

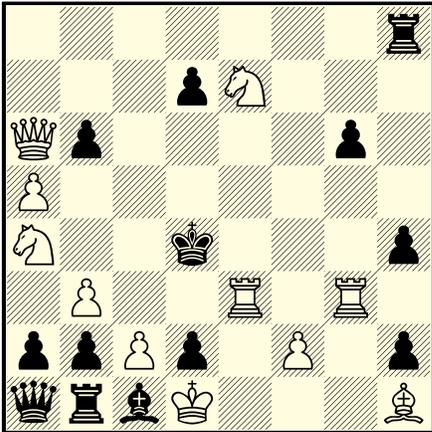
WCCI 2016-2018 – Selfmates selection

All problems appeared originally in December 2018 on Google Sites at:
(<https://sites.google.com/view/mihailoswebsite/mihailos-chess-problems-new>)

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s ≠ 5*[✓] C⁺ 11 + 13

Content:

* Set play (Sp₁)

- 1... ♠b5(x) 2. ♠f3 ~ 3. ♣d6+ ♣xe3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 2... ♣h5 3. ♣d6+ ♣d5 4. ♣xd5 ♣xe3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 2... ♠d5 3. ♣e4+ ♠xe4 4. ♣d6+ ♣xe3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 2... ♣xe3 3. ♣xb6+ ♣f4 4. ♣d6+ ♣e3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠

✓ Thematic try (T₁)

- 1. ♠c4(Z)? ~ 2. ♣e2(W) ~
 - 3. ♣d3+ ♣xd3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 3. ♣g4+ ♣d3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 2... ♠xg3 3. ♣xb6+ ♣d3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 1... ♣f8(p) 2. ♣g4+ ♣f4 3. ♣e2 ~
 - 4. ♣xb6+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 4. ♣xf4+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 3... ♣xe4 4. ♣xe4+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 1... ♠b5(x)! 2. ♣e2(W)? ~ 3. ♣d3+ / ♣g4+
 - 2... ♠xa4(z_t)!
- 1... ♠xg3(y)! 2. ♣e2(W)? ~ 3. ♣xb6+ ♣d3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♣c8/h5 3. ♣xb6+ ♣c5 4. ♣xc5+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♣b8 3. ♣b5! ~ 4. ♣e5+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 3... ♠d5/d6 4. ♣c6+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♠g2(w_t)!

Solution (S₁)

- 1. ♣e2(W)! ~ 2. ♠c4(Z) ~
 - 3. ♣d3+ ♣xd3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 3. ♣g4+ ♣d3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 2... ♠xg3 3. ♣xb6+ ♣d3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 1... ♠b5(x) 2. ♠c4(Z)? ♠xa4(z_t)! ← *first try - threat continuation*
- 1... ♠b5(x) 2. ♣g5? ~ 3. ♠c3+ ♣d3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠ ← *second try - ♣ leaves g3-d3 line*
 - 2... ♠xa4(z_t) 3. ♣d6+ ♣c3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♠b4(z_s)!
- 1... ♠b5(x) 2. ♣f5+(X) ♠xf5 3. ♣g4+ ♠xg4/f4 4. ♠c3+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠ (s₁)**
- 1... ♠xg3(y) 2. ♠c4(Z)? ♠g2(w_t)! ← *first try - threat continuation*
- 1... ♠xg3(y) 2. ♣a8? ~ 3. ♠c3+ ♣d3 4. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠ ← *second try - ♣ leaves a6-d3 line*
 - 2... ♣c8 3. ♠c3+ ♣xc3 4. ♣h8+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♠xf2(w_s)!
- 1... ♠xg3(y) 2. ♣c6+(Y) ♠xc6 3. ♣xb6+ ♠c5 4. ♠c3+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠ (s₂)**
- 1... ♣b8(q) 2. ♣a7? waiting/zugzwang ← *waiting try*
 - 2... ♣b8 ~ 3. ♠c4 ~ 4. ♣d3+ / ♣g4+ ♣(x)d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 3... ♠xg3 4. ♣xb6+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♣c8 3. ♠c3+(Q) ♣c3 4. ♣g4+(R) ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♣f8 3. ♣g4+(R) ♣f4 4. ♠c3+(Q) ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♠g ~ 3. ♠c4 (~ 4. ♣d3+ / ♣g4+) ♠xg3 4. ♣f5+(X) ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♠d ~ 3. ♠c4 (~ 4. ♣d3+ / ♣g4+) ♠xg3 4. ♣c6+(Y) ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♠h ~ (♠h3) 3. ♠c4 (~ 4. ♣d3+ / ♣g4+) ♣f8 4. ♣d3+ ♣xd3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♠xg3 3. ♣xb6+ ♣xb6 4. ♠c3+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♣b7!
- 1... ♣b8(q) 2. ♠c4(Z) ~ 3. ♣d3+ / ♣g4+ ♣(x)d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 2... ♠xg3 3. ♣b5! (~ 4. ♣e5+) ♠d5/d6 4. ♣c6+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 1... ♣f8(p) 2. ♠c4?(Z) ♣xf2!
- 1... ♣f8(p) 2. ♣g4+ ♣f4 3. ♠c4 ~
 - 4. ♣xb6+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
 - 4. ♣xf4+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠
- 3... ♣e4 4. ♣gxe4+ ♣d3 5. ♣xd2+ ♠xd2≠

Comment is on the next page. →

Comment: The problem has three main thematic phases: the set play (\mathbf{Sp}_1), thematic try (\mathbf{T}_1), and the solution (\mathbf{S}_1). There are two key black thematic moves $1... \text{♠b5}(x)$ and $1... \text{♠xg3}(y)$ and a substantial portion of the problem's content revolves around them. Namely, in the set play there is a set continuation after $1... \text{♠b5}(x)$, in the thematic try both of these moves turn out to be the refutations, and in the solution two of the three main complexes happen after these moves are played. As the problem is full of very quiet, strategic play the role of these moves in any of the thematic phases will require a bit of more detailed analysis which is provided below.

Main thematic phases:

1. Set play (\mathbf{Sp}_1)

After black plays $1... \text{♠b5}(x)$ in the initial position there is a nice $s \neq 4$ with a very *quiet flight-giving sacrificial* key $2. \text{♙e3}!$ A bit shorter threat is then extended to the full length after $2... \text{♞h5}$. There are also two nice variants $1... \text{♠d5}$ and $1... \text{♞xe3}$ where ♞e3 is sacrificed both actively and passively and white still manages to find a path for ♞ to get to d6 and eventually to d2.

Looking at the initial position it seems rather clear that if the battery from the first row is to play it will highly likely have to be via d2. The most promising path for getting black in a position to enable such a battery-opening is to somehow force ♞ to the third row. There are of course three squares on the third row that are the best candidates for the ♞ 's arrival: c3, d3, and e3. The above variant of the set play contains the play where ♞ is forced to e3 which is, as mentioned above, done through a flight-giving move $2. \text{♙e3}$ followed either by a passive sacrifice of ♞e3 (♞ simply captures it) or by its an active sacrifice via $3. \text{♞e4+}$ after $2... \text{♠d5}$. Now, if one looks at the three squares c3, d3, and e3 in the initial position, the one that's guarded the least is exactly the e3 (e3 is guarded by ♙f2 and ♞g3 , c3 is guarded by ♘a4 , ♞e3 , and indirectly by ♞g3 , while d3 is guarded by ♙c2 , ♞a6 , ♞e3 , and indirectly by ♞g3) and from such a standpoint it is a no surprise that the white strategy revolved around getting ♞ to move to e3. However, as we will see below, contrary to this intuition, in the thematic try and the solution the white strategy will be exactly opposite and it will revolve around getting ♞ to arrive on d3.

2. Thematic try (\mathbf{T}_1)

The thematic try actually shows some of the main ideas composed in the problem. However, it will fail due to an incorrect selection of the order of white's first and second moves. Before getting to that one should start with the explanation of the main plan and the strategic components needed for its a realization. The main plan of course is to get ♞ on d3. The crucial strategic components are: 1) the recognition that the key white thematic pieces are ♞a6 and ♞g3 (not the other two, ♙c2 and ♞e3 , that also guard d3); and 2) the recognition that the strategy of freeing the d3 square will actually center around the removal of ♞ from the a6-d3 line and the removal of ♞g3 from the g3-d3 line. Once this thing is established it is clear that the removal of ♙c2 and ♞e3 is only of a technical nature and will be a part of the mechanism in a supporting fashion. However, the way how ♙c2 and ♞e3 relinquish the control of d3 is precisely where the distinction between the try and the solution appears and what eventually serves as the source of the core ideas behind many key variants played in this problem.

