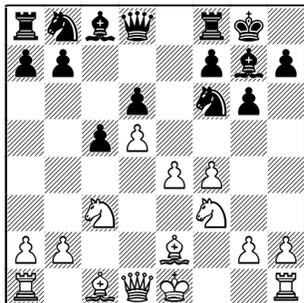


## Part 2



1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7 4 e4  
d6 5 f4 c5 6 d5 0-0 7 ♗f3 e6 8  
♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5 ♖e8

## STEP BY STEP

### 10 e5

White has no real alternatives to this breakthrough. I think it is the only way to fight for an advantage.

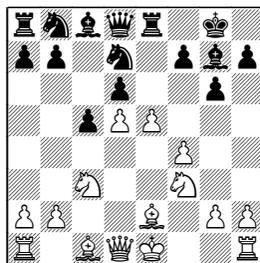
I must confess that I sinned more than once in blitz with the incorrect sac 10 0-0? ♗xe4 11 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 12 ♙d3 ♖e8 13 f5, but it counts only on the cheapo 13...♗d7 (13...♙xf5+) 14 ♗g5 ♗e5 15 ♗xf7 ♗xf7 16 fxg6 ♗e5 17 ♖h5 hxg6 18 ♙xg6 ♗xg6 19 ♖xg6 ♖f8?? 20 ♙h6+--. Instead, 19...♖e7 20 ♙d2 ♖e8+ or 19...♖e5+ repel the attack.

10 ♗d2 is much more solid, but nowadays it is considered innocuous. Perhaps simplest is to develop the knight to a6 – 10...♗a6 11 0-0 ♗c7 12 a4 b6 13 ♖e1 ♙a6 14 ♖a3 ♙xe2 15 ♖xe2=, Spassky-Marin, France, 1991.

### 10...dxe5

I was surprised to discover that the seemingly stupid 10...♗fd7 is not that bad at all.

The only certain thing now is that 11 e6? fxe6 12 dxe6 ♗f6+ leaves White over-extended.



The allegedly best 11 exd6?! achieves the same result after 11... a6 12 a4 (12 0-0 b5+) 12...♗f6 13 0-0 ♖xd6! (A Chess Base source mentions only 13...♙g4 14 ♖b3 b6 15 h3 ♙xf3 16 ♙xf3 ♖xd6 17 ♙d2±) 14 ♗e5 ♖d8! 15 ♙f3 ♗bd7 16 ♖e1 ♗xe5 17 fx5 ♗d7 18 e6 ♗e5. Now White has to take on f7 and think about maintaining the balance, e.g. 19 exf7+ ♗xf7 20 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 21 ♙f4 ♙d4+ 22 ♖h1 ♗e5 23 d6 ♗xf3 24 ♖xf3 ♙d7 25 ♖xb7 ♖b8 26 ♖d5+ ♖f7 27 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 28 ♖e1=. My effort to improve on this variation proved in vain.

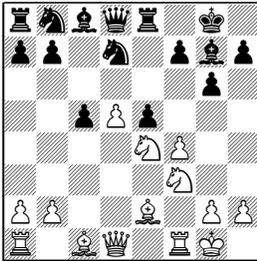
Eventually I understood that Black's tender point in the diagram

Part 2

position is f7 and we should attack it by:

11 0-0! dxe5 12 ♖e4!

12 fxe5 ♖xe5 13 ♔f4 would transpose to a popular position where White has not sufficient compensation in my opinion.



The first thing I considered here was:

a) 12...exf4 13 ♖d6 ♖e7 14 ♔xf4 ♖b6 (14...♔xb2 15 ♔g5±) 15 ♖g5. White has full compensation and making a couple of natural moves suffices to convince the engines:

15...♔f6 16 ♖ge4 ♔d4+ 17 ♖h1 f5 18 ♖c3 ♖a6 19 ♖db5±. Black's king is rather vulnerable.

15...♔d4+ 16 ♖h1 f6 17 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 18 ♖f3 ♖e4 (Alternatively, 18...♔e3 19 d6 ♖e6 20 ♔xe3 ♖xe3 21 ♖d2 ♖e6 22 ♖g5 ♖xe2 23 ♖xe2 ffg5 24 ♖e7 ♖c6 25 ♖f7+ ♖h8 26 ♖ae1 ♖d7 27 ♖e6 ♖d4 28 ♖d5 ♖f5 29 ♖xf5 gxf5 30 ♖xf5±; 18...♔xb2 19 ♖b1 ♔c3 20 d6 ♖e8 21 ♖xb6 axb6 22 ♔b5± and the threat of 23 ♖b3+ regains some material.) 19 ♔h6 (It is also tempting to eat the important dark-squared bishop by 19 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 20 ♖b3 ♖g7 21 ♖ad1 ♖8d7 22 ♔e3 ♖xd1 23 ♖xd1) 19...♖8d7 20 ♔d3 ♖e5 21 ♖xd4 cxd4 22 ♖c1 ♖d8

