

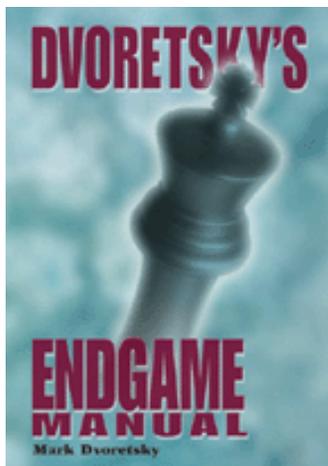


## The Effects of Replaying

I have frequently mentioned, in books and articles, an effective training method: replaying specially selected positions – positions which cannot be “resolved” from beginning to end, so there is really no sense in trying. Instead, players must find, in succession, a series of correct decisions independently (or nearly independently) of each other.

### COLUMNISTS

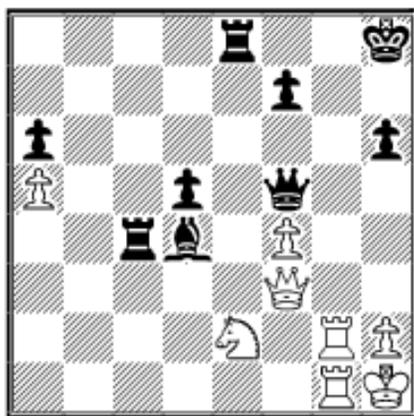
## The Instructor Mark Dvoretsky



In the majority of such exercises, play continues for a minimum of ten moves, although sometimes longer. After all, a shorter variant could in fact be calculated from beginning to end, which would then abolish it as a playing exercise. But there are sometimes exceptions.

The brilliant attack from the following game, which remained hidden in the annotations, and which is now offered for your consideration, has for some reason never become widely known, although its basic ideas were demonstrated in Mikhail Botvinnik's annotations from his book *1941 Match-Tournament*. But even those who are familiar with Botvinnik's analysis will be none the worse for it – for they too will see sharp new variations.

*Botvinnik - Bondarevsky*  
Leningrad/Moscow 1941



So – you have White. Try to find each move in turn, taking Black's replies from the following text. Or you might play out this fragment against a friend: he will also find it a problem requiring deep insight into the position.

**39.Ne2xd4!**

In combination with White's next move, this is a rather obvious exchange: in this way, White gets the opportunity to speculate on the

pin along the a1-h8 diagonal. In the game, Botvinnik played the much weaker 39.Ng3?, and after 39...Qe6! 40.Re2 Be3, he ought to have been dead lost: White has neither his pawn, nor any sort of compensation for it. Igor Bondarevsky, however, erred in turn: 39...Qh7? 40.Qxd5 Bxg1 41.Qxc4 Ba7 42.Nf1 Qf5 43.Qc3+ f6 44.Qc7 Qh7 45.Qc6 Qf7 46.Qxa6 Bd4 47.Qd3 Re1, leading to a roughly equal position. In the end, however, Black won.



**39...Rc4xd4 40.Qf3-c3**

After 40.Qg3? Qf6, there is no g-file breakthrough.

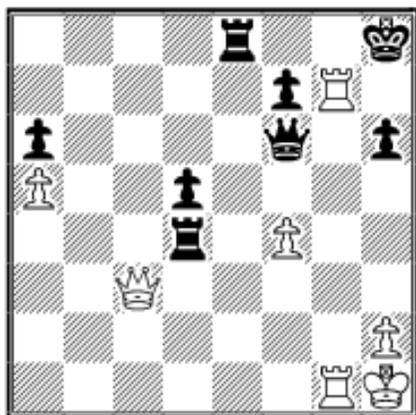
**40...Qf5-f6!**

Black's move is easily found through the method of exclusion: 40...Qe4? 41.Rd1; 40...Qd3? 41.Qc6; and 40...Qxf4? 41.Rg4 (or 41.Rd1) all lose for him.

But how does White continue the attack now? There's only a draw after 41.f5? Qe5 42.Qc6 Rh4 43.Re2 Rxh2+!, with perpetual check; or 42.Qh3 Qf6 (42...Qxf4? 43.Rg4+- is bad; but 42...Kh7!? is possible) 43.Rg6 Rh4! 44.Rxf6 Rxh3 = (since 45...Re2 will follow).

**41.Rg2-g7!!**

A powerful quiet move. White certainly does not threaten 42.Rxf7 Qxf7 43.Qxd4+ Kh7 – there's no win here – but 42.Qg3!, followed by 43.Rg8+. By the way, this is just how you should always place your heavy pieces on an open file: with the rook (or both rooks) ahead of the queen.



