

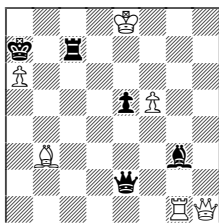
## StrateGems 2020 Studies Award

By Michal Hlinka, International Judge, FIDE

I received 17 studies for evaluation. I excluded from the award consideration **E0385** (Krug). It is anticipated by R. Becker and J. Akobia, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bent-MT, *The Problemist* 2007 (Kh2/Kh4), 1.Ra1!.

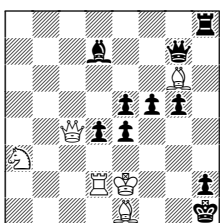
I would like to thank my friend Luboš Kekely for anticipation checking, so I was able to complete the award in a relatively short time.

Prize  
Martin Minski



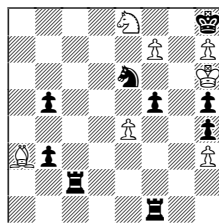
Win (6+5)

Special Prize  
Peter Krug & Mario G. Garcia



Win (6+10)

Special Prize  
Jean Carf



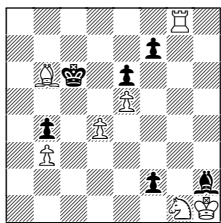
Win (7+9)

**Prize - (Martin Minski - E0381)** An elegantly composed study on the author's favorite topic – white queen sacrifice. The white king does not behave gallantly towards its queen. The king sacrifices it. Well, gallantry is not cultivated in chess, on the contrary, the sacrifice of a queen is considered one of the priorities in the creation of the study! Solution: **1.Kd8! Kb8** (1...Rg7 2.f6 +-, or 1...e4 2.Rxg3 +-) **2.a7+!** [2.Rb1? Bh4+! 3.Qxh4 Qd3+ 4.Bd5+ Qxb1 5.a7+ Rxa7 6.Qf6 Rh7! 7.Qxe5+ (7.Qc6 Rh8+=, or 7.Qd6+ Ka7 8.Qa3+ Kb6 =) 7...Ka7 8.Qd4+ Qb6+ 9.Qxb6+ Kxb6 =, or 2.Rxg3?? Qxa6 -+ ] **2...Rxa7 3.Rb1!** (battery 3.Rxg3?? Qa6 -+) **3...Bh4+!** (deflection of the white queen 3...Qd3+ 4.Bd5+ +-) **4.Qxh4** (4.Ke8?? Qb5+ -+) **4...Qd3+** (4...Qd2+ 5.Bd5+ +-) **5.Qd4!!** (the point 5.Bd5+? Qxb1 6.Qf6 Rh7! =) **5...Qxd4+** (5...exd4 6.Bc2+ Ka8 7.Bxd3 +-) **6.Bd5+ Rb7 7.Rxb7+ Ka8 8.Rd7+** (8.Rb5+? Ka7 =) **8...Kb8 9.f6 e4** (9...Qh4 10.Rb7+ +-, or 9...Qb6+ 10.Ke7 Qc5+ 11.Ke8 e4 12.f7 +-) **10.f7 Qh8+ 11.Ke7 Qe5+ 12.Be6 Qc5+ 13.Ke8 +-.**