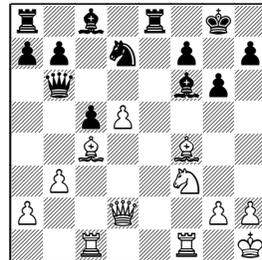
23 ♔f4 ♖xd5 24 ♔e4↑.

Then I looked at the purely computer move:

b) 12...♖f8. The trick is that 13 fxe5 ♖xe5 14 ♔g5 ♖b6 15 ♔e7 would face 15...♖bd7! with unclear play. Other continuations give White some initiative:

15...♖xf3+ 16 ♖xf3 ♖xb2 17 ♖f6+±; 15...♖xb2!? 16 ♖f6+ (16 ♖fg5!?) 16...♔xf6 17 ♔xf6 ♖bd7 18 ♖b1 (18 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 19 ♖b1 ♖d4+ 20 ♖xd4 cxd4 21 ♔xe5 ♖e8 22 ♔xd4 ♖xe2 23 ♖fe1 ♖xe1+ 24 ♖xe1 ♔d7 25 ♖e7 ♖d8 26 ♖f2±. This endgame should be a draw, of course.) 18...♖a3 19 ♖b3 ♖xf3+ 20 ♖bf3 ♖xa2 21 ♔e7 ♖e5 22 ♖e3 ♖c4 23 ♔xc4 ♖xc4 24 ♔xf8 ♖f8 25 ♖ef3 f5 26 ♖e1∞. Anyway, my impression was that Black's defence was too often based on checks along the g1-a7 diagonal, so I focused on:

13 ♖h1!? exf4 14 ♔xf4 ♖f6 (14...♔xb2 15 ♔g5) 15 ♖xf6+ ♔xf6 16 ♖c1 ♖d7 17 ♖d2 ♖b6 18 ♖b3 ♖e8 19 ♔c4↑



It is not obvious how Black can disentangle his pieces. His immediate concern should be how to complete development. The only reasonable move in that direction is

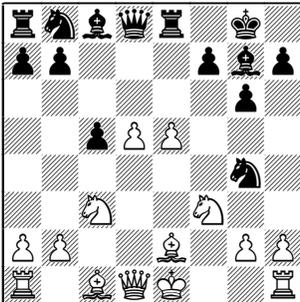
19...♖f8, (since 19...♗e5? loses to 20 ♗e3) when 20 ♗g5 ♗g7 21 ♗f2 admonishes about the weakness of f7, e.g. 21...♗d7 22 ♗e5! ♗xe5 23 ♗xf7+ ♖h8 24 ♗f6 ♗xf6 25 ♗xf6 ♗d8 26 d6±.

As a whole, my proposition of 11 0-0! dxe5 12 ♗e4! leads to a strong White's initiative without excessive risk.

I should also mention 10...♗g4 11 h3 ♗h6. Now best seems the restrained development by 12 0-0 (or 12 ♗e4 first) 12...♗f5 13 ♗e4 ♗f5 (or 12...dxe5 13 fxe5 ♗f5 14 0-0 ♗d7 15 e6) 13 0-0 dxe5 14 fxe5 ♗d7 15 e6 fxe6 16 dxe6 with an edge, for instance, 16...♗b6 17 ♗b5 ♗xe6 18 ♗xe8± ♗xe8 19 ♗xc5 ♗d5 20 ♖e1 or 16...♗e5 17 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 18 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 19 e7 ♗d4+ 20 ♖h2 ♖e8 21 ♗g5±.

### 11 fxe5 ♗g4

11...♗f7 is already dubious because White's pawn arrives at e7: 12 e6 fxe6 13 dxe6 ♗b6 14 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 15 ♗b5 ♗a6 16 e7 ♖e8 17 ♗g5 h6 18 ♗d6 ♗d7 19 ♗xe8 ♗xe8 20 ♗e3 ♗xe7 21 ♖f2 ♗a4 22 ♗ad1±.