So, to relinquish the control of d3 the following two moves by ♙c2 and ♞e3 , $\text{♙c4}(Z)$ and $\text{♞e2}(W)$ will be considered. In the try white first goes with their an incorrect order, i.e. it starts with $1. \text{♙c4}(Z)?$ and follows that with a threat $2. \text{♞e2}(W) \sim 3. \text{♞d3+}/\text{♞g4+} \text{♞d3} 4. \text{♞xd2+} \text{♞xd2}\neq$. One should note that in this portion of the threat there is only the removal of ♞g3 from the d3-g3 line from the above mentioned crucial strategic components. In other words, ♞a6 does not need to be removed because white's first move $1. \text{♙c4}(Z)?$ closes a6-d3 line and already achieves the same effect the ♞ 's removal would have achieved. However, after $2... \text{♠xg3}$ we have a clearing of the double-threat and $3. \text{♞xb6+}$ indeed has the ♞ removed from the a6-d3 line (although, as just mentioned, this is now not really needed from the point of view of relinquishing the control of d3). While $2... \text{♠xg3}$ is a clearing defense, it is a defense against white's third move. Black actually has three defenses against the threat that can be played right after white plays $1. \text{♙c4}(Z)$. These defenses are: $1... \text{♞f8}(p)$, $1... \text{♠b5}(x)$, and $1... \text{♠xg3}(y)$. Below we take a bit closer look into each of these defenses.

*) $1... \text{f8(p)}$: Black also has a nice move $1... \text{f8(p)}$ which eventually in a quiet way defends against $2. \text{e2(W)}$ via $2... \text{xf2}$! While it defends against $2. \text{e2(W)}$ it also allows for $2. \text{g4+}$ and after $2... \text{f4}$ white continues with $3. \text{e2(W)}$ ($\sim 4. \text{xb6+ / f4+}$) xe4 $4. \text{xe4+ d3}$ $5. \text{xd2+ xd2}\neq$ (this also establishes a *reciprocal* change of white's second and third moves from the threatening line that goes through $3. \text{g4}$; however, due to the double threat in the third move, $3. \text{d3+ / g4+}$, there isn't really a need to put too much emphasis on this).

Refuting the try

Now, the try is refuted by both $1... \text{b5(x)}$ and $1... \text{xg3(y)}$. However there is a nice strategy behind these refutations and we will briefly look at each of them separately.

*) $1... \text{b5(x)}$: One first recognizes that $1... \text{b5(x)}$ doesn't defend directly against the threat but rather in a subtle way. Namely, after $1... \text{b5(x)}$ the threat $2. \text{e2(W)} \sim 3. \text{d3+ / g4+}$ doesn't work because after $2... \text{xa4}$ the squares c3 and c5 are not guarded anymore.

*) $1... \text{xg3(y)}$: Contrary to $1... \text{b5(x)}$ (which, as explained above, is not a direct defense against the threat), $1... \text{xg3(y)}$ is a direct defense against the threat as the moves $3. \text{d3+ / g4+}$ are not possible. However, white can still proceed with the clearing version of the threat $2. \text{e2(W)} \sim 3. \text{xb6+}$ which after $2... \text{c8 / h5}$ even extends to the full length, i.e. $2. \text{e2(W)} \text{c8/h5}$ $3. \text{xb6+ c5}$ $4. \text{xc5+ d3}$ $5. \text{xd2+ xd2}\neq$. Moreover, after $2... \text{b8}$ white has even more beautiful quiet continuation $3. \text{b5!} \sim 4. \text{e5+ d5 / d6}$ $4. \text{c6+}$. Still, $2... \text{g2!}$ finally refutes the threat as after $2... \text{g2!}$ $3. \text{xb6+ d3}$ $4. \text{xd2+}$ the white bishop h1-e4 line is closed and the black king can escape via $4... \text{e4!}$

One should also note a nice geometric and strategic *reciprocally inharmonic* play of black pawns b6 and h4. Namely, b6 first moves down *orthogonally* on the *diagonal* c line a6-d3 and then captures *diagonally* on a4 to enable eventual escape of c via c3 or c5. On the other hand, h4 first captures *diagonally* on the *orthogonal* g line g3-d3 and then moves down *orthogonally* on g2 to enable eventual escape of c via e4.

3. Solution (S₁)

In the solution white applies the same strategy as in the try (T_1) with the only difference being the order of white's first and second move. Now, white starts with $1. \text{e2(W)}$ and threatens $2. \text{c4(Z)} \sim 3. \text{d3+ / g4+}$ d3 $4. \text{xd2+ xd2}\neq$. Black again has the same three defenses as in the try ($1... \text{f8(p)}$, $1... \text{b5(x)}$, and $1... \text{xg3(y)}$). As it will turn out, there will also be a fourth move by black, namely $1... \text{b8(q)}$, that will introduce a plenty of interesting play as well. Below we take a bit closer look into each of these defenses with the exception of $1... \text{f8(p)}$ (the reason $1... \text{f8(p)}$ is excluded is because its an analysis is essentially no different from the corresponding one given in the above discussion of the thematic try (T_1)). The position after each of the three defenses $1... \text{b5(x)}$, $1... \text{xg3(y)}$, and $1... \text{b8(q)}$, will effectively be a separate $s \neq 4$ with thematic tries and the solution. Each of these $s \neq 4$ will be analyzed below as separate complexes.

*) Position after $1. \text{e2(W)}! \text{b5(x)} \leftarrow$ **Complex 1** (effectively a separate $s \neq 4$)

Now, obviously after $1. \text{e2(W)}! \text{b5(x)}$ is played one can view the resulting position as a separate $s \neq 4$. This $s \neq 4$ has two thematic tries and the solution.

- The first try would obviously be to continue with the threat itself, i.e. $2. \text{c4(Z)} \sim 3. \text{d3+ / g4+}$. However, this quiet attempt fails for the same reason it failed in the try (T_1), i.e. after $2... \text{xa4(z}_t)$ the squares c3 and c5 are not guarded anymore.
- The second try is an upgrade compared to the corresponding play in the try (T_1) after $1. \text{c4(Z)} \text{b5(x)}$. Namely, white now has an additional quiet play $2. \text{g5}$ with a threat $3. \text{c3+ d3}$ $4. \text{xd2+ xd2}\neq$. This threat can be defended with the reappearance of $2... \text{xa4(z}_t)$ (which, as mention above, refuted the first try, i.e. the original threatening continuation). However, white has a new continuation which utilizes the now unguarded square c3, $3. \text{d6+ c3}$ $4. \text{xd2+ xd2}\neq$. Still, $2. \text{g5}$ eventually fails because black can play the other move by the b5 pawn, i.e. it can play $2... \text{b4(z}_s)$!

- After the two failing quiet tries, white finally has a successful strategy as well. It goes through 2. ♖f5+(X) ♗xf5 3. ♖g4+ ♗xg4/f4 4. ♖c3+ ♖d3 5. ♖xd2+ ♗xd2≠. The main idea is to get ♗g6 (via a sacrifice of the ♖e7) to guard the checking by the white rook on the fourth row. That way white can finally utilize the key weakness of 1... ♗b5(x), namely the closing of the b6-d3 ♖ line. One now also recognizes the main reason why 1. ♖e2(W)! works whereas 1. ♖c4(Z)? doesn't. Here after the white rook checks on the fourth row, white can remove the last piece guarding d3, the ♖c2, via a check 4. ♖c3+ and then there is still a ♖ on e2 to finally force the opening of the black first-row battery. On the other hand, in the try (T₁), after 1. ♖c4(Z)? 1... ♗b5(x), the above continuation 2. ♖f5+(X) ♗xf5 3. ♖g4+ ♗xg4/f4 fails. Namely, white still has the other technical piece ♖e3 available to check via say 4. ♖e4+ (this move would be an analogue to the above 4. ♖c3+) but after 4... ♖d3 the white pawn from c4 (or for that matter any other white piece) can't force the opening of the black battery.

*) Position after 1. ♖e2(W)! ♗xg3(y) ← **Complex 2** (effectively another separate s ≠ 4)

Similarly to what happened in **Complex 1**, after 1. ♖e2(W)! ♗xg2(y) is played one can again view the resulting position as a separate s ≠ 4. This s ≠ 4 also has two thematic tries and the solution.

