so angry with himself that he slapped his head with his hands when he was later shown the surefire win he missed somewhere in this sequence. What was it?

7
S.Kasparov - A.Frank
Bethune Open 2001
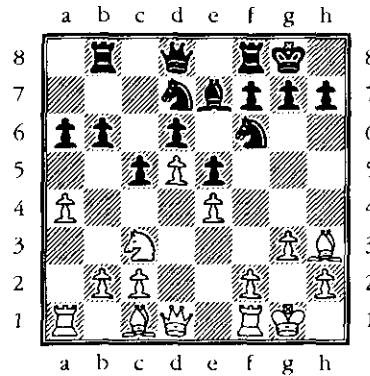
White to play

White played 13 ♕e2 to restrain Black's queenside advance, but Black nevertheless played 13...b5 and there followed 14 axb5 axb5 15 ♘xb5 ♘xe4 with the idea that if 16 ♕xe4 ♖xb5 Black has exchanged his wing pawn for a centre pawn with a good position. Was Black right in his assessment of the position? (clue: this is a book on tactics, not strategy. Look for combinations!)

8
N.McDonald - R.Dive
London 1994
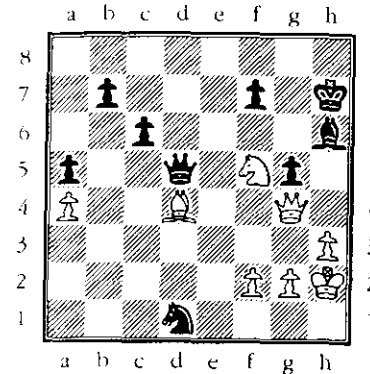
Black to play

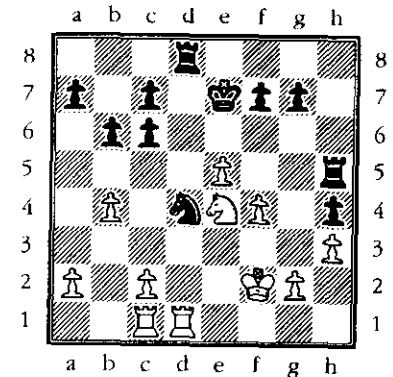One of my own games. Black attacked the bishop with 50...c5 What is White's best move?

9
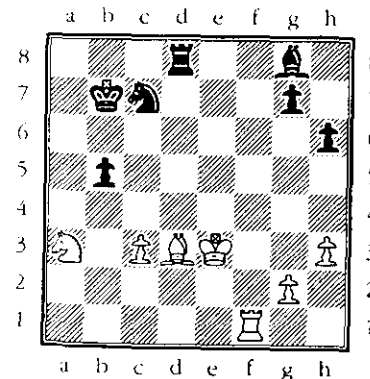
White to play

Work out all the important variations after 1 ♖b1 ♘d5+! Can White survive?

What happens if 1 ♘c2, recentralising the knight? Finally, is it better for White to play 1 ♘xb5 or 1 ♗xb5 and how do you assess the position?

10
G.Kasparov - V.Kramnik
Wijk aan Zee 2001

White to play

In this position Kasparov wanted very much to strengthen his hold on the kingside with 25 g4, but he saw that after 25...hxg3+ en passant his pawn structure would be broken. Therefore he reluctantly settled for 25 ♘g5 and the game eventually finished as a draw. What had Kasparov missed after 25 g4 hxg3+? Don't make the same mistake that Kasparov did of only thinking strategically—think about tactics!

11
R.Meessen - M.Gurevich
Belgian Championship 2001
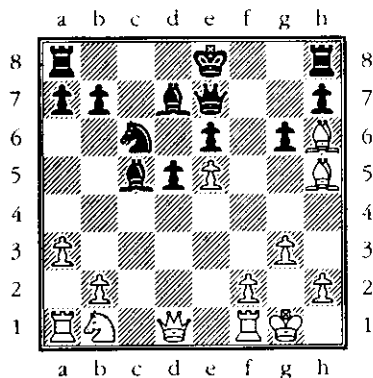
White to play

In the diagram White's attack is running out of steam and e5 is hanging as well as the bishop, so he decided it would be a good idea to force a draw. The game proceeded **17 ♕c1 gxh5 18 ♗g5 ♕f8 19 ♗h6** and now 19...♕e7 20 ♗g5 would be a repetition. Can Black do better?

3 Double Attacks by the Queen

**B**ecause of her power to move like both a rook and bishop the queen is the undoubted star of the double attack.
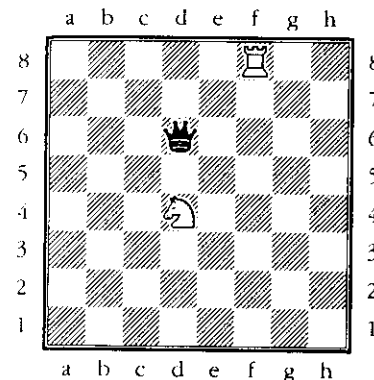
In the diagram the queen attacks the rook diagonally and the knight frontally. The two pieces can't defend each other so one will be lost. I shall subsequently call a straight line attack on a piece—as here against the knight—'a lateral attack' or 'attacking a piece laterally' in contrast to a 'diagonal attack' or 'attacking a piece diagonally'.

This double method of attack—diagonally and laterally—comes in many guises. A Hungarian Grand-master once resigned a game in three moves as White after 1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♗g5 c6 3 e3?? dropping a bishop to 3...♕a5+. In the US Championship a player once lost a rook on move five: 1 e4 c5 2 b4 cxb4 3 a3 d5 4 exd5 ♕xd5 5 axb4?? ♕e5+. Incidentally, this blunder has been made three times in serious tournaments. White resigned at once in two of the games, but in the third he played on and almost won!

When writing a book on the King's Gambit I noticed that the move 3 fxe5 is virtually always a terrible blunder for White because of 3...♕h4+, no matter whether after 1 e4 e5 2 f4 Black has declined the pawn offer with 2...♗c5, 2...♘c6, 2...d5 or anything else sensible, including 2...♕f6! Of reasonable moves, only after 2...♘f6 is it ever OK to play 3 fxe5. The most extreme form is 1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♗c5 3 fxe5?? ♕h4+ and White has the miserable choice between 4 ♔e2 ♕xe4 mate and 4 g3 ♕xe4+ winning a rook with the double attack.

These are extreme examples. More common is the following lateral/diagonal attack that wins a pawn.
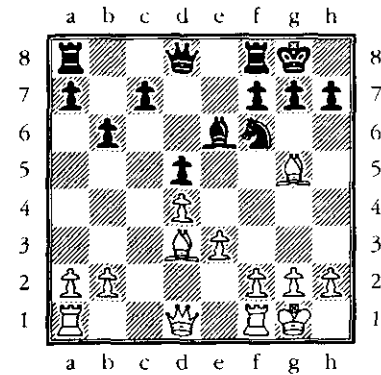
White wins a pawn with **1 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 2 ♕c2** threatening both **3 ♕xc7** and **3 ♗xh7+**. This might seem nothing special compared to winning a piece, but it is usually enough to win a game.
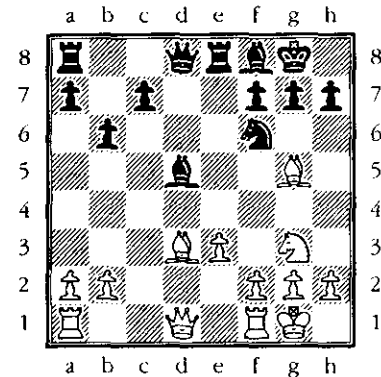
White to play

This is a particularly virulent version of another typical double attack. After **1 ♗xf6 ♕xf6** tempting is the discovered attack **2 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 3 ♕xd5** as if **3...♕xb2 4 ♕xf7**, but **3...♖ad8** allows Black to play on a pawn down. Instead **2 ♕h5!** is much deadlier as the double attack on d5 and h7 wins a piece. If back a move Black plays **1...gxf6**

2...♗g7 9 ♘f5 mating) **3 ♕f5** and Black has to give up a whole rook with **3...♗e4 4 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 5 ♘xe4** in order to avoid being mated on h7.

The queen, like the bishop, can also attack along two diverging diagonals. The following is a common and deadly form of this attack. I've taken an old example but it happens frequently in amateur chess.

W.Wainwright - A.Robinson
England-USA cable match 1907

1 d4 e6 2 e4 d5 3 ♘c3 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♘d7 5 ♘f3 ♘gf6 6 ♗d3 ♘xe4 7 ♗xe4 ♘f6 8 ♗d3 ♗d6 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♕e2 b6 11 ♗g5 h6??
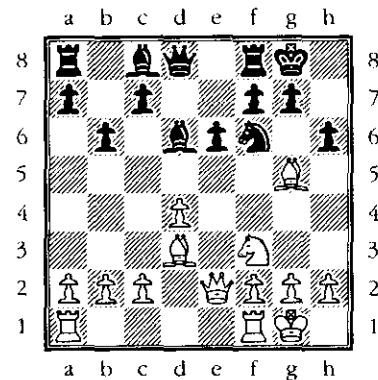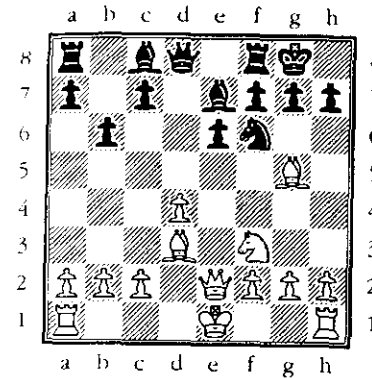
A natural move aiming to develop the bishop on b7, but tactics come before strategy! Black is almost encouraging White to win a rook.

12 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 13 ♕e4!

There is a double attack on a8 and h7. Black has to prevent the mate, but after **13...♖d8 14 ♕xa8** he soon resigned.

A variation on the same theme is

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♘d7 5 ♘f3 ♘gf6 6 ♗d3 ♘xe4 7 ♗xe4 ♘f6 8 ♗d3 ♗e7 9 ♕e2 0-0 10 ♗g5 b6??

11 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 12 ♕e4 1-0 in A.Becker - H.Norman Hansen, Munich Olympiad, 1936.

Next is an example of a double attack from my junior days. I have forgotten all the games I played myself in the tournament in question, but I remember this game between two of the other competitors very well. Some background information on the game might help to explain its dramatic outcome. I was playing in the Kent Under 16 Championship. Chris Ward, the future GM, was leading the tournament by half a point and would be down-floated to one of two players in the last round. Both players were desperate to avoid playing the leader—they were decent club players, but no match for Ward. When the pairings came out, one of these players, Benedict Rich, couldn't believe his

luck—not only had he avoided Ward but he had been down-floated to a player he had never heard of, a certain J.Hong! Rich sat down and the game began. He fully expected to win and share equal second. I was on the board next to him so I saw exactly what happened.

B.Rich - J.Hong
Kent Under 16 Championship 1983

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♘d4

What's this? Rich hesitated ever so slightly before taking the pawn on e5. You can bet that if Chris Ward had offered the e pawn he would have thought a long time before taking it, but he remembered he was playing a weak player, and weak players blunder pawns, don't they?

4 ♘xe5 ♕g5!
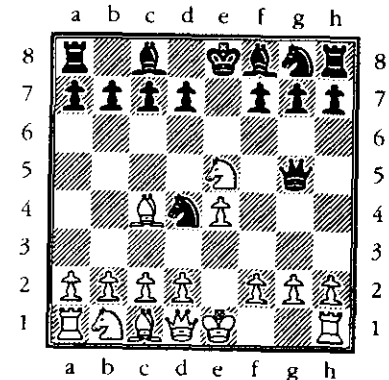
Black bashed out this move without thinking. The double attack on e5 and g2 is very strong as White can't afford either to lose the knight or allow his kingside to be smashed up with **5...♕xg2**.

Here the first signs of confusion began to appear on Rich's face, but he shrugged his shoulders and applying the maxim 'check first and philosophise later!' he quickly played
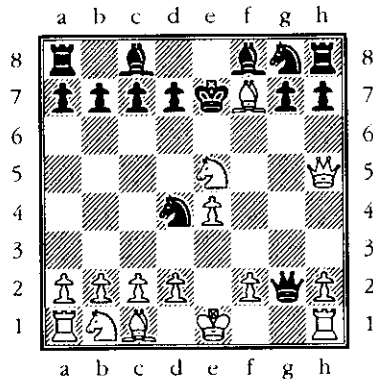
5 &xf7+

At least he avoided 5 ♘xf7 ♕xg2 6 ♖f1 ♕xe4+ 7 ♗e2 ♘f3 mate.

5...♔e7

Now it seemed to dawn on Rich that he was in big trouble. The best try is 6 0-0 ♕xe5 7 ♗c4 with two pawns for the piece and some attacking chances based on a future f2-f4. But psychologically White was already beaten and blundered again with

6 ♕h5? ♕xg2

and now White really is dead lost. The new double attack—this time on e4 and h1—is even stronger than the one on e5 and g2 as White has no way to bale out. For example, if 7 ♕h4+ to defend e4, then 7...g5! and the double attack on White's queen and h1 settles things at once. Or if 7 ♖f1 then 7...♕xe4+ (7...♘f6 might be even better) 8 ♔d1 ♕xc2+

9 ♔e1 ♕xc1+ 10 ♕d1 ♘c2+ 11 ♔e2 ♕xd1+ 12 ♖xd1 ♘xa1 and White has suffered huge material losses.

In the game White tried **7 d3** but soon lost after **7...♕xh1+** etc.

White was by no means a bad player, but he was beaten by the fatal combination of an opening surprise and over-confidence.

This opening trap is well established and is known as the Blackburne Shilling Trap. If I remember correctly, it is so called because Joseph Henry Blackburne, one of the strongest players of his day, used it a lot in 'simuls' in the 1890s—and the fee to play him in a 'simul' was One Shilling in old English money!

It has claimed many victims, especially in junior tournaments. A vast number of games in these events begin 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4, and on 3...♘d4 it is no surprise that 4 ♘xe5 is very tempting; after all, isn't the whole idea of the opening to put pressure on f7?

In fact, as we have seen, 4 ♘xe5 is a serious error. As remarked above, tactics come before strategy and the double attack after 4...♕g5 is simply stronger than anything White can create on f7.

White should avoid all this with 4 ♘xd4 exd4 5 0-0 followed by c2-c3 etc. aiming to get control of the centre. In the Bird's Opening after 3 ♗b5 ♘d4 4 ♘xd4 exd4, White often voluntarily plays ♗c4 to put the bishop on a better square (or is kicked there by ...c7-c6, which gains time for ...d7-d5 to gain space on the centre). Therefore it could be

argued that White is a tempo up on Bird's opening after 3 ♗c4 ♘d4. For this reason the line has never caught on—but, as far as traps go, it is an excellent one! Still, I do NOT recommend you play it.

From the examples in this book it is clear that most players far more readily see the combinative and tactical opportunities that a position offers them than it offers the opponent. An International Master once told me that he always plays better against stronger opponents because he looks to see what they are doing or might be planning—whereas against weaker players he becomes completely focused on his own ideas and sometimes misses something obvious! Not even World Champions are immune from underestimating their opponent's chances, as the following example shows.

G.Kasparov - M.Tal
World Cup, Skelleftea 1989
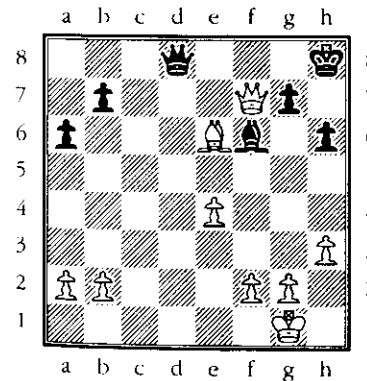
White to play

Two pawns down in a simplified position against the reigning World Champion, you wouldn't think you

had much of a chance. Almost any sensible move now wins for White, for example 33 b3. The black queen is tied down by the need to prevent ♕g8 mate. Instead Kasparov uncorked one of the worst blunders of his whole career.

Kasparov played **33 ♕xb7??** and lost his bishop after **33...♕d1+ 34 ♔h2 ♕d6+**. Nevertheless, with three pawns for the piece White had ample material compensation and still carried on playing for advantage after **35 g3 ♕xe6 36 b3 ♕d6 37 ♔g2 ♗d4 38 h4 ♕f6 39 f4** with an eventual **draw**. Of course only to draw after being two pawns up wouldn't have satisfied Kasparov at all!

S.Conquest - M.Narciso Dublan
Pamplona 2001
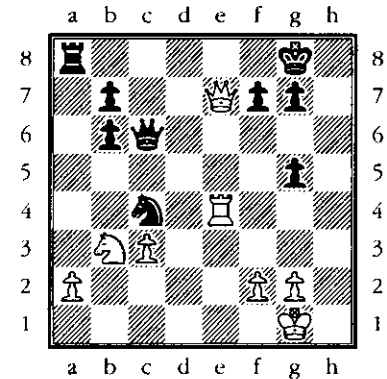
Black to play

Can Black safely take the pawn on a2? In the game he certainly thought so. There followed **37...♖xa2? 38 ♕d8+ ♔h7**. If now the obvious 39 ♖e8 the black king is safe on g6 after 39...♘d6 40 ♖h8+

♔g6 41 ♘d4 ♛c5 when Black remains two pawns up. Instead disaster struck from an unexpected direction:

39 ♛d3!!

A quiet but deadly move. White threatens both the knight and a killing discovered check. Thus if 39...♘b2, attacking White's queen, there follows 40 ♖h4+ ♔g8 (As the writer Irving Chernev once said, even the laziest king runs away from a double check!) 41 ♛d8+ and mate next move. If 39...♘d6 40 ♖c4+ wins Black's queen. Therefore he has to give up the piece straight away.

39...♛g6
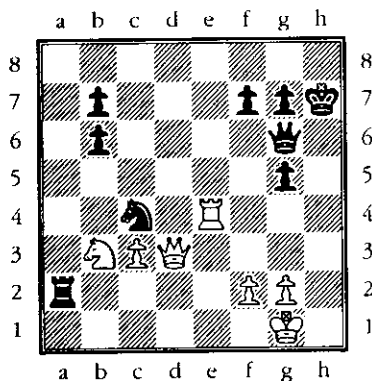
40 ♛h3+!

No chances for the opponent! Admit it, were you only thinking about 40 ♛xc4? That should win, but it simplifies things to force the exchange of queens before taking the knight, as this kills off all Black's tactical chances based on attacking the white king. If now 40...♔g8 41 ♖e8 mate, so Black's next move is forced after which the endgame is easily winning for White.

40...♛h6 41 ♛xh6+ gxh6 42 ♖xc4 ♖c2 43 ♘d4 ♖c1+ 44 ♔h2 h5 45 ♖c7 ♔g6 46 ♘b5 ♖c2 47 f3 f5 48 ♖xb7 g4 49 ♖xb6+ ♔g5 50 ♘d4 1-0

Having come this far, it's a pity Black didn't allow the neat finish 50...♖xc3 51 f4+! with a knight fork after 51...♔xf4 52 ♘e2+ or mate after 51...♔h4 52 ♘xf5.

S.Knott - N.McDonald
Kent v. Herts match 2002
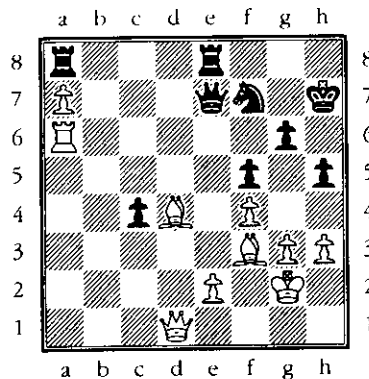
White to play

A very curious example from my own play. Here White has every chance to win after 33 ♛c2. Instead he played 33 ♗xh5??. An astonishing blunder in time pressure. My opponent said he hallucinated that his pawn was on e3, not e2, and so thought he could answer 33...gxh5 with the decisive 34 ♛xh5+. But even if this was the case, Black can ignore the bishop and pick up a rook with 33...♛b7+. While I was

wondering which piece to win my opponent said 'this is ridiculous' and resigned.

G.Kasparov - A.Karpov
Linares 2001
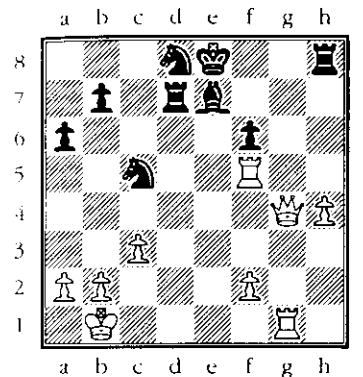
White to play

You would expect Kasparov to be trying to land a mating blow here, but instead he used the theme of double attack to win a piece.

29 ♖h5! ♖f8

If 29...♖xh5 30 ♛xh5+ ♘f7 (or 30...♔f8 31 ♛h8+ ♔f7 32 ♛g8 mate) 31 ♖g8+ ♗f8 32 ♛xc5 and White wins a piece with the pin.

30 ♖xc5 ♗xc5 31 ♛h5+ 1-0

It is double attack on the king and bishop. Black will be left with a rook and knight to fight a queen and two pawns—hopeless odds against Kasparov.

Next up is one of Anand's wins on the way to becoming the 2001 FIDE World Champion. The extract shows that he would never have made it to the top without a

thorough knowledge of the tactical theme of double attack.

V.Anand - A.Dreev
FIDE World Championship,
Moscow 2001
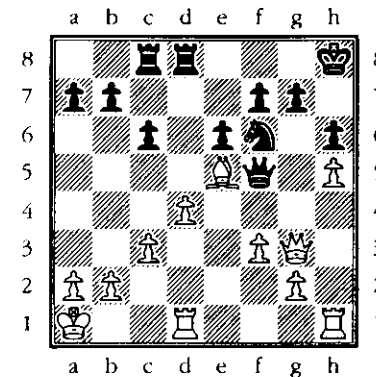
Black to play

Since 24...♘xh5? 25 ♖xh5 ♛xh5 26 ♛xg7 mates, Dreev played **24...c5** and there followed **25 dxc5 ♘xh5 26 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8.**

If now 27 ♖xh5?, hoping for 27...♛xh5 28 ♛xg7 mate, Black gets in first with 28...♖d1 mate. As 28 ♛h4 ♖d2 29 ♛xh5? ♛xh5 30 ♖xh5 ♖d1 also falls for the back rank, Anand either has to retreat with 28 ♛e1, or find something special. He found it by applying the principle of the double attack with **27 ♗xg7+!.**

The point is that after 27...♘xg7 28 ♛h4 Black can't deal with the double threat of 29 ♛xd8+ and 29 ♛xh6+ ♔g8 30 ♛h8 mate.

27...♔h7 28 ♛h4 ♖d2
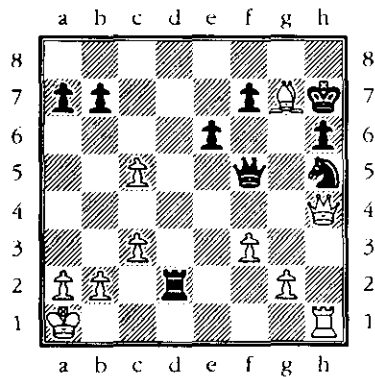
29 &xh6!

Destroying all Black's hopes at counterplay. Anand uses a pin to simplify into a rook and pawn endgame where he starts with two extra pawns.

29...&xh6 30 g4 &g5 31 &xh5+ &xh5 32 &xh5+ &g7 33 a4 &d3 34 c6!

Giving back a pawn to create a decisive passed pawn on the queenside.

34...bxc6 35 &a5 &xf3 36 &xa7 e5 37 a5 &f6 38 a6 e4 39 &a8 &d3 40 &e8 &d5 41 b4!

Black's last hope was the impetuous 41 a7? &a5+.

41...&d7 42 c4 1-0

The pawns steamroller through after 43 b5 etc.

In the next position White appears to stand quite well. True, his king is in the centre but it appears fairly safe: there are no minor pieces to hound him. Meanwhile he has an active queen and both rooks on open files: the rook on d7 looks especially well placed. Black on the other hand has a rook boxed in on f8. So all seems well with White's position.

Dao Thien Hai - G.Kasparov
Europe-Asia rapidplay match,
Batumi 2001
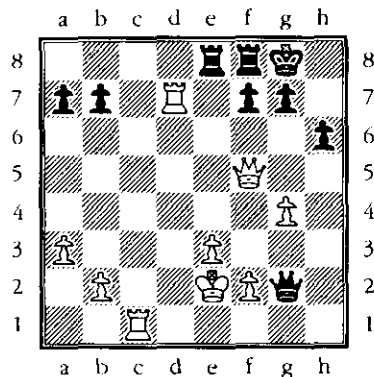
Black to play

However, he was struck out of the blue by the combinative blow **22...&e5!**

The aim is to drive away the white queen so that a fork can be set up on g4.

23 &f3

Instead 23 &xe5 &xg4+ 24 &e1 &xd7 25 &c7—in order to get the pawn back—25...&d3 26 &xb7 &d8 and Black, who threatens 27...&d1 mate, has a decisive attack. Or 23 &f4 &e4 24 &f5 g6 25 &f3 &xe3+! as in the game.

23...&xe3+! 24 &xe3

White loses his queen after 24 &xe3 &e8+ when it's mate as well after 25 &f4?! g5+ 26 &f5 &xf3 mate.

24...&xg4+ 25 &f1 &xd7 26 &xa7

The final blunder, but he is already two pawns down.

26...&b5+ 27 &g2 0-1

If 27 &e1 &e8+ is fatal for the white king, but having played this move White resigned when he saw that the double attack strikes again with 27...&g5+!.

The next is a highly unusual position. After 16 moves neither player has developed his king's bishop! Whoever manages to mobilise his reserve forces first will have a decisive advantage. Bareev applied three tactical themes: pin, double attack and trapping pieces.

C.Crouch - E.Bareev
Hastings, 1992/93

Black to play

He began with

16...b6! 17 &xe5

White is loathe to give up his dark-squared bishop but otherwise 17...&xc5 will just win a pawn.

17...&xe5 18 &c3

Breaking the pin and attacking the black knight, but Bareev is ready.
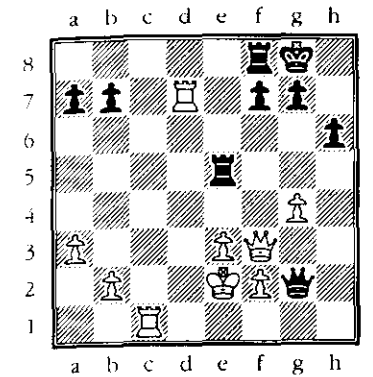
18...&d5! 19 &d2

Alas, for White, if 19 cxb6 &e4+ and he loses the knight on b1 with check or his queen after 20 &d2 &b4.

19...&xc5 20 f4

In order to regain his pawn White has to allow his queen to be shut out of the game, after which she can no longer help defend her king.

20...&g6 21 &xg7 &d4 22 &h6 &e3 23 &c4 &d4 24 g3 &c3+ 25 &e2 &c5 26 &d2 &e3+ 27 &d1 &b4 0-1

If 28 &c4 &f3+ wins the rook.

P.Kiriakov - A.Baburin
Monarch Assurance, Port Erin 2001

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 e3 ♗e6?!

An odd move that aims to hold onto the pawn. Natural was 3...♘f6 or the spirited 3...e5!?.
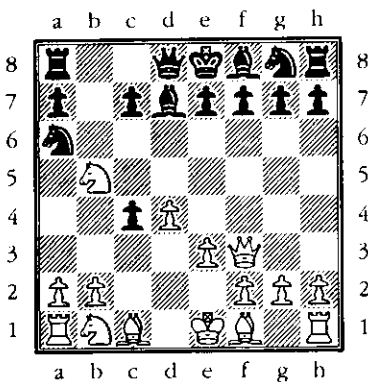
4 ♘e2!

Planning 5 ♘f4, so the bishop voluntarily retreats.

4...♗d7 5 ♘ec3! b5?!

If Black doesn't hold onto the pawn then his bishop manoeuvre to e6 and d7 will look ridiculous. However, disaster now strikes.

**6 ♕f3 ♘a6 7 ♘xb5!!**

A brilliant move. How does White intend to answer 7...♗xb5?

When I first played through this game I thought the idea was 8 a4?! ♗d7 9 ♗xc4 with a double attack on the knight and f7. However, 8...♘b4 lets Black confuse matters somewhat.

Much stronger is the second piece offer 8 ♗xc4!! ♗xc4 (as f7 is

attacked, there is little choice) Now White combines deflection with double attack to pick up a rook and bishop: 9 ♕c6+ ♕d7 10 ♕xa8+ ♕d8 11 ♕c6+ (back for more!) 11...♕d7 12 ♕xc4.

In the game Black handed over a couple of pawns in order to survive a respectable number of moves: 7...♘f6 8 ♗xc4 e6 9 ♕b7! (as the knight on a6 can't leave c7 undefended White wins a second pawn) 9...c6 10 ♕xa6 cxb5 11 ♗xb5 ♗b4+ 12 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 13 ♘xd2 ♖b8 14 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 15 b3 0-0 16 0-0 and **Black resigned** 12 moves later.

C.O'Shaughnessy - N.McDonald
London, 1994
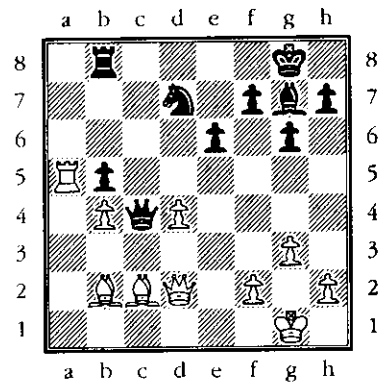
Black to play

Black prepared a double attack with 31...♗h6!

In principle Black is happy to get rid of his inactive bishop in exchange for the bishop on c2 which is guarding White's light squares

However, he had to calculate carefully that White isn't able to strike a decisive blow on the dark squares on the kingside. The critical line runs 32 ♕xh6 ♕xc2 33 ♗a1 ♕b1+ 34 ♔g2 when:

34...♕xb4?! is risky, for example 35 ♖a7 (or 35 d5 e5! 36 ♖a7 ♕e4+ 37 ♔g1 ♕xd5 38 ♖xd7 ♕xd7 39 ♗xe5 when White is attacking b8 and also threatening mate on g7, but Black saves himself and wins with the double attack 39...♕d1+ 40 ♔g2 ♕d5+) 35...♕c4? (or 35...♘f6 36 d5! ♘xd5? 37 ♕g7 mate) 36 ♖xd7 ♕c6+ (it looks like the double attack will win the exchange, but...) 37 d5! ♕xd7 38 ♕g7 mate.

Nonetheless, Black can keep control with the simple 34...♕e4+ 35 ♔g1 ♕d5! making sure that the bishop on a1 stays blocked on. Then ♖c8, ♘f6 etc. allows him a decisive positional build up.

In the game White preferred 32 ♕d1 ♕xb4. The first double attack is on a5 and b2. 33 ♕a1 ♕d2 34 ♗e4 ♗e3! The winning move that sets up a double attack on e4 and g1. 35 fxe3 ♕xe3+ 36 ♔f1 ♕xe4 37 ♔g1 ♕d5!

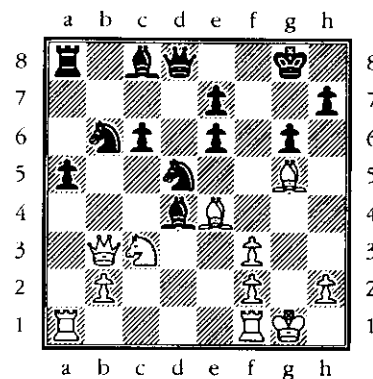As long as the bishop remains shut in Black has an easy win.

38 ♕f1 ♔g7 39 ♕e2 ♘f6 40 ♕e3 ♖c8 41 ♕d3 ♖c4 42 ♕e2 ♕c6 43 d5?!

Finally the bishop sees daylight but after the third double attack White resigned.

43...♕b6+ 0-1

However not every combination works as the next game illustrates...

B.Kantsler - N.Vlassov
Aeroflot Open, Moscow 2002

Black to play

I hope you gain some interesting ideas from this book that you can apply in your own games. Nevertheless it is always worth remembering that not every combination works just because it is possible! Here is a drastic example of an unsound idea.

Earlier Black had sacrificed the exchange for two pawns leading to the sharp and unclear position in the diagram. Here Vlassov played **20...e5** which created a pin on his own knight on d5. Now 21 ♘e2 was the safe move but, seeing a possible fork of king and rook on d5, Kanstler got excited and played **21 ♗xe7?**. There followed **21...♕xe7 22 ♘xd5 cxd5 23 ♗xd5+ ♘xd5 24 ♕xd5+ ♔g7** when White saw to his horror that after 25 ♕xa8, apparently reaping the reward for his double attack, he is likely to be defeated in just three moves: 25...♗b7 26 ♕b8 ♕g5+ 27 ♔h1 ♗xf3 mate. So he played the dismal **25 f4** and

resigned after 25...♗b7 26 ♕b5 ♖f8 27 ♖a3 ♖xf4 28 ♖g3 ♕f7 29 ♕e2 ♕d5 as mate follows on h1.

There is always the danger of something going wrong when you make a combination. It is even possible that your opponent is cajoling you into committing yourself, as he has a nasty surprise waiting for you! In the above example Vlassov may have played 20...e5 specifically to provoke White's suicidal reaction. This brings us on to a question of a psychological nature: if you are playing a very strong opponent, and he gives you the chance of playing what seems a strong combination, how much should you trust him?

Capablanca, the World Chess Champion from 1921 to 1927, lost fewer games in his career than any other top player. Therefore it must have been a shock to his opponent in the following game when he realised he could win material.

J.Capablanca - G.Thomas
Hastings 1934 35
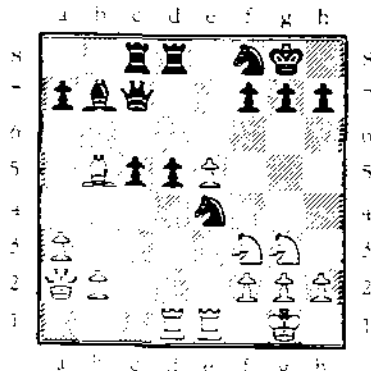
White to play

The Cuban genius got it wrong for once with

23 ♘xe4??

Black is comfortable after say 23 ♗d3 ♘xg3 24 hxg3 ♘e6 but this is how White should play.

23...dxe4 24 ♘d2

Still not seeing the danger. Critical was 24 ♘g5 ♖xd1 25 ♖xd1. If now 25...h6? White can play 26 ♘xf7 ♕xf7 27 ♗c4—pinning and winning! But Black can turn the tables with 25...c4!. This cuts off the white queen's intersection with f7 and so threatens 26...♕xe5, with a double attack on the bishop and knight. Then White has to give up a pawn with a miserable position after 26 e6 fxe6 27 ♘h3, but at least he wouldn't be dropping a piece.
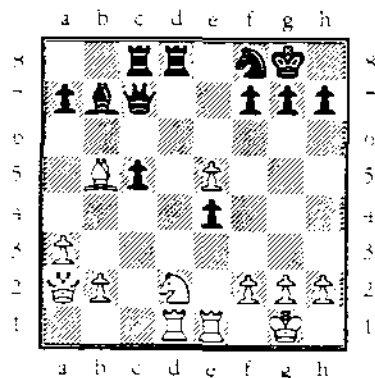
24...♖xd2?!

Here it seems that Black was afraid of ghosts. He was playing one of the greatest players of all time and was apparently bluffed into thinking that after 24...♕a5!, which wins a piece, White had a nasty surprise waiting for him. Indeed,

after 25 ♗c4 ♖xd2 26 ♗xf7+ ♔h8 27 e6, it looks like White's passed pawn is going to be dangerous. However, Black then has the stylish 27...e3!!. Now it turns out that Black's e pawn is stronger than White's after 28 f3 ♖xd1 29 ♖xd1 e2 while if 28 fxe3 ♖xg2- 29 ♔f1 ♕b5+ and mate follows. Leaving aside the spectacular 27...e3, which Black can perhaps be excused for missing, White would also have nothing real for the piece after the simple 27...♖xd1 28 ♖xd1 ♕c7.

Thomas sees that he can win two pieces for a rook without allowing any complications and so prefers this—an understandable decision against a mighty opponent. On the other hand it might have cost him the win if Capablanca hadn't blundered again later in the game. If Thomas had been a bit braver he might have forced Capablanca to resign in a couple of moves.

White fought on dourly, and reached an endgame that offered some survival chances.

25 ♖xd2 ♕a5 26 b4 ♕xb5 27 bxc5 ♕xc5 28 ♕b2 ♗a8 29 ♖dd1 ♕e7 30 ♕d4 h6 31 ♕d6 ♕xd6 32 ♖xd6 ♘g6 33 e6 fxe6 34 ♖xe6 ♔f7 35 ♖a6 ♖c7 36 ♖b1 ♘e7 37 h4 ♘c8 38 ♖b5 ♗b7 39 ♖f5+ ♔g8 40 ♖e6 ♘e7 41 ♖f4 ♗d5 42 ♖d6 ♖c8 43 ♖a6

White cannot seize the seventh rank with his rook by 43 ♖d7? because after 43...♘g6 44 ♖g4 (44 ♖f5 is similar) 44...♗e6 the two rooks are forked.

43...♖c1+ 44 ♔h2 ♘c6 45 h5 ♖c2
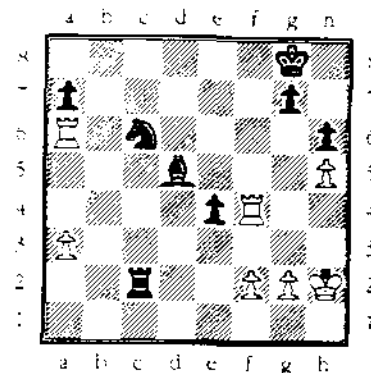
46 ♖f5?

White meets the threat of e4-e3 but the remedy proves far worse than the ailment. Instead if 46 ♖a4 e3 47 fxe3 ♖xg2- 48 ♔h3 ♖c2 would be very bad for White in view of his isolated pawns, but he would have been able to struggle on. And, with his wonderful endgame technique and strong sense of self preservation, Capablanca might have saved himself. The game move allows an interesting combination which traps the rook on a6.

46...♗e6! 47 ♖f4 ♖c4!

The changing of the guard: the black rook takes over the defence of e4 and at the same time cuts off the retreat of the white rook to a4. Now White can do nothing about the threat of ♗c8.

48 g4 ♗c8 49 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 50 ♖xe4 ♔f7 51 ♖a4 ♖a6 52 ♖f4+ ♔e7 53 ♖e4+ ♔f6 0-1

It seems to me that Sir George Thomas jeopardised the win of a lifetime by being too trusting of his opponent. Capablanca had to make a second serious mistake in the

endgame before his opponent had the courage to seize his opportunity.

My advice would be not to trust the opponent at all, no matter what his reputation. If you are right in your calculation, you might score a nice win; if you are wrong, you might lose, but at least you have been courageous and learnt something for the future: and both these assets will make you a better player. Of course, if you have an easily winning position then there is no need to embark on a combination, unless you are sure it works.

We cannot help making a psychological assessment of our opponent before and during a game. Does he look confident or is he tired and run down? Of course we could be wrong—or the opponent might be bluffing! GM David Bronstein warned me when playing in Russia about opponents who pretend to be half asleep and make their moves in a languid, bored way. Then when you have been lulled into making careless, superficial moves they pounce!

"What should I do about them?" I asked Bronstein and got some typically inimitable advice from the old maestro:

"If they are higher rated than you it's easy—offer them a draw! If they refuse, they can't carry or pretending to be uninterested in the game."

4   Double Attacks by the Queen Puzzles

1
N.McDonald - P.Lukacs
First Saturday, Budapest 1995
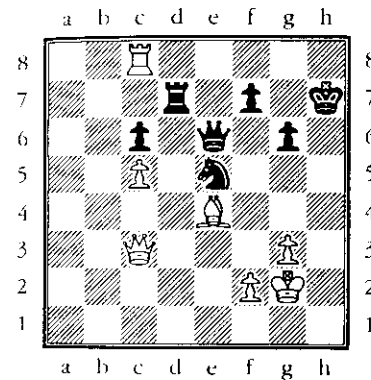
White to play

White played **40 ♕a1** threatening mate by 42 ♕h1+ ♔g7 43 ♕h8. Black tried to relieve the pressure by **40...♖d1** uncovering an attack on White's rook. Does this save him?

2
N.McDonald - T.Wall
Coulsdon 1997
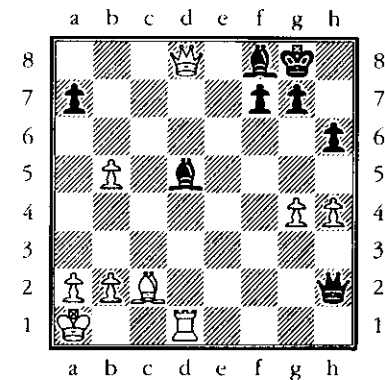
Black to play

Black played **37...♗f3** attacking the rook. What is the best reply?

3

Henry Atkins was one of the might-have-beens of the chess-world. As a young man he showed his promise by finishing way ahead of the great Russian Chigorin at Hannover in 1902 but subsequently never played much international chess. In the game given here he beat Isidor Gunsberg, who played a match for the World Championship, in only eight moves!

H.Atkins - I.Gunsberg
Hanover 1902

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♘f3 c5 4 e3 ♗g4 5 ♗xc4
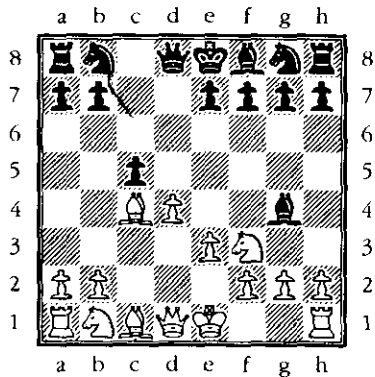
Firstly, what happens if 5...♘f6 here?

Black in fact played **5...e6.** Now see if you can work out the win that Atkins found in the game.

4

In the chapter on trapping we shall look at a strange game that began **1 d4 f5 2 ♗g5 h6 3 ♗h4 c5!?.** For the moment I would just like to know if you think it is OK for White to play **4 e3** here
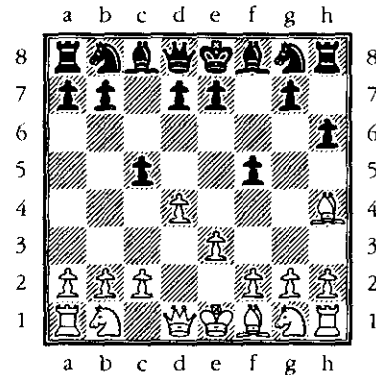
and after **4...♕b6 5 dxc5**, attacking Black's queen?

5
B.Gelfand - G.Kasparov
Dos Hermanas 1996
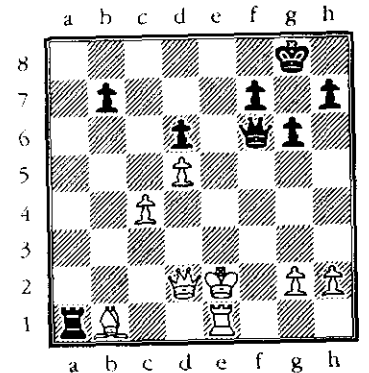
Black to play

You are a piece up against a 2775 player but try not to get too excited! Your king is in check after **39...♕e5+** —Should you go 40 ♔f1 or 40 ♔f2 or 40 ♕e3 ?

6
F.Jouber - K.Shirazi
Bethune Open 2001
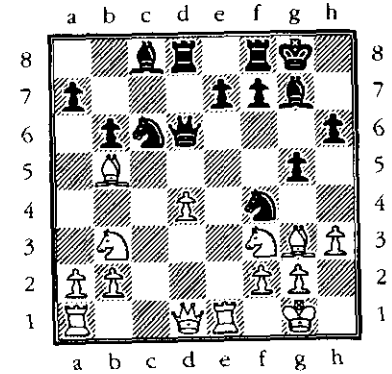
Black to play

Here Black played **18...e5** attacking d4. Should White

(a) take the pawn with 19 dxe5

(b) take the pawn after 19 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 20 ♘xe5

(c) simplify with 19 ♗xf4 exf6 20 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 21 ♖c1

It's your choice!

5 Double Attacks by Rook, Bishop and Pawn

The queen is a fantastic double attacker thanks to her overwhelming force; the knight meanwhile causes mayhem with its crafty leap. None of the other pieces has such power or unpredictability, but they can still deliver a mighty punch to the unwary. In this chapter we look at the double attacking antics of the bishop, rook and pawn. By the way, the words 'fork' and 'double attack' mean the same thing. We tend to talk about a 'pawn fork' or a 'bishop fork' because the attack is forking out from the pawn or bishop in two directions diagonally. However, the principle of double attack is the same whether it occurs diagonally or laterally.

Bishop Fork
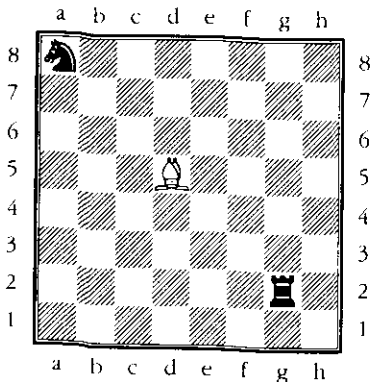
In the diagram the bishop shows its long-range power. The knight

and rook are both attacked and can't defend each other.
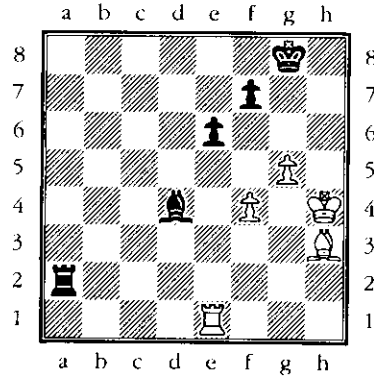
Black to move can win White's rook with the bishop fork **1...♗f2+ 2 ♔g4 ♗xe1**. Meanwhile White to move can play **1 ♖xe6!** winning a pawn for if **1...fxe6 2 ♗xe6+ ♔g7 3 ♗xa2** he has regained his rook and is two pawns up.

Double Attack by the rook
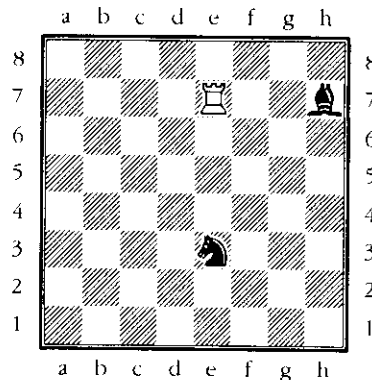
The rook attacks the bishop and knight. They can't help each other so next move one of the pieces will be captured.
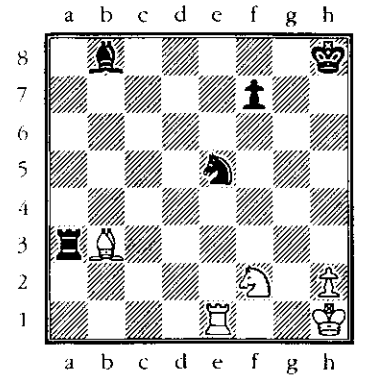
White to move could try **1 ♗xf7?** with the idea of 1...♘xf7? 2 ♖e8+ ♔g7 3 ♖xb8 winning back the piece with the bonus of an extra pawn. However, Black can reply **1...♖f3!** with a double attack on the bishop and knight. Then Black wins a piece.

Pawn Fork

The pawn is the humblest unit on the chessboard. For this reason the queen doesn't relish becoming embroiled with advancing enemy pawns at close quarters. In such a case her very strength may be a weakness as she must always run from the attack: she can never stand and fight and risk being exchanged for a mere pawn or two.
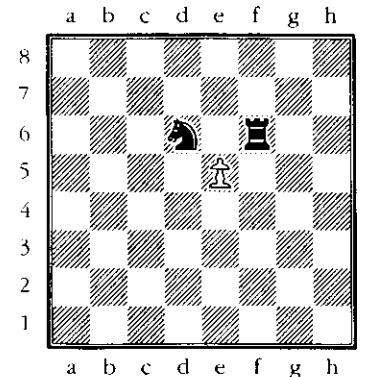
The white pawn embarrasses its superiors! Despite their general advantage over the pawn neither rook nor knight is designed to cope with this sort of diagonal attack except by running away. As both pieces cannot be moved at the same time, Black can only cut his losses by moving the rook and losing the knight.
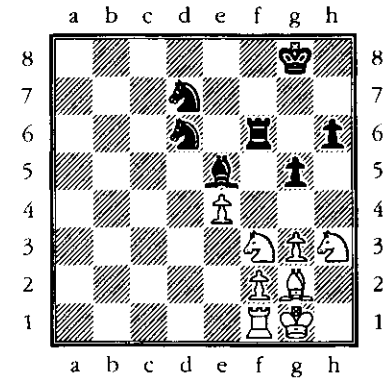
Black has ideas of 1...g4 but White gets in first with 1 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 2 f4! gxf4 3 gxf4 ♘ec4—nothing else helps—4 e5 and the pawn wins a piece thanks to the fork of the knight and rook.

U.Von Herman - M.Stangl
Bundesliga, Germany 2001
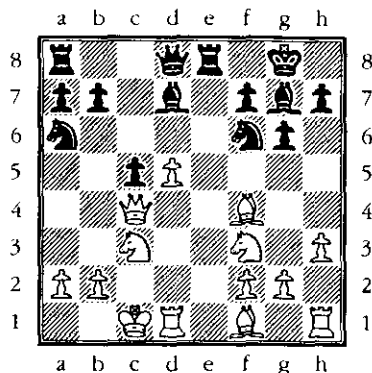
White to play

White innocently played **13 ♗e2?** but was hit by **13...b5!**

14 ♕b3

If 14 ♘xb5 ♖e4! with a double attack on the queen and bishop.

14...c4

The pawns close in on the white queen.

15 ♕a3

No better is 15 ♕c2 b4 16 ♘b1 b3 17 axb3 cxb3 18 ♕d3 ♖c8+ 19 ♘c3 ♘b4 20 ♕d2 ♘e4 and there will be a frightful massacre after 21...♘xc3.

15...♕b6

White resigned as 16...b4 will be a fatal fork. It doesn't help to play 16 ♕d6 as 16...b4 wins a piece anyway because the bishop on e2 will be hanging if the knight moves from c3.

We see that the white knight always had a vital function on c3: at

move 14, it was to guard the e4 square against ♖e4; and from move 15 onwards to keep the bishop on e2 defended. Therefore it could never retreat, no matter how hard pressed; this made it an easy target for an attack by the b pawn. The fact that the white queen (and king!) were also vulnerable made the win simple.

Next is a gruesome example of a pawn fork that never actually happened!

N.McDonald - I.Nataf
Paris-London match 1994
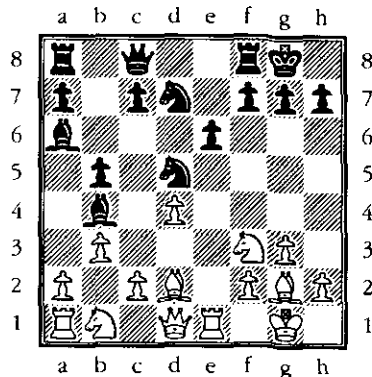
Black to play

Black played **13...c5??** when **14 c3! ♗a5 15 dxc5** left him facing a pawn fork after 15...♘xc5 16 b4. So he tried to escape with **15...b4 16 c4 ♘5f6**. Now he is ready to play 17...♘xc5 with a good game, but **17 a3!** scotched that idea. There followed **17...♖b8 18 ♘d4! ♕xc5 19 ♘c6** winning the battle for the b4 square. **19...♖bc8**
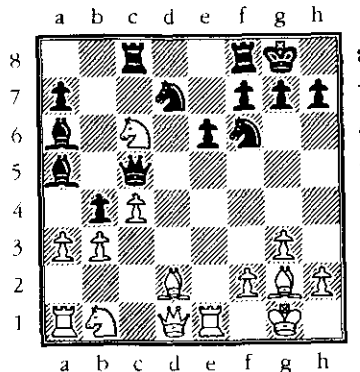
Here the pawn fork 20 axb4 wins, but **20 ♗e3!** was the cleanest way to decide the game and in fact Black immediately resigned. The queen only has two moves: 20...♕f5 21 ♘e7+ loses it, while 20...♕h5 21 ♕xh5 ♘xh5 22 ♘xa5 or 22 axb4 win a lot of material with the exchange of queens having taken away from Black any last swindle chances.

In the following game the double attack is as it were 'split in half': two pawns each attack one piece.

Xu Hanbing - C.Trajber
Balatontourist Open 2000

1 ♘f3 d5 2 d4 ♘f6 3 c4 g6 4 ♘c3 ♗g7 5 ♕b3 dxc4 6 ♕xc4 0-0 7 e4 a6 8 e5 b5 9 ♕b3 ♗e6?
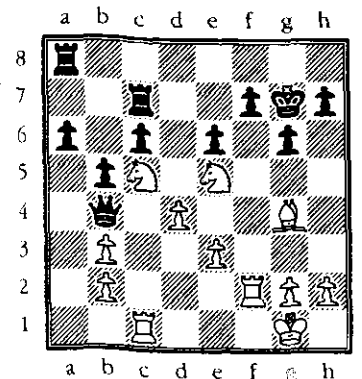
It is possible that Black deliberately went into the line of play in the game, in which case the error belongs in the realms of faulty positional judgement as much as in a book on tactics. However, more likely he intended the bishop move as a zwischenzug to gain time by attacking White's queen before

moving his knight to safety. In that case White's reply must have been a shock.
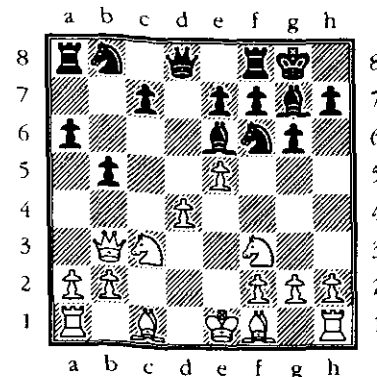
10 exf6! ♗xb3 11 fxg7

The point: White picks up a third piece for the queen as there is a double attack on b3 and f8. After 11...♔xg7 12 axb3 Black had a queen and pawn for the three pieces, but the three pieces proved more valuable, especially after some poor defending by Black. The game finished: **12...♘c6 13 ♗e3 ♘b4 14 ♖c1 ♘d5 15 ♗e2 ♕d6 16 0-0 c6 17 ♘e4 ♕e6 18 ♘c5 ♕d6 19 ♘e4 ♕e6 20 ♘c5 ♕d6 21 ♘e5 ♖fc8 22 ♗g4 ♖c7 23 ♘e4 ♕b4 24 ♘c5 ♘xe3 25 fxe3 e6 26 ♖f2!**

A clever move. It appears that White is preparing to double rooks with 27 ♖cf1 to attack f7—which would be quite sufficient to win in the long run—but in fact he is plotting an instant win by taking the d2 square away from the black queen.

26...h5?

The only move was 26...♕a5.

27 ♖a1! 1-0

The black queen is trapped and will be lost to 28 ♘ed3.

Next is a gruesome example of discovered/double attack. It also shows that not every zwischenzug is a good idea. The victim was rated 2450.