### 12 e6!

It took me too many years to ripen for this move. The next pages are irrelevant to the proposed repertoire, but they might be of interest to Black players who can face the widespread 12 ♗g5. When I started playing the FPA more than 20 years ago, I believed firmly in this move. I had a lot of original analyses and it brought me many memorable victories over strong opponents. However, two ideas completely destroyed my favourite repertoire. They remain milestones in the theory of the FPA as White has not found anything to revive the variation:

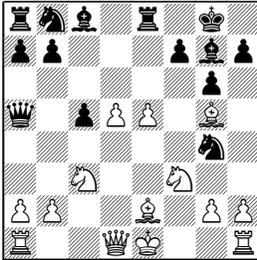
Neurohr-Schlosser, St. Ingbert 1988: 12...♗b6 13 0-0 ♗xe5 14 d6 ♗xf3+ 15 ♗xf3 ♗xb2 16 ♗d5 ♗d4+ 17 ♖h1 ♗xa1 18 ♗xa1 ♗xa1 19 ♗xa1 ♖e5!! and Black is somewhat better; Semkov-Marin, Berga, 1990

14 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 15 ♗c4 ♗xb2 16 d6 ♖f8! 17 ♗xf7+ ♖g7!±.

**White has many other options, of course, but they all lead to a forced draw as best.**

For many years I could not understand how White players still persisted with playing this line while it was obviously dead. I myself switched to dxe5 early in the opening. Then Golubev presented me with his very interesting book *Understanding the King's Indian, Gambit 2006*, where I was really stunned to read that 12 ♗g5 ♗b6 13 ♗d2, intending long castling, was rather dangerous to Black!! (Some research on this subject pointed out to a 2005 Chess Base opening sur-

vey by Konikowski.) And off I went, my old love coming back at full bloom. I started playing blitz games to test Golubev's recommendation, but soon discovered that most of my opponents answered 12 ♖g5 with 12...♗a5.



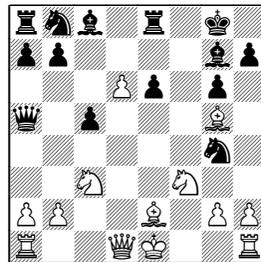
Now the hint about castling queenside does not help since the enemy queen is much more dangerous than it was from b6, and it does not block the advance of the b7-pawn. On the other hand, the b2 pawn is not hanging, so 13 0-0 should be in favourable circumstances compared to the 12...♗b6 line. Detailed analysis did not confirm my hopes though. After 13...♞xe5 White usually chooses 14 d6, but then 14...♞bc6! (I'd be glad to take Konikowski's word that "White has the better prospects" after 14 d6, but my own inner voice tells me just the opposite.) 15 ♞d5 c4! turned to be extremely unpleasant, e.g. 16 ♞f6+ ♙xf6 17 ♙xf6 ♞g4. (By the way, Konikowski does not consider 14...♞bc6 at all. I suspect that it is not the only good option for Black though.)

The alternative 14 ♞xe5 ♙xe5 15 ♙c4 (or 15 d6 ♙e6 16 ♞h1 c4 17 ♞e4

♞d7+) 15...♗b4 16 ♗b3 ♙f5 17 d6 ♗xb3 18 axb3 ♙xd6 19 ♞d5 is not a playable option either. Only in the most optimistic frame of mind I could assess it as roughly equal. Anyway, we cannot speak about any White's advantage.

I was not going to give up easily and began looking for new ways. Obviously 12...♗a5 takes the sting of the whole idea with d6 and ♞d5.

However, White obtains other options, as **13 e6!** (Formally, this is not a novelty as it had already been played in the game Hartmann-Erwes, Germany 1994, but White connected it with a wrong idea – 13...fxe6 14 0-0?! 13...fxe6 14 d6 (14 h3 ♞f6!)



The more I analysed this position, the more I liked it for White.

I shall explain the fine points of this pawn structure later in this chapter. White's play is linked with the vulnerable dark squares in Black's camp and the hanging state of the g4-knight. Of course, the d6-pawn is also lying in ambush only two squares away from queening. Perhaps Black should activate his queen by:

14...c4

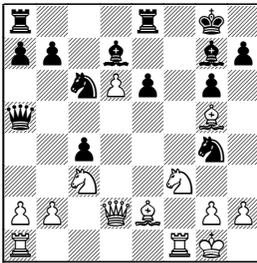
5 f4 c5 6 d5 0-0 7 ♖f3 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5 ♖e8

