

CYRUS LAKDAWALA

TACTICAL TRAINING

EVERYMAN CHESS

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About the Author

Cyrus Lakdawala is an International Master, a former National Open and American Open Champion, and a six-time State Champion. He has been teaching chess for over 30 years, and coaches some of the top junior players in the U.S.

Also by the Author:

1...b6: Move by Move

1...d6: Move by Move

A Ferocious Opening Repertoire

Anti-Sicilians: Move by Move

Bird's Opening: Move by Move

Botvinnik: Move by Move

Capablanca: Move by Move

Carlsen: Move by Move

Caruana: Move by Move

First Steps: the Modern

Fischer: Move by Move

Korchnoi: Move by Move

Kramnik: Move by Move

Larsen: Move by Move

Opening Repertoire: ...c6

Opening Repertoire: Modern Defence

Opening Repertoire: The Sveshnikov

Petroff Defence: Move by Move

Play the London System

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The Classical French: Move by Move

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The Four Knights: Move by Move

The Modern Defence: Move by Move

The Nimzo-Larsen Attack: Move by Move

The Scandinavian: Move by Move

The Slav: Move by Move

The Trompowsky Attack: Move by Move

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Introduction

“On the chess board, lies and hypocrisy do not survive long. The creative combination lays bare the presumption of a lie; the merciless fact, culminating in the checkmate, contradicts the hypocrite.” – Emanuel Lasker

If the goddess Caissa granted you the choice, which would you pick?

- a) Perfect knowledge of the openings.
- b) Perfect strategic understanding.
- c) Perfect vision to spot and accurately calculate tactics and combinations.

If you picked choice ‘c’, then congratulations. It means you understand the essential nature of chess. We chess players routinely over-invest in opening study and chronically under-invest in tactical training. Lower-rated club players especially are shackled by lack of familiarity with basic tactical themes, yet they study and fuss over the 23rd move of a line in the Dragon, which they likely will never reach over the board.

In the opening we are chained to the knowledge we wield. The more we memorize, the less likely we are to veer from Theory’s norm, since we lack the will to overthrow that which gives us comfort. The same principle applies for tactical pattern recognition. The more we study them, the greater our power in a tournament or online game. We have within ourselves the power to go any place we want and the way we study is our ‘anywhere’.

There is a psychologists’ term called “proportionality bias”, where most of us believe that huge events (i.e. boosting your rating from 1799 to 2000+) must have behind them huge causes. In reality, even a tiny shift contains the power to create big change – for worse or better.

This is what this book attempts: to get you to shift your study focus to training in tactics, combinations and calculation. In chess we quickly learn that to believe in the inevitability of a foreseeable future, brought on by decisions in the present, is a mirage, since our games rarely go the way we plan. We have a clear view of a future, which inevitably mutates into something we did not foresee. With growing tactical power, we can alter this fate, to allow us to mold our own future on the board, via superiority of tactical vision, the ability to spot combinations and the ability to confidently and accurately calculate complex variations.

By doing so we also eliminate our Groundhog Day repeated errors. Students show me their games and in the vast majority miss basic tactical opportunities in almost every game. The aperture of opportunity closes quickly. Miss your combination – or your opponent’s combination against you – and we can easily flip a win into a draw or loss.

I roomed with IM Professor David Strauss at a tournament 35 years ago. David opined that chess

below the professional level is not great art, but instead a trade which anyone with reasonable ability can learn to be proficient. Chess is naturally tilted towards tactics, over opening knowledge and strategic ability. Combinations are not something which arise in the naturally gifted alone. They are simply geometric patterns which, through repeated study, can be mastered by *anyone*. David felt that if a player could reach a 1600 rating level, then this same player could also become a Master or strong Expert, rated over 2100.

Superiority in tactics turns a player into a coiled viper. Wait long enough in a game and a tactical opportunity invariably arises. Every week students ranging from 900 to 2300 show me their tournament games (or pandemic online games). Rare is a game where either my student or their opponent fails to get at least two chances to win the game or hold the draw through some missed tactic. The wasted opportunity nearly always stems from lack of tactical alertness, a problem we aim here to address and fix.

This book categorizes mating patterns and tactical themes, and is also designed as a training workbook. Unlike most other books on tactical training, this one contains a huge number of composed mating (i.e. White forces mate in 3 moves) problems and also endgame studies. Composed works will be our muse, which we have lost, if previously we only studied basic online tactical puzzles and worked feverishly on our openings, to reach positions we never actually get in real games.

Here is our curriculum:

Chapter 1: We identify various mating patterns. There is no greater educational priority than mastery of fundamental mating patterns.

Chapter 2: We cover shorter mates in 2, 3 and 4 moves.

Chapter 3: Longer mates, from 5 moves to mate in 50 (believe it or not, the mate in 50 is actually *not* a difficult problem to crack!).

Chapters 4 through 32: We cover various tactical themes in alphabetical order, starting with Annihilation of Defensive Barrier and ending with Zwischenzug.

Chapter 33: Chess history isn't over due to Covid-19. It is still being written, via online play. The final chapter covers the Magnus Carlsen Chess Tour's final epic online match between world champion Magnus Carlsen and American super-GM Hikaru Nakamura. The nail-biting match came down to the final game and was the most watched online chess event in history. I go through most of their decisive games and it's basically a pop quiz where you attempt to solve the combinations they saw (or missed!). In this chapter we don't know the tactical theme beforehand, simulating an over-the-board game situation.

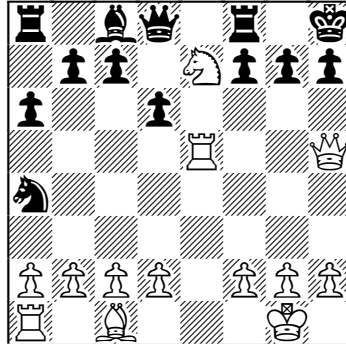
A combination often contains many henchmen, yet only a single mastermind at its core. So a single problem, study or game fragment combination in the book may contain four or five different themes, yet will be placed in the chapter of the dominant theme. I could have easily added 10 extra chapters to the book but didn't, because they were in effect sub-divisions of a pre-existing category. For example, I didn't place a chapter on Double Check, since the theme is too minor to merit its own chapter. Due to space limitations I doubled up on some chapters, like Decoy/Removal of the guard, and Obstruction/Interference, since the theme pairs are nearly geometrically synonymous.

Unlike my book on composed works, *Rewire Your Chess Brain*, in this book I label both the theme and difficulty level of the problem. For example: You are in the Double Attack chapter and it says "Level 3" which means you know to look for a double attack. Level 3 is a problem an 1800-rated player should solve without breaking too much of a sweat. Level 1 is kind of a no-brainer problem which

should be solved in seconds. Level 2 is a basic tactical theme. Level 3 has been described. Level 4 gets steeply more difficult and even a 2000-rated player may have trouble solving it. Levels 4.5 to 5 means that even a 2400-rated player may sweat to solve it.

Here are a couple of examples from the book:

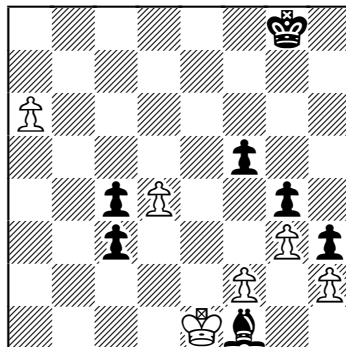
W.Berryman-E.Straat
Hastings 1919



This is an example of a Level 2 problem, meaning White to move. It isn't so tough to solve this mate in 2, the answer to which is 1 ♖xh7+! ♔xh7 2 ♜h5 mate. This is an example of Anastasia's Mate.

Prepare yourself, because here comes an example of a Level 5 + problem. This is a portion of a Smyslov study. White's nearly impossible goal is to reach a fortress draw. The answer is embedded within the book.

Vasily Smyslov
Moi Etyudy, 2000



In many of the game fragments and composed works, you may have multiple chances to solve with the degree of difficulty usually lessening as the game or study moves along. My suggestion is to

go through the book once, mark your score and then come back to the book a month later. For success to arise we must first endure failure, both over the board and in our training sessions.

Don't stress if you are unable to solve some (or even many) of the exercises in this book on your first try. I guarantee you that on your second reading, your tactical imprints will gain muscle, your internal database will be more entrenched, and your score and solving time more accurate/faster.