And now Black's position appears totally hopeless. He can't play 41...Qxf4? 42.R7g4; nor 41...h5? 42.R7g5 – White wins in either case. And on 41...Rxf4, 42.Qg3 Rf1 (42...Rfe4 43.Rg8+ Kh7 44.Qg7+ Qxg7 51.R1xg7 mate) 43.Rg8+ Kh7 44.Qd3+ (or 44.Rxe8 Rxg1+ 45.Kxg1) wins also. Nevertheless, Black has a defense (unusual and difficult to find though it may be), as pointed out by the Leningrader P. Ulanov.

**41...Re8-d8!!**

Very elegant; the rook moves to a defended square, which comes in handy in the line 42.Qg3? Rd1! 43.Rg8+ Kh7 =. And White also gets nothing out of 42.Rxf7? Qxf7 43.Qxd4+ Kh7 44.Qd3+ Kh8 45.Qxa6 Qxf4 =.

Nevertheless, White still wins – in fact he has three ways to do so, each in turn interesting and pretty in its own way. The first is:

**42.h2-h3!!**



The shortest win, suggested by Botvinnik. Paradoxically, Black appears to be in zugzwang! Once again, 42...Qxf4 loses to 43.R7g4, and 42...h5 to 43.R7g5. The rook on the 8th rank has only one safe square – d8; once it leaves that square, the rook is lost: 42...Re8 43.Qg3 Rd1 44.Rg8+ Kh7 45.Rxe8.

**42...Rd4xf4**

And by moving to the f-file, this rook abandons its control of d3.

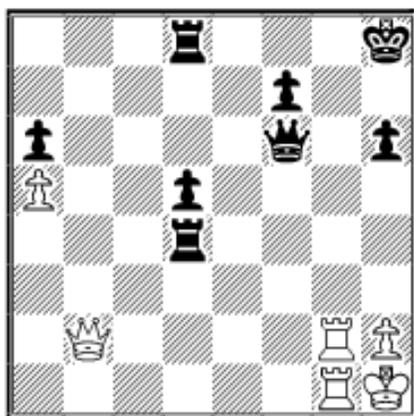
**43.Qc3-g3! Rf4-f1 44.Rg7-g8+ Kh8-h7 45.Qg3-d3+!**

**II.**

**42.Qb2!?**

This, too, is a try at zugzwang (42...Rxf4 loses to 43.Qg2). Its drawback is that after **42...Qxf4**, Black's queen now has the f3-square. Here's what I found:

**43.R7g4 Qf3+ 44.R4g2 Qf6**



At first glance, White has simply lost his f4-pawn for nothing. On 45.Rf2?, Black has either 45...Qe5 46.Qb6 Qe4+ 47.Rfg2 Qh4 =, or 45...Qh4 =, when 46.Rd1?? fails against 46...Qxf2! -+.

Once again, a quiet move decides!

**45.Rg3!!**

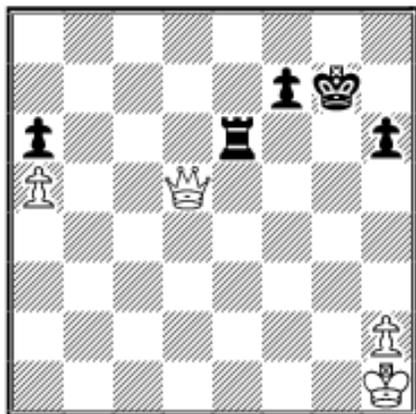
Threatening 46.Qg2.

**45...Qe5 46.Rg4! Re4 47.Qb6! Kh7 48.Rg7+ Qxg7 49.Rxg7+ Kxg7 50.Qxd8.**

It's amusing that what was formerly the only safe square for the rook – on d8 – now turns out to be the most vulnerable.

**50...Re6 51.Qxd5**

The final position of this variation deserves a diagram.



Without the two h-pawns, this would be a draw: the rook shuttles between the e6- and g6-squares, keeping the white king from crossing the 5th rank.

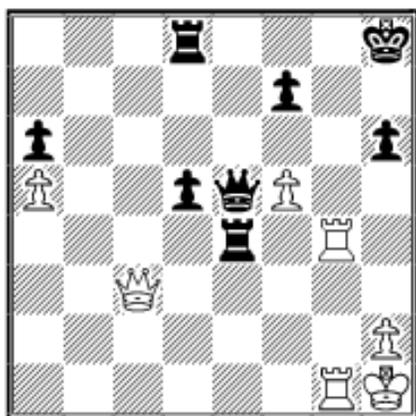
There would also be no win if you took the a-pawns off the board; however, this requires some explanation. If White succeeds in playing h2-h4-h5, depriving the black rook of a vital support point at g6, then – as Nikolai Grigoriev established in 1917 – he wins.