**Special prize - (Peter Krug & Mario Garcia - E0388)** Here too, White sacrifices the queen, which makes it possible to create mate threats after 5.Rg3. Black has several alternatives regarding defending itself, but the white B/R battery can always relocate its murderous shooter so that the check-mate is ultimately used. Solution: **1.Kd1!** [1.Kf1? Qh6! -+, or 1.Qc1? Rc8! -+ (1...Kg2? 2.Kd1+! Kh3 3.Rg2 f4 {3...Ba4+ 4.Sc2 Kxg2 5.Qxg5+ Kh1 6.Qxf5 +-} 4.Rxh2+ Kxh2 5.Qd2+ Kh3 6.Bxe4 Bg4+ 7.Kc1 Qc7+ 8.Sc2), or 1.Bg3? Kg2 =] **1...d3 2.Qxe4+! fxe4 3.Bxe4+ Kgl 4.Rg2+ Kf1** (4...Kh1 5.Rg3#) **5.Rg3 Qh7!** [{main I} 5...Bb5 6.Bg2+! (6.Sxb5? Qh7! =) 6...Kgl 7.Bc6+ Kf1 8.Sb1 h1Q 9.Sd2#, or {main II} 5...Ba4+ 6.Kd2 Bb5 {6...Qd7 7.Bg2+ Kgl 8.Bd5+ Kf1 9.Sc4 Qa7 10.Bg2+ Kgl 11.Be4+ Kf1 12.Bxd3 #, or 6...Rd8 7.Bg2+ Kgl 8.Bb7+ Kf1 9.Sc4 Qxb7 10.Se3#} 7.Bg2+! (7.Sxb5? Qh7! ) 7...Kgl 8.Bb7+ Kf1 9.Sc2 dxc2 10.Bg2+ Kgl 11.Bc6+ Kf1 12.Bxb5 #, or {main III} 5...Bg4+ 6.Kd2 Qd7 7.Bg2+ Kgl 8.Bd5+ Kf1 9.Sc4 Qa7 10.Bg2+ Kgl 11.Be4+ Kf1 12.Bxd3+ Be2 13.Bxe2#) **6.Bg2+!** (6.Bxh7? Bb5! 7.Be4 h1Q 8.Bxh1 Ba4+ 9.Kd2 Rxh1 10.Rf3+ Kg2 11.Rxd3 Rh3 =) **6...Kgl 7.Bf3+!** (7.Bd5+? Kf1 8.Sc4 Qh5+!) **7...Kf1 8.Sc4 Ba4+ 9.Kd2 Qa7** (9...h1Q 10.Se3#) **10.Bg2+ Kgl 11.Be4+ Kf1 12.Bxd3#**

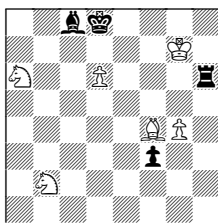
**Special Prize - (Jean Carf - E0387)** Many studies have been based on the threatening mate along the diagonals a1-h8 and h1-a8, respectively. Here is a combination of the promotion of the f7-pawn to a queen and a check-mate. Interestingly, Black defends itself with the creation of an R/S battery. The hero of the fight is a white knight, which gradually eliminates the black defenses. The study could end after 13.Kxf5. Unfortunately, the composer has paid a price for unnatural form. Solution: **1.Bd6! Rc6!** [1...Rc5 2.Bxc5 fxe4 (2...Re1 3.Bd4+ Sxd4 4.f8Q+ mate) 3.Bd6 Rf5 (3...Sg7 4.Be5 Rxf7 5.Sxg7 Re7 6.Se6+ Rg7 7.Bxg7+ mate) 4.Kg6 b2 5.Kxf5 Sf8 6.Bxf8 b1Q 7.Be7 e3+ 8.Kg5 Qf19.f8Q+ Qxf8 10.Bxf8 Kxh7 11.Sf6+ Kh8 12.Kh6 e2 13.Bg7+ mate] **2.Be5+ Sg7+ 3.Sf6 Se6** (3...Rc8 4.f8Q+ Rxf8 5.Sxh5 Rg16.Sxg7 Rf7 7.Sxf5+ Rf7 8.Sxg7 +-) **4.Sxh5+ Sg7+ 5.Sf6 Se6 6.Se8+ Sg7+ 7.Sd6 Rxd6 8.Bxd6 fxe4 9.f8Q+ Rxf8 10.Bxf8 Sf5+** (10...Se8 11.Ba3 Sf5 12.Bb2 and 13.Bxf6+ mate) **11.Kg6 b2** (11...e3 12.Bb4 Sd4 13.Bc3 +) **12.Bb4 b1S** (12...Se7+ 13.Bxe7 b1Q 14.Bf6+ mate) **13.Kxf5 Kxh7 14.Kxe4 Kg6 15.Kf4 Kh5** (15...Kf6 16.Kg4 Ke5 17.Kxh4 Kd4 18.Kg5 Sc3 19.h4 Se4+ 20.Kg6 Sg3 21.Bd6 +- ) **16.Kf5 Kh6 17.Kg4 Kg6 18.Kxh4 +-.**