Unlike *Rewire Your Chess Brain*, I didn't fill this book only with impossibly brilliant combinations. Masterpiece combinations, mating problems and endgame studies are unsullied by age and in this book there are many. Yet I also chose to include examples of the mundane, since these minor combinations occur so much more frequently in our own games – and which we tragically miss!

As such, it's going to be a feast (Levels 1, 2 and 3) and famine (Levels 4 and 5) format where one problem may be trivially simple, while the next may be murderously difficult. So you correctly solve a Level 1 or Level 2 and think "This is easy!" and then you get walloped with a Level 5, which will be miserably difficult – if not impossible – to solve, for an average club level player. From the primitive, arises the complex.

Living a thing is very different to studying it. In this book we are given cues. What other move are you going to look at in the Greek Gift chapter, but 1...h7+ or 1...h2+? In real life nobody taps you on the shoulder and warns that you – or your opponent – has a combination in the position. The eventual goal is to try and solve without any cues at all (then read *Rewire Your Chess Brain!*).

What is a Combination?

A combination is a truth, uttered out loud, which the victim left unconsidered. The essence of a combination is that we settle our issues with our fists, rather than through compromise or subtle diplomacy. Contrary to popular belief a combination – however deep – is not a curving, endless labyrinth of mist and illusion. No matter how complex, combinations are merely a collective of basic themes. If we master identification of these themes and their quirky mechanics, then *any* club level player can easily spot *any* short-range combination, and hopefully, some long-range ones as well.

Why are combinations difficult to see? After all, a combination, by its very nature is never anti-logical. The reason they are difficult to see is that all combinations are geometric anomalies, otherwise the move wouldn't deserve an exclam. When we master tactical patterns until they become – dare I say it? – routine, then in a way they cease to be anomalies. A combination, unlike a stylistic or strategic decision, is not a matter of opinion.

Solving comes in two parts:

1. We need to find the idea and theme, which are dreams.
2. Implementation/calculation, which puts flesh, blood and bones to our dream.

When we are winning, our natural inclination may be to do nothing, hoping the opponent self-destructs. This scenario is unlikely to happen, since our desperate opponents are at their most inventive when they have nothing to lose. To put the opponent away, we must be willing to get our hands dirty. If we see a sacrificial combination, then it's critical that we trust our instincts/calculation and strike without doubt in our abilities. Some of us believe that tactics arise from some form of mystical intuition. Maybe this was true in the 19th Century, with chess knowledge still in its infancy. Today, no mystical intuition is required. All it takes to master tactics are the following factors:

1. Be familiar with and able to identify specific mating or tactical patterns.
2. Practice tactics by working daily on puzzles, composed mating problems and endgame studies.

Our job is to fill our internal dossiers with patterns – lots of them! Constant practice gradually alters our mind to become preternaturally attuned to even the most subtle geometric anomaly.

3. Just as important as solving a combination is the timing – the when – of a combination. If we practice, our spidey senses begin to tingle at the approach of a combination.

4. Another key factor is the final assessment. In my first rated tournament I found a ‘combination’ which won my opponent’s queen. It only cost me two rooks and a bishop to ‘win’ it. Needless to say I lost the game due to a moronic misassessment, even though the combination’s calculation was totally accurate.

5. Unlike the subjects of politics and religion, with combinations, there can be no differences of opinion. When launched, a combination cannot partially work. It must work 100%. We all mourn our bungled games, as we would a cherished friend who is senselessly killed in a random, freak accident. If we are truthful, we realize that our chess loss may not have been a random event, but one directly traced to our weakness: an inability to either see, or correctly calculate, a combination. It was there all along. We just failed to work our way through the ramifications.

6. When we grow more adept tactically, we are also kept safer, since we develop the defensive skill of sniffing out our opponent’s deceptions and dirty tricks, long before they can be sprung on us. In other words, the polarity is reversed and we see potential combinational threats against our own position.

That’s it. If you do these things diligently, it isn’t so difficult to jump a full class, due to your superiority to your opponent in the realm of tactics. So let’s stop attributing magical properties to tactical skill. At club level it is nothing more than a learned trade, rather than an art form. That which was once considered an arcane secret, is now an open public library, for us to peruse.

This book is an attempt at the de-mystification process. In the crisis portion of a game, when our clock is low and our hearts pound at a dangerously quickening pace which would worry any cardiologist, that is the place when words and logic grow quiet and our mind functions on symbols and geometric expressions alone. That is when our tactical training kicks in and from potential folly and ruin, arises our single path to victory.

The Importance of Composed Endgame Studies and Composed Mating Problems

When we first learn chess, even a completely unremarkable rote combination is the source of wonder and enchantment. Then we become stronger players and our overfamiliarity with standard combination patterns becomes...well...ordinary. If you take up the solving of composed works, I promise that your sense of childlike wonder of what can be achieved on the chess board will return.

I began the Facebook group Chess Endgame Studies and Compositions with my friend GM Max Illingworth in late 2019 (it approaches 13,000 members, as I write this and will probably reach 15,000 members by the time you read this book). Each day members post composed mating problems and endgame studies, and each day I gasp in wonder at an impossibly unlikely pattern displayed in the answer.

Lower-rated students often show me their ‘brilliant’ combinations and are then instantly offended by my lack of appreciation of the alleged beauty. The fact is in today’s chess world, basic combinational patterns have become so routine, that many of them reach the level of tactical clichés. Our goal in this book is to master the basics and then look deeper into a position’s geometric secrets.

This is where composed works come in. At first our minds are mundane, full of rules and regulations. Composed works have a way of untying mental knots of geometric orthodoxy. My students constantly tell me: “They are too hard!” I ask them why they are so forbearingly patient with their own tactical limitations? Why are we satisfied to be the unremarkable student – neither intelligent, nor stupid – who is perfectly content with a row of B’s punctuated with an occasional A and C grade? Enough of that. Let’s go for straight A’s.

It's human nature to be frightened of things which we don't understand. Composed works are not reality shows for people who don't like reality. Their benefit is directly applicable to our over-the-board training. The vast majority of 4 and 5 difficulty level problems in this book are composed works, which take us to places where no mere tactics puzzles can follow.

When it comes to teaching, my philosophy is overtraining – pushing the student past their comfort zone. This is where composed mating problems and endgame studies enter. When it comes to composed works, the average player tends to be intimidated by the complexity level and feels left out, as if from an elite group whose members alone know the secret handshake. Some combinations come with two separate solutions. Not so with composed works. Unlike our styles and choices of openings, when it comes to composed works, it's a monolithic culture without factions or choices. There is only a correct equation and an incorrect one.

Attempting to solve these strains us to our limits. There is no bs'ing involved with studies i.e. "This move looks right. Maybe it will work." We should not allow petrification of the mind by only sticking with basic puzzles, which merely provide a shallow base. Composed works tend to be deeper both conceptually and mathematically, than normal over the board combinations. Their depth pushes us to our limits to solve – which we normally don't achieve.

With composed works it's *not* the solving which is the important thing. It's the process of attempting to solve, usually failing, and then looking up the answer, which provides the real benefit. Why? Because now our mind is imprinted with a completely unorthodox pattern, the seed of which may one day arise in one of our own tournament games. In the case of the vast majority of endgame studies in the book, I truncated a composer's original study into a portion to turn a murderously difficult study into a more doable semi-murderous study.

I especially loaded up the book with works from two of my favorite composers, Vasily Smyslov and Alois Wotawa, whose composing styles are as far apart as Smyslov's games to Tal's. Smyslov's studies, although always profoundly deep, tend to be similar to the way he played chess. The solutions are always in harmony with logic. Wotawa's studies are the exact opposite, full of crazy anomalies and jarring patterns we wouldn't have thought of in a million years.

Genes Don't Matter

Is chess destiny fixed, or is our fate fluid? The effect of genetics made us who we are, when it comes to our level of natural chess ability. There are three varieties of capabilities in chess:

1. The naturally gifted.
2. The average, which makes up the overwhelming majority of us.
3. Those who struggle, even with the basics.