G.Mohr - M.Zube
Nuremberg Open 1989

1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘c6 3 ♘f3 f5 4 d4 e4 5 ♗g5

This appears to be a useful zwischenzug, but it paves the way for a fatal blunder.

5...♘f6 6 d5?

Rather than move the knight White counterattacks.

6...exf3 7 dxc6 fxg2 8 cxd7+

White would be a pawn down for nothing after 8 ♗xg2 bxc6. Of course, after Black's reply he might well have wished he had played this...
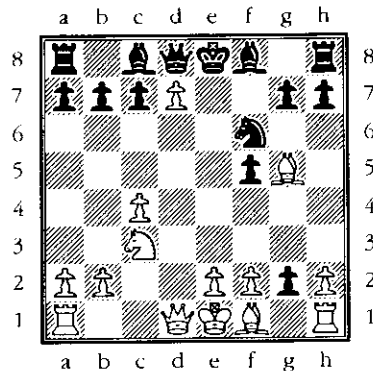
Now chances are equal after 8...♕xd7 9 ♕xd7+ ♗xd7 10 ♗xg2, but instead there came:

8...♘xd7!! 0-1

A very nasty surprise.

If White had considered this method of recapture for five seconds he wouldn't have fallen for the trap. Of course, he didn't even look at it for one second: the knight is pinned and besides no one ever recaptures in this way!

The unexpected double attack means that White is a piece down after 9 ♗xg2 ♕xg5 or a rook after 9 ♗xd8 gxh1=♕.

White also fell for this trap in Razuvaev-Kupreichik, Dubna 1970 and Doroshkevich-Tukmakov, Riga 1970. Such is the danger of routine thinking. When engaging in any operation that involves 'close combat' with the opponent's forces, it is essential to calculate variations rather than rely on general principles.

E.Bareev - P.Leko
NAO Masters, Cannes 2002
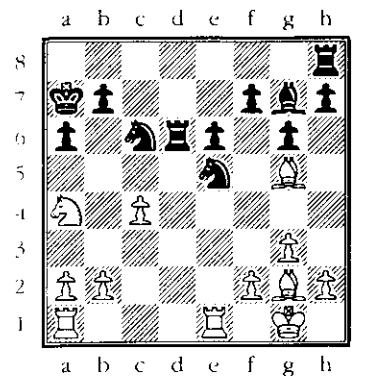
White to play

After **20 ♖ed1** Leko didn't want to give away control of the d file and so played **20...♘d4**. He had calculated that, after 21 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 22 ♗e3 pinning his rook, he could play 22...♘xc4 when his bishop defends the rook and he has won a pawn. Or similarly 21 ♗e3 ♘xc4 wins a pawn.

However, disaster struck from an unexpected direction: **21 ♗e7!** using the square left undefended by 20...♘d4.
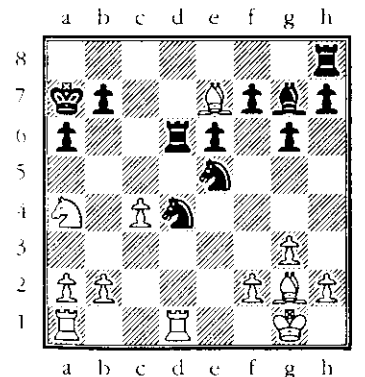
If 21...♖d7 22 ♗c5+ wins a piece while if 21...♘e2+ 22 ♔f1 ♖xd1+ 23 ♖xd1 and the knight is trapped on e2. Leko tried giving up the exchange, but he lost very quickly: **21...♘xc4 22 ♗xd6 ♘xd6 23 ♔f1 e5 24 ♖ac1 ♖d8 25 ♖c5 ♔b8 26 ♖d5 ♔c7 27 ♘c5 ♖e8?! 28 ♖c1 ♗h6 29 ♘xa6+ 1-0** It's not worth investigating 29...♔d7 30 ♖c7+ ♔e6 31 ♘c5+ ♔f5 32 ♖xd6.

A double attack by a rook features strongly in the next game, but it's worth repeating that to make a successful combination you normally have to combine more than one tactical idea. In fact the game is bristling with tactical themes from both sides: trapping pieces, double attack and forking.

E.Repkova - B.Kelly
Wroxham Masters 2002
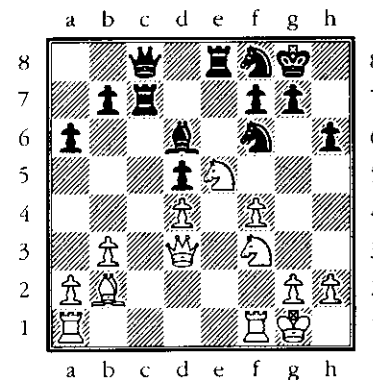
Black to play

After **20...♘e4** Black threatens to trap the white knight with 21...f6. It

is awkward having to secure a retreat square—for example 21 ♕d1 f6 22 ♘d3 ♘g6 and White has the unappealing choice between 23 g3 (when 23...♕h3 looks dangerous) and wholesale grovelling with 23 ♘fe1. Not liking this much White tried a combinative approach:

21 ♖ae1?

Even so, it was better to endure the inconveniences of the note above than to lose material.

21...f6 22 ♔h1

So that if 22...fxe5? 23 dxe5 ♗e7 (Note that if White hadn't played 22 ♔h1 then 22...♗c5 calling check! would win for Black.) 24 ♕xd5+ regains the knight on e4 leaving White two pawns up.

22....♖c2!

The trouble for White is that Black doesn't have to take the knight immediately. The move 22 ♔h1, which was essential to make White's combination work after 22...fxe5, proves to be fatally flawed after the game move. White cannot defend the bishop on b2 and at the same time cover f2. After 23 ♖e2 ♖xe2 24 ♕xe2 Black can happily pocket the knight with 24...fxe5.

23 ♘c4!?
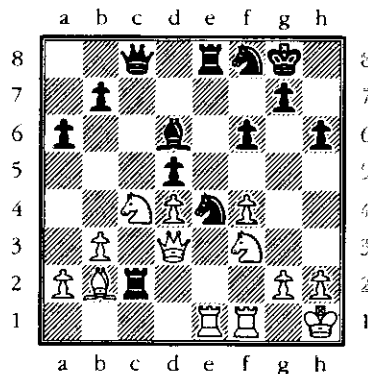
An ingenious attempt to st[a] alive. White defends the bisho[p] attacks the rook on c2 by cutting o[ff] the defence from the queen a[nd] hopes to bluff Black out of checki[ng] on f2 by threatening ♘xd6 shou[ld] the black knight leave e4.

23...♘f2+!

Black isn't hoodwinked. He h[as] calculated that he will have the la[st] laugh with a double attack. Th[e] moves that follow are forced.

24 ♖xf2 ♖xe1+ 25 ♘xe1 ♖xf2 [26] ♘xd6 ♕e6!

Now Black can't defend both [d6] and e1.

27 ♗c3 ♕xd6 0-1

A simplified position th[at] exchange down with no activity [is] resignable in international ches[s.] Besides, next move either the a2 [or] f4 pawns will drop.

6 Double Attacks by Rook, Bishop and Pawn Puzzles
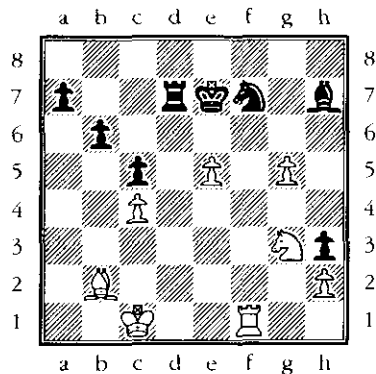
1
V.Anand - A.Morozevich
Dortmund 2001

How did Morozevich capitalise on his pressure along the c file? One move proved enough!
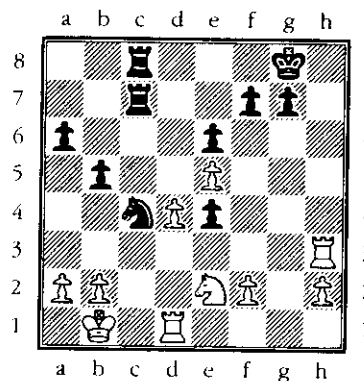
2
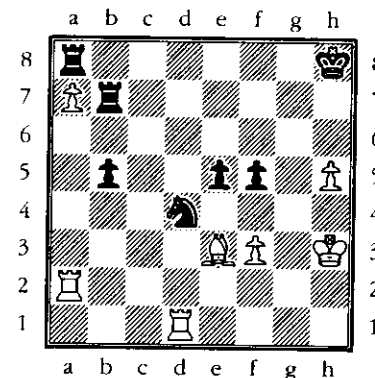
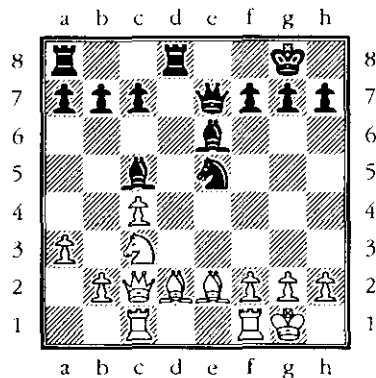Can Black to move safely capture the passed pawn on a7?

3

White to play
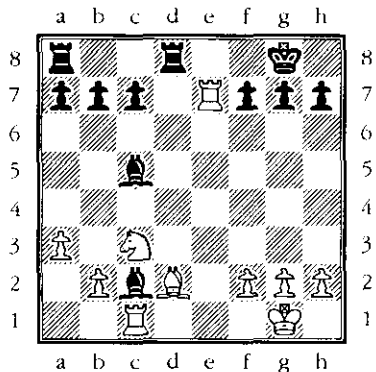
How can White exploit his passed pawns?

4

M.Deffontaine - S.Bry
Bethune Open 2001

Black to play

Black grabbed a pawn with 15...♘xc4 16 ♗xc4 ♗xc4. Then after 17 ♖fe1 Black's queen was attacked and both his bishops loosely placed, so he played 17...♗d3 18 ♖xe7 ♗xc2. Now
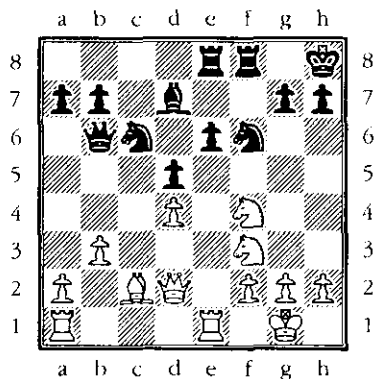
Black has a bishop en prise, but things seem far worse for White as he has both a rook and bishop attacked.

Can he escape with **19 ♖xc7**, getting the pawn back?

5

S.Vokarev - G.Prakken
Ubeda Open 2000

Black to play

Black sought to free his game with 17...♘xd4 18 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 19 ♘xd4 e5. Now after 20 ♘fe6 ♗xe6 21 ♖xe5 ♗d7 he held the draw in the game Vallejo Pons- I.Farago, St. Vincent 1998. Can you do better?

7 Pins

If you have played through the terrible deeds of the knight in the first chapter, it won't surprise you to learn that the great masters of the late 19th century, such as Pillsbury and Chigorin, believed that knights were more valuable than bishops. In those days positional and defensive technique were on a much lower level so it was no wonder that the maverick knight had a lot more opportunity to do damage than the 'steady' bishop.

These days both pieces are roughly estimated at being worth 3 points or pawns, but no expert ever gives the nod to the knight: the bishop is regarded as very slightly, but definitely, the superior piece.

This decline in the value of the knight compared to the bishop should also take place in a player's personal chess development. I can remember some unforgettable moments from my early chess history in which a knight fork either won me a glorious victory or, more frequently, destroyed my position. The bishop was rarely involved in such dramatic moments. None the less, once a player feels he understands chess logic and becomes resistant to forks by the strange-moving knight, he starts to appreciate the long term pressure that the bishop can give. Already

after the moves 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 the bishop is harassing the knight in a way which the knight can never return: namely a **pin**. This example is very mildly irritating for Black: much nastier things await the pinned player in this chapter! Although queen and rook can also pin, I have mainly concentrated on pins by the bishop in this chapter. We'll begin with some definitions.

Roughly speaking, a pin involves attacking a piece that can't run away from the attack without allowing the capture of a more important piece that is sheltering behind it on the same line.
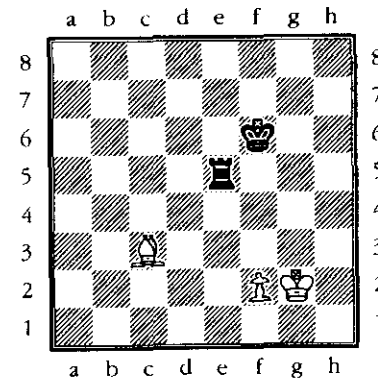
The black rook is attacked but cannot move to safety as then the black king would be attacked. The rook is therefore said to be pinned by the bishop against the king.

White to move could win the exchange with 1 ♗xe5+, but even better would be 1 **f4**, exploiting the pin to win the rook for nothing next move by 2 ♗xe5.

The bishop, queen and rook are all capable of pinning a piece. The example above is of a diagonal pin by a bishop. Here is a lateral pin by the rook.
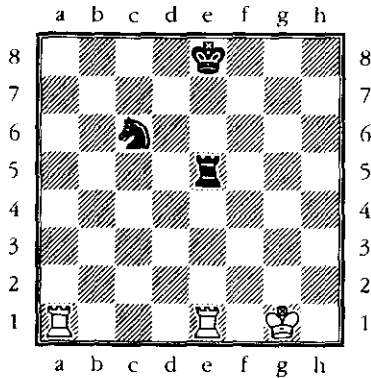
White sets up a pin with the exchange 1 ♖xe5+ ♘xe5 and now 2 ♖e1 pins the knight against the king. Note that the pin prevents Black playing 2...♘f3+ because Black would be in check before White!

Two important additions need to be made to the definition of a pin above. Firstly, a piece can be pinned against an important square as well as a more valuable piece. For example:
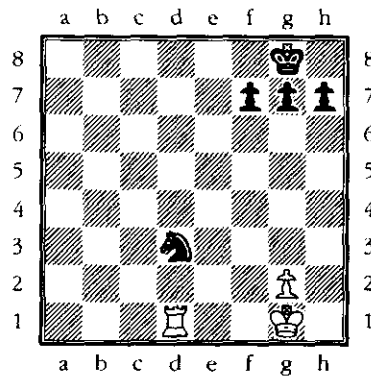
If the black knight moves no piece behind it will be lost, but 2 ♖d8 will be mate. In effect, the knight is pinned against the d8 square, though curiously the word 'pin' is not used in these situations. Instead in this specific example authors would come up with some fudge about the knight 'not daring to move because of the weak back rank'.

The second point is that only a piece pinned against the king is paralysed. Take the following example:
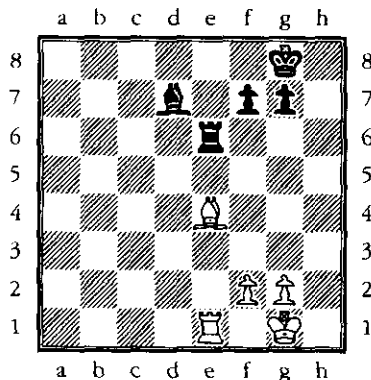
It is Black to play. There is a pin on the e file, but if 1...f5, the pin changes hands and becomes a diagonal pin: 2 ♗d5! Therefore Black has to tread more carefully with 1...♗c6! and only after 2 f3 f5 Now with d5 defended the pin holds firm and White has to give away the exchange with 3 ♗xc6 ♖xe1+.

Pins occur fairly often in games; in fact they play a part in almost any strategy. I recall GM Julian Hodgson telling me about one of his games with a French amateur which began 1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 c6 4 f4 ♕a5. The idea of Black's queen foray is to slow down White's attacking build up by forcing him to defend his e pawn. White, however, completely missed the point and continued developing with 5 ♘f3? and after 5...♘xe4 immediately resigned in disgust at blundering his pawn. So Black's positional move became a trap because of White's reply. After the game Hodgson suggested that White could utilise a counter pin of his own with 6 ♗d3 ♘xc3 7 ♕d2!? followed by 8 bxc3 with some open lines as compensation for the pawn. Hodgson then stated that he might consider playing this sacrifice as White in a future game! Whether this comment was based on an objective appraisal of the position or designed to annoy his opponent I'll let the reader judge for himself.

If the pinned piece is supported by a pawn the pin is often harmless or only slightly irritating. In this chapter we look at the more deadly of the species.

P. Carton - G.Crawley
GLC Masters, London 1986
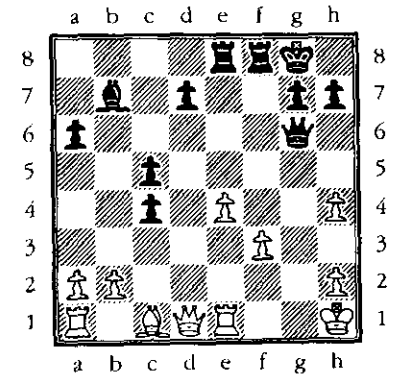
Black to play

Here a crowd of spectators gathered when Black sacrificed his rook with

22...♖xf3!? 23 ♕xf3 ♖e4

I was one of these onlookers, and as I waited for White to move I tried to work out what Crawley had planned against 24 ♗e3. The pin on b7 is awkward: Black cannot play 24...♖xe3 as 25 ♕xb7 just leaves White a rook up. So maybe he intended 24...♕g4 hoping for 25 ♕xg4 ♖xg4 mate, but I couldn't see a decisive move after 26 ♕g2. Crawley's quiet move took me completely by surprise.

24 ♗e3 ♗c6!!

A fantastic move, after which the pin on the long diagonal changes hands. Black doesn't need to hurry the attack as White's king and queen cannot escape from the deadly diagonal.

25 h5

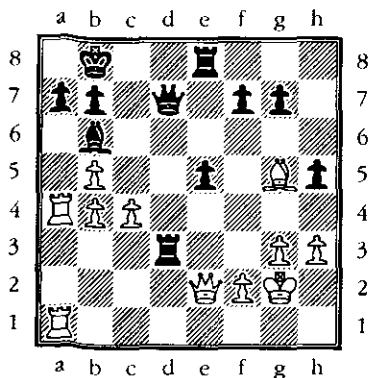White has no answer to the threats.

25...♖g4!

Spectacular, but the queen offer isn't as hard to find as 24...♗c6!!.

26 ♖f1

Of course 26 ♕xc6 ♕xc6 mates.

26...♕f6! 0-1

M.Adams - J.Lautier
Biel 1991

White to play

As yet there is no pin in sight, but such is White's pressure that two mighty pins suddenly appear. Here Adams played **27 c5** which looks (and is!) crushing. If Black retreats his bishop then the white rook comes crashing through on a7. So Lautier tried one last throw of the dice with **27...♕xb5** hoping for 28 cxb6?? ♖xg3+ (discovered attack on the queen!) 29 ♔f1 (here a little knowledge is a dangerous thing as if White hadn't seen he could defend his queen in this manner he wouldn't fall for the trap!) 29...♖g1+! (deflecting the white king from the defence of the queen.). Instead Adams played the simple **28 ♔h2!** and suddenly the black queen and rook on d3 were in a nasty pin. After **28...♗c7 29 ♖xa7 ♔c8 30 ♖a8+ ♗b8** it was pin number two.
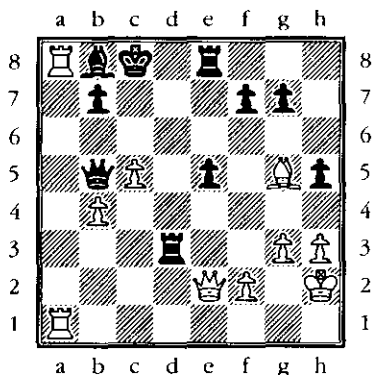
The question is how can White combine the power of these two pins? He did so with **31 ♖d1!** when **Black resigned** for if 31...e4 32 ♗f4! when in relieving one pin Black has fallen prey to another.

N.McDonald - J.Naylor
Maidstone v. Lewisham,
County Final, 2002
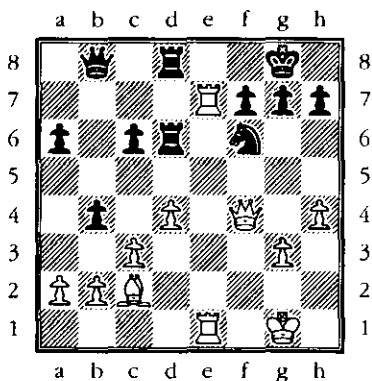
White to play

With his next couple of moves White set up a decisive pin.

33 ♗b3! ♖f8

The only other way to defend f7 was by blocking out the bishop with 33...♘d5, but this allows 34 ♕xf7+ and mate next move.

34 ♖xf7! ♖xf7 35 ♖e7

Black has no good way to support his rook on f7. If 35...♘d5 36 ♕xf7+ or 35...♖d5 36 ♕xb8+.

35...♕d8

If 35...♔h8 36 ♖xf7 h6 37 ♖xf6! gxf6 (37...♖xf6 38 ♕xb8+) 38 ♕xh6 mate.
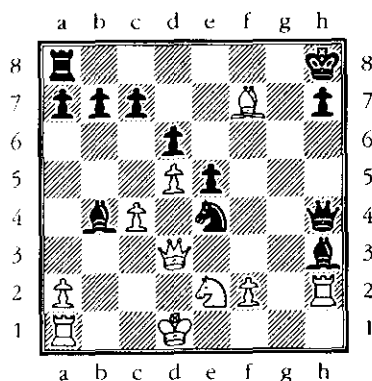
36 ♖xf7

Being a pawn down is the least of Black's worries since his king is facing a winning attack.

36...♔h8 37 ♕g5 g6 38 ♕h6 1-0

If 38...♕g8 White has 39 ♖f8 or 39 ♖xf6 uncovering an attack on the black queen.

Z.Gyimesi - A.Shirov
FIDE World Championship,
Moscow 2001

White to play

This example will remind us that no pin, apart from that on the king, is absolute.

Black's bishop is pinned against the queen, but there is a knight fork on f2 if he takes it straight away. Gyimesi may have reasoned as follows:

'The bishop won't run away—I'll play 25 ♖b1, attacking the other bishop and bring my rook into the game—perhaps even 26 ♖b3 to add to the attack on the pinned bishop. If 25...♘xf2+ 26 ♖xf2 ♕xf2 27 ♖xb4 ♕xf7 28 ♕xh3 and White has a piece for three pawns, with unclear play.'

Unfortunately for White the bishop did run away after **25 ♖b1 ♗f5!!**
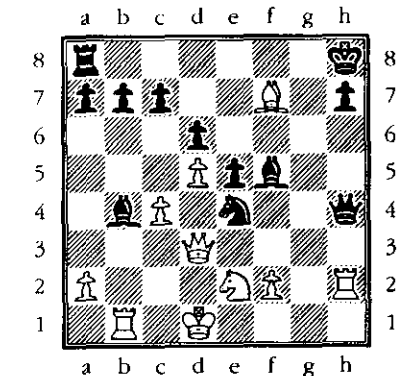
26 ♕f3

If 26 ♖xh4 ♘xf2+ 27 ♔c2 (it is fatal that the rook on b1 can always be attacked by the bishop on f5, for example 27 ♔c1 ♘xd3+ 28 ♔d1 ♘f2+) 27...♗xd3+ 28 ♔b3 ♗xb1 29 ♔xb4 and White emerges three pawns down.

26...♕g5

Black has freed himself from the pin and now has a decisive attack against White's king. The immediate threat is 27...♕d2 mate.

27 ♖b2
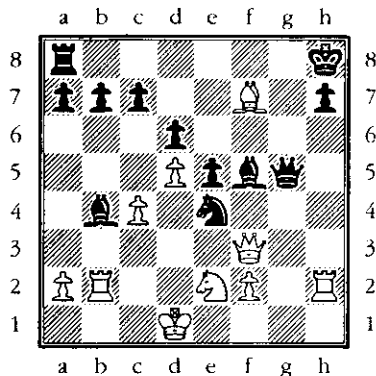
27...♘c3+! 28 ♔e1

If 28 ♘xc3 ♗g4 would be a great revenge for the bishop—in contrast to White's pin in the diagram this pin is absolute as it is on the white king.

28...♘xe2+ 29 ♖xb4 ♘d4! 0-1

As 30 ♕c3 (or 30 ♕g3 ♕c1 mate) 30...♕g1+ wins the rook.

In the following example, White's last move 13 ♕d3? was an outright blunder which allowed 13...♘xb4!. If now 14 axb4 ♖xc3! (not 14...♗xb4 15 ♗d2) when 15 ♕xc3 ♗xb4 wins White's queen.

C.Duncan - N.McDonald
St Peter's De Beauvoir tournament,
London 1995
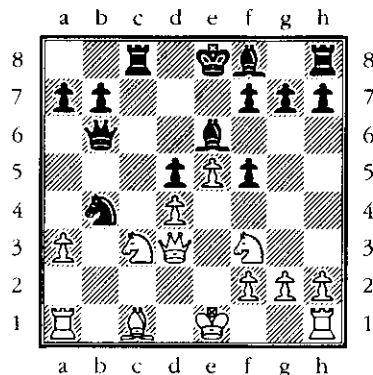
White to play

14 ♕d2 ♕a6!

An essential move serving many purposes: it stops White from castling, pins the a3 pawn so that 15 axb4 is impossible, and prepares 15...♘d3+. If Black had just been satisfied being a pawn up and played 14...♘c6, then 15 0-0 would allow White to put up a hard fight.
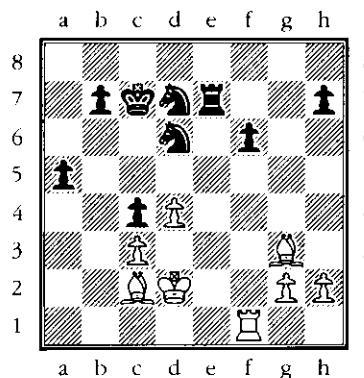
15 ♗b2

Also hopeless is 15 ♘e2 ♘c2+.

15...♘d3+ 16 ♔d1 ♘xb2+ 17 ♕xb2 ♕d3+ 0-1

The double attack on the king and c3 wins a piece.

S.Agdestein - A.Shirov
Bergen 2001

White to play

The black knight on d6 is very unpleasantly pinned against the king by the bishop. It is necessary to increase the pressure and Agdestein brought the rook into the attack by:

30 ♖f5! ♔c6

If 30...b5 31 ♖d5 ♖e6 32 ♗f5! and every white piece is joining in the struggle to exploit the pin on d6, including the light-squared bishop: this piece doesn't even know that the d6 square exists but it is playing a vital subsidiary role in attacking the black rook. Black's position would immediately collapse.

31 ♗a4+! ♔c7

The king retreats unwillingly back into the pin, though at least with the consolation that if now 32 ♖d5 he has 32...♖e6 without worrying about 33 ♗f5. If instead 31...b5 then 32 ♗xd6 ♔xd6 33 ♗xb5 leaves Black in a horrible endgame with all his pawns isolated and sickly.

32 ♖c5+!
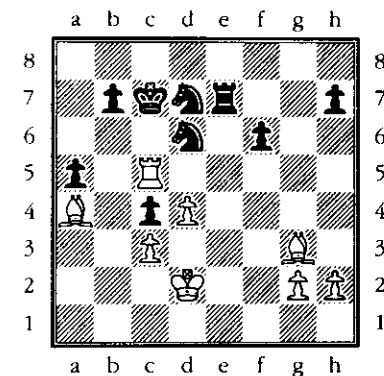
A clever move that wins the pinned piece.

32...♘xc5 33 dxc5 ♖g7 34 cxd6+ ♔d8 35 ♔e3 ♖g5 36 ♗h4 ♖e5+ 37 ♔d4 ♖e6 38 ♔c5 b6+ 39 ♔d5 and White, with a dominant king and a lethal pair of bishops, won easily in the endgame.

We all have an opponent that we just can't ever seem to get a decent result against, even if he or she is of about the same playing strength. At the time of writing, the most famous example is the lop-sided score between Kasparov and Shirov. Even those who claim that Kasparov is the greatest player of all time must surely admit that 15 wins to nil in his favour with 12 draws is a bizarrely one sided score.

At a slightly lower level, despite a very similar rating, Viktor Bologan has lost to Joel Lautier in all six of their games, including three consecutive Olympiads—in 1992, 1994 and 1996. Not surprisingly, Bologan seems to have become disheartened by this long string of failures. Here is their fourth encounter:
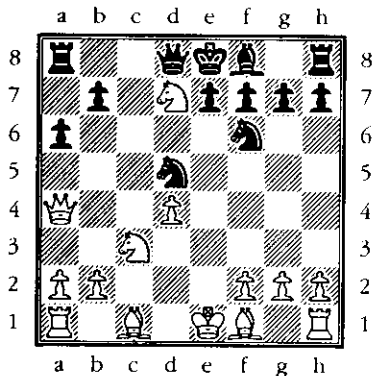
J.Lautier - V.Bologan
Enghien-les-Bains 1999

1 c4 c6 2 e4 d5 3 cxd5 cxd5 4 exd5 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 ♘bd7 6 ♘f3 a6 7 d4 ♘b6 8 ♘e5!?

Black would have a safe game with 8...g6, but Bologan couldn't see why he shouldn't recapture the pawn straight away:

8...♘bxd5?? 9 ♕a4+! ♗d7

Hopeless is 9...b5 10 ♗xb5+ axb5 11 ♕xa8.

10 ♘xd7

1-0

Black has no choice but to resign for if 10...♕xd7 11 ♗b5 axb5 12 ♕xa8+ wins the exchange.

In the next game, White is a pawn up but after his last move 31...♘e5 Black appears to have a fighting chance: the white bishop on c4 is hanging and he is ready to play ♗c6 attacking f3. Many players would play 32 ♗e2 to ward off both threats. Instead Agdestein found a way to completely upset Black's position:
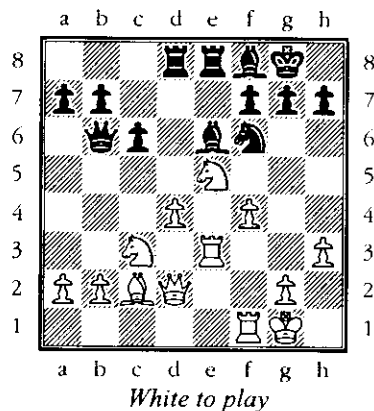
S.Agdestein - S.Knott
4NCL, Birmingham 2002

White to play
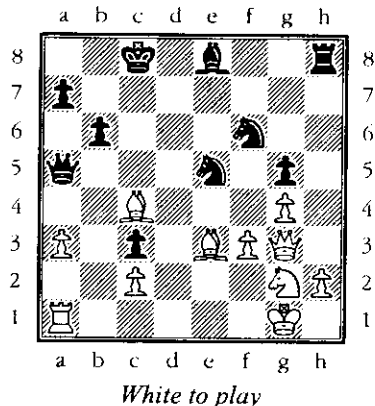
32 ♗a6+! ♔b8

Walking into a fatal pin, but if 32...♕xa6 33 ♕xe5 ♖f8 34 ♗xg5 ♘d7 35 ♕xc3+ and White is three pawns up. Meanwhile if 32...♔d8 33 ♖d1+ ♔e7 34 ♗d4 and Black's king is facing a lethal attack.

33 ♗d4! ♘fd7 34 ♖e1 1-0

The knight on e5 is in a double pin, which becomes a double attack after 34...♕xa6 35 ♗xe5+ ♘xe5 36 ♕xe5+.

F.Castaldo - I.Rogers
Saint Vincent 2001

White to play

White now played **18 f5** attacking the bishop. This sets a nice trap for if 18...♖xd4? counter-attacking the queen, then 19 fxe6! ♖xd2 20 exf7+ ♔h8 21 fxe8=♕ ♕xe3+ 22 ♔h1 wins as if 22...♘xe8?! 23 ♖xf8 mate. Black could just move his bishop, say to d5, but Rogers found something much better that exploited the power of a pin:

18...♗xa2! 19 ♘xa2 ♖xd4 20 ♕f2

The queen walks into a pin, as otherwise a piece will drop due to a potential discovered check, e.g. 20 ♕c3 ♖xe5 21 ♖xe5 ♖d3+ or 20 ♕e2 ♖xe5 21 ♖xe5 ♖d2+.

20...♗c5!

Now the white king, queen and rook cannot all be evacuated from the diagonal in time. The immediate threat is 21...♖xe5! 22 ♖xe5 ♖d5! winning the queen.

21 ♔h1

If 21 b4 ♖xb4!.

21...♖dd8!

A decisive retreat.

22 ♘c4 ♗xe3 23 ♕f3 ♕b5!

White resigned as if 24 ♘xe3 ♖xe3 25 ♕xe3 ♕xf1+.

V.Anand - Fritz 6
Siemens Man-Machine re-match, Frankfurt 1999
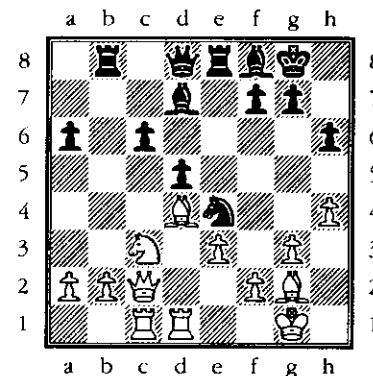
Black to play

Here Fritz to move won the first 'battle of the pins' after

20...c5! 21 ♘xe4

Or else the bishop is trapped.

21...cxd4 22 ♖xd4

The only chance as 22 ♘c5 dxe3 looks horrible for White.

22...♗f5 23 ♖cd1 ♕e7!

Winning a piece, but White can still put up a tough resistance in the endgame.

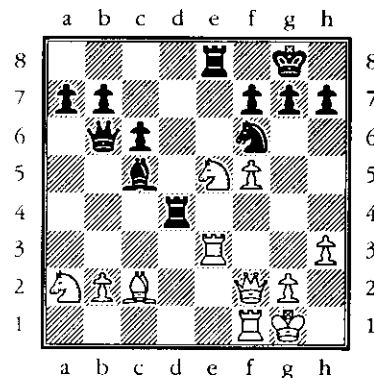**24 ♖xd5 ♗xe4 25 ♗xe4 ♕xe4 26 ♕xe4 ♖xe4 27 ♖1d2 a5 28 b3 a4 29 bxa4 ♖xa4 30 ♖c2 ♗a3 31 ♖d7 ♗b2 32 ♔g2**

White has two pawns for the piece and can hope for a draw after, say, 32...♗f6 33 ♖dc2 but Fritz's next move simplified his task considerably.

A computer can work out variations to an astounding depth, but it can no more understand tactical themes than it can understand strategical themes. Thus when it could calculate everything at move 20 above it made a precise combination to win a piece. But here, with judgement to the fore rather than calculation, it played **32...♖xa2?** when **33 ♖dd2** pinned the bishop for eternity. The bishop could be freed if somehow the black king got to c3, but of course it can never cross the d file if White keeps his rook stationed there. At this point its human controllers pulled the plug on Fritz and gave Anand a draw

The next four games are by Kasparov and all feature lateral pins by a rook.

G.Kasparov - B.Gelfand
Novgorod 1997
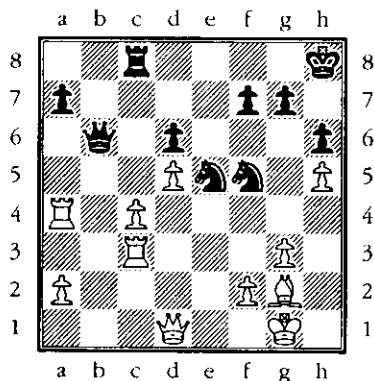
Black to play

Black is the exchange and a pawn down, but at least he thought he could count on some dark square control after **35...♘d4**. Alas, this turned out to be a mirage after **36 c5!** cutting off the defence of the knight as 36...dxc5 fails to 37 ♖xd4 with a pin on the c file. The game ended **36...♖xc5 37 ♕xd4 1-0**

V.Anand - G.Kasparov
Linares 1997
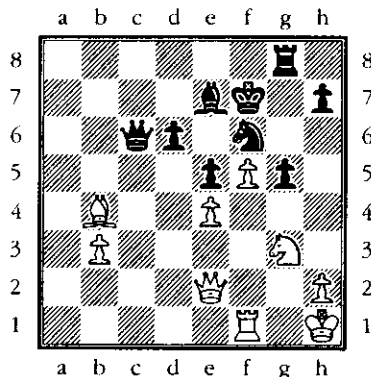
Black to play

White's centre is looking fragile so dynamic play is called for.

38...h5!

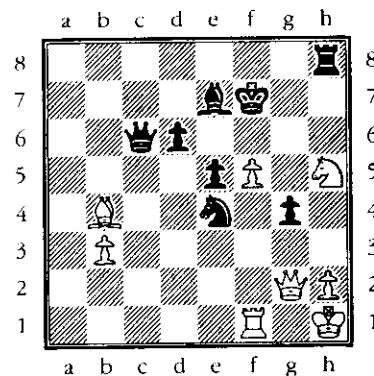Threatening to win the e4 pawn with 39...h4 40 ♘h5 ♘xe4.

39 ♘xh5

Losing without much of a fight, though admittedly the alternative 39 ♖e1 g4 leaves White tied up.
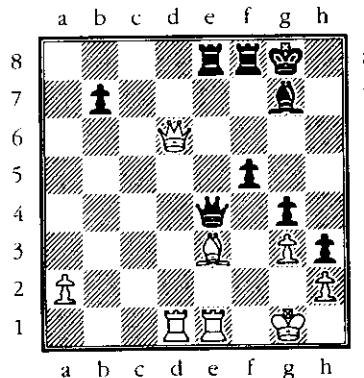
39...♘xe4 40 ♕f3

White had relied on this pin to save him, but after

40... g4 41 ♕g2 ♖h8!

...he resigned. The knight has only one retreat and the problem is that after **42 ♘g3 ♘xg3+** White can neither recapture with the h pawn, which is pinned frontally by the rook, nor with the queen as it is pinned diagonally by Black's queen.

A.Shirov - G.Kasparov
Linares 1997

White to play

Threatened with mate on g2, White rushed to exchange queens with 33 ♕d5+ ♕xd5 34 ♖xd5. However, he now falls into a gruesome pin.
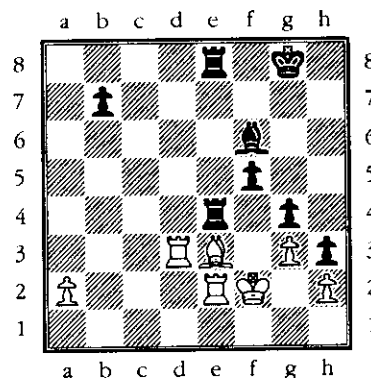
34...♗c3!

It is essential to prevent White freeing himself with 35 ♗d2 or 35 ♗f2.

35 ♖e2 ♖e4

The next step is to double the rooks against the paralysed bishop.

36 ♔f2 ♖fe8 37 ♖d3 ♗f6

White is completely tied up.

a) 38 ♖e1 f4! 39 gxf4 ♗h4+ and the skewer wins a rook.

b) 38 ♖c2 ♖xe3 39 ♖xe3 ♗d4 and after 40 ♖ce2 Black could simply play his king to g5 then play f5-f4 and, after g3xf4+ ♔xf4, winning the a-rook. If 40 ♖cc3 there is an elegant breakthrough on the kingside: 40...♖xe3 41 ♖xe3 f4! 42 gxf4 ♗xe3+ 43 ♔xe3 (the endgame is lost after 43 ♔g3 ♗g1 44 ♔xg4 ♗xh2 45 ♔xh3 ♗xf4) 43...g3 and a pawn will queen.

In the game Shirov played **38 Red2** but resigned after **38...Rxe3**. There could follow
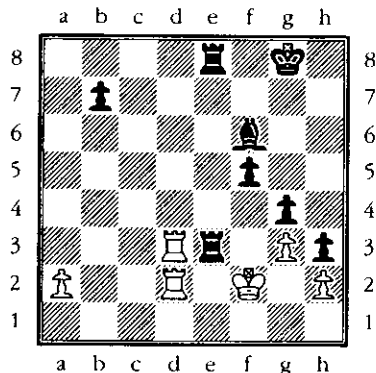
39 Rxe3 Rxe3 40 ♔xe3 ♗g5+ the skewer again 41 ♔e2 ♗xd2 42 ♔xd2 f4! 43 gxf4 (or 43 ♔e2 fxg3 44 hxg3 h2) 43...g3 and soon Black will have another queen.

G.Kasparov - P.Leko
Fujitsu Siemens Giants,
Frankfurt 2000
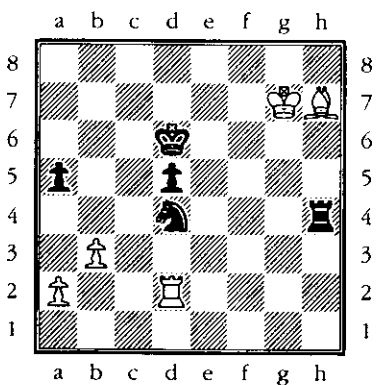
White to play

The world Number One wasn't so fortunate in the next example. Here Leko has the better of it as White's

king is a long way from the black passed pawn. Still, it doesn't seem much and a long hard fight is in prospect. Instead the game only lasted another two moves: such is the power of a pin!

46 ♗d3? ♘e6+ 47 ♔f6

Instead the king could have gone to g8, but then it would be so far away from the passed pawn that Black would have good winning chances.

47...Rf4+! and White resigned.

The only square for the king is g6, but after 48 ♔g6 the pin 48...Rd4 is fatal.

White has no time to unpin his rook with 49 Rd1, intending 50 ♗c2 or 50 ♗e2, as Black has 49...♘f4 — with check! — winning the bishop. It turns out 46 ♗d3 was a big blunder: instead 46 ♗g6, for example, should draw.

P.Broutin - A. De Boer
Bethune Open 2001
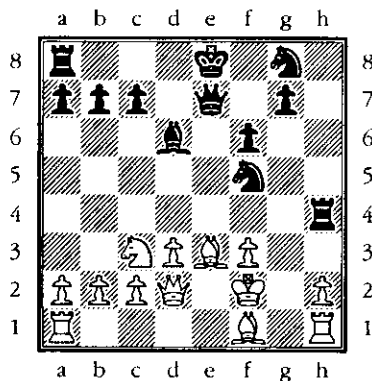
White to play

Black has some pieces on impressive squares on the kingside and the h2 pawn is under attack. There being no good way to defend it, White played **14 Re1**. This introduces a potential pin on Black's queen and king.

Black embarked on an unsound combination.

14...Rxh2+?

He should have been fearless of the pin and captured the other way: 14...♗xh2 15 ♗f4 ♗xf4! 16 Rxe7+ ♘fxe7 (Here 16...♘gxe7? is incredibly natural, developing the piece; the problem is that after 17 Rxh4 ♗xd2 18 Rh8+ White loses the rook on a8 to a skewer. That's why Black has to keep the knight on g8.) 17 ♕e1 Rxh1—Now Black has a rook and two pieces for the queen and much the better chances, though White has a lot of play after 18 ♕e4 g5 19 ♕xb7.

15 Rxh2 ♗g3+

If 15...♗xh2 16 ♗f4 wins the queen, but after the game move White had prepared
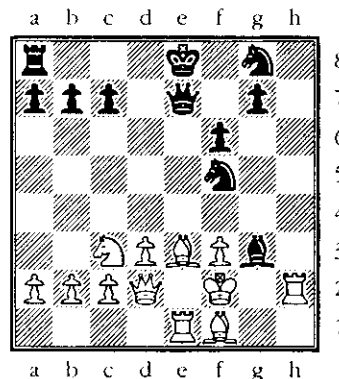
16 ♔g1!

A simple move, but it refutes Black's combination. Instead 16 ♔e2 ♘xe3 17 ♕xe3 ♕xe3+ 18 ♔xe3 ♗xe1 looks equal.

16...0-0-0

Perhaps Black had forgotten that on 16...♗xe1 17 ♕xe1 ♕xe3+ (or 17...♘xe3 18 Re2) 18 ♕xe3+ ♘xe3 the rook can swing over to the e file: 19 Re2! and Black is in a fatal pin.

17 ♗f2 ♗xh2+ 18 ♔xh2

White now has an extra piece.

18...♕d6+ 19 ♔g1 ♘d4 20 ♗xd4 ♕g3+?

Losing more material to a knight fork. If Black wanted to try one last swindle then there was 20...♕xd4+ 21 ♕e3 ♕d6 22 ♕xa7?? (the sure bet winning move is 22 ♕e6+ exchanging queens) 22...♕g3+ and Black picks up the rook.

21 ♗g2 Rxd4 22 ♘e2 and Black decided enough was enough. 1-0

Combining tactical ideas

Although each chapter in this book concentrates on just one specific tactical device, virtually every combination involves the use of two or more of these ideas. The following game is a good example. It features one of the most successful of all opening traps that has claimed at least three GM victims. The secret of its effectiveness is that the moves leading up to it are entirely natural and this dulls the player's tactical vigilance. It only lasts 14 moves,

but see how many tactical themes you can spot.

A.Bigg - Van Laatum
Hastings Challengers 1999

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♗g5 e6 3 e4 h6 4 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 5 ♘f3 d6 6 ♘c3 ♘d7 7 ♕d2 c6?!

Black wants to play ...e6-e5 to gain an equal share of the centre, but he doesn't want to be bothered by ♘d5. So first of all he defends the d5 square a second time. At the same time he rules out ♘b5—or so he thinks! A safe alternative was 7...a6!?.

8 0-0-0 e5?

Continuing his plan, but moving ever closer to the abyss...

9 dxe5
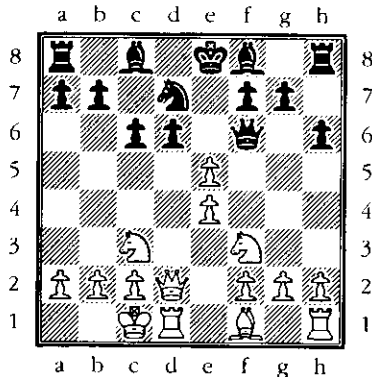
If this wasn't tactically strong it would be a positionally bad move as White is releasing Black's dark-squared bishop. This is one of the factors that makes the trap venomous—Black no doubt is relieved that

his bishop on f8 is going to see daylight and replies

9....dxe5?

Tactics come before strategy! Black had to try the positionally inferior, but tactically sound, 9...♘xe5 though 10 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 11 f4 is pleasant for White.
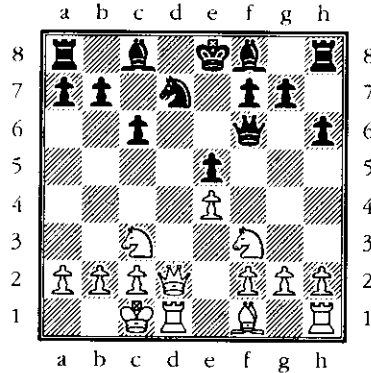
10 ♘b5!

If 10...cxb5, to stop the fork on c7, 11 ♗xb5 is murderous: 11...♕e6 12 ♘xe5! (a deflecting move: it attacks d7 again and so forces the queen away from the defence) 12...♕xe5 13 ♗xd7+ ♔e7 14 ♗xc8 and Black is two pawns down with an exposed king. A spectacular finish would then be 14...♖xc8 15 ♕d7+ ♔f6 16 ♕xc8 ♗a3!? (uncovering an attack on the white queen and hoping to gain time to attack after 17 ♕xh8 with 17...♕xb2+) 17 ♕f5+!. The simplest reply, which forces the exchange of queens. Black is the exchange and two pawns down after 17...♕xf5 18 exf5. Remember that when you are material up it is often a good idea to exchange queens!
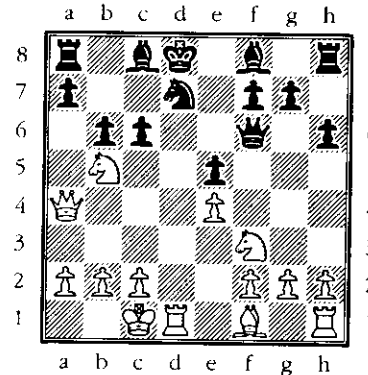
10...♔d8

The king isn't happy to move onto the open d file, but the fork on c7 must be stopped and if 10...♖b8 11 ♘xa7 wins a pawn: the knight doesn't get trapped on a7 because ♘xc8 can be played at a convenient moment.

11 ♕a5+

More powerful was the straight-forward development 11 ♗c4! as 11...cxb5 still loses to the pin after 12 ♗xb5 ♕e7 13 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 14 ♘xe5 ♕xe5? 15 ♕xd7 mate.

11...b6 12 ♕a4

12...a6

The outcome wasn't clear after 12...cxb5 13 ♗xb5 as Black now has some extra defensive options against the pin. Firstly, he can block the d file with 13...♗d6 and following 14 ♖xd6 ♕xd6 15 ♖d1, clearing the way for the massacre after 15...♕c7 16 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 17 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 18 ♕xd7 mate, he can give up his queen: 15...♕xd1+! 16 ♔xd1 ♘c5 and Black can fight on with two rooks for a queen, though his exposed king will still cause him some problems.

13 ♘d6! ♔c7??

Black is desperate to avoid the double attack after 13...♗xd6 14 ♕xc6 and 13...b5 14 ♕a5+ doesn't help. However, in trying to escape he falls for a far bigger tactic.

14 ♘e8+ 1-0

In fact Black managed to resign just before the knight reached e8.

White's initial combination utilised the themes of fork, pin and deflection, while at move 11 double attack was important. It is vital that a player is alert to all the tactical devices available in a position, not just one or two. Otherwise he or she might make wonderful combinations that fail at the critical moment due to a 'bug' in the system: a vital piece of tactical knowledge that is missing.
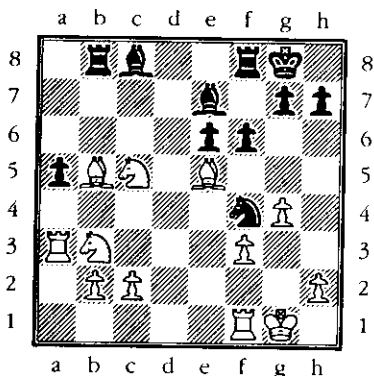
A.Grischuk - G.Kasparov
Linares 2001
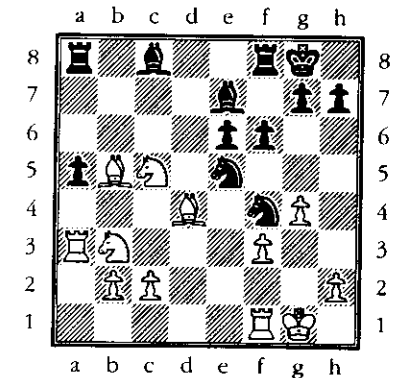
Black to play

An extremely complicated position arose after **23...♖b8** attacking

the white bishop. If now 24 Ξxa5 ♗d8! wins material as the rook cannot retreat without leaving the bishop en prise. So Grischuk played **24 ♗xe5**

Black has to recapture his piece, but which one?

If 24...Ξxb5 then 25 ♗xf4 Ξxc5! (not 25...♗xc5+ 26 ♘xc5 Ξxc5 27 ♗d6 with a fork) 26 ♘xc5 ♗xc5+ 27 ♗e3 ♗xa3 28 bxa3 looks fairly equal. Or 24...fxe5 25 c4! defending the bishop and planning 26 Ξxa5. Instead Kasparov played the strong zwischenzug

24...♘h3+! 25 ♔g2 Ξxb5

If you compare this position with the one in the note above after 24...Ξxb5, you will see that there White answered 25 ♗xf4. Here, however, there is no way that White can get his bishop from e5, where it is attacked and capture the knight at the same time. Thus if 26 ♔xh3 fxe5 and there is no way to defend the knight on c5 against the pin—if 27 Ξxa5 Ξxa5 28 ♘xa5 ♗xc5 wins a piece.

26 ♗g3

Therefore he has to keep his bishop to defend c5, but this time it is retreating without capturing anything. A better defence would have been 26 ♗d4, at once supporting the knight, when if 26...e5—the immediate 26...♘f4+ 27 ♔h1 Ξd8 is also uncomfortable for White—27 ♗e3 ♘f4+ 28 ♔h1 holds on.

26...♘g5 27 ♗f2
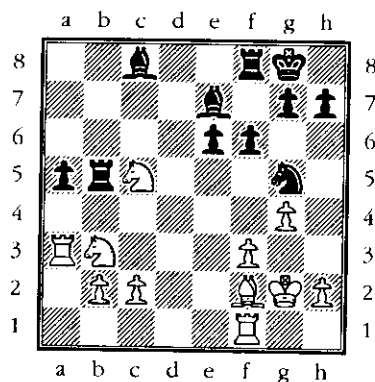
No doubt Grischuk imagined the bishop was safer here than on d4 or e3, but now a new target appears in White's camp—the pawn on f3.

27...♗b7!

With this attack on f3 Black gains time to strengthen the pin on the unfortunate knight on c5.

28 ♗g1 Ξc8 29 h4

If 29 Ξxa5 Ξxa5 30 ♘xa5 ♗xf3+ 31 Ξxf3 ♘xf3 32 ♔xf3 ♗xc5 33 ♗xc5 Ξxc5 winning.

29...♗xf3+

White escapes the worst after 29...♘f7 30 Ξxa5. Meanwhile Kasparov steers clear of further complexities after 29...♘xf3 30

♘xb7 as he sees an easily won endgame.

30 Ξxf3 ♘xf3 31 ♔xf3 ♗xc5 32 ♘xc5 Ξbxc5 33 ♗xc5 Ξxc5 34 c3 h5!
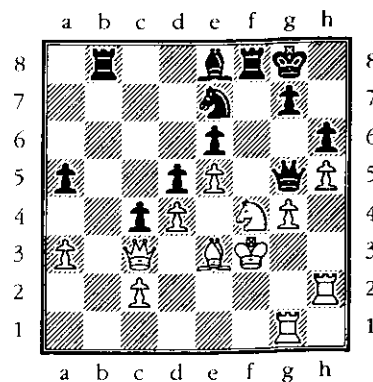
Creating by force connected passed pawns.

35 gxh5 Ξxh5 36 b4

Entirely hopeless against a World Champion is 36 ♔g4 Ξb5 37 Ξa2 ♔f7.

36...axb4 37 cxb4 Ξxh4 0-1

If 38 Ξb3 Ξh3+ with a skewer.

A.David - P.Enders
Bundesliga, Germany 2000

Black to play

The pin on f4 is awkward for White, but how can it be strengthened? If he is given time White will play Ξf2 and ♔e2, when the initiative will pass to him—the knight, which is at the moment paralysed, will threaten ♘xe6 or another vicious discovered attack on

the black queen. Alas, most players as Black would see nothing better than defending the a5 pawn from capture. Instead Enders played the brilliant but logical

30...♗g6!!

This was quite a shock for White and he lost quickly after 31 ♔e2?! Ξxf4 32 hxg6 Ξe4 33 ♔d2 ♕xg6 34 ♕xa5 Ξxe3! 0-1

White resigned for if 35 ♔xe3 ♕e4+ 36 ♔d2 ♕xd4+ picks up the rook on g1.

