

**Bishop and Knight Save the Day:  
A World Champion's Favorite Studies**

Sergei Tkachenko

# **Bishop and Knight Save the Day: A World Champion's Favorite Studies**

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## **THE BISHOP AND THE KNIGHT HAND IN HAND...**

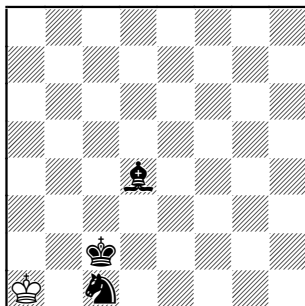
The bishop and knight pair often make chess players shudder. Why? Because of the tricky checkmate! Mating with a bishop and knight is far from simple. Indeed, there have been cases when famous players were unable to mate their opponent in the allocated 50 moves.

One example involved the Kievan master Evsey Poliak. The game ended in a draw after he failed to mate his opponent with bishop, knight and king versus a lone king. After the game, somebody asked him why he didn't chase the enemy king into a corner that was the same color as his bishop. The disappointed Poliak replied: "I kept trying to chase him but for some reason the king refused to move there!"

There was even an old painting that captured this balance of forces! Back in 1793, French artist Remi-Fursy Descarsin painted a doctor playing chess against... the Grim Reaper, no less. And the doctor looks dead pleased, because he's just mated Death himself with a bishop and knight!

Here's that position from Descarsin's painting  
(No. I):

### No. I



Actually, though, the Grim Reaper had the last laugh – poor Descarsin was guillotined later that year during the French Terror.

Ever since chess composition became widespread, famous problemists have created studies where the bishop and knight finish off the opponent's king. However, many of them failed to withstand the test of time and dual solutions and other slip-ups were found in them. Despite that, some of the cooked puzzles got fixed.

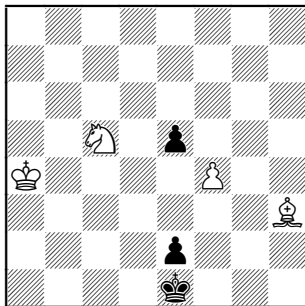
**No. II** shows a corrected version of a study by the winner of the first international chess tournament (London, 1851), the famous German chess player Adolf Anderssen.

## No. II

A. Anderssen

Aufgaben für Schachspieler, 1842

(corrected by S. Tkachenko)





*White to play and win*

First, white needs to restrict the freedom of the black king...

**1. ♘e4!** After 1.fxe5? ♔d2! white has to work hard to draw: 2. ♙d7! e1=♚ 3.e6 ♔c3 4. ♔b5 and so on.

**1...exf4 2. ♔b3! f3** (2...♔d1 3. ♙g4 ♔e1 4. ♘c3)  
**3. ♔c2 f2 4. ♘c5!** And back to its starting square!

4...f1= 5.d3#. Instructive interaction of all of white's pieces!

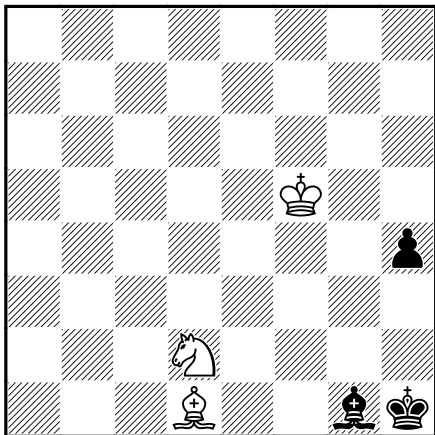
The point of this book isn't to teach chess players how to mate the opponent with king, bishop and knight against the king. There are many other works out there where you can learn that.

Rather, this book contains 100 instructive studies where the bishop and knight successfully counter different black armies. As before, there are no more than six moves in the solutions. This allows experienced players to test their skills and calculation technique just from looking at the diagram.

Weaker players will also find analyzing these studies very instructive. The variety of tactical ideas where the bishop and knight combine in the finale will provide new practical skills.

Good luck in unraveling more chess mysteries!

## No. 1



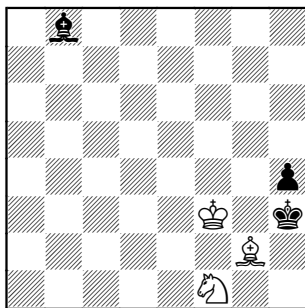
*White to play and win*

Black's problem is the unfortunate location of his king...

1. ♖f3+ ♔h2 2. ♘f1+ ♔h3 3. ♖h1!! Only in the corner! The bishop is useless in the middle: 3... ♖d5? ♖h2! 4. ♔e4 ♔g2!, and black is saved. Not 3... ♔f4? ♖h2+, and the white king cannot reach f3.

3... ♖h2 (3... ♖d4 4. ♔f4) 4. ♔e4! ♖f4. The black king cannot gain his freedom: 4... ♔g4 5. ♘xh2+ and so on.

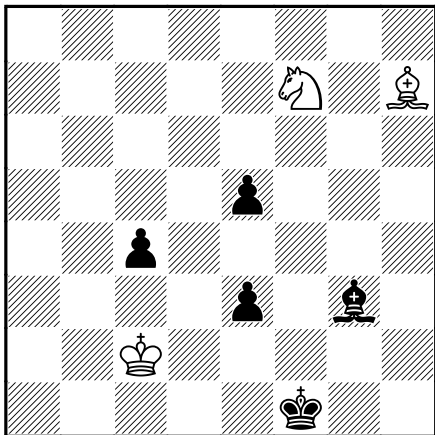
5. ♔f3! (5... ♔xf4?, stalemate) 5... ♖e5 6. ♖g2#.



Author A. Troitsky, 1896



No. 2



*White to play and draw*