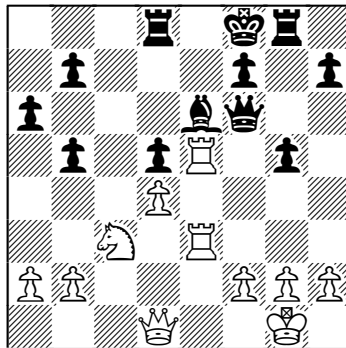
It doesn't matter which one you fall under. If you labour on your tactical skills, you will rise. I give you my written promise on this. Destiny is in *our* hands and not predetermined by our genes. If you are a 1400 player who dreams of cracking the 1600 barrier, or an 1850 player who aspires to break 2000, or a 2100 who aspires to masterhood, there is no doubt you can achieve it if you put in the time and master tactics. May you all grasp your goals, via tactical mastery!

Cyrus Lakdawala,
San Diego,
January 2021

21) Pins

The official description of a pin is one where our attacking piece paralyzes a defending piece, which is unable to move without exposing a more valuable piece on its other side. If a defending piece is pinned to the king, then it is illegal to move away the pinned piece, if in doing so the defending king is exposed to check. But you all knew this!

371) P.Morphy-A.Anderssen Paris 1858



White to play
Level 1

Let's start with a simple example. Anderssen's position is the dirty windshield where someone writes: "Wash me". How did Morphy put Anderssen's wobbly position away?

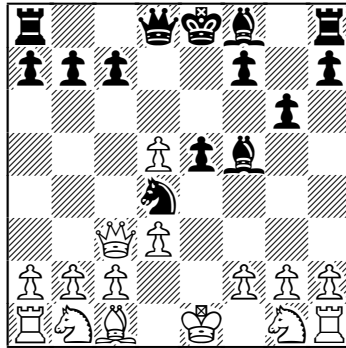
Answer: Chop on e6 and then pin the queen with ♖f3 next.

20 ♖xe6! 1-0

20...fxe6 21 ♖f3 wins.

372) Adow-Borissow

St. Petersburg 1889



Black to play
Level 1

White is grossly behind in development and just one not-so-tough-to-find move ends the game.

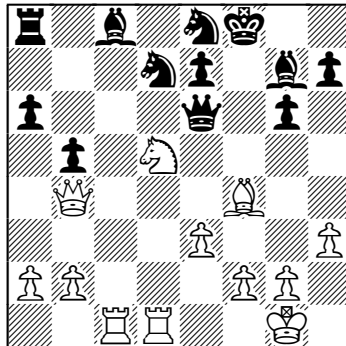
Answer: Pin/knight fork.

9...♖b4! 0-1

10 ♗xb4 ♘xc2+ loses the queen all the same.

373) M.Tal-S.Johannessen

Riga 1959



White to play
Level 4.5

Tal was the man who made the world believe in magic again. I really didn't know what chapter to place this game into, since there are so many tactical themes within it. I placed it in the Pin chapter since it seems to be the most dominant theme. Tal began a series of combinations. How would you continue as White?

Answer: Let's begin with an overloaded defender trick by transferring the rook to c6.

21 ♖c6! ♗f7

Not 21...♗xc6?? 22 ♗xe7+ ♔g8 23 ♗xe8+ ♕f8 24 ♘e7+ (knight fork) 24...♔g7 25 ♘xc6.

22 ♘c7! ♘xc7

After 22...♙b7 23 ♘e6+ ♔g8 24 ♖xd7! ♙xc6 25 ♗xe7 ♙f8 26 ♘xf8 Black is unable to recapture, as 26...♗xf8?? is met with 27 ♗b3+ ♔h8 28 ♙e5+ ♘f6 29 ♗e6, forcing mate.

23 ♖xc7 ♗e6

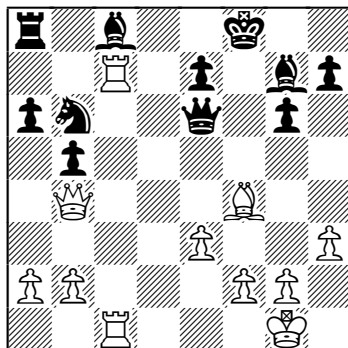
23...♘f6 24 ♖d8+ ♘e8 25 ♗xe7! ♗xe7 26 ♙d6 wins Black's queen.

24 ♖dc1

Threat: ♖xc8, forcing Black's knight to move.

24...♘b6

24...♘f6 is met with the same trick.



White to play

Level 3

Do you see White's shot?

Answer: Pin. The rook is immune.

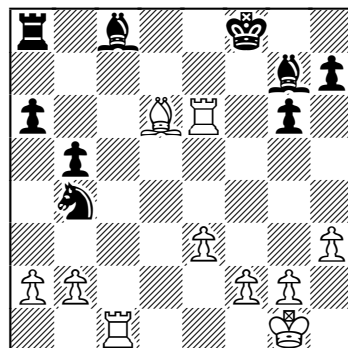
25 ♗xe7!

Tal's move is even stronger than the also winning 25 ♖c6! ♘d5 26 ♗c5. Too many black pieces hang simultaneously. This is sort of the spoiled-sport, no fun version which wouldn't appeal to Tal's endless sense of adventure. I would have picked this way, since it is easier to calculate, but maybe that is why Tal is Tal and I am just me.

25...♘d5

Or 25...♗xe7 26 ♙d6 and game over.

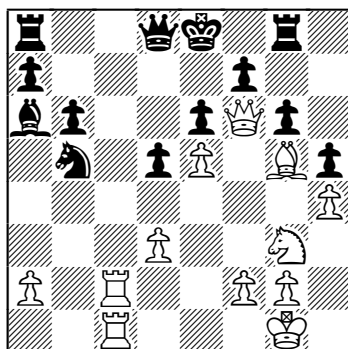
26 ♗xe6+ ♘xb4 27 ♙d6+! 1-0



Double attack. After 27...♔f7 28 ♗e7+ ♔g8 (or 28...♔f6 29 ♙xb4 ♙f5 30 ♖c6+ ♔g5 31 ♗xg7) 29 ♖cc7! ♙f8 (29...♙xb2 30 ♗e8 mates) 30 ♗e8 ♙b7 31 ♖xa8 ♙xa8 32 ♖c8 White wins two pieces.

374) D.Bronstein-B.Goldenov

Kiev 1944



White to play
Level 3

Bronstein can win the exchange by swapping on d8. Do you see a continuation which is far more devastating for Black?

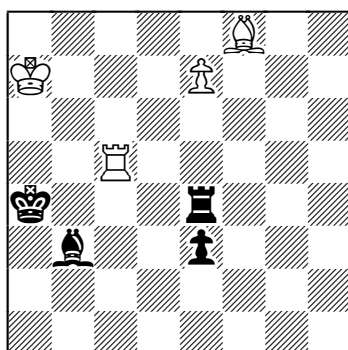
Answer: Pinned piece/overloaded defender.

24 ♖c8!! 1-0

After 24...♗xc8 25 ♖xc8 neither black bishop or queen can take the rook, due to the mating threats on d8 and e7. Bronstein's shot is far more aesthetically pleasing than the lethargically unimaginative (yet still winning) 24 ♗xd8+ ♗xd8 25 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 26 a4 ♘d4 27 ♖c7.

375) M.Botvinnik

Shakhmaty v SSSR, 1949



White to play
Level 4.5

Vasily Smyslov is not the only over-the-board world champion composer in this book. Botvinnik said he got the seed of the idea from a Gulyaev study from the previous year. It's a mutual promotion race where White looks lucky to try and hold a draw. Look deeper and you may find White's hidden win:

Answer: Swing they rook laterally to f5, in preparation for ♖f4!

1 ♖f5!!

After 1 ♖c1? e2 2 ♖e1 only Black can win.

1...e2

Alternatively:

a) 1...♙f7 2 ♖xf7 ♙b3 (2...e2 3 ♖f4! e1♚ 4 e8♚+! wins) 3 ♖f4! ♖e6 4 ♖b4+ ♙c2 5 ♖b8 e2 6 e8♚ e1♚ (in such positions, the player to move nearly always wins) 7 ♖c8+ ♙d1 8 ♖d8+ ♙c2 9 ♖a4+ ♙b2 10 ♖b8+ forces mate in 4 moves at the most.

b) 1...♖e6 2 ♖f6! ♖e5 3 ♖f4+ ♙b5 4 ♖f5! wins.

2 ♖f4!

This rook is The Flash on crack. Black promotes first, yet loses.

Step 2: Removal of the guard/pinned piece.

