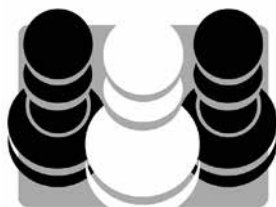


Turbo-Charge Your Tactics 2

Accelerate and Win

By

Oleksiyenko & Grabinsky



Quality Chess
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Contents

	Key to Symbols used	4
	Preface by Vladimir Grabinsky	5
	Preface by Mykhaylo Oleksiyenko	7
	Structure of the Book	8
	Introduction	9
1	Exercises 1-39	17
2	Solutions 1-39	25
3	Exercises 40-72	53
4	Solutions 40-72	59
5	Exercises 73-101	87
6	Solutions 73-101	93
7	Exercises 102-126	119
8	Solutions 102-126	125
9	Exercises 127-152	153
10	Solutions 127-152	159
11	Exercises 153-179	185
12	Solutions 153-179	191
13	Exercises 180-197	217
14	Solutions 180-197	221
15	Chess Engines	241
	Name Index	278

Preface by Vladimir Grabinsky

The most frequently asked question to a trainer is: “How can I improve?” Nevertheless, there is another underlying question that is most often not verbalized: “How can I do it quickly and with the minimum possible effort?” Let’s briefly touch on this subject.

In most cases, I do not believe in training my students over the Internet. I do not expect that an hour or two per week will be enough to expand the student’s horizons to the point that they get to reach the next level. There isn’t some “knowledge” that, when passed on, brings the light with it. “Knowing” is not enough! Being able to implement what you know is the key, and that comes with practice, not overnight.

The main task for a coach is to give good direction for the trainee’s independent work, to recommend which material is better, to guide the student through the journey of self-improvement. An experienced mentor who can sift through the widely available material in the era of the online “chess boom” is invaluable – not all content is created equal.

Some things need to be given priority if we want our chess improvement to be swift and efficient, while others might just have to wait. I endorse this piece of advice so confidently that I feel the need to repeat something I wrote for the preface to Volume 1 of this series: “Tactics and calculation are the key elements of modern chess. They are not just two of many equally important factors, but rather the crucial factors that determine your current level.” We should focus on these aspects of our game the most, even if it means we might lag behind a little in other areas.

Furthermore, an aspiring player must work on his own. Paying money for someone else to make the improvements happen for you is not going to cut it. You will have to solve puzzles to improve your brain’s dexterity when choosing a move. You will have to analyse your games to draw conclusions on what prompts most of your mistakes. Even working on openings on your own is much more beneficial than skimming through a file created by someone else. Top players might be able to digest all that information quickly and effortlessly, but that is due to their already superb understanding of the game and their immense pattern-recognition abilities. Coaches will not replace your own work, as they cannot do it for you. You must be the protagonist in this journey.

I think I made my point clear, so let’s discuss some details. Should you solve problems online? Of course! I would dare to say you even have to. It’s easy, and the statistics created can provide high-quality feedback if someone wants to read them properly. However, sometimes you might want to take a break from gadgets, close all messaging apps, hold a book in your hands and just think. It might not be as fast as going through an online puzzle database, but the examples are

prettier, cleaner, and more instructive. They're not AI-generated; they're carefully handpicked by professionals.

This series is written for those who want to put in the work! We promise many instructive and interesting examples that will give you a sense of great satisfaction. Your brain will be happy because it likes to think. You will be happy because you like to succeed. You'll be even happier when you watch your efforts bear fruit in your upcoming tournaments. Just give yourself the opportunity.

Vladimir Grabinsky
Lviv, November 2023



The Grabinsky family

Preface by Mykhaylo Oleksiyenko

If you are holding this volume, you probably read or even liked the first one. “So,” you might be wondering, “why should I buy the next one?” Well, Volume 2 is a natural continuation of the content presented in the previous book. It just happened that over the years we collected so much material that we had to split it into two parts. The books work better together, but this one can certainly be enjoyed as a standalone work.

The main concept is the same, so at some point you might catch us repeating advice that you already read in the previous book. However, the more you practise, the better you become. It is not enough to understand that you have some flaws or blind spots in your calculation. You need to practise as much as possible until you manage to eradicate your brain’s troubling misconceptions. That is why you should be holding this book. Here, you will find examples from games involving even stronger players than the ones featured in Volume 1. You will learn from both the great moves and the mistakes made by the World Champions and their challengers – the players making up the absolute cream of the crop throughout chess history.