Therefore, Black must answer h2-h4 with h6-h5!, sacrificing a pawn, but in return obtaining a new support point at h6 for the rook. As Grigoriev (and independently some 30 years later, also Genrikh Kasparian) showed, this position is drawn.

One can understand why, with a-pawns still on the board, the pawn sacrifice with h6-h5 (in response to h2-h4) does not save Black – White gets the chance to take the rook at e6 at the right moment, with a winning pawn endgame.

### III.

**42.f5!? Qe5 43.R7g4 Re4**



Here, 44.Qc6? Kh7 would be useless. The way to win is the spectacular blow **44.Rh4!!**, found by Igor Zaitsev. But the game's not over yet – White still needs to display considerable accuracy (the remaining analysis is mine):

**44...Rd6** (44...Kh7 45.Rxh6+!) **45.Qc7!**  
 (White threatens both 46.Qb8+ and 46.Qf7)  
**45...Re1** (45...Rf6 46.Qd8+; 45...Qe7  
 46.Qb8+; 45...Re2 46.Qb8+ or 46.Qd8+)  
**46.Qc8+!** (The more spectacular 46.Qd8+?

would let slip the win: 46...Qe8! 47.Qxd6 Rxf1+ 48.Kxg1 Qe1+ 49.Kg2 Qe2+!  
 (49...Qxh4 is weaker: 50.Qf8+ Kh7 51.Qxf7+ Kh8 52.Qxd5) 50.Kg3 Qe3+  
 51.Kg4 Qe2+!, with a perpetual check. And 46.Qb8+? would also be a mistake:  
 46...Qe8 47.Qb2+ Qe5 = (or even 47...d4!? 48.Qxd4+ Re5, with the terrible  
 counter-threat 49...Qa8+).

**46...Qe8 47.Qc3+ Re5** (forced – the rook was *en prise* at e1, which rules out  
 either 47...Qe5 or 47...d4) **48.Qg3!+-**, and the queen reaches the g-file anyway,  
 with decisive effect.

The position which arose in the following game after White's 11th move can also be played out. Your task is to take the black pieces at that point, and to find the six strongest moves in about half an hour. Vadim Zvjagintsev once solved this task in only 5 minutes; but the great majority of solvers – several strong

grandmasters among them – failed.

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dc 3.e4 Nf6 4.Nc3** (4.e5 is more common) **4...e5 5.Nf3 ed 6.Qxd4**



The first instructive point. Trading queens leads to a somewhat better endgame for White. Black finds a stronger continuation.

**6...Bd6!**

By avoiding the exchange, Black seeks to win a tempo later, using his knight to hit the enemy queen, which has come to the center too early. It's a logical strategy – once you're sure that 7.e5? doesn't win a piece after 7...Nc6 8.Qe3 0-0 (8...Ng4 9.Qe4 Bc5 is also

strong) 9.ef Re8 10.Ne4 Bf5 11.Nfd2 Bxe4 12.Nxe4 Bb4+ – in fact, it's Black who wins.

The game Goldin - Balashov (Irkutsk 1986) continued: 7.Bg5 Nc6 8.Qxc4 h6 9.Bh4 Be6 10.Qa4 (10.Qe2 g5 11.Bg3 g4) 10...0-0 11.Be2 Ne5 12.Nd4 Bd7 13.Qc2 Ng6 14.Bg3 Qe7 15.0-0 Bxg3 16.hg Rfe8, with about equal chances.

**7.Bxc4 0-0**

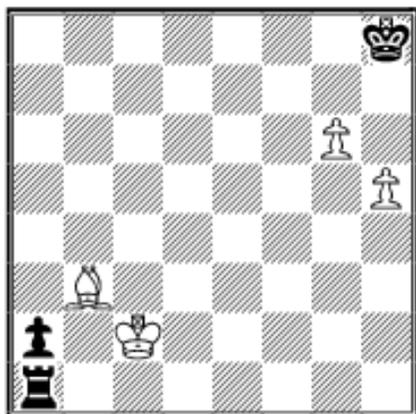
More accurate than 7...Nc6 8.Bb5, when Black doesn't win a tempo on the queen after all. Here again, 8.e5? Nc6 is useless.