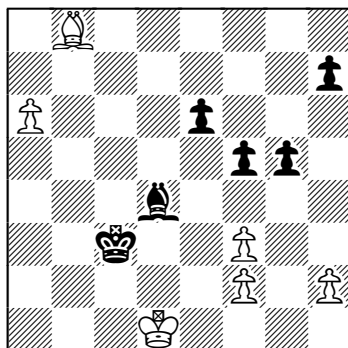
2...e1♚

Or 2...♖xf4 3 e8♚+ ♙a5 4 ♖e5+ ♙a4 5 ♖xf4+ and mate in 3.

3 e8♚+

3...♙a5 4 ♖f5+! forces mate in 4.

376) R.Fischer-Euwe Leipzig Olympiad 1960



White to play
Level 2

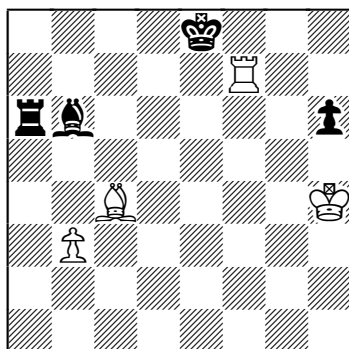
Euwe's position is a feeble, sputtering candle, whose life can be extinguished by a single gust of wind from an open window. 35 a7 wins a piece. Yet Emanuel Lasker advised that if we find a good move, we should keep searching, since there may be an ever better one. Is there an even more efficient way for Bobby to win?

Answer: Pinned piece/pawn promotion.

36 ♙e5! 1-0

After 36...♙xe5 37 a7 White makes a new queen.

377) A.Kakovin
Olympic ty Schach, 1960



White to play
Level 4.5

The final combination is not deep, yet it isn't easy to see, since it is so counter-intuitive.

Answer: 1 ♖f6!!

It isn't easy to unlearn a habit. This is why composed works are so valuable. They free our minds from the trap of orthodoxy. The vast majority of us (including me), would never consider such a move, since it walks into a simple pin with ...♗d8.

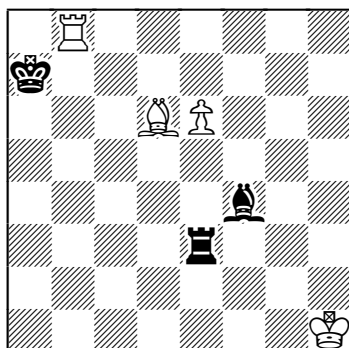
1...♗d8 2 ♗b5+!

Ah yes, checks and balances. Zwischenzug/interference. This is the key move. Black's king is forced to move to e7, which obstructs the pin on the f6-rook.

2...♚e7 3 ♖xa6

Winning.

378) A.Kakovin
L'Italia Scacchistica, 1961



White to play
Level 4.5

Be careful not to stumble into a theoretical draw:

Answer: 1 ♗c5+!!

1 ♖xf4? ♜xe6 is a theoretical draw.

1...♙xb8 2 ♖xe3

Black must move the bishop to d6, in order to try and halt White's e-pawn.

2...♗d6

The bishop backpedals faster than a Cirque du Soleil cyclist, to try and halt White's promotion.

2...♙c7 3 ♖xf4+ ♙d8 4 ♖d6 is an easy win for White.

3 ♖f4!

Step 2: Pinned piece/removal of the guard.

3...♙c7

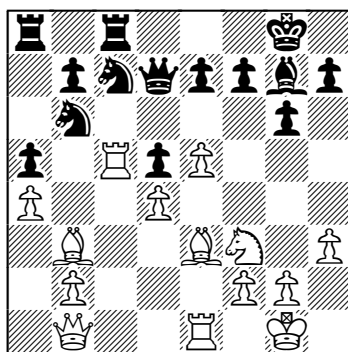
3...♖xf4 4 e7 promotes.

4 e7! ♙d7 5 ♖xd6

And White wins.

379) D.Bronstein-A.Vaisman

Tbilisi 1974



Black to play

Level 1

Should Black play ...♗xa4?

Answer: Absolutely nyet! Taking the pawn loses the c7-knight due to a pile up pin along the c-file.

23...♗xa4??

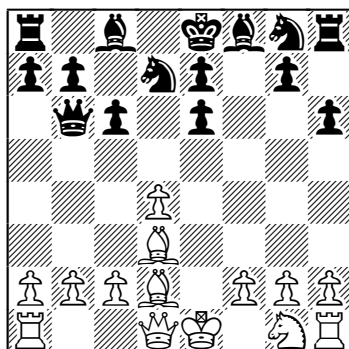
A self-inflicted gash is more painful than one inflicted by an enemy. Normally thought precedes action, but not if you are in time pressure or fatigued. Black should have been more careful and simply unraveled with 23...e6 24 ♜ec1 ♖f8 25 ♜5c3 ♗e8 with an inferior but playable position.

24 ♖xa4 ♜xa4 25 ♜ec1 1-0

Sometimes a game just ends in anticlimax. There is no defence to the coming ♜c2, which wins the c7-knight.

380) J.Nunn-K.Georgiev

Linares 1988



White to play

Level 2.5

Black is up a piece, yet his position is tormented by discordant conditions, with precariously placed king and zero development. Last move Black grabbed White's not-so-hanging knight on e6. Prove why this was a blunder:

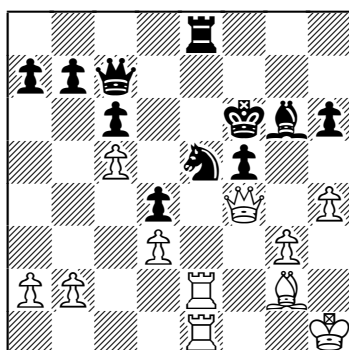
Answer: Start with the obvious queen check on h5.

9 ♕h5+ ♖d8 10 ♙a5!

Step 2: Pin Black's queen via a5. This move isn't so easy to spot, since our attention naturally veers to the kingside and centre. Georgiev played on and lost.

381) L.Psakhis-E.Ragozin

London 1994



White to play

Level 2

Black's position is in a sorry state, since he is stuck with the irksome duty of protecting his pinned knight. All Black's position requires to go over the edge is one small shove from White. How did Psakhis put his opponent away and win more material?

Answer: Push the g-pawn, exploiting dual pins. There is no answer to g4-g5+, which chases Black's king away from defence of the pinned e5-knight.

36 g4! ♖e7 37 g5+

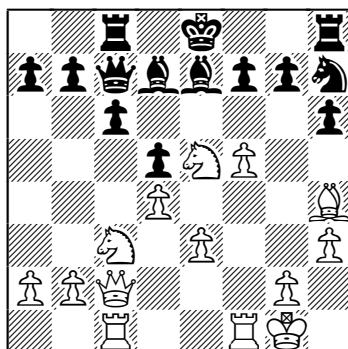
Removal of the guard. Black's knight falls.

37...hxc5 38 hxc5+ 1-0

After 38...♙g7 39 ♖xe5 Black finds himself down a rook.

382) H.Olafsson-Bj.Thorfinnsson

Reykjavik 2001



White to play

Level 2

White ended the game with a simple combination:

Answer: Step 1: Exchange on e7, luring Black's king to e7.

20 ♙xe7

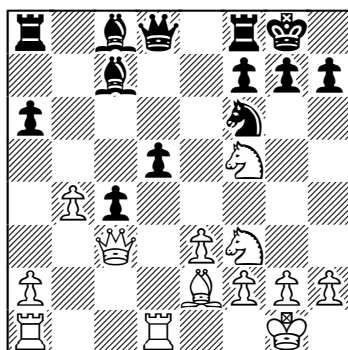
Answer no.2: Also winning is to reverse the order with 20 ♘xd5! cxd5 21 ♖xc7 ♗xc7 22 ♖xc7 ♙xh4 23 ♘xd7. White won a full exchange, with a crushing position.

20...♙xe7 21 ♘xd5+! 1-0

Step 2: Pinned piece/knight fork. There is no benefit in administering medical care to the dead, so Black wisely resigned. 21...cxd5 22 ♖xc7 ♗xc7 23 ♖xc7 ♘f6 24 ♖xb7 is completely hopeless.

383) A.Huzman-G.Kasparov

European Club Cup, Rethymnon 2003



White to play

Level 1.5

Tactical ability does not arise in occult intuition. It is simply a matter of increasing the number of patterns in our internal database. Yet there is a secondary factor: alertness. If Kasparov had the white pieces here, he would have seen Huzman's combination in a flash. Yet as Black, his attention wandered and allowed it. Kasparov's position looks OK. It isn't. What did he overlook?