Another nice feature is the final chapter dedicated to Stockfish – the ultimate World Champion. You may be surprised to learn that even chess engines have flaws. I will talk about how you should properly use these mighty beasts to avoid getting influenced by these flaws, and you will get to witness positions which you might be able to solve, while the engine fails. After you finish this volume, you will probably be able to tell your friends that in some cases you played better than a World Champion, or even an engine!

Over the years, I made a habit of collecting positions that engines had trouble solving or failed altogether. It was a fascinating experience to try and outsmart them! I started to notice what those positions had in common. Some of them I had to delete, because newer versions of Stockfish were able to solve the puzzles, so it could happen that future versions of Stockfish will be able to solve the positions presented as well. Well, it certainly will happen at some point – we just don’t know when.

Nevertheless, I put a lot of work and dedication into that chapter, and I filled it with positions which I thought would be useful to you, even if engines were not part of the equation. I think you will learn the most if you try to solve each position yourself, before reading through the chapter or feeding it to your engine.

Let’s get to work, shall we?

Mykhaylo Oleksiyenko
Lviv, November 2023

Introduction

Hello again! You've probably read some of the points we're about to make in this introduction back when you were reading the introduction to Volume 1 of this series but still, bear with us. We'd like to emphasize some of the concepts we've explained earlier, and expand upon the topic of invisible, weird, computer-like moves, while getting you ready for the challenges that lie ahead in the exercise part of the book.

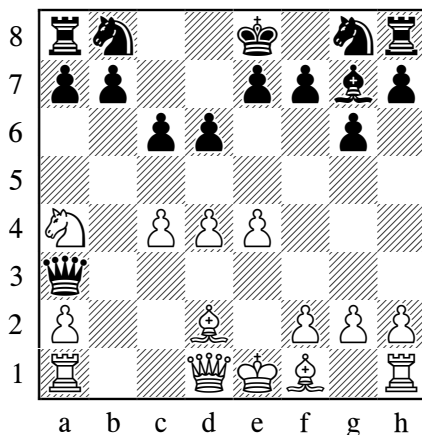
For readers who are not familiar with Volume 1, don't despair – the following segment is enough to prepare you for solving the puzzles. Getting both volumes works better, but the books can be enjoyed individually as well. For those who have already worked through Volume 1, don't slack over this and go directly to the puzzles! You'll miss some cool examples if you do, and you will benefit from using the examples in these pages as a warm-up for what follows.

The game below was played on the top board in Round 7 of the Ukrainian Championship semi-final back in 2014. Yuri Vovk was leading with $5\frac{1}{2}/6$ and Vladimir Onischuk was second with $5/6$. If Yuri was to win the game, he would almost guarantee himself a place in the Final (there were six or seven spots available). As it turned out, the game ended in a draw, and ultimately neither player managed to qualify.

Yuri Vovk – Vladimir Onischuk

Lviv 2014

1. ♘f3 g6 2. e4 d6 3. c4 ♙g4 4. d4 ♙xf3 5. ♖xf3 ♙g7 6. ♗d1 c6 7. ♘c3 ♗b6 8. ♙e3 ♗xb2 9. ♘a4 ♗b4† 10. ♙d2 ♗a3 11. ♙c1 ♗b4† 12. ♙d2 ♗a3



I (Mykhaylo) was watching this game very closely for one reason: I had encountered this position in Jacob Aagaard's *Grandmaster Preparation – Positional Play* some time ago! Gelfand and Morozevich had played the same moves (in the same order!) back in 2008. That game soon ended in a draw by repetition.

I completely forgot about my own game – I was waiting for the end of this one. Both players had spent a lot of time already. It meant that both were invested in the position and did not know it had been played before.

After a bit more time, the game ended in a “perpetual” after 13.♙c1 ♖b4† 14.♙d2, exactly like the predecessor Gelfand – Morozevich, Moscow 2008.

The second that they finished the game, I asked them to find a win for White. They couldn't spot it. By the way, that's not a brag; I also could not find the solution when reading Jacob's book!

Imagine their shock when I showed them the winning line. None of us qualified for the Final that year, but all of us learnt a valuable idea...