- As in **Complex 1**, the first try would be to continue with the threat itself, i.e. with 2. ♖c4(Z). However, since ♖ is captured on g3 white continues as in the try (T₁) with a clearing version of the threat ~ 3. ♖xb6+ ♖d3 4. ♖xd2+ ♗xd2≠, which is after 2... ♖c8/♖h5 extended to the full length and after 2... ♖b8 further refined via 3. ♖b5! ♗d5/♗d6 4. ♖c6+ ♖d3 5. ♖xd2 ♗xd2≠. This attempt fails for the same reason it failed in the try (T₁), i.e. after 2... ♗g2(w_t) the square e4 is not guarded anymore.
- Again as in **Complex 1**, one has the second try as an upgrade compared to the corresponding play in the try (T₁) after 1. ♖c4(Z) ♗xg3(y). The strategy of the try is analogous to the strategy in the second try of **Complex 1**. In the second try of **Complex 1** white moves one of the thematic pieces, ♖g3, away from the g3-d3 line to utilize the fact that 1... ♗b5(x) neutralized the guarding of d3 by the other white thematic piece, i.e. ♖, via the a6-d3 line. Here, white plays in a *conceptually reciprocal* fashion 2. ♖a8 and moves the queen away from the a6-d3 line to utilize the fact that 1... ♗xg3(y) neutralized the ♖g3's guarding of d3 via the g3-d3 line. The remaining part of the threat 3. ♖c3+ ♖d3 4. ♖xd2+ ♗xd2≠ is obviously the same as in the second try of **Complex 1**. Black then defends against this threat via an *anti-Bristol* 2... ♖c8 and after 3. ♖c3+ ♖c3 the eighth row is cleared and white can continue with 4. ♖h8+ ♖d3 5. ♖xd2+ ♗xd2≠. Still, 2. ♖a8 eventually fails because black can play the other move by the g3 pawn, 2... ♗xf2(w_s)!, and the main plan 3. ♖g4+ ♗xg4/f4 4. ♖c3+ ♖d3 5. ♖xd2+ ♗xd2≠ doesn't work as the escape of the black king via freed e3 square, 5... ♖e3, is possible as well.
- As in **Complex 1**, the two failing quiet tries, are eventually followed by a successful white strategy. The strategy is perfectly analogous to the successful strategy in **Complex 1**. It goes through 2. ♖c6+(Y) ♗xc6 3. ♖xb6+ ♗c5 4. ♖c3+ ♖d3 5. ♖xd2+ ♗xd2≠. The main idea is to get ♗d7 (via another sacrifice of the ♖e7) to guard the checking by the white queen on the diagonal b6-d4. This effectively enables white to utilize the key weakness of 1... ♗xg3(y), which is neutralizing the ♖g3's guarding of d3 square via the g3-d3 line. As in the successful strategy of **Complex 1**, here one can also see why 1. ♖e2(W)! is a better choice than 1. ♖c4(Z). After the white queen checks on the b6-d4 diagonal, white can via a check 4. ♖c3+ fully relinquish the control of d3 while still having ♖ on e2 available to finally force opening of the black first-row battery. On the other hand, in the try (T₁), after 1. ♖c4(Z)? ♗xg3(y), the above conceptual continuation 2. ♖c6+(Y) ♗xc6 3. ♖b6+ ♗c5 fails as after 4. ♖e4 ♖d3 the white pawn from c4 again can't force the opening of the black battery. One should also add that since the white pawn on c4 closes a6-d3 ♖ line the above conceptual continuation with the removal of the ♖ from the a6-d3 line wouldn't be needed unless one insists that ♖c4 (and not any other white piece) is to be used in forcing the opening of the black battery. Of course, ♖c4 is to be used if one is to establish a perfect conceptual analogy between **Complex 1** and **Complex 2**.

★) Position after 1. ♖e2(W)! ♜b8(q) ← **Complex 3** (effectively another separate s ≠ 4)

Similarly to what happened above in **Complex 1** and **Complex 2**, after 1. ♖e2(W)! ♜b8(q) is played one can again view the resulting position as a separate s ≠ 4. This s ≠ 4 has one thematic try and the solution. However, this time things are reversed compared to **Complex 1** and **Complex 2**. Namely, in these two complexes the original threat was not working (in fact, it was a carefully refuted try) and other successful white strategies needed to be designed. Here, the threat will turn out to work and the additional try will be possibly even more beautiful than the second tries in **Complex 1** and **Complex 2**.

- After 1. ♖e2(W)! ♜b8(q), white can play a quiet move 2. ♗a7 which turns out to be almost good enough. Namely, after 2. ♗a7 there is no any particular threat and the move seems as of no use. However, once one starts examining what happens after black plays its possible second moves it turns out that after all but one of these moves white can actually come up with a successful strategy. For example, 2... ♜~ reactivates the threat 3. ♖c4(Z) as after 3... ♜xg3(y) capturing ♜b6 via 4. ♗xb6+ is possible. Two precise *corrective* moves by ♜b8, 2... ♜c8 and 2... ♜f8, defend against this threat reactivation but enable another two continuations with *reciprocally* exchanged white's *third* and *fourth* moves, 3. ♖c3+(Q) ♜c3 4. ♜g4+(R) ♜d3 5. ♜xd2+ ♜xd2≠ and 3. ♜g4+(R) ♜f4 4. ♖c3+(Q) ♜d3 5. ♜xd2+ ♜xd2≠, respectively.

Moves by the thematic black pawns, 2... ♜d~ and 2... ♜g~ also reactivate the threat 3. ♖c4(Z) as now after 3... ♜xg3(y) white can continue with 4. ♜c6+(X) and 4. ♜f5+(Y), respectively. This effectively reintroduces two white's *second* moves from the main thematic lines (s₁) and (s₂) as the *fourth* moves in this waiting/zugzwang complex.

Finally, after 2... ♜h~(♜h3) the threat 3. ♖c4(Z) can be reactivated again. Its a *corrective* version 2... ♜xg3(y) defends against the threat reactivation but enables another interesting variant 3. ♗xb6+ ♜xb6 4. ♖c3+ ♜d3 5. ♜xd2+ ♜xd2≠.

Since after 2. ♗a7 the ♜b6 is pinned seemingly mates are provided on all black moves. The sole exception though turns out to be another *corrective* move by ♜b8, 2... ♜b7! which then is the refutation of this *waiting/zugzwang* completely *dual-free* s ≠ 4 try.

- The above failing quiet try is again followed by a successful white strategy. It basically goes through the main threat 2. ♖c4(Z) and after 2... ♜xg3 white now can play quietly 3. ♗b5! with the threat ~ 4. ♗e5+ ♜d3 5. ♜xd2 ♜xd2≠ (this threat of course is not possible when ♜ is on h8 as then 3... ♜h5! would refute it). After 3... ♜d5/d6 white continues 4. ♜c6+ ♜d3 5. ♜xd2+ ♜xd2≠. Both of these lines are obviously of the full 5-move length. This basically means that not only does the 1... ♜b8(q) introduce these two new lines and the above beautiful waiting/zugzwang try it also effectively serves as a way to extend the somewhat shortened 4-move threat to its a full 5-move long variant.

Technical comments:

There are quite a few details regarding the conception of the mechanism and its a practical realization that are worth of being highlighted separately.

First, one should observe the economy and the choice of the key thematic pieces. Clearly, the two key white thematic pieces are ♗b6 and ♜g3. The three supporting white pieces are ♖c2, ♜e3, and ♜e7. The whole black strategy is basically governed by only one strong piece, ♜h8, and by four black pawns, ♜h4, ♜d7, and ♜g6.

Second, there are four white lines that play the key role in the entire mechanism. These are diagonal lines a6-d3 and b6-d4 and orthogonal lines g3-d3 and g4-d4. Obviously the first two are utilized by the ♗ and the last two by the ♜g3. One should also note that the play in the two main thematic lines (s₁) and (s₂) in the solution (effectively white's successful strategies in **Complex 1** and **Complex 2**) is fairly analogous with a high degree of *diagonal/orthogonal* harmony and contains the *reciprocally* exchanged roles of ♗a6 and ♜g3 as well as the *reciprocally* exchanged roles of lines a6-d3 and g3-d3.

Geometry

Finally, one of the most important elements is the choice of the geometry. Quite a lot of effort was put forth to achieve all the geometric features present in the problem and it is only fitting to highlight them at the

end of this analysis as probably the most artistic portions of the problem. One, of course, starts by noticing the diagonal utilization of ♖a6 on the a6-d3 line and the corresponding orthogonal utilization of ♜g3 on the g3-d3 line. These two lines are complemented with the utilization of the *immediately adjacent* lines b6-d4 and g4-d4 in many of the problem's variants (with this complementing being of an especially analogous nature in the main thematic lines (s₁) and (s₂)). It should also be noted that two of the supporting white pieces, ♖c2 and ♜e3, guard the d3 square in the initial position in an also diagonal/orthogonal fashion (this time via short lines, diagonal c2-d3 and orthogonal e3-d3). Moreover, their moves, ♖c3+ and ♜e4+ that highlight the conceptional reasoning for avoiding the reversed order of white's first and second moves (1. ♜e2(W) and 2. ♖c4(Z)) also contain the *adjacent type of shift* of these short lines to diagonal line c3-d4 and orthogonal line e4-d4. This type of shift is geometrically fairly similar to the way the moves ♖xb6+ and ♜g4+ shift the play from lines a6-d3 and g3-d3 to lines b6-d4 and g4-d4, respectively.

Another thing that shouldn't necessarily go without being emphasized is the maximal utilization of all of the board's four corners. First, ♔ is on a1 to strengthen the battery since there is a lot of quiet play and the presence of black's battery on the first row needs to be reassured. The ♙ on h1 is conveniently located so that 2... ♗g2(w_t) can be played and the closing of the bishop line can be utilized to refute one of the continuations after 1... ♗xg3(y) in both, the main thematic try (T₁) and the solution (S₁). Finally, the second try in *Complex 2*, 2. ♖a8?, and the ensuing *anti-Bristol* clearance on the eighth row (♜ moves from h8 to c8) to eventually enable 4. ♖h8+ is quite likely the most artistic of all of the board's corners/edges utilizations (although one may not necessarily be willing to underestimate the artistic aspects of the utilization of the middle portion of the board either, especially of the 4 × 4 rectangle c3-f3-f6-c6 where ♔ resides *completely alone* after the key 1. ♜e2(W)!).