It is much more interesting to consider the position after 31 hxg6 ♘xg6 32 ♕d2. Now Black has to decide how to go about conquering the f4 square.
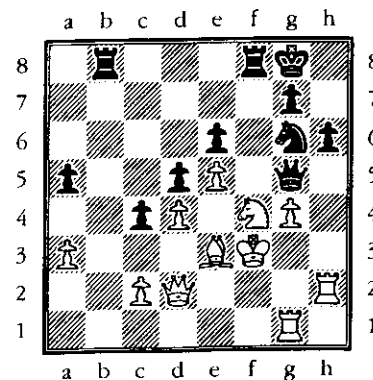

The obvious capture

The first move to consider was 32...♘xf4. Then after 33 ♗xf4 Black can't actually conquer the f4 square—the best he can do is 33...Ξxf4 34 ♕xf4 Ξf8 35 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 with just an unclear endgame.

The subtle capture

You will notice that Black doesn't have all his pieces aiming at the f4 square—the rook on b8 only joins in the attack later on and White's queen is able to make a good swap under the circumstances. In contrast after **32...Rxf4+ 33 Bxf4 Rf8!** Black has all three pieces simultaneously attacking f4 and White's queen doesn't get to give herself up for a rook. After f4 drops Black has a dangerous initiative, for example **34 Ke2 Nxf4+ 35 Kd1 Rb8! 36 Qc1 Qg6! 37 Qxf4** (or else Black plays 37...Qe4) **37...Rb1+ 38 Qc1 Rxc1+ 39 Kxc1 Qe4** and, as **40 Rd2** loses to **40...Qe3** threatening 41...Qxg1+ and 41...c3, and **40 Rd1 Qf4+ 41 Rhd2 c3** also wins, White cannot prevent **Qxd4** dismantling his central pawn structure. Still it was hard work finding all these moves and White had other options as well.

### The deflection

The third move to think about was **32...c3!!**
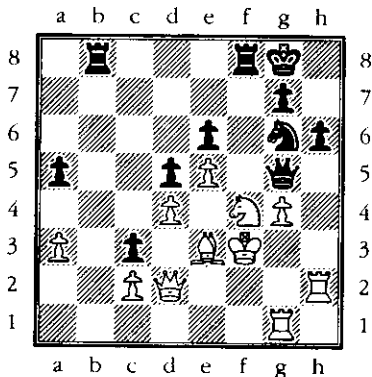
Did you consider it? The basic idea is to drive the white queen to a worse square before exchanging on f4. Now after **33 Qxc3 Nxf4 34 Qd2 Rb7!** Black has time to strengthen the pin on the f file as White's queen was decoyed from d2 for a move. If White captures **35 Bxf4** (or 35 Kg3 h5! 36 Bxf4 Qxg4+ 37 Kf2 Rxf4+ and wins) then **35...Rbf7** followed by Rxf4 gives Black a massive attack. Instead **33 Qc1 Nxf4 34 Bxf4** (or 34 Kg3 h5!) and now, thanks to the white queen being on b1, Black has the deflection **34...Rb1!! 35 Qxb1** (unhelpful is 35 Kg2 Qxg4+ while 35 Qe3 Rxg1 leaves the white queen overloaded—she can't take on g1 and keep f4 defended) **35...Qxf4+** and it is mate after **36 Kg2 Qf3 or 36 Ke2 Qd2**—this time the pawn on c3 supports a mate.

It isn't easy to see all these subtle tactical points. I wonder how much Enders saw before he made the sacrifice? It is possible he reasoned 'after 30...Bg6 my experience, supported by a quick analysis, tells me that in all lines I am at least equal as White's king will be very exposed and my position is solid; whereas if I don't play 30...Bg6 I will be definitely worse. So let's play it and see if I can find a win later on! Even if Black misses 32...c3 he still has a continuous initiative after 32...Rxf4+; only if he plays 32...Nxf4 does he lose most of his advantage.

8 Pins Puzzles

1
A.Hersvik - M.Buckley
World Junior Champ., Athens 2001
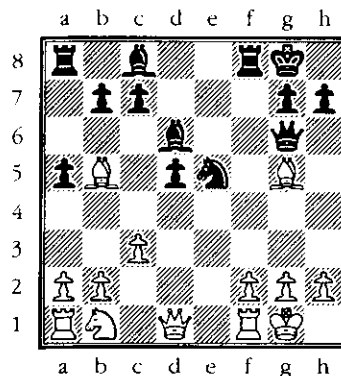
White to play

After **15 f4 Ng4** White played **16 Qd4** to prevent both the fork 16...Ne3 and 16...Bc5+. What is Black's best response? (Remember this is a chapter on pins!)
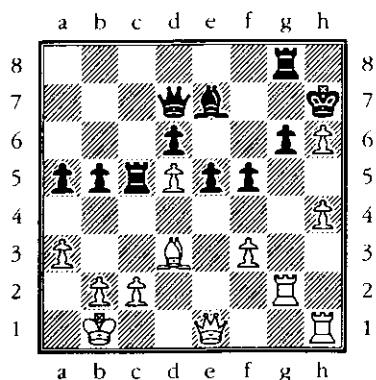
2
R.Jossien - R.Bessat
Bethune Open 2001
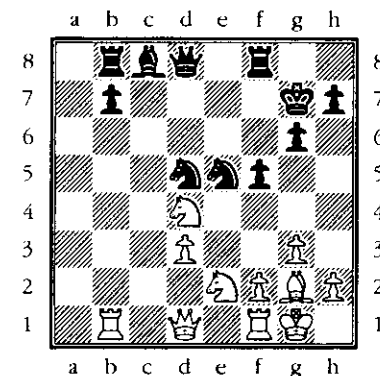
White to play

After **20 Rb5** the knight on d5 is attacked twice, but Black thought he could save his piece with **20...Nc3 21 Nxc3 Qxd4** Was he right?

3
M.Adams - M.Kobalija
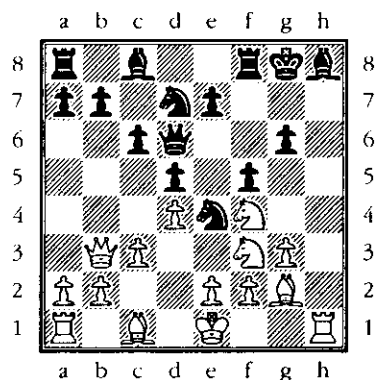FIDE World Championship,
Moscow 2001

White to play

Here **31 ♕xa5 ♖xd5** was played. From a positional point of view Black was probably pleased to swap a rook's pawn for a centre pawn, but what horrible surprise awaited him?

4
P.Kiriakov - B.Gonzalez
Internet Final,
Dos Hermanas 2002

White to play

After **13 ♘h4** the solid reply would be 13...♖f6 but Black saw the chance to fork White's knights with **13...g5**. Has White blundered?

5
M.Adams - B.Larsen
Aarhus 1997
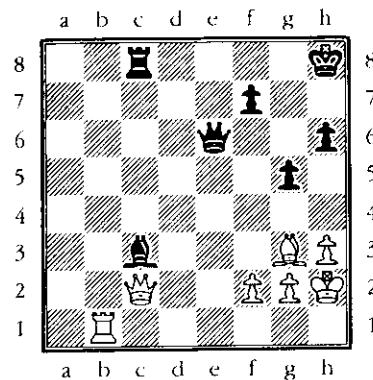
White to play

Here White played **42 ♖b8**. Should Black respond with 42...♖xb8, 42...♕e8, 42...♔g8, 42...♕c6 or 42...f6?

6
G.Kasparov - N.Short
Sarajevo 1999
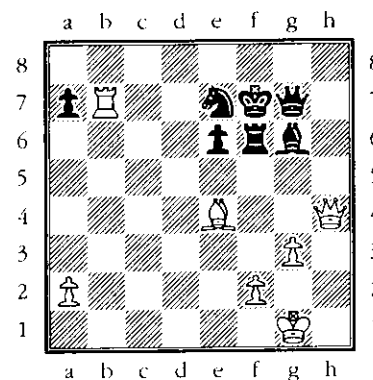
White to play

After **37 ♗xg6+** Black has three ways to recapture the bishop, but they all lose. Can you see how?

7
R.Kempinski - E.Sutovsky
European Team Championship,
Leon 2001

White to play

Can White safely play **23 ♖xg5** in the diagram?

8
E.Grivas - C.Crouch
Hampstead 1998
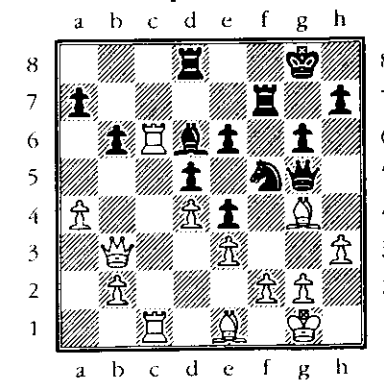
White to play

White played **31 ♗b4** and Black recentralised his queen with **31...♕e7**, having calculated that **32**

♗xf5 ♖xf5 (not 32...♗xb4 33 ♗xe6) 33 ♗xd6 ♖xd6 is nothing for White, for example 34 ♖xc6 ♕xd6 or 34 ♕a3? ♖xc6! 35 ♕xe7 ♖xc1+ and Black looks at least equal as f2 will be hanging. However, by changing his move order somewhere in the above sequence White was able to win a piece! How does he do it?

9
J.Howell - N.McDonald
Wrexham, 1995

Black to play

Here Black innocently played **15...♘d7**. Why was this a bad idea?

10
A.Morozevich - N.McDonald
4NCL, Birmingham 2002
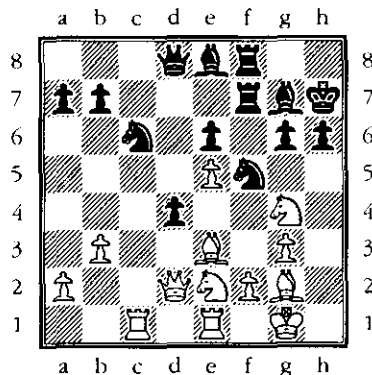
After **23 ♗xc6** should Black recapture with the bishop or pawn?

9 Skewer

A skewer involves attacking a piece that has to move out of the way, allowing the capture of a less important piece sheltering behind it on the same line. Thus it is like a pin in reverse.
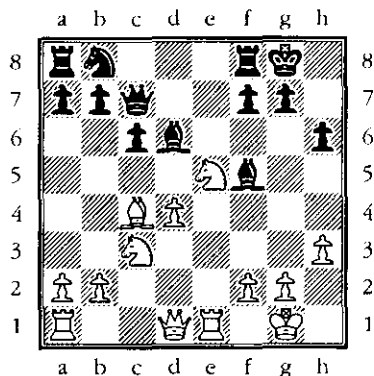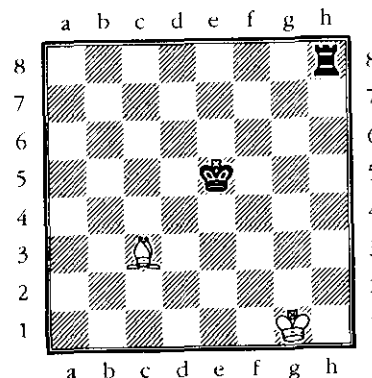

The black king has to move out of check, whereupon ♗xh8 wins the rook.

Perhaps the most common type of skewer is one based on a weak back rank.
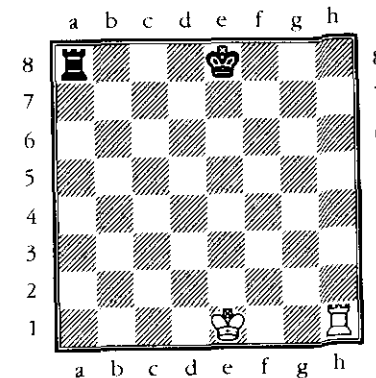
White to move wins the rook with **1 ♖h8+ ♔e7 2 ♖xa8**. If it is Black's move he can win White's rook with **1...♖a1+ 2 ♔e2 ♖xh1**

In practical play a skewer is much rarer than a pin. A pin arises after just four natural moves in the Queen's Gambit: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 and already the black knight is pinned against the queen. On the other hand, although it is inconvenient, the pin doesn't do much harm here: the knight stays put on f6 and Black can continue his development. In contrast, in a skewer the big piece is compelled to move out of the way—the threat

can't just be ignored. Therefore a skewer, though less frequent, tends to be a weightier tactical device than a pin.

One reason for the rarity of the skewer is that, like pins, the most effective skewers mainly work against the king; but whereas a piece can be pinned against a king sitting on his first rank, it isn't often that a king ventures far enough out in front of its own army to fall victim to a skewer. In fact, if it is in the centre of the board the king will probably be much more worried about being mated than being skewered!

It is in the endgame, when both sides advance their kings fearlessly, that the opportunities for a skewer reach their peak. Not infrequently the skewer is used to decide the outcome of a race to queen.
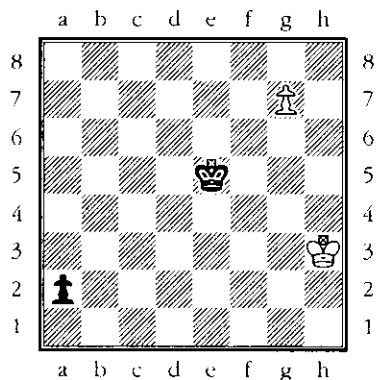
Whoever moves first wins. White to move wins with a diagonal skewer: 1 g8=♕ a1=♕ 2 ♕g7+ (or 2 ♕h8+) 2...♔e4 3 ♕xa1 while Black to move wins with a lateral skewer: 1...a1=♕ 2 g8=♕ (there is

nothing better) 2...♕h1+! (exploiting the bad position of the white king to set up the skewer) 3 ♔g3 ♕g1+ 4 ♔h3 ♕xg8.

Skewers in the opening are quite unusual, but the following is a fine example of a trapper trapped!
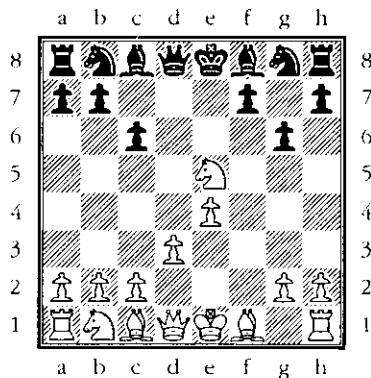
**L.Hazai - I.Bilek**
Hungarian Championship 1973

1 e4 c6 2 d3 e5 3 f4 d6 4 ♘f3 g6 5 fxe5 dxe5 6 ♘xe5

According to Tartakower a combination just shows that someone has blundered. Certainly someone has blundered here as the e pawn can't be given up for nothing, but is it White or Black? Bilek exploited the double attack to win the knight with **6...♕a5+ 7 ♗d2 ♕xe5**, but White had the last laugh with the skewer **8 ♗c3! ♕e7 9 ♗xh8** when he was the exchange and pawn up. Black, a Hungarian Grandmaster, had forgotten that with 4...g6?? he was ruining his indirect defence of the e5 pawn.

Kasparov used the threat of a skewer to build up an initiative in the following example.

G.Kasparov - R.Ponomariov
Linares 2002
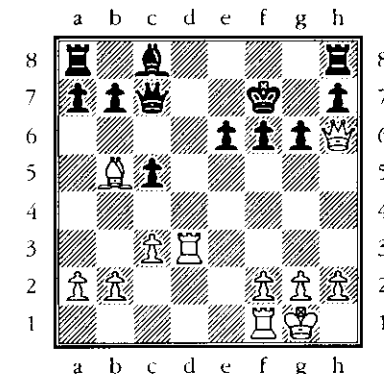
Black to play

Black is a pawn up but seriously behind in development. Therefore he played **19...a6** attacking the bishop, with the idea of gaining time to put his bishop on the excellent d5 square after 20 ♗a4 b5 21 ♗c2 ♗b7 22 ♖fd1 ♗d5. Kasparov however found an excellent way to frustrate this plan: **20 ♖h3!** when if 20...axb5 the skewer 21 ♕xh7+! ♖xh7 22 ♖xh7+ ♔g8 23 ♖xc7 leaves White the exchange up. Ponomariov saw this and played **20...♕e7** but after **21 ♗d3!**—the bishop is delighted to have the square vacated by the rook and threatens 22 ♗xg6+!—**21...f5 22 g4!** White kept up the attack and eventually won on move 38.

M.Illescas Cordoba - A.Morozevich
Pamplona 1998
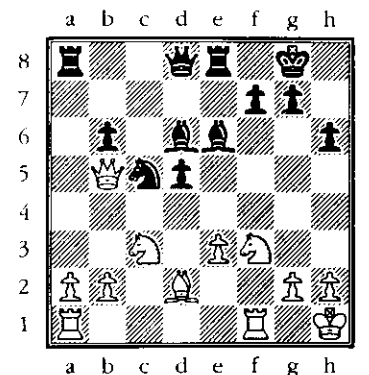
White to play

Here Illescas played **22 ♖ad1** counting on having pressure on d5 in a quiet position. However, to a tactical firebrand like Morozevich, there is no such thing as a quiet position. Here he applied a skewer with decisive effect:

22...♗c8!!
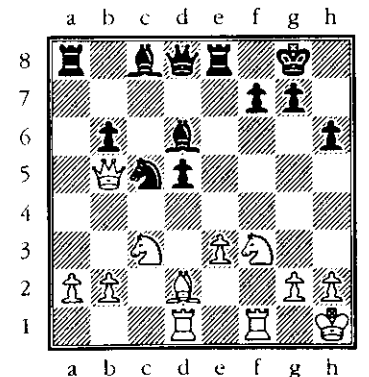
An unexpected retreat with the big threat of 23...♗a6 spearing the white queen against the rook on f1.

23 ♘xd5

Giving up the exchange straight away. If instead

(a) 23 ♖g1 ♗a6 24 ♕c6 (if 24 ♕b4 ♘d3 25 ♕b3 ♘f2 mate) 24...♘d3 25 ♗e1 ♘b4 26 ♕a4 ♗c4 winning White's queen.

(b) 23 ♖fe1 ♗a6 24 ♕c6 (or 24 ♕b4 ♘d3 winning the exchange) 24...♘d3 25 ♖f1? (better to give up the exchange with 25 ♕xd5) 25...♘b4 26 ♕a4 ♗xf1 winning.

A wonderful demonstration of the power of the skewer.

23...♗a6 24 ♕xb6 ♗xf1 25 ♖xf1 ♖xa2 26 ♕xd8 ♖xd8

The exchange up for a pawn and with two weak pawns to attack, Black made short work of the endgame.
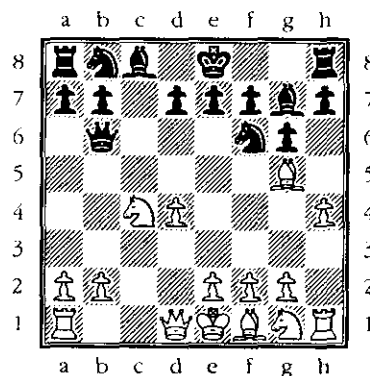
27 ♗c3 ♘e4 28 ♗d4 ♗c5 29 ♘c3 ♘xc3 30 bxc3 ♗xd4 31 ♘xd4 ♖c8 32 ♘b5 ♖c5 33 ♘d6 ♖xc3 34 h3 ♖cc2 0-1

J.Hodgson - D.Norwood
British Championship,
Eastbourne 1991

After the rather eccentric opening moves **1 d4 g6 2 h4!? ♘f6 3 ♗g5 ♗g7 4 ♘d2 c5 5 c3 cxd4 6 cxd4** Black was tempted to attack two white pawns with **6...♕b6**. There followed **7 ♘c4!**

Black completely missed the point of this and replied **7...♕b4+?** expecting to gain time by attacking the knight and forcing it to retreat back to d2. However, after **8 ♗d2! ♕xc4** (or 8...♕b5 9 e4 and the threat of 10 ♘d6+ gives White the initiative) **9 ♖c1** the black queen couldn't escape as 10 ♖xc8 mate would follow. Strictly speaking, the fact that it is mate on c8 rather than a win of material makes this a pin rather than a skewer, since the king is more important than the queen; but the mechanism of attacking a piece with an 'x-ray' through the enemy queen is more typical of a skewer than a pin. After **9...♕xc1 10 ♗xc1 ♘c6 11 ♘f3** White had a distinct material advantage but a draw was immediately agreed due to the tournament situation—Julian Hodgson only needed half a point to become the 1991 British Champion.

10 Skewer Puzzles

1
J.Sugden - N.McDonald
Hastings Challengers 2001/2002
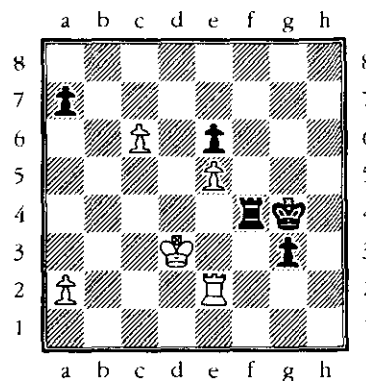
White to play.

Seeing that after 38 c7 Black can stop the passed pawn with 38...♖f8, White played **38 ♖e4** pinning the rook. How should the game now finish?

2
V.Anand - T.Radjabov
FIDE Grand Prix, Dubai 2002

White to play.

Black's king has been driven out into the open and is surely doomed, but what is the simplest way to finish the game?

3
N.McDonald - B.Jacobs
GLC Masters, London 1986

Black to play

4
N.McDonald - G.Izsak
Elekes tournament, Budapest 1995
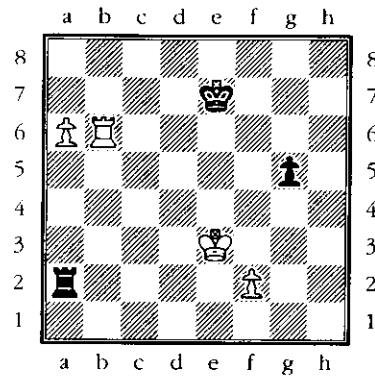
White to play

With two extra passed pawns Black is easily winning. Here he played **42...d2**, calculating that (a) **43 ♗xc2 ♘xc2 44 ♘xc2 d1=♕** wins, or 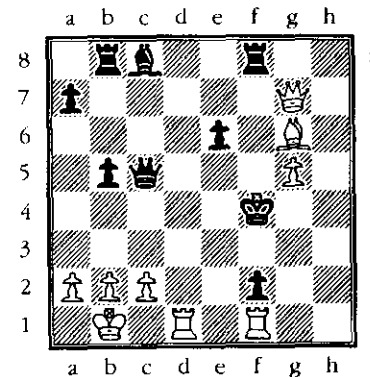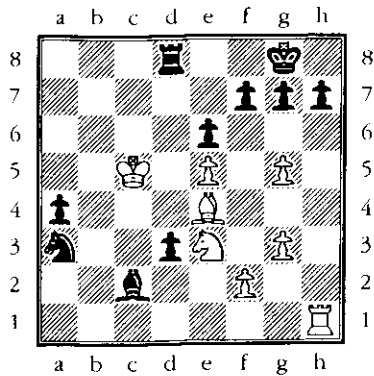(b) **43 ♘xc2 ♘xc2** and if White captures the knight then **♖c8+** regains the piece with a skewer after which the rook and pawn endgame is easily won for Black. What was the flaw in this calculation?

White gave up the f pawn with **52 ♔e4! ♖xf2** Why?

11   Discovered Attack

I've always wondered why this isn't called *uncovered attack*? Whatever its name it can be a fearsome tactical weapon as the following examples show.
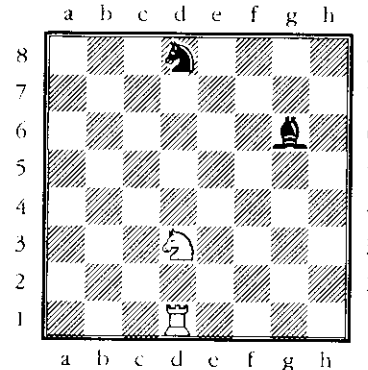
White plays **1 ♘f4 or 1 ♘e5**. The knight attacks the bishop and at the same time an attack by the rook is uncovered—or *discovered*—on the knight on d8. The black pieces can't defend each other so next move White will capture one of them.
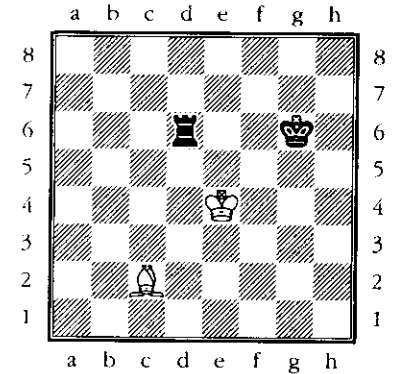
White plays **1 ♗e5+** uncovering an attack on the black king by the bishop and also attacking the black rook with his king. Black can't deal with both threats and so is forced to give up the rook with either **1...♖d3 2 ♗xd3+** or **1...♔g5** (or anywhere else) **2 ♔xd6**. Because this example involves a discovered attack on the black king it is also referred to as a *discovered check*. The most famous example of discovered check was recorded as far back as 1620 by Greco. It goes **1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♘xe5 ♘xe4?! 4 ♕e2 ♘f6?? 5 ♘c6+**: the black king is in check

from the queen and therefore he loses his own queen to the knight.

You will have noticed in these examples that the strength of a discovered attack comes from the fact that there are two threats: one from the piece that is lying hidden in ambush and a secondary one from the piece that moves out of the way to reveal the ambush. Therefore it is closely related to the theme of double attack. If the defender cannot deal with both threats he is likely to lose material.

A.Morozevich - J.Polgar
Frankfurt-West Masters 1999
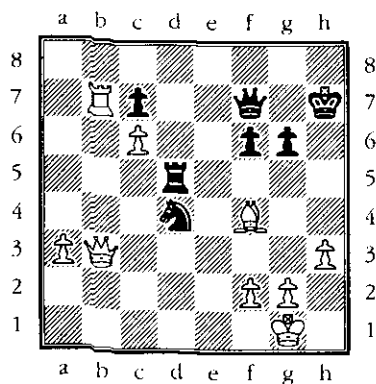
White to play

In this position White has every chance to win, but he fell for a horrible swindle.

43 ♕c4??

Not 43 ♖xc7 ♕xc7, but 43 ♕b6! wins nicely, for example 43...♘e2+ 44 ♔h2 cxb6 (or 44...♘xf4 45 ♖xc7) 45 ♖xf7+ ♔g8 46 c7 ♔xf7

47 c8=♕ ♘xf4 48 ♕c7+ and White picks up the knight to end all resistance.

43...♘f3+!

This clears the way with gain of time for the discovered attack.

44 gxf3

If 44 ♔f1 ♖d1+ is a mighty check(!!) all the same.

44...♖d1+

Uncovering an attack on White's queen.

45 ♕f1 ♖xf1+ 46 ♔xf1 ♕c4+

Not only has White lost the queen, but to cap it all he now drops the bishop to a double attack.

47 ♔g2 ♕xf4 48 a4 ♔h6 0-1

S.Pedersen - N.McDonald
London 1997

Black to play

Here White has a very pleasant position with the two bishops and potential pressure along the e file

Therefore I tried to entice him into a blunder with
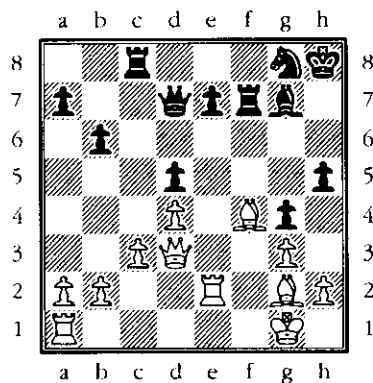
28...♖c6!? 29 ♕b5?

A natural move that attacks d5, but it falls straight into the trap.

29...♗xd4+!

Black unexpectedly wins a key pawn for if 30 cxd4 the discovered attack 30...♖c1+! 31 ♖xc1 ♕xb5 wins White's queen. There followed

30 ♔h1 e6 31 ♖ae1

Still 31 cxd4 ♖c1+ wins.

31...♗g7 32 h3 ♘f6 33 ♕d3 gxh3 34 ♗f3 ♔g8 35 ♕g6 e5!

Another discovered attack

36 ♖xe5 ♘e4 37 ♕xh5 ♖xf4!

...and finally a fork. If 38 gxf4 ♘g3+ wins White's queen.

38 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 39 ♖1xe4 dxe4 40 ♖xe4 ♖c8 and Black won.

G.Kasparov - K.Georgiev
Sarajevo 2000
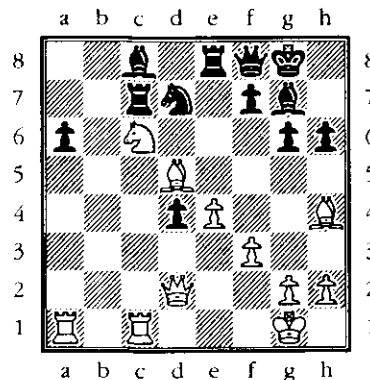
White to play

Black has an extra pawn, but his pieces are under great pressure. In particular his rook is very precariously placed on c7. The obvious way to uncover an attack on it is with 27 ♘e7+. Then 27...♖xe7 28 ♖xc7 g5 29 ♗g3 ♘e5 and 28 ♗xe7 ♖xc1+ 29 ♖xc1 ♕xe7 30 ♖xc8+ ♔h7 are both somewhat better for White, but not crushing.

Kasparov found a much stronger move:

27 ♗e7!!

With this move order White gets to capture both black rooks after 27...♖xe7 28 ♘xe7+ ♕xe7 29 ♖xc7, leaving him two exchanges up. In contrast, in the 27 ♘e7+ ♖xe7 line above, White can capture either rook, but neither is with check, giving Black time to save the remaining rook, either with 28...g5 or 28...♖xc1+.

27...♖xc6

Giving up the queen is the only way to play on.

28 ♗xf8 ♖xc1+ 29 ♖xc1 ♘xf8 30 ♕f4

Kasparov homes in on the weak f7 square.

30...♗e6 31 ♖c7 ♗xd5

Or 31...f5 32 exf5! ♗xd5 (32...gxf5 33 ♕g3) 33 f6 and the threats of 34 ♖xg7+ and 34 f7+ can't both be stopped.

32 exd5 f5 33 d6 ♖d8 34 ♕h4! 1-0

The double attacks carry the day!

After 34...♖xd6 White has either 35 ♕e7 ♖d7 36 ♖xd7 ♘xd7 37 ♕xd7 or 35 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 36 ♕e7+ ♔g8 37 ♕xd6. Meanwhile if 34...g5 35 ♕h5 and the threat of 36 ♕f7 can only be met by 36...♖d7 losing after 37 ♖xd7 ♘xd7 38 ♕e8+ ♘f8 39 d7 or 36...♘d7 when 37 ♖xd7! ♖xd7 38 ♕e8+ attacks both king and rook.

O.De la Riva Aguado - A.Morozevich
Pamplona 1999

White to play

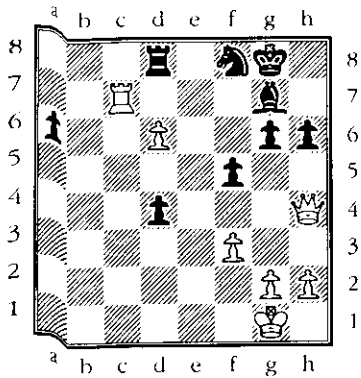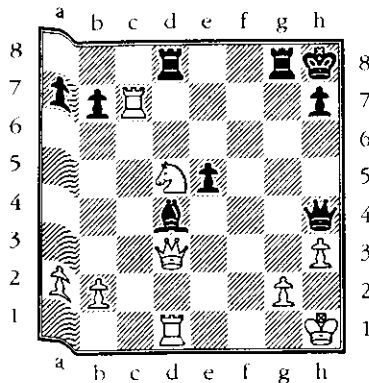In the diagram above White played **32 ♘f6** which on the face of it looks very strong. Besides threatening 33 ♘xg8 it attacks h7 a third time. If 32...♕xf6 33 ♕xh7 or 33 ♖xh7 is mate—an extreme example of a successful deflection. On the other hand there is nothing compelling Black to take the knight. Black could defend with 32...♖g7, but Morozevich found something much stronger.

32...e4!

Blocking the white queen's attack on h7 and uncovering an attack by the black bishop on the knight. The game ended abruptly with:

33 ♕xe4?! ♗xf6 34 ♖xd8?

If 34 ♕xh4? ♖xd1+ is our familiar zwischenzug, winning a rook after 35 ♔h2 ♗xh4, but White wouldn't last long even after the sensible 34 ♕c2.

34...♕xe4 0-1

Going back to the diagram, after 32 ♘f6 e4!, much tougher was 33 ♘xe4!? ♗e5 — the point, attacking the rook on c7 and uncovering an attack on White's queen — 34 ♖xh7+ with two variations:
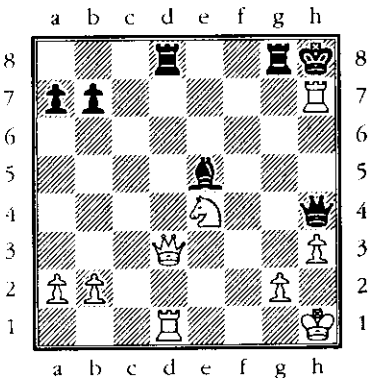
(a) 34...♕xh7 35 ♕xd8! now Black even loses after 35...♖xd8? 36 ♖xd8+ ♔g7 37 ♖d7+ when the skewer wins back the queen and leaves White two pawns up. Unfortunately for him after simply 35...♕xe4 36 ♕d2—he has to guard against 36...♕f4—he is a piece down for two pawns with little hope.

(b) 34...♔xh7 35 ♘g5+ (after 35 ♘f6+ ♔h8! the black king is completely safe) 35...♔g7 36 ♘e6+ ♔h8 37 ♘xd8 ♕f4! and as White is soon mated after 38 g3? ♖xg3 he has to give up the knight with 38 ♘f7+ ♕xf7 39 ♕d2, with a similar situation to the end of variation (a) above.

A.Fedorov - U.Adianto
Olympiad, Istanbul 2000
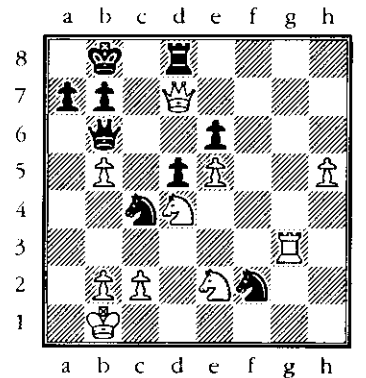
White to play

Here Fedorov played **31 ♘xe6!** which is very powerful for if 31...♖xd7 32 ♖g8+ ♖d8 33 ♖xd8+ ♕xd8 34 ♘xd8 leaves Black in big trouble in the endgame—the h pawn is on its way to h8. So Black tried

31...♖c8 32 ♕xd5?

Instead 32 h6! leads to a beautiful win—remember that passed pawns should be pushed! Now 32...♘d2+ 33 ♔c1 is nothing for Black, so he should try 32...♘e4 33 h7! ♘xg3 34 ♕xc8+! ♔xc8 35 h8=♕+ ♔d7 36 ♕g7+ ♔xe6 (if 36...♔e8 37 ♕f8+ leads to mate: 37...♔d7 38 ♕f7+ ♔c8 39 ♕e8+ ♔d8 40 ♕xd8 mate) 37 ♘d4+!!, luring the black queen to d4, 37...♕xd4 38 ♕f6+ ♔d7 39 e6+ and Black loses his queen to the discovered attack.

32...♘e4!

An excellent counterattacking move. It attacks the rook and if 33 ♕xe4?? ♘d2+.

33 ♖g7??

Instead 33 ♖d3 ♘ed2+! 34 ♖xd2 (if 34 ♔c1 ♕a5! threatens mate on a1) 34...♘xd2+ 35 ♕xd2 ♕xe6 and the endgame should be a draw.
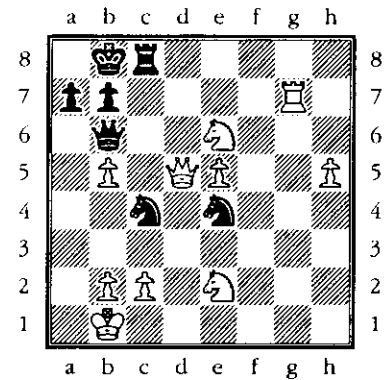
33...♘ed2+!

The right knight. After 33...♘cd2+ 34 ♔c1 White can answer 34...♘b3+ with 35 ♕xb3.

34 ♔c1 ♘b3+!

White resigned here since if 35 cxb3 ♘e3+ wins the queen, as does 35 ♔d1 ♘e3+. Meanwhile he is mated after 35 ♔b1 ♘cd2+ 36 ♔a2 ♕a5.

A.Ledger - N.Frost
Jersey Open, St Helier 2002
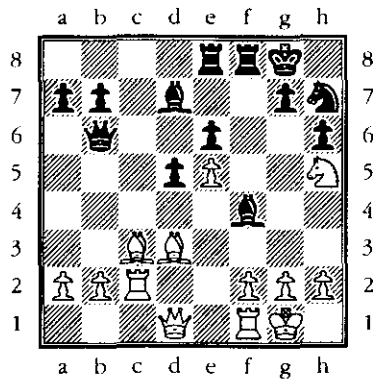
Black to play

Black played **20...♗b5**, a well justified positional move as it aims to exchange off the light-squared bishops. Unfortunately it loses by force!

21 ♗d4!

Gaining time to open the c file by attacking Black's queen.

21...♕a6

If 21...♕xd4 we have the familiar trick 22 ♗xh7+ ♔xh7 23 ♕xd4 winning the queen.

22 ♗xb5 ♕xb5 23 ♖c7 ♖c8

Normally this would be described as a blunder, but Black had no way to defend against the threat of 24 ♖xg7+, wreaking havoc on his second rank as 23...♖f7 24 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 25 ♘xf4 also drops the bishop. If 23...g5 simply 24 g3 traps the bishop, or 23...g6 24 ♕c2, aiming at g6, 24...♖f5 25 ♘xf4 when 25...♖xf4 26 ♕xg6+ is slaughter.

24 ♖xc8

A simple example of deflection or overworking a piece.

24... ♖xc8 25 ♘xf4 1-0

As a postscript to this game, imagine if White hadn't been tactically alert, or had never seen the idea of the discovered attack in this form. Then from the diagram he might well have answered 20...♗b5 with **21 ♗xb5? ♕xb5**. Now **22 ♕g4** looks strong as there is a double attack against the bishop and g7. Losing are 22...g5 23 g3, trapping the bishop, or 22...♗g5 23 h4, but Black has a clever defence with **22...♖f7!**. Now **23 ♘f6+ ♘xf6 24 exf6 ♗xh2+!**—deflecting the white king from the defence of the rook on f1—**25 ♔xh2 ♕xf1 26 fxg7 ♖xf2** is unclear at best for White, while after **23 ♘xf4 ♕a4!** Black uses the double attack on c2 and f4 to regain his piece with equal chances.

A.Ivanov - C.Crouch
Dutch Open 1992
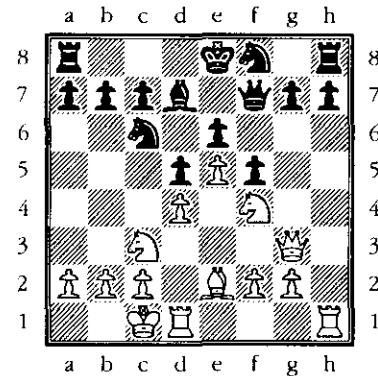
White to play

White began a combination to exploit two ideas: a pin on the black queen and a discovered attack on the rook on h8 after the forceful opening of the h file.

14 ♗h5! g6

If 14...♘g6 15 ♗xg6 wins at once.

15 ♗xg6 ♘xg6 16 ♕xg6!

The only way as the pin changes hands after 16 ♘xg6?? ♖g8.

16...hxg6?

A bad mistake. Black emerges a pawn down after 16...♕xg6 17 ♘xg6 ♖g8 18 ♖xh7 0-0-0 19 ♘f4, but the best way to resist was 16...♘e7 and if 17 ♕f6 ♖f8.

17 ♖xh8+ ♔e7 18 ♖xa8 g5

If 19...♕h7 20 ♖h8!.
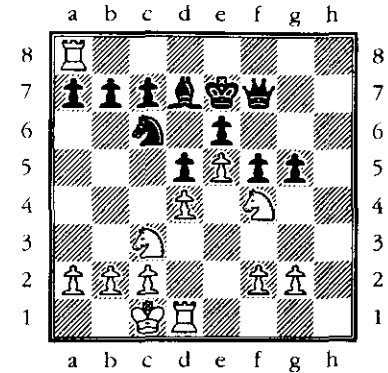
19 ♖h8!?

It turns out that White doesn't have to retreat his knight as Black has no time to evacuate his king and queen from the coming pin. The simple 19 ♘fe2!? also looks sufficient to win, for if 19...♕h7 20 ♘g3 followed by 21 ♖h1 is decisive or 19...♗e8 20 ♖h1 ♕g7 21 ♘b5! ♔f8 22 ♘xc7! ♕xc7 23 ♖h8+ ♔g7 24 ♖axe8 and wins.

19...gxf4 20 ♖dh1 ♘xd4 21 ♖1h7 f3 22 gxf3 ♘xf3 23 ♖xf7+ ♔xf7 24 ♖b8 ♗c6 25 ♖c8 ♘xe5 26 ♖xc7+ ♔f6 27 f4 ♘g6 28 ♘e2 and the exchange up for a pawn White won the ending.

Quiet moves

In his book *Think like a Grandmaster* Kotov talks about 'creeping moves' — moves which are unobtrusive and quiet and at first glance seem to make no difference to the position, but in fact they have

a devastating power. Here is such an example.

K.Mueller - I.Farago
Hamburg 2000
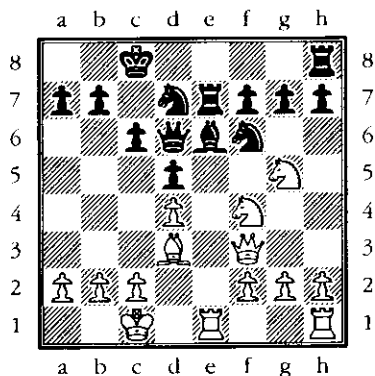
White to play

White played the little move **15 ♕g3!** after which Black's position suddenly became hopeless. The threat is 16 ♘g6!! uncovering an attack on Black's queen and also attacking the rook on e7. Then 16...♕xg3 17 ♘xe7+ ♔d8 18 ♘xc6+! bxc6 19 hxg3 leaves White the exchange and a pawn up.

15...♗g4

If 15...♖ae8 16 ♘g6 still wins the exchange, while on 15...♔b8 16 ♘fxe6 ♕xg3 17 hxg3 White is a pawn up after either 17...fxe6 18 ♖xe6 or 17...♖he8 18 ♘xf7 ♖xf7.

16 ♖xe7

Of course if now 16 ♘g6? ♖xe1+.

16...♕xe7 17 f3!
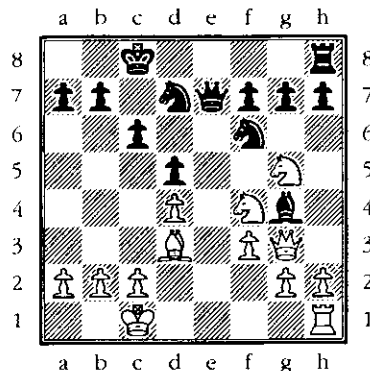
Attacking the bishop and at the same time clearing the way for 18 ♖e1.

17...h6

The bishop has no safe retreat as 17...♗e6 18 ♖e1 ♘f8 19 ♗f5 wins a pawn while the enormous power of 15 ♕g3 reveals itself after 17...♗h5: 18 ♖e1 ♕f8 (if 18...♕d6 19 ♘xh5 wins a piece) 19 ♘fe6! fxe6 20 ♘xe6 and Black can't both save his queen and prevent ♕c7 mate.

18 ♖e1 ♕f8 19 ♘xf7!

Desperado: the knight gives itself up for an important pawn before White captures the bishop.

19...♕xf7 20 ♗g6!

Another useful zwischenzug which forces the black queen to a square where she blocks in her rook. If immediately 20 fxg4 ♖e8 battles on.

20...♕f8 21 fxg4 ♕d6

There was no other way to prevent 22 ♘e6.

22 ♖e6 ♕f8

Losing quickly but if 22...♕c7 23 ♖e7 and Black is in a decisive bind.

23 ♗f5 ♕f7 24 ♖xf6! 1-0

If 24...♕xf6 25 ♘e6 or 24...gxf6 25 ♘e6 ♘b6 26 ♘g5+ and wins the black queen.

The next example is a warning that even in the most harmless-looking positions you have to be alert for tactics.

D.Norwood - S.Collins
4NCL, Birmingham 2002
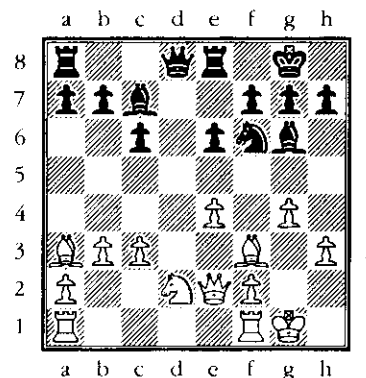
White to play

There doesn't seem to be much going on in this quiet position. Therefore White played the strategically good **17 ♖ad1** counting on having a good position because of his control of the d file. However,

he was hit by a 'bolt of lightning:' **17...♘d5!!**. This threatens both 18...♘xc3 and 18...♘f4 followed by 19...♘xh3+. If 18 exd5 exd5 19 ♘e4 ♕h4!? followed by 20...♗xe4 is overwhelming. GM David Norwood sank into deep thought and then submitted to huge material losses in order to keep the initiative with **18 ♘c4!? ♘xc3 19 ♕e3 ♘xd1 20 ♖xd1**. Black is of course winning, but White managed to build up a big attack after **20...♕h4 21 ♔g2 ♖ed8 22 ♘d6 ♗b6 23 ♕e2 e5 24 ♗b2 ♕e7 25 ♗a3 ♗d4 26 ♘c4 ♗c5 27 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 28 h4 f6 29 h5 ♗f7 30 ♘e3 ♖xd1 31 ♕xd1 ♕d4 32 ♕c1 a5?** (here 32...h6! to rule out White's kingside pawn advances would surely be a straightforward win) **33 g5! fxg5 34 ♘f5 ♕d8 35 h6! g6 36 ♘e3 ♗e6 37 ♗g4 ♕d7 38 ♔g3 a4 39 ♕c5 axb3 40 axb3 ♖e8 41 f3 ♕f7 42 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 43 ♘g4** with an unclear position: Black is the exchange and two pawns up but there are huge dark square holes in his kingside which White's knight, queen and monster pawn on h6 are all well placed to exploit. Meanwhile White has achieved a blockade on the light squares. The game eventually finished as a draw. Going back to the diagram position, 17 ♘c4 keeps a slight edge for White as the trick 17...♘d5? fails to 18 exd5 exd5 19 ♘e3.

As we saw at the start of the chapter a particularly powerful form of discovered attack is discovered check.

L.Aronian - J.Plaskett
Hastings 2000/2001
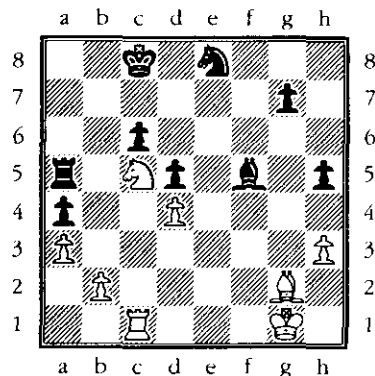
White to play

Here White played **33 ♗xd5! ♔c7**

If 33...cxd5 34 ♘b3+ picks up the rook, while 33...♗d7 34 ♘xd7 ♔xd7 (or 34...♖xd5 35 ♘b6+ with a fork) 35 ♗xc6+ ♔d8 36 ♖c4 and 37 ♖xa4 with an easy win.

34 ♗xc6!

White gets maximum benefit from the potential discovered attack. If now 34...♔xc6 35 ♘b3+ ♔b6 36 ♘xa5 ♔xa5 37 ♖c5+ with a double attack on the king and bishop.

34...♘d6 35 ♗xa4 ♔d8 36 ♖c3 and, with two extra pawns, **White** soon **won**.

12   Discovered Attack Puzzles

1

You decide to play the French as Black, but after **1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♗d7** your opponent plays in the style of the Ruy Lopez with **6 ♗b5** What should you do?
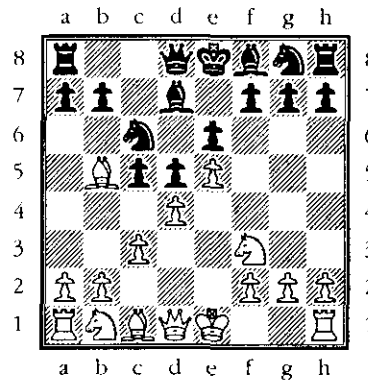
2

L.Williams - N.McDonald
Lloyds Bank Open 1994
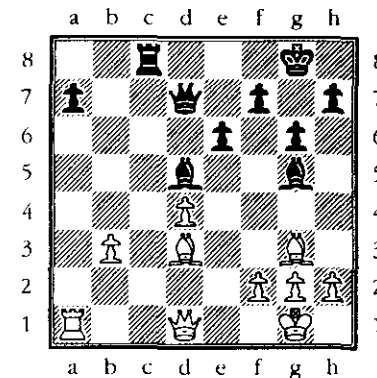
White to play

Work out how Black should respond to **25 f4**.

3
J.Shaw - N.McDonald
Cafe Baroque tournament,
London, 1995
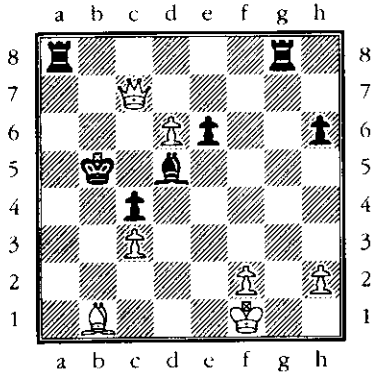
White to play

White grabbed a pawn with **41
♕d7+ ♗c6 42 ♕xe6** Was this a
good idea?

4
S.Karjakin - V.Topalov
FIDE Grand Prix, Dubai 2002
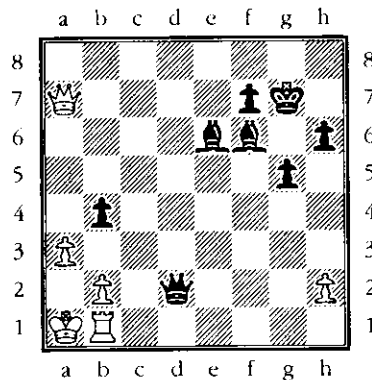
White to move

Black threatens 33...♗f5 and
34...♗xb1 destroying the defender
of b2, or the combinational
33...♗xb2+! 34 ♖xb2 ♕c1+ 35 ♖b1
♕c3+ 36 ♖b2 bxa3 winning, so
White met both threats by **33 ♕a5**.
If Black now plays the 33...♗xb2+?
combination he won't be able to
play 36...bxa3 at the end of it
because of 37 ♕xc3+.

However, after Black's reply
White resigned straight away. What
was it?

5
J.Aagaard - N.McDonald
Drury Lane tournament 1997
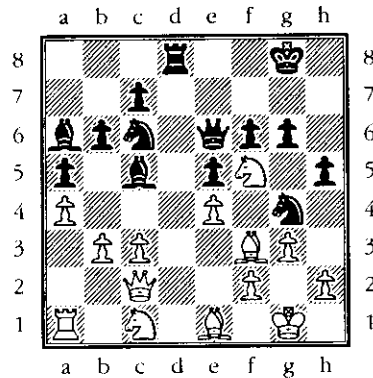
White to play

Rather than retreat his knight,
White played **24 h3** and there
followed **24...gxf5 25 exf5**. A
zwischenzug: White's idea is that
after the black queen moves to
safety he can regain his knight with
26 hxg4 and stay a pawn up. What
was wrong with this idea?

6
G.Kasparov - R.Kasimdzhanov
Wijk aan Zee 1999
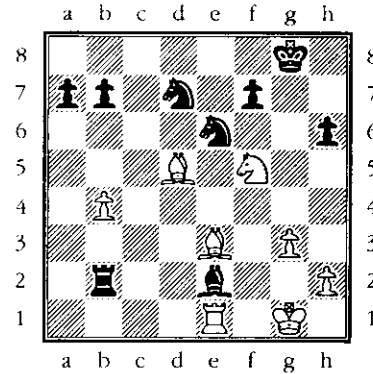
White to play

Most club players would be
thinking which of Black's pawns to
capture—the one on a7, b7 or h6.
Probably they would settle for 34
♘xh6+. However, Kasparov came
up with a clever way to use a
discovered attack. Can you find it?
(a clue: the black rook is awkwardly
placed as it has to defend the bishop
on e2!).

7
N.McDonald - A.Bang
European Cup, Reykjavik 1999
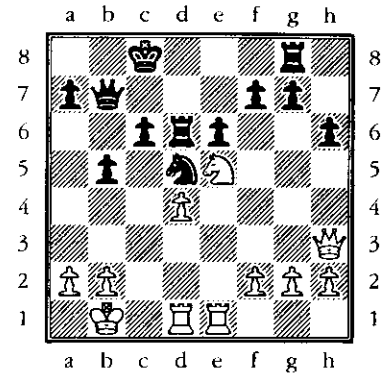
White to play

White is a pawn down. How
should he play and what is your
assessment of the position?

13 Trapping Pieces

This is a very democratic tactical weapon as any piece can trap any other piece. The punishment for falling into a trap may vary from a long term in prison to a swift death sentence.
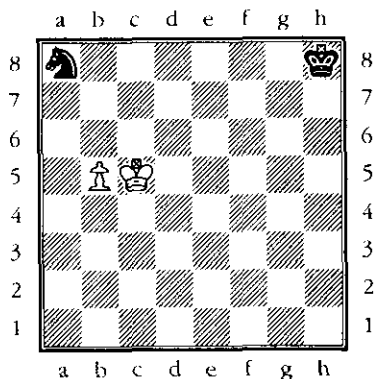
With **1 ♔c6!** White traps the knight and will capture it in two moves with ♔b7 and ♔xa8. Then he will queen his pawn. Black's king is too far away to save the knight or stop the pawn queening.
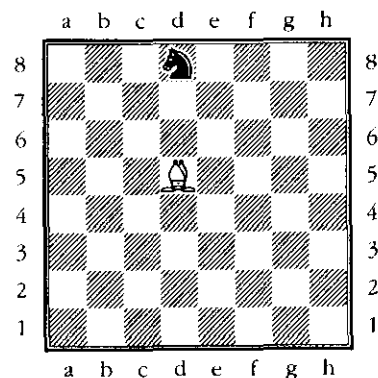
Here the bishop traps the knight on d8. On the other hand, it can't win it without the help of another piece.
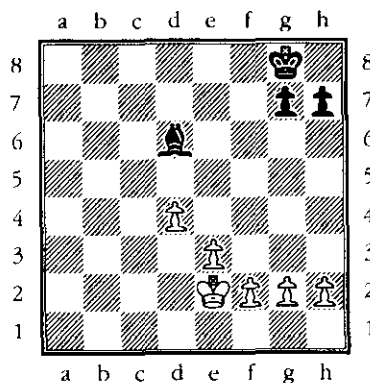
One of the most well known of all traps. Black grabs a pawn with **1...♗xh2?** but after **2 g3!** the bishop is shut in. Now a race begins to free or capture the bishop: **2...h5 3 ♔f3 h4 4 ♔g2! hxg3 5 fxg3** and the bishop perishes. The best Black can do is **5...♗xg3** but **6 ♔xg3** gives White a winning endgame.