1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Honorable Mention  
Franjo Vrabec



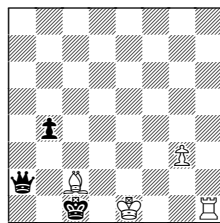
Win (7+6)

1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Honorable Mention  
Yochanan Afek



Win (6+4)

3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Honorable Mention  
Petr Kiryakov  
& Pavel Arestov



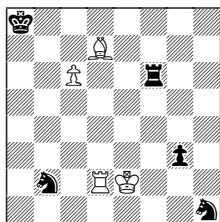
Draw (4+3)

**1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Honorable Mention - (Franjo Vrabec - E0374)** After a pleasant introduction (in the first phase), White elegantly prepares the breeding ground for the second phase in a pawn position with distant opposition from the kings. Solution: **1.Rc8+! Kb7!!** [1...Kxb6 2.Rc1 fxf1Q+ 3.Rxg1 Bxg1 4.Kxg1 +- see main line, or 1...Kb5! 2.Rc5+!! Ka6! 3.Ra5+! Kb7 4.Ra7+! Kxb6 (4...Kc6 5.Ra1 +- see main line after 4...Kc6) 5.Ra1 +- see main line] **2.Rc7+!!** [2.Rc1? fxf1Q+ 3.Rxg1 Bxg1 4.Kg2 (4.Kxg1 Kxb6 = see main line) 4...Be3! 5.Kf3 Bd2 =] **2...Ka6! 3.Ra7+! Kb5! 4.Ra5+! Kxb6!** [4...Kc6 5.Ra1! fxf1Q+ 6.Rxg1 Bxg1 7.Ba7! Be3 (7...Kb7 8.Kxg1 Kxa7 9.Kf2 +-) 8.d5+ Kxd5 9.Bxe3 Kxe5 10.Bc5 Ke4 11.Bxb4 +-] **5.Ra1 fxf1Q+ 6.Rxg1 Bxg1 7.Kxg1** with: a) **7...Kb7! 8.Kf1!!** [8.Kf2? Ka7!! 9.Ke2 (9.Kf3 Kb7! 10.Ke3 Kb6 11.Ke4 Kc6 =) 9...Ka6! 10.Kd2 Ka5! =, or 8.Kg2? Ka6 9.Kf3 Kb7! =] **8...Kb6!** (8...Kc7 9.Ke2 Kc6 10.Kd2 +-, or 8...Kc6 9.Ke2 Kb6 10.Ke3 +-, or 8...Ka7 9.Kf2 +- ) **9.Ke1!** (9.Ke2? Ka6! =, or 9.Kf2? Ka7!! =) **9...Kb7** (9...Ka5 10.Kd2 Ka6 11.Ke2! Ka5 12.Kf3 Kb6 13.Ke3 +-, or 9...Kc7 10.Ke2 +-, or 9...Kb5 10.Kf2 Kc6/Ka6 11.Ke2 +-, or 9...Ka6 10.Ke2 Ka5 11.Kf3 Kb6 12.Ke3 +- ) **10.Kd2!** [10.Kf1 Kb6 11.Ke1 Kb7 waste of time, or 10.Kd1 Kb6 11.Kc2 (11.Kc1 Kb5 12.Kd1 Kb6 13.Ke1Kb7 waste of time) 11...Ka6! =] **10...Ka6 11.Ke2! Kb6 12.Ke3 +-;** b) **7...Ka6! 8.Kg2!!** (8.Kf2? Ka7!! =, or 8.Kf1? Kb7!! =) **8...Kb6** (8...Kb7 9.Kf3 Kc7 10.Kf4 Kd7 11.Ke3 Kc6 Ke4+-, or 8...Ka7 9.Kf2! +- ) **9.Kg3!** (9.Kg1 Ka6 waste of time) **9...Kc6 10.Kf2!** (10.Kf3? Kb7!! =) **10...Kc7 11.Ke2! Kb6 12.Ke3 Kc6 13.Ke4 Kb6** (13...Kc7 14.Kd3 +- ) **14.d5 +-.**