Alternatives are 14...♙d7 15 0-0 c4 16 ♖d2 ♖c6 (16...♖f8 17 ♖h1 ♖c6 18 h3 ♖ge5 19 ♙h6 ♖ac8 20 ♖ae1 ♖f5 21 ♖xe5 ♖xf1+ 22 ♖xf1 ♖xe5 23 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 24 ♙xc4 ♖a5 25 ♙d3↑) 17 ♖e4! ♙xd2 (17...♖f5 18 ♖c2) 18 ♖fxd2 regaining the pawn with a plus; 14...♙d7 15 0-0! (15 h3 ♖ge5 16 0-0 ♖xf3+ 17 ♖xf3 c4 18 ♖d2 ♖e5 19 ♖f4 ♙d7 20 ♖af1 ♖f8) 15...c4 16 ♖h1 ♖b6 17 ♖e1 ♙d7 (17...♖b4 18 ♖d2±) 18 ♖h4± ♖e5 19 ♖e4.

15 ♖d2 ♖c6

The seemingly dumb 15...♙d7 might be better. Then 16 ♙xc4 ♖de5 17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5+ 18 ♙e2 ♖f8! 19 d7 ♙xd7 20 ♖xd7 ♖e3 is rather risky for White, so he should better develop and play all over the board: 16 0-0 ♖c5+ 17 ♖h1 b5 18 h3 ♖ge5 19 a4 bxa4 20 ♖xa4 ♙b7 21 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 22 d7±.

16 0-0 ♙d7



17 ♖e4!

A very important resource which exploits the placement of Black's knight on g4. That's why moves like 17 h3 should be made only by concrete reasons. In our case Black would have welcomed it as 17...♖ge5 18 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 19 ♙e7 ♖c5+ 20 ♖h1 ♙c6 is satisfactory for

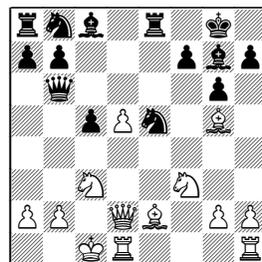
him. 17 ♖h1 is more consistent, but the forced play 17...♖ge5 18 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 19 ♙h6 ♙xh6 20 ♖xh6 ♙c6 21 ♖e3 b6 22 b4 cxb3 23 axb3 ♖c5 24 ♖xc5 bxc5 25 ♖a5 ♖f7 (25...♙d7 26 ♖a6 ♙b7 27 ♖aa1 ♖f8 28 ♙c4) 26 ♖b5 ♖ed8 27 ♖c7 ♖ab8 28 ♖xa7 ♖xd6 29 ♖xe6 ♖e8 30 ♙c4 ♖h8 31 h4 ♖xc4 32 ♖ff7= leads only to a draw. The text allows White to conquer the f6-square:

17...♖d5

Alternatively: 17...♖b6+ 18 ♖h1 ♖xb2 19 ♖ab1 ♖xd2 20 ♖fxd2±; 17...♖xd2 18 ♖fxd2±; 17...♖f5 18 ♖c2 ♖f8 (Or 18...♖a5 19 ♖xc4 ♖b6+ 20 ♖h1 ♖e3 21 ♙xe3 ♖xe3 22 ♖c5) 19 ♖h1 retaining a lot of threats.

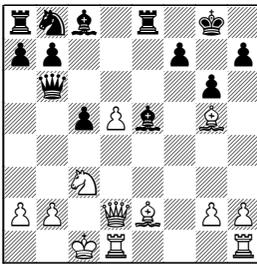
18 ♖f4 ♖f5 (18...♙d4 19 ♖xd4±) 19 ♖fd2 ♖xf4 20 ♖xf4 ♖e3 21 ♖f6+ ♙xf6 22 ♖xf6±.

I was happy with my find 13 e6! to 12...♖a5 and was getting more confident about the whole system, when trouble came, as usual, from the main line with 12...♖b6. Of course 13 ♖d2 looked quite fresh, but gradually **I began to realise that White's play had not a stable background and only counted on some tactical tricks.** Look at the position after 13...♖xe5 14 0-0-0:



Black has tried here probably a dozen of moves but somehow White managed to generate threats. The whole question is who would be faster. Black will put his bishop on f5 and White's king will be in a critical situation, if it had not been for the resource g2-g4 which repels the dangerous attacker. However Black has 14...♖xf3! and White's design is completely destroyed. Then 15 gxf3 ♜f5 (15...♜xc3? 16 ♚xc3 ♞xe2 17 ♞he1±) 16 ♞he1 ♖d7± or 15 ♜xf3 ♖d7 16 d6 ♖e5 17 ♖d5 ♖d3+! 18 ♜b1 ♚xd6 19 ♚xd3 ♜f5± are rather grim for him.