Finally, the play of ♗b6 and ♗h4 is left for the very end of this geometric discussion as it is probably the pinnacle of all the geometric effects. This problem could not be considered complete until the full *geometric harmony* (or its a *reciprocal* absence) in the play of these pawns wasn't achieved. These two pawns play the first black moves in both, *Complex 1* and *Complex 2*. In *Complex 1* it is the *orthogonal* 1... ♗b5(x) whereas in *Complex 2* it is the *diagonal* 1... ♗xg3(y). The first one acts on the *diagonal* line a6-d3 whereas the second one acts on the *orthogonal* line g3-d3. In *Complex 1* the first pawn then refutes the first try (basically the threatening continuation 2. ♖c4(Z)) via a *diagonal* move 2... ♗xa4(z_t). At the same time, in *Complex 2* the second pawn refutes this complex' first try (basically again the threatening continuation 2. ♖c4(Z)) via an *orthogonal* move 2... ♗g2(w_t). While all of this is also contained in the thematic try (T₁), the final point comes in the solution when one looks at the second tries of *Complexes 1 and 2* (these second tries are of course one of the two key conceptual upgrades compared to the main thematic try (T₁); the other one obviously being white's successful strategies contained in the main thematic lines, (s₁) and (s₂)). Namely, in *Complex 1* the first pawn then also refutes the second try of this complex 2. ♜g5?; this time though it is via an *orthogonal* move 2... ♗b4(z_s). At the same time, in *Complex 2* the second pawn refutes this complex' second try 2. ♖a8?; this time though it is via a *diagonal* move 2... ♗xf2(w_s).

<i>Reciprocal diagonal/orthogonal geometry in the play of the pawns from b6 and h4</i>			
		<i>Complex 1</i>	<i>Complex 2</i>
Black first move		1... ♗b5(x) <i>orthogonal</i>	1... ♗xg3(y) <i>diagonal</i>
First try	White second move	2. ♖c4(Z)?	2. ♖c4(Z)?
	Black second move	2... ♗xa4(z _t)! <i>diagonal</i>	2... ♗g2(w _t)! <i>orthogonal</i>
Second try	White second move	2. ♜g5?	2. ♖a8?
	Black second move	2... ♗b4(z _s)! <i>orthogonal</i>	2... ♗xf2(w _s)! <i>diagonal</i>

This *reciprocal* diagonal/orthogonal geometry in the play of the pawns from b6 and h4 is schematically shown in the above table. Finally, one should also add that both tries in both of the complexes end up being refuted by the second black moves played by the same pawn on two adjacent squares. In *Complex 1* the refuting second black moves are 2... ♗xa4(z_t) and 2... ♗b4(z_s) and are played by the same b6 pawn on the *adjacent* squares a4 and b4. In *Complex 2* the refuting second black moves are 2... ♗g2(w_t) and 2... ♗xf2(w_s) and are played by the same h4 pawn on the *adjacent* squares g2 and f2.

hand $1... \text{♖g6}(q_3)$ enables $2. \text{♜c4+}$ and after $2... \text{♝d3}$ $3. \text{♞e4+}$ ♖xe4 , ♖ is again on the opened e-file and the switchback move by the ♞g2 can again force the mate on e1. Looking carefully at the logic behind this thematic line one observes that ♖ maintains the presence on the e-file by basically going around the ♞e6 via the shortest possible route (e8-g6-e4). This in a way nicely complements the main strategy of opening the e-file by forcing the ♞e6 to move away (the $1... \text{♖g6}$ actually defends against this strategy). Basically, while the black queen is trying to escape the e-file white uses the location where the ♖ arrives (the square g6) and the time needed to open the e-file to bring the ♖ back on the part of the e-file that's already opened.

The thematic try is conveniently refuted by a fairly quiet move $1... \text{♖c8}(q_0)$ which in a way is also a corrective move. Namely, as mentioned above, the thematic continuation (t_1) is refuted by a random move $1... \text{♖~}$ after which only the second continuation (t_2) works. However, to ensure that (t_2) doesn't work either another precise move by the black queen, namely, precisely $1... \text{♖c8}(q_0)$, can be utilized. After $2. \text{♜d3+}$ $3. \text{♖xc2+}$ $4. \text{♝d4}$, white now cannot play $4. \text{♖e4+}??$ since the ♖ on c2 is *pinned* by the ♝ from c8! Also, the thematic continuation from the set play doesn't work either as there is no ♞ on e1 to support it.

2. Solution (S₁)

In the solution $1. \text{♜g3}!$ the threat (s_0) and the thematic line (s_3) show a *reciprocally* changed white *second* and *third* moves (the order $2. \text{♜xg4+}(X)$ and $3. \text{♞f3+}(Y)$ in (s_0) is replaced by its a *reciprocal* version $2. \text{♞f3+}(Y)$ and $3. \text{♜g4+}(X)$ in (s_3)). Moreover, in the thematic line (s_3) the black thematic moves $1... \text{♜xh3}(q_4)$ and $1... \text{♜xh6}(q_5)$ (as well as any other move by the ♜h4) are followed by $2. \text{♞f3+}(Y)$. These moves are followed by $2. \text{♞f5+}(Z)$ and $2. \text{♜d3+}(W)$, respectively in the thematic try, which means that one also has *2+1 changed white continuations (mates)*.

The two main thematic lines (s_1) and (s_2) show a fully analogous play that relies on the following strategic elements: 1) first the black queen arrives behind a pawn (on f7 and behind ♞e6 in (s_1) and on h5 and behind ♞g5 in (s_2)) to form masked lines f7-c4 and h5-c5; 2) white then sacrifices ♞ on f5 in (s_1) and ♜ on f4 in (s_2) to force the pawns e6 and g5 to open these masked lines; and 3) white then finally sacrifices ♖ on c4 in (s_1) and on c5 in (s_2) to force the ♖ to reach the c-file and eventually enable the sacrifice of the ♞ from e1 on c2.

One now easily recognizes the main idea of the entire complex, namely the same strategic element – *removing black pawn from the thematic lines to enable black thematic line piece to move along the line* – appears *doubled* in both, the thematic try $1. \text{♞g2}?$ and the solution $1. \text{♜g3}!$. However, the key point is in the difference of the realization of this strategic element. Namely, in the try in (t_1) and (t_2) the lines e8-e1 and b1-e4 already exist in the initial position, whereas in the solution in (s_1) and (s_2) the lines f7-c4 and h5-c5 are in a way *anticipated*, i.e. they don't exist in the position itself but are rather created through the black queen's first moves $1... \text{♖f7}(q_1)$ and $1... \text{♖h5}(q_2)$. Moreover, the moves along the opened lines are the mating moves in the try and so to say mate-supporting moves in the solution (of course, one should note that $4... \text{♖c2}$ also mates in the two main thematic lines in the solution; however, it is rather clear from the mechanism itself that white main strategy in these thematic lines is to get the ♖ on the c-file so that the c2 square is guarded and that the battery from the first row can be utilized).

5 changed white second move continuations			
Black first move	White second move continuation		Type of change
	Thematic try $1. \text{♞g2}?$	Solution $1. \text{♜g3}!$	
$1... \text{♖f7}(q_1)$	$2. \text{♜d3+}(W)$	$2. \text{♞f5+}(Z)$	1+2 changes
$1... \text{♖h5}(q_2)$	$2. \text{♜d3+}(W)$	$2. \text{♜f4+}(R)$	
$1... \text{♖g6}(q_3)$	$2. \text{♜c4+}(Q)$	$2. \text{♜xg4+}(X)$	1+1 change
$1... \text{♜xh3}(q_4)$	$2. \text{♞f5+}(Z)$	$2. \text{♞f3+}(Y)$	2+1 changes
$1... \text{♜xh6}(q_5)$	$2. \text{♜d3+}(W)$	$2. \text{♞f3+}(Y)$	

Finally, one should also note that the random move by the ♖ in the thematic try (which as mentioned above can also serve as a threats separator as it is followed only by $2. \text{♜d3+}(W)$, i.e. only

by the thematic line (t_2) includes $1...♖f7(q_1)$ and $1...♗h5(q_2)$ as two particular moves. Given that these moves are followed by $2.♘f5+(Z)$ and $2.♙f4+(R)$, respectively in the solution one then again has another **1+2 changed continuations (mates)**. Moreover, the corrective move $1...♗g6(q_2)$ is followed by $2.♙c4+(Q)$ in the try and by the threat $2.♙xg4+(X)$ in the solution which establishes one additional **changed white continuation (mate)**. Overall, as shown in the table above, after five black thematic moves $1...♖f7(q_1)$, $1...♗h5(q_2)$, $1...♗g6(q_3)$, $1...♙xh3(q_4)$, and $1...♙xh6(q_5)$ there are in total **5 changed second white move continuations** between the thematic try and the solution.

There are so to say **three full changes** after black moves $1...♗h5(q_2)$, $1...♗g6(q_3)$, and $1...♙xh3(q_4)$ and two additional changes after $1...♖f7(q_1)$ and $1...♙xh6(q_5)$ that are in the form of so to say **reduced changes**. Moreover, there are three different white continuations $2.♙d3+(W)$, $2.♙c4+(Q)$, and $2.♘f5+(Z)$ in the thematic try (they follow the above mentioned three black defenses $1...♗h5(q_2)$, $1...♗g6(q_3)$, and $1...♙xh3(q_4)$, respectively) and there are four different ones $2.♙f4+(R)$, $2.♙g4+(X)$, $2.♘f3+(Y)$, and $2.♘f5+(Z)$ in the solution (the first three of course follow the same black defenses $1...♗h5(q_2)$, $1...♗g6(q_3)$, and $1...♙xh3(q_4)$ in the solution). One of those four white continuation moves from the solution, namely the fourth one $2.♘f5+(Z)$, is actually even **transferred** from the set of the three try's continuations.