G.Buckley - J.Shaw
Hastings Challengers 2002
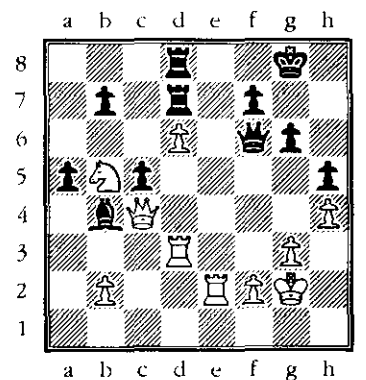
White to play

White has fantastic compensation for the pawn: the black bishop is entombed on b4 and he has a strong passed pawn and control of the open e file.

White now played **33 ♖de3!?**. A crafty move as Black, in time pressure and fearing 34 ♖e8+, automatically played **33...♔g7** when after **34 ♖f3** the black queen suddenly found itself trapped. The game ended **34...♖xd6 35 ♘xd6!**. This leads to a quicker win than the simple 35 ♖xf6 ♖xf6. **35...♕xd6 36 ♕xf7+ ♔h6 37 ♖e7 1-0** Black is unable to guard against mate on both g7 and h7 unless he plays 37...♕xe7, but then 38 ♕xe7 leaves him with only a bishop for the queen. Buckley had worked everything out to a finish, but you have to be very sure that you have calculated correctly if you turn down the chance to be a queen for a rook up: think how embarrassing it would be if you had got it wrong!

V.Kotronias - M.Godena
European Team Championship,
Leon 2001
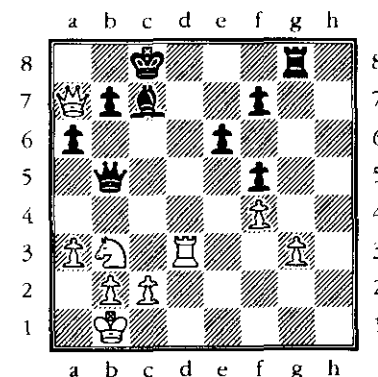
White to play

White has built up a powerful attacking position and with **32 ♖c3!**, threatening to skewer the king and rook with 33 ♕a8+, he could have set Black huge problems. Instead he played **32 ♘c5?** which on the face of it looks equally strong. In fact it falls for a devilish trap: **32...♗b8! 33 ♕a8 ♕xc5!** Kotronias had thought this impossible due to the pin that follows, but after **34 ♖c3 ♕xc3! 35 bxc3** it is true that White

has won material, but how can he ever extricate his queen? Black has only to exercise a little care and the queen's entombment will remain permanent, as the rest of the game demonstrates:

35...Xxg3 36 ♔b2 Xg4 37 c4 ♔c7! 38 ♔c3 Xg8!

Black defends the bishop so that if White ever tries to rescue the queen with c5-c6 he can play ♔xc6 keeping the prison intact.

39 ♔b4 Xd8

Cutting off the white king from interfering with the passed pawns he is about to create.

40 c5 f6 41 a4 ♔c6 42 c4 e5 and **White resigned** as the passed pawns are unstoppable. Once the white queen was shut in, this was a very easy win for Black.

V.Anand - P.Svidler
Linares 1998
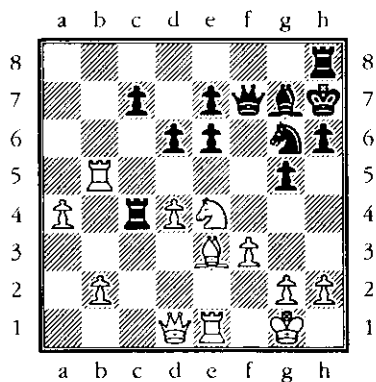
Black to play

Here Black to move could extricate his rook with 33...Xc6, but Svidler became ambitious and tried

33...d5? 34 ♘c5 ♛f5. Now given one free move and Black will play ♘h4 with good chances. However, he was allowed no respite as Anand trapped the rook:

35 b3! Xc3

The rook drops at once after 35...Xc2 33 g4.

36 ♛d2!

Nevertheless the rook is forced to the fatal c2 square.

36...Xc2 37 g4! ♘h4

Also hopeless is 37...Xxd2 38 gxf5 and Black has two pieces hanging.

38 gxf5 ♘xf3+
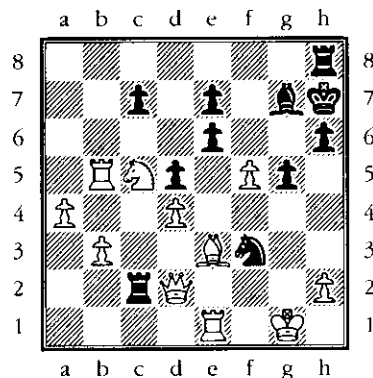
39 ♔h1!

The only square for the king! If instead 39 ♔g2 ♘xd2 40 Xe2 Black has the fork trick 40...♘c4! to save the piece — 41 Xxc2? ♘xe3+ 42 ♔f3 ♘xc2.

Or 39 ♔f2 ♘xd2 40 Xe2 and here 40...♘e4+? 41 ♘xe4 Xxe2+ 42 ♔xe2 dxe4 43 fxe6 looks like an awful endgame for Black, but instead he can fight strongly with

the exchange sacrifice 40...Xxc5 41 dxc5 ♘e4+ 42 ♔g2 exf5 with a very impressive array of passed pawns in the centre. In fact, I think White might even be hard pressed to draw this!

39...♘xd2 40 Xe2 ♘c4

The knight is still pinned after 40...Xc1+ 41 ♔g2. Black could have tried 40...Xxc5!? 41 Xxc5 ♘e4 42 Xxc7 exf5 with similar counterplay to that in the note above on 39 ♔f2, though much inferior as White's rook has already broken through to c7. In any case Black might as well have given this a go as he resigns in two moves!

41 Xxc2 ♘xe3 42 Xe2 1-0

If 42...♘xf5 43 ♘xe6 and not only is White the exchange up but Black centre pawns are harmless.

A.Bezgodov - S.Hmadi
Tunis Open 1997
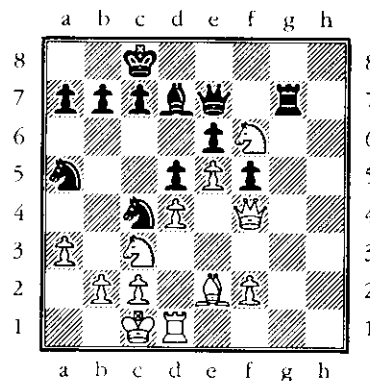
White to play

After **22 b4!** there is no immediate threat to the knight because if 23 bxa5?? White is mated on b2 after 23...♛xa3+. On the other hand, the knight cannot retreat as 22...♘c6 allows White to make a combination to destroy the defence of the other knight: 23 ♘cxd5! exd5 24 ♘xd5 ♛f7 25 ♗xc4. Now White has two extra pawns and the attempt by Black to win a piece with a pin rebounds: 25...♗e6 26 ♛h6! attacking Black's rook so that it drops off if Black takes twice on d5. White also threatens 27 ♘b6+! axb6 28 ♗xe6+. If 26...♔b8 to avoid this then 27 ♘b6!—anyway—27...♗xc4 28 ♘xc4 Xh7—what else?—29 e6! Xxh6 30 exf7 Xf6 31 Xg1! and 32 Xg8 will mate or queen the pawn.

22...c6

Black strengthens his centre to avoid the variation above but in doing so he cuts off the retreat of his knight.

23 ♘b1!

Defending a3 and so winning a piece. Black now makes a forlorn sacrifice in an attempt to open up the white king.

23...♘xa3 24 ♘xa3 ♛xb4 25 ♘b1 c5

Black's pieces are too uncoordinated to pose any real threat to the white king. Still, White's queen and the knight on f6 are rather shut out of the game. How can he bring them into action? Bezgodov shows us how.

26 ♛h6 Xf7

The only move for if 26...♖g2 27 ♕f8+ ♔c7 28 ♕d6+ wins at once.
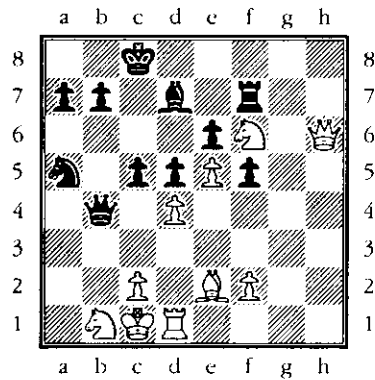
27 ♘xd5!

The key to exploiting the extra piece is to break up Black's pawn structure and regain the initiative.

White could trap the rook with 27 ♗h5? when if 27...♖e7 28 ♕f8+, but Black can turn the tables and win with 27...♘c4! and there is no good way to prevent mate on b2.

27...exd5 28 e6 ♗xe6 29 ♕xe6+ ♖d7 30 ♕xf5

Threatening 31 ♗g4. Black could safely resign now. The remaining moves were:

30...♔c7 31 ♕e5+ ♔c6 32 dxc5 ♕xc5 33 ♘c3 ♕a3+ 34 ♔b1 ♕b4+ 35 ♔a1 ♘c4 36 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 37 ♕e6+ ♔c5 38 ♘e4+!

Not even giving Black the pleasure of some checks.

38...♔b4 39 ♕xd7 1-0

M.Ulibin - C.Hanley
Isle of Man 2001

After the opening moves **1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♗d7 6 ♗e2 ♘ge7 7 0-0 cxd4 8 cxd4 ♘f5 9 ♘c3 ♗e7 10 g4 ♘h4 11 ♘xh4 ♗xh4**

White played **12 f4**. Now Black could retreat his bishop back to e7, but instead he attacked the white centre with **12...f6**.

There followed **13 g5 ♕b6** (the bishop can't escape the trap for if 13...fxg5 14 fxg5 ♗xg5 15 ♗h5+ g6 16 ♕g4! ♗xc1 — or 16...gxh5 17 ♕xh5+ — 17 ♗xg6+ hxg6 18 ♕xg6+ ♔e7 19 ♕f7 mate.) **14 ♗e3 fxe5 15 ♘a4!**

Not 15 fxe5 ♘xe5! when Black uses the pin on d4 to win an important pawn and if necessary defend the bishop on h4 with ♘g6.

15...♕a5 16 fxe5
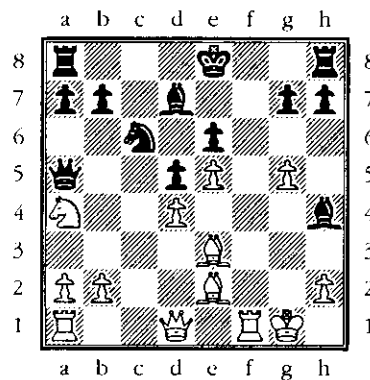
16...♘xd4?

A better attempt to exploit the discovered attack on a4 is 16...♘xe5 when 17 ♘c5! keeps up White's dangerous initiative: the bishop is still shut in on h4 and he has ideas of both 18 dxe5 or ♘xb7. Instead a way for White to go completely wrong is 17 dxe5?! ♕xa4 (not 17...♗xa4 18 ♕d4 winning the bishop on h4) 18 ♕xa4 ♗xa4 19 ♖f4??—winning a bishop?—19...♗xg5! No—the pin proves mightier than the double attack!—20 ♖xa4 ♗xe3+ and Black is two pawns up.

17 ♕xd4 ♕xa4

Black still has the trick 18 ♕xa4 ♗xa4 19 ♖f4 ♗xg5! but after

18 b4!

he had to resign as the defence of the bishop has been cut off.

A.Summerscale - N.McDonald
St Peter's De Beauvoir tournament,
London 1995

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♘c3 ♘bd7 6 ♕c2 ♗d6 7 ♗e2 0-0 8 0-0 b6 9 cxd5 cxd5

White was tempted to gain the bishop pair by 10 ♘b5?! ♗e7 11 ♘c7 ♖b8 12 ♘a6? (the last chance to change his mind with 12 ♘b5) 12...♗xa6 13 ♗xa6. However, 13...b5 cuts off the bishop's retreat. Then 14 ♘e5 ♘xe5?! Here 14...♕b6 was much simpler: 15 ♘c6 (or 15 ♕c6 ♘xe5 16 ♕xb6 ♖xb6 17 dxe5 ♘d7 winning the

---

bishop) 15...♖be8! when 16 ♗c8 ♘b8! (not 16...♖xc8?? 17 ♘xe7+) 17 ♘xb8 ♖xc8 and wins the knight.

15 dxe5 ♘e4 16 a4 ♕a5!

The pin on the a file prevents White from freeing his bishop.
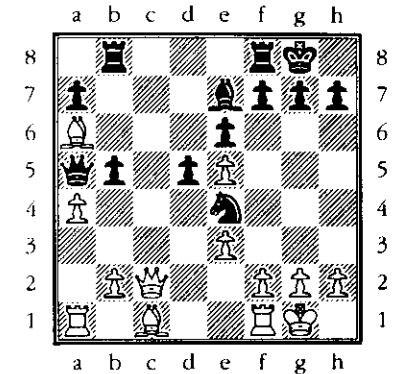
17 f3!

The best try which prepares a pawn fork to break the pin on the a file.

17...♘c5

Forced, for if 17...♘g5 18 h4 wins the knight.

18 b4! ♕xa6 19 bxc5 b4

So Black hasn't won a piece, but the passed pawn proves strong enough to win.

20 ♗b2

If White is given time for 21 ♗d4 and 22 ♖fc1, solidifying the c5 pawn, then he would be almost equal. Therefore Black has to act fast.

20...b3!
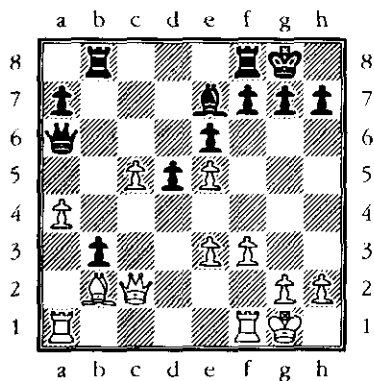
21 ♕c3

The only other way to keep c5 defended was 21 ♕c1 but then 21...♖fc8 22 ♗d4 ♗xc5! 23 ♗xc5 b2 and the pawn fork wins at least the exchange. But with the white queen on c3 White can no longer defend the c pawn with ♗d4.

21...♖fc8 22 ♗a3 ♕xa4

Now White's queenside begins to crumble.

23 ♕b2 ♕b5 24 ♖fc1 ♗xc5 25 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 26 ♖xa7 ♖xc1+ 27 ♕xc1 b2 28 ♕b1 ♕c5 0-1

Black is winning due to the double threat to the rook and 29...♕c1+ queening the pawn.

In the following game, Black's knight is perilously placed on a5 in the diagram. If White could just find a way to nudge it with b3-b4...

A.Morozevich - R.Ponomariov
FIDE World Championship,
Moscow 2001
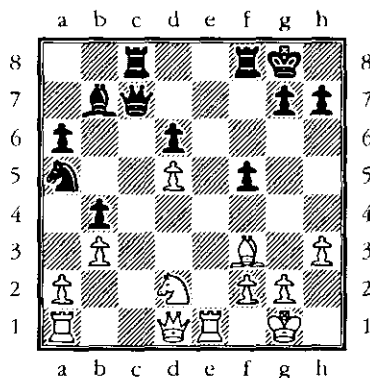
White to play

23 a3! ♕b6

If 23...bxa3 24 b4 ♘c4 25 ♖c1 and the pin wins material after 25...♘xd2 (or 25...♘b2 26 ♖xc7 ♘xd1 27 ♖xb7 with a piece more) 26 ♖xc7 ♘xf3+ 27 ♕xf3 ♖xc7 28 ♕xa3.

24 axb4 ♕xb4 25 ♖a4 ♕c3

Also hopeless is 25...♕b6 26 ♕a1 (not 26 b4 ♘c4 and the knight springs free) 26...♘xb3 (26...♖c5 27 b4 — forking — 27...♖c2 28 bxa5) 27 ♘xb3 ♕xb3 28 ♖b1—a skewer! —28...♕c2 29 ♖xb7.

26 ♖e3 ♕b2 27 ♘f1!

Not 27 ♖xa5?? ♖c1.

27...♖c5

Or 27...♖c1 28 ♕d3 f4 29 ♖e7 ♖c5 30 b4.
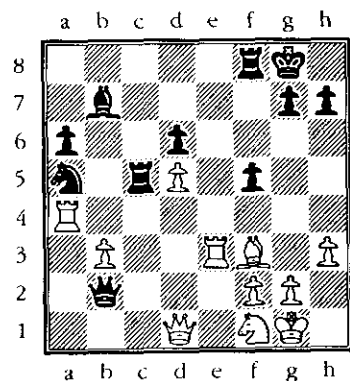
28 ♕e1

Again the b3-b4 fork has to be considered carefully. Here it fails after 28 b4? ♖c1 29 ♕d3 ♘c4.

28...♖c1

Finally the piece drops off. The counterattack that follows is rather pointless against a player of Morozevich's class.

29 ♕xa5 ♕b1 30 ♗e2 f4 31 ♖f3!

Not even allowing the slightest glimmer of an attack after 31 ♖e7 f3 32 gxf3.

31...g5 32 ♗d3 ♕b2 33 ♖c4 1-0

Twice in the notes above b3-b4 was a mistake which let the knight go free (note to moves 25 and 28); twice it was the key move in winning a piece (note to moves 23 and 27). That's why you have to calculate carefully!

M.Kobalija - V.Zakharstov
Chigorin Memorial 2001
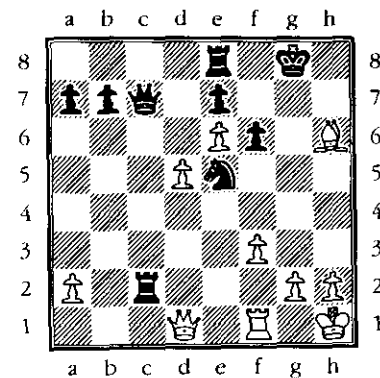
White to play

White is a rook down but **26 f4!** looked very strong as if 26...♘g6 27 ♕h5 leads to a quick win, e.g. 27...♔h7 28 ♗f8+ ♔g8 29 ♕xg6+ ♔xf8 30 ♕f7 mate). However, Black had prepared an apparently very strong counter-sacrifice.

26...♖c1!? 27 ♕xc1 ♕xc1 28 ♖xc1 ♘g4!

This is the idea: the white bishop is trapped! However, White had calculated further.

29 h3 ♘xh6
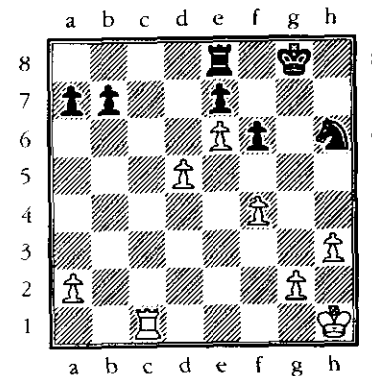
30 g4!!

The knight has slain the bishop, but now finds it can't escape from the prison cell. Three squares—g4, f5 and f7 are barred by White pawns (if Black ever plays f6-f5 then g4-g5 will keep the knight shut in). The remaining square is g8, but after ♔f8 and ♘g8, how can the knight continue its journey? The squares e7 and f6 are blocked by Black's own pawns (again if f6-f5 White plays g4-g5).

30...♖d8 31 ♖c7

White only has two pawns for the piece but has all the winning chances.

31...♔f8 32 ♖d7 ♘f7!

A nice try to get the knight involved in the game. If 32...♖xd7 33 exd7 ♘f7 34 ♔g2 and with his knight pinned down to stopping the passed d pawn and the king needing to stay within range of the passed h pawn, Black can only wait as White advances his king towards the queenside and finds a way to breakthrough.

33 ♔g2 b5 34 ♔f2 ♔e8 35 ♖xa7 ♘d6

The knight has reached the centre, but Black's other pieces are severely restricted: the king is tied down to guarding the e7 pawn and the rook can't wander far from the back rank. The advance of White's passed pawns now overstretches the defences.

36 h4 ♔f8 37 h5 f5 38 g5 ♘e4+ 39 ♔e3 ♖xd5 40 ♖a8+ ♔g7 41 h6+ ♔h7 42 ♖e8 ♘xg5 43 fxg5 ♖e5+ 44 ♔f4 ♖xe6 45 ♖f8 1-0

A.Volokitin – N.Firman
Lvov 2001
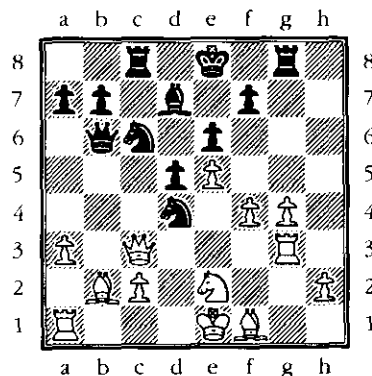
Black to play

Black began a combination with 17...♘b4! uncovering an attack on White's queen. If White captures either knight with his queen then the remaining one will fork his king and queen on c2.

18 ♘xd4! ♖xc3 19 ♗xc3

Now White has a rook and bishop and pawn for the queen. If 19...♘c6 then 20 ♘b5 followed by 21 ♘d6+ gives White the initiative. Note that in this line the counter combination 20...♘xe5? 21 fxe5 ♗xb5 22 ♖b1 a6 23 a4 would lose for Black. However, Black has no intention of going backwards with the knight.

19...♘a2!!

This disrupts White's position. The knight is immune because of the double attack after 20 ♖xa2 ♕b1+; meanwhile the threat is 20...♘xc3 destroying the defender of the knight on d4 and so winning a piece.

20 ♗d2

There is nothing better, but Black is delighted to exchange off White's excellently centralised knight for his errant one on a2.

20...♕xd4 21 ♖xa2 a6!

Now Black is aiming to exchange off White's good bishop with 22...♗b5.

22 ♗e3 ♕c3+ 23 ♗d2 ♕d4

Keeping up the attack on the f4 pawn as if 23...♕c7 24 ♗b4 followed by ♖c3, ♗d6 gives back the initiative to White.

24 ♗e3 ♕e4!

Black makes a courageous decision to play for a win even though it leads to his queen being buried.

25 ♗d3 ♕h1+ 26 ♗g1 ♖h8 27 c3!

This doesn't save the game but it is nevertheless a neat way to bring the queen's rook into the game and prevent 27...♖xh2.

27...♗b5 28 ♗xb5+ axb5 29 ♖ag2
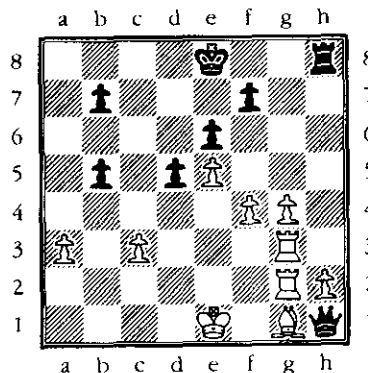
Completing the entombment of the black queen. Now begins an exciting race: Black has to use his rook via the queenside to free his queen before White succeeds in breaking through with a passed pawn on the kingside.

29...♔d7 30 f5 ♖a8 31 f6 ♖xa3 32 g5 ♖xc3 33 ♔f2 ♖xg3 34 ♔xg3

The queen is still shut in, but it requires the attention of all White's pieces. This means that away from this packed corner of the board a king and pawn endgame is taking place in which Black's king is free to challenge the white pawns.

34...b4! 35 ♔h3 b3 36 g6

White has to do or die or else the b pawn just marches through.

36...fxg6 37 f7 ♔e7

Stopping the passed pawn. The blockade of the black queen now begins to unravel as White tries for one last swindle.

38 ♖f2 ♔f8 39 ♖f1 d4!

Killing off the threat of 40 ♗c5+.

40 ♔g3 b2 41 ♖b1 ♕c6 42 ♗xd4 ♕c2! 43 ♖xb2 ♕d3+ 0-1

A double attack to end with. An enthralling game which demonstrates many of the tactical ideas discussed in this book.

The Noah's Ark Trap

Here is a little game I've made up to illustrate a common way in which a bishop can be cornered by a triangle of pawns:

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 f5

The Latvian Gambit.

3 ♗c4 ♘c6 4 d3 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♗c5 6 ♘c3 d6 7 ♗g5 h6 8 ♗h4 g5 9 ♗g3?

Instead of passively accepting his bishop's fate, White should have played 9 ♘xg5! hxg5 10 ♗xg5 with two pawns for the knight and an awkward pin on f6 which can be strengthened with 11 ♘d5. This sacrifice has occurred many times in similar positions: according to the specific situation it can be decisive or feeble, depending on how much trouble the pin causes Black. In this particular case it appears to give White good chances as there is no obvious way for Black to free himself.
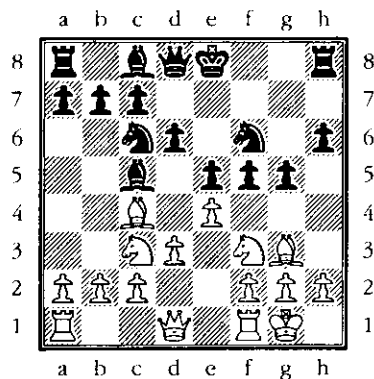
9...f4 and **White resigns** as the bishop perishes. This encirclement of the bishop by the black pawns is called the Noah's Ark Trap.

There is an opening variation of the Dutch that begins **1 d4 f5 2 ♗g5 h6 3 ♗h4**. White isn't afraid of the Noah's Ark trap as after **3...g5 4 ♗g3 f4** he can play **5 e3!**. Black has no time to take the bishop as 5...fxg3?? 6 ♕h5 is mate. If Black defends against the mate, say with 6...♘f6, then 7 exf4 just leaves White a pawn up. However, Black has a move which both prevents the mate and strengthens f4. This is **5...e5!** clearing the e7 square for the black king. Has White blundered material?

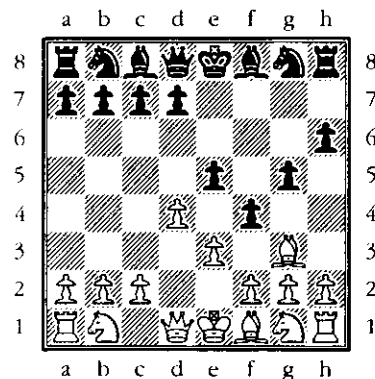No, White can play **6 exf4 exf4 7 ♗xf4! gxf4 8 ♕h5+ ♔e7 9 ♕e5+** with a double attack on the black king and rook. But this isn't the end of the story. After **9...♔f7** he has to be careful for if **10 ♕xh8?! ♕e7+!?** **11 ♗e2 ♘f6** and the white queen is shut in on h8. Black needs just two moves to win it: 12...♘c6 and then 13...♗g7. Therefore a much better move for White is the zwischenzug **10 ♗c4+!** when after **10...d5 11 ♗xd5+ ♔g6 12 ♗e4+!** (not 12 ♕xh8? ♕xd5) **12...♔f7**
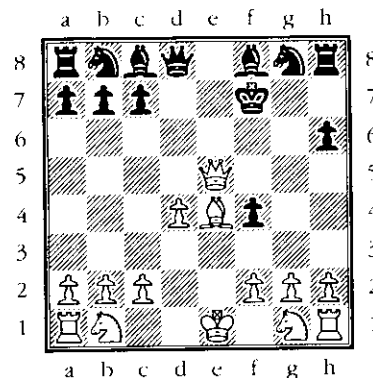
13 ♕xh8!? ♘f6 the white queen is again surrounded on h8 but with the difference that White has gained the time to win another pawn and develop his king's bishop. Black now threatens 14...♗b4+ with a discovered attack on White's queen. Therefore **14 ♘c3** seems the best move, when if **14...♘xe4** White mustn't play 15 ♘xe4? ♗b4+—falling for the trap at the second opportunity!—but **15 ♕h7+!** and **16 ♕xe4** Otherwise Black cannot keep the white queen boxed in, for example 14...♘c6 15 0-0-0 ♕e7 (threat 16...♗g7) 16 ♘d5! and the white queen is freed.

As a postscript to this, after **12...♔f7**—see the diagram above—White can ignore the rook on h8 and play to attack the black king. He has won a pretty gamelet as follows:

13 ♗d5+ ♔g6 14 ♘e2!? ♘f6 (forced for Black is mated after 14...♗g7 15 ♘xf4+ ♔h7 16 ♕e4+) **15 ♘xf4+ ♔g7?** (correct is 15...♔h7! when White has three pawns for the piece and an attack

after, say, 16 ♗e6 but the game is far from over) **16 ♘h5+ ♔g6 17 ♕g3+!** ♗g4 (if 17...♔xh5 18 ♗f7 is mate, while mate also follows after 17...♔h7 18 ♕d3+) **18 ♘xf6 ♔xf6 19 ♕h4+ ♔f5**
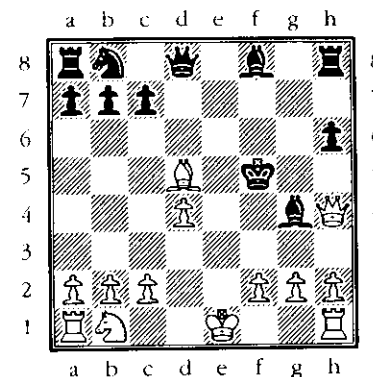
If now 20 ♕xd8? the discovered check wins back the queen. So White played **20 ♗e4+!** and **Black resigned**. If now **20...♔xe4** White has the zwischenzug **21 ♘c3+!** to rule out a future ♗b4 with check by Black when **21...♔f5 22 ♕xd8** wins the queen safely. This was the game Contini-Cazzaniga, Milan 1993.

Despite the disasters above Black has the last laugh in our discussion of this version of the Noah's Ark Trap. A recent game began **1 d4 f5 2 ♗g5 h6 3 ♗h4 c5!?**—a risky move but here it works perfectly. White was aware that Black couldn't successfully trap his bishop with 3...g5 because of the tactics discussed above and thinking that 3...c5 changed nothing to this scenario he played **4 dxc5?**
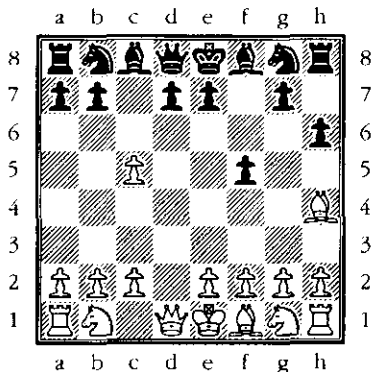
However, **4...♕a5+!** came as a rude shock. The black queen vacated the d8 square with gain of time by checking and after **5 ♘c3 g5** White was facing the loss of his bishop for insufficient compensation as if **6 ♗g3 f4** the trap springs shut and **7 e3 fxg3 8 ♕h5+** is now only a check, not checkmate, because of **8...♔d8!**. White tried **6 e4** but after **6...gxh4 7 ♕h5+ ♔d8 8 ♕xf5 ♗g7 9 0-0-0 ♗xc3 10 bxc3 ♕xc3 11 ♘f3 ♕a1+ 12 ♔d2 ♕f6 13 ♕d5 ♘c6** it was entirely hopeless for him in Handke-Berg, Bermuda 2002

The knight has a unique x-ray ability to see through matter—the power of every other piece stops at a barrier, whether on a diagonal or file, but the horse just gallops straight through.

At the 2001 World Junior Championship, Sebastian Pozzo, the English representative in the Under 10 tournament, exploited this with the following spectacular combination.

1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 ♘bd7 4 ♘f3 e5 5 ♗c4 h6?! (5...♗e7) 6 0-0 ♗e7 7 ♕e2 0-0 8 ♖d1 exd4 9 ♘xd4 ♖e8? 10 ♗xf7+!

White thought for 40 minutes before making the combination.

10... ♔xf7
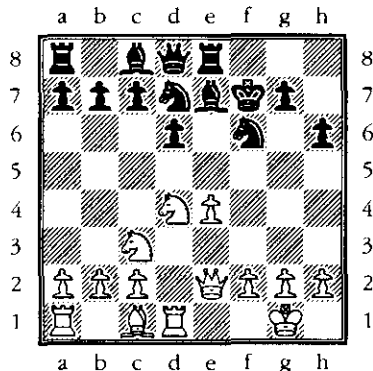
11 ♘e6!!

The point: the black queen, apparently safe within her own lines, is smothered unless the knight is captured, but this leads to a quick mate.

11...♔xe6 12 ♕c4+ d5 13 ♘xd5 ♔f7 14 ♘f4+ ♔f8 15 ♘g6 mate!

The combinational motif has a famous antecedent: Fischer-Reshevsky, New York 1958, went **1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 g6 5 ♘c3 ♗g7 6 ♗e3 ♘f6 7 ♗c4 0-0 8 ♗b3 ♘a5? 9 e5! ♘e8 10 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 11 ♘e6! dxe6** (Black is mated after **11...♔xe6 12 ♕d5+ ♔f5 13 g4+ ♔xg4 14 ♖g1+ ♔h5 15 ♕d1+ ♔h4 16 ♕g4**) **12 ♕xd8 ♘c6 13 ♕d2 ♗xe5 14 0-0** and with queen for two pieces White won easily. Fischer had the advantage that he had seen the idea in a magazine article by IM Bob Wade whereas Pozzo had to discover it for himself. In all, it wasn't a bad achievement for a nine year old!

14 Trapping Pieces Puzzles

1
I.Ibragimov - V.Zhelnin
Russia Cup, Moscow 1998

A Russian rated 2490 developed his pieces with Black as follows: **1 d4 d6 2 ♘f3 ♘d7 3 e4 g6 4 ♗c4 ♗g7**
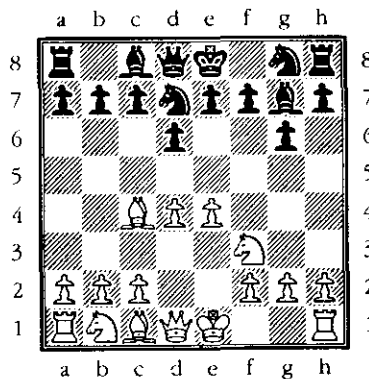
Was there anything wrong with this set up?

2
P.Harikrishna - I.Krush
Hastings 2001/2002
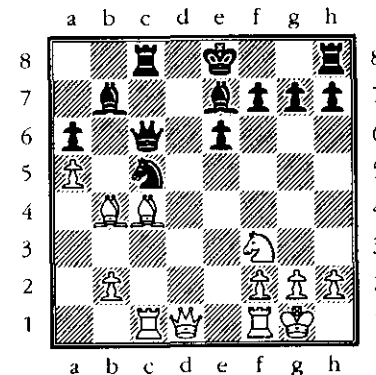
White to play

White played the calm retreat **20 ♗e2!** with an awkward pin on the knight on c5. The main threat is **21 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 22 b4** winning a piece. Black didn't fancy an inferior endgame after **20...♕d5 21 ♕xd5 exd5** (not **21...♗xd5 22 ♗xa6!** exploiting the pin) **22 ♖fd1**, and so tried for an exchange of queens without weakening her pawn structure with **20...♕a4**. Was this a good idea?

3

E.Vladimirov - G.Kasparov
Europe-Asia rapidplay match,
Batumi 2001
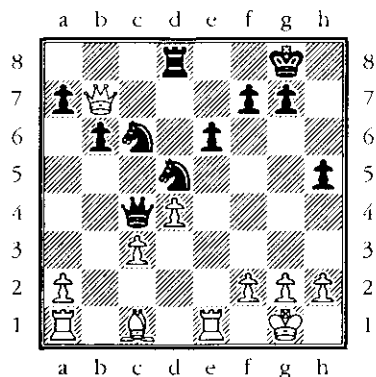
Black to play

How can Black trap the white queen?

4

A.Grobelny - B.Socko
Polish Team Championship 2000
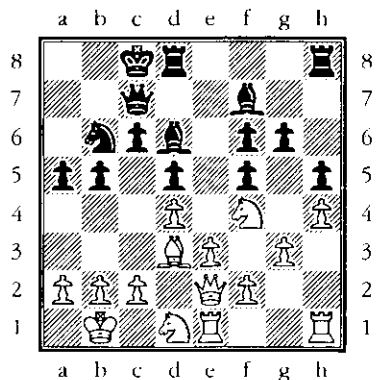
White to play

White sacrificed a piece for three pawns with **17 ♗xb5? cxb5 18 ♕xb5 ♘c4! 19 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 20 ♕xd5**. Why did this lead him to disaster?

5

F.Kwiatkowski - T.Rendle
Hastings Challengers 2000

After the opening moves

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♗e7 4 ♘gf3 ♘f6 5 e5 ♘fd7 6 ♗d3 c5 7 c3 ♘c6 8 0-0 a5 9 ♖e1 cxd4 10 cxd4 ♕b6 11 ♕a4 g5 12 ♘b3 g4 13 ♘fd2

Black played the quiet move **13...♕c7**
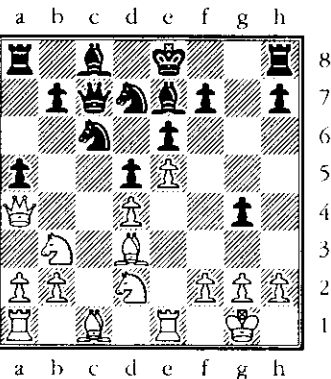
What is the threat? Put three possible replies 14 ♘f1, 14 ♗b1 and 14 ♗f1 in descending order of badness.

6

R.Redzepagic - I.Gazik
Naleczow 1986
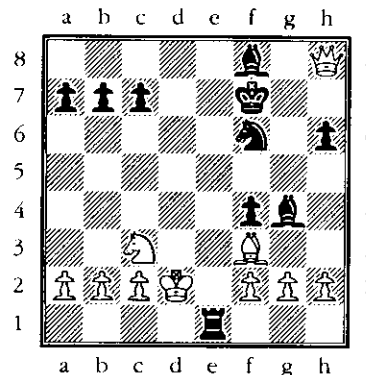
Black to play

White has just attacked Black's rook with **22 ♔d2**. What is the strongest reply?

7

K.Mah - N.McDonald
Hastings Masters 1995
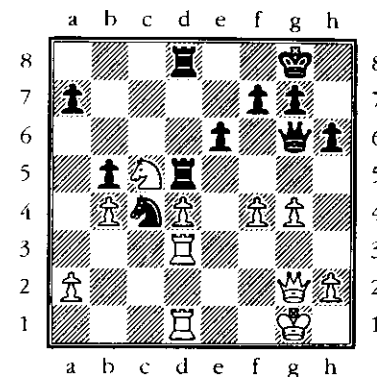
White to play

Positionally speaking, White stands worse in view of the weak d4 pawn. My opponent came up with a clever idea to try to force a draw: **35 f5!** undermining the rook on d5. Then **35...exf5 36 ♘b7 ♖8d7 37 ♘c5 ♖7d6 38 ♘b7**. Now, rather than carry on repeating, I tried **38...♘e5** attacking White's rook. Was this a good idea?

15 Removal of the Defender

I t's easy to pick off the pieces of a beginner, but when you play a good opponent you will find that their pieces have an annoying habit of defending each other from capture. Here we look at various ways in which you can break up this cosy arrangement and win material. The most obvious is the physical destruction of the defender, usually called *destroying the defender*:
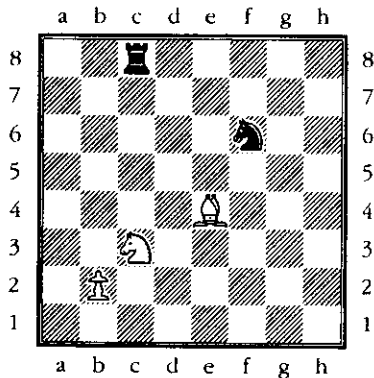
Here Black plays **1...Rxc3! 2 bxc3 Nxe4** The rook sacrificed itself for the knight to remove the defender of the bishop, but overall Black has emerged with two pieces for the rook as he then got to capture the bishop for nothing.

Another method is to force the defending piece away. This is known as *deflection*.
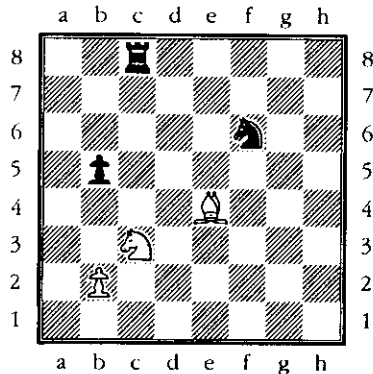
Black plays **1...b4** attacking the knight. It has to move to safety but then the black knight will capture the undefended bishop, for example if **2 Nd5 Nxe4**.

Finally the defending piece can be *overworked* or *overloaded*. This means that it has two (or more) defensive tasks, and if called on to do both at once it fails under the pressure.
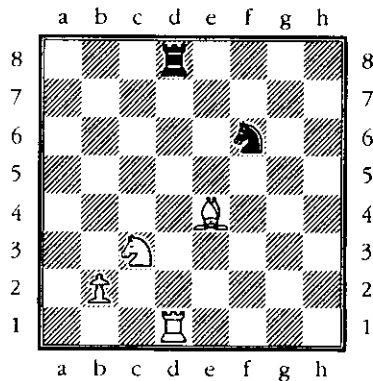
The white knight defends both the rook and bishop. Black plays **1...Rxd1** and suddenly the knight can't perform both duties, for if 2 Nxd1 Nxe4 wins the bishop. You can't be in two places at once!

Here is a startling example of deflection in a game between international class players.

K.Kulaots - J.Geller
Aeroflot Open, Moscow 2002

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 Qh4 5 Nc3 Bc5 6 Be3 Nge7??

Dealing with the threat of 7 Nf5 but missing another more insidious trap. He had to exchange twice on d4.

7 Nf3! Qh5

The only way to defend the bishop, but after

8 g4!
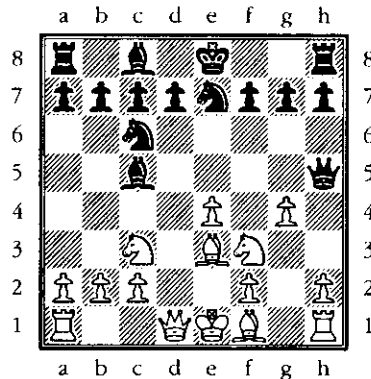
Black resigned. There are no safe squares left on the fifth rank and 8...Qxg4 9 Bxc5 leaves him a piece down.

I.Lentz - Z.Stanojos
Hastings Challengers 2002
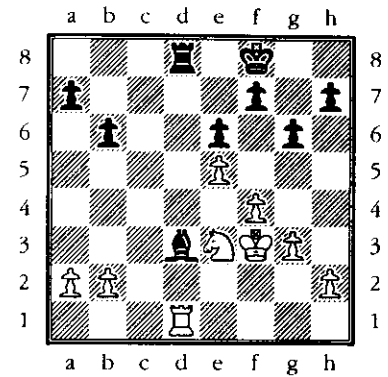
Here, the black bishop is in a pin and if White could play Ke3 he would win it. Therefore he moved his knight out of the way: **28 Ng4?** which as well as 28 Ke3 also threatens 29 Nf2. Unfortunately it leaves the rook on d1 undefended and Black exploited this with **28...Be4+!**
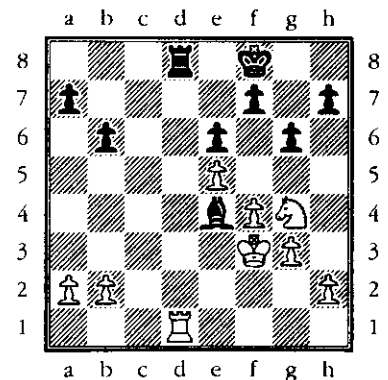
The bishop gives check and uncovers an attack on White's rook! If 29 Kxe4 Rxd1 leaves Black the exchange up. It appears that White

can save himself with **29 ♔e2** but then Black has two ways to win:

the *deflection* **29...♗f3+!?** when 30 ♔xf3 ♖xd1 again leaves Black the exchange up with an easy win.

the *fork* after **29...♖xd1! 30 ♔xd1 ♗f3+** and Black loses a whole piece.

In the game neither of these happened. White realised his mistake as soon as Black played 28...♗e4+ and **resigned**.

G.Kasparov - A.Shirov
Linares 2000
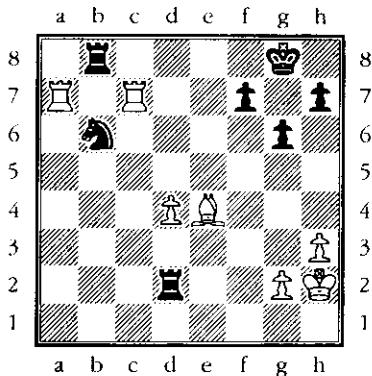
White's rooks look threatening on the seventh rank, but after 31...♖xd4 attacking the bishop White has nothing better than to force a draw with 32 ♖xf7 ♖xe4 33 ♖g7+ ♔h8 (33...♔f8 34 ♖xh7 ♔g8 is the same) 34 ♖xh7+ ♔g8 35 ♖ag7+ ♔f8 36 ♖a7 (or 36 ♖xg6 ♘d5 37 ♖h8+ ♔f7 38 ♖xb8 ♔xg6 with a drawn

endgame) 36...♔g8 37 ♖ag7+ ♔f8 etc. with a draw by repetition.

Instead Shirov played **31...♘c8**. His idea was gain time by attacking the rook on a7 to play ♘d6, guarding the f7 pawn. However, after

32 ♖ab7!

Black is losing a piece. The black rook is crowded out from defending the knight after 32...♖a8 33 ♖b4. This is stronger and simpler than 33 ♖xf7 ♘d6—forking all three white pieces!—though even here not surprisingly White's domination of the second rank allows him to reach a winning endgame with 34 ♖g7+ ♔f8 35 ♖xh7! ♘xb7 36 ♖h8+ ♔e7 37 ♖xa8 ♘d6 38 ♗xg6 ♖xd4.

32...♖xb7

The black rook is deflected from the defence of c8. Also inadequate for Black is 32...♖db2 33 ♖xb2 (or 33 ♖xc8+ immediately) 33... ♖xb2 34 ♖xc8+.

33 ♖xc8+ ♔g7 34 ♗xb7 ♖xd4 35 g4

and Kasparov converted his piece advantage in another 17 moves.

In the 2000 European Under 14 Championship one of the competitors always aimed for a kingside fianchetto as White. Thus against the French he began with this sequence of moves:

1 e4 e6 2 d3 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘f6 4 ♘gf3

Then White is ready to play 5 g3 and 6 ♗g2. These moves can be played against virtually anything Black does—White doesn't need to

think. However, one of his opponents decided to get him out of his prearranged plan with

4...♗c5!?

This provocative move aims to force White into an unfamiliar set up after say 5 e5 ♘fd7 6 d4 ♗b6 7 c3—White has a space advantage but his cosy kingside fianchetto is no longer appropriate. Instead, White carried on thoughtlessly

5 g3?? dxe4 6 ♘xe4

If 6 dxe4 ♘g4 and White can't defend f2.

6...♘xe4 7 dxe4
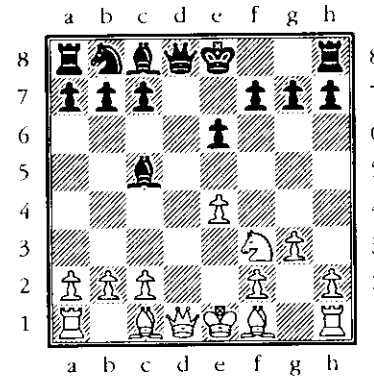
7...♗xf2+

Using deflection to win a pawn.

8 ♔xf2

If it wasn't for this reply based on discovered attack things would be even worse for White.

8...♕xd1 9 ♗b5+ ♕d7 10 ♗xd7+ ♗xd7

and Black had an extra pawn which he finally managed to convert into a win.

I hope by now you are convinced that no position can be played without having at least a quick look around for tactical ideas. If the position is quiet, there is unlikely to be any tactical response, but it doesn't do any harm to ask yourself just before you make a move:

'If I play this move, what is his best response? Will I have fallen into a tactical trap?'

G.Kasparov - M.Adams
Sarajevo 1999
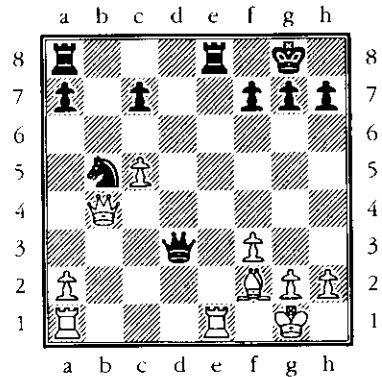
White to play

Black's knight is dangerously short of squares. The black queen has only to be nudged—or deflected—a little way aside...

27 ♖ed1!

Only thus! If 27 ♖ad1 Black has the defence 27...♖xe1+ deflecting the attack away from the queen after 28 ♖xe1.

27...a5

If 27...♕e2 28 a4 wins the knight, because the black queen has been driven from d3 and so she no longer defends the knight after ♘c3. Therefore Black has to force the white queen to a4 where she blocks the a2-a4 advance.

28 ♕a4!

Nevertheless the white queen is delighted to be driven to a4 as now she controls the d1 square. This sets up the win with ♖d1 which follows at move 31 below.

28...♕e2

Black could have tried 28...♘c3, hoping to fight on after 29 ♖xd3? ♘xa4, but instead 29 ♕xe8+! ♖xe8 30 ♖xd3 wins a rook.

29 ♖e1 ♕d3

The position is now the same as in the diagram, but with the moves ...a7-a5 by Black and ♕a4 by White inserted. As the white queen now controls d1, there is a simple win.

30 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 31 ♖d1 1-0

After 31...♕e2 32 ♖e1 ♕xe1+— forced—33 ♗xe1 ♖xe1+ 34 ♔f2 Black could try one last trap with 34...♖e2+ when if 35 ♔xe2?? (instead 35 ♔f1 c6 36 ♕xa5 wins easily) 35...♘c3+ forks the king and queen. Of course any serious chance of Kasparov falling for this trap probably disappeared sometime around his fifth birthday!

N.McDonald - D.Anagnostopoulos
Stockholm Open 1994
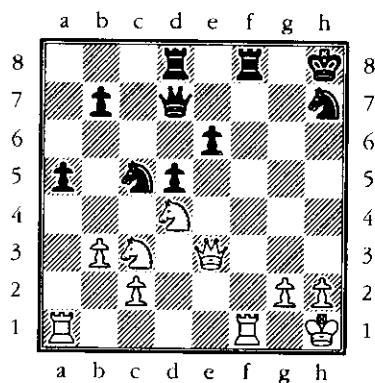
White to play

The e6 pawn is well defended in the diagram, but using the power of deflection White set up a knight fork there: 27 ♕e5+! ♕g7 If 27...♔g8 White can develop a decisive attack with 28 ♖f3! ♖xf3 (28...♕g7? 29 ♖g3) 29 gxf3! opening the g file when Black has no defence against 30 ♖g1+. It is the unobvious recapture 29 gxf3 which is perhaps the hardest part of the combination to calculate.

28 ♕xg7+ ♔xg7 29 ♘a4!

Deflecting the black knight away from the defence of e6. This is much better than being mated after 29 ♖xf8 ♖xf8 30 ♖xa5?? ♖f1. Now whatever Black plays there will be a fork on e6 winning the exchange.

29...♖xf1+ 30 ♖xf1 ♘xa4

There is a fork all the same after 30...♖c8 31 ♘xc5 ♖xc5 32 ♘xe6+.

31 ♘xe6+ ♔g6 32 ♘xd8 and Black resigned after 32...♘c5 33 ♘f7 ♘f6 34 ♘e5+ ♔g7 35 g4 ♘fe4 36 ♖f7+ ♔g8 37 ♖c7 b5 38 h4 a4 39 bxa4 1-0

A.Shirov - S.Tiviakov
Wijk aan Zee 2001
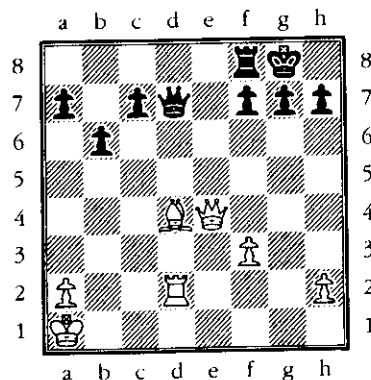
Black to move has three pawns for the piece. He played **27...♖e8**, activating his rook by attacking the white queen.

28 ♗c3!

The white queen stands her ground. This discovered attack on the black queen wrests the initiative back into White's hands. If now 28...♕xd2 29 ♕xe8 mate or 28...♖xe4 29 ♖xd7 ♖e8 30 ♖xc7 and Black has lost a vital pawn.

Here's a nasty trap White could have fallen for: 28 ♕c2 ♖e1+ 29 ♖d1?? ♕xd4+! winning a bishop and rook.

28...♕b5

Going passive is unpleasant after 28...♕c8 29 ♕d4. Now, however, Black appears to have good chances: if, say, 29 ♕g4?? then 29...♖e1+ forces mate.

29 a4!

Forcing Black to exchange queens after which all his counterplay vanishes.

29...♖xe4 30 axb5

The pawn on b5 cripples all three Black queenside pawns. These become an easy target for White's rook.

30...♖a4+ 31 ♔b2 f6 32 ♔b3 ♖f4 33 ♖d8+ ♔f7 34 ♖d7+ ♔g6 35 ♖xc7 ♖xf3 36 ♖xa7 ♖f5 37 ♔c4 ♖c5+ 38 ♔b4 ♖d5 39 ♖b7 ♖d6 40 ♔c4 h5 41 ♗d4 1-0

The passed pawn White is about to create on b5 will inevitably cost Black his rook. Meanwhile his kingside pawns are too slow to cause White any problems.

L.Fressinet - A.Morozevich
NAO Masters, Cannes 2002
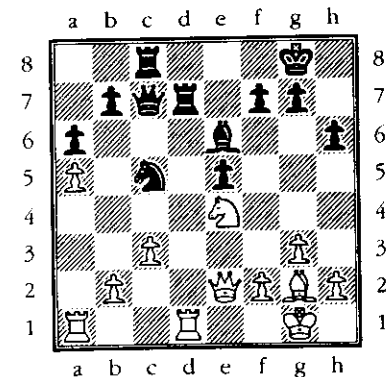
Black to play

Here Black could play 28...♘b3, going after the a5 pawn when if 29 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 30 ♖d1 ♘xa5 31 ♘d6 ♖d8 32 ♕xe5 ♗c6! and the pin on the d file is rather awkward for White. Instead Morozevich preferred to double rooks on the d file with

28...♖cd8?!

Now Black's position goes from slightly better to slightly worse.

29 ♘xc5 ♕xc5

If 29...♖xd1+ 30 ♖xd1 ♖xd1+ 31 ♕xd1 ♕xc5, attacking a5, White wins a pawn with 32 ♕d8+ (there is also 32 ♗xb7 ♕xa5 33 ♕e2! transposing to the next note) 32...♔h7 33 ♗xb7 when, if 33...♕b5, then 34 ♕b6 defends everything.