I attempted to get around this obstacle by changing the move order: 14 ♖xe5 instead of castling, but 14...♜xe5 15 0-0-0 turned out to be not much better since Black had:

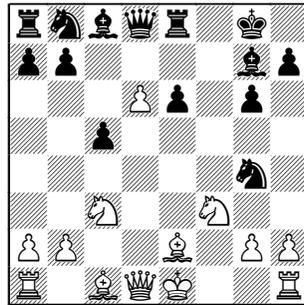


15...♜xc3 (It is another question that 15...♖d7 may be even better for Black: 16 ♞he1 ♜d4 17 ♖b5 ♖e5 18 ♖xd4 cxd4 19 ♚xd4 ♜f5± or 16 d6 ♖f6 17 ♞he1 ♜xc3) 16 ♚xc3 ♞xe2 17 ♞he1 (17 ♜h6 f6) 17...♜g4 18 ♜h6 f6 19 ♞xe2 (19 d6 ♚xb2+ 20 ♚xb2 ♞xb2 21 ♞e8+=) 19...♜xe2 20 ♚h3 (20 ♚e3 ♜f7±) 20...♚d6 21 ♚c8+ ♜f7 22 ♞e1 g5 23 ♞xe2 ♚f4+ with perpetual. Of course this forced

draw is sufficient, albeit not exclusive argument, against 13 ♚d2.

I was already ripe for the thought of burying once again the FPA, but at that point it dawned on me that White could try a completely different, purely strategic approach. This brings us back to my proposed repertoire:

**12...fxe6 13 d6**



Apparently I'm not alone to think that White's position hides some venom as two strong grandmasters have recently tested the new move order 13 ♜g5!?, and, note, in very important team tournaments – the Olympiad and the Russian championship! Jobava-Bologan, Turin 2006, saw further 13...♖f6 14 d6 h6 15 ♜xf6 ♚xf6 16 ♖b5 ♜d7 17 ♖c7 ♖c6 18 ♖xa8±. White came also better in Tarasova-Lomineishvili, EICC Plovdiv 2008, after 13...♜f6 14 ♜xf6 ♖xf6 15 d6 ♖d5 16 ♖xd5 exd5 17 ♚xd5+ ♜e6 18 ♚xc5 ♖d7 19 ♚d4±.

The critical line 13...♚b6 14 ♚d2 appeared in I. Popov-Inarkiev, Dagomys 2008, when 14...c4 15 0-0-0 exd5 16 ♞he1 ♖c6 17 ♜xc4 ♜f5 18

5 f4 c5 6 d5 0-0 7 ♖f3 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5 ♞e8

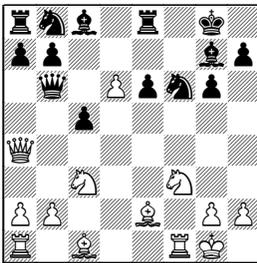
♙xd5+ ♔h8 19 ♖h4 was very tangled, but probably slightly better for White. I have no idea though what White had in mind against the computer's suggestion 14...♙xc3 15 bxc3 exd5. Perhaps we will learn the answer in future.

In the diagram position I analyse:

- A. 13...♙b6
- B. 13...♖e5
- C. 13...♖c6
- D. 13...♙d7
- E. 13...♞f8

**A. 13...♙b6**

I start with this move, because it is absolutely critical for my idea. It bans 14 0-0 due to 14...c4+, and discourages the thematic development of the c1-bishop to g5 since the b2-pawn is hanging. White has not too much of a choice. At first I pondered over 14 ♖a4 ♖f6 15 0-0



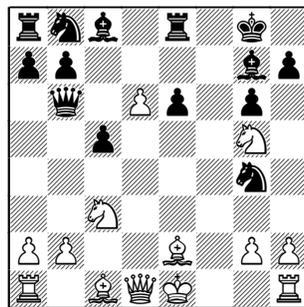
It seems that White's attack is running very smoothly on the dark squares:

15...♖bd7 16 ♖h4 ♖xd6 17 ♙h6 ♙xh6 (17...♙e7 18 ♖g5 ♙xh6 19 ♖xh6 ♖g7 20 ♖h3♖) 18 ♖xh6 ♖g4 (Or 18...♙e7 19 ♖g5 ♞f8 20 ♞ad1±