Technical comments:

There are of course quite a few additional technical details that complement the main content. For example, in the try $1.♘g2?$, black thematic defenses $1...♙h3(q_4)$ and $1...♙xh6(q_5)$ separate the two threats. It is interesting to note that once the $♙h4$ moves it actually leaves the fourth row and there is no longer the option for black to control the e4 square by moving the g4-pawn and opening the h4-e4 line. That means that $1...♙h3(q_4)$ and $1...♙xh6(q_5)$ could conceivably also be followed by a nice quiet continuation $2.♙e3$ with a threat $3.♙e4+♖d3$ $4.♗xc2$ $♙xc2≠$. However, the only reason why such a quiet strategy isn't working and ultimately why the duals on $1...♙h3(q_4)$ and $1...♙xh6(q_5)$ in the try are avoided is the reappearance of another black thematic move, namely $2...♗g6(q_3)$!

In the solution the main strategy of white's threatening attack assumes getting $♖$ on d3. To do so both, $♙$ from the third row and $♘e1$ should relinquish the control of this square. In the first part of that strategy one recognizes the **Indian anticritical** key $1.♙g3!$ In the second part white has two options: 1) to utilize this **Indian** move via $2.♘xg4 \sim 3.♘f3+♖d3$ $4.♗xc2+♙xc2≠$ and 2) to capture $♙g4$ via $2.♙xg4$ which simultaneously ensures that the rook is off the third row and the square f3 is no longer under the $♙g4$ attack so that $3.♘f3+(Y)$ can be played. Only the second option turns out to work while the first one is refuted again by another one of black thematic moves, $2...♖f7(q_1)$! Of course, $2.♘xg4$ does not work because once the knight leaves h6 it can't reach f5 anymore and the thematic continuation that follows $1...♖f7(q_1)$ ($2.♘f5+(Z)$ and so on) can't be played. This in a way leaves the Indian anticritical element of the key $1.♙g3!$ as unused. However, after black plays $1...♙\sim$ in the solution, white finally has the opportunity to play $2.♘f3+(Y)$ and then after $2...♖d3$ to quickly continue with $3.♗xc2+♙xc2≠$ or after $2...♙xg4$ to complete the reciprocal reversal of the second and third moves from the threat by continuing with $3.♙xg4+(X)$ $♖d3$ $3.♗xc2+♙xc2≠$ (the first of these two continuations of course shows the **Indian anticritical** in its full power).

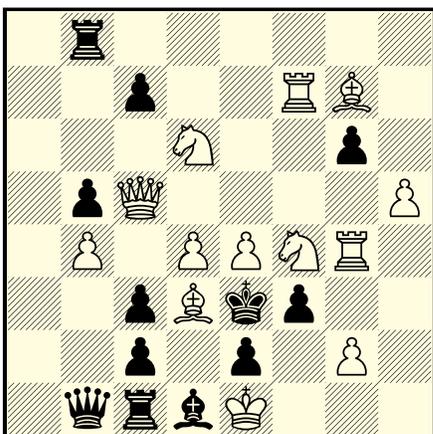
Another pair of interesting technical details is present in the choice of thematic defenses in the solution. Namely, both black moves $1...♖f7(q_1)$ and $1...♗h5(q_2)$ are defenses because the threat $2.♙xg4+(X)$ can't work. The reasons why these moves can not be followed by the threat are in a way **reciprocally exchanged** roles of $♖$ and $♙h4$. For example, if after $1...♖f7(q_1)$ white continues with $2.♙xg4+(X)$ then on the defending move by the $♖$, namely $2...♖f4$ the threat can materialize. However, after the defending move by the $♙h4$, namely $2...♙xg4!$ white can't proceed with the threat anymore as $3.♘f3$ would be followed by $3...♖xf3!$ On the other hand, if after $1...♗h5(q_2)$ white continues with $2.♙xg4+(X)$ then on the defending move by the $♙h4$, namely $2...♙xg4$ the remaining part of the threat can materialize. However, after the defending move by the $♖$, namely $2...♖xg4!$ white can't proceed with the threat anymore as $3.♘f3$ would be followed again by $3...♖xf3!$ This of course, ensures that $1...♖f7(q_1)$ and $1...♗h5(q_2)$ are indeed defenses and at the same time in a way underlines the point that their defensive effects are substantially different. Namely, $1...♖f7(q_1)$ defends against white's third move from the threat, i.e. against $3.♘f3+(Y)$ whereas $1...♗h5(q_2)$ defends against white's second move from the threat, i.e. against $2.♙xg4+(X)$.

There is also another nice detail that happens after black plays $1...♙h5$ in the solution. Given that the

role of this move can be viewed as the role of $1...♖h5(q_2)$ (i.e. as the arrival of the black line piece behind the ♗g5 and forming of the masked line h5-c5) one may expect that it should be followed by the same white continuation that follows $1...♖h5(q_2)$. However, this time $2...♜f4+(R)? ♗xf4$ $3...♜c5+ ♜xc5$ $4...♞xc2+ ♜xc2≠$ doesn't work as black can also play $4...♜xc2+!$ and now the white king can escape the mate through $5...♞d1!$ This is of course an interesting small complementary detail when viewed as a part of the overall strategy and content of the problem. However, it is one of the key constructional details as it enables $2...♞f3+(Y)$ to be the sole continuation after $1...♜~$ and ultimately ensures that the duals on all the moves by $♜h4$ are avoided.

Finally we should point a few features that relate to the artistic impression. In both, the try and the solution there is one orthogonal and one diagonal thematic line. Moreover, in (s₁) and (s₂), there is a nice sequence of four moves in a row (2 white and 2 black moves) being played on the vertically adjacent squares (♞ is sacrificed on f5, ♜ is sacrificed on f4, ♖ is sacrificed on c4 and c5). A nice complementary artistic touch is that the first moves in the try and the solution, $1...♞g2?$ and $1...♜g3!$, respectively, are also played on the vertically adjacent squares g2 and g3. When it comes to the artistic approach and the geometry the final touch of course is the choice of the trio of the ♖ moves ($1...♖f7(q_1)$, $1...♖h5(q_2)$, and $1...♖g6(q_3)$) on the *diagonal* line f7-h5 combined with the choice of the ♜h4 moves ($1...♜xh3(q_4)$, $1...♜xh6(q_5)$, $1...♜h5$, and $1...♜xh2$) on the *orthogonal* line h2-h6 and the fact that after the key ♖ *is surprisingly alone* in the rectangle c3-f3-f5-c5 on a board with no less than 26 pieces.

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$s \neq 5^*$ C^+ 13+12

Content:

* Set play (Sp_1)

1... ♠f2≠; 1... ♠xg2 2. ♠d5+ ♣f3 3. ♠xe2 ♠xe2≠

✓ Thematic try (T_1)

1. ♠xf3?(Q) ~ 2. ♠d5+(R) ♣f3 3. ♠xe2 ♠xe2≠

1... ♣xf3(x) 2. ♠xg6(Z) ~

3. ♠f5(W_1) ~ 4. ♠g4+ ♣e3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3. ♠g5(W_2) ~ 4. ♠g4/g2+ ♣e3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3. ♠h6(W_3) ~ 4. ♠h5+ ♣e3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

2... ♠e8(y) 3. ♠f5(W_1)? ~ 4. ♠g4+ ♣e3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3... ♠e5(z_1) 4. ♠d5/g2+ ♠xf5 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3... ♣e3(z_2)! 4. ♠g4 ♠e5 5. ♠xe2+ ♣xd4!

2... ♠e8(y) 3. ♠g5(W_2)? ~ 4. ♠g4/g2+ ♣e3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3... ♠e5(z_1)! 4. ♠f~ ♠f5 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠? (6. ♠xc1?)

3... ♣e3(z_2) 4. ♠g1+ ♣f3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠ ← *orthogonal*

Indian anti-Bristol

2... ♠e8(y) 3. ♠h6(W_3)! ~ 4. ♠h5+ ♣e3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3... ♠e5(z_1) 4. ♠d5/g2+ ♠f5 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3... ♣e3(z_2) 4. ♠d5+(R) ♣f3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

2... ♠e8(y) 3. ♠xb5(W_4)? waiting/zugzwang

3... ♠~8 4. ♠c4 ~ 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠ ← *diagonal Indian anti-Bristol*

3... ♠e5(z_1)(♠xe4/e6/e7/f8) 4. ♠d5/g2+ ♠f5(♠f4/f6/xf7) 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3... ♣e3(z_2) 4. ♠d5+(R) ♣f3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3... ♠a2 4. ♠g2+ (♠d5+?) ♠xf7 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

3... ♠c7~!

1... ♠xb4 2. ♠d5+/♠g2+ ♣xd3 3. ♠f4+ ♣e3 4. ♠xc3+ ♠xc3≠

1... ♠xd6(w)!

Solution (S_1)

1. ♠g3! ~ 2. ♠xe2(X_1) ~ 3. ♠f4 ~ 4. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ (s_1)

2... ♠g5(q) 3. ♠xg5+(Y_1) ♣xd3 4. ♠f4+ ♣e3 5. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠

~ 2. ♠xg5(Y_1)? ~ 3. ♠xe2+(X_1) ♣xd3 4. ♠f4+ ♣e3 5. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ but 2... ♠xd6!