30 ♗xb7!
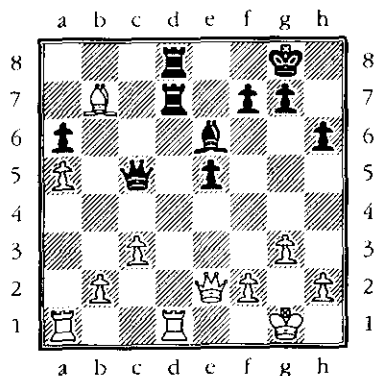
30...♗c4

Instead 30...♖xd1+ 31 ♖xd1 ♖xd1+ 32 ♕xd1 ♕xa5 33 ♕e2! ♕a1+ (if 33...♕b5 34 ♗xa6 while 33...♔h3 34 ♕xa6! stops 34...♕a1+) 34 ♔g2 a5. It is reasonable to assume that when calculating

ahead before playing 28...♖cd8 Morozevich had got this far. It's a fair number of moves, but in view of all the forced captures this isn't a particularly difficult calculation, especially for a 2700 player! Here the Russian may have assumed he would be at least OK after 35 ♕xe5 ♕xb2 attacking White's bishop: in fact the passed rook pawn even gives him the edge. However, there is a sneaky tactic concealed in the position: going a bit further 36 ♕b8+! ♔h7 37 ♗e4+ wins Black's queen through a discovered check! It is curious that many commentators thought that Morozevich had chosen the inferior continuation at move 28 because he had simply missed 30 ♗xb7, when in all probability the real reason was this subtle tactic many moves deep!

31 ♕e1 ♕b5?

This seems to be a misguided winning attempt. Instead 31...♖xd1 32 ♖xd1 ♖xd1 33 ♕xd1 ♕xa5 White's passed c pawn gives him the advantage, but it is nothing decisive.

32 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 33 ♗e4 ♗b3

Not 33...♕xb2 34 ♖b1 when 34...♕a3 35 ♖b8+ or 34...♕d2 35 ♖b8+ ♖d8 36 ♕xd2 both cost Black his queen.

34 ♗f3 ♖d6

Perhaps 34...f5 was the best chance to confuse matters as now White frees himself.

35 ♕e2 ♗c4 36 ♕e4 ♗d5

The final error, losing more material, but it was already hopeless, for if 36...♕xb2 37 ♖b1 wins.

37 ♕xe5 ♕xb2 38 ♖f1 ♗xf3 39 ♕xd6 ♕xc3 40 ♕f4 ♗e2 41 ♖c1!

Beginning a clever little manoeuvre to kill off any Black swindles by exchanging queens.

41...♕d3 42 ♕b8+ ♔h7 43 ♕b1 1-0

J.Shaw - N.McDonald
Hastings Challengers 1994
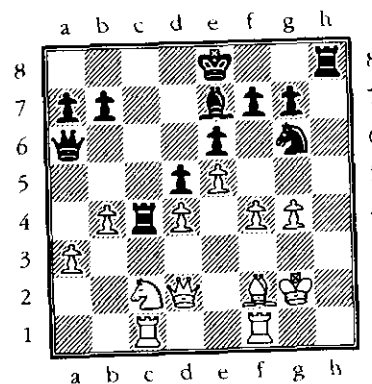
Black to play

Here Black realised that the key to a winning breakthrough was to conquer the f4 square at any cost. Therefore he played **24...♖c3!** threatening 25...♖d3 chasing the queen away from the defence of the f4 pawn.

25 ♘e1

If 25 ♕xc3 ♘xf4+ 26 ♔f3 (if 26 ♔g3 or 26 ♔g1 then 26...♘e2+ forks the king and queen) 26...♖h3+ 27 ♔g3 ♖xg3+! 28 ♔xg3 ♘e2+ wins the queen.

25...♕e2!

A stronger form of persuasion. **White resigned** here as he will lose a rook after 26 ♕xe2 ♘xf4+ 27 ♔g1 ♘xe2+ while if 26 ♕xc3 ♘xf4+ 27 ♔g3 ♖h3+ 28 ♔xf4 g5 is mate.

These mating combinations didn't suddenly appear as if by magic—they were the result of gaining command of a key square.

J.Timman - M.Gurevich
Bundesliga, Germany 1999
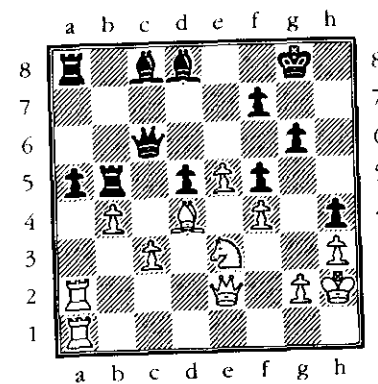
White to play

Black is under pressure along the a file, but it appears the defence is holding firm. After all, the a5 pawn is attacked three times but guarded three times. However, with the simple **28 ♕e1!** Timman introduced another target—the h4 pawn. The bishop on d8 is overstretched or overloaded in having to defend both rook pawns. The game went **28...♗b7 29 bxa5 ♖bxa5 30 ♖xa5 ♖xa5 31 ♖xa5 ♗xa5 32 ♕xh4!**

This doesn't actually win a pawn but it makes possible a decisive

breakthrough along Black's weakened dark squares.

32...♗xc3 33 ♕d8+ ♔h7 34 e6!

Discovering the threat of mate on h8 and so ensuring that the pawn runs through.

34...♗xd4 35 exf7 ♗xe3

Or 35...♗g7 36 ♕g8+ ♔h6 37 f8=♕ ♗xf8 38 ♕h8 mate.

36 ♕g8+ 1-0

It's mate next move.

B.Larsen - M.Adams
Najdorf tournament,
Buenos Aires 1991
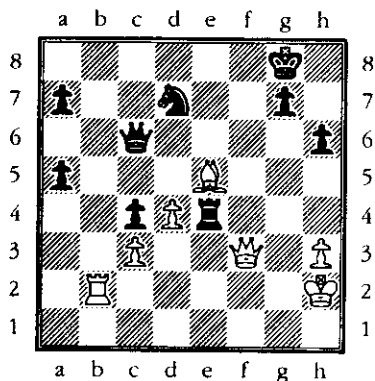
White to play

Black threatens to pick up a pawn with 38...♘xe5 39 dxe5 ♕d5, but rather than retreat the bishop Larsen tried 38 ♕f5. Black responded 38...g6! aiming to drive away the queen and win the pawn. The game ended abruptly after 39 ♖g2? ♖e2! 0-1 when Adams proved himself king of the pins! However, 38...g6

is obviously a very loosening move and there were two more sensible moves for White to consider:

Firstly 39 d5?!—hoping to drive the black queen away from the defence of g6. If 39...gxf5? 40 dxc6 and White wins. Knights are just awful at stopping passed pawns, as you see after 40...♘xe5 41 c7, when the black pieces are in a tangle. So Black should play 39...♕b6! as suggested by Adams. The queen prefers to be captured on b6 where it denies White a passed pawn on the c file. In essence, this is a refined desperado move. 40 ♖xb6 gxf5 41 ♖g6+ ♔f7 42 ♖g7+ ♔f8 43 ♖xd7 ♖xe5 and with his king near the white passed pawn Black has winning chances in the endgame.
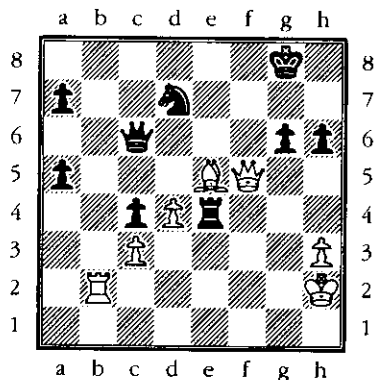
Secondly, 39 ♕f3! ♘xe5 40 dxe5 ♕d5 41 ♖b8+ ♔h7 42 ♖e8! ♖xe5 and now, based on the fact that the rook on e5 has to stay guarding the queen, White can force a neat draw by perpetual check with 43 ♖e7+! ♔g8 44 ♖e8+ ♔h7 45 ♖e7+ etc. The game would also end in perpetual check after 42...♕d2+ 43 ♔g3

♖e3 44 ♖e7+ etc. A pinned piece by no means loses all its powers! Here the white queen is controlling the squares f7 and f8—the inability of a king to walk through check applies even if the piece barring it is pinned.

There were three examples of deflection in this analysis. One was in the game with 39...♖e2! when the rook couldn't afford to be forced away from the g file; then there was 39...♕b6! in the analysis to 39 d5 which entices the rook to a square where it is attacked; and finally after 39 ♕f3 the perpetual was made possible by the fact that the black rook couldn't allow itself to be deflected from the defence of the queen.

N.Miezis - U.Adianto
Olympiad, Istanbul 2000
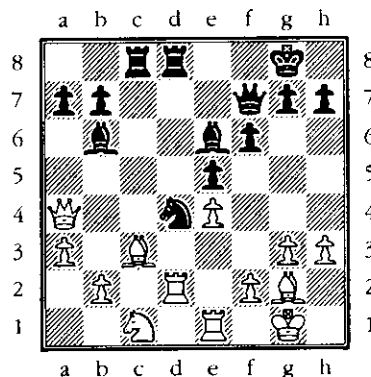
Black to play

Black made a combination to destroy the defender of the rook on d2:

22...♖xc3! 23 bxc3 ♘f3+ 24 ♗xf3 ♖xd2

Black regains his material, with a rook on the seventh rank, a dark-squared bishop which now has no rival in the white camp and two white pawns are under attack—on f2 and h3. There followed **25 ♖e2 ♗d7! 26 ♕b3 ♕xb3 27 ♘xb3 ♖d3 28 ♖d2**

If 28 ♔g2 simplest looks 28...♗xh3+ 29 ♔xh3 ♖xf3 30 ♔g2 ♖xc3.

28...♖xf3 29 ♖d7 ♖xg3+! Remember the pins! **30 ♔f1 ♖xh3 31 ♘d2 ♖xc3 32 ♖xb7 ♖c2! 33 ♖d7**

If 33 ♔e1 ♗a5 with a diagonal pin or 33 ♔e2 ♗a5 with a lateral pin.

33...♗d4 34 ♘b3 ♗xf2

And despite being three pawns down White battled on for a rather pointless number of moves before resigning.

N.McDonald - O.Romanishin
Tbilisi, 1986
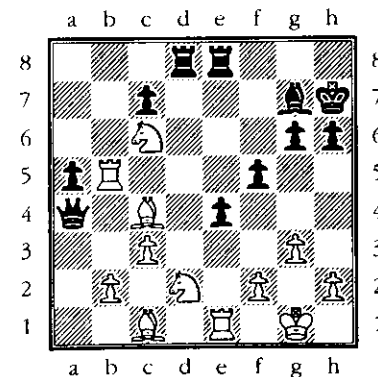
Black to play

At the moment White has three pieces for the queen, but this

changed after **26...♖xd2!** when if 27 ♗xd2 ♕xc4. Nor does 27 ♗b3 ♕xb5 help. So I tried **27 b3 ♕a2** defending the rook. **28 ♖xa5**
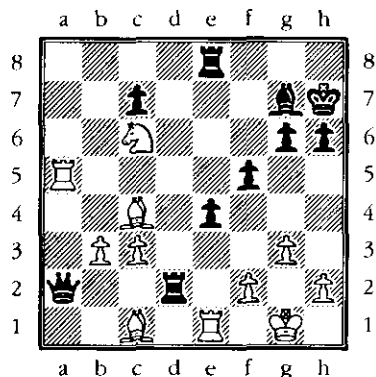
There have been very few occasions in my adult chess career when I have been hit by a completely unexpected tactical blow. Here Romanishin started thinking and I couldn't understand why. As far as I could see he only had one move and that was 28...♕c2, saving his queen. Then I intended to resist with 29 ♗xd2 ♕xd2 30 ♖e2 ♕xc3 31 ♖a7, though with only a rook and bishop for a queen and pawn White is losing in the long run.

However, Romanishin carried on thinking and I sat there puzzled, until finally he played:

28...e3!!

Black offers his queen as a temporary loan so that following 29...exf2+ he will gain a new one with a rook as interest. In avoiding this I went meekly to my doom.

29 ♔h1 exf2 30 ♖f1 ♕c2 31 ♗xd2 ♕e4 mate

A.Moen - N.McDonald
Hastings Challengers 1999
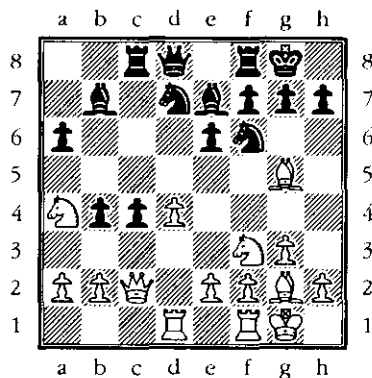
White to play

In this position White went seriously astray with **15 ♘c5? ♘xc5 16 dxc5 ♕a5!** when after **17 ♕xc4**—or else he remains a pawn down after say 17 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 18 ♘g5 ♗xg5 19 ♗xb7 ♖xc5, though that was undoubtedly the best fighting chance—**17...♖xc5** the double attack on the queen and the bishop on g5 proved fatal:
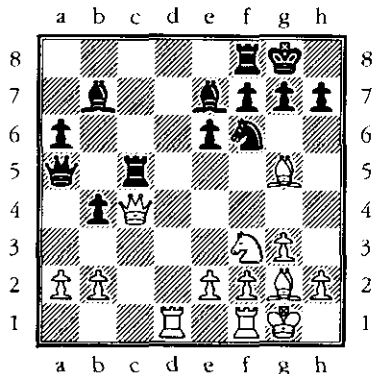
18 ♕h4

If 18 ♕f4 ♘h5! wins a piece—the queen is attacked and so is the bishop on g5 for a third time.

On 18 ♕d3 White escapes after 18...♗xf3? 19 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 (or 19...♗xg2 20 ♗xe7) 20 ♗xf3, but 18...♖g5! 19 ♘xg5 ♗xg2 20 ♔xg2 ♕xg5 leaves Black with two pieces for a rook.

18...♗xf3 Destroying the defender. **White resigned** as, after 19 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 attacking his queen, he has no time for 20 ♗xf3 and so remains a whole piece down. The lateral action of the black rook as in this example is easy to underestimate.

16   Removal of the Defender Puzzles

1
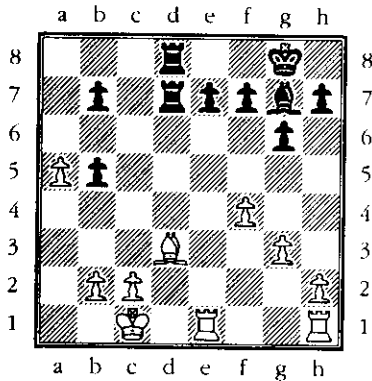
White played **1 ♗xb5** and after **1...♖d5** he saw that moving his bishop would allow **2 ♖xa5** while defending it with **2 c4** would give Black a lot of counterplay after **2...♖d2**. Therefore he decided to play **2 ♖d1**. Was this a good idea?

2

You decide to have a go at the Morra Gambit:

1 e4 c5 2 d4 cxd4 3 c3 dxc3 4 ♘xc3 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 e6 6 ♗c4 ♘f6 7 0-0 ♕c7 8 ♕e2 ♘g4
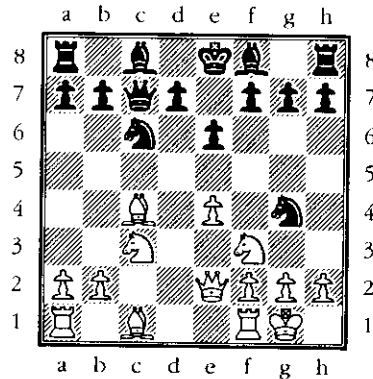
Now is it safe to play **9 h3** to drive away the knight?

3
N.Zeliakov - A.Morozevich
FIDE World Championship,
Moscow 2001
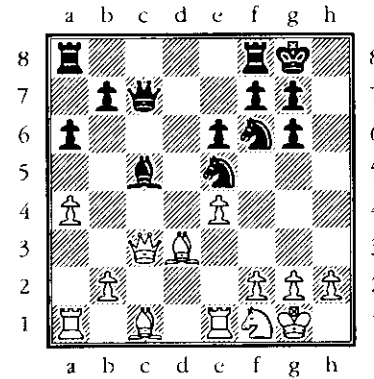
Black to play and destroy the defender!

4
M.Adams - M.Gurevich
Wijk aan Zee 2002
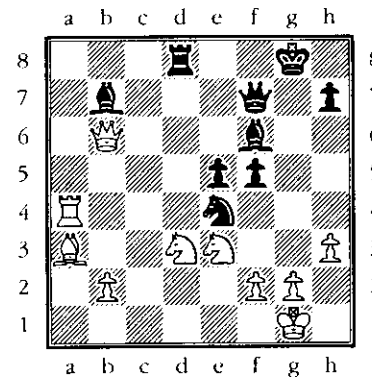
White to play. How did he smash Black's defences?

5
P.Thipsay - G.Prakash
Indian Championship, Nagpur 1999
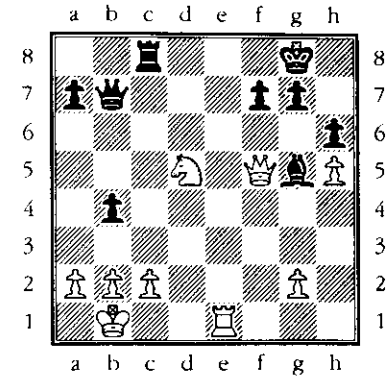
White to play

Thipsay used the principle that a piece doesn't defend the square it stands on to great effect. Can you see how?

6
G.Kasparov - J.Timman
Wijk aan Zee 2000
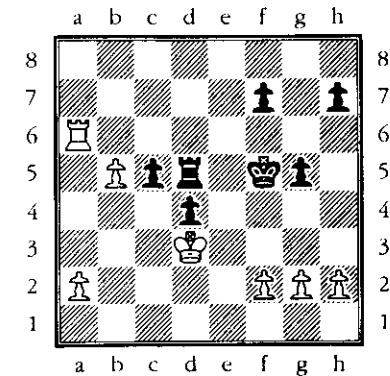
White to play

Here after **33 ♖c6** the Dutch Grandmaster played **33...c4+**. He reasoned that if **34 ♔xc4** he has the trick **34...d3! 35 ♔xd5 d2** when his pawn queens, so White has to settle for **34 ♖xc4 ♖xb5** when after **35 ♖xd4 ♖b2** Black regains his pawn with a draw. Was Timman right and how should the game end?

7
L.Asztalos - A.Alekhine
Bled 1931
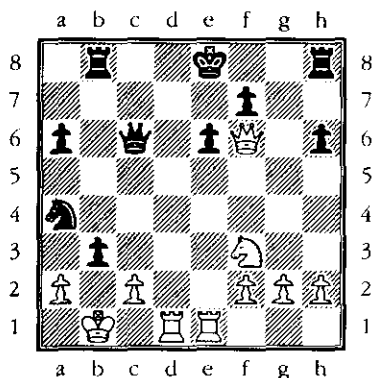
White to move

A little bit of history. The Hungarian Master Asztalos had World Champion Alekhine under great pressure in the diagram position. Here he played **24 axb3** and a gleeful Alekhine couldn't resist telling him that he could have played **24 ♕xh8+**. "I feared the reply **24...♔e7**" replied his opponent. Who was right? (incidentally such a conversation between two of the World elite during a game is virtually unthinkable these days.)

8
J.Emms - J.Hodgson
British Championship,
Plymouth, 1989

After the opening moves

1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♞f6 3 ♞c3 c6 4 f4 ♛a5 5 ♕f3 d5 6 e5 ♞e4 7 ♗d3 ♞a6 8 ♞ge2

GM Julian Hodgson, then rated 2535, offers you the e pawn with **8...♞b4**
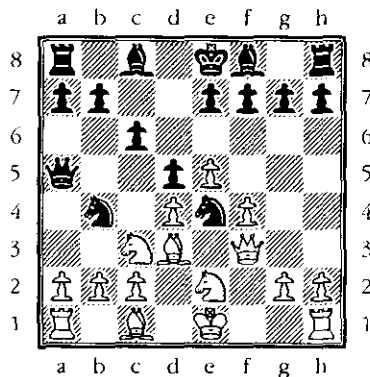
Should you take it with **9 ♗xe4 dxe4 10 ♕xe4**, or are you afraid something nasty will happen?
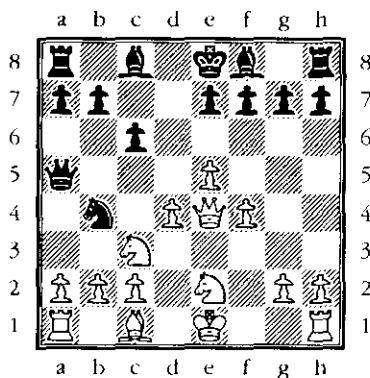
9
G.Von Buelow - D.Poldauf
Bundesliga, Germany 2002
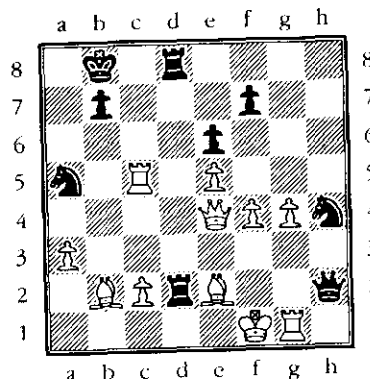
White to move

It is White's move and he looks in big trouble as Black is threatening to win with 28...♖d1+ 29 ♗xd1 ♖xd1+. However, he came up with the clever idea of using the bishop on b2 to defend his back rank: **28 ♗c3!?** when there followed **28...♖d1+ 29 ♗xd1 ♖xd1+ 30 ♗e1**
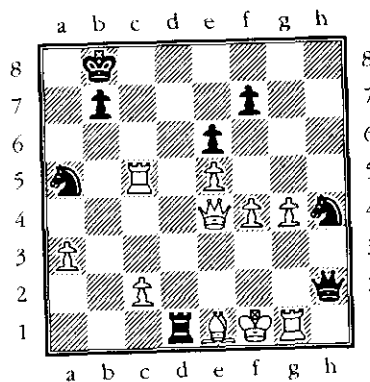
and White was the exchange and two pawns up. Had he escaped?

10
M.Ulibin - E.Sveshnikov
USSR Team Championship 1988
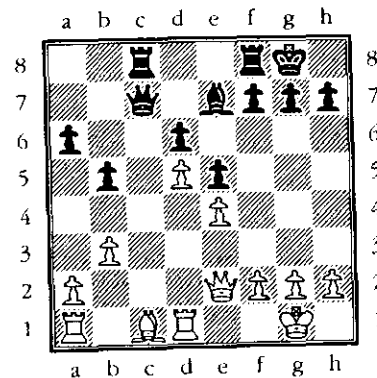
Black to play

Black played **18...♕c2**

White didn't want to give Black a rook on the seventh rank after 19 ♕xc2 ♖xc2 and so played

19 ♕g4
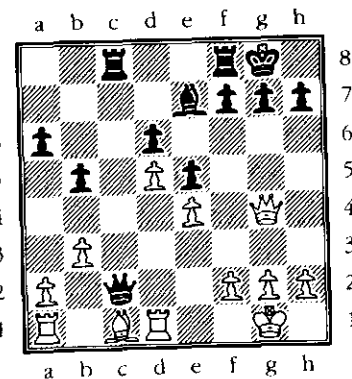
What is White's threat? What is the best way to meet it?

17 Zwischenzug and Desperado

Zwischenzug means in German 'in between move'. It involves delaying, hopefully advantageously, what had seemed a necessary move, such as the recapture of a piece. The zwischenzug doesn't have to be check, but it has to be of a sufficiently forcing nature to distract the opponent from taking advantage of the delay.
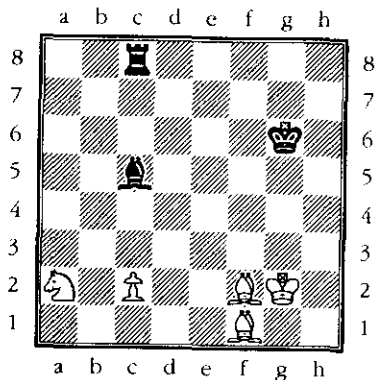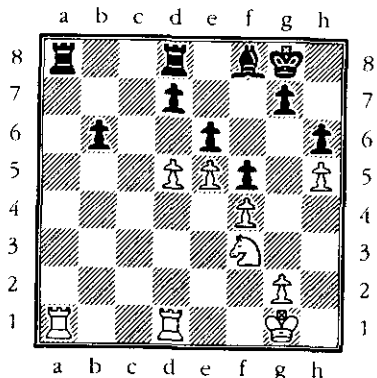
Black to move plays **1...♗xf2** which, besides capturing the bishop, discovers an attack on the pawn on c2. If now 2 ♔xf2? ♖xc2+ 3 ♔g3 ♖xa2 and Black has won a knight and pawn. Instead White plays the zwischenzug **2 ♗d3+!** This defends the c2 square and gives check, so Black has no time to save his bishop. After **2...♔h6** only now does White take the bishop: **3 ♔xf2** and c2 is safely defended.

White to move is a pawn down but he could bury Black's bishop with 1 d6!. It would never see daylight and White would have all the time in the world to round up the b6 pawn with his knight and rooks and *then aim an attack at d7*. However, White didn't see any reason why he shouldn't exchange off a pair of rooks first with **1 ♖xa8**, when 1...♖xa8? 2 d6 entombs the bishop all the same. But Black was aware of the power of a zwischenzug and activated his bishop with **1...♗c5+!**. The obvious recapture on a8 can wait a move. After **2 ♔h2 ♖xa8** the bishop could no longer be trapped and Black had all the winning chances.

Related to zwischenzug, because it often involves the delay of an apparently forced capture or recapture, is the concept of a desperado. A desperado move basically involves a devil may care lunge by a doomed piece to inflict as much damage, material or positional, on the opponent's forces. After all, if a queen is going to be lost anyway, it's better to get a bishop or even a pawn for it than nothing at all!
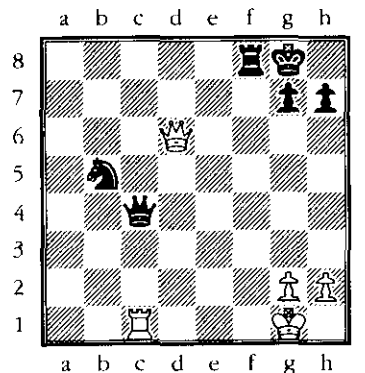
It is White's move. Black is a piece up and both queens are attacked. If 1 ♖xc4 ♘xd6 and Black keeps his extra piece. Rather than allow this straight swap, White should sell his queen as dearly as possible since it is going to be lost anyway. After **1 ♕xf8+!** Black has no time to save his queen as he must play **1...♔xf8**. Then **2 ♖xc4** and White has emerged the exchange up. The move 1 ♕xf8+ is referred to as a desperado move; in this case it is the queen that goes desperado as she has nothing to lose.

In the following game, Black could play 25...♘xb4, but he worked out a more efficient way of regaining the pawn—or so he thought!

G.Buckley - P.Harikrishna
Ron Banwell Masters, London 2001
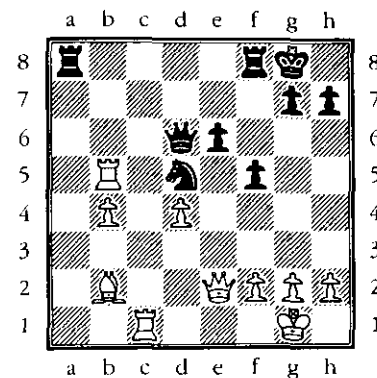
Black to play

25...♕a6 26 ♖e1 Harikrishna, a strong GM, now calculated 26...♖ab8 27 ♖xb8 ♕xe2 28 ♖xe2 ♖xb8, when he regains the pawn with 29...♖xb4, but after **26...♖ab8** —incidentally accompanied by a draw offer!—**27 ♖xb8** he resigned.
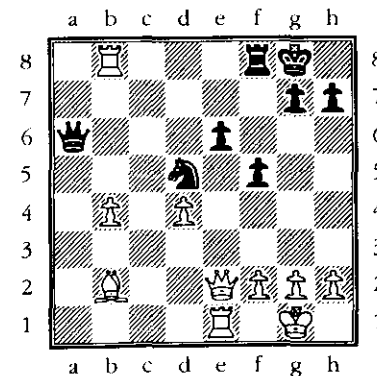
He noticed to his horror that if 27...♕xe2 White has the zwischenzug/desperado 28 ♖xf8+! when after 28...♔xf8 29 ♖xe2 Black has lost a rook.

G.Kasparov - J.Polgar
Linares 1997

Black to play

The pin on e8 looks fatal, but Judith Polgar gambled with **39...♗xb5** Perhaps she was hoping for a massive swindle along the lines of 40 ♖xf8 ♖b1 41 ♖xf7+ ♔g6 42 dxe6 ♗xf1 43 ♖g8+ ♔f5 44 e7?? ♗h3+ 45 ♗e1 ♗d4+ 46 ♔h1 ♖xe1 mate.

Kasparov found a simple way to avoid all traps:

40 ♗xb5 ♖xd8 41 ♗d3+! 1-0

A killer zwischenzug—White moves his bishop to safety with check, and is ready next move to play 42 ♖xd8 regaining his rook and remaining a piece up. Therefore Polgar resigned.

In the next position, with the courage of calculation, Kasparov played....

G.Kasparov - I.Sokolov
Sarajevo 1999

White to play

27 ♗xb4!

Snatching the pawn looks extremely risky as White falls into an awkward pin on the c file after

27...♖c8 28 ♗xe7 ♖xc6
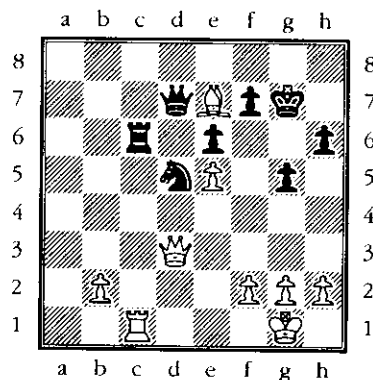
29 ♗f6+!

...but as usual the World No.1 has everything worked out! This is an essential zwischenzug before capturing on c6. If 29 ♖xc6 ♕xc6 30 ♗f6+ can be answered by 30...♘xf6 31 exf6+ ♔xf6 with a level game.

29...♔g8

If 29...♘xf6 30 exf6+ (not 30 ♕xd7? ♖xc1+ and White will be mated) with three possibilities for Black:

(a) 30...♔xf6 appears good for Black at first glance as if White captures either black rook or queen he is mated in one move. Then you see 30 ♕f3+!! followed by 31 ♕xc6 and you realise Kasparov's complete mastery of tactics.

(b) Another horrible way for Black to lose is 30...♔f8 31 ♖xc6! ♕xd3 32 ♖c8+ with a back rank mate to follow.

(c) The only defence for Black would be 30...♔g8 31 ♕b1 ♖xc1+ 32 ♕xc1 ♕d4 winning the f6 pawn, though, after 33 h4!? ♕xf6 34 hxg5 hxg5 35 b4, the passed pawn gives White serious winning chances in the endgame. A similar endgame eventually arises in the game.

30 ♖xc6 ♕xc6 31 ♕d2! ♕a4 32 h3 ♕e4 33 f3 ♕f5

Now Black is ready to play ♘xf6 or ♕xe5 if the bishop retreats. Perhaps Sokolov thought he had a safe game, but Kasparov had another surprise waiting.

34 ♕a5!
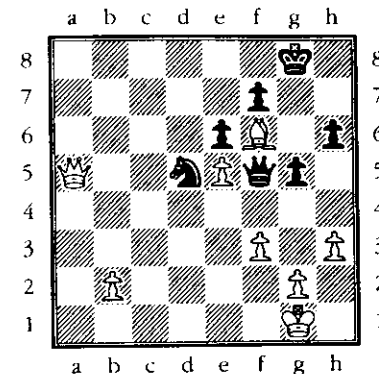
34...♘xf6

If 34...♕b1+ 35 ♔h2 ♕xb2 36 ♕a8+ ♔h7 37 ♕h8+ ♔g6 38 ♕g7+ ♔h5 (or 38...♔f5 39 ♕h7+ ♔f4 40 ♕e4 mate) 39 ♗xg5! hxg5 40 ♕h7 mate.

35 ♕d8+! ♘e8

Utterly hopeless are 35...♔h7 36 ♕xf6 ♕b1+ 37 ♔h2 ♕xb2 38 ♕xf7+ ♔h8 39 ♕xe6 or

35...♔g7 36 ♕xf6+ ♕xf6 37 exf6+ ♔xf6 38 ♔f2 when the outside passed pawn is decisive.

36 ♕xe8+ ♔g7 37 ♕b5

Now the passed pawn eventually wins the game for White.

37...♕c2 38 ♕b4 ♕e2 39 ♕d4 h5 40 b4 ♕e1+ 41 ♔h2 h4 42 b5 ♕g3+ 43 ♔h1 ♕e1+ 44 ♕g1 ♕xe5 45 ♕b1 ♕d5 46 b6 ♕b7 47 ♕b4 e5 48 ♕c5 ♔g6 49 ♕c7 1-0

R.Wojtaszek - J. Sikora Lerch
Prerove 2001
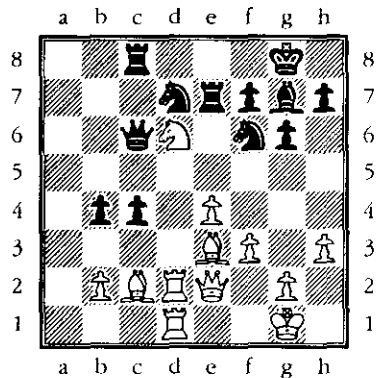
White to play

White could play 25 ♘xc8 ♕xc8 when he is the exchange up. His next move after that would probably be 26 ♗a4 to bring his bishop into the attack. Instead he found something even stronger:

25 ♗a4!

Immediately!

25...♕c7

If 25...♕xa4 26 ♘xc8 ♖e8 (we are back in the realm of knight forks after 26...♖e6 27 ♕xc4 ♖c6? 28 ♘e7+) 27 ♕xc4 leaves White the exchange and a pawn up.

26 ♘xc8

Only now does White take the rook.

26...♕xc8
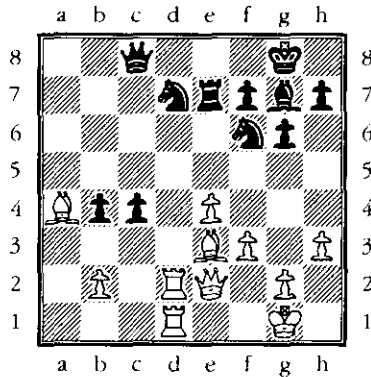
If you compare the position to that after 25 ♘xc8 ♕xc8 26 ♗a4, you will see that White has gained a tempo by playing 25 ♗a4 first. This is because Black was forced to waste a move on 25...♕c7 and only then 26...♕xc8.

Perhaps you are thinking this doesn't make much difference—whichever way White plays he is the exchange up with pressure. In fact, the difference is significant as White can save himself the trouble of trying to exploit his extra material by using the extra move to break through with

27 e5!

whereupon **Black** immediately **resigned**. If 27...♘xe5 28 ♖d8+ wins the queen so Black would be a rook down after 27...♘e8 28 ♗xd7 or 27...♖xe5 28 ♗xd7 ♘xd7 29 ♖xd7.

A.Shirov - J.Polgar
Linares 2001
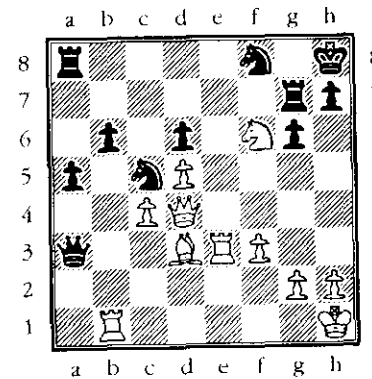
Black to play

White has a dangerous looking initiative on the kingside. Black played 42...♘xd3 hoping to ease the pressure after 43 ♖xd3 ♕c5 offering the exchange of queens. Instead Shirov took his chance with

43 ♘e8!

Threatening mate on g7 so Black has no choice.

43...♖xe8 44 ♖xe8 ♔g8 45 ♖e3!

Now the rook returns to go after the knight. Not however 45 ♕f6 ♖f7 and Black defends successfully.

45...♘f2+ 46 ♔g1
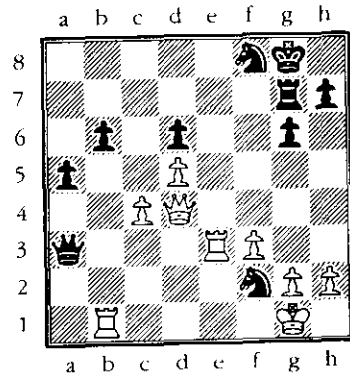
46...♕a4

If 46...♕a2 White could pick up the knight with 47 ♖f1 but even stronger would be 47 ♖b2 regaining the knight whilst keeping the other rook well placed on the e file. If after the latter move Black sacrificed the queen with 47...♕xb2 48 ♕xb2 ♘d1 49 ♕xb6 ♘xe3 50 ♕xe3 White should win the endgame fairly easily.

Judith Polgar is a fine tactician herself. Her crafty game move prepares to answer 47 ♔xf2?? with 47...♕c2+!—double check picking up a rook.

47 ♖e2!

Shirov is having nothing to do with swindles. Black has run out of tricks and now the knight is lost.

47...♖c7 48 ♔xf2

The most efficient way to capture as it maintains the queen and rook on e2 on active squares. In what follows the white king ends up on some rather odd squares but he proves very safe. Meanwhile the white pieces start to feed on Black's weak pawns.

48...♖xc4 49 ♕xb6 ♖c5 50 ♕xd6 ♕d4+ 51 ♔g3 ♖xd5 52 ♕f4! ♕c5 53 ♖c1 ♖g5+ 54 ♔h4 ♖h5+ 55 ♔g4 ♕d5 56 ♖d2 ♕e6+ 57 ♔g3 a4 58 ♕c4 ♖a5 59 ♖e2! 1-0

A neat concluding move which doesn't allow Black to bring up the knight to support the passed pawn after 59 ♕xe6+ ♘xe6. Now 59...♕xc4 60 ♖xc4 wins easily, e.g. 60...♘d7 61 ♖e7 ♘b6 (or 61...♘c5 62 ♖e5) 62 ♖b4 ♖a6 63 ♖e6 and wins the knight.

J.Lautier - N.McDonald
European Cup, Breda 1998
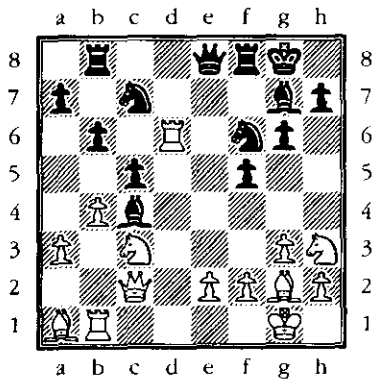
Black to play

Here Black, to move, trustingly attacked the white knight with **17...cxb4?** intending after the 'obvious' recapture 18 axb4 to protect the bishop with 18...b5 when Black has a fairly safe position. However, you can't afford such careless thinking, especially against a player rated 2645! There came **18 ②e4!** uncovering an attack on the bishop and straight away I realised I was in big trouble. Black has no time for 18...b5 as White has three pieces hitting f6.

18...②xe4?

Most players react badly to a surprise. Here Black had to grin and bear it with 18...fxe4 19 ♕xc4+ ♕f7 (not 19...♖f7 20 ②g5) 20 ♕xf7+ ♖xf7 21 ②g5 ♖ff8 22 axb4. The weakness on e4 and the two bishops give White a clear edge, but Black can fight on.

19 ♕xc4+
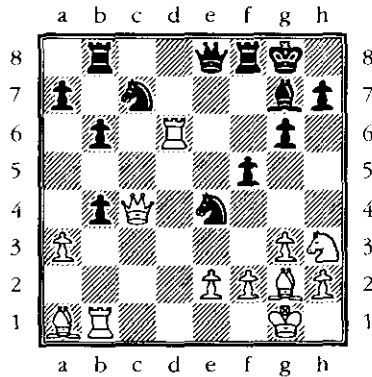
19...♖f7

White has a neat win with a sham queen sacrifice after 19...♕f7 20 ♖d7! ♕xc4 — no choice — 21 ♖xg7+ ♔h8 22 ♖xc7+ ♕c3 23 axb4! — much more precise than 23 ♗xc3 ②xc3 — 23...♕xa1 24 ♖xa1 and White is a piece up. If instead 19...♔h8 20 ♗xg7+ ♔xg7 21 ♗xe4 then 22 ♕xc7 wins.

20 ♗xe4
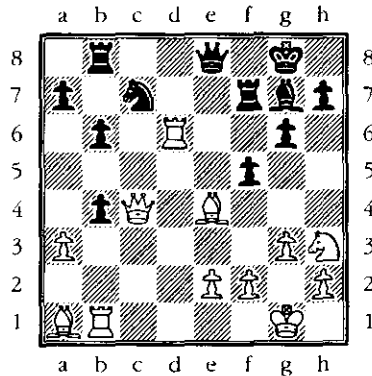
20...②b5

Useless is 20...fxe4 21 ②g5 or 20...♕xe4 21 ♕xf7+!, a familiar forking combination, 21...♔xf7 22

②g5+ ♔g8 23 ②xe4 ♗xa1 24 ♖xa1 fxe4. White has the extra exchange and 25 axb4 is a trivial win. However, when annotating this game in *Informator 73* Lautier gives 25 ♖ad1: the most precise as if now 25...bxa3? 26 ♖d8+ ♖xd8 27 ♖xd8+ ♔f7 28 ♖d7+ ♔e6 29 ♖xc7 a2 30 ♖c1 wins. Otherwise after say 25...②b5+ 26 ♖d8+ ♖xd8 27 ♖xd8+ ♔f7 28 axb4 the win is even easier for White than after 25 axb4 as White has succeeded in exchanging off Black's remaining rook. I guess this precision is what makes Lautier one of the best players in the world (with two wins over Kasparov!) as few players would look beyond 25 axb4.

With the game move I hoped to set a few swindles: the knight attacks the rook and also threatens to fork on a3. However, with accurate counterattacking moves White removes his pieces one by one from hanging squares.

21 ♖e6! ♕d7 22 ♗c6 ②xa3 23 ♕b3!

It is the potential pin on the rook on f7 which will destroy Black.

23...♕c7 24 ♖d1 ♗xa1
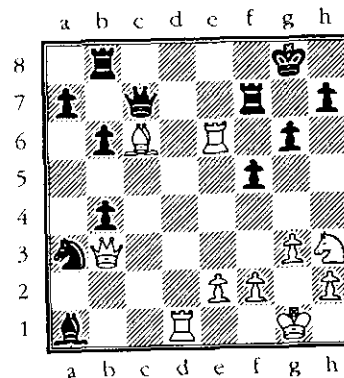
As before with 17...cxb4 above I was hoping for some respite by trading pieces.

25 ②g5!

And once again Lautier deigns to be slowed down by recapturing! White immediately exploits the looming pin on the f7 square.

25...♗c3 26 ②xf7 ♕xf7 27 ♖d7 1-0

If the queen moves from f7 the discovered check by the rook on e6 will be butchery, so I resigned. Lautier played with iron precision throughout this game.

In the next example White essayed the double-edged Rosentreter Gambit in the King's Gambit:

A.Fedorov - M.Adams
European Team Championship,
Pula 1997

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ②f3 g5 4 d4 g4 5 ♗xf4!? gxf3 6 ♕xf3 d6 7 ②c3 ②c6 8 ♗c4 ♕h4+ 9 ♗g3 ♕f6 10 ♕xf6 ②xf6 11 0-0
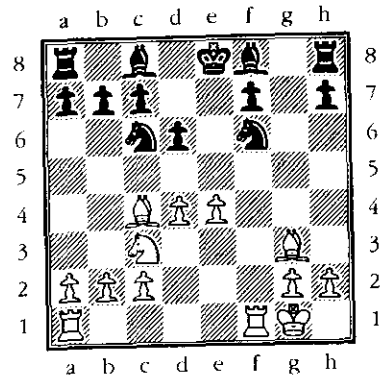
Queens have been exchanged and Black is still a piece up. However, White is menacing an attack down the f file. Michael Adams decided to give back the piece to complete his development and ease the pressure, but he had the worse endgame after 11...Øxd4 12 Ħxf6 Åe6 13 Åd3 Åg7 14 Ħff1 Øc6 15 Ød5 0-0-0 16 c3 due to the weakness on f7 and eventually lost.

The interesting question is what happens if Black holds onto his extra piece with **11...Åe7**, then after **12 e5 dxe5 13 dxe5** if Black plays the obvious 13...Ød7? he faces annihilation with 14 Åxf7+ Êd8 15 Ħad1: his king is stuck in the centre and there is no answer to 16 e6.

However, rather than move the knight from f6, Black can apply the theme of zwischenzug to good effect: **13...Øa5!** counterattacks against the white bishop which is besieging f7.
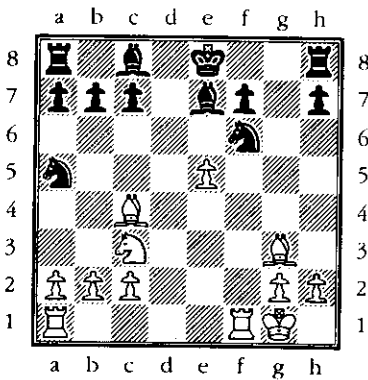
(a) If **14 exf6?!** then the zwischenzug **14...Åc5+!** saves the bishop and buys time for **15 Êh1 Øxc4**, eliminating White's dangerous bishop. The position then looks better for Black, for example if **16 Ød5** planning a fork on c7, Black could even consider **16...0-0**—yes, it is still legal!

(b) Therefore White's best reply might be **14 Åxf7+!?**. The bishop becomes a desperado and gives itself up for a pawn, as it is going to be captured anyway. Then after **14...Êxf7** White has a useful zwischenzug before capturing on f6: **15 Øe4!?** which prevents Åc5+ —as would occur after 15 exf6 Åc5+. Then the position is unclear.

V.Topalov - A.Shirov
Linares 1998
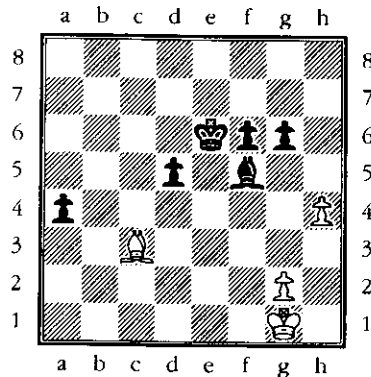
Black to play

The following example is probably the most famous desperado move of all time. Black wants to bring his king up the board to shepherd home one of his extra pawns. The quickest route is via f5 and e4. However, the black bishop

is blocking the f5 square, and if Black moves it out of the way then White has time to bring up his own king. For example, 47...Åb1 48 Êf2 Êf5 49 Êe3 and with the d pawn unable to go past the d4 square the win, if it is possible, is extremely difficult: such is the drawing power of opposite-coloured bishops.

Instead, Shirov came up with the splendid

47...Åh3!!

Black wants the bishop out of the way and this is the most forceful way of doing it! By attacking the g2 pawn it slows down the arrival of the white king in the centre.

48 gxh3

This wins a piece, but it loses the race to keep the black king out of e4. If instead 48 Êf2 Êf5 49 Êf3 (giving up a third pawn with 49 Êe3 Åxg2 is hopeless, despite the opposite-coloured bishops) 49... Åxg2+! 50 Êxg2 Êe4 and the black king and passed pawns will defeat the white bishop in similar style to the game.

48...Êf5 49 Êf2

If White is given one free move, then Êe3 would mean that all danger had past. It is for this reason that Tartakower talked about 'the tragedy of one tempo'.

49...Êe4! 50 Åxf6

If 50 Êe2 f5, and how can White stop all three passed pawns?

50...d4 51 Åe7 Êd3 52 Åc5

Or 52 Êe1 Êc2 and the d pawn advances.

52...Êc4! 53 Åe7 Êb3 0-1
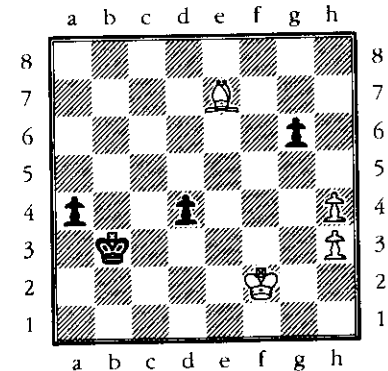
A possible finish is 54 Êe2 Êc2 55 Åb4 d3+ 56 Êe1 a3 57 Åxa3 d2+ and the pawn queens.

18 Zwischenzug and Desperado Puzzles

1
G.Kasparov - M.Adams
Sarajevo 1999
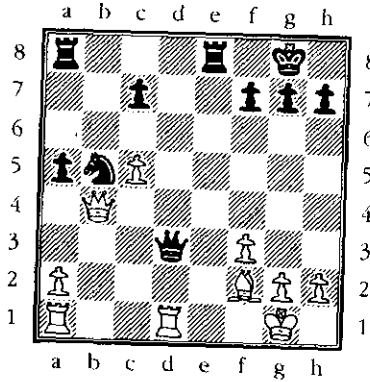
White to play

In the game Kasparov-Adams, given in the chapter on deflection, White played 28 ♕a4. Can he play a desperado with **28 ♕xa5** as Black's queen is hanging?

2
N.McDonald - J.Szabolcsi
First Saturday, Budapest 1996
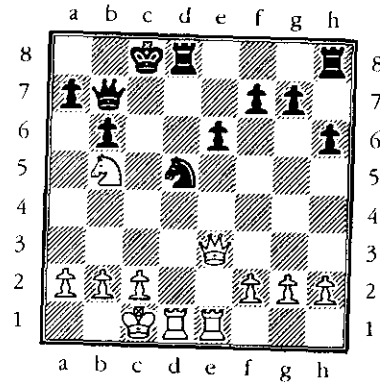
White to play

White played **22 ♕a3**, threatening a fork on d6, and the game finished **22...♕d7 23 c4 a5 24 ♕b3!** and **Black resigned** as he loses a piece. Was **22...♕e7** a better try?

3
V.Anand - J.Lautier
Investbanka, Belgrade 1997
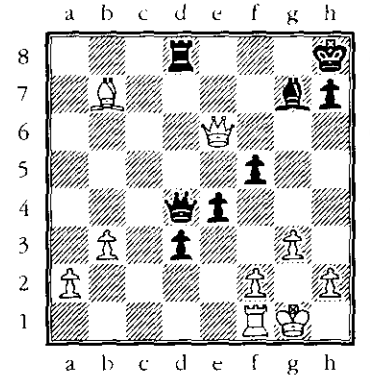
Black to play

Black has a wonderful passed pawn. After **40...d2** it would be hopeless in the long run blocking it with 41 ♖d1, so Anand staked everything on **41 ♕xf5**
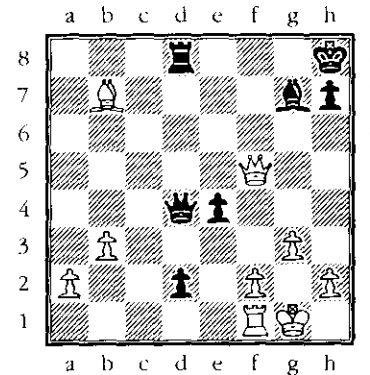
Now what should Black play?

4
D.Hennig - N.McDonald
Wichern Open, Hamburg 1997
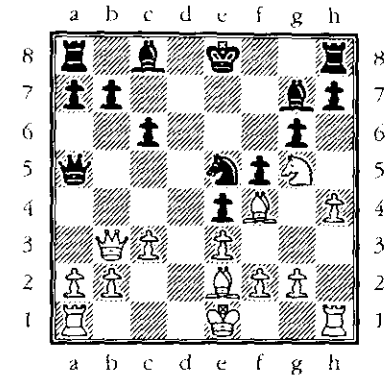
Black to play.

The diagram position was reached in one of my games in a tournament in Hamburg. It was played in the last round and last round games tend to start very early in the morning—which perhaps explains the tactical blindness both players showed.

It is Black to move and White threatens 14 ♗xe5 ♕xe5 15 ♕f7+ ♔d8 16 ♖d1+, so I played **13...♕b6** offering the exchange of queens. The game then continued **14 ♗xe5 ♕xb3 15 axb3 ♗xe5** and the ending was eventually drawn. What did both players miss in this sequence and how big is the resulting advantage?

5

R.Bates - E.Grivas

Hampstead 1998
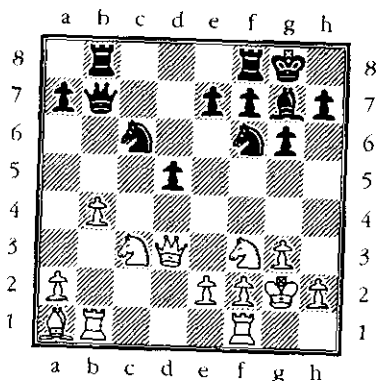
White to play

After **20 ♘xd5 ♘xd5** White could recapture on d5 when 21 ♕xd5 ♗xa1 22 ♖xa1 ♘xb4 23 ♕xb7 ♖xb7 is equal. However, in the game White had the idea of playing the zwischenzug **21 ♗xg7** to avoid getting his rook deflected to the a1 square. Then if **21...♔xg7**

22 ♕xd5 Black cannot regain his pawn: **22...♘xb4? 23 ♕xb7 ♖xb7 24 a3** wins the knight—this is because the white rook is *still* on b1. Nor can Black play **21...♘dxb4** because of **22 ♕c3 ♘xa2 23 ♕a1!** winning material or **21...♘cxb4 22 ♕d4** again defending the bishop and threatening **23 a3**.

So Bates played **21 ♗xg7**—and was soon staring at a lost position!
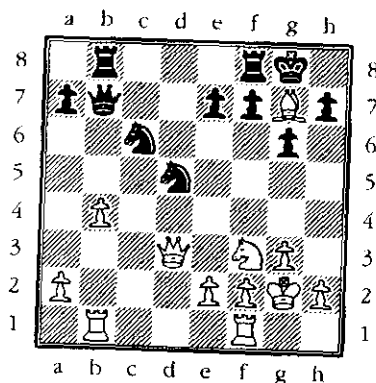
What had he missed in his calculations?

19 Passed Pawns

N o specific tactical device is considered in this chapter. Instead we will have a look at typical combinative themes generated by the presence of passed pawns. As will be seen in some of the later examples, the problem for the defender may be the severe pressure that a passed pawn places on the co-ordination of his pieces rather than any imminent danger of the pawn reaching the eighth rank.

Perhaps the most famous exploit by a passed pawn is seen in the following diagram.

E.Bogoljubow - A.Alekhine

Hastings Six-Masters 1922

White to play

After **29 ♖xa5 b4! 30 ♖xa8** Black ignored the decimation of his army in order to queen the pawn: **30...bxc3!? 31 ♖xe8 c2! 32 ♖xf8+ ♔h7 33 ♘f2 c1=♕+ 34 ♘f1**. Now White's pieces are tied up and Black won material after **34...♘e1!** (threatening mate on f3!) **35 ♖h2 ♕xc4 36 ♖b8 ♗b5 37 ♖xb5** (or if 37 ♘d2 ♕c1 38 ♖xb5 ♘f3+ 39 ♔g2 ♕g1+ 40 ♔h3 ♕xh2 mate) **37...♕xb5** and Alekhine won the endgame.

Alekhine rated this game as one of the two best he had ever played. What makes it special is the triumph, against all the odds, of the passed pawn—it just keeps on going while all the time common sense is screaming loudly at Black to recapture something. The positional laws of chess seem to have been overthrown by the sheer brilliance of Alekhine's genius. Quite understandably the former World Champion himself had no wish to dispel that notion when he later annotated the game!