13.h4!!

White simply prepares ♖h3.

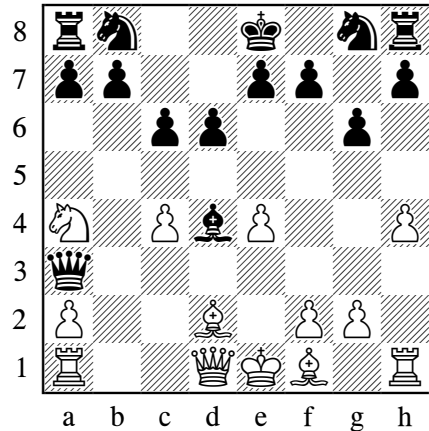
13.♖b1 does not work only because of 13...♙xd4! when the game becomes very forcing. There should follow: 14.♖c2 Threatening ♙c1. 14...♗a6! White has to settle for a draw. 15.♙c1 ♗b4! 16.♖xb4 ♖xb4† 17.♙d2 ♖a3 18.♙c1 With a repetition.

13...♙xd4

13...d5 14.♖h3!? ♖d6 15.e5! leads to a position where White's overwhelming lead in development grants him a decisive advantage.

Trying to exchange the dark-squared bishops also does not help Black: 13...♙h6 14.♙xh6!?

♗xh6 The d4-pawn is not hanging, so White can simply play 15.♖b1! and take away the b4-square from the black queen. The b7-pawn is under fire but, more importantly, White threatens to trap the queen with ♖h3 followed by ♖b2.



14.♖h3 ♖xa4 15.♖xa4 ♙xa1 16.♖b3

Black will not be able to survive.

Why is 13.h4!! so hard to see? Well, the pawn on d4 is hanging, so you may feel like you “do not have time” for “silly” moves like h2-h4. Another reason could be that in most cases, the h2-h4 move has the idea to push the pawn to h5; only very rarely is the idea to play ♖h3. Furthermore, there is usually a bishop on c8 that stops the rook from coming to h3. Finally, all the action seems to be occurring on the queenside so, naturally, our attention is focused on that part of the board.

Probably, it is all those reasons combined that make this move so hard to see. In any case, it is useful to have this motif in your “repertoire of ideas”, as it is hard to find such moves unless you have seen the idea before. Hopefully, after many grandmasters (Gelfand, Morozevich, Vovk, Onischuk and Oleksiyenko) failed to see this idea, you will be able to learn from our mistakes.



*The authors training
the next generation!*

Chapter 1

Exercises 1-39

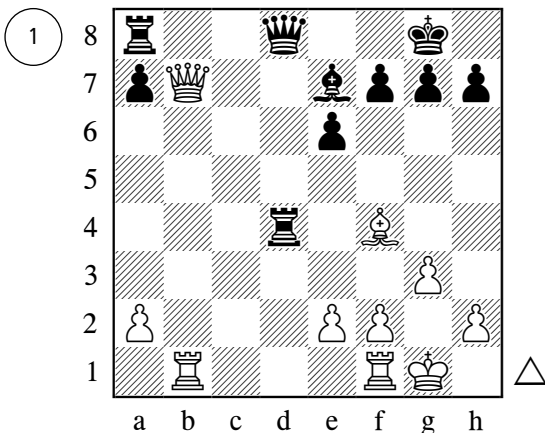
As explained earlier, for most of this book we will be solving puzzles taken from games played by the World Champions along with those who challenged them for the chess crown. You will find at least one example from each World Champion, from Steinitz all the way to Ding Liren. (However, please note that the puzzles will not be arranged in chronological order of World Champion.)

One should not treat these puzzles any differently from those in Volume 1 – except perhaps for experiencing a little more joy in finding a solution one of the World Champions might have missed. The puzzles are ordered according to difficulty – at least according to our opinion.