~ 2. ♠xe2(X_2)? ~ 3. ♠d3 ~ 4. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ ← *reciprocal annihilation eventually fails*

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠xc3+(Y_2)?

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠~(♠f1) ~ 4. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ but 3... ♠g4!/♠xd6!

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠d3 ~ 4. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ but 3... ♠g4! ← *corrective refutations reduction*

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠xb5 ~ 4. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠

3... ♠g4 4. ♠c4 ~ 5. ♠xe2 ♠xe2≠ but 3... ♠xd6! ← *corrective refutations reduction*

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠xf3! ~ 4. ♠g4+ ♠xf3≠

3... ♠xf4 4. ♠g4+ ♠xg3 5. ♠f3+ ♠xf3≠ but 3... ♠xd6! ← *corrective refutations reduction*

1... ♠xd6(w) 2. ♠xe2(X_2) ~ 3. ♠d3 ~ 4. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ (s_2)

2... ♠g5(q) 3. ♠xc3+(Y_2) ♣xe4 4. ♠d3+ ♣e3 5. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠

~ 2. ♠xc3(Y_2)? ~ 3. ♠xe2+(X_2) ♣xe4 4. ♠d3+ ♣e3 5. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ but 2... ♠c8!

~ 2. ♠xe2(X_1)? ~ 3. ♠f4 ~ 4. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ ← *reciprocal annihilation eventually fails*

2... ♣xd3 3. ♠f4+

3... ♣e3 4. ♠d5 ~ 5. ♠xf3 ♠xf3≠

3... ♣xe4 4. ♠d5+ ♣e3 5. ♠/♠xf3 ♠xf3≠

2... ♠d5 3. ♠f4 ♠xe4 4. ♠e5/e7 ~ 5. ♠xf3 ♠xf3≠

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠xg5+(Y_1) ♣xd3 4. ♠f4+?

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠~ ~ 4. ♠xf3+/♠xgf3+ ♠xf3≠ but 3... ♠g4!/♠xd3!

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠f4 ~ 4. ♠xf3+ ♠xf3≠ but 3... ♠g4! ← *corrective refutations reduction*

2... ♠g5(q)! 3. ♠g1 ~ 4. ♠xf3+/♠xgf3+ ♠xf3≠ but 3... ♣xd3! ← *corrective ref. reduction*

1... ♠g5(q) 2. ♠f5+ ♣xf4 3. ♠xf3(Q) ~ 4. ♠g4+ ♣xf3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

1... ♠h8 2. ♠d5+ ♣xd3 3. ♠f4+ ♣e3 4. ♠xb5 ~ 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠

Comment is on the next page. →

Comment: The main idea of the problem is the strategy overhaul from the set play and the thematic try to the solution.

Main thematic phases:

1. Set play (Sp₁)

In the initial position ♠f3 is rather loose and has two possible moves. Its simple move 1... ♠f2≠ is an immediate mate. However, its second possible move 1... ♠xg2 is more interesting as it has a bit less obvious set continuation 2. ♠d5+(R) ♣f3 3. ♠xe2 ♠xe2≠. This set continuation actually highlights the key strategy of the thematic try and will be discussed below in more details. Here it should just be noted that having ♣ maneuver on f3 may turn out to be useful in designing a successful white's selfmating strategy.

2. Thematic try (T₁)

The above set play after 1... ♠xg2 has already indicated that allowing ♣ to utilize the f3 square may be beneficial. One then naturally wonders what would happen if white tries to enable ♣ to indeed utilize the f3. The easiest and the most direct way to do that is to start with a *sacrificial flight-giving* first move 1. ♠xf3. Given that in terms of freeing the f3 for ♣ the effect of 1. ♠xf3 is pretty much the same as the effect of 1... ♠xg2, one then naturally also has the following threatening continuation 2. ♠d5+(R) ♣f3 3. ♠xe2 ♠xe2≠ (basically a repetition of the set play continuation after 1... ♠xg2). After ♣ moves to f3, 1... ♣xf3(x), there is effectively a separate s ≠ 4. This resulting s ≠ 4 has another quiet introductory move 2. ♠xg6(Z)! This quiet move is followed by three also quiet threats 3. ♣f5(W₁), 3. ♣g5(W₂), and 3. ♠h6(W₃). Each of these threats is effectively a separate s ≠ 3 complex with interesting play that comes into effect after black clearing move 2... ♠e8(y)! The resulting position after 1. ♠xf3 ♣xf3(x) 2. ♠xg6(Z) ♠e8(y) (effectively a s ≠ 3) is discussed below. As it will be clear from the discussion the resulting s ≠ 3 will have two tries starting with 3. ♣f5(W₁) and 3. ♣g5(W₃), and a solution starting with 3. ♠h6(W₃). Moreover, it will have another interesting try starting with 3. ♠xb5(W₄)!

*) Position after 1. ♠xf3 ♣xf3(x) 2. ♠xg6(Z) ♠e8(y) – White plays 3. ♣f5(W₁) ← Complex 1

After white plays 3. ♣f5(W₁) there is a convenient threat 4. ♣g4+ ♣e3 5. ♣xe2+ ♠xe2≠. Black has two key moves that defend against this threat, 3... ♠e5(z₁) and 3... ♣e3(z₂). After 3... ♠e5(z₁) white utilizes the f-file battery via 4. ♠d5/g2+ and after 4... ♠xf5 finally plays 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠. On the other hand, after 3... ♣e3(z₂)! the threatening continuation 4. ♣g4 (effectively the *fourth white quiet* move in a row) doesn't work as after 4... ♠e5 5. ♣xe2+ the black king can escape via 5... ♣xd4!

*) Position after 1. ♠xf3 ♣xf3(x) 2. ♠xg6(Z) ♠e8(y) – White plays 3. ♣g5(W₂) ← Complex 2

After white plays 3. ♣g5(W₂) there is the same threat as above 4. ♣g4+ ♣e3 5. ♣xe2+ ♠xe2≠. Black again has the same two key moves that defend against this threat, 3... ♠e5(z₁) and 3... ♣e3(z₂). However, this time things are reversed. After 3... ♣e3(z₂) white has a new continuation 4. ♣g1+ ♣f3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠. On the other hand, after 3... ♠e5(z₁)! the above mentioned opening of the f-file battery 4. ♠f~ now doesn't work as 4... ♠f5, 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠? won't result in a mate since ♣ attacks ♠ on c1 (i.e. white can play 6. ♣xc1?).

*) Position after 1. ♠xf3 ♣xf3(x) 2. ♠xg6(Z) ♠e8(y) – White plays 3. ♠h6(W₃) ← Complex 3

After white plays 3. ♠h6(W₃) there is a threat strategically similar to the threats in *Complexes 1 and 2*, namely via an *Umnov* effect white threatens 4. ♣h5+ ♣e3 5. ♣xe2+ ♠xe2≠. As in *Complexes 1 and 2* black again has the same two key moves that defend against this threat, 3... ♠e5(z₁) and 3... ♣e3(z₂). After 3... ♠e5(z₁) white proceeds as in *Complex 1*. On the other hand, after 3... ♣e3(z₂) white can activate the main threat from the second move which now gets extended to the full 5-move length, 4. ♠d5+(R) ♣f3 5. ♠xe2+ ♠xe2≠.

Looking at the above complexes it is now clear that they effectively serve as a way of clearing the triple threat. However, the clearing is done in a specific way. There are two thematic black third moves that defend against each of the three third-move threats. In the two nonworking threats there is selfmating

continuation on one of these defenses whereas the other one is the refutation. In the working threat there are white continuations on both of these defenses. Moreover, after $3... \text{♙e3}(z_2)$ there are changed white continuations $4. \text{♖g1+}$ and $4. \text{♜d5+}$ between **Complex 2** and **Complex 3**. This threat clearing role of $2... \text{♜e8}(y)$ is schematically shown in the table below.

<i>Clearing of white third move triple threat</i>			
Black third move	White fourth move continuation		
	<i>Complex 1</i> $3. \text{♖f5}?$	<i>Complex 2</i> $3. \text{♖g5}?$	<i>Complex 3</i> $3. \text{♜h6}!$
$3... \text{♜e5}(z_1)$	$4. \text{♜d5/d2+}$	$4. \text{♜} \sim ?$	$4. \text{♜d5/d2+}$
$3... \text{♙e3}(z_2)$	$4. \text{♖g4}?$	$4. \text{♖g1+}$	$4. \text{♜d5+}$

As mentioned above, after black plays $2... \text{♜e8}(y)$ there is another try $3. \text{♜xb5}(W_4)$. This continuation not a part of the above discussed triple threat but is actually enabled by the second black move itself, i.e. by $2... \text{♜e8}(y)$. Moreover, somewhat unexpectedly, it results in a waiting/zugzwang position!