♖e5 21 ♖ce4) 19 ♖g5 ♖ge5 20 ♞ad1 ♙e7 21 ♙e3 ♖f7 (21...♖xf3+ 22 ♞xf3 with the following options: 22...b6 23 ♖e4; 22...♞f8 23 ♖d5; 22...♖f6 23 ♞df1 ♖d5 24 ♙f2±) 22 ♖e4 ♞f8 23 ♖fg5 ♖xg5 24 ♖xg5 ♖f6 25 ♙c4. All the white pieces come into play to ensure a stable advantage after 25...a6 26 ♞de1 b5 27 ♙xe6+ ♙xe6 28 ♙xe6+ ♙xe6 29 ♖xe6 ♞f7 30 ♖xc5±. Black's problems sprang from the weakness of the e6-pawn. Therefore the knight should go not to d7, but to c6:

15...♙xd6! 16 ♖e4 (Now 16 ♖h4 ♖c6 17 ♙h6 ♙xh6 18 ♖xh6 ♞f8 19 ♖g5 ♙e7 is much less effective for White in comparison with the previous variation.) 16...♙e7 17 ♙g5 ♙d7 18 ♙b3 ♙c6 19 ♖xf6+ ♙xf6 20 ♙c4 and Black has various ways to level the game as 20...♖a6 (but not 20...♙xg5?! 21 ♞ae1!) 21 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 22 ♞ad1 ♖c7 23 ♖d4 ♙e5 24 ♖xc6 bxc6 25 ♞fe1♖ or 20...b5 21 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 22 ♙xb5 a6 23 ♙c4 ♖d7.

Remains:  
**14 ♖g5!**



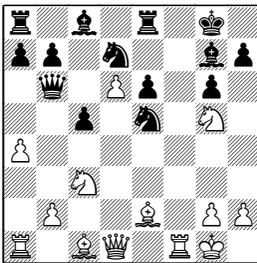
**14...♖h6**

The knight is heading for f5 from where it covers the f-file, attacks d6 and does not bar the g7-bishop.

However, 14...♖e5 15 0-0 ♖bd7 also looks possible.

15...♖bc6 does not control the f6-square so we should be able to rapidly destroy the enemy's castling position, for instance: 16 ♖e1 ♖d4 (16...♖b4 17 a3) 17 ♖h4 h5 (17...♖xe2+ 18 ♖xe2 h5 19 ♖e4±) 18 ♖xh5! ♖f5 19 ♖h3 gxh5 20 ♖xh5 ♖d7 21 ♖h7+ ♖f8 22 ♖ce4+-.

Then only 16 a4! poses significant problems to Black.



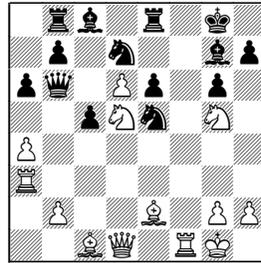
Instead, 16 ♖e1 c4+ 17 ♖h1 ♖xd6 18 ♖h4 h6 19 ♖ge4 ♖e7 or 16 ♖ge4 c4+ 17 ♖h1 ♖c6 18 ♖e1 b5 or 16 ♖e3 ♖xb2 17 ♖b5 ♖f8 18 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 are insufficient for obtaining an advantage.

The pawn move is threatening with ♖b5, but more importantly, it enables the rook lift ♖a1-a3-h3 with a devastating effect:

a) 16...a6 17 ♖a3 ♖b8 (17...c4+ 18 ♖h1 ♖c5 19 ♖e3 ♖c6 20 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 21 ♖ce4 ♖d5 22 ♖b1 b5 23 ♖f3 ♖xf3 24 ♖axf3 ♖b7 25 ♖f7 ♖f8 26 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 27 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 28 ♖f1+ ♖f5 29 ♖xe6+-) 18 ♖d5!

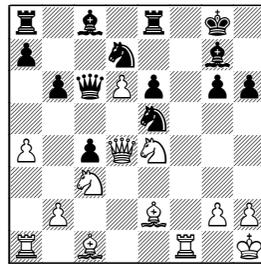
White's pieces are incredibly ac-

tive. Whatever idea I tried, everything worked perfectly!



18...exd5 19 ♖xd5+ ♖h8 20 ♖h3+-;

b) 16...c4+ 17 ♖h1 ♖c6 18 ♖d4 h6 19 ♖ge4 b6



20 ♖f6+! ♖xf6 21 ♖xe5 ♖h5 22 ♖b5±.

Some readers proposed another retreat:

14...♖f6

White answers 15 0-0



15...♗c6

15...♙d7 also deserves attention.