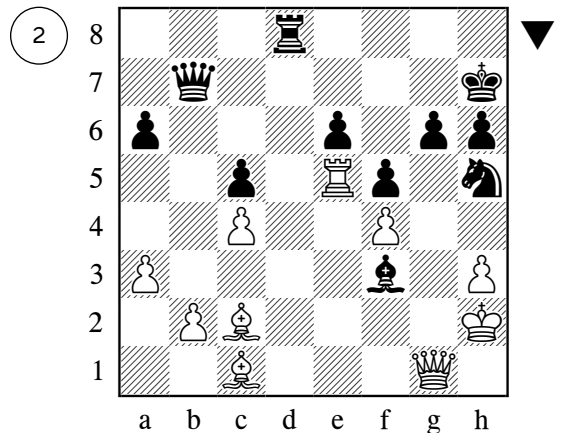
Failing some of these puzzles wouldn't be a bad thing. On the contrary: it would mean this book is perfectly suited for you. If we're solving exercises that keep us entirely in our comfort zone, then we're probably not using our time very effectively. Improvement always implies getting out of our comfort zone; how else would we be able to expand it?

Have fun!

Smyslov – Tolush, Moscow 1961



Bakulin – Smyslov, Moscow 1961



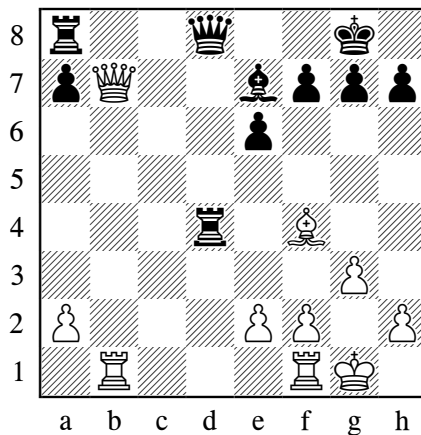
Chapter 2

Solutions 1-39

We weren't too hard on you, were we? We started off with a series of cute but quite simple shots, and gradually increased the complexity of the puzzles until we reached the slightly more challenging ones. We didn't want to startle anyone, but we shouldn't pamper you either. Those of you who have already worked through Volume 1 might think these were easy, but don't worry – that won't be the case for long.

1. Vasily Smyslov – Alexander Tolush

Moscow 1961



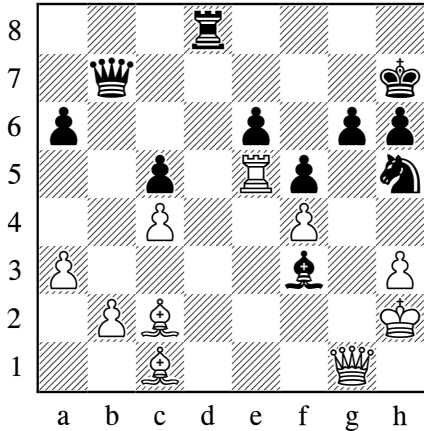
17. ♙b8!

Smyslov creates a nice cage to trap the black rook. Tolush immediately resigned.

1-0

2. Nikolac Bakulin – Vasily Smyslov

Moscow 1961



White's position seems to be ready to collapse, but all entry squares are safely defended. Or are they?

39... ♖xb2!

The c1-bishop is overloaded. It can't perform both the necessary tasks it had to fulfil (protecting the b2-pawn and the d2-square). Sometimes we forget that the queen could be sacrificed for "just one pawn". Black wins.

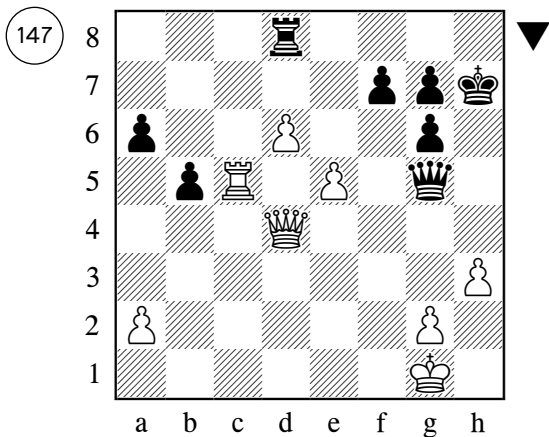
40. ♕xb2

The game saw 40. ♖e2, when any decent move wins. Smyslov chose the cleanest: 40... ♖d4! 41. ♖xd4 ♖xd4! White resigned.