*) Position after $1. \text{♜xf3} \text{ ♙xf3}(x) 2. \text{♜xg6}(Z) \text{ ♜e8}(y) - \text{White plays } 3. \text{♜xb5}(W_4) \leftarrow \text{Complex 0}$

After white plays $3. \text{♜xb5}(W_4)$ there is no threat. After $3... \text{♜} \sim 8$ the **Indian anti-Bristol clearing** effect of $3. \text{♜xb5}(W_4)$ comes into a full power via $4. \text{♖c4} \sim 5. \text{♖xe2+} \text{ ♜xe2} \neq$. This of course complements the **clearing** effect $2. \text{♜xg6}(Z)$ has in the triple threat and in particular in the separating changed variant, $2. \text{♜xg6}(Z) \text{ ♜e8}(y) 3. \text{♖g5}(W_2) \text{ ♙e3}(z_2) 4. \text{♖g1+} \text{ ♙f3} 5. \text{♜xe2+} \text{ ♜xe2} \neq$. This changed variant of course has the **orthogonal Indian anti-Bristol clearing** ($2. \text{♜xg6}(Z) - 3. \text{♖g5}(W_2) - 4. \text{♖g1+}$) to harmoniously match the above mentioned **diagonal Indian anti-Bristol clearing** ($3. \text{♜xb5}(W_4) - 3. \text{♖c4} - 5. \text{♖xe2+}$).

On the two thematic black third-move defenses there are repeated mates from **Complex 3**. One should just note that now, $3... \text{♜e5}(z_1)$ is a corrective more by the ♜e8 ($3... \text{♜xe4/e6/e7/f8}$ have the same corrective effect and are followed by the same white continuation $4. \text{♜d5/g2+}$). All moves by the ♙ (except $4. \text{♙a2}$) are followed by a quick mate $4. \text{♖xc3} \text{ ♙xc3} \neq$. After $3... \text{♙a2}$, there is a nice dual avoidance as well $4. \text{♜g2+}(\text{♜d5+}?)$. The waining/zugzwang complex is refuted by a random move of ♜c7 .

Finally, black can choose not to pursue taking the flight-giving key and capturing the sacrificed white pawn on f3. Instead, a direct defense $1... \text{♙xb4}$ against the opening of the $\text{♖}/\text{♜}$ battery can be played. However, white then via $2. \text{♜d5+}/\text{♜g2+} \text{ ♙xd3} 3. \text{♜f4+} \text{ ♙e3} 4. \text{♖xc3+} \text{ ♙xc3} \neq$ (basically a **switchback** of the ♜f4) forces the annihilation of ♜d3 and the opening of c3-e3 line to eventually utilize the fact that ♙ from b4 guards the c3 square. The entire try $1. \text{♜xf3}?$ is refuted by $1... \text{♜xd6}(w)!$

3. Solution (S₁)

Although there is a set play after any of the moves by the ♜f3 and although there is the above promising try that relies on moving the black king to f3 and having the entire play being centered around exploiting the black king's exposure on f3, the key move in the solution brings a complete change of strategy and the role of the f3 square. Namely, the key $1. \text{♜g3}!$ brings two key effects that work against both, the set play and the thematic try. First, it pins ♜f3 so that it can't play and second, it strengthens the attack on f3 so that it is now fairly inconceivable that the black king's promising move to f3 will materialize. Because of these changes the overall mating strategy is completely different and is split between two main complexes, the first one that centers around the threat and the second one that centers around the main thematic defense $1... \text{♜xd6}(w)$. Moreover, different mating strategy also brings an interesting complementary play after two additional black defenses that will be described below within an additional third complex.

To start things off one obviously looks at the position after the first white move $1. \text{♜g3}!$.

*) Position after $1. \text{♜g3}!$ – Main threat $\leftarrow \text{Complex 4}$

After the key $1. \text{♜g3}!$ white can try to execute the main plan of **annihilating** the ♜e2 via forming a $\text{♖}/\text{♜}$ **battery** of the g5-e3 diagonal and then utilizing the **switchback** maneuver of the ♜f4 , $2. \text{♖xg5}(Y_1)? \sim 3. \text{♜xe2+}(X_1) \text{ ♙xd3} 4. \text{♜f4+} \text{ ♙e3} 5. \text{♜xf3+} \text{ ♜xf3} \neq$. However, this battery forming strategy

fails as after 2... ♖d6! the e4 square will eventually be unguarded and 4. ♘f4+ will be of no use. Instead of typically expected battery forming white actually proceeds in an *anti-battery* fashion with a more quiet direct *switchback* maneuver of the ♘f4, 2. ♘xe2(X₁) ~ 3. ♘f4 ~ 4. ♗xf3+ ♕xf3≠ (s₁). As now one has basically three quiet moves in a row that gives black enough time to actually defend against the threat via 2... ♗g5(q) (and eventually 3... ♗g4). However, white then proceeds with 3. ♗xg5+(Y₁) ♖xd3 4. ♘f4+ ♖e3 5. ♗xf3+ ♕xf3≠ which extends this shortened version of the threat to its full 5-move length and at the same time also activates the play along the g5-e3 line (still though in the spirit of the main idea, i.e. in an *anti-battery* fashion). Moreover, this threat extension also completes the *reciprocal* exchange of the white second and third moves (X₁) and (Y₁) compared to the battery-forming try.

Reciprocal ♗e2 annihilation via ♕ from d3 fails

Looking at the position after the key one also observes that ♘f4 is not the only white piece that can be utilized to annihilate ♗e2, ♕d3 can do the same thing via its own switchback maneuver 2. ♕xe2(X₂)? ~ 3. ♕d3 ~ 4. ♗xf3+ ♕xf3≠. This maneuver is eventually refuted by 2... ♗g5(q)!. White play after 2... ♗g5(q)! is interesting as well and it is only in the later stages of play that it becomes apparent why 2... ♗g5(q) indeed refutes this ♕d3 *switchback* maneuver. For example, analogously to checking via g5-e3 line white can now try to counter 2... ♗g5(q) with checking via c3-e3 line, i.e. with 3. ♗xc3+(Y₁). However, ♖ doesn't have an empty square (say e4) where to temporarily escape before the *switchback* 3. ♕d3 can be completed. Alternatively, white can try to move bishop elsewhere. If it plays randomly 3. ♕~ (say 3. ♕f1) there are two strong continuations by black, 3... ♗g4! and 3... ♗d6! A more precise *corrective* 3. ♕d3 is eventually refuted only by 3... ♗g4!. On the other hand, another *corrective* version 3. ♕xb5 allows for a successful continuation after 3... ♗g4, as white can play 4. ♗c4 ~ 5. ♗xe2+ ♕xe2≠. However, 3... ♗d6! refutes against 3. ♕xb5. After yet another *correction* 3. ♕xf3 (~ 4. ♕g4+ ♕f3≠) black can defend via 3... ♗xf4 which white can counter with 4. ♕g4+ ♗xg3 5. ♗f3+ ♕xf3≠. However, 3... ♗d6! proves again too strong and no successful continuation exists.

*) Position after 1. ♗g3! ♗xd6(w) – Main thematic line ← Complex 5

After the key 1. ♗g3! black has three strong defenses. The white continuation after the first one, 1... ♗xd6(w) establishes the main thematic line and provides an analogous play to the main threat discussed in the above *Complex 4*. Analogously to what was done in the threat, white can try to execute the main plan of *annihilating* the ♗e2 via forming a ♗/♕ *battery* on the c3-e3 line and then utilizing the *switchback* maneuver of the ♕d3, 2. ♗xc3(Y₂)? ~ 3. ♕xe2+(X₂) ♖xe4 4. ♕d3+ ♖e3 5. ♗xf3+ ♕xf3≠. However, similarly to what happened in *Complex 4* this battery forming strategy fails as after 2... ♗c8! the opening of white battery via 3. ♕xe2+(X₂) will not work. Instead of this battery forming white analogously to the strategy of *Complex 4* proceeds in an *anti-battery* fashion with a more quiet direct *switchback* maneuver of the ♕d3, 2. ♕xe2(X₂) ~ 3. ♕d3 ~ 4. ♗xf3+ ♕xf3≠ (s₂). Black again has enough time to defend against this quiet threat via 2... ♗g5(q) (and eventually 3... ♗g4). However, white again can proceed in an analogous fashion with 3. ♗xc3+(Y₂) ♖xe4 4. ♕d3+ ♖e3 5. ♗xf3+ ♕xf3≠ to extend the shortened version of the threat to its full 5-move length and also in an *anti-battery* fashion activate the play along the c3-e3 line. As in *Complex 4*, one again has that this threat extension also completes the *reciprocal* exchange of white second and third moves (X₂) and (Y₂) compared to the battery-forming try.

Reciprocal ♗e2 annihilation via ♘ from f4 fails

Not only is there a perfect strategic analogy in white successful strategy, there is also a perfect analogy in the reciprocal avoidance of ♗e2 annihilation by the other white thematic piece when compared to the main threat. This time though instead of utilizing ♕d3 to annihilate ♗e2, ♘f4 can attempt to do so as well via its own switchback maneuver 2. ♘xe2(X₁)? ~ 3. ♘f4 ~ 4. ♗xf3+ ♕xf3≠. As in *Complex 4* this maneuver is eventually refuted by 2... ♗g5(q)!. White play after 2... ♗g5(q)! though is even a bit richer this time around. First one notes that now black can play 2... ♖xd3 to in a way after 3. ♘f4+ ♖e3/xe4 force white to extend its attack via 4. ♗d5 (moreover, black can also extend white play with 2... ♗d5 ~ 3... ♗xe4). While these black moves only extend white play 2... ♗g5(q)! indeed refutes it. White continuations after 2... ♗g5(q)! are again fairly analogous to the ones from *Complex 4*. For example, after 2... ♗g5(q) checking via g5-e3 diagonal, i.e. with 3. ♗xg5+(Y₂) doesn't work as after

3... ♖xd3 4. ♘f4+? the black king can escape via c4 or e4. The *corrective* play of the ♗e2 with the purpose of *refutations reductions* from the corresponding play in *Complex 4* is here paralleled with the *corrective* play of ♘e2 with a similar *refutations reductions* motivation. If the knight plays randomly 3. ♘~ (here it basically means if it is just lifted as there is no square to randomly play) there are again two strong continuations by black 3... ♗g4! and 3... ♖xd3! A more precise *corrective* move 3. ♘f4 is eventually refuted only by 3... ♗g4!. On the other hand, the other *corrective* option 3. ♘g1 is refuted by 3... ♖xd3! and the separation/reduction of the double refutations is correctively completed.