FM Hagen Poetsch sent me deep analyses which do not prove any White's advantage. His main line is: 16 ♖h1 ♗c6 17 ♗a4 ♘b4 18 ♙d2 ♗d4 19 ♙c3 ♗d5 20 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 21 ♗xd5=. It is better to deprive Black of the b4-square with 16 a3!? a6 17 ♗e1! ♗xd6 (17...♗c6 18 ♗h4 h6 19 ♗ge4 ♗xe4 20 ♗xe4 c4+ 21 ♖h1 ♗d4 22 ♙xh6) 18 ♙f4 ♗e7 19 ♗g3 b6 20 ♙d6 ♗d8



21 ♙d3!

Poetsch considers only 21 ♗f7 ♙xf7 22 ♙c7 with no more than a draw. The text, on the contrary, provides White with a crushing attack:

21...♙c6 22 ♗xh7→.

The 15th move alternative 15...♗bd7 is weak, according to Poetsch, due to 16 a4 with initiative: 16...c4+ 17 ♖h1 ♗c5 18 ♞a3 a6 19 ♗ce4 ♗xe4 20 ♗xe4 ♗e5 21 ♗g5 ♗d5 22 ♗c2 ♗e5 23 ♞h3 or 16...h6 17 a5 ♗d8 18 ♗f3 when Black's kingside is weakened. On the opposite wing White also have threats like ♗b5.

Let us return to 15 0-0 ♗c6.

Now White follows with 16 ♗a4 ♘b4 17 ♞f4 ♗a5 18 ♙e3

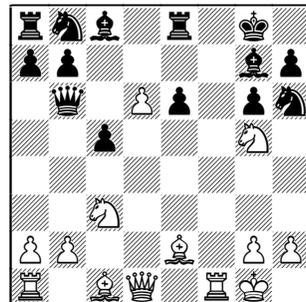


White's d6-pawn and active pieces are constantly creating concrete threats. Poetsch examines here:

18...♗d5 19 ♙d2 ♗d8 (19...♗cb4? 20 ♞f7 ♗d8 21 ♙b5 ♗c6 22 ♗f3 ♞f8 23 ♙xf8+ ♗xf8 24 ♗h3) 20 ♗f7 ♙d4+ 21 ♖h1 ♗d7 22 ♗h6+ ♖h8 23 ♞f1 with an advantage, for instance: 23...♗e5 24 ♙g5 ♗g7 (24...♙e3 25 ♙b5) 25 ♗d2 ♙d7 26 ♗c3 ♞f8 27 ♗xd5 exd5 28 ♙e7± or 23...♗d8 24 ♗c3 ♗xd6 25 ♙g5 ♙g7 26 ♗d2 ♗c7 (26...♗d7? 27 ♙b5 ♗c6 28 ♞f7) 27 ♙xd8 ♞xd8 28 ♗f7+ ♖g8 29 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 30 ♞ae1±.

Of course, this analysis covers only the first lines of the engines, but it sheds some light on White's possibilities.

**15 0-0**



We should build our play on better coordination and space advantage. Every attempt to grab quickly material usually ends up favourably to Black: 15 ♖b5? ♖d8 16 ♙f4 ♖c6 17 ♖c7 ♗xb2 18 ♖b1 ♗c3+ 19 ♙d2 ♗d4 20 ♖xa8 ♗xd6 21 ♖e4 ♗b8↑.

In the diagram position, main branches are:

- A1. 15... ♖c6
- A2. 15... ♖f5

**A1. 15... ♖c6 16 ♖ge4!**

Initially I let myself being enticed by the beautiful variation:

a) 16 ♖a4 ♗b4 17 ♖h1 ♖f5 18 d7 ♙xd7 19 ♗xd7 ♗xa4? 20 ♖xe6 ♙f6 (20... ♗b4 21 ♙g5 ♖e5 22 ♗d5 ♖h8 23 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 24 g4±; 20... ♖h8 21 ♙g5 ♙xb2 22 ♗ae1 ♙c3 23 ♙d3 ♗xa2 24 ♙xf5 gxf5 25 ♖e3±) 21 ♙g5 ♙xg5 22 ♗xf5 ♖e7 23 ♗d5 ♖b4 24 ♗af1!!+- ♙h6 25 ♗d2!, but 19... ♗ad8!! quickly sobered me down: 20 ♗f7+ ♖h8 21 ♖xc5 ♖e7 22 ♗xe7 (22 ♖xe6 ♖dd7 23 a3 ♗a5 24 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 25 ♗xf5 gxf5 26 g4 ♖d4 27 ♙c4 h6 28 ♖xg7 ♖e1+ 29 ♖g2 hxg5±) 22... ♖cxe7 23 ♖f7+ ♖g8 24 ♖xd8 ♗h4! 25 ♙f4 ♖d5 26 g3 ♗xd8 27 ♖xe6 ♗b6 28 ♖xg7 ♖xf4 29 ♖xf5 ♖xe2 30 ♖e7+ ♖g7 31 ♖d5 ♗e6 32 ♖f4 ♖xf4 33 ♗xf4 ♗e2=. This is a dead draw.