Answer: Pinned piece/knight fork.

21 ♖xd5!

The d5 point is the weak link. The f6-knight is unable to capture due to the mating threat on g7 and the queen is unable to capture due to the fork on e7.

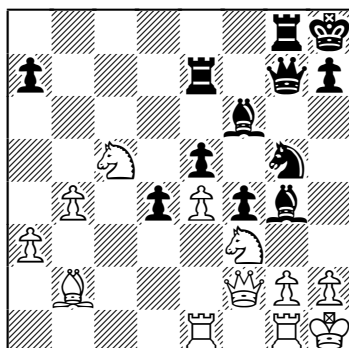
21... ♖e8

If 21... ♗xd5 (pinned piece) 22 ♖xg7 mate or 21... ♖xd5 22 ♗e7+ (knight fork) 22... ♖h8 23 ♗xd5.

22 ♗xc4 1-0

White won two clean pawns without compensation and Kasparov resigned. Black is unable to win back material with 22... ♗e6 23 ♖c5 ♗b6? due to the crushing 24 ♗xg7!.

384) B.Ahlander-L.McShane
Malmö 2003



Black to play
Level 2

How did Black win material?

Answer: Step 1: Chop the f3-knight with the bishop.

36... ♗xf3! 37 gxf3 ♗h3!

This knight is not to be trusted around a cash register.

Step 2: This unpinning shot wins a full exchange.

38 ♖g2

38 ♖xg7? loses even more material after 38... ♗xf2+ 39 ♖g2 ♖exg7+ 40 ♖xf2 ♖g2+ 41 ♖f1 and now the simplest is 41... ♖xb2.

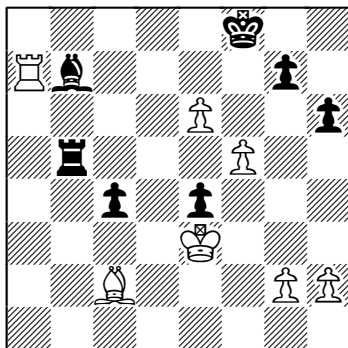
38... ♗xg1 39 ♖xg1 ♖xg2+

Black is up a full exchange and is happy to simplify.

40 ♖xg2 ♖xg2 41 ♖xg2 ♖c7 0-1

42 ♖f1 ♗e7 43 ♗d3 ♖c2 is completely hopeless for White.

385) A.Morozevich-E.Alekseev
Moscow 2008



White to play
Level 2

Make one powerful move and unstoppable threats assail Black's position:

Answer: Attraction/pin.

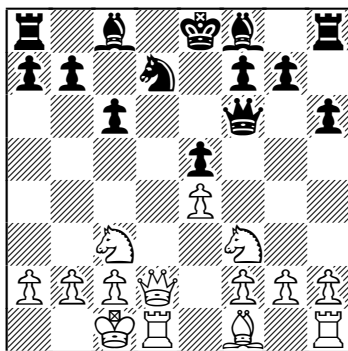
39 e7+! ♖xe7

Or 39...♖f7 40 ♗a4! ♗c6 41 ♖c7! and wins.

40 ♗xe4 1-0

The pinned b7-bishop is lost.

386) C.Lakdawala-J.Banawa
Southern California State Championship 2010



White to play
Level 5

Black owns the bishop-pair and control over the dark squares. If White continues quietly, my position will go downhill. Violence is necessary. How should White continue?

Answer: Pin. We can play out knight to b5, since the cost of Black's taking it is too high.

10 ♞b5!

Cryptomnesia "occurs when a forgotten memory returns without its being recognized as such by the subject, who believes it is new and original." After the game, I was convinced that I pulled off a

Morphy-like masterpiece – until I consulted the database and saw that 18 other people beat me to it (now the number is up to 20!). You aren't the genius you believed yourself to be, if 18 others beat you to the idea.

10...♖d8!

IM Banawa found the path of greatest resistance after a 40-minute think. He hopes to eventually eject the b5-knight and then hide his king on c7. His alternatives are disastrous:

a) After 10...cxb5? 11 ♙xb5 ♜e6 12 ♗xe5! White keeps playing on the pin and the game is over. If 12...♜xe5?? 13 ♙xd7+ ♖e7 14 ♙xc8 ♜xc8 15 ♜d7+, winning the c8-rook.

b) 10...♜b8 11 ♗xa7 (threat: ♗xc8 and ♜xd7 mate) 11...♜f4 (or 11...♜e6 12 ♙c4! – decoy – 12...♜xc4 13 ♗xc8 ♜e6 14 ♗xe5!; overloaded defenders, and White wins) 12 g3! ♜xd2+ 13 ♜xd2 ♗c5 14 ♗xc8 ♜xc8 15 ♗xe5 when Black, who can't take on e4 (more pins!), found himself down two pawns for no compensation in I.Rogers-I.Glek, Linz 1997.

11 ♜a5+!

White must be more forceful than 11 ♙c4? ♙c5 when Black is OK.

11...b6!

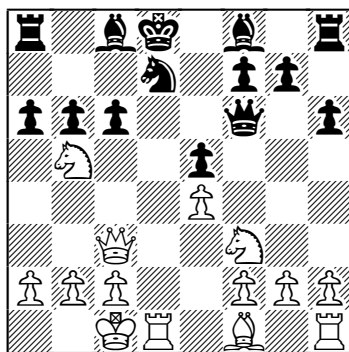
Again Joel finds the best defence. After 11...♖e7? 12 ♗d6 ♗b6 13 ♗xc8+ ♜xc8 (or 13...♗xc8 14 ♜c7+ ♖e8 15 ♜d7 mate) 14 ♜xa7 Black has to resign.

12 ♜c3!

Double attack on c6 and e5.

12...a6

Instead, 12...cxb5? 13 ♙xb5 ♙c5 14 ♙xd7 ♙xd7 15 ♗xe5 wins, while 12...♙c5 was tried in E.Rozentalis-V.Nithander, Gothenburg 2012. Now White played 13 b4! with a winning position.



White to play
Level 3

How should White continue the attack?

Answer: Interference/double attack.

13 ♗d6! ♙xd6

Instead, 13...♖c7?? 14 ♗e8+ forks king and queen, while 13...c5 14 ♗xc8! ♙xc8 15 g3! (threat: ♙h3) 15...♖c7 (15...♜e6 16 h4! alters nothing: 16...♜xa2 17 ♙h3 ♜a1+ 18 ♖d2 ♜a5 19 ♜xa5 bxa5 20 ♖e2 and wins) 16 ♙h3 ♜d8 17 ♜xd7+ ♜xd7 18 ♙xd7 ♙xd7 19 ♜d1+ ♙d6 20 ♗xe5+ ♖c7 21 ♜xd6! wins, since 21...♖xd6 (21...♜xd6 22 ♗xf7 is an easy win for White) 22 ♜d3+ ♖e7 23 ♜d7+ ♖f8 24 ♜c8+ wins.

14 ♜xc6

Double attack on a8 and d6.

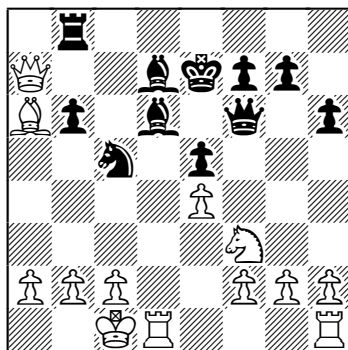
14...♔e7

14...♙b7 15 ♖xb7 is also lost for Black.

15 ♗xa8 ♘c5 16 ♗a7+

Theoretical novelty, except I had no idea that we were still in book! 16 ♙c4 b5 17 ♗a7+ ♙b7 was S.Drazic-B.Damjanovic, Podgorica 1996, with a completely winning position for White.

16...♙d7 17 ♙xa6 ♖b8



White to play
Level 2

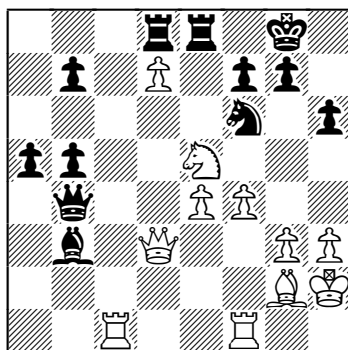
How does White win more material?

Answer: Decoy/overloaded defender.