**1st-2nd Honorable Mention - (Yochanan Afek - E0377)** Thanks to its f-pawn, Black is able to capture the white knight. White counters with 5.d7+! and 6.Se4, which forces Black to play 6...Bxg4. White has set a trap and after 7.Sf6+! Black will lose both its pieces. Solution: **1.Sd1!** (1.Sd3? Bxa6 2.Kxh6 Bxd3!) (1.Kxh6? f2!) **1...Rh1** (1...Re6 2.Bg5+ Kd7 3.Sc5+ Kxd6 4.Sxe6 Bxe6 5.Bf4+) **2.Sf2 Rf1 3.Sc5 Rxf2 4.Bg5+ Ke8 5.d7+ Bxd7 6.Se4** (Threatening 7.Sd6#) **Bxg4** (6...B any 7.Sxf2 +- ) **7.Sf6+ Kd8** (7...Ke7) **8.Sxg4+ Kd7 9.Sxf2 winning.**

**3rd-4th Honorable Mention - (Petr Kiryakov & Pavel Arestov - E0382)** A nice miniature with a selection of the first move. The white castling does not work immediately but comes on the second move after the try 1...b3?. The study contains an instructive but unattractive move, which, however, is the only one that can maintain a draw result. Solution: **1.Be4!** (1.0-0? Kxc2 2.Rf2+ Kb3 3.Rxa2 Kxa2 ->) **1...Qd2+** (1...b3 2.0-0! =, or 1...Qc4 2.Rh4 =) **2.Kf1 b3 3.Rh4** (3.Kg1 Qd4+ ->) **3...b2 4.Kg1** (White is building the fortress Rf4+ Pg3 against the wQ. The Bishop holds the "b" Pawn. 4.Rf4 Qh2 -> was weaker. In the case of 4.Bh7? White loses control over xf3. It may follow 4...Qe3 5.Kg2 Qe2+ 6.Kg1 Qf3 7.Kh2 Qf2+ ->) **4...Qe3+ 5.Kg2 Qe2+ 6.Kg1 b1Q** (6...Kd1 7.Rf4! = fortress) **7.Bxb1 Qf3!** (7...Kxb1 = fortress) **8.Rh3!!** [Try: 8.Kh2 Qf2+ 9.Kh1 (9.Kh3 Kxb1 ->) 9...Qxg3 10.Rc4+ Kb2! 11.Rb4+ (11.Rc2+ Kb3 12.Rg2 Qh4+ 13.Kg1 Qe1+ ->) 11...Ka3 -> no perpetual check] **8...Kxb1 9.Kh2 Qf1 10.Rh4! Qf2+ 11.Kh1 Qxg3 12.Rb4+** = Positional draw, perpetual check.

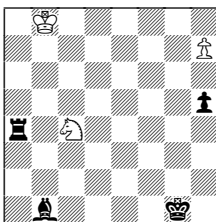
3rd-4th Honorable Mention  
L'uboš Kekely



Win

(4+5)

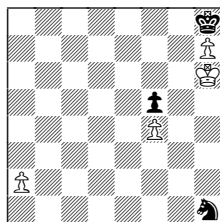
Commendation  
Pavel Arestov



Win

(3+4)

Special Commendation  
Yechiel Robinson



Win

(4+3)