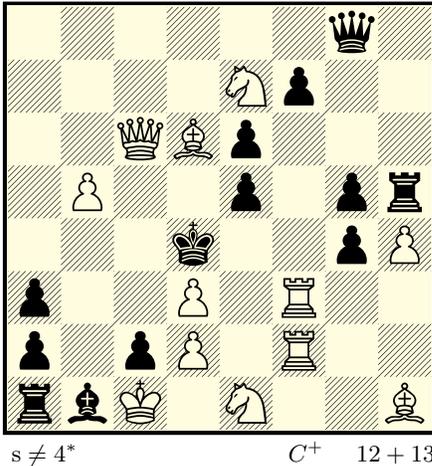
*) *Positions after 1. ♗g3! ♗g5(q)/ ♗h8 – Additional thematic lines ← Complex 6*

As it was obvious from *Complexes 4 and 5* the black move that plays one of the key roles was 2... ♗g5(q). That move enabled the reactivation of the line g5-e3 and c3-e3 in the main threat and main thematic line and their an extension to full 5-move length. More importantly, it was the key engine why reciprocal ♗e2 annihilations were not possible. Given its defensive strength when played as the second black move one expects that it can be even more powerful in defending when played as the first black move. It is of course true that 1... ♗g5(q) is actually another defense (one of the above mentioned three black defenses) against the main threat. It is followed by a battery creation on the f-file through a passive sacrifice of one of the two white key pieces, ♘f4. In other words, white plays 2. ♘f5+ and then after black counters with 2... ♖xf4 in the true *anti-battery* spirit of the problem the battery doesn't get activated. Instead, white plays quietly the first move from the try 3. ♗xf3(Q) and follows with another *switchback* (♗g3 moves back to its original g4 square) ~ 4. ♗g4+ ♖xf3 5. ♗xe2+ ♗xe2≠.

The third black defense 1... ♗h8 brings another *switchback* maneuver that results in a passive sacrifice of the other white key piece, ♗d3, 2. ♘d5+ ♖xd3 3. ♘f4+ ♖e3. This maneuver is followed by another quiet continuation 4. ♖xb5 ~ 5. ♖xe2+ ♗xe2≠.

One should also add that after 1... ♖xb4 one has repeated play from the try (this time though even without a tiny dual 2. ♘g2+) 2. ♘d5+ ♖xd3 3. ♘f4+ ♖e3 4. ♖xc3+ ♖xc3≠, which is of course the shortened version of the above switchback continuation after 1... ♗h8.

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Content:

* Set play

1... ♖xf3 2. ♘xf3+ ♔d3 3. ♖xc2+ ♜xc2≠

1... ♗g3 2. ♖f4+ ♜gxf4/ ♜exf4/ ♜e4 3. ♘f3+ ♔d3

4. ♖xc2+ ♜xc2≠ ← *white-white Umnov*

1... ♜e8 2. ♖d5+ ♜xd5 3. ♘c6+ ♖xc6 4. ♘xc2+ ♜/♖xc2≠ ← *white-white Umnov*

1... ♜f5(x) 2. ♘xf5+ ♜xf5 3. ♖c4+ ♖xc4 4. ♘xc2+ ♜/♖xc2≠ but 4... ♔d5!

1... ♜h4(y) 2. ♖f4+ ♜exf4/ ♜e4 3. ♖b6+ ♜c5 4. ♘xc2+ ♜xc2≠ but 4... ♔xd3!

Solution

1. ♖g3! ~ 2. ♖xg4+(X) ♜e4 3. ♘f3+(Y) ♔xd3 4. ♖xc2+ ♜xc2≠

~ 2. ♘f3+(Y)? ♜xf3 3. ♖xg4+(X) ♔xd3 4. ♖xc2+ ♜xc2≠ but 3... ♜e4!

1... ♜f5(x) 2. ♘xf5+ ♜xf5 3. ♖c4+(♖a4+?) ♖xc4 4. ♘xc2+ ♜/♖xc2≠ (a_{s1})

1... ♜h4(y) 2. ♖f4+ ♜xf4/ ♜e4 3. ♖b6+(♖c5+?) ♜c5 4. ♘xc2+ ♜xc2≠ (a_{s2})

Comment: The main thematic content of the problem is distributed between two phases, the set play and the solution. In the solution, there are two main thematic lines (a_{s1}), (a_{s2}) that by design don't work in the set play. To compensate for it the set play has two completely different thematic lines that do work and effectively serve as decoys for what will turn out to be the solution.

Main thematic phases:

1. *Set play*

In the diagram position ♖ on f3 is under attack of ♜g4. However, after 1... ♜xf3 there is a short set continuation 2. ♘xf3+ ♔d3 3. ♖xc2+ ♜xc2≠ which should supposedly ensure that ♖ doesn't feel overly uncomfortable on f3. Moreover, after 1... ♗g3 white has a set *Umnov* type of continuation 2. ♖f4+ ♜gxf4/ ♜exf4/ ♜e4 3. ♘f3+. This actually means that on both possible moves of ♗g4 (1... ♜xf3 and 1... ♗g3) there are already set mates. Additionally, after 1... ♜e8 white completes the pair of *Umnov* type of continuations with 1... ♜e8 2. ♖d5+ ♜xd5 3. ♘c6+. The key portions of the *Umnov* strategy are fully analogous; ♖ and ♖ leave the thematic squares f3 and c6, respectively through checking which is neutralized by the pawns from the black lines that will play a critical role in the solution. Once the squares f3 and c6 are emptied white knights can arrive on them and force two types of continuations: 1) the first one that assumes the arrival of the ♔ on d3 (which will be the type of continuation also utilized in the threat of the solution) and 2) the second one that assumes the arrival on the c-file of a black line piece (in this case ♖) that can control c2 (which will be the type of continuation utilized in the main variants of the solution).

Of course, while the above mentioned *Umnov* continuations are already set, black has fairly quiet moves 1... ♜f5(x) and 1... ♜h4(y) that also have seemingly interesting analogous continuations. However, those continuations fail due to a lack of control of d5 and d3, respectively.

2. *Solution*

Instead of trying to utilize the existing *Umnov* variants from the set play and the ability to control the moves of ♜g4, white in the solution plays 1. ♖g3! which blocks ♜g4 and takes away both of its possible

moves (1... ♖xf3 and 1... ♗g3). However, it does open the h1-d5 diagonal line of the ♔h1 and the path f2-f4 for the ♖f2 while remaining in control of d3. This is then sufficient that the failing continuations after 1... ♗f5(x) and 1... ♗xh4(y) in the set play now actually work. These two continuations are of course the main thematic lines. They contain fully analogous strategy that assumes openings of the doubly-masked black lines g8-c4 and h5-c5. Both of these lines have two black pawns sitting on them. Black thematic moves 1... ♗f5(x) and 1... ♗xh4(y) do half of the openings (obviously the direct ones forced by the defensive needs against the threat 2. ♖xg4+). The other half of the openings is done through the sacrifices of the ♕ on f5 and ♖ on f4. Once the lines are opened ♖ utilizes that to force ♗ and ♖ to get on the c-file to eventually enable 4. ♕xc2+.

One should note though a *conceptually reciprocal dual avoidances* (sacrifice/pinning) in the play of ♖ which happen on the diagonal b6-d4 line and on the orthogonal a4-d4 line. Namely, in (a_{s1}) (i.e. after 1... ♗f5(x)) one has 3. ♖b6+ and the black rook from h5 is afterwards effectively *pinned* on c5 and can't capture ♕ on c2 (which would be the way to escape mating ♔). Of course, if white *sacrifices* the queen via 3. ♖c5+? then ♖xc5 and 4. ♕xc2+ is followed by ♖xc2+ 5. ♔d1! On the other hand, in (a_{s2}) (i.e. after 1... ♗xh4(y)) white does *sacrifice* the queen via 3. ♖c4+ and then after ♖xc4 and 4. ♕xc2+ ♖xc2≠, 5. ♔d1 is not possible. Moreover, while now after 1... ♗xh4(y) sacrificing ♖ works, checking and *pinning* via 3. ♖a4+? ♖c4 doesn't, since ♖ can't jump over ♖b5.

Finally, one should also note the very subtle role that the ♗e5 plays in avoiding the *reciprocal* exchange of white moves 2. ♖xg4+(X) and 3. ♕f3+(Y) in the threat.