18 ♖xd6! ♗xd6 19 ♖d1 1-0

Black's queen is unable to protect her rook.

387) Ding Liren-M.Carlsen Chessable Masters (online rapid) 2020



Black to play
Level 4

On his last move Ding unwisely pushed his d-pawn to the seventh rank, hoping to receive dynamic benefit from its presence. We must train ourselves – receive a premonition – of *when* a combination comes into existence. Magnus experienced just such a premonition after Ding pushed his d-pawn to the seventh rank. How did Magnus exploit Ding's overly ambitious last move?

Answer: Just capture the d7-pawn. White's knight is pinned and won't escape.

27...♘xd7!

Magnus avoided:

a) 27...♞e7?? 28 ♞c8 ♞exd7 29 ♞xd8+. X-ray attack. White wins.

b) 27...♞f8? (this variation is in the placebo group section of the clinical study) 28 ♞c7 ♘c4 29 ♘xc4 bxc4 30 ♞xc4 ♞xd7 31 ♞xb4 ♞xd3 32 ♞xb7 when White stands at least equal in the ending.

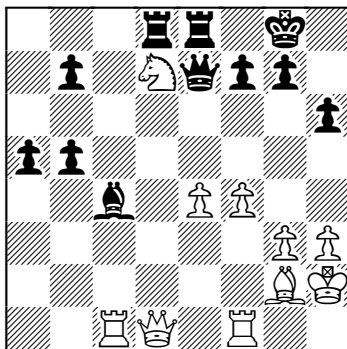
28 ♘xd7 ♘c4!

Zwischenzug.

29 ♞d1

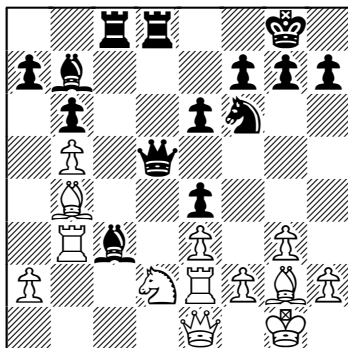
Or 29 ♞xc4 bxc4 30 ♞d5 ♞e7 31 ♞d1 c3! 32 ♞xb7 c2 33 ♞c1 ♞xd7 34 ♞b2 ♞b4 35 ♞xc2 ♞d2 36 ♞c6 ♞xe4!. Not again! Another pin trick. Black is up an exchange and a pawn, and wins easily.

29...♞e7! 0-1



Step 3: Pinned piece. Black regains the sacrificed piece and remains too many pawns up.

388) D.Dubov-M.Carlsen
Chessable Masters (online rapid) 2020



Black to play
Level 4

Find Magnus' crushing blow and White's hopelessness becomes apparent.

Answer: Queen sacrifice/removal of the guard.

22...♞xb3!!

Some combinations pop up at us, dripping with prismatic illumination. Carlsen soon demonstrates White's complete hopelessness.

23 axb3 ♟xb4

White's queen is eternally pinned. If it moves, the d2-knight falls.

24 ♟f1

Or 24 ♖a1 ♟xd2 25 ♖xa7 ♜d7 26 ♖a2 ♜c1+ 27 ♟f1 ♟c3. Threat: ...♜dd1, to which there is no defence, since 28 ♜c2 ♜a1 traps White's queen.

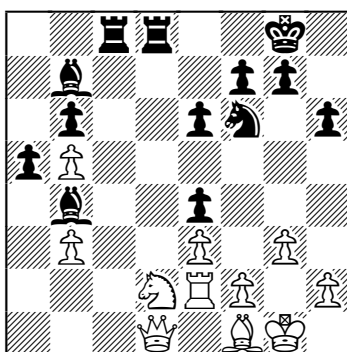
24...a5!

Masterful strategic play. Now White is even deprived of desperate ideas like ♖a1 and ♖xa7.

25 ♖d1

25 bxa6 ♟xa6 is disastrous for White.

25...h6 0-1



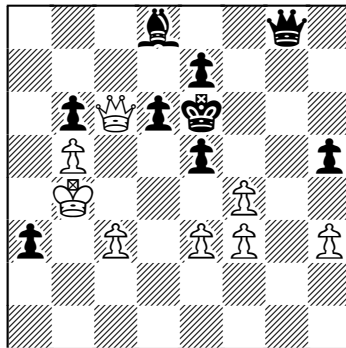
Magnus calmly gives air for his king. White is helpless to prevent the doubling of rooks on the d-file, so White loses his knight and Black gets way too much for the queen.

22) Queen Sacrifice

This is everyone's favourite chapter, since we all dream of sacrificing our queen brilliantly, to end the game.

389) L.Kubbel

Bakinski Rabochi, 1927



White to play
Level 4

Force White's win:

Answer: Queen sacrifice/attraction. We lure Black's king to d5.

1 ♖d5+!!

The faint of heart never engage in risky speculation which makes them either rich or poor. This sacrifice is *not* speculation, since the resulting lines are completely clear.

1...♔xd5

Acceptance is forced, or Black hangs the queen on g8.

2 f5!

Step 2: We cut off the e6 escape route. Now White threatens c3c4 mate.

2...e4 3 f4!

Now we seize control over the e5 escape route.

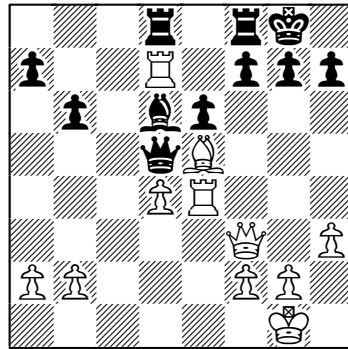
3...♔g1

Or any other move on the board and the result is the same.

4 c4 mate

David and Goliath mate.

390) A.Nimzowitsch-V.Nielsen Copenhagen 1930



White to play
Level 4

If a pure strategist looked at the position, blissfully unaware of the position's dynamic element, there is no sense that a calamitous event awaits Black. Nimzowitsch finished the game in brilliant fashion. Continue for White:

Answer: Step 1: Sacrifice the exchange on d6, strengthening White's grip over the kingside dark squares.

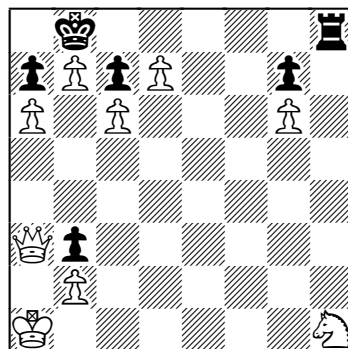
22 ♖xd6!!

The dark-squared bishop on e5 is more valuable than White's d7-rook.

22...♗xd6 23 ♕f6! 1-0

Step 2: Queen sacrifice. It is Black who must hand over his own queen to evade mate. Chess is that terrible universe where the wicked flourish and the just suffer. Wicked = tactically acute, while Just = excellent strategists who routinely bungle the game via tactical ineptitude. I lived on the Just side for decades, got tired and defected. 23...gxf6 (23...♗xe6 24 ♕xe5 wins) 24 ♖g4+ ♔h8 25 ♕xf6 is mate.

391) T.Gorgiev Schackvärlden, 1937



White to play
Level 5

Before Black is a desert, a blazing sun, sand, stone and poisonous snakes. But be careful. This isn't so easy for White to win as you may initially believe. Look closer. Black has no king moves. If Black can eliminate the rook, then the game will end in stalemate. How would you continue for White?

Answer: The queen must be sacrificed on f8, in order to buy time.

1 ♖f8+!!

Natural moves fail.

a) 1 ♖xb3? ♜xh1+ 2 ♚a2 ♜a1+! 3 ♚xa1 is stalemate.

b) 1 ♘g3? ♜h1+! There it is again: 4 ♘xh1 stalemate.

1...♜xf8 2 ♘f2! ♜h8

Black's rook is tied down to its first rank: 2...♜xf2 3 d8♜ mate.

3 ♘h3!

Apparently there is a secondary win with 3 ♘d1! which all composers dread, since then the problem is 'cooked'. In the world of chess composition, cooked = immoral. For us non-composers, a cook isn't the end of the world, for training purposes.

3...♜f8 4 ♘f4 ♜h8 5 ♘h5 ♜f8 6 ♘f6!