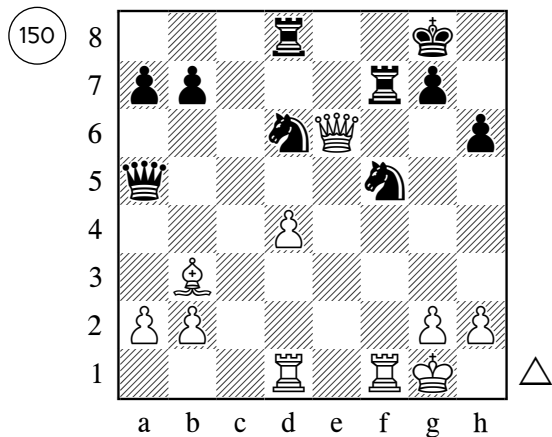
40... ♖d2†!

Black wins the house.

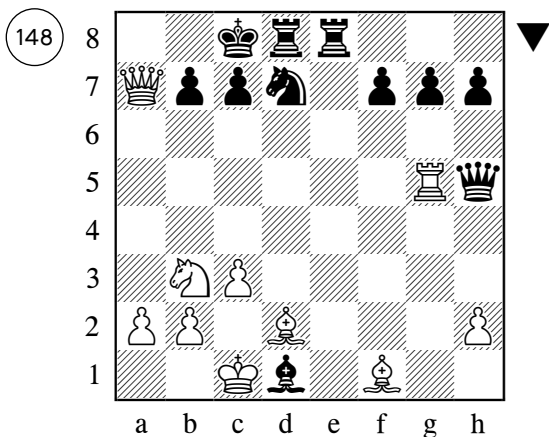
Aronian – Kramnik, Paris 2013



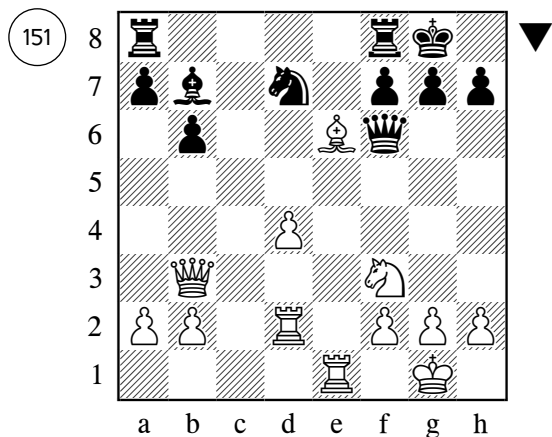
Stahlberg – Capablanca, Moscow 1935



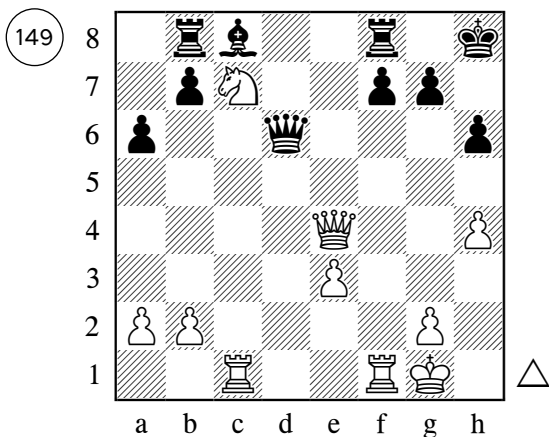
Aurbach – Capablanca, Neuilly 1913



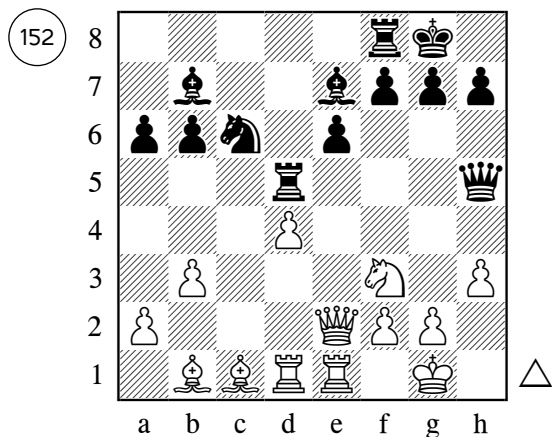
Alekhine – Pen, Odessa 1918



Alekhine – Onnen, Bandung 1933

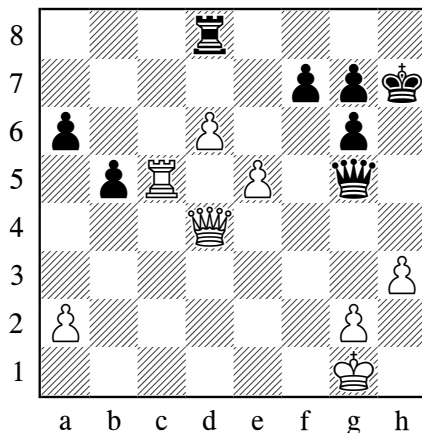


Alekhine – Wood, Montevideo 1939



147. Levon Aronian – Vladimir Kramnik

Paris 2013



34...f6!