**8.Bg5 Nc6 9.Qd2** (9.Qe3!?) **9...h6 10.Bh4 Bg4 11.0-0-0**

Our replaying exercise would begin here; we shall return to our game, however, only later, after another diagram. Instead, we offer here a lengthy "lyrical" (or actually "instructional") digression, which could amount to a rather significant hint. Strong players who would rather use this exercise as training should probably leave this section until after their replay is over. While for those who feel less secure about their own abilities – read the following text, and then see if you can employ the idea presented when calculating your variations.

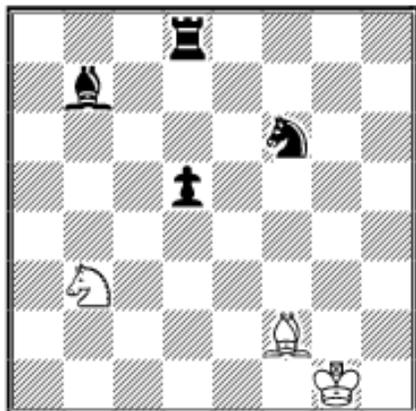
Many years ago, Emanuel Lasker introduced the "desperado" concept, which translated from the Spanish means: a desperate person, despairing, a "kamikaze". In the course of the game, several pieces – both ours, and our opponent's – will turn "desperado" – that is, they will display an inner wish to self-destruct. Or, to use Lasker's expression, a "*berserk desire to attack.*" This will happen in one of the following situations:

1) "*Sometimes, a piece involuntarily aids the enemy, for example: when it hinders the mobility of its own pieces.*" Lasker illustrated this with the following setup:



Here, Black's rook hinders the a2-pawn from queening, so it turns "desperado," by **1...Rc1+!**

Another instructive setup, based upon the need to blockade the passed pawn, comes from Aron Nimzovich. (see next diagram)



"After 1...d4 2.Nxd4 or 2.Bxd4, all Black's pieces, which were standing behind the pawn, suddenly spring to life: the b7-bishop gains a diagonal pointing at the enemy king, the d8-rook gains an open file, and the knight on f6 obtains another central square." The d5-pawn is a typical "desperado."

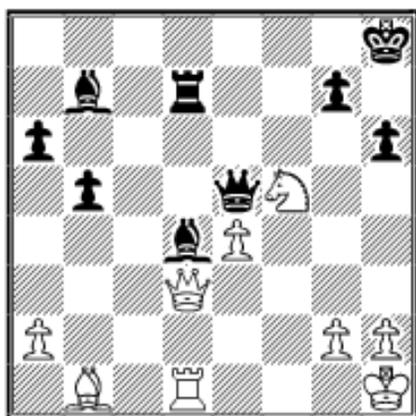
While we're here, we should also mention one other situation of practical importance which fits under the same heading: the "mad

piece" (which is most commonly a "mad rook.") A piece becomes "mad," inviting its own capture, when the capture results in stalemate.

2) Sometimes, a piece will either be doomed to capture, or unfortunately placed – a chronic weakness in the position: such pieces are often prone to offer themselves as sacrifices.

As an example, Lasker offered a famous example of a premature resignation.

**Popiel - Marco**  
Monte Carlo 1902



Black resigned, failing to see the winning withdrawal of the pinned bishop: **36...Bg1!**

The preceding is also well illustrated by the games Tarrasch - Lasker and Levitina - Alexandria, examined in the chapter, "Form Your Own Opinion," from my book *School of Chess Excellence 2: Combinative Play*.

3) It sometimes happens that one side will undertake an exchanging operation or combination, during the course of which

several pieces on both sides are simultaneously under attack. The attacked pieces, striving to sell themselves as dearly as possible, become "desperadoes," capable

of any sort of ridiculous-looking move.

Once again, here is an example from Lasker's *Manual*, to which I have added one preliminary move apiece for both sides.

***Forgacs - Duras***

Peterburg 1909



**25...Re2! 26.Be5**

On 26.Bxe2 Rxe2 27.Qf1, ...Qa3 decides.

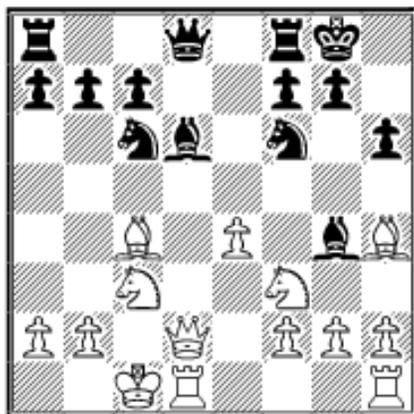
**26...Qxe5!**

And White resigned. "In this case, it is the queen who takes the desperate step, since Re2xf2 does not work, and the rook at e2 is en prise. Here, it removes the most powerful, and most aggressive enemy piece available to it." (And let me add a footnote of

modification, that after 26...Rxf2?! 27.Bxd6 Rxh2, Black would have "only" two extra pawns, instead of the extra piece he obtains after 26...Qxe5! And in fact, 26...fe!? 27.Bxe2 ef would, like the text, also have led to a decisive gain of material.)