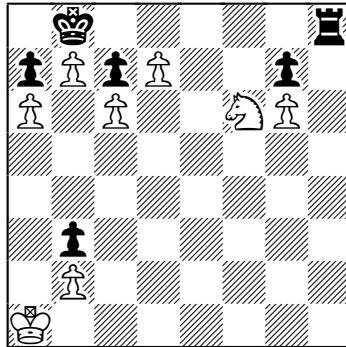
Interference.

6...♜h8

Alternatively:

a) 6...gxf6 7 g7 ♜g8 8 ♚b1 f5 9 ♚c1 f4 10 ♚d2 f3 11 ♚e3 f2 12 ♚xf2 ♜d8 13 ♚e3 ♜g8 14 ♚d4 ♜d8 15 ♚c4! ♜g8 16 ♚xb3 ♜d8 17 ♚c4 ♜g8 18 ♚d5 ♜d8 19 ♚e6 ♜g8 20 b4! (not 20 ♚f7?? ♜xg7+! 21 ♚e6 ♜g6+ 22 ♚e7 ♚e6+ 23 ♚f7 ♜f6+ with a Mad Rook Draw) 20...♜d8 21 b5! ♜g8 22 b6! (do you see the idea now? we give Black's king air, eliminating stalemate ideas) 22...axb6 23 ♚f7 ♜d8 24 g8♜ mates quickly.

b) 6...♜d8 7 ♘e8! (zugzwang) 7...♜xd7 8 cxd7 (no stalemate) 8...c5 9 d8♜ mate.



White to play
Level 2

Finish Black off:

7 d8♜+

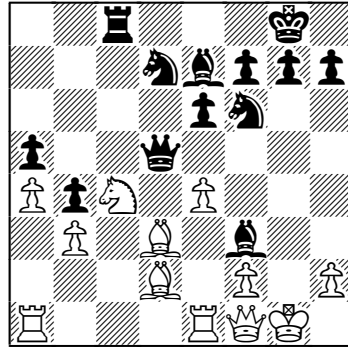
Answer: Step 1: Clearance.

7...♜xd8 8 ♘d7+

Black is forced to take the knight, lifting the stalemate threat.

8...♜xd7 9 cxd7 c5 10 d8♜ mate

392) B.Molinari-L.Cabral
Montevideo 1943



Black to play
Level 5

This is the Uruguayan Immortal. It's full of blurred edges and confusing ambiguities, yet not when you plug in the engine, who says Black has a crushing attack. It may well be the most profound over the board combination in the book and is as difficult as a composed study. How should Black continue? Start with a queen sacrifice, except that Black kept his queen the entire game!

Answer: 24...♖xc4!!

A typical gang initiation/entry act is for the wannabe gang member to commit a crime against an innocent person, just to gauge the level of ruthlessness.

25 bxc4

Not 25 exd5?? ♖g4+ 26 ♗g2 ♖xg2+ 27 ♕f1 ♖xh2 and mate in 2, while after 25 ♗xc4 ♗xd2 White can resign.

25...♗h5

Threat: ...♗g4+.

26 ♗f4 ♖g4

Even better was 26...♗d6!! 27 ♗xd6 (27 ♗g3 ♖g4 28 e5 ♖xh2!! 29 ♗xh2 ♖xe5 30 ♗e4 ♖d3! wins) 27...e5 (interference) 28 h3 ♗g5+ 29 ♕h2 ♖g4+! 30 hxg4 ♗h4+ 31 ♗h3 ♗xf2+ 32 ♗g2 ♗xg2 mate.

27 ♗e2 ♖de5!

Attackers flood White's kingside.

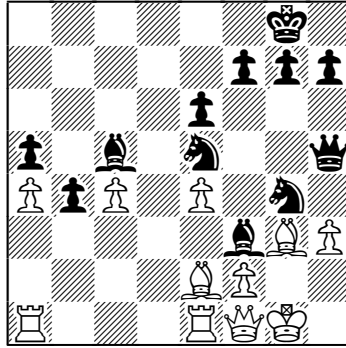
28 h3

After 28 ♗xf3 ♖xf3+ 29 ♕g2 g5 30 ♗g3 ♖gxh2 31 ♗xh2 g4!! (zwischenzug) 32 ♗g1 ♗h3+ 33 ♕h1 ♖xg1 34 ♖xg1 ♗f3+ 35 ♖g2 ♗xe4 White is again completely busted.

28...♗c5!

Going after f2.

29 ♗g3

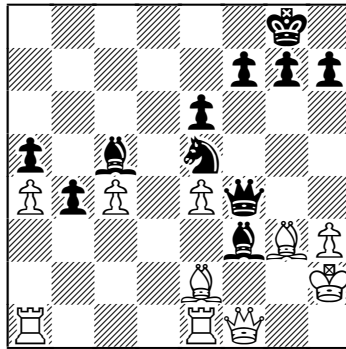


Black to play
Level 4.5

What is Black's strongest continuation?

Answer: Annihilation of defensive barrier.

29...♖xf2!! 30 ♔xf2 ♚g5+ 31 ♔h2 ♚f4+ 32 ♔g3



Black to play
Level 3

Cabral ended his masterpiece with a mate in 4:

Answer: Decoy.

32...♔g1+!

Answer no.2: 32...♖g4+ also mates in 4: 33 hxg4 ♔g1+! (decoy) 34 ♚xg1 ♚h6+ 35 ♔h4 ♚xh4 mate.

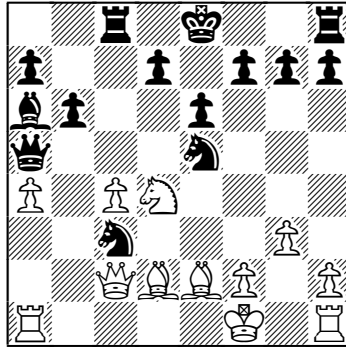
33 ♚xg1

Or 33 ♔xg1 ♚xg3+ 34 ♚g2 ♚xg2 mate.

33...♖g4+! 0-1

Clearance. 34 hxg4 ♚h6+ 35 ♔h4 ♚xh4 is mate. Intuition is a cognition which lies beyond the reach of pure intellect. I doubt very much if Cabral worked all this out in advance of his masterpiece, yet his intuition kept finding the correct continuation, until White was finally mated.

393) T.Fox-J.Timman
Islington 1970



Black to play
Level 5

Black's massive development lead means a lot more than the fact that the c3-knight is pinned and lost. Black has two winning continuations. Find one of them:

Answer: Queen sacrifice.

15... ♖xe2!

The gladiators would chant to the Roman emperor: "We who are about to die, salute you." Timman goes for the more artistic version, giving up his queen in exchange for multiple pieces.

Answer no.2: Also winning is 15... ♜xc4! 16 ♙xc4 ♜xc4 17 ♙xc3 ♜e3+ (double check/discovered attack) 18 ♙g1 ♜xc2 19 ♙xa5 ♜xd4 20 ♙b4 ♜c2 21 ♜b1 ♜xb4 22 ♜xb4 ♙b7 23 ♜c4 ♙d8 24 h4 ♙xh1 25 ♙xh1 when Black is up three clean pawns.

16 ♙xa5 ♜xd4 17 ♜b2 ♜xc4

Threatening horrible discovered checks.

18 ♙g2

Instead, 18 ♙e1?? ♜d3+ forks king and queen, while 18 ♙g1 bxa5! 19 ♜b8+ ♜c8 gives Black three minor pieces for the queen and a completely winning position, since White cannot play 20 ♜xe5?? due to 20... ♜f3+, forking.

18... ♙b7+

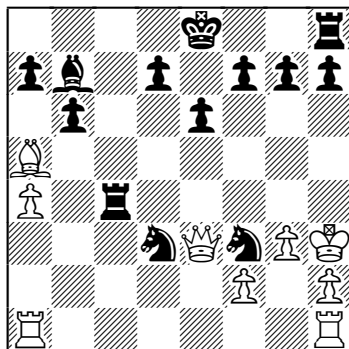
The light squares around the white king look sickly.

19 ♙h3

19 ♙g1 0-0 is also God-awful for White.

19... ♜d3 20 ♜d2 ♜f3! 21 ♜e3

Or 21 ♜xd3 ♜g5 mate.



Black to play
Level 2

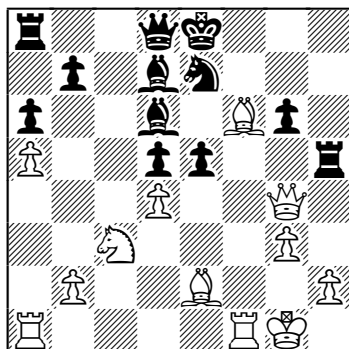
White's queen is not a beautiful woman, by anyone's standards. How did Timman force mate in 2?