Black chose 34...♙g3? and after 35.♙f2! (35.♞c3!? was also winning) 35...♙xf2† 36.♕xf2 it was an easy win for White.

35.e6

There are no checks, those pawns look scary, and promotion seems inevitable. Why would you even look at this position?

35...♙g3!!

Black will win one of those scary pawns. There is no way to defend both.

36.♞c6

If 36.e7, then 36...♞xd6! and White is the one having to be careful. He has to play: 37.e8=♙ ♞xd4 38.♞h5† gxh5 39.♙xh5† With a perpetual.

After 36.♞d5 ♙e1† 37.♕h2 ♙xe6 Black is fine.

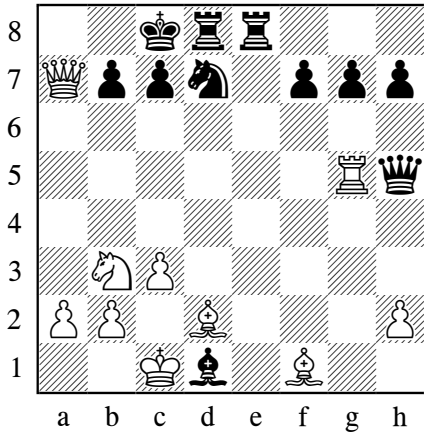
In case of 36.d7 ♙e1†! 37.♕h2 ♙xe6 38.♞d5 we transpose to the previous note.

36...♙e1† 37.♕h2 ♙xe6 38.♞xa6

A draw would be the expected outcome.

148. Arnold Aurbach – Jose Raul Capablanca

Neuilly (simul) 1913



The black queen is hanging. What would you do?

19...♖e1!!

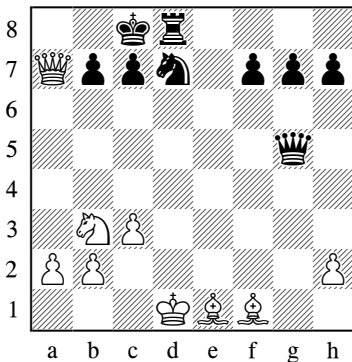
Putting yet another major piece en prise. White must be careful to not get in trouble.

The game went: 19...♖xh2? 20.♔xd1! ♕h1 21.♖g1! White managed to organize his pieces, getting a winning position which he eventually converted to a full point.

After 19...♖f3?? 20.♙g2! the black queen cannot move due to ♖xb7#. (20.♖a8†!? ♖b8 21.♙g2 also does the trick.)

20.♖xh5

White shouldn't play with fire: 20.♙xe1? ♖xg5†! 21.♔xd1



21...♖b6†! Cutting off the queen. 22.♖d4 ♕f5! The black queen will enter on b1 and wreak havoc in the white camp. White is in huge trouble.

If 20.♖f2!?, then 20...♖xf1! (Another crazy Stockfish suggestion is 20...♖e2!?.) 21.♖xf1 ♙e2! 22.♖f2 ♖f3! solves all of Black's problems.

20...♖xf1!

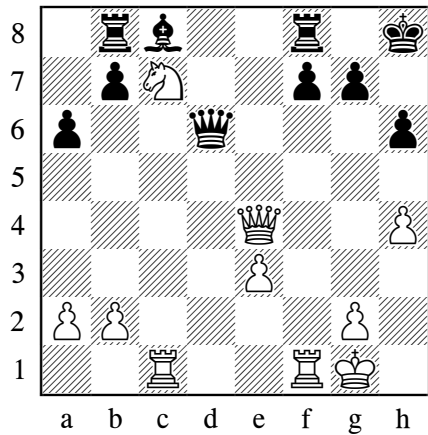
The discovered check is very dangerous. White has to find some only moves:

21.♖f5! ♙f3†! 22.♙e1! ♖xe1† 23.♔d2 ♖e2† 24.♔c1

Black can choose whether to repeat moves or keep playing for a win.