**3rd-4th Honorable Mention - (L'uboš Kekely - E0380)** Black defends inventively, but it turns out that White's passed pawn is more promising. Finally, because of the weakness of the black knight in the corner of the board, Black must surrender. Solution: **1.c7** (1.Rxb2? Rf2+ 2.Kd3 Rxb2 3.c7 Sf2+ 4.Ke3 Rc2 =) **1...Rf2+** (1...Rf8 2.Bc6+ Ka7 3.Rd8 +) **2.Ke1!** (2.Ke3? Sc4+ 3.Kd4 Rxd2+ 4.Kc3 Sd6 5.Bc6+ Ka7 6.Kxd2 Sf2 =) **2...Sd3+!** **3.Rxd3** (3.Kd1? Rf8 4.c8Q+ Rxc8 5.Bxc8 Sf4 6.Rd8 g2 7.Rg8 Sf2+ 8.Kd2 Se4+! 9.Ke3 Sc3 10.Rg7 Kb8 11.Ba6 Scd5+! =) **3...Rc2 4.c8Q+ Rxc8 5.Bxc8 g2 6.Bb7+! Kxb7 7.Rd7+ Kc6 8.Rg7 Kd5 9.Rxg2 Ke4 10.Rg1 Sf2 11.Kxf2 +-.**

**Commendation - (Pavel Arestov - E0376)** Another miniature from this author's workshop. It is not enough for Black to gain a knight (1...Rxc4), so he plays more forcefully 1...Rb4+! and then the knight's gain would be enough for a draw. However, an unpleasant surprise of 2.Sb6!! follows. In this way, White gains an important tempo and in another beautiful winning maneuver, the queen completes the destruction in Black's camp. Solution: **1.h8Q! Rb4+!** (1...Rxc4 2.Qa1! Rb4+ 3.Kc7! h4 4.Qg7+ - main line) **2.Sb6!!** (2.Kc7? Rxc4+ =) **2...Rxb6+ 3.Kc7! Rb4!** [3...Re6 4.Qc3! Rg6! 5.Qb2! (but not 5.Qc1+? Kh2! 6.Qxb1 Rg7+ 7.Kd6 h4 =) 5...Bf5(Bd3) 6.Qd4+ Kh2 7.Qf2+ +-] **4.Qa1!** (4.Qxh5? Rc4+ 5.Kd6 Bd3 =; 4.Qc3? Rg4!

5.Qc1+ Kh2! 6.Qxb1 h4 => **4...h4** [4...Kg2(Kf2) 5.Qc3! Rg4 6.Qb2+ Kh3 7.Qxb1+., or 4...Kh1 5.Qa5! Rf4 (5...Rg5 6.Qxh5+ +-) 6.Qe1+ Kg2 7.Qxb1 +., or 4...Rb3 5.Qd4+ Kg2 6.Qd2+ Kg3 7.Qe1+ Kg2 8.Qe2+ Kg3 9.Qe6! Rf3 10.Qe1+ +-] **5.Qg7+!** (5.Qc3? Rf4 6.Qc1+ Rf1 => **5...Kh1** (5...Kh2 6.Qe5+ Kg2 7.Qe2+ Kg3 8.Qe1+ +., or 5...Kf2(Kf1) 6.Qf8+ +-) **6.Qc3! Re4!** (6...Rg4 7.Qh3+ +-) **7.Qc1+ Kg2 8.Qb2+!** (8.Qxb1? Rc4+! 9.Kd6 h3 =, draw with bKg2) **8...Kg3 9.Qxb1** (win with bKg3 9.Qb3+? Kg2 10.Qb2+ Kg3 – loss) **9...Rc4+ 10.Kd6 h3 11.Qg1+ +-.**

**Special Commendation - (Yechiel Robinson - E0384)** An elegant miniature with the promotion to knight, in which the game continues. The individual fragments of the game are already known, but the strict anticipation was not found. Solution: **1.a4!** (The black knight cannot catch the white pawn, but it can force an under-promotion) **1...Sf2 2.a5 Se4 3.a6 Sd6 4.a7 Sc8 5.a8S!** (5.a8Q? stalemate, or 5.a8B is a material draw, for example: 5...Sb6 6.Bc6 Sd5 threatening 7...Sxf4 or 7.Bxd5 stalemate) **5...Sb6 6.Sc7** (Avoiding stalemate again) **6...Sd7 7.Se6 Sf8 8.Sg5** (Avoiding stalemate yet again and threatening 9.Sf7+ mate) **8...Sxh7 9.Sxh7 +-.**

*We thank Michal for this timely award. Please send comments to Franjo Vrabec by October 1st, 2021.*