Answer: Removal of the guard.

21... ♖g5+! 0-1

If 22 ♔xg5 ♗xf2 mate.

394) C.Lakdawala-I.Ivanov
Continental Open, Los Angeles 2000



White to play
Level 4

Time pressure, like a dangerous experimental drug, comes with the following effects:

1. Loss of reason.
2. Bouts of anger/depression/fear.
3. Hallucinations.
4. Paranoia.

My GM opponent and I were down to our last two minutes on our clocks, living off our five-second time delays. I sensed that White must strike here. How would you continue?

Answer: Queen sacrifice/annihilation of defensive barrier.

26 ♔xh5!

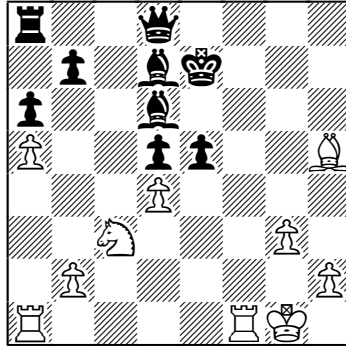
The queen sacrifice is stronger than 26 ♔xg6+ ♗xg6 27 ♖xh5 ♗b8 28 ♖xg6+ ♗f8 29 ♖xe5+ ♗g8 30 ♖f7+ ♗h7 31 ♗ae1. White is also winning here.

26...gxf5 27 ♖xh5+ ♔f8 28 ♕xe7+!

Step 2: Attraction. Igor told me after the game that he had only counted on the line 28 ♕xe5+? ♕f5! with a completely confusing position, which is still better for White.

28...♗xe7

Instead, 28...♗g8 29 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 leaves Black down a full rook.



White to play
Level 1

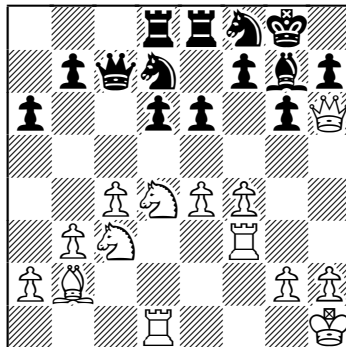
Now I forced mate in 2:

Answer:

29 ♖xd5+ 1-0

If 29...♗e6 30 ♕f7 mate.

395) R.Antonio-Dao Thien Hai
Kuala Lumpur 2005



White to play
Level 2

Our eye automatically looks at the g7-square. Does it work? (Hint: We are in the Queen sacrifice chapter, so it's a pretty good bet it does work!).

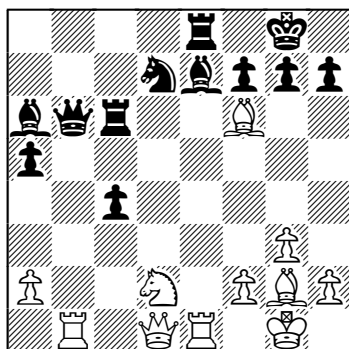
Answer: 19 ♕xg7+!

Queen sacrifice. Orthodoxy leads to a safe life, yet sin is so much more interesting. This sacrifice is easy to work out.

19...♗xg7 20 ♖d5! 1-0

Clearance. If 20...exd5 (or 20...♖g8 21 ♗xc7 ♜e7 22 ♙a3 ♗c5 23 ♗dxe6! when 23...fxe6 24 ♙xc5 ♜xc7 25 ♙b6 wins and 23...♗cxe6 24 ♗d5! ♜ed7 25 ♗f6+ ♖g7 26 ♗xd7 ♜xd7 27 ♜xd6 leaves White up an exchange and two pawns in the endgame) 21 ♗f5+ ♖g8 22 ♗h6 mate.

396) M.Krasenkow-H.Nakamura
Barcelona 2007



Black to play
Level 5

Hikaru's queen, c6-rook and e7-bishop are all hanging. Why didn't this worry him? Black's first move is obviously forced. It's what comes after which is an analytical nightmare.

Answer: Queen sacrifice/annihilation of defensive barrier. White's king is kidnapped, placed in the trunk of a car and taken for an unpleasant ride.

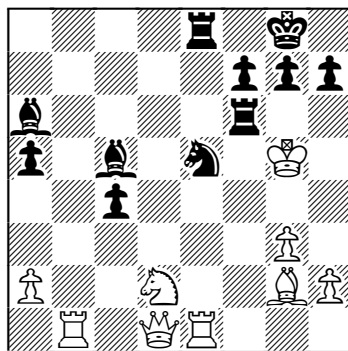
21...♜xf2+!

If not for this queen sacrifice, Black must resign. Of course, Hikaru saw the queen sacrifice well in advance of this position. 21...♜c7?? 22 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 23 ♙xe7 leaves White up a piece.

22 ♙xf2 ♙c5+ 23 ♙f3

Instead, 23 ♙f1 c3+ 24 ♜e2 c2! (attraction) 25 ♜xc2 ♙xe2+ 26 ♙e1 ♙d3+ 27 ♙d1 ♙f2!! (threat: ...♜e1 mate) 28 ♗c4 ♙xc2+ 29 ♙xc2 ♜xc4+ 30 ♙d3 ♜a4 31 ♙c6 ♜a3+ 32 ♙d2 ♗xf6 33 ♙xe8 ♜xa2+ 34 ♙d3 ♗xe8 leaves Black up two pieces.

23...♜xf6+ 24 ♙g4 ♗e5+ 25 ♙g5



The general rule of thumb: If your king finds himself on the fifth rank in a crowded position, it's considered a bad sign. Now Black has a forced mate in 9:

Answer: 25...♖g6+!

Answer no.2: 25...♙c8! is less forcing yet also forces mate in 9.

26 ♖h5

Or 26 ♖f5 ♙c8+ 27 ♖e4 ♖d6! (this way White's king is not allowed to the d-file) 28 ♖f4 ♘d3+ 29 ♖g5 ♗xe1 30 ♗xe1 ♖g6+ 31 ♖h5 ♖h6+ 32 ♖g5 f6 mate.

26...f6

Threat: ...♖h6 mate. Instead, 26...♙c8! forces mate in 7, or if 27 h3 ♙e7! 28 ♗xe5 ♖h6 mate.

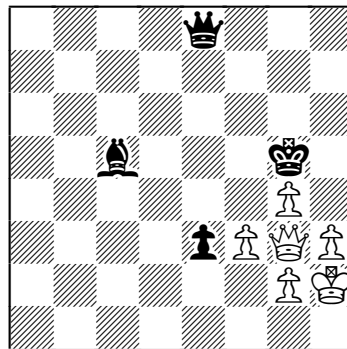
27 ♗xe5

27 ♙d5+ ♖f8 28 ♖h4 ♖h6+ 29 ♗h5 g5+ 30 ♖h3 ♗xh5+ 31 ♖g2 ♖d8 wins a second piece.

27...♗xe5+ 28 ♖h4 ♙c8! 0-1

All Black needed was another attacker to cover kingside light squares. 29 ♘xc4 ♖h6+ 30 ♗h5 ♗hxh5 is mate.

397) A.Zhukov Source unknown



White to play
Level 3

My friend GM Melik Khachian posted this problem on Facebook. He and someone else said the problem may be by the Russian composer Alexandr Zhukov, but I couldn't find either date or publication. It's too nice a problem to leave out of the book, due to incomplete information, so here it is.

It looks as if White is forced to take perpetual check starting with h3-h4+. Do you see something better?

Answer: Queen sacrifice/attraction/zwischenzug.

1 ♗h4+!!

What a shocker! Acceptance is a death sentence, as is declining: 1...♙xh4 (1...♖g6 loses the queen to the skewer 2 ♗h5+) 2 f4. Zwischenzug. There is no stopping 3 g3 mate.

What is the more powerful force? The desire for revenge, or the need for self-preservation? Many players if they were White in a tournament game would miss the queen sacrifice, would be worried about losing and would have gone for the inferior line, just to avoid a loss: 1 h4+? 1...♖g6 2 ♗c7 e2 3 h5+ ♖h6 4 ♗f4+ ♖g7 5 ♗g5+ ♖f7 6 ♗f5+ is only perpetual check.