However for all the aesthetic appeal of the combination it depends on deep calculation and enormous tactical flair rather than some mystery of genius. Remember that the laws of strategy aren't set in stone as are the rules of the game. Thus the rules require that a bishop must always move diagonally and a pawn can never capture forwards,

no matter what the situation is on the board. In contrast positional laws are imprecise approximations based on what has turned out well in the past. From an early age we learn that it is normally a very good idea to take the opponent's pieces rather than push a pawn. But this doesn't mean there aren't instances in which a pawn may be worth more than a queen.

Alekhine knew that knights are *notoriously bad at stopping passed* pawns and he would also have seen that the rook on g2 is curiously helpless at defending the first rank. Therefore the passed pawn cannot be stopped if the other rook is enticed away. These considerations *gave him the idea for his splendid* combination. First Black takes a queen and then can't be stopped from creating a new queen; White meanwhile takes a pawn, two rooks and a queen. Black's material sacrifice is much less than it seems *at first glance.*

Fortunately for me I have no claims to being a great player, but, given the position, I would certainly have considered the idea of 30...bxc3. I might have rejected it because in assessing the position afterwards I wouldn't have believed it was worth cashing in the passed pawn just to keep White tied up. (and objectively speaking I would have been right!—see below) The greatness of Alekhine was his fine feel for the initiative which allowed him to properly evaluate such positions well in advance.

As a matter of fact, from the diagram after **29 ♖xa5 b4 30 ♖xa8**

there is a much simpler win with the straightforward **30...♛xa8**. Then 31 ♛c2 ♘e1 wins the exchange and *keeps the passed pawn, so White* has to try **31 ♛b3**. Now **31...♛a1!** leaves White defenceless against the threat of 32...♗a4 picking up the knight on d1. For example 32 ♛b1 ♖a8 threatening **33...♛xb1+ 34 ♘xb1 ♖a1** winning a piece. It is unlikely that White would have lasted another 10 moves after 30...♛xa8, whereas he fought on for another 23 moves after 30...bxc3, all the way to a king and pawn endgame.

Alekhine chose the beautiful, creative path and the game would never have been remembered if he had opted for the workmanlike 30...♛xa8. Nevertheless, I think the combination loses some of its lustre because it wasn't the most efficient way to win.

G.Milos - N.Short
Buenos Aires 2000
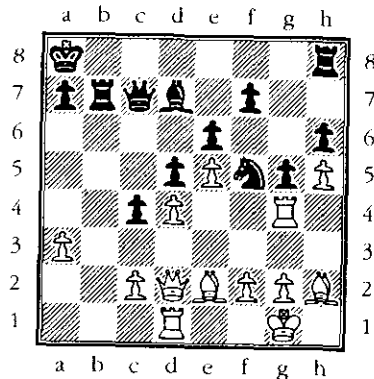
Black to play

White has a rook on a rather odd square on g4 where it is temporarily

'stalemated'. The bishop on h2 also has little scope at the moment. Nevertheless, if White succeeds in breaking through on the kingside with f2-f4 etc. then his strange piece deployment will be justified. Therefore Black has to act fast on the queenside before White can activate his pieces.

25...♗a4! 26 f4 ♖b2 27 ♖c1 c3 28 ♛d3

Now White is ready for 29 fxg5, but he was struck down by

28...♖xc2! and Milos **resigned**. After 29 ♖xc2 ♗xc2 30 ♛xc2 ♘e3 31 ♛c1 ♘xg4 32 ♗xg4 c2 there is no way to prevent ♖b8 and ♖b1 forcing through the passed pawn.

L.Johannessen - H.Nakamura
Bermuda 2002
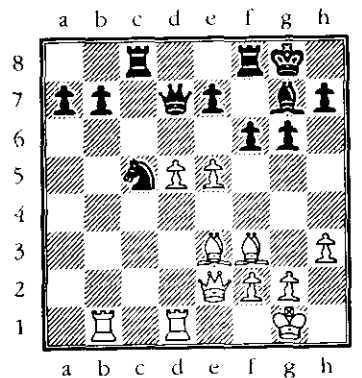
White to play

21 d6!

Passed pawns must be pushed!

21...b6

Terrible is 21...fxe5 22 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 23 ♖xb7. Perhaps the lesser evil was 21...exd6 22 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 23 ♖xb7 ♛e6 when White has the pleasant choice between 24 ♖xd6 ♛xe5 25 ♛xe5 fxe5 26 ♖dd7 when his rooks dominate the seventh rank or 24 exd6 ♛xe2 25 ♗xe2 keeping a strong passed pawn.

22 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 23 e6 ♛c8

Black is stifled by the passed pawn after 23...♛e8 24 dxe7 ♛xe7 25 ♖d7 ♛e8 26 ♖bd1 and there is no defence to 27 e7 followed by ♖d8.

24 dxe7 ♖e8
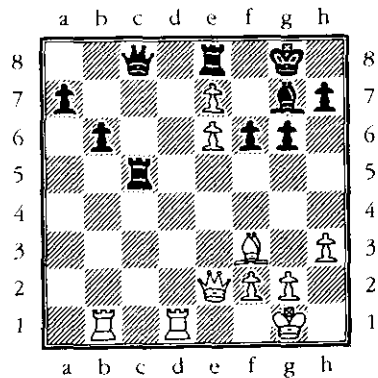
At first it appears that Black has succeeded in avoiding the danger, but White has prepared a combination that clears all obstacles in the way of the e6 pawn.

25 ♖d8! ♖xd8 26 exd8=♛+ ♛xd8 27 e7 ♛e8 28 ♛e6+ ♔h8 29 ♖d1

Threatening 30 ♖d8.

29...♖c8 30 ♛xc8! ♛xc8 31 ♖d8+ 1-0

E.Berg - S.Mannion
Hastings Challengers 2001/2002
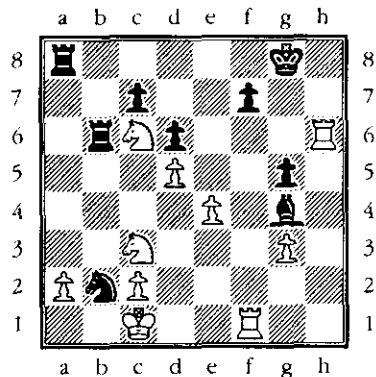
Black to play

Black played **26...Ra3** trusting that the attack on the knight would be highly awkward for White. However, White simply ignored the threat and started a brilliant combination: **27 e5!! Rxc3**

If 27...dxe5 28 ♘e4, threatening a fork on f6, gives White a big attack.

28 e6 ♗f3

A desperate attempt to block the f file as Black is mated after 28...fxe6 29 ♘e7+ ♔g7 30 Rg6+ ♔h7 31 Rh1+ ♗h3 32 Rxh3.

29 e7 Re3 30 Rxf3!

There goes the bishop as the rook on e3 is overloaded.

30...Re2 31 Re6!

An elegant finishing touch based on the theme of interference.

31...Rxe6 32 dxe6 1-0

Nothing can stop the pawn queening.

N.McDonald - D.Bronstein
Wrexham 1995
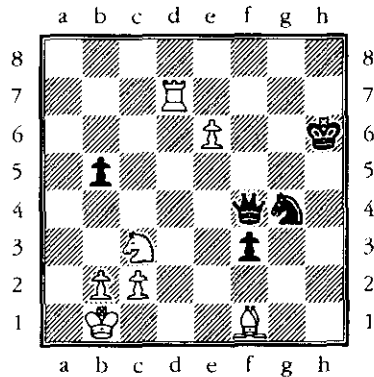
Black to play

In the diagram Black has queen for rook and knight but it is nevertheless a sharp and unclear position.

36...♕e5

Black's first task is to neutralise White's passed pawn.

37 e7 ♘f6 38 Rd3 f2!

White was hoping to escape after 38...♕e1+ 39 ♔a2 ♕xf1 40 Rd6! ♔g7 41 Rxf6.

39 ♘d1 ♕xe7 40 Re3

Not 40 ♘xf2 ♕e1+ winning a piece.

40...♕c5 41 ♗d3

Here I imagined that regaining the pawn with Rf3 etc. would be straightforward, but Bronstein has other ideas.

41...♘g4! 42 Rg3

If 42 Rf3 ♕e5 43 ♘xf2 ♘xf2 wins a piece as if 44 Rxf2? ♕e1+.

Now it appears White is safe as 42...♔g5? or 42...♔h5? allow the pin 43 ♗e2.
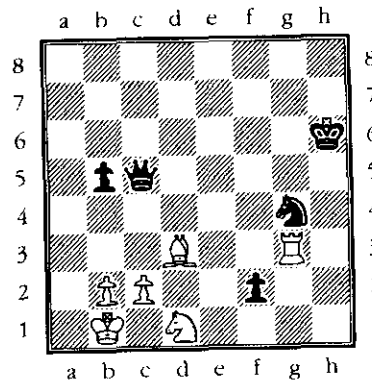
42...♕d5!!

A magical move as White loses to a double attack after 43 Rxg4 f1=♕! 44 ♗xf1 ♕xd1+ 45 ♔a2 ♕xg4.

43 ♘e3 ♘xe3 44 Rxe3 ♔g5!

Much better than 44...♕xd3 45 Rxd3 f1=♕+ 46 ♔a2 when Black has queen for rook. However, if White leaves his rook on the third rank, defended by a pawn, with the pawn defended by the king, how can Black breakthrough with his king to win the game? Bronstein rules out this blockade by bringing up his king immediately.

45 ♔c1 ♔f4 46 Rh3

Losing at once but if 46 Re8 ♕xd3 47 cxd3 (47 Rf8+ ♕f5) 47...f1=♕+ 48 ♔c2 and the fact that White's pawns have been split up prevents him from setting up the solid blockade discussed in the last note.
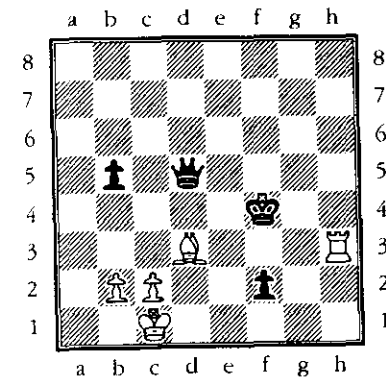
46...♕e6! 0-1

The final double attack is on the rook and e1. **White resigned** as if 47 Rh1 ♕e1+ and mate next move.

G.Kasparov - M.Adams
Linares 2002
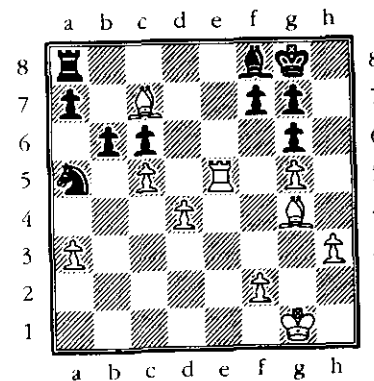
Black played **31...♘c4** expecting the rook to retreat. Instead there came the amazing breakthrough **32 d5!** White is prepared to give up the exchange to create a passed pawn. There followed **32...♘xe5 33 ♗xe5 cxd5 34 c6** and the passed pawn

aided by the two bishops won a piece: **34...f5 35 gxf6 gxf6 36 ♗e6+ ♔g7 37 ♗g3 ♗xa3 38 ♗xd5 ♖c8 39 c7 ♗c5 40 ♗b7 ♖xc7 41 ♗xc7** Kasparov quickly wrapped things up in the endgame: **41...a5 42 ♗c6 g5 43 ♔f1 ♔g6 44 f3 ♔h5 45 ♗e8+ ♔h6 46 ♔e2 f5 47 ♗d8 1-0** Black's pawns and king are paralysed and he can only wait as White brings his king to e5 and forces Black to play f5-f4 whereupon ♔f5 followed by ♗xg5 wins both kingside pawns.

Now return to the diagram and look again at the position after **31...♘c4 32 d5**
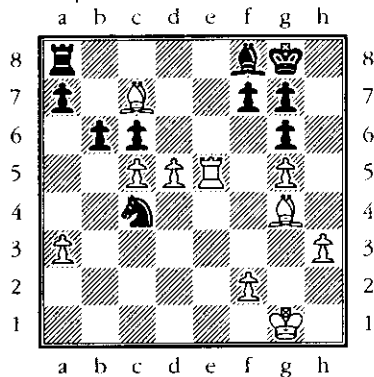
Ask yourself which is the more dangerous enemy of the Black position: the white rook or the passed pawn he creates after 32...♘xe5 33 ♗xe5 cxd5 34 c6. If you decide it is the passed pawn, you might find the following wonderful defence:

32...cxd5! 33 c6 ♘a5!! Black completely ignores the white rook. **34 ♗d7 ♘xc6! 35 ♗xc6 ♖c8.** White is temporarily a piece up, but the pin wins one of the bishops.

Whatever White plays, Black will emerge a pawn up!

Of course it was extremely difficult to see this defence. I give three reasons why this was so—leaving out other possible factors such as time pressure and the oppressive nature of playing Kasparov!

(1) We all biased towards capturing pieces, therefore 32...♘xe5 is very hard to resist.

(2) we miss backward knight moves.

(3) Adams has just played his knight from a5 to c4 and was probably relieved to centralise it. The idea that playing it back again to a5 would have seemed bizarre.

I think only one man in the world might have seen the defence, and he was sitting on the other side of the board!

The examples so far have been blood and thunder because the time element has been vital: if the attacker hadn't acted fast the opportunity to utilise the pawn would have disappeared.

In contrast, if the opponent is bottled up by the passed pawn and has no way to free his game, the emphasis is on patience: you mustn't hurry! Kasparov has played many games with brain-busting complications—but only when the situation on the board demanded it. If he can win without giving his opponent the slightest counterplay he will always choose that option, even if it takes longer.

G.Kasparov - T.Oral
Eurotel Trophy Simul, Prague 2001
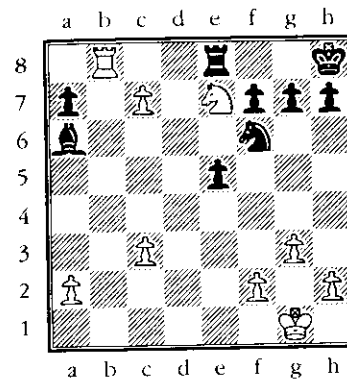
White to play

Here White could regain the piece at once with 32 c8=♕ but there is no need to hurry: the black pieces are, temporarily at least, paralysed by the passed pawn. So Kasparov played **32 c4!** utilising the second passed pawn. If now 32...h6 33 c5 ♔h7 34 ♖xe8 ♘xe8 35 c8=♕ ♗xc8 36 ♘xc8 a5 37 ♘d6! ♘c7 (if 37...♘xd6 38 cxd6 and the pawn queens) 38 ♘xf7 e4 39 ♘d6 and White wins the pawn on e4 as well with an easy win. Black tried **32...g6** which made things simpler for White as the knight on f6 lost its support: **33 ♘d5! ♖c8**

Of course if 33...♘xd5 34 ♖xe8+.

34 ♘xf6 ♔g7 35 ♖xc8 ♗xc8 36 ♘e8+ 1-0

If 36...♔f8 37 ♘d6.

J.Timman, - G.Kasparov
EuroTel Trophy, Prague 1998
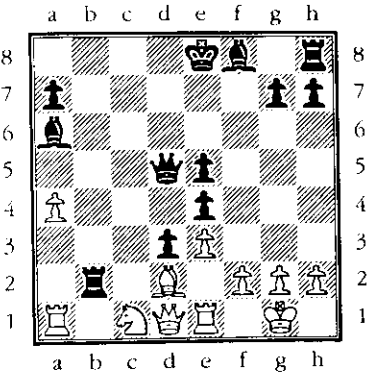
23 ♗c3 d2! 24 ♖f1

If 24 ♗xb2 dxe1=♕+ 25 ♕xe1 ♗b4! and the white queen has no safe squares. After 26 ♕xb4 ♕d1+ or 26 ♗c3 ♗xc3 27 ♕xc3 ♕d1 White gets mated on the back rank.

24...♗xf1!

Kasparov wants to win as simply and cleanly as possible. Don't forget that Black is still two moves from castling: if White is allowed some freedom, even at the cost of a piece, he might be able to set up some threats against the black king. Of course the threat is very low, but Kasparov is merciless. He plans to keep White entirely bottled up.

Here, for example, 24...dxc1=♕ allows White some play after 25 ♕xd5 ♕xc3 26 ♖ac1.

25 ♗xb2 ♗c4!

Again Kasparov is in no hurry to win material if it means that White's queen escapes into activity. He isn't interested in variations such as 25...dxc1=♕ 26 ♕xd5 (or 26 ♕xc1) 26...♕xb2 27 ♖xf1.

26 ♘e2 ♗b3

After the exchange of queens the passed pawn will be decisive.

27 ♘c3 ♗xd1 28 ♘xd5 ♗b3 29 ♘c3 ♗b4 30 ♘d1 0-0! 0-1
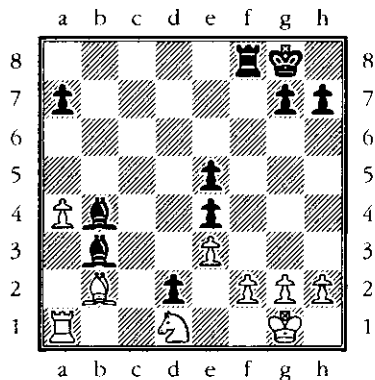
A very fitting time for White to resign, just when Black completes his development! White still hasn't suffered any big material loss, but he is utterly tied up.

A possible finish is **31 ♗xe5 ♖c8 32 ♗b2 ♗xd1 33 ♖xd1 ♖c2** and wins after either **34 ♗a1 ♖c1** or **34 ♖b1 ♖xb2**.

Nor can White's king do anything, for if **31 ♔f1 ♗c4+ 32 ♔g1 ♗e2 33 h3** (all he can do is wait) **33...♖c8 34 ♔h2 ♗xd1 35 ♖xd1 ♖c2 36 ♗xe5 ♖c1** and wins.

If you want to win quickly, don't be afraid of playing a long game. Often a patient, restrained positional move leads to a quicker win than a desperate attacking move.

There is hardly any position, no matter how good, that can't be ruined by careless play. Here is a particularly chilling example.

J.Waitzkin - R.Bates
Agency Masters, London 1998
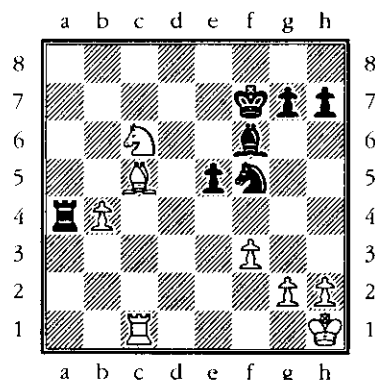
White to play

How can White possibly lose this position? He has a strong extra passed pawn and besides Black only has three pawns and none is of any danger to White. The question only seems to be whether Bates can hold on for a draw.

41 b5?

The first sign of over-confidence. Instead 41 ♔g1 would rule out any back rank tricks.

41...♘d4!

An excellent move. Suddenly a black passed pawn appears on the scene.

42 ♗xd4

If 42 ♘xd4 exd4 43 b6 ♖a5! is awkward for White: the rook goes to b5, if necessary, and meanwhile the advance of the passed pawn with ...d4-d3 and ...d3-d2 is difficult to meet.

42...exd4 43 b6??

White is confused by the resistance he has met but refuses to believe that the win has slipped from his grasp. He had to play 43 ♖d1.

43...d3 44 b7 d2 45 ♖g1
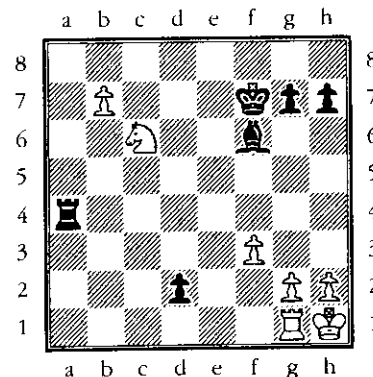
45...♖a1!

White must have underestimated this move.

46 b8=♕

It turns out that queening with check is more important than queening first as White is mated

after 46 ♖xa1 ♗xa1 47 b8=♕ d1=♕.

46...♖xg1+ 47 ♔xg1 d1=♕+ 48 ♔f2 ♕c2+ 49 ♔f1 ♕c1+ 50 ♔f2 ♕xc6

Winning a piece. Black eventually ground out a win on move 64.

If a single passed pawn can cause so much trouble then it is evident that two or more, if mobile and connected, can frequently overwhelm the defence. The 'price' to stop two connected passed pawns, unless there is a blockade, is often a piece. Therefore it is well worth making a material investment to create passed pawns.

H.Jonkman - G.Hertneck
European Championship,
Saint Vincent 2000
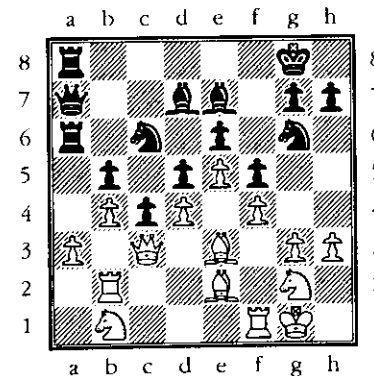
Black to play

Black broke through on the queenside with **23...♖xa3! 24 ♘xa3 ♕xa3 25 ♗d2**

After 25 ♕xa3 ♖xa3 26 ♖fb1—if the b4 pawn drops the black connected passed pawns will be unstoppable—26...c3! 27 ♖b3 c2 28 ♖1b2 ♖xb3 (simplest) 29 ♖xb3 ♘xd4! and according to what White plays Black wins next move with either ♘xb3, ♘xe2+ or c1=♕+.

25...♗d8!

The b4 pawn is now adequately defended, but Black spots another weakness in White's structure—the d4 pawn.

26 ♖d1 ♗b6 27 ♗e1

For the moment White is holding onto both b4 and d4, but after the queen exchange the situation becomes untenable.

27...♕xc3 28 ♗xc3 ♖a3

The blockade now crumbles as the bishop can't retreat from c3 without losing the d pawn, while the rooks can't defend it without giving up one of the threatened pawns. White chooses the lesser evil, but he cannot hope to restrain the passed pawns.

29 ♖c2 ♖b3 30 ♗a1 ♘xb4 31 ♖b2
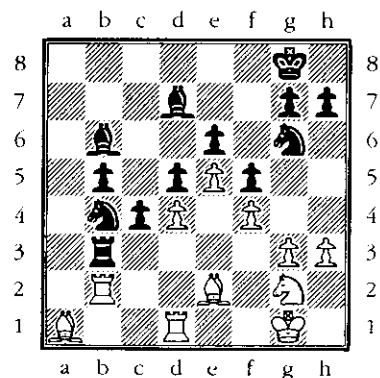
31...♖a3!

A finesse: if 32 ♖xb4 ♖xa1 33 ♖xa1 ♗xd4+ 34 ♔f1 ♗xa1 then ♗c3 and b5-b4 and the pawns roll forward.

32 ♔h2 ♘a6 33 ♖c2 ♘e7 34 ♗b2 ♖b3 35 ♗a1 b4 36 g4 ♖a3 37 ♗xc4

A desperate attempt to stem the tide of pawns.

37...dxc4 38 ♖xc4 ♗b5 39 ♖cc1 ♘c7 40 d5 ♘cxd5 41 ♗d4 ♗xd4 42 ♖xd4 ♗d3 0-1

In this chapter so far the passed pawns have been ferocious. Now we'll look at some games in which they have been successfully neutralised.

J.Hellsten - A.Delchev
Albacete Open 2001
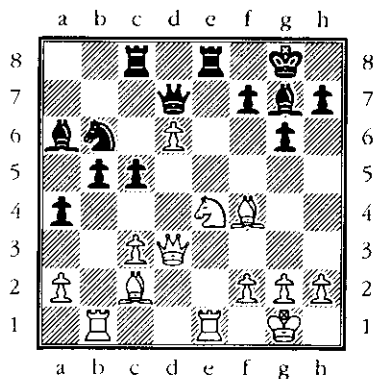
Black to play

A passed pawn isn't always an advantage: sometimes it can be sickly

and sap the energy of the pieces that are tied to defending it. The former World Champion Capablanca once remarked that a passed pawn is either very strong or very weak, and that the weakness or strength increased the further it advances up the board.

In the diagram Black increased the pressure on the passed pawn with 21...♘c4! This required careful calculation as after 22 ♕d5 White was threatening 23 ♘xc5 and 22...♕c6?? allows 23 ♕xc6 ♖xc6 24 ♘f6+! ♗xf6 25 ♖xe8+. However, 22...♗b7! did the trick: 23 ♘xc5 ♗xd5 24 ♘xd7 ♖xe1+ 25 ♖xe1
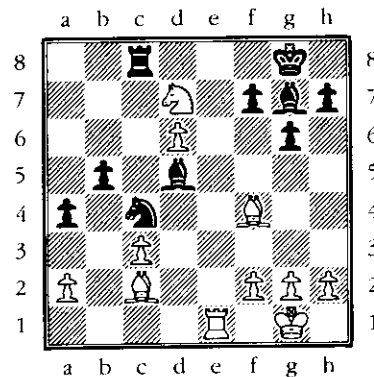
25...♗e6! The point. The knight has only one way out of d7 and that involves giving up the passed pawn. **26 ♘e5 ♘xd6** The weaknesses on a2 and c3 make White's position hopeless. For example if 27 ♘xg6 hxg6 28 ♗xd6 ♗xa2 and then ♗xc3, when Black will have connected passed pawns. The game ended 27 ♖d1 ♘c4 28 ♘xc4 ♗xc4 29 ♗e4 ♗xa2 30 ♗b7 ♗b3 31 ♖d6 ♖e8 32 ♗d2 a3 0-1

Y.Naudin - O.Gladyszev
Bethune Open 2001
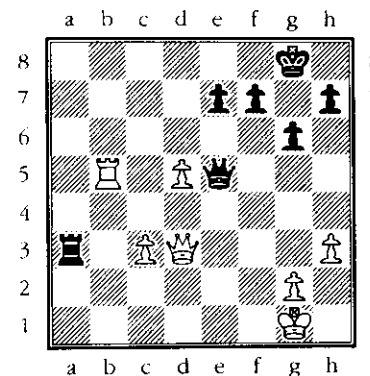
White to play

29 d6!?

If 29 ♖c5 ♖a1+ looks highly unpleasant, while otherwise the c3 pawn is lost. White therefore tries to confuse matters.

29...♕e1+!

This is the most straightforward way to win but it had to be calculated carefully as White's passed pawn looks dangerous.

30 ♔h2 ♖xc3 31 ♖b8+

If 31 dxe7 ♖xd3 32 ♖b8+ ♔g7 33 e8=♕ ♕g3+ 34 ♔g1 ♖d1+ and mate next move.

31...♔g7 32 ♕d4+

Here 32 dxe7 ♖xd3 33 e8=♕ ♕g3+ wins as in the last note.

32...f6

Here 32...e5 33 ♕xc3! ♕xc3 34 d7 wins for White!

33 dxe7 ♕g3+ 0-1

White loses all his pieces after 34 ♔h1 ♖c1+ 35 ♕g1 ♖xg1+ 36 ♔xg1 ♕xb8.

Underpromotion

I have only once been told off by my opponent for playing carelessly. This was in a club match in my early days, when he scolded for playing too fast as White: **1 d4 d5 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 d4 4 e3?! ♝b4+ 5 ♗d2 dxe3! 6 ♗xb4??** falling for the trap: 6 fxe3 is necessary **6...exf2+ 7 ♔e2**
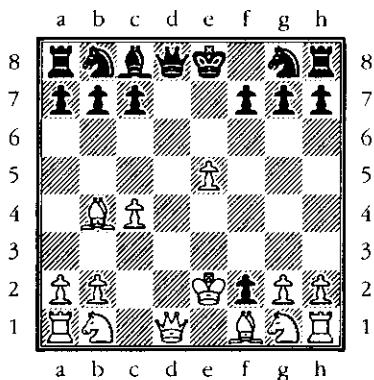
7...fxg1=♘+! A killing underpromotion. Instead 7...♕xd1+ 8 ♔xd1 fxg1=♕ 9 ♖xg1 is only slightly better for Black. Only here did I see that after **8 ♖xg1 ♝g4+** White loses his queen. I battled on with **9 ♔e1** but it was hopeless: **9...♕h4+ 10 ♔d2** (10 g3 ♕e4+ is even worse) **10...♕f2+** etc.

This is a well known trap and if you have the habit of playing the opening quickly and thoughtlessly it is easy to fall into it. Underpromotion may be used for the purpose of avoiding a stalemate in the endgame, but in the middlegame it is very rare: the only real scenario is to promote to a knight and give check. This will either be to gain time—as in the example above—or to fork the defending king and another piece, as in the following simple example.
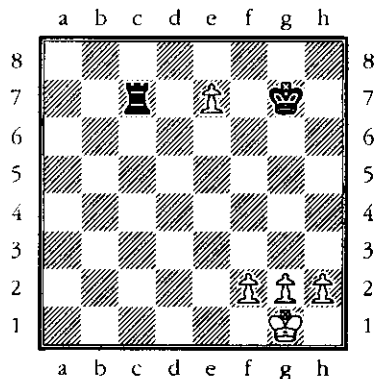
If 1 e8=♕? then 1...♖c1+ mates, but instead **1 e8=♘+!** followed by 2 ♘xc7 wins at once.

20 Passed Pawns Puzzles

1
C.Csiszar - N.McDonald
Zug 1991
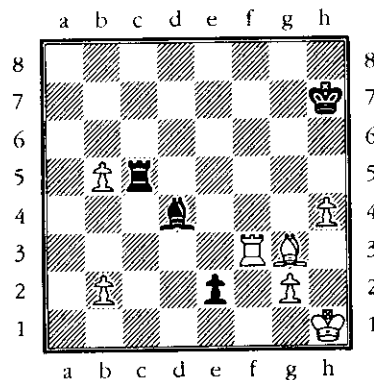
Black to play.
What is the best way to utilise the asset of the passed pawn?

2
G.Kasparov - M.Adams
Linares 1997
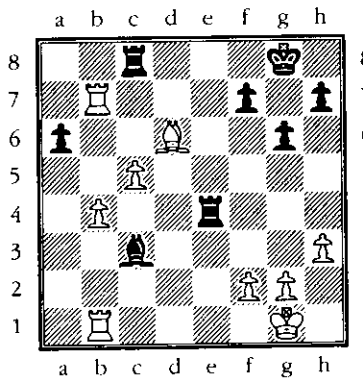
Black to play

Here Adams played **30...♖c4** How would you now break through on the queenside?

3
N.McDonald - N.Carton
London 1994
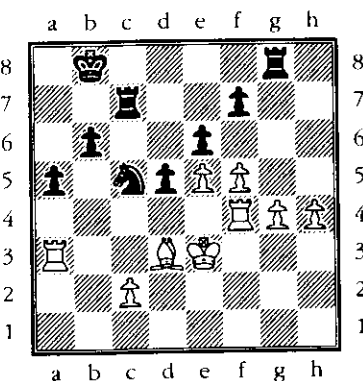
Black to play

Black tried **35...f6 36 exf6 e5** Now 37 ♖f1 ♖xg4 breaks up the phalanx of kingside passed pawns, when White will be struggling to draw in view of his scattered pieces and Black's own strong passed pawns.

Any ideas how White could do better and how do you assess the position?

4

D.Sadvakasov - A.Morozevich

Astana 2001

Black to play

5

P.Lukacs - N.McDonald

First Saturday, Budapest 1995
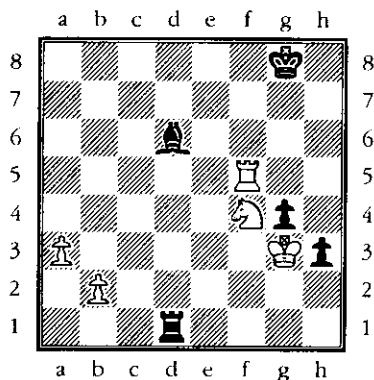
White to play

Black has two passed pawns, but it isn't easy to touch down on the eighth rank. If for example **42...Rf1 43 Rg5+ Kf7 44 Rxg4 Bxf4+** White loses after 45 Rxf4+? Rxf4 46 Kxf4 h2 and the pawn slips through, but instead **45 Kxh3!** eliminates the last pawn and allows White to escape into a theoretically drawn endgame. Starting from the diagram, can you find something better for Black?
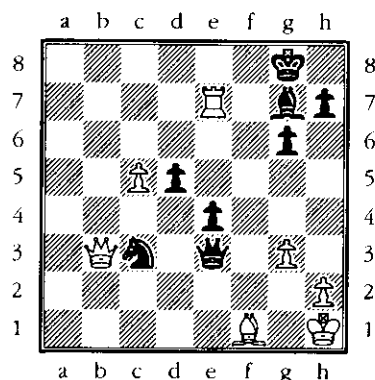
In the game White played **28 c6** and Black replied **28...Wc1** threatening mate. How should White respond? And can you find a better move for Black than 28...Wc1? Clue: it's very complicated but basically Black has to try to force perpetual check or he will lose as White's passed pawn is marching through.

21 Opening Lines

Whether a key line is open or closed can have a decisive bearing on the outcome of a game. This was recognised in the late 19th century when, after two centuries of disasters on f7 after 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4, players started playing 1...e6! to block out the bishop on c4. A lot of tactical manoeuvres and sacrifices are ruled out by a blocked centre.

Nevertheless, all through the ages players have come to grief precisely because they have trusted in the closed nature of a position to allow them to take liberties such as delaying development or pawn hunting. Then unexpectedly the centre has burst open and they have been swept away by a wave of tactics.

P.Wikstrom - T.Johansson

Gausdal 2002

After the opening moves **1 d4 f5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 h3 d5 4 g4 Nc6 5 Nc3 Ne4 6 Bf4 e6 7 e3 Bb4 8 Wd3 0-0** White played **9 gxf5** no doubt

expecting 9...exf5 or 9...Rxf5, when the position in the centre is static. Instead Black blasted open lines with
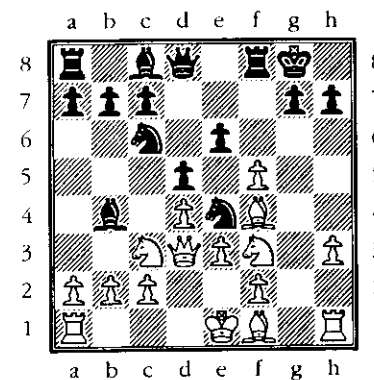
9...e5!! 10 dxe5 Bxf5

The light-squared bishop comes to life. Suddenly White has no defence against a discovered attack on his queen by the knight, as if she retreats to d1 then 11...Nxc3 is decisive. The line White chose in the game is even worse than that scenario.

11 Nd4 Bxc3+ 12 bxc3 Nxf2

Double attack!

13 Nxf5 Nxd3+ 14 Bxd3 Wd7 0-1

J.Degraeve - S.Kasparov
Bethune Open 2001
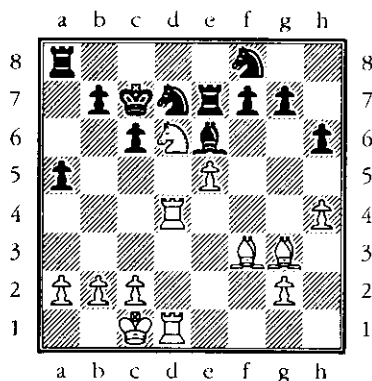
Black to play

Here 20...♘c5 looks solid enough but Sergei Kasparov played **20...♘b6?** which not only opens the d file but also takes away the b6 square from his king. If you are wondering why this should matter, look at what happens now:

21 ♘f5!! ♖d7

Black gives up a pawn as after 21...♗xf5 22 e6+ the open d file and open diagonal combine to produce a mate: 21...♔c8 23 ♖d8 mate. If Black had played 20...♘c5 he would have been able to play 21...♔b6 escaping the mate.

22 ♘xg7 ♖xd4 23 ♖xd4 ♖d8 24 ♖f4

and here Black gave up in exasperation. **1-0**

V.Topalov - B.Gulko
Dos Hermanas 1994
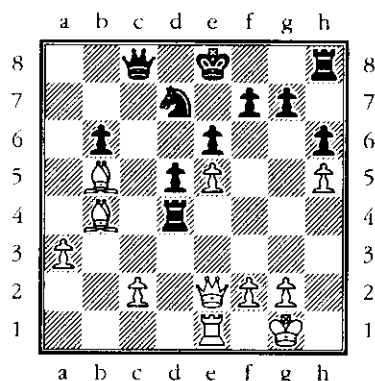
White to play

Black is the exchange up but the white bishop pair look menacing. The pin on d7 may not seem that significant as the knight is defended twice and the d file is closed. If it were Black's move he would play 24...♖xb4 25 axb4 0-0 with a safe position. So White has to do something fast.

24 ♖d1!

In some ways this is an extraordinary move as White offers the exchange of rooks when he seems to be running short of pieces to attack with. However, the black rook was performing an excellent service guarding the d file and preventing ♕g4, besides being ready to sacrifice itself with ♖xb4 to allow the king to escape. The game now

finished **24...♖xb4** giving back the exchange straight away, but White maintains strong pressure. The alternative 24...♖xd1+ is considered below as puzzle number four.

25 axb4 ♕c3

If 25...0-0 26 c4! and the potential attack on d7 is very awkward: White will certainly win a pawn.

26 ♕g4!
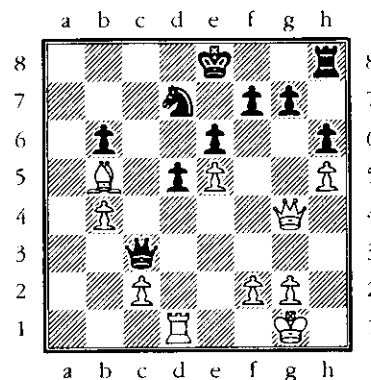
An excellent temporary pawn sacrifice to end the black queen's blockade of the c pawn. Black has little choice but to accept as g7 is attacked and castling drops the knight. Besides the breakthrough 27 ♖xd5! exd5? 28 ♕xd7+ ♔f8 29 ♕d8 mate is threatened. **26...♕xe5 27 c4!** Now Black's collapse is swift. **27...f5 28 ♕g6+ ♔e7 29 cxd5 exd5 30 ♗xd7 ♔xd7 31 ♕f7+ ♔c8 32 ♕a7! ♖e8 33 ♖c1+ ♔d8 34 ♕b7! 1-0** Mate will follow on c8 or c7 after all sensible replies.

G.Kasparov - P.Leko
Linares 2001
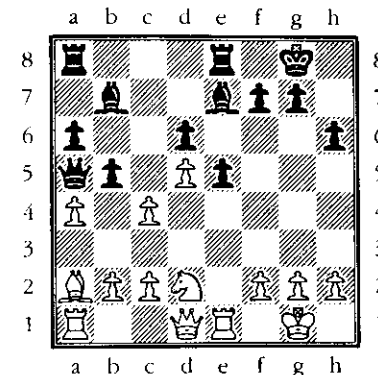
Black to play

Peter Leko is a pawn down against Kasparov and quite understandably hurried to regain it with **20...♕xa4?**. But then came **21 c5!!**.

Who would have thought that the f7 square would suddenly become a target? If 21...dxc5 there follows a decisive line clearance: 22 d6! ♗xd6? better to give up the bishop 23 ♗xf7+ a killer discovered attack 23...♔xf7 24 ♖xa4 and Black loses his queen.

21...♕b4?

A groggy move. White has a strong protected passed pawn after 21...♕d4 22 c6 ♗c8, but at least the bishop on a2 remains inactive.

22 ♘e4!

White could play 22 c6 with a big positional advantage, but Kasparov

sees that he can decide the game in direct tactical style. This is what is meant by the word 'flair'—not accepting a safe advantage when a dynamic approach will give even more.

22...♕xb2

It is the same old story after 22...dxc5 23 c3!—over the next two moves White drives the black queen to an exposed square—23...♕xb2 24 ♖e2! ♕a3 25 d6 and there is no good answer to 26 ♗xf7+, to say nothing of 26 dxe7.

23 cxd6 ♗f8 24 c3!

The trap closes on the black queen. The main threat is 25 ♖e2 ♕a3 26 ♗b3 winning queen for rook.

24...f5 25 d7 ♖ed8

If 25...fxe4 26 dxe8=♕ ♖xe8 27 d6+ leaves White the exchange up with a very strong passed pawn.

26 d6+ ♔h8
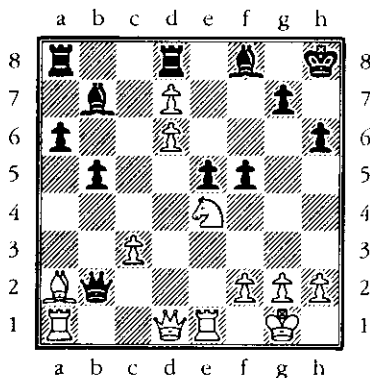
27 ♘c5!!

An elegant knight manoeuvre. There are three facets: attack on the

bishop on b7, attack on the queen and attack on the weak f7 square.

27...♗c6 28 ♘d3! ♕xc3 29 ♘xe5

Now the threats include 30 ♖c1 winning the bishop with a skewer.

29...♗e4 30 ♘f7+ ♔h7 31 ♘g5+!
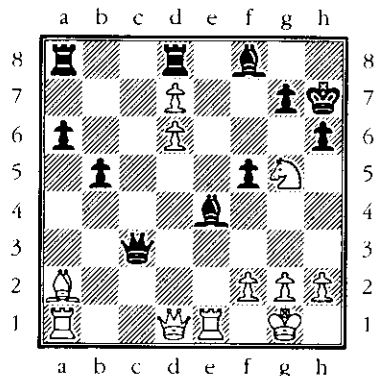
1-0

If 31...hxg5 32 ♕h5 mate. If 31...♔h8 32 ♘xe4 fxe4 33 ♕d5 when 33...♗xd6 34 ♕xd6 just leaves White a piece up while a decisive king hunt begins after 33...♔h7 34 ♕g8+ ♔g6 35 ♗d5! ♖a7 36 ♗xe4+ ♔f6 37 ♗d5 (clearing the e6 square for the rook or queen) 37...♔g6 (Black is also mated after 37...♖axd7 38 ♕e6+ ♔g5 39 ♖e5+ ♔h4 40 g3+) 38 ♖e6+ ♔g5 39 f4+ ♔g4 40 ♗f3+ ♔h4 41 ♖xh6+ gxh6 42 ♕g4 mate. Meanwhile 31...♔g6 32 ♘xe4 fxe4 33 ♗d5 ♖ab8 34 ♗xe4+ forces the black king forward to its doom.

I doubt if Leko looked at these variations before deciding to resign —he knew that once his king started wandering to squares like f6 there would be various easy wins for White.

G.Kasparov - V.Kramnik
Siemens Giants, Frankfurt 1999
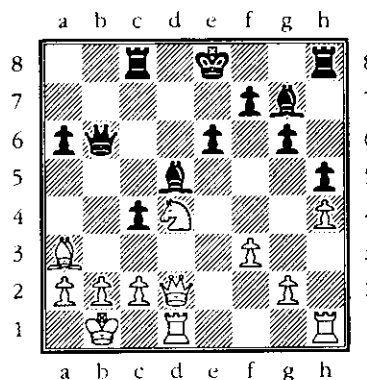
White to play

Black cannot castle, but on the other hand he has the strong threat of 27...c3, breaking open White's queenside. If White plays in natural style with **27 c3**, then **27...♗xd4 28 ♕xd4**—if 28 cxd4 c3 29 ♕c2 ♔d7! and Black has an attack—**28...♕xd4 29 ♖xd4 ♔d7** and having exchanged queens Black has little to fear.

Instead Kasparov showed his flair for the initiative with

27 ♕g5! ♗f8

If 27...♕c7 28 ♖he1 continues the build-up, when after 28...♗f8 White can play 29 ♕xd5 simply winning a piece or try 29 ♕f6!? leading to a spectacular mating finish if Black saves his rook: 29...♖g8 30 ♘xe6! ♗xe6 31 ♖xe6+ fxe6 32 ♕xe6+ ♗e7 33 ♕xg8+ ♗f8 34 ♕xf8 mate! or: 29...♖h7 30 ♘xe6! ♗xe6 31 ♖xe6+ fxe6 32 ♕xf8 mate.

This is pretty, but instead Black can resist with 29...♗xa3 30 ♕xh8+

♔e7, when he is only the exchange down.

If you have a 100% clear win of a piece should you try for a quicker and more pretty win that contains an element of risk? If it is a serious tournament or club game, then you should go for the simple win every time. On the other hand, if it is a friendly game or a game in a tournament with nothing at stake, play the risky move. You will learn a lot more about chess that way and be forced to exercise your imagination. However, if your current level of experience is such that you don't always win when a piece up, then take the piece even in friendly games and practice how to exploit a material advantage.

28 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 29 ♖he1

White brings up his last undeveloped piece into the attack. In contrast, there is no good way for Black to activate his king's rook. Therefore when the game opens up he will for all intents and purposes be a rook down.

29... ♖b8 30 b3
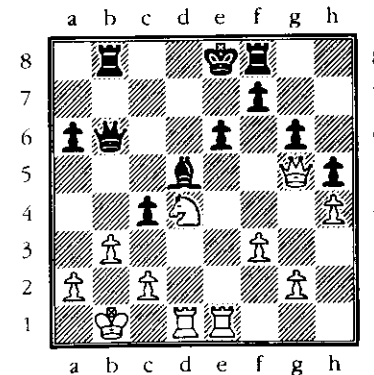
Note that b3 is attacked four times and only defended three times, but Black's queen and rook on b8 are the 'wrong way round' to stage a breakthrough! Thus if you swap them around, with the queen on b8 and the rook on b6, Black would be able to carry out the attack: 30...cxb3 31 cxb3 ♗xb3 32 axb3 ♖xb3+ 33 ♘xb3 ♕xb3+ and the queen gives perpetual check after 34 ♔a1 ♕a3+ 35 ♔b1 ♕b3+ 36 ♔c1 ♕c3+ etc. Thus Black would have been able to escape from the tricky situation with a draw.

The order of pieces is vital when attacking any point.

30...♖d8 31 ♘e2!

The knight heads for c3 or f4 to put pressure on the bishop, which is Black's defensive fortress in the centre.

31...cxb3 32 axb3
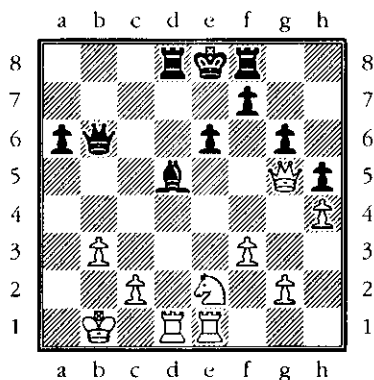
Before retreating his knight Kasparov had to make sure that Black can't sacrifice on b3: 32...♗xb3 and White loses after 33 cxb3? ♕xb3+ 34 ♔a1 (34 ♔c1 ♖c8+ 35 ♔c2 ♖c2 mate) 34...♕a3+

35 ♔b1 ♖b8+ 36 ♔c2 ♖b2+ 37 ♔c1 ♕a1 mate. However 33 ♖xd8+ exchanges twice on d8 and then captures the bishop with an easy win.

32...♖d7

Now taking on b3 is a real threat, for example if 33 ♘f4? ♗xb3 34 ♖xd7 ♔xd7 35 cxb3? ♕xb3+ 36 ♔a1 ♕a3+ 37 ♔b1 ♖b8+ and the other black rook unexpectedly enters the game with mate after 38 ♔c2 ♖b2+ 39 ♔c1 ♕a1.

33 ♔b2!

A simple but effective precaution. Black's only hope of counterplay disappears after which it is all one way traffic.

33...♕d8

If 33...♖b7 34 ♖xd5! exd5 35 ♘d4+ ♔d7 36 ♕e7+ ♔c8 37 ♕xf8+ is crushing.

34 ♕f4 ♕c7

Still trying to exchange queens, but it meets with a startling refutation. In any case, with the rook on f8 shut out of the game and a Kasparov attack about to begin with 35 ♘c3, Black had little hope.
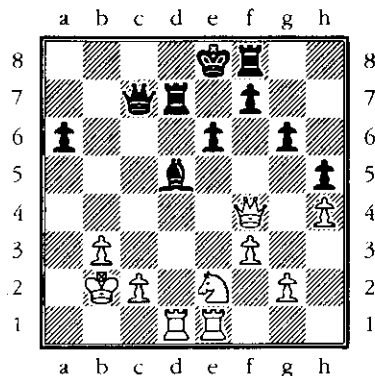
35 ♖xd5!!

A fantastic combination of three themes: pin, discovered check and removing the defender.

Removing the defender: if 35...♖xd5 36 ♕xc7 wins the queen.

Pin: if 35...♕xf4 36 ♘xf4 ♖d5 37 ♘xd5 and Black remains a piece down as the e pawn is pinned.

Discovered check—see the game continuation:

35...exd5 36 ♘d4+!

Black resigned. If 36...♖e7 37 ♕xc7 and Black can't recapture the queen as his rook is pinned. Or, the nicest point of all, if 36...♔d8 37 ♘e6+! fxe6 38 ♕xf8 mate.

G.Kasparov - J.Timman
EuroTel Trophy, Prague 1998
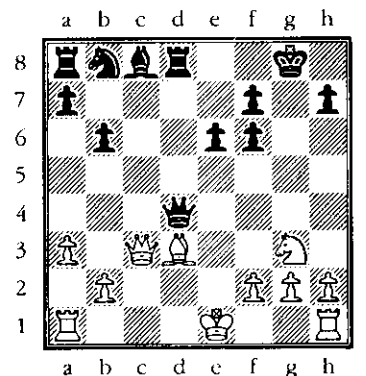
White to play

Timman had played a very risky opening and though he has an extra pawn things look very bad for him in the diagram after...

15 ♗e4!

...attacking the entombed rook on a8. But the Dutchman tried

15...♕xc3+ 16 bxc3 ♖d5!
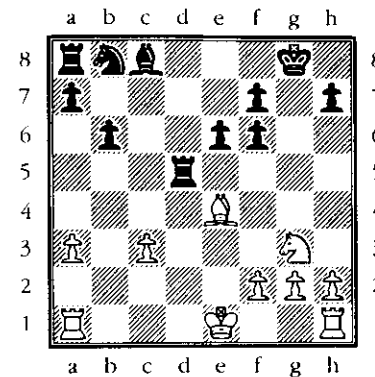
Now after 17 ♗xd5 exd5 Black has a solid position and can develop with ♗e6 and ♘d7, when the weakness of c3 will make it very difficult for White to prove any advantage. Even less advisable for White is 17 c4 ♖e5 18 0-0 ♖xe4 19 ♘xe4 ♘d7 when Black is solidly placed without even a weakness on d5.

Rather than win material immediately Kasparov elects to keep up his initiative by exploiting his lead in development. I wonder how many club players would have been as patient?

17 ♖d1!! ♗b7

If 17...♖xd1+ 18 ♔xd1 and White wins a piece. Nor could Black play 17...♖e5 because of 18 ♖d8+ ♔g7 19 ♖xc8 f5 20 f4! ♖xe4+ 21 ♘xe4 fxe4 22 ♔e2 and, with the black queenside completely paralysed, White wins the knight with 23 ♖d1 and 24 ♖dd8.

18 ♗xd5 ♗xd5

Here 18...exd5 is so ugly that it is no surprise Black avoided it. A sharp retort by White is 19 c4 dxc4 20 ♖d8+ ♔g7 21 ♘f5+ ♔g6 22 ♘d6 when if 22...♗d5 23 ♖g8+ ♔h5 24 ♘f5! threatens 25 g4 which can only be prevented by 24...♗xg2 giving up the bishop. Instead 22...♘c6! when 23 ♖xa8 ♗xa8 24 ♘xc4 gives White a winning endgame, but there would still be a lot of work to be done.

19 ♘h5!
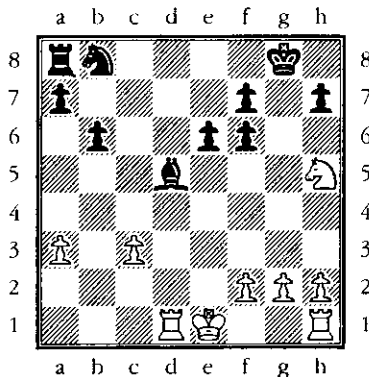
19...♘d7

If 19...♗b7 20 ♖d8 is mate. The only chance was 19...♔f8 but 20 ♘xf6 ♗xg2 21 ♖g1 ♗c6 22 ♖g8+ ♔e7 23 ♘xh7 is hopeless.

20 c4!

Setting up a knight fork.

20...♗c6 21 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 22 ♘xf6+ ♔g7 23 ♘xd7 f6 24 ♔e2!

The knight is surrounded but the white rook will wake up in time to rescue it.

24...♖c8

An elegant finish is 24...♔f7 25 ♖d1 ♔e7 26 c5! ♖d8—or the knight escapes—27 cxb6! ♖xd7 28 ♖xd7+ ♔xd7 29 bxa7 and queens.

25 ♖c1 ♖c7

If 25...♔f7 26 c5 ♔e7 27 c6.

26 ♘b8 1-0

N.Miezis - D.Houdart
Bethune Open 2001
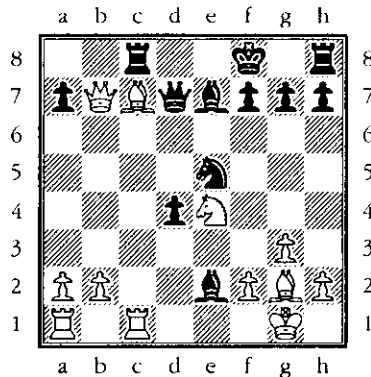
White to play

White is in an awkward pin. Nevertheless, with one black rook shut out of the game on h8 and the black king precariously placed on f8 it feels like Black's game is hanging by a thread. The question is how can White use his superior fire-power to land a decisive blow? If he takes too long then Black's passed pawn will become dangerous or he will play g7-g6 and ♔g7 and bring his rook into the game. So no time is to be lost.

Black's back rank is looking extremely vulnerable. If White were

able to move the bishop from c7 with check, then Black wouldn't have time to take White's queen. This would give White time to strike against Black's back rank.

This idea would work perfectly after 20 ♘d6!? ♗xd6? 21 ♗xd6+ ♕xd6 22 ♖xc8+ with mate to follow.

However, not very clear is 20...♖xc7 21 ♕xc7 ♕xc7 22 ♖xc7 ♗xd6 23 ♖c8+ ♔e7 24 ♖xh8 d3. White is two exchanges up, but the passed pawn still has to be neutralised. Also after 20...♗a6!? 21 ♕xa6 ♖xc7 22 ♘b5 ♖xc1+ 23 ♖xc1 g6 Black has a fighting chance.

White in fact played **20 ♘c5!!**
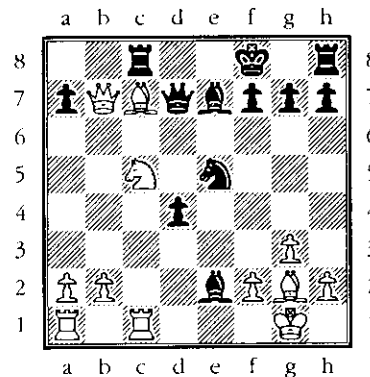
20...♕f5

If 20...♕xc7 21 ♘e6+ fxe6 22 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 23 ♕xc7 or 20...♖xc7 21 ♘xd7+ ♖xd7 22 ♖c8+ win very easily.