149. Alexander Alekhine – P.W. Onnen

Bandung (simul) 1933



25.♖e8!!

Usually, this square is beyond the reach of the white pieces. The point is to remove the queen from the h2-b8 diagonal. Then, a crushing attack starting with ♖e5 will decide.

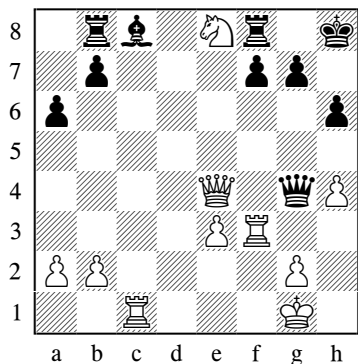
Alekhine played 25.♖fd1?, but this natural move leads only to equality. Black had several decent options. The best one would be

25...♔g3!, with a good amount of counterplay. (25...♔b6!? would also be fine, while the game saw 25...♔f6!? and Black was OK, even though he eventually lost.)

25...♔e6

There is nothing else.

After 25...♔g3? 26.♖f3! the queen has to relinquish control over the e5-square: 26...♔g4



27.♔e5! ♖a8 28.♘c7! White is threatening both ♘xa8 and ♔g3. There is no stopping both.

If 25...♔b6, then 26.♔e5 wins on the spot. The queen delivers a surprising but effective fork.

26.♔f4!

The b8-rook will not survive.

26...♖xc8

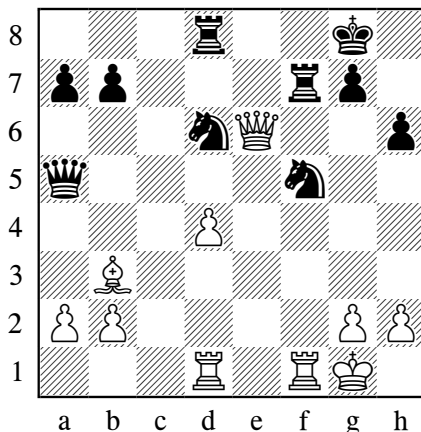
26...♖a8? would lose the whole rook after 27.♘c7.

27.♔xb8 ♔xc3† 28.♔h2

White will convert the extra exchange. There are too many open files.

150. Gideon Stahlberg – Jose Raul Capablanca

Moscow 1935



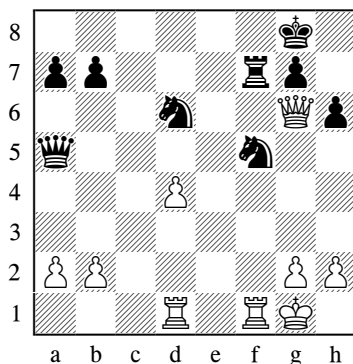
Gideon Stahlberg missed a chance to beat the former World Champion:

23.♔e5!!

This backward move was the key. There is not much to calculate since nothing can stop g2-g4.

White played 23.g4? and Capablanca found all the correct moves: 23...♔h8! 24.♔e5 ♔xe5! 25.dxe5! ♘e3!! 26.♘xf7 ♘xd1! 27.exd6 ♖xd6 A draw was agreed.

It was important to win the tempo on the black queen. 23.♔g6? doesn't, and Black has time to defend with: 23...♖dd7! 24.♘xf7† ♖xf7



After 25.g4 Black would have two ways to continue. One is 25...♘e3! when White must take a draw by capturing on d6. (The other would be the fighting: 25...♞f6!? 26.♞h5 ♞xa2 27.gxf5 ♞xb2 With compensation.)

23...♞b6

After 23...♞xe5 24.dxe5 White wins the house.

24.♙xf7†!

The most direct.