From the preceding, we draw a simple conclusion: *that we must always be ready to recognize "desperado" situations, and to examine any moves, even the most unbelievable, of such pieces, which under normal circumstances would never enter our heads.*

And now, finally, it is time to return to our game.



Black begins a favorable exchanging combination.

**11...Bg4xf3! 12.g2xf3 Nf6xe4 13.Bh4xd8?!**

Playing White, grandmaster Anthony Miles makes the most natural move, taking the enemy queen. He correctly rejected the line 13.Nxe4?! Qxh4 14.Nxd6 cd (or 14...Rad8!?), as leading to a difficult position.

But notice that both sides now have a number of pieces simultaneously *en prise*. These pieces – the white queen among them – are now "desperadoes", capable of any sort of action. Sergei Dolmatov suggested an excellent strengthening of White's play: 13.Qxh6!! gh 14.Bxd8. Here are some possible continuations:

A) 14...Nxc3 15.Rhg1+ Kh7 16.Bf6 Nxa2+!? 17.Bxa2 (17.Kb1?! Rg8 18.Bd3+ Rg6 would be weaker) 17...Bf4+ 18.Kb1 Be5 19.Bxe5 Nxe5 20.f4, followed by 21.Rd7, when White seizes the initiative;

B) 14...Raxd8 15.fe, when Black's position is a little better, but he has no real chance of winning;

C) 14...Bf4+!? 15.Kc2 Nxf2 (Black loses after 15...Nxc3?! 16.Rhg1+ Bg5? 17.Bxg5; and he gets little out of 15...Rfxd8 16.fe Nd4+ 17.Kb1) 16.Rhg1+ Kh7 17.Bf6, and now:

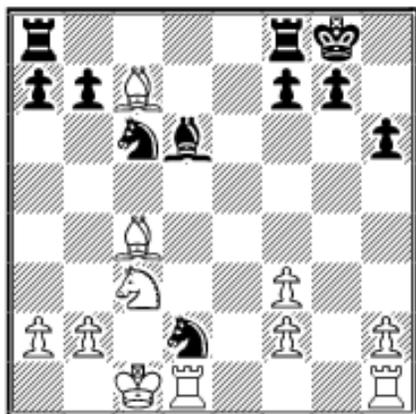
a) 17...Bg5 18.Nd5! Nxd1 19.Bd3+ Kg8 20.Bxg5 hg 21.Rxg5+ Kh8 22.Rh5+ Kg8 (22...Kg7?? 23.Rh7+ Kg8 24.Nf6 mate) 23.Rg5+ is perpetual check;

b) 17...Rg8 18.Rxg8 Rxg8 19.Rd7 gives both sides chances;

c) 17...Be5 18.Nd5! Rg8 19.f4!, and once again, we reach a double-edged endgame where it's nearly impossible to predict the outcome.

### 13...Ne4xd2 14.Bd8xc7!

Otherwise, White remains a pawn down; so, the bishop turns "desperado."



Now Black, it appears, must choose between 14...Nxc4 15.Bxd6 Nxd6 16.Rxd6, or 14...Bxc7 15.Kxd2. In either case, he stands better; but his opponent, who has been able to maintain the material balance, has hopes of saving himself.

On the other hand, several pieces are still *en prise*, so they're "desperadoes," capable of anything. Black found a completely unexpected blow, guaranteeing him a healthy extra pawn.

### 14...Bd6xh2!! 15.Bc7xh2

15.Rxd2 Bxc7 could hardly be called better. And one more "desperado" – 15.Bxf7+ Rxf7 16.Bxh2 – doesn't help: after 16...Nxf3, White is a pawn down again.

### 15...Nd2xc4 16.Rd1-d7 b7-b6

And Black eventually converted the extra pawn.

Oh – and I nearly forgot to tell you who was Black. It was the computer, Deep Thought (the predecessor to Deep Blue, which beat Garry Kasparov in a match). You can understand that, for a computer, with no human habits or prejudices to

shake off, finding a move like 14...Bxh2!! would not be difficult. I hope, after reading this piece, that making similar imaginative decisions will become easier for you, as well.



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