Or 20...♗xc5 21 ♖xc5 and Black cannot meet the threat of 22 ♗d6+, for example, 21...f6 22 ♗d6+ ♔f7 23 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 and one way for White to win is 24 ♗xe5 ♕xb7 25

♗xb7 and White remains a piece up.

Also insufficient is 21...♔g8 22 ♖xe5 d3 23 ♖d5 ♕g4 24 ♗a5 and the passed pawn is stopped.

21 ♗xe5 ♗xc5 22 ♗xd4 1-0

The passed pawn has vanished. White's threats include 23 b4, winning the bishop, and if 22...♗g4 to meet this then there is another pin: 23 ♗xc5+ ♖xc5 24 ♕b4 and the rook is lost.

So far we have seen some magnificent examples of line opening. The following game shows that sometimes a combinative sequence can be used to plug lines.

R.Ponomariov - M.Adams
Linares 2002
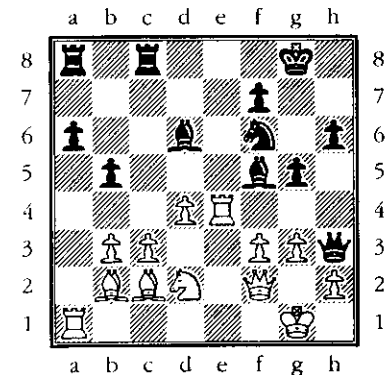
Black to play

It is Black's move in this sharp position between two of the top GMs in the world. He is a pawn down but he could win the exchange by capturing on e4. However, after 23...♗xe4 24 ♘xe4 White has ample compensation for

the material in the form of his strong centre and the fragility of Black's kingside. So Adams came up with **23...♗b4!?** attacking the c3 pawn. If now 24 cxb4? ♖xc2 and the black rook is in an excellent position where it attacks the bishop on b2 and pins the knight on d2. White's game would collapse after 25 ♖b1 ♗xe4 26 fxe4 ♘xe4. Nor does 24 ♕e3? ♘d5 help. So the question for Ponomariov is: how can I meet the pressure along the c file without allowing the black rook to invade on c2? He solved this perfectly with **24 ♖e5!!** Remember that no pin is absolute unless it is on the king! **24...♗xc2 25 cxb4 ♗g6**

Clearing the c2 square for the rook, but **26 ♖c5!**
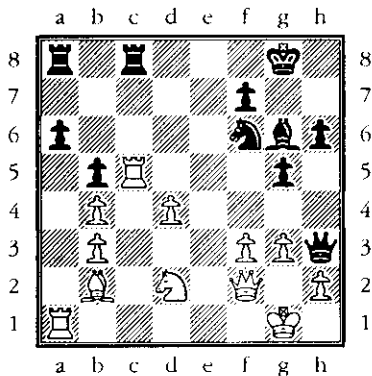
plugged the c file just in time. Now Black has no counterplay and his kingside will be very draughty after White unleashes his dark squared bishop with d4-d5. Ponomariov won after a hard fight:

26...♖e8 27 ♘f1 ♖ad8 28 d5 ♘d7 29 ♘e3!

Planning a big attack with ♘g4 and ♕d4. Naturally White would be delighted to have connected passed pawns after 29...♘xc5 30 bxc5.

29...h5 30 f4!

Preparing to shut in the black bishop when White will tighten his control of the centre.

30...h4 31 f5 hxg3 32 hxg3 ♗h5 33 d6 ♖e4 34 ♖ac1
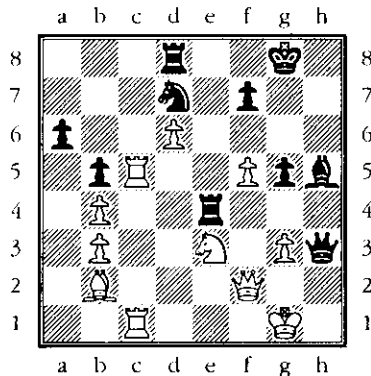
34...♘xc5

White was planning 35 ♖c8 with a decisive attack, so Black finally takes the rook and stakes everything on a last desperate lunge against the white king.

35 bxc5 ♔h7 36 ♗f6 ♖g8 37 d7 ♖h4!? 38 ♕g2!

Not 38 gxh4 gxh4+ 39 ♘g2 ♗f3. The exchange of queens kills off all Black's hopes.

38...♗f3 39 ♕xh3 ♖xh3 40 ♔f2 g4 41 ♘f1 ♖h5 42 d8=♕ ♖xd8 43 ♗xd8 ♖xf5 44 ♘e3 ♖h5 45 ♗h4 1-0

22 Opening Lines Puzzles

1
N.McDonald - P.Briggs
Hastings Masters 1995
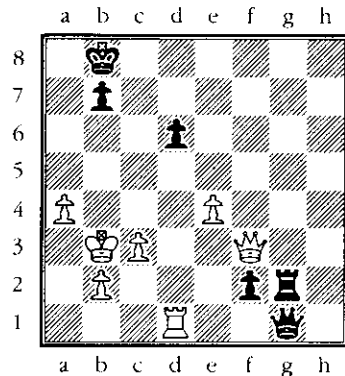
Black to play

Should Black

(a) keep the tension by playing 40...♔a8;

(b) play 40...♕xd1+ 41 ♕xd1 ♖g1 to force through the f pawn;

(c) play 40...f1=♕ giving up the passed pawn but clearing the way for 41...♕b6+ with a double attack on b2.

It's your choice!

2
N.McDonald - J.Gonzalez Garcia
First Saturday, Budapest, 1995
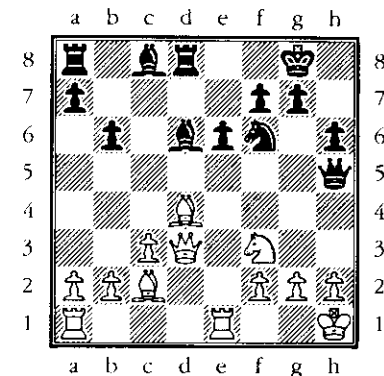
Black to play

Black played **18...♗b7** reckoning that after **19 ♗xf6 gxf6**—not however 19...♗xf3 when 20 ♕h7+ ♔f8 21 ♕h8 is mate—**20 ♕h7+ ♔f8**
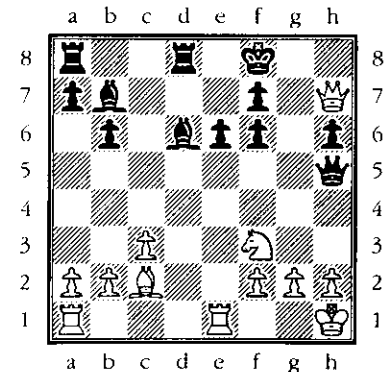
his king would be safe and then the threat of 21...♗xf3 followed by 22...♕xh2 mate would be decisive. Was he right?

3
G.Kasparov - P.Leko
Tilburg 1997
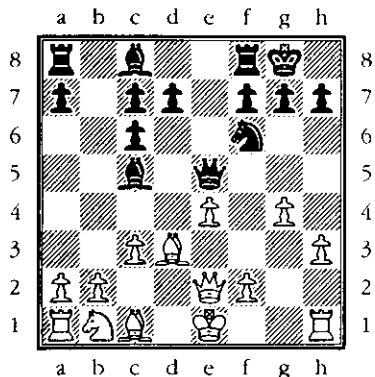
White to play

After **12 g5**, the Hungarian GM played **12...♘xe4** and there followed **13 ♗xe4** (if 13 ♕xe4 ♕xe4+ 14 ♗xe4 ♖e8 15 f3 d5 and Black regains the piece with an excellent game) **13...♖e8 14 ♗f3 ♕xe2+ 15 ♗xe2 ♗a6**
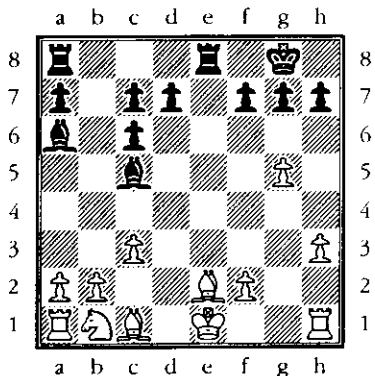
Who has blundered?

4
V.Topalov - B.Gulko
Dos Hermanas 1994
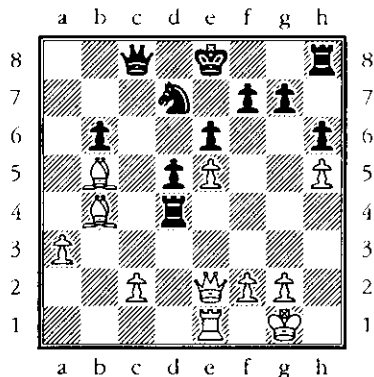
White to play

This puzzle has no right and wrong answer: instead it is designed to help you practice your analysis of a complicated position. There is no better way to improve than to select the key point in a hard fought game and analyse it 'to the death'.

In the Topalov-Gulko game, given earlier in the chapter, after **24 ♖d1** Black gave up the exchange immediately with 24...♖xb4. Instead the critical continuation is **24... ♖xd1+ 25 ♕xd1**. In his analysis in *Informator 60*, Topalov now gives the laconic comment 'intending c2-c4 and wins'. However, things are by no means that simple after **25...♔d8!** breaking the pin on the knight. Have a go at analysing this position and try to decide what you think is the strongest line. As a guide, I spent about one and a half hours analysing it while preparing the book. You might like to write down some of your analysis.

Puzzles 5-9

Congratulations on getting to the final puzzle in the book! I have chosen an exciting miniature game that illustrates many of the tactical themes discussed in the book. I have put key references to these themes in bold. I suggest you play through the game and stop off to answer each question as you come to it. There are five in total.

M.Adams - K.Georgiev
Elenite 1993

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♗g5 ♘e4 3 ♗f4 c5 4 f3 ♘f6 5 d5 d6 6 e4 g6 7 ♘c3 ♗g7 8 ♕d2 0-0

A risky decision as White is angling for a kingside attack. It was better to leave White guessing where the black king will end up with 8...a6. After 9 a4—to restrain Black from gaining space with b7-b5—it would become a much less attractive option for White to castle queenside as he has loosened his pawn cover there.

9 ♗h6 ♗xh6 10 ♕xh6 e6 11 0-0-0 exd5 12 exd5 ♖e8
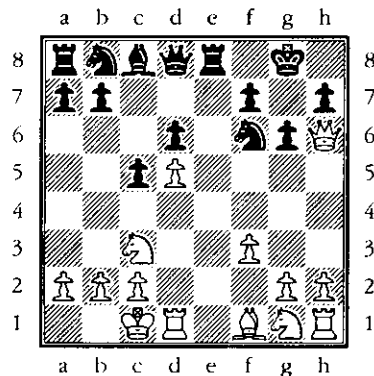
13 ♘ge2!

The first important tactical point remains behind the scenes but is of importance. If White had lunged forwards with 13 h4 then Black has the chance to meet the attack with 13...♕e7 intending 14...♕e3+ 15 ♕xe3 ♖xe3 exchanging off queens. Adams' idea is that if 13...♕e7 now he can continue 14 ♘g3 ♕e3+? 15 ♕xe3 ♖xe3 16 ♘ge4, trapping the rook on e3, which will be lost to a subsequent ♔d2 to say nothing of the attack on d6. Note how Adams employs the trap to prevent Black from freeing his game with a queen exchange — he isn't setting a 'cheapo' just for the sake of it.

13...a6 14 ♘g3 b5 15 ♘ce4 ♘xe4 16 ♘xe4
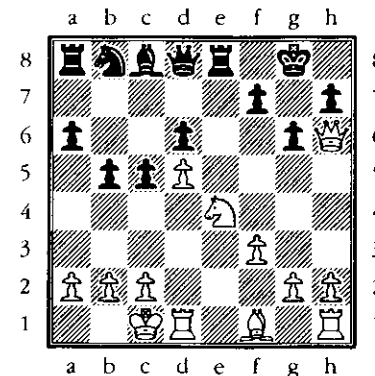
16...f5

This weakens the kingside and invites the knight to a most threatening square on g5. Of course a player like Georgiev—who had an Elo rating of 2660 when this game was played—is well aware of the drawbacks to this move.

Puzzles 5-7

Three questions to see if you are awake:

5) Firstly, how would White answer 16...♗f5, challenging the knight in a different way?

6) Secondly, how would White meet 16...♘d7 to bring the knight over to the defence of the kingside?

7) Thirdly, how would he meet 16...♕e7?

17 ♘g5
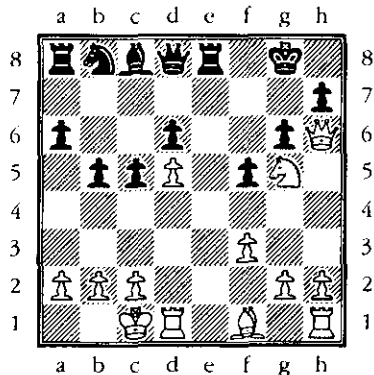
17...♕e7?

Before reading on you might like to see if you can find Adams' next move. There are some subtle points. Have a look at the piece disposition on both sides and let your fantasy soar!

Instead 17...♖e7 18 h4 ♕f8 19 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 20 h5! and White will open the h file for his rook and keep the knight on the dominant g5 square for if 20...h6 White has 21 hxg6! hxg5 22 ♖h8+ ♔g7 23 ♖xc8 ♔xg6 24 g4! opening a line for the bishop. 24...fxg4 25 ♗d3+! A

zwischenzug before the recapture of the pawn. By checking first White prevents the bishop being shut in after 25 fxg4 c4. 25... ♔g7 26 fxg4 when with Black's queenside pieces paralysed White can build up a decisive attack with ♖h1, etc. Now 26...c4 would be pointless after 27 ♗f5 etc.

It wasn't necessary for White to see this whole variation over the board. If Black had played 17...♖e7 I suspect Adams would have got as far as 23 ♖xc8 in his calculation and then relied on his positional judgement to tell him (correctly) that he had a big advantage because of the pin on b8.

In any case, Black played 17...♕e7. After this move the conditions for a combination are set. I'm sure that Adams saw his next move very quickly, perhaps instantaneously—he has a very sharp eye for tactics! But if he had had to reason things out perhaps his internal dialogue would have been something like what follows:

'Black is a long way from completing his development, I have two pieces aggressively posted near his king, occupying dark square holes in his loose pawn structure. Therefore, if I can exploit the open e file there should be an overwhelming combination available.

Let's think about things more specifically. The black queen has to stay on the second rank guarding h7. Otherwise I will play ♕xh7+ with a quick mate or at least a very strong breakthrough. If somehow I can play ♖e1, the black queen won't be able to defend both h7 and the

rook on e8. She will be overloaded, with two functions when she can only do one. If she moves out of the way my reply ♖xe8+ would drag her away from the defence of h7. There aren't any Black pieces that can interpose on the e file after ♖e1—the only move ♗e6 is a joke after ♖xe6. So how can I get my bishop on f1 out of the way?'

The move he played was

18 ♗xb5!
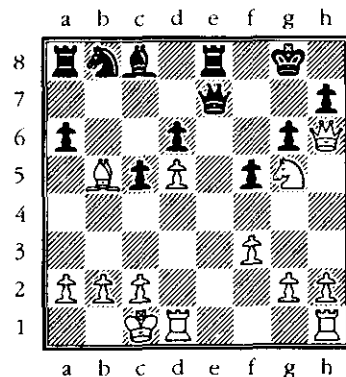
This isn't strictly a desperado move but it is played in that spirit. One of the good things about this pawn grabbing, rook attacking 'loud' move is that it is impossible to ignore. In other words it is a forcing move—Black can take the bishop or lose time moving the rook, he can't just ignore the bishop. If White had played the surreal 18 ♗c4 Black would lose after 18...bxc4 in the same way that 18...axb5 loses after 18 ♗xb5, but of course he could just ignore the bishop and play 18...♕g7. More realistically White could have played 18 ♗d3 to keep some advantage after 18...♕g7 19 ♕xg7+

♔xg7 20 ♖he1, but it would be nothing compared to what happens in the game.

18...♕e3+

If 18...axb5 19 ♖he1! and Black has a grim choice of losing his king after 19...♕xe1 20 ♕xh7+ ♔f8 21 ♕f7 mate or his queen after 19...♕d7 20 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 21 ♕xh7+ ♔f8 22 ♕h8+ ♔e7 23 ♖e1+.

19 ♔b1 ♖e7
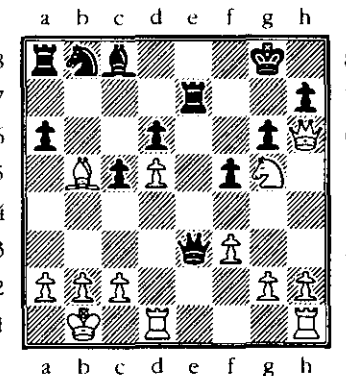
Here again I suggest you should try to guess White's next move.

Perhaps Black was feeling quite happy hereabouts, thinking that the plus features for him were:

(a) control of the e file—if 20 ♖he1 ♕xe1 21 ♖xe1 ♖xe1 mate.

(b) the white knight is in an awkward pin

(c) the white bishop is hanging—White will have to waste time moving it and this will give Black the chance to develop his queenside. Then the pawn missing from the b file may allow him to start an attack on White's king with ♖b8 etc.

20 ♗e8!!

A brilliant move. If it came as a complete surprise to you don't be discouraged as it was probably just as big a shock to Georgiev! Take some time to see if you can grasp the idea. As David Bronstein once said to me, "after playing through a game, sit back and have a cup of tea or coffee or something stronger if you prefer and ask yourself: 'what have I seen?'"
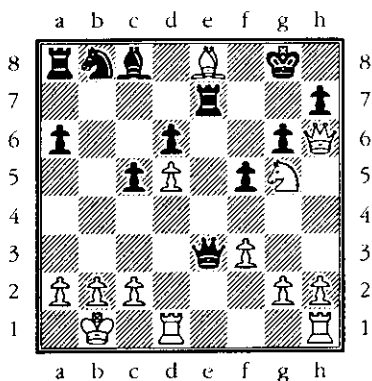
Puzzle 8

As the next puzzle, imagine how you would play if Black replied with the developing move **20...♘d7**. The answer is given at the end of the game, but the themes at work are explained in detail in the next note.

20...♕e5 21 ♖he1! 1-0
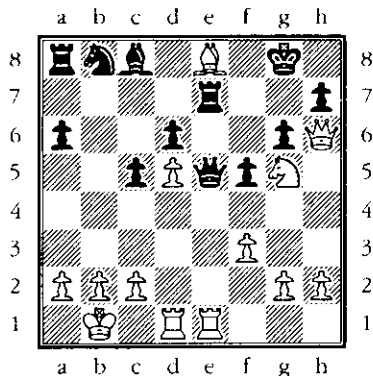
The point of 20 ♗e8 is revealed after 21...♕xe1. White replies not 22 ♖xe1?? when 22...♖xe1 is checkmate, but 22 ♗f7+!, overloading the rook on e7, which now cannot both remain defending h7 and the queen on e1. Now 22...♔h8 allows 23 ♕xh7 mate (or equally 23 ♕f8 mate), so Black has to try 22...♖xf7 23 ♖xe1 when he has lost his queen for insufficient material and besides he is still facing the catastrophic threats of 24 ♖e8+ or 24 ♘xf7.

Therefore Black, a strong Grandmaster, resigned here. After **21...♕g7 22 ♕xg7+!** (22 ♗f7+ is discussed as the next puzzle below) **22...♖xg7** (if 22...♔xg7 simply 23 ♖xe7+ ♔f6 24 ♖c7 will keep the extra rook) **23 ♗c6!! ♘xc6** (if 23...♗d7 24 ♗xa8 leaves White easily winning on material) **24 ♖e8** checkmate! This last variation illustrates clearance with gain of time and a back rank mate.

Puzzle 9

Now say Black had tried **21...♕g7** and rather than 22 ♕xg7+ White had played **22 ♗f7+**.
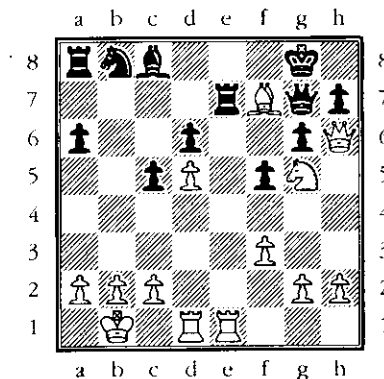
Is he still winning after this move?

After seeing this game it is hard to argue with the advice of Bent Larsen that you can't begin to play positional chess unless you have an eye for tactics. In the hands of a lesser player, White's attack might well have broken down on move 18 or 20. This was a brilliant game by Adams, but it wasn't the equivalent of casting a magical spell to steal a Dragon's egg like in a Harry Potter book—instead he applied the laws of strategy and tactics in an almost perfect way.

Such a convincing win is often described as 'effortless'. This is nonsense—it took a great deal of tactical skill and hard concentration.

23 To Err is Human!

As a game goes on move after move the normal state of affairs isn't combinations. It is building up our position, developing pieces, making plans, avoiding traps, etc. etc. So what are the features that set the alarm bells ringing that a combination might be possible?

The key thing to remember is that before you can make a strong combination there has to be a mistake or series of mistakes by the opponent.

If you think about how a player decides on his move or plan, you will soon realise there is wide scope for error. He uses knowledge from another game that isn't appropriate in the given situation; he half remembers a bad experience that makes him shy away from a perfectly decent line of play; or perhaps he is too scared to launch an attack or too impatient to defend.

In particular, it is hard to escape from the tyranny of the initial judgement—to change your mind about a position when the facts don't fit the preconceived idea. Players rush to their doom because they can't or are unwilling to re-evaluate the position. They may play very slowly but usually they are spending their time convincing themselves that their plan is the right one. "If you can't see what to do, wait until your opponent finds a plan—it's sure to be wrong!" wrote the great German GM Tarrasch.

Once a player chooses a plan he often carries it through without checking to see if it really works, or if it is tactically sound. Because his plan is wrong, the logic of the position turns against him and move by move his position gets steadily worse. Unless he pulls himself back from the brink, a combination will appear to cut him down.

All these things or just plain weakness can lead the opponent to put his pieces onto bad squares. It is then that you pounce!

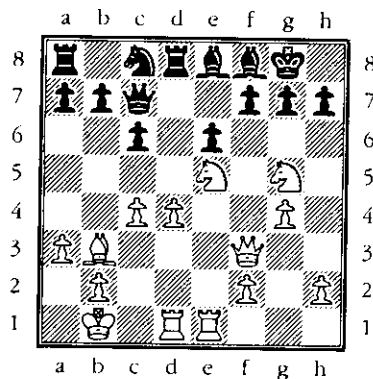The following dramatic example shows that any square or pawn, if the player has misplaced his pieces, can become vulnerable to a combination.

R.Ponomariov - V.Ivanchuk
FIDE World Championship 2002

White to play

This game was played in the final match of the FIDE World Championship in Moscow 2002

After **23 c5! Black resigned**, despite having equal material and a solid looking pawn structure.

The problem is the vulnerability of the pawns on e6 and f7. It may seem surprising to hear the f7 pawn described as weak: after all, Black has his king, queen and even the bishop on e8 all defending the f7 square, whilst it is only attacked three times! However, the 'sickness' of the e6 square has spread to infect the f7 square as well. The e6 pawn is under intense pressure from the white bishop and knight on g5 and even indirectly from the rook on e1. Thus, if it were White's move, he would have two combinations available against the e6 square:

(a) a knight fork after 24 ♗xe6!? fxe6 25 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 26 ♘xe6+ ♔g8 27 ♘xc7 and White has two extra pawns;

(b) a breakthrough after 24 ♘xe6! fxe6? 25 ♗xe6+ ♔h8 26 ♕xf8 mate.

If Black tries to defend against these threats with 23...h6 then 24 ♘gxf7! ♗xf7 25 ♘xf7 ♕xf7 26 ♗xe6 winning Black's queen for two pieces—with two pawns thrown in as small change.

Incidentally, still good enough to win after 23...h6, though by no means as convincing, is 24 ♘xe6 fxe6 25 ♗xe6+ ♔h7 26 ♕f5+ (not falling for 26 ♕xf8 ♗g6+! with a discovered attack on White's queen) 26...g6 27 ♕xf8

Black has no good move after 23 c5. If 23...f6 24 ♘xe6 will be a massacre.

If he moves his king away to h8, to avoid the pin, then f7 drops straightaway; similarly f7 falls after 23...♘e7. In fact the only way to avoid disaster on f7 is 23...♖d5, giving up the exchange after 24 ♗xd5 cxd5. In a World Championship match it would be senseless to play on the exchange down for nothing. Therefore Ivanchuk preferred to resign immediately after 23 c5.

These combinations didn't come out of thin air. They arose because the black pieces are on squares where they offer no protection to the e6 square. Thus if, in the diagram, you transfer the black knight to d5, where it shields the e6 pawn against the white bishop, all the combinations vanish. White would still have a space advantage, which comes down to the fact that Black has failed to organise counterplay with ...c6-c5 earlier in the game. In other words, as Tartakower once remarked wryly 'a combination shows that someone has blundered'. In this case, it is Black who has blundered by making strategical mistakes.

Having reached almost the end of this book I hope that the reader has developed a good nose for a combination. A weak point, a king and queen separated by the distance of a knight fork, a piece cut off from its fellows—they all indicate some lack of harmony in the opponent's forces.

Here are two simple but striking examples of blunders induced by a reliance on a preconceived idea without checking the tactics.

J.Sebrek - V.Schneider
Budapest 2002
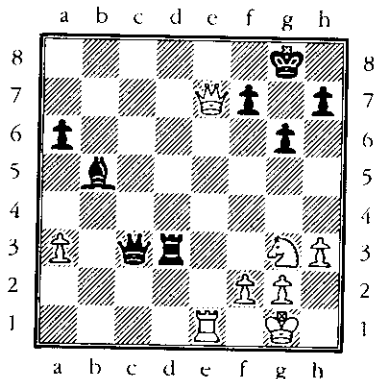
White to play

Black has the ascendancy on the queenside and threatens ♕xa3; meanwhile White feels he has control on the kingside. 'The dark squares are my friends' he says to himself 'just look at the hole on f6, it is positively inviting me to put my knight there!' So he rushes to get counterplay before a3 drops and hangs a whole rook with **34 ♘e4??**. The dark squares aren't his friends after **34...♕xe1+ 35 ♔h2 ♕a1 36 ♘g5 ♕g7 37 ♕c7 ♕f8 0-1** Incidentally, White could have developed a dark square attack with 34 ♖e5 ♕xa3 35 ♖c5.

Here's a position I've created, based on this game, with basically some of the pieces shuffled a file to the left.

Here I think White is much less likely to blunder a rook with 34 ♘d4?? as he wouldn't feel as secure on the dark squares—the rook on d1 is on a light square, and Black has good light square control. The idea that blunders can be caused by believing that you are invincible on squares of a certain colour has also been discussed in the chapter on knight forks.

G.Flear - S.Smetakin
Hastings Challengers 2002

Black to play

In this position the black bishop on e6 is attacked three times and defended three times; therefore it is safe from capture. Black, however,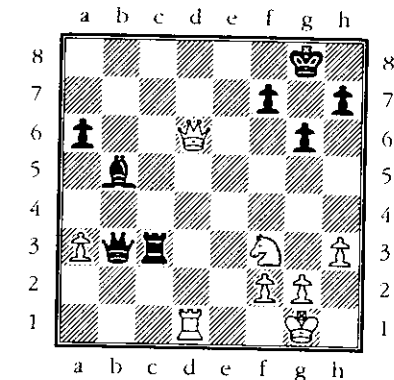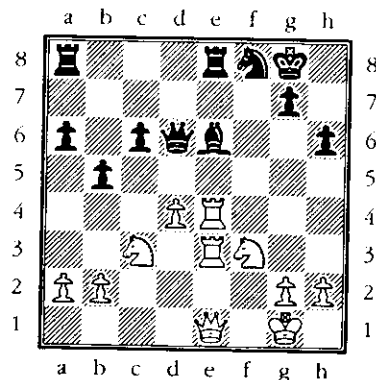 sought to ease the tension as has been done in many games by offering an exchange of rooks on the e file with **22...♗f7??**. Unfortunately for him, in this specific case, the rook on e8 is attacked three times and only defended twice: this means that White wins a piece after **23 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 24 ♖xe8 ♗xe8 25 ♕xe8** In the game Black resigned after 23 ♖xe8.

Now imagine a virtually identical position as follows:
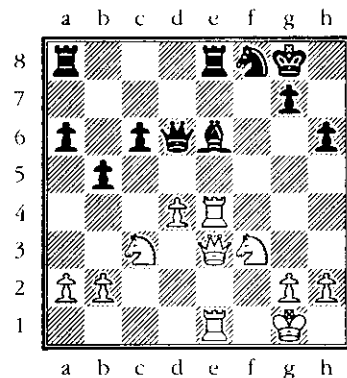
The only difference is that the white queen and rook on e1 have swapped places. Now **22...♗f7** is perfectly reasonable as if **23 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 24 ♕xe8?**—he should play another move such as 24 ♘e5—**24...♗xe8 25 ♖xe8** and White has only a rook and bishop for his queen.

Incidentally, in this example we see the importance of the order in which pieces are attacking a point. If you want a particularly strong pin, involving an attack by several pieces, it's optimum to have the stronger pieces at the back of the queue. Whether or not a move like 22...♗f7 loses material can only be worked out by calculation, not by remembering similar examples in past games.

It is risky for a player to make a sacrifice, even an objectively correct one, when he has no clear follow up in mind. Copying a half remembered sacrifice from a book of Kasparov's best games can be a death trap.

M.Tolonen - E.Raaste
Finnish Team Championship 2001
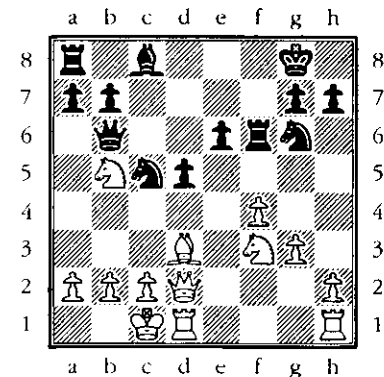
Black to play

In this equal-looking position Black suddenly gave up a pawn with **14...e5!? 15 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 16 fxe5 ♖f2**

Here's the idea: after 17 ♕xf2 ♘xd3+ wins the white queen: it's our old friend the discovered attack.

17 ♕c3
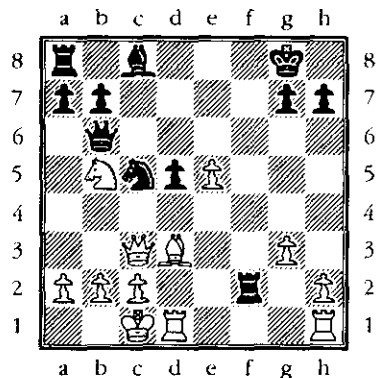
17...♗d7?

Black loses his nerve. He had to continue to harass the white queen with 17...♘xd3+ 18 ♕xd3 ♗f5! 19 ♕xd5+ ♔h8. Now the threat to c2 is very difficult to meet, for example if 20 ♘d4?!—probably the move that Black thought was the refutation but in fact 20 ♘a3 is safer—then not 20...♖d8 21 ♕f7! when the pin on the bishop is awkward and 21...♖xd5 is answered by 22 ♕f8 mate, but 20...♖c8! keeping up the pressure on c2, when White would lose if he played 21 ♖d2 ♖xd2 22 ♔xd2 ♖d8 and the queen is skewered against the knight.

Because he stumbled here, Black was left a pawn down with a shattered position against a player rated 100 Elo points below him. If he had avoided the pawn sacrifice at move 14 he might have slowly outplayed his opponent in the middlegame or endgame. Instead

Black has destroyed himself, although to be fair White now plays very precisely to clinch the game.

18 ♘d6!

Now that White has control of the c8 and f5 squares—stopping ♖c8 and ♗f5 respectively—the main danger is passed and he is a pawn up.

18...♘a4 19 ♕b3 ♕e3+ 20 ♔b1 ♕xe5 21 ♗e4!

An elegant pin.

21...♘b6

Black is ripped apart after 21...♕xd6 22 ♗xd5+ ♔h8 23 ♗xb7.

22 ♗xd5+ ♘xd5 23 ♖xd5 ♕e6

24 ♘e4!

Another fine move, attacking the rook, threatening 25 ♖xd7 winning the bishop as the black queen is pinned, and preparing ♘g5 to chase the black queen away from the a2-g8 diagonal.

If now 24...♗c6, hoping for 25 ♘xf2 ♗xd5 forking White's queen
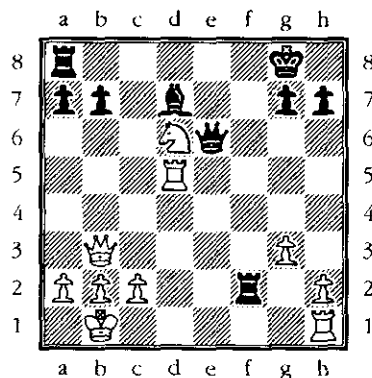
and rook, White wins the queen with 25 ♖d8+! ♖xd8 26 ♕xe6+.

24...♖f7

He has to retreat and defend the bishop as if 24...♗e2 25 ♘c5! ♖e1+ 26 ♖xe1 ♕xe1+ 27 ♖d1+ discovered check wins Black's queen before he has time to mate White with ♕xd1.

25 ♘g5 ♕c6 26 ♖hd1 1-0

Black resigned. The threats of 27 ♖xd7 or 27 ♘xf7 speak for themselves.

I remember a game from my first ever tournament at school in which I exploited my opponent's refusal to adjust his plan. As White I began 1 e4 e5 2 h4 At that time I was addicted to the development 3 ♖h3 based on the principle that the rooks were the strongest pieces apart from the queen and so should be developed immediately. However, after my opponent's reply 2...h5 I sensed that he liked symmetrical positions and showed enough flexibility to venture 3 g4!? Sure enough, there followed 3...g5 4 hxg5 hxg4 5 ♖xh8, winning a rook!

When we leave the beginner stage in chess we no longer habitually leave our pieces en prise or move them into positions where they can be captured. It still sometimes happens, of course, but it is no longer the normal state of affairs! In fact, we don't even see moves that would leave our queen en prise to a pawn—they just aren't a part of our thinking any longer. In most situations this is good—we don't

waste our time looking at stupid moves. However, it can lead to 'chess blindness' if we exclude too many moves from our thinking.

For the final time let me remind you that the difficulty of a combination is either in seeing the key move or in calculating the consequences of the move. There can be no doubt about that when you look at the next diagram.
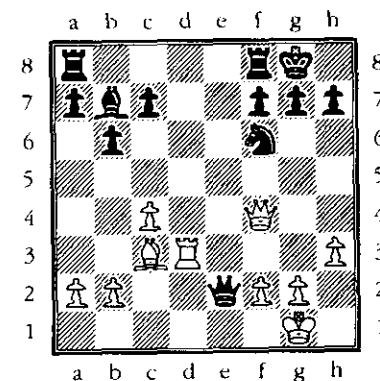
It is White to move. When I was coaching at the World Junior I asked some of the younger players what is White's best move? Have a look yourself before you read on.

Well, one of the players got very excited when he saw 1 ♕xf6 gxf6 2 ♖g3+ ♔h8 3 ♗xf6 mate! If you saw that, well done—you are learning the mating patterns! I hope it doesn't upset you too much if I tell you that it is wrong?

When I told them that Black was winning after 1 ♕xf6 one of the players looked briefly at 1...♖e1+ to deflect the bishop when if 2 ♗xe1? gxf6 3 ♖g3+ ♔h8 4 ♗c3 h5! 5 ♗xf6+ ♔h7 and White's attack is

defeated, but he quickly saw that 2 ♔h2 leaves Black defenceless. Someone else tried 1...♛d1+ to deflect the rook from the third rank, but again 2 ♔h2 and Black has no time to take the rook because of mate on g7. A third try was 1...♛e1+ 2 ♔h2 ♛xc3, but then 3 ♛xc3 just leaves White a queen for a rook up.

After looking at the position for a long time and trying ever more ridiculous moves, one of the players was convinced I was bluffing and that White was winning after 1 ♛xf6. However, there is a way to defend g7 which is astonishingly difficult for humans to see: 1...♛g4!!. This threatens mate on g2. After 2 hxg4 fxg6, the g file is blocked so White can't mate with 3 ♖g3+. Black stays a rook up and wins.

From the time we sit down at the board we take care to avoid leaving our queen en prise. But in addition we learn to give up our queen in mating patterns like 1 ♛xf6 gxf6 2 ♖g3+. On the other hand, we don't learn moves like 1...♛g4. Therefore it is a blind spot. Until now of course—remember this pattern in your games!

So White is actually losing in the diagram position, for example 1 ♗xf6 ♛xd3 2 ♛g5 ♛g6 defends and wins, as does 1 ♖g3 ♘h5 2 ♛d4 f6, while if 2 ♛h6 Black can win with the simple 2...f6, but much more elegant is 2...♛d1+ 3 ♔h2 ♛h1+! 4 ♔xh1 ♘xg3+ followed by 5...gxh6. The white king is dragged to a square where the rook can be taken with check.

The way in which a player judges and assesses a position is a reflection of his or her own personality as well as previous chess experiences. We don't easily give up our beliefs even if our increasing experience suggests they are wrong.

I remember two players from my youth who held strong but incorrect opinions on the nature of chess play.

One of them always declined a sacrificial offer 'on principle'. This was inspired by his belief that it was a waste of time thinking before you moved, as this would only give your opponent time to think as well. In his opinion it was much better to do your thinking before your opponent moved, and then play your own move instantly. With this philosophy, there would never be any time to calculate whether or not it was safe to accept a surprise sacrifice, so he had decided always to decline any offer.

Of course, once you knew his weakness it became easy to beat him as a sacrifice like ♗xh3! in front of his castled king always won a pawn as he would never take the bishop!

The other player was well prepared in the opening and had a strong positional style, but he imagined that the game would win itself as soon as he had all his pieces on good squares. He had no enthusiasm for a tactical brawl and frequently made bad blunders even in winning positions.

In fact no two players are going to think about a position in exactly the same way, unless there is a huge material or positional imbalance or an entirely forced line of play.

On the other hand, a combination is often right or wrong. If there is only one way to win then Kasparov or Kramnik will both play the identical moves. For this reason a game can be ruined just because one tactical theme isn't known. It will be a 'bug' in your chess system, occasionally crashing your games.

I hope this book has got all the bugs out of your system, but you still need to practice and practice and practice. One of the tried and tested ways to improve your chess is to take complicated positions from games and analyse them 'to the death'. When I was a junior I started analysing puzzles from magazines and writing down the variations. I found *Bent Larsen's Good Move Guide* (Oxford University Press, 1982) an extremely valuable source of positions. There are of course literally hundreds of books and magazines to choose from. Even a newspaper column can provide useful material.

Therefore the key ingredients to chess improvement are hard work and open mindedness to new ideas. With these two qualities you could exceed even your greatest aims!
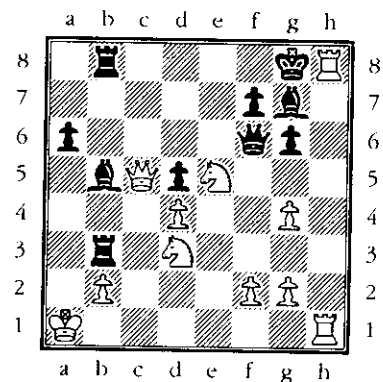
24 Solutions

Knight Forks

1) You don't have to be a World Champion to spot **31 ♘e7+** winning the queen.

2) 22...e5 23 ♕xd7! 1-0 For if 23...♕xd7 24 ♘f6+ regains the queen leaving White two pawns up with the b6 and f7 pawns hanging.

3) 38 ♕xd7! ♕xc3 If 38...♖xd7 39 ♘e6+ **39 ♘e6+ ♔h6 40 ♕xf7 ♕xa1+ 41 ♔h2 ♕e5+ 42 f4 1-0**

4) White should get in first with the knight fork **32 ♖h8+!**

32...♗xh8 33 ♖xh8+ ♔xh8 34 ♘xf7+ ♔g8 35 ♘xd8 Now after 35...♖xd8 36 ♘e5 Black has two rooks for the queen, but his dark squares are terminally weak and he resigned after 36...♗e8 37 ♕e7 ♖db8 38 ♘g4 1-0 Black will be mated following 39 ♘f6.

5) If 38 ♘xb5? Black wins material with 38...♘f3+! 39 ♕xf3 ♖xd3. White played **38 ♔g2** to stop this and after **38...♕c4 39 ♖fd1??**, a natural move, but... **39...♘c2! 40 ♕d2** (if 40 ♕e2 ♖xd3 and again there will be a fork on e1) **40...♖xd3** and **White resigned** as if 41 ♕xd3 ♘e1+! wins the queen—even better than winning a rook with 41...♕xd3 42 ♖xd3 ♘e1+.

6) Kasparov missed **39 ♖c7!**
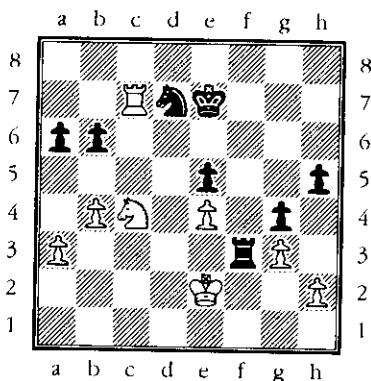
pinning the knight with two threats: 40 ♘xb6 winning a piece and 40 ♖xd7+ ♔xd7 41 ♘xe5+ and 42 ♘xf3, leading to a king and pawn endgame two pawns up. Black is defenceless, e.g. 39...♖c3, trying a counter pin, 40 ♔d2! ♖b3 41 ♔c2 crowding out the rook and forcing it back to the fatal f3 square or 39...♖b3 40 ♘xb6! (White should avoid 40 ♘xe5? when 40...♔d6! forks both White's pieces and holds

on after 41 ♖xd7+ ♔xe5) **40...♔d6 41 ♖xd7+ ♔c6** It looks at first glance that Black has escaped because the knight is attacked and it can neither move to safety or be defended by the rook. However, 42 ♖d3! offering the exchange of rooks destroys Black's hopes: after **42...♖b2+ 43 ♖d2 ♖xd2+** (or else he can't regain the piece) **44 ♔xd2 ♔xb6** he has been forced into a hopeless king and pawn endgame. Finally if 39...♖f6 (defending b6) 40 ♘xe5 ♔d6 41 ♘xd7!, attacking the black rook, 41...♖f7 42 ♖a7 and again Black will be compelled into the losing king and pawn endgame.

7) White is *Sergei* Kasparov, not Garry, but he showed he could still pack a combinational punch as there followed: **16 ♘a7!** threatening 17 ♘c6. As the knight on e4 is hanging Black tried **16...♘g5 17 ♗xg5** Curiously, White could leave the bishop on h3 en prise with 17 ♘c6?! ♘xh3+ 18 ♔g2 and still win the exchange after 18...♕e8 19 ♘xb8 ♕xb8 20 ♔xh3. **17...♗xg5 18 ♘c6 ♕c7 19 ♘xb8 ♖xb8?** The final blunder. The only move was 19...♘xb8 **20 ♕g4 1-0** The double attack on d7 and g5 picks up more material.

8) Black forced the bishop to move, but the reply wasn't exactly what he would have wished: **51 ♗g7!** Now 51...♗xg7 52 ♕h5+ ♔g8 (or it's mate next move after 52...♗h6 53 ♕xh6+) **53 ♘e7+** wins the queen.

Instead Black came up with the clever defensive move **51...f6!** If now 52 ♗xh6? (52 ♘xh6 ♔xg7) 52...♘xf2 when 53 ♕f3? ♕xf3 54 gxf3 ♔g6! regains the piece a

couple of pawns up or if 53 ♕h5 ♕xf5 when White's best bet is to give perpetual check with 54 ♕f7+! ♔xh6 55 ♕f8+ ♔g6 56 ♕g8+ ♔h6 57 ♕f8+! ♔h5 58 ♕h8+ etc.

Nevertheless 52 ♗xf6! was good enough to win after 52...♘xf2 53 ♕h5 ♕xf5 (there is nothing else) 54 ♕f7+ 1-0 It's mate next move.

9) After the plausible **1 ♖b1**, attacking the b5 pawn, **1...♘d5+!** wins in every variation:
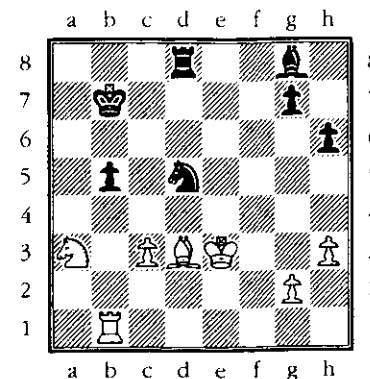
Black wins a piece after

(1) 2 ♔d4 ♘f4+

(2) 2 ♔e2 ♘f4+ (or 2...♘xc3+)

(3) 2 ♔e4 ♗h7+ (or 2...♘xc3+) 3 ♔d4 ♘f4+

(4) 2 ♔d2 ♘f4

and the exchange after

(5) 2 ♔f2 ♘xc3 or

(6) 2 ♔f3 ♘xc3 3 ♗e4+! ♘xe4 4 ♔xe4 ♗h7+ wins the exchange, while if 4 ♖xb5+ ♔c6 5 ♔xe4 ♖a8! and Black wins a piece.

If 1 ♘c2 the skewer 1...♖xd3+ 2 ♔xd3 ♗c4+ and 3...♗xf1 wins.

The game is likely to end in a draw after 1 ♘xb5 ♖xd3+ 2 ♔xd3 ♘xb5 when White has a rook and a pawn for two pieces. Perhaps White's best chance is 1 ♗xb5 ♖a8 (or 1...♘d5+ 2 ♔d4) 2 ♗c4 ♖xa3 3 ♗xg8 ♖xc3+ 4 ♔d4!? and White has a very slight advantage as his king is nearer to the pawns, though it is surely going to be a draw.

10) After 25 g4 hxg3+? 26 ♘xg3 ♖xh3—or any other move to safety by the rook—White wins a piece with the knight fork 27 ♖xd4! ♖xd4 (unhelpful is 27...♖xg3 28 ♖xd8) 28 ♘f5+. Therefore Black would have to answer 25 g4 by retreating the rook from h5 but, having achieved g2-g4, White has a nice positional advantage. When, after the game, Kasparov found out what he had missed he was furious with himself!

11) Gurevich began a long combination based on knight forks:
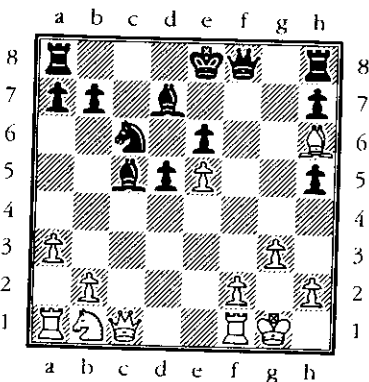
19...♘d4! 20 ♗xf8 ♘e2+ 21 ♔g2 ♘xc1 22 ♗g7!

The only chance is to counter-attack as 22 ♗xc5 ♘b3 forks rook and bishop.

22...♘b3! 23 ♗xh8 ♘xa1 24 ♘d2 ♘c2 25 ♖c1

White has defended as well as possible and now the pin regains the piece.

25...♘e3+!

The knight goes desperado to win an important pawn.

26 fxe3 ♗xe3 27 ♖c2 ♖c8! 28 ♖xc8+ ♗xc8 29 ♘f1 ♗c1 0-1
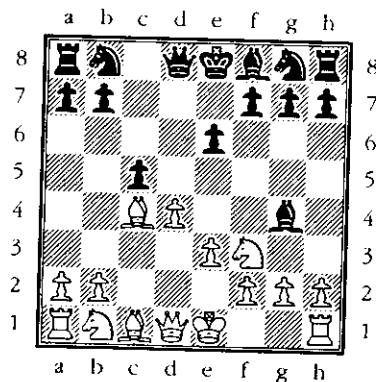
A second pawn drops.

Double Attack by Queen

1) No—41 ♕xd1 ♕xc8 42 ♕h5+ and Black loses his knight so he resigned.

2) 38 ♕d3! is a double attack on h7 and f3 Black resigned.

3) If 5...♘f6 6 ♗xf7+! ♔xf7 7 ♘e5+ ♔e8 8 ♘xg4 wins a pawn. Black's best defensive try was 5...♘h6, guarding the bishop.

The game ended

5...e6

6 ♕a4+!

White's winning plan entails diagonal pressure against the black king which can be increased with gain of time by attacking Black's bishop with ♘e5.

6...♘d7

If 6...♕d7 7 ♗b5 ♘c6 8 ♘e5 ♕c7 9 ♘xg4—the simplest move—leaves White a piece up. The best way to resist was 6...♘c6, though White keeps a decided advantage after 7 ♘e5, e.g. 7...♗f5 (he loses a piece to a double attack after 7...♗h5 8 ♘xc6 bxc6 9 ♕xc6+ ♔e7 10 ♕xc5+) 8 ♘xc6 bxc6 9 ♕xc6+ ♔e7 10 ♕xc5+ with two extra pawns and the initiative after 10...♔f6 11 ♕e5+ or an endgame on 10...♕d6 11 ♕xd6+ ♔xd6.

7 ♘e5 ♗f5 8 ♘xd7 1-0

If 8...♕d7 9 ♗b5 wins the queen.

4) After 4 e3 ♕b6 White could get a strong initiative with 5 ♘c3!—the analysis is out of the scope of this book—but not 5 dxc5?? when 5...♕b4+ wins the bishop!

5)
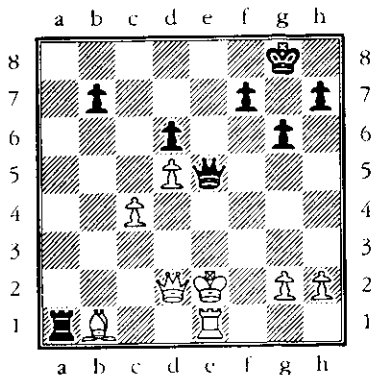
If 40 ♕e3?? ♕b2+ regains the piece. In the game Gelfand chose 40

♔f1?? which was also a horrible blunder after 40...♖xb1! 41 ♖xb1—note that 41 ♖xe5 is impossible as the rook is pinned—41...♕f5+ 42 ♔e2 ♕xb1 when the double attack had regained Black his piece leaving him a pawn up. Kasparov eventually won the ending.

Gelfand must have been kicking himself as 40 ♔f2! wins easily—if 40...♖xb1 the rook on e1 isn't pinned so he can play 41 ♖xe5 And if 40...♕xh2, getting a second pawn for the piece, White has a double attack of his own: 41 ♖e8+ ♔g7 42 ♕d4+ ♔h6 43 ♕xa1.

6) In the game White played (a), but after 19 dxe5 ♕b4!, with a double attack on White's queen and bishop, he had nothing better than 20 ♗xc6 ♖xd1 21 ♖axd1 ♕c4 when Black's queen outweighed the rook and bishop. Suggestion (b) is a terrible mistake as if 19 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 20 ♘xe5?? ♕xg2 mate. So best is (c), simplifying with 19 ♗xf4 exf4 (not 19...gxf4 20 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 21 ♘xe5) 20 ♗xc6 ♕xc6 21 ♖c1, though after 21...♕d5 Black's better pawn structure and strong bishops give him a clear advantage.

Double Attacks by Rook, Bishop and Pawn

1) Black won a pawn with **28...♘xb2! 0-1** If 29 ♔xb2 ♖c2+ regains the knight a pawn up with a dominating position.

2) No: after **1...♖bxa7 2 ♖xa7 ♖xa7 3 ♖xd4! exd4** (it doesn't help to play 3...♖a3: 4 ♖d8+ ♔h7 5 ♗g5 and the passed h pawn will rush forwards e.g. 5...♖xf3+ 6 ♔h4 b4 7

🗒d7+ ⬜g8 8 h6 b3 9 h7+ ⬜h8 10 ♗f6 mate) 4 ♗xd4+ 🗒g7 5 h6 and White wins the rook.

3) White can win a piece with **1 e6!** (This move order is the most forcing as after the similar 1 g6 ♗xg6 2 e6 Black could try battling on with 2...🗒d3 3 exf7 ♗xf7) **1...⬜xe6 2 g6 ♗xg6 3 🗒f6+ ⬜e7 4 🗒xg6** and White should win comfortably.
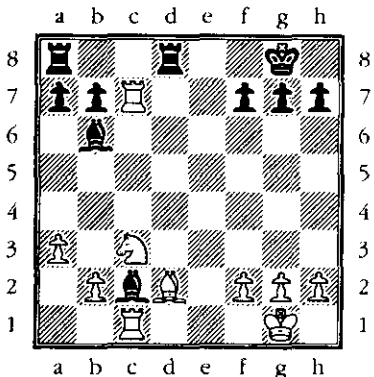
4) White is a pawn down after **18...♗xc2**, so 19 🗒e2 ♗d3 would have been hopeless in the long run. Instead he played **19 🗒xc7** in the game but resigned after **19...♗b6** seeing that both his rook and bishop are attacked.

He was wrong to resign! It is true that it is hopeless after 20 🗒xb7 🗒xd2 when Black's rook defends the bishop on c2. However, if White could give up his bishop in such a way that in capturing it Black doesn't also defend his bishop on c2, then he would survive. This can be done with **20 ♗g5!** attacking the black rook. Then **20...f6? 21 🗒xb7 fxg5?! 22 🗒xc2** is good for White. So Black should be satisfied with **20...♗xc7 21 ♗xd8 🗒xd8 22 🗒xc2**

♗e5! 23 g3 🗒c8** with positional pressure.

5) The pawn fork goes wrong after **20 ♗g6!** when Black resigned immediately in Vokarev-Vokarev, Ubeda 2000. He will lose at least the exchange, reaching a dead endgame, for example: **20...hxg6 21 🗒xg6+ ⬜g8 22 🗒xf8 exd4 23 🗒xd7 🗒xe1+ 24 🗒xe1 🗒xd7 25 🗒d1** or **20...🗒e7 21 🗒f5 ♗xf5 22 ♗xf5 🗒g8 23 🗒xd5 🗒xf5 24 🗒xe7 🗒xe7 25 🗒ac1** etc.

Pins

1) Black played **16...🗒xh2!** winning a pawn for if 17 ⬜xh2 🗒xg5. She won after **17 🗒e1 c6 18 ♗d3 ♗f5 19 ♗xf5 🗒xf5 20 🗒e3 🗒g4** etc.

2) No—**22 🗒e2 🗒d6 23 🗒a1!** put him in a fatal pin. Here he resigned as if 23...🗒e8 24 f4.

3)
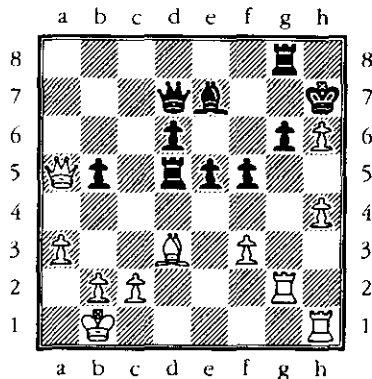
32 ♗c4!

Adams uses the pin on the b5 pawn to spike a rook.

32...♗d8 33 🗒a8!