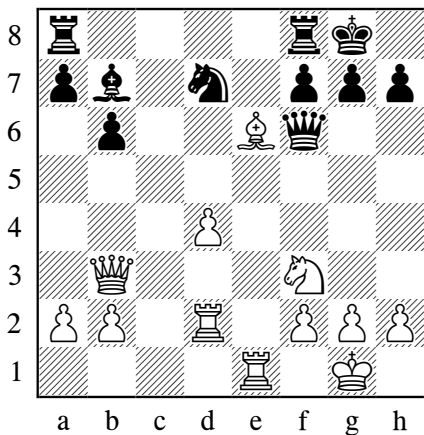
24.g4!? also wins.

24...♙xf7 25.g4!

Game over.

151. Alexander Alekhine – Ilya Pen

Odessa (simul) 1918



16...fxe6!

It turns out that Black can actually capture the bishop.

Alekhine's opponent missed a great chance to win the game. He settled for a much smaller advantage: 16...♙xf3? 17.♙xd7 ♞g5! 18.♞xf3 ♞xd2 19.♞c3 Black is better but certainly not winning. Alekhine even managed to outplay his opponent and take the full point.

17.♞xe6 ♞f5!!

The star of the show. We are in a surprising situation when there is no good discovered check. Black is winning in all lines.

But not 17...♞f7? 18.♘g5 when White wins because f2 is defended.

18.♞e5†

If 18.♞f6†, then 18...♞d5! wins for Black.

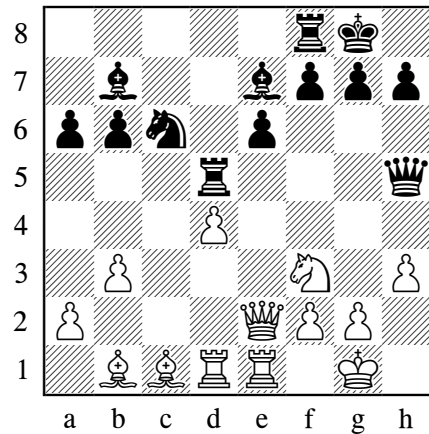
18.♞xb6† is met with 18...♙d5!.

18...♞f7!

Game over.

152. Alexander Alekhine – Baruch Harold Wood

Montevideo 1939



19.♞f1!!

This is not the first time you met this idea in the book! Were you paying attention the last time? White is threatening to win the queen with g2-g4 and there is no decent way to secure Her Majesty without making a big concession.

Alekhine found the right idea but, again, messed up the execution. He chose 19.♙e4? ♞d7 and only now 20.♞f1. In this case, Black's

queen has a chance to escape with 20...♖a5! when the position remains balanced. (In the game, Black immediately returned the favour with 20...♙f6? and was again completely lost after 21.d5!.)

19...♖d7

Trying to evacuate the queen through the fifth rank fails, but it's not like there were any good options for Black:

After 19...g5 there is no immediate win, yet Black is completely lost due to his exposed king: 20.♙e4! Next move is d4-d5 blasting the centre open.

19...f6 and 19...f5 both lose a crucial central pawn to 20.♖xe6. White has a winning advantage in both cases.

20.d5!

The point. White can shut down the queen's escape route. Next move White traps the queen with g2-g4 or wins a piece on c6.

Conclusion

Let's once again pick out a few noticeable themes from this section. Some may be repeated, but that probably means they're among the most important pieces of advice we're trying to get across.

Stopping one move later than where you wanted to stop, and considering a wide range of candidate moves on each ply, was essential once again. Choosing to highlight the most instructive, we'd like to return your attention to Exercises 139 (26.♖b1!), 142 (23...♖d8!) and 151 (17...♖f5!!). The first was hard to consider because it was backward, the second could evade our attention if we had stopped earlier, and the third might be the hardest of the bunch, even though it was only one move away from the starting position. It's not every day you can allow a discovered check like that.

Calculating everything for ourselves, while allowing our brains to consider a multitude of candidates, would help us to consider these moves. The same thought process would aid tremendously in finding 19...♖e1!! in Exercise 148 and 23.♖e5!! in Exercise 150.

Another important aim of this series is convincing you to consider "antipositional", irregular moves, even if your brain tends to resist this process at first. That's why we included several counterintuitive operations, like Exercises 128 (21...exf5! ruining the structure), 137 (17.♙xe4! parting with the strong bishop), 141 (32.♖f1!! moving away from the open h-file) and 147 (34...f6! allowing two connected passed pawns on the sixth rank). Principles are good, but if they're stopping us from finding tactics, well, that must be fixed!