It's important that White has this move which keeps up the attack on d5.

33...bxc4 34 🗒xd5 c3 35 🗒hg1

35...♗f6
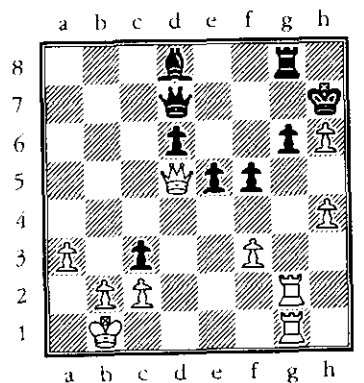
If 35...cxb2 36 🗒xg8+! ⬜xg8 37 🗒xg6+ ⬜h8 (even simpler for White is 37...⬜f8 38 🗒g8+ ⬜f7 39 🗒1g7+) 38 🗒g8+ ⬜h7 39 🗒8g7+ 🗒xg7 40 hxg7 ⬜g8 41 h5! ♗f6 42 h6 and 43 h7+ queens.

36 b3

Now White's king is perfectly safe and he has a passed pawn on the queenside.

36...🗒e7 37 a4 g5

A hopeless bid for freedom.

38 hxg5 🗒xg5 39 🗒xg5 ♗xg5 40 f4! 1-0

A nice line clearing move with an echo of the pin 32 ♗c4. If 40...♗xf4 41 🗒g8+ ⬜xh6 42 🗒g6 mate, while 40...exf4 41 🗒xf5+ ⬜xh6 42 🗒h1+ ♗h4 (or 42...⬜g7 43 🗒h7+ winning the queen) 43

🗒xf4+ ⬜h5 44 🗒xh4+ 🗒xh4 45 🗒xh4+ ⬜xh4 46 a5 and the passed pawn queens.

4) No!
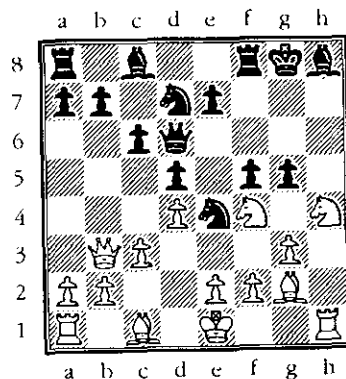
14 🗒xf5! 🗒xf5 15 ♗xe4 exploits the pin on d5 to win a key pawn. There followed **15...🗒f7**—closing the diagonal so that Black threatens to capture the knight or bishop.

16 🗒xd5! the simplest riposte. Black loses another pawn for if 16...cxd5 17 ♗xd5 the pin is restored and White wins after 17...🗒f6 18 ♗xf7+ 🗒xf7 19 🗒xh8! deflecting the king from the defence of the queen—19...⬜xh8 20 🗒xf7. So in the game Black settled for **16...🗒f8 17 🗒e3** but, two pawns down, it was hopeless.

5) All the moves apart from 42...🗒c6 lose to 43 🗒xc3! winning a piece. After **42...🗒c6** a **draw** was agreed. Note that if **43 🗒xc8+ 🗒xc8 44 ♗e5+**, hoping to exploit the pin on the black queen to win a piece, then **44...♗xe5** is check!!

6) If 37...🗒xg6 38 🗒xe7+ wins Black's queen.

Or 37...♔xg6 38 ♕g4+ ♔h7 (even worse is 38...♔f7 39 ♖xe7+! ♔xe7 40 ♕xg7+) 39 ♕xg7+ ♔xg7 40 ♖xe7+ ♔g6 41 ♖xa7 and Black has two extra pawns in the endgame.

Finally the game finished 37...♕xg6 38 ♕b4! ♕f5 39 ♕xe7+ ♔g6 40 ♕h7+ 1-0

7) Yes, as after 23 ♖xg5! ♗d3? 24 ♔d2! ♗xe2 25 ♖cg1 White regains his piece with advantage. Instead Black could keep the tension with 23...♗g6 when 24 ♖g3 (avoiding 24...♗h6) 24...♖e7 25 ♔f1 ♖ae8 26 ♗d3 leaves Black with plenty of activity, but White is a pawn up and his chances are far better than in the game. Instead in the game White played 23 ♔d2? but was in trouble after 23...♗g6 24 ♗d3? ♗e5! when there was no good answer to the double threat of 25...♗xh2 and 25...♗f4+ skewering the king and rook. White resigned after 25 ♗xg6 ♗f4+ 26 ♔d3 ♗xc1 27 ♘xc1 fxg6 28 ♖xg5 ♔f7 29 ♘e2 ♖h8 30 ♖g3 ♖xh2 31 ♖f3+ ♔g8 32 ♘f4 ♖f8 33 ♔e3 ♖h4 34 d6 ♖e8+ 0-1

8) 31 ♗b4 ♕e7 32 ♗xf5 ♖xf5 33 ♖xd6! ♖xd6 34 ♕a3 and the pin won the rook, leaving White a piece up. Crouch resigned after 34...♕h4 35 ♗xd6 ♕xf2+ 36 ♔h1 ♖g5 37 ♖c8+ ♔g7 38 ♗f8+ 1-0 It's mate in two moves.

It seems to me that Black lost this game because he only looked at the exchange of pieces on d6 in the 'natural order'—that is, the harmless 33 ♗xd6 ♖xd6 34 ♖xd6 ♕xd6 rather than 33 ♖xd6! ♖xd6, when White has the killer 34 ♕a3 rather

than having to recapture with 34 ♗xd6. Most of the time it doesn't matter in what order you exchange pieces, but sometimes it can be decisive. So when you calculate a combination make sure you try out the moves in different orders!

9) After 15...♘d7?
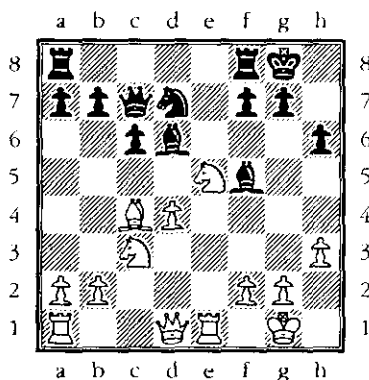
16 ♘xf7! ♖xf7 17 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 18 ♕f3 there was no good way to defend the bishop for if 18...g6 19 g4 (or 18...♔g6 19 g4 ♗c2 and simplest is 20 ♕e2! trapping the bishop.) Black tried 18...♗h2+!? 19 ♔h1 ♕f4 which looks as if it defends successfully for 20 ♕xf4 ♗xf4 leaves Black with two bishops for a rook and pawn. But James Howell had calculated further than me: 20 ♖e3!! kept the black bishop stranded on h2 with no time to escape for if 20...♕xf3 21 ♖xf3 and both bishops are hanging. Black did the best he could with 20...♘f6 but after 21 g3 (he could also have played 21 ♕xf4 ♗xf4 22 ♖f3 g5 23 g3) 21...♗xg3 22 fxg3 ♕xf3+ 23 ♖xf3 ♗xh3 24 d5 ♗d7 25 ♘e4 cxd5 26 ♘xf6 gxf6 27 ♖af1 f5 28 g4 ♔f6 29 gxf5 couldn't quite save the endgame the exchange for a pawn down.

Rather than 15...♘d7, Black had to eliminate the strong knight with 15...♗xe5, though he is still worse after 16 dxe5.

10)
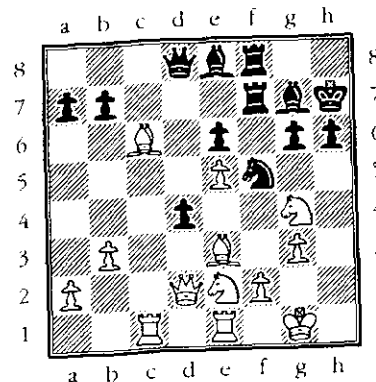
Here 23...bxc6! was very strong as it sets up a pin along the d file after 24 ♗xd4 ♖d7 25 ♖ed1 h5! chasing away the defender of the e5 pawn. 26 ♘e3 (here 26 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 27 exf6 e5 doesn't help White) 26...♘xd4 27 ♘xd4 ♗xe5 28 ♘xe6 (or 28 ♘ec2 c5) 28...♖xd2 29 ♘xd8 ♖xf2 when Black is a pawn up with a crushing position, e.g. if 30 ♖xd2 ♖xd2 31 ♘xc6? ♗xc6 32 ♖xc6 ♗d4 33 ♖e6 ♖e2 wins the pinned knight. Similar but even worse for White would be 24 ♘xd4 ♖d7 25 ♘xe6 (25 ♖ed1 h5!) 25...♖xd2 26 ♘xd8 ♖xd8 and Black has an extra piece.

Instead, in the game, I chose the natural 23...♗xc6? without too much thought as it puts the bishop on a lovely diagonal. However, there was no excuse not to calculate! Black still stood somewhat better after 24 ♘xd4 ♗d5 but was later outplayed in a time scramble and lost.

Skewer

1)
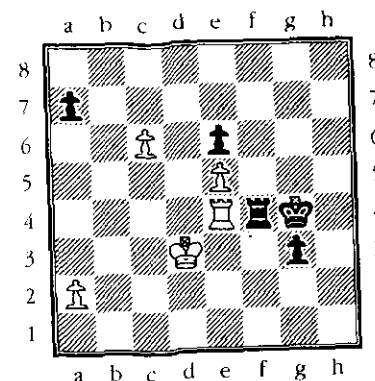
Black would only draw after 38...♖xe4? 39 ♔xe4 g2 40 c7 g1=♕ 41 c8=♕ ♕e1+ 42 ♔d4 ♕d2+ 43 ♔e4, but 38...g2! does the trick. After 39 c7 g1=♕ **White resigned** as 40 ♖xf4+ (he loses a rook with check after 40 c8=♕ ♕d1+ 41 ♔e3 ♕e1+) 40...♔xf4 41 c8=♕ ♖xe4+ 42 ♔c3 (in contrast to 38...♖xe4? because White rather than Black has exchanged rooks and the white king no longer has access to the e file) 42...♕c1+ and the queen is lost to the skewer.

2) Anand found the surefire win: 32 ♕xf8+! and Radjabov resigned immediately as 32...♕xf8 33 ♖xf2+ skewers his king and queen. If then 33...♔xg5 34 ♖xf8 ♔xg6 you can be materialistic with 35 ♖dd8, but 35 ♖g1+ ♔h7 36 ♖f4 and 37 ♖h4 is a straightforward mate.

3) the game went 43 ♘xc2 ♘xc2 44 ♗xh7+! ♔f8 45 ♗xc2 ♖c8+ 46 ♔d6!
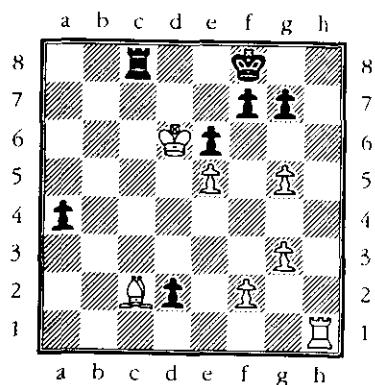
and only here did Black realise that he can't play 46...♖xc2 because of 47 ♖h8 mate!

There followed **46...♖d8+ 47 ♔c5** (here 47 ♔c7 ♖d4! is risky for White with his king cut off from the action) and now Black should agree to a draw after 47...♖c8+ 48 ♔c5. Instead he attempted to win with **48...♖d5+ 48 ♔b4 ♖xe5 49 ♗xa4** If 49...♖e1 White has the winning defence 50 ♖h8+ ♔e7 51 ♖e8+ ♔d6 52 ♖d8+ ♔e5 53 ♖xd2. After **49...♔e7 50 ♖d1 ♖e2 51 f4 ♖g2 52 ♔c5 f6 53 gxf6+ ♔xf6 54 ♗c6 ♖xg3 55 ♖xd2 g5 56 fxg5+ ♖xg5+ 57 ♔d6** Black was finally ground down in a rook and bishop versus rook endgame on move 112! An incredible punishment for his carelessness at move 42.

4) White achieves nothing after 53 a7 ♖a2 54 ♖b7+ ♔d6, but **53 ♖h6!** wins. **Black resigned** as **53...♔d7** (or 53...g4 or 53...♔f7) **54 ♖h8!** (preparing the skewer) **54... ♖a2 55 a7 ♖xa7 55 ♖h7+** wins the rook.

Discovered Attack

1) after 6 ♗b5 the trick **6...♘xe5!** uncovering an attack on White's bishop wins a pawn after either 7 ♘xe5 ♗xb5 or 7 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7. I have won a pawn a couple of times in this way when giving a 'simul'.

2) 25 f4? **♗xb3!** White resigned as there is a double attack on the d4 square and his queen. If 26 ♕xb3 ♕xd4+ will win the rook on a1 with check, so that White has no time to take the bishop on g5. If the black bishop hadn't been on d5 'hiding' the attack on d4 White would never have fallen for the trap.

3) No, as he dropped his queen to 42...♗g2+ **0-1** There is a pin after 43 ♔e1 ♖ae8 or a discovered check after 43 ♔g1 ♗h3+ or 43...♗d5+.

**4)** 33...♗a2! **0-1** If 34 ♔xb2 b3+ wins the queen by discovered attack.

5) White had reckoned without **25...♕d6 26 hxg4**
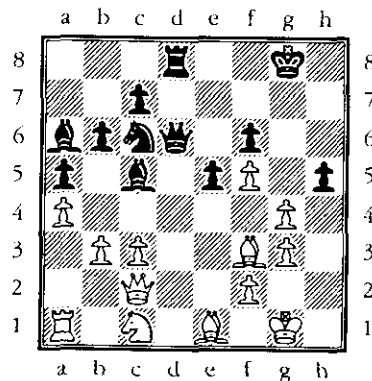
26...e4!

Attacking the bishop and uncovering an attack on g3—did you notice that the f2 pawn is pinned? Now if 27 ♗xe4 ♕xg3+ 28 ♔g2 ♘e5!—threatening 29...♘f3+ winning the queen—29 ♔h1 (after 29 ♕e4 ♗xf2+! Black wins as in the note to 28 ♗g2 below) 29...♕h4+ 30 ♔g1 ♕xg4 31 ♔h1 ♘f3 32 ♗xf3 ♕h3+ 33 ♔g1 ♕f1+ 34 ♔h2 ♗d6 is mate, so White tried **27 ♕xe4** but resigned after **27...♕xg3+ 0-1** Hopeless are 28 ♗g2 ♗xf2+! 29 ♗xf2 ♖d1+ 30 ♗e1 ♖xe1+ or 28 ♔h1 ♕h3+ 29 ♔g1 ♕f1+ 30 ♔h2 ♗d6+ 31 ♕f4 ♗xf4 mate.

6) 34 ♗c1!
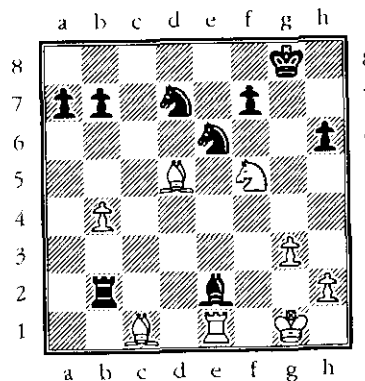
34...♖b1

Black had relied on this move to save his bishop for if 34...♖c2 35 ♗xe6 fxe6 36 ♘d4 forks the rook and bishop when 36...♖xc1 (best) 37 ♖xc1 ♗g4 38 ♖c7 wins easily for White.

35 ♗e4!

If 35 ♗a2? ♖a1 36 ♘e7+ ♔h7! saves Black—but not 36...♔f8 37 ♗xh6+ ♔xe7 38 ♖xa1.

35...♖a1 36 ♘e7+! 1-0

Black loses the exchange after 36...♔f8 (even worse is 36...♔g7 37 ♗b2+) 37 ♗xh6+! (the point of the combination!) 37...♔xe7 38 ♖xa1—against a World Champion this would be hopeless odds.

Note that if 36 ♘xh6+? Black can escape with 36...♔f8 as White's knight is blocking ♗h6+.

White had to get his pieces on exactly the right squares to force the black king into the fatal bishop check. If he had played 35 ♗a2? or 36 ♘xh6+? the black king would have had a square to avoid the bishop ambush.

7) 24 ♕g3! is very strong.
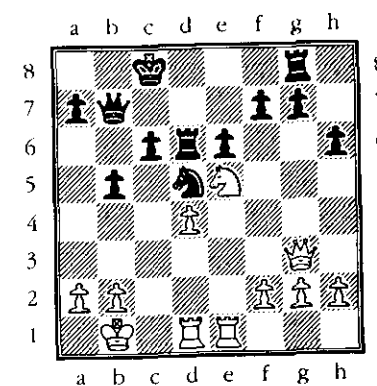
The discovered attack on Black's rook on d6 is difficult to meet, for example:

(a) 24...♔b8 25 ♘xf7! wins the exchange and a pawn;

(b) 24...f6 25 ♘f7! ♖d7 26 ♘d6+ winning the exchange;

(c) 24...♖dd8 25 ♘xc6! followed by ♖c1 with a big attack for if 25...♕xc6? 26 ♖c1 wins the queen;

(d) 24...罩gd8 25 豐xg7 and Black cannot avoid the loss of a second pawn for if 25...f6 26 豐xb7+ 含xb7 27 包f7.

In the game Black tried **24...豐e7** but after **25 包xf7 罩d7 26 包xh6!** he was left a pawn down. He resigned after **26...罩gd8 27 包g4 罩d6 28 包e5 包c7 29 罩c1 含b7 30 罩e2 豐e8 31 罩ec2** as c6 is dropping as well.
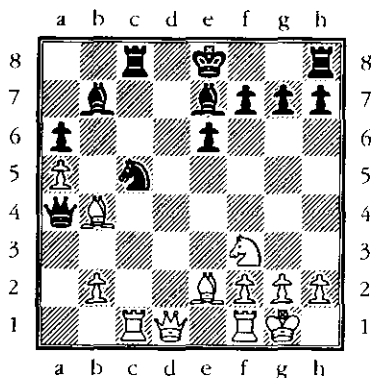
Trapping Pieces

1) 5 盒xf7+! 1-0 for if 5...含xf7 6 包g5+ 含e8 (6...含f6 7 豐f3 mate) 7 包e6 wins the queen.

2) It was a bad mistake, as Black's knight became trapped on a4:

21 豐xa4+ 包xa4 22 罩xc8+!

An essential move. Instead 22 盒xe7? 含xe7 23 罩xc8 罩xc8 and Black's knight on a4 will escape via c5 or b2. Harikrishna's move order prevents Black activating her rook until it is too late.

22...盒xc8 23 罩c1!

Gaining more time to shut in the knight for if 23...盒xb4? 24 罩xc8+ skewers the king and rook.

23...盒d7 24 盒xe7

Only now, when precautions have been made to prevent the black knight escaping along the c file does White make this exchange.

24...含xe7 25 b3 包b2

A sad necessity as now the knight is lost.

26 罩c2 罩c8 27 罩xb2 罩c1+ 28 盒f1 盒b5 29 包d2 1-0

3) 20...包a5! 21 豐xa7 豐c6

Threatening 21...罩a8.

22 豐a6 包c4!

Cutting off the escape along the a6-f1 diagonal.

23 罩b1 包c7!

Not 23...罩a8? 24 豐b5. White resigned as if 24 豐a7 罩a8. The only way to play on is 24 罩xb6 包xb6 25 豐d3, but with just two weak pawns for a knight there was no hope against any strong player, let alone Kasparov!

4) Very strong was **20...盒b4!** with a discovered attack on the queen **21 豐e6+** (no better is 21 豐a8+ 含d7 22 豐d5+ 含e7) **21...包b8** and if now 22 c3 White loses his queen to 22...罩d6. White must have missed this in his calculations before 17 盒xb5. He tried **22 豐xf6 盒xe1 23 罩xe1** but four pawns are no match for a rook in the middlegame, unless they are far advanced passed pawns. **White resigned** after **23...罩c8 24 罩e2 豐d6 25 豐g5 a4 26**
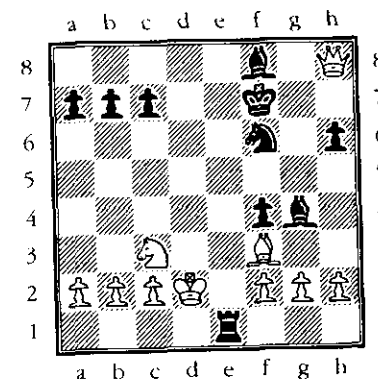
a3 罩c7 27 豐f4 豐c6 28 d5 豐xd5 29 包c3 豐c6 30 e4 豐b7 31 包xa4 豐b5 32 exf5 包xa3+.

5) The game continuation revealed the threat and also why 14 包f1? is a bad move as it does nothing to stop it:
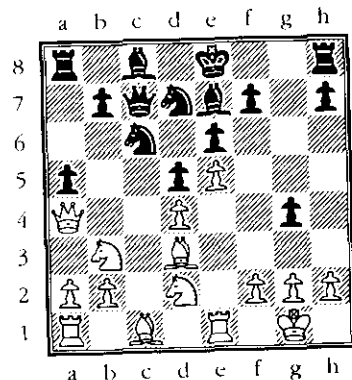
14 包f1? 包b6 15 豐b5 a4 and **White resigned** in Kwiatkowski-Rendle, Hastings 2000, since he loses a piece as if 16 包c5 罩a5 traps his queen. A move that makes the perpetrator resign within two moves is admittedly pretty bad, but this doesn't quite earn the accolade as the worst move of the three. This is because after **14 盒b1??**—with the idea of clearing a retreat for the queen back to either d3 or e2 or f1 after 14...包b6 15 豐b5—**14...b5! 15 豐xb5 盒a6 16 豐a4 包b6** and White loses the queen for a piece. That leaves **14 盒f1!** as the best try by far. After 14...包b6 15 豐b5 a4 16 包c5 罩a5 17 豐d3 盒xc5 18 dxc5 包d7 Black will capture on either c5 or e5 but White is only a pawn down with fighting chances. The move **13...豐c7!** is quiet but extremely strong—an example of a 'creeping' move

6) With some precise play, Black can trap the white queen:

22...盒xf3! (not 22...罩e8 23 盒xg4 包xg4—or 23...盒g7 24 盒h5+ 包xh5 25 豐h7—24 豐h7+) **23 含xe1** (if 23 gxf3 罩e8 then 24...盒g7 wins the queen) **23...盒c6 24 f3 盒e8! 25 包e4 盒g7 26 包g5+ 含g6!** (not 26...hxg5 27 豐h3 盒d7 28 g4 fxg3 29 豐xg3 and the queen has escaped) **27 豐xg7+ 含xg7 28 包e6+ 含g6 29 包xf4+ 含f5 30 包d3 b6** and Black won the endgame.

7) I should have carried on repeating as **38...包e5?** was a bad blunder. If 39 dxe5 罩xd3 wins for Black, but **39 包xd6 包xd3 40 包xf5!** won material: in view of the threatened fork on e7 Black cannot save his knight. I tried **40...包f4!?** hoping for 41 豐f3?? 罩xf5 but there followed **41 包e7+ 含h7 42 豐f3! 豐c2 43 包xd5 包e2+ 44 含f1!** (not 44 含f2?? 包xd4+) **44...豐xd1+ 45 含f2** and Black's knight was trapped. After **45...豐xd4+ 46 含xe2 豐b2+ 47 含f1 豐a1+ 48 含g2 豐xa2+ 49 含h3** **White eventually won the endgame.**

Removal of the Defender

1) No, as **2...♗xb2+! 3 ♔xb2 ♖xd1** won the exchange and a pawn. This deflection is a common trick in the Sicilian Dragon.

2) Four players rated over 2200 and countless amateurs have fallen for this trap. After **9 h3?? ♘d4!**
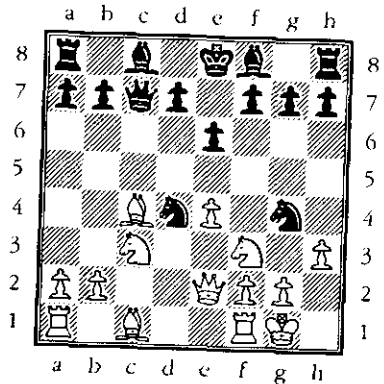
wins White's queen for if **10 ♘xd4 ♕h2** is mate as the white knight has been deflected from the defence of h2. White has no time to move his queen as **10 ♕d1 ♘xf3+** will also lead to mate on h2.

3) **17...♗xf2+! 0-1**
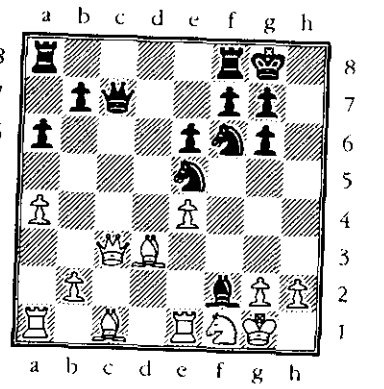
White emerges no less than the exchange and two *pawns down after* **18 ♔xf2 ♕xc3 19 bxc3 ♘xd3+ 20 ♔e2 ♘xe1 21 ♔xe1 ♘xe4.** Such is the effect of destroying the defender!

4) **43 ♘xe5!** deflecting the bishop from the defence of the rook on d8. Gurevich tried the desperate **43...♖d1+** but **resigned** after **44 ♘xd1 ♗xe5.** Also hopeless was **43...♕e8 44 ♕b3+ ♔h8 45 ♘f7+ ♔g7 46 ♘xd8** when, to add to Black's woes, the bishop on b7 is hanging with check.

5) The bishop on g5 is guarding the e7 square and so preventing any fork with **31 ♕xc8+ ♕xc8 32 ♘e7+.** However, Thipsay played **31 ♖e7!!**
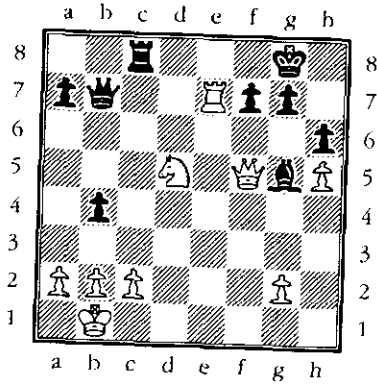
when if **31...♗xe7 32 ♕xc8+ ♖xc8 33 ♘xe7+ ♔f8 34 ♘xc8** and White has won a piece. As White threatens the queen and also 32 ♕xf7+, Black had nothing better than **32...♕xd5 32 ♕xd5 ♗xe7** but White soon won after **33 a3!** (not 33 ♕d7?? ♖d8 34 ♕xe7 ♖d1 mate, but if now 33...bxa3 34 ♕d7 wins a

piece) **33...♖d8 34 ♕e4 b3** (a noteworthy try—if 35 ♕xe7 ♖d1 mates, so Black succeeds in giving up the pawn in a less unpleasant way than 34...♗f6 35 axb4) **35 cxb3 ♗f6 36 ♕e3** stopping 36...♖d2, after which White soon won by creating queenside passed pawns.

6) The game finished **34 ♔xc4 d3 35 ♔xd5 d2**
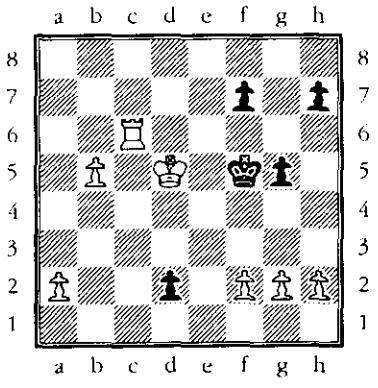
36 g4+!! and **Black resigned.** After **36...♔xg4** or **36...♔f4** White wins time to stop the d pawn queening with **37 ♖c4+ ♔f3 38 ♖d4.**

7) Alekhine was right. After **24 ♕xh8+ ♔e7**
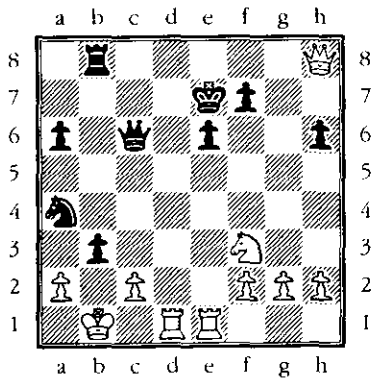
White is mated if he takes the other rook: **25 ♕xb8? ♕xc2+ 26 ♔a1 ♕xa2,** but he can deflect the white queen with **25 ♖d7+!** Now if **25...♕xd7 26 ♕xb8** and Black is lost as there is no attack left after **26...bxc2+ 27 ♔c1** or **27 ♔xc2.** Alternatively if **25...♔xd7 26 ♘e5+** and Black loses because whatever square his king goes to Black replies with a check: **26...♔e7 27 ♘xc6+** or **26...♔c7 27 ♕xb8+! ♔xb8 28 ♘xc6+.** After the inferior **24 axb3?** in the game White still had a big advantage but Alekhine managed to hold on for a draw.

8) The pawn is poisoned as after
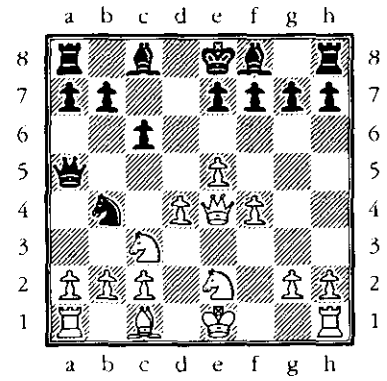
10...f5!! 11 exf6 ♗f5 the queen is driven away from the defence of c2.

12 ♕f3 ♘xc2+ 13 ♔f2 0-0-0!

Not giving White the chance to complicate after 13...♘xa1 14 fxg7 ♗xg7 15 ♕h5+ ♔d8 16 b4! ♕xb4 17 ♕xf5.

14 g4

Horrible is 14 ♖b1 exf6 etc.

14...♘xa1 15 gxf5 ♕xf5 16 ♖d1 exf6 and **Black won.**

The young John Emms lost this game, but he was right to take the pawn if he couldn't see a reason why not. This fearlessness is one reason why he is a Grandmaster nowadays.

9) No, because of **30...♘f3!!**


```
  a b c d e f g h
8 . ♚ . . . . . . 8
7 . ♟ . . . ♟ . . 7
6 ♞ . ♖ . ♟ . . . 6
5 ♞ . ♖ . ♙ . . . 5
4 . . . ♕ ♙ ♙ . . 4
3 ♙ . . . . ♞ . ♛ 3
2 . . . ♙ ♖ . . ♛ 2
1 . . . ♜ ♔ ♔ ♖ . 1
  a b c d e f g h
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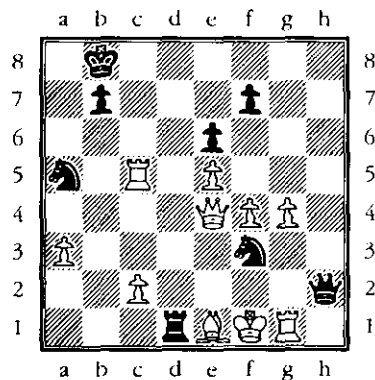
when the biggest threat of all was 31...♘d2 mate. After **31 ♕xf3** the white queen had been deflected away from its defence of the bishop on e1, which allowed **31...♖xe1+ 32 ♔xe1 ♕xg1+** double attack! **33 ♔e2 ♕xc5** when the black queen had gorged on two rooks. **White resigned after 34 ♕d3 ♘c4 35 a4 ♘b6 36 ♕h7 ♘d5.**

10)


```
  a b c d e f g h
8 . . ♜ . . ♜ ♚ . 8
7 . . . ♝ ♟ ♟ ♟ . 7
6 ♟ . . ♟ . . . . 6
5 . ♟ ♙ ♙ . . . . 5
4 . . . . ♙ . ♕ . 4
3 . ♙ . . . . . . 3
2 ♙ . ♟ . . ♙ ♙ ♙ 2
1 . ♖ . ♖ . . ♔ . 1
  a b c d e f g h
```

White's threat is 20 ♗h6 ♗f6 21 ♖ac1 ♕xa2 22 ♖xc8 and he has won a rook by a skewer—note how well the white queen is placed on g4 in this combination. However, she becomes a target on this square when Sveshnikov gets in first with his own combination.

19...f5!!

The idea is to clear the way for a decisive attack on the f2 square by hitting the white queen which cannot allow herself to be deflected from the defence of the rook on d1.

20 exf5 h5! 21 ♕f3

If 21 ♕xh5 ♖xf5 is similar to the game.

21...e4! 22 ♕xh5 ♖xf5 0-1

A double attack against the queen and the f2 square. **White resigned** as it's a back rank mate after 23 ♕g4 ♕xf2+ etc.
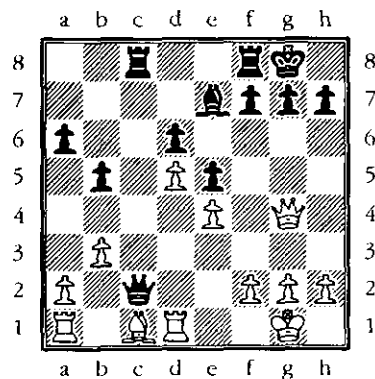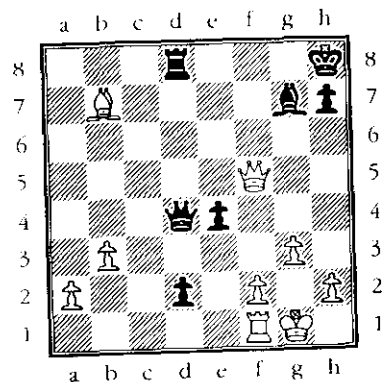
Zwischenzug and Desperado

1) No, as Black has a desperado of his own with 28...♕xd1+! when after 29 ♖xd1 ♖xa5 he emerges with an extra rook.

2) If 22...♕e7 23 ♖xd5! ♕xa3 24 ♖xd8+ (a killer zwischenzug) 24...♖xd8 25 ♘xa3 and White is a piece up.

3) An inexperienced player would get excited here at the prospect of beating a FIDE World Champion and rush into **41...d1=♕?** when the win suddenly becomes difficult after **42 ♗xe4!** threatening mate on h7 42...♕xf1+ 43 ♔xf1 ♔g8—there is
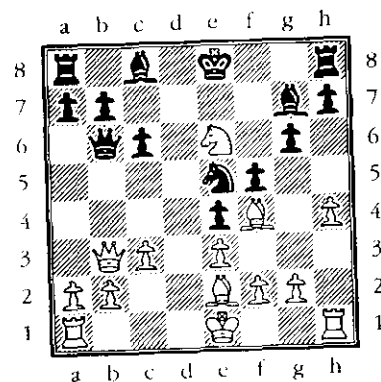
no other good move—**44 ♕xh7+ ♔f8** Black has an extra rook, but White has five pawns and the black king is a target for a lot of checks.


```
  a b c d e f g h
8 . . . ♜ . . ♚ . 8
7 . ♗ . . . ♝ ♟ . 7
6 . . . . . . . . 6
5 . . . . . ♕ . . 5
4 . . ♟ ♛ ♟ . ♙ . 4
3 ♙ . ♙ . . . . ♙ 3
2 ♙ . . . ♟ ♙ . . 2
1 . . . . . ♖ ♔ . 1
  a b c d e f g h
```

However, Lautier showed just enough patience: **41...♖f8!** and White resigned.

The zwischenzug wipes out all resistance after 42 ♕xe4 d1=♕ 43 ♖xd1 ♕xd1+ 44 ♔g2 ♕d2 etc. or 42 ♕h5 ♖xf2 43 ♖xf2 d1=♕+ or finally 42 ♕d5 ♕xd5 43 ♗xd5 ♖d8 44 ♗xe4 d1=♕.
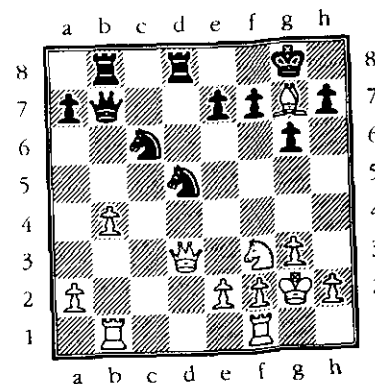
4) White could have played **14 ♘e6!**


```
  a b c d e f g h
8 ♜ . ♝ . ♚ . ♜ . 8
7 ♟ ♟ . . . ♟ ♝ ♟ 7
6 . ♛ ♟ ♘ . . ♟ . 6
5 . . ♞ ♟ . . . . 5
4 . . . . ♟ . . ♙ 4
3 . ♕ ♙ ♙ . . ♙ . 3
2 ♙ . . . ♗ ♗ ♙ . 2
1 ♖ . . . . ♔ . ♖ 1
  a b c d e f g h
```

14...♕xb3 (if 14...♗xe6 15 ♕xe6+ wins a piece or 14...♗f6 15

♕xb6 axb6 16 ♘c7+ winning a rook) **15 ♘xg7 —zwischenzug!— 15...♔f8 16 axb3** Now 16...♔xg7 17 ♗xe5+ is resignable, but White's combination doesn't win a piece because Black can battle on with 16...♘f7! as White's knight is trapped on g7. After the desperado 17 ♘xf5! gxf5 or 17 ♘h5! gxh5 18 ♗xh5 White is a sound pawn up with good winning chances.

5) Bates had missed that Black had a zwischenzug of his own: after **21 ♗xg7 ♖fd8!!**


```
  a b c d e f g h
8 . ♜ . ♜ . . ♚ . 8
7 ♟ ♛ . . ♟ ♟ ♗ ♟ 7
6 . . ♞ . . . ♟ . 6
5 . . . . . ♞ . . 5
4 . ♙ ♙ . . . ♘ ♙ 4
3 ♙ . . . . . ♗ ♙ 3
2 . ♟ . . ♙ ♙ . . 2
1 . ♖ . . . ♖ ♔ . 1
  a b c d e f g h
```

defended the knight and threatened to win White's queen with 21...♘f4+. There is no good reply as the white queen and bishop can't safely defend each other. For example if **22 ♗d4 e5!** (simpler than 22...♘dxb4 23 ♕e4 ♘xd4 24 ♕xb7 ♖xb7 25 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 26 a3) **23 ♗c5** (even worse is 23 ♗xe5 ♘xe5 24 ♘xe5? ♘f4+ 25 ♔g1 ♘h3 mate) **23...♘f4+ 24 gxf4 ♖xd3 25 exd3 exf4** and Black is easily winning. In the game White tried **22 b5** but reached a lost endgame after **22...♘f4+ 23 gxf4 ♖xd3 24 bxc6 ♕xb1 25 ♖xb1 ♖xb1 26 exd3**
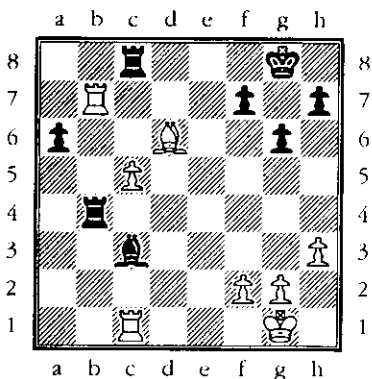
♔xg7 The remaining moves were 27 ♘e5 ♖b8 28 d4 e6 29 ♘c4 ♖c8 30 ♘a5 ♔f6 31 ♔f3 ♔e7 0-1

Passed Pawns

1) 52...♖c1+ 53 ♔h2 ♗e5! 0-1

Deflecting the white bishop from the defence of e1 so that rather than winning a piece with 53...e1=♕ Black wins a rook after 54 ♖e3 e1=♕ (the simplest, not even letting White get his king out after 54...♗xg3+ 55 ♔xg3 e1=♕) 55 ♖xe1 ♖xe1 etc.

2) 31 ♖c1! ♖xb4

32 c6! ♖d4

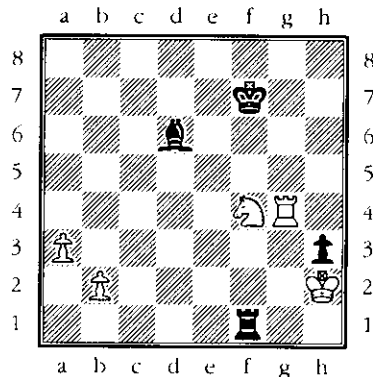If 32...♖xb7 33 cxb7 and queens or 32...♖xc6 33 ♗xb4.

33 c7 1-0

For if 33...♖xd6 34 ♖b8.

3) White kept his passed pawns intact with **37 g5!!** giving up the rook. After **37...exf4+ 38 ♔xf4** there was little Black could do against the kingside juggernaut: **38...♘e4** (or 38...♖h7 39 g6 ♖xh4+

40 ♔g5) **39 ♗xe4 ♖c4 40 g6 ♖xe4+ 41 ♔g5 1-0** The pawns roll through.

4) Morozevich played **42...♖g1+! 43 ♔h2** (43 ♔f2? h2) **43...♖f1 44 ♖g5+ ♔f7 45 ♖xg4**


It seems that White will draw as in the variation above after 45...♗xf4+ 46 ♔xh3, but the young Russian had prepared **45...♖f3!!** This completely paralyses White. The game ended **46 a4 ♗xf4+ 47 ♔g1 h2+ 48 ♔g2 ♖f1!** A simple deflection wins the day as if 49 ♖h4 ♖g1+. **0-1**

5) The game ended abruptly after **28...♕c1? 29 ♕b8+! ♗f8 30 ♕f4 ♕xf4 31 gxf4** and **Black resigned** as the c pawn is unstoppable.

Instead **28...♗f8!!** leads to highly interesting variations.

The first point is that **29 ♕b8** is no longer check, so Black can draw with **29...♕f3+ 30 ♔g1** (The drawing mechanism exploits the fact that the white queen is no longer on b3, guarding the d1 square: so if 30 ♗g2?? then 30...♕d1+ forces mate.)

**30...♕e3+ 31 ♔g2 ♕f3+** etc. giving perpetual check.
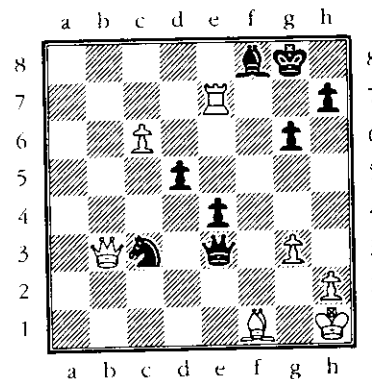
The second try for White is **29 c7**. Now tempting is **29...♕f2?**. On the face of it this looks strong as White has no way to defend the bishop and if it moves then Black gives perpetual check, for example **30 ♗a6 ♕f3+ 31 ♔g1 ♕e3+ 32 ♔f1 ♕f3+ 33 ♔e1 ♕e3+** etc. and there is no escape for the white king. However, White has the incredible **30 ♖g7+!!** The basic idea is to take Black's knight with check. If 30...♗xg7 31 c8=♕+ so Black has the miserable choice between **30...♔xg7 31 ♕xc3+ d4 32 ♕c1! ♕f3+ 33 ♗g2** or **30...♔h8 31 ♖f7!** (another nice offer) **31...♕xf7 32 ♕xc3+ d4 33 ♕c1** (or 33 ♕xd4+) and in either case he can resign as White will have a new queen and there is no perpetual check.

You will have noticed that Black lost because White was able to take the knight on c3 with check. Therefore instead of 29...♕f2? Black should keep the knight defended with **29...♕c1!** which all the same threatens mate on f1. Then White cannot evade the draw e.g. **30 ♔g2 ♕d2+ 31 ♔g1** (he could try hara-kiri with 31 ♔h3 ♕h6+ 32

♔g4?? ♕h5+ 33 ♔f4 ♗h6 mate) **31...♕e3+ 32 ♔h1 ♕c1** and it's back to square one.

Opening Lines

1)
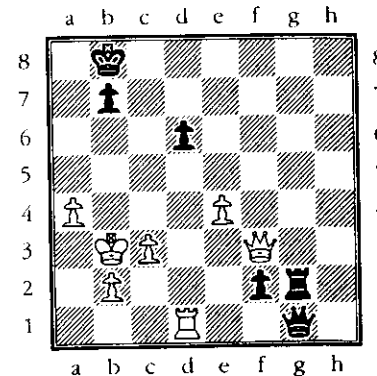
Firstly, option (b) **40...♕xd1+? 41 ♕xd1 ♖g1** fails completely to **42 ♕xd6+** and according to where the black king goes White checks on either c5 or f8 to win the passed f pawn.

In the game Black chose (c) **40...f1=♕?** thinking that after 41 ♖xf1 ♕b6+ 42 ♔c4—the only way to avoid mate—42...♖xb2 he would have at least a draw due to White's uncomfortable king. However, **41 ♕xf1!** ruined things: **41...♕b6+ 42 ♕b5** blocking the attack. Black was left two pawns down with no counterplay and soon resigned.

That leaves option (c), moving the king. The quiet **40...♔a8!?** threatens 41...♕xd1+ 42 ♕xd1 ♖g1 when White cannot force a draw with 43 ♕xd6 as 43...f1=♕ 44 ♕d8+ ♔a7 45 ♕a5+ (or 45 ♕d4+ ♔a6 46 ♕d6+ b6) 45...♕a6 46 ♕c5+ ♕b6+

and wins. A plausible end to the game is **41 Qf8+ Ka7 42 Qf3 Ka8** (if 42...Qxd1+ 43 Qxd1 Rg1 44 Qd4+) **43 Qf8+** with a draw by repetition.
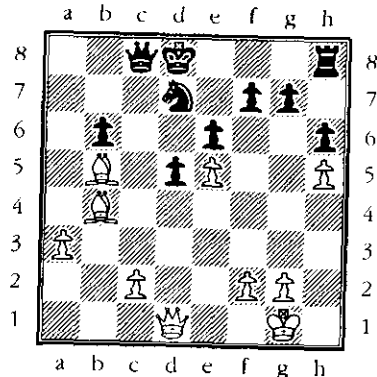
2) No—White gets in first with **21 Rxe6!**—threatening 22 Qh8 mate—**21...fxe6 22 Bg6** with the double threat to the queen and mate on f7. Black could find nothing better than **22...Rd7 23 Qxd7 Qxg6 24 Qxb7 Rd8 25 Qxa7** leaving White two pawns up.

3) It may appear that White is in some trouble due to the pin on the bishop: for example 16 Be3 Bxe3 17 Bxa6?! Rc1+ 18 Kd1 Bxb2 19 Kc2 Bxa1 20 Nd2 Bxc3 21 Nxc3 and Black has the better chances with a rook and three pawns for two pieces. Nevertheless, if you notice that after **17 fxe3! Rxe3 18 Rh2 Rae8** White can save the bishop with **19 c4! Bxc4 20 Nc3**, with a piece for three pawns and the better game, you are close to finding the solution...

Leko had missed **16 c4!** This not only clears the c3 square for the knight but also buys a vital tempo for putting it there by blocking the attack of the black bishop on e2. After **16...Bxc4 17 Nc3** Black's pressure along the e file fizzled out as if 17...Bd4 18 Be3! Bxe3 19 fxe3 Rxe3? 20 Kd2! wins material. The game ended:

17...Rab8 18 Kf1 Be6 19 b3 f6 20 gxf6 Bd4 21 Bb2 Bxf6 22 Na4 Bh4 23 Nc5 Rf8 24 Rh2 Bxh3+ 25 Kg1 Rbe8 26 Nxd7 Bxf2+ 27 Rxf2 Bxd7 28 Bc4+ Be6 29 Rxf8+ Kxf8 30 Rf1+ Ke7 31 Bxe6 1-0

4) I looked at all sorts of moves, but concentrated mainly on three possibilities.

Firstly **26 Qg4 Rg8 27 Qh4+** which looks good after 27...Kc7 28 Qe7 Qd8 29 Bd6+ Kb7 30 Qxf7! grabbing another pawn before taking on d7 unless Black is obliging with 30...Kc8 31 Ba6 mate. However, **27...f6!** is an annoying reply though if he wants it after **28 exf6 Nxf6** White can force a pretty draw with **29 Qf4**—threatening to invade on d6—**29...Qc7 30 Be7+! Kc8** (30...Qxe7 allows mate in one) **31 Ba6+ Kd7 32 Bb5+** etc.

Conclusion: 26 Qg4 doesn't quite hit the mark.

Secondly **26 c4 dxc4 27 Qd4** (if 27 Qd6 Re8, and I don't see a good line for White, though 28 Bxd7 Qxd7 29 Qb8+ Qc8 30 Qd6+ Qd7 31 Qb8+ forces a draw by repetition) **27...Re8 28 Bd6** (the attempt to play it slowly with 28 a4 allows Black to fight back with 28...Qb7! 29 a5 Qd5 30 Qxd5 exd5 31 a6 Kc8 32 Bd6 c3! and White is in deep trouble) **28...c3! 29 Bxd7 c2!** (it's mate after either 29...Qxd7 30 Qxd7 30 Kxd7

30 Bc5+ Kc6 31 Qd6+ Kb5 32 Qxb6+ Ka4 33 Qb4) 30 Bxc8 (if 30 Be7+!? Kc7!! 31 Qd6+ Kb7 32 Bxc8+ Rxc8 and the pawn queens) **30...c1=Q+ 31 Kh2 Kxc8 32 Qxb6** Despite *the simplification this* position is actually very dangerous for Black: his queen is tied down to preventing a mate on c7 and his rook is tied down to preventing a mate on e7, e.g. 32...Rd8? 33 Qb8+ Kd7 34 Qb7+ and mate follows. A possible continuation is **32...f5 33 a4!** With the black pieces paralysed White decides to try to queen the a pawn. **33...Qf4+ 34 g3 Qc4 35 a5 f4 36 g4 f3 37 a6 Qf4+ 38 Kh3 Qc1 39 Qb7+ Kd8 40 Qxf3** and White wins by shepherding home the passed pawn.

Conclusion: 26 c4 looks promising, but the variations are complex and Black isn't without counterchances if White miscalculates something.

Finally in my analysis I settled on **26 Qf3!?**
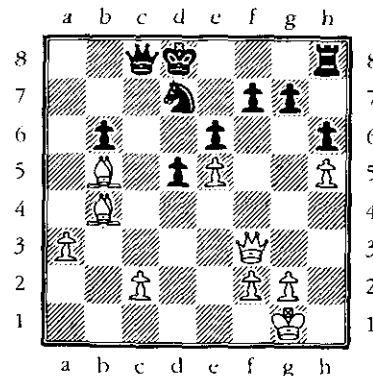
Both 26...Qxc2 27 Qxf7 and 26...Nxe5 27 Qg3 Qc7 28 Qxg7 allow White to break through, so **26...Ke8** looks best to guard f7.

However, the black king is then walking back into the knight pin. Now **27 Qg3** gives Black an unpleasant choice:

If **27...Qxc2? 28 Qxg7 Qb1+ 29 Kh2 Qh7 30 Qf6** and mate follows on e7.

Or **27...Rg8 28 Qd3!** aiming to infiltrate on the h7 square, for example 28...Kd8 29 Qh7 Re8 30 Qxg7 Qxc2 31 Qxf7 If 28...g6 29 c4 dxc4?! 30 Qd6 Qd8 31 hxg6! Rxg6 (31...fxe6 32 Qxe6+) 32 Qf8 is mate, so Black is reduced to **28...Rh8 when 29 c4 dxc4 30 Qd6 Qd8 31 Bxc4** keeps up relentless pressure.

Conclusion: 26 Qf3 allows White to keep Black bottled up without any counterplay. The variations are fairly straightforward, so it should be preferred to 26 c4.
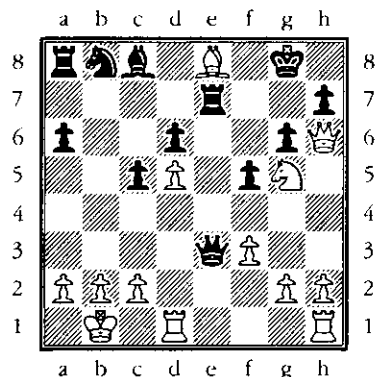
Puzzles 5-9

At move 16
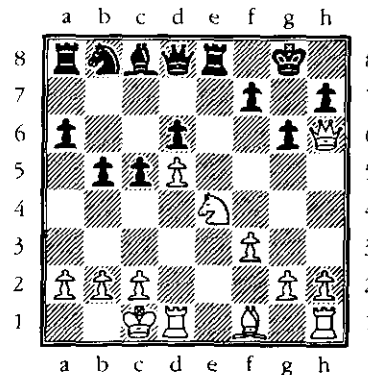
5) If **16...Bf5 17 Ng5** and Black can't defend h7.

6) Or **16...♘d7 17 ♘xd6** wins a pawn (but not 17 ♘g5 ♘f6 defending h7).

7) Finally if **16...♕e7** (to meet 17 ♘g5 with 17...f6) **18 ♕f4!** threatens both the d6 pawn and **19 ♘f6+**.

At move 20

8) If **20...♘d7 21 ♖he1! ♕xe1 22 ♗f7+!** gives Black the sad choice between **22...♔h8 23 ♕xh7 mate** and **22...♖xf7 23 ♖xe1** losing his queen.

9) At move 22 (after the hypothetical **21...♕g7 22 ♗f7+**)
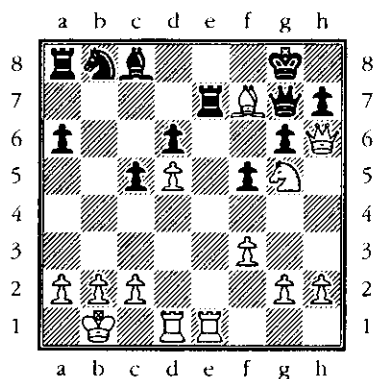
Yes, White is still winning after 22 ♗f7+, though it requires a lot more skill. The easy part is that if either 22...♔f8 or 22...♔h8 then 23 ♕xg7+ ♔xg7 24 ♖xe7 ♔f6 25 ♖c7 just leaves White a rook up. So Black must try **22...♖xf7**. Now 23 ♖e8+ ♖f8 24 ♖xf8+ works for White after 24...♕xf8?? 25 ♕xh7 mate, but 24...♔xf8 spoils things. In fact White has to be more subtle and utilise Black's dark square weaknesses on both the first and second rank. This can be done by **23 ♘xf7 ♕xf7 24 ♕h4!** This threatens 25 ♖e7 ♕f8 26 ♕xh7 mate.
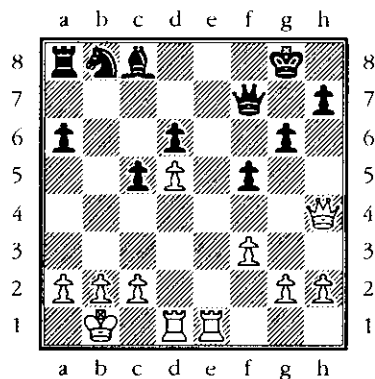
Now **24...♘d7 25 ♖e7 ♕f6 26 ♕xh7+ ♔f8 27 ♖e6!** (here 27 ♖de1 looks strong but Black has 27...♘e5!) **27....♕f7** (or 27...♕g5 28 ♖xg6 when if Black saves his queen 29 ♖g8 will be mate) **28 ♕h8+ ♕g8 29 ♖e8+!** winning Black's queen. Instead **24...♖a7** reinforces the second rank, but then White has the straightforward **25 ♕d8+ ♔g7** (if 25...♕f8 26 ♖e8) **26 ♕xc8** when he is the exchange and a pawn up, to say nothing of his lingering attack.

Note the quiet move 24 ♕h4 Remember in the middle of an attack to look out for such unpretentious but deadly moves!