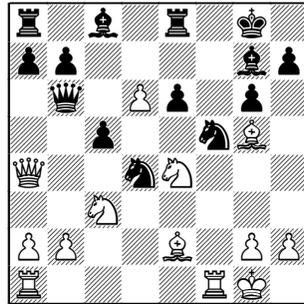
b) 16 ♖ce4 does not achieve the goal either owing to 16... ♖d4 17 ♙c4 ♖hf5 18 ♗xf5 ♖xf5 19 d7 ♙xd7 20 ♗xd7 ♖e7±.

**In this system, when you are uncertain how to continue, point your pieces at the kingside dark squares.** Such a strategy works here, too:

**16... ♖f5**

16... ♖f7 fails to 17 d7 ♙xd7 18 ♗xd7 ♙d4+ 19 ♖h1 ♖e7 20 ♗xf7! and White emerges with a better ending after 20... ♖xf7 21 ♗d6 ♖e5 22 ♙g5 ♖d7 23 ♗xb6 axb6 24 ♖f6 ♖c7 25 ♖xh7 ♖g7 26 ♖f6±.

**17 ♙g5 ♖cd4 18 ♗a4**

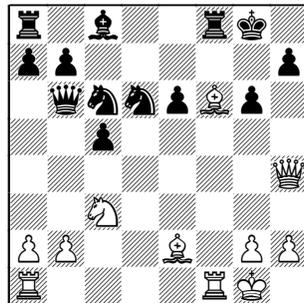


Black covered solidly his kingside and I was unable to find anything decisive on that wing. Fortunately, we have another valuable resource – the d6-pawn.

**18... ♖c6**

This retreat does not look natural, but it is the first line of Rybka. “She” thinks that White has nothing better but return to d1. Alternative is 18... ♗c6 19 ♗xc6 ♖xc6 20 g4 ♖fd4 21 ♖xc5 ♖e5 22 ♙d1±.

**19 ♖f6+! ♙xf6 20 ♙xf6 ♖xd6 21 ♗h4 ♖f8**



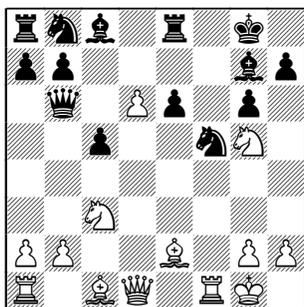
5 f4 c5 6 d5 0-0 7 ♖f3 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5 ♞e8

Black's position was difficult. For instance, 21...♗d4 22 ♙e5 ♖d8 23 ♗f4 ♗6f5 loses a piece to 24 g4 ♗xe2+ 25 ♗xe2 b6 26 ♗c3 ♙b7 27 gxf5±.

### 22 ♙h5!

An exquisite move. Black still can put up some resistance, but the result of the opening battle is already clear. The threat of taking on g6 is impossible to deflect: 22...♗b4 (22...♗f7 23 ♗g3±) 23 ♗g5 ♗f5 (23...♗f7 24 ♗g3±) 24 ♞f4 ♗xb2 25 ♞b1 ♗d2 26 ♙xg6 ♗e3+ (26...h6 27 ♙f7+ ♗xf7 28 ♗h5+ ♗xf6 29 ♗e4+-) 27 ♗h1 h6 28 ♗g4 ♗e5 29 ♙xe5 ♗xe5 30 ♙xf5+ ♗h8 31 ♗g6 exf5 32 ♗xh6+ ♗g8 33 ♗d5±.

### A2. 15...♗f5



### 16 ♞xf5!!

I have not analysed any other continuations since this hit proved to be good enough. Rybka and Fritz 11 at depth 15 still do not see it all. Later I discovered that Deep Junior 10 comported more humanly. It picked up this sacrifice in a flash and correctly evaluated it in White's

favour ever since the first second. But, amazingly, going deeper, the engine rejected this option!

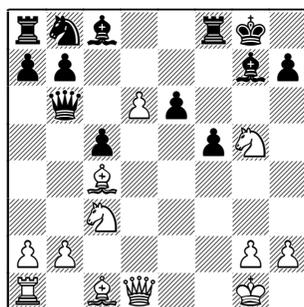
### 16...gxf5 17 ♙b5

Ensuring an access to h5 and removing a defender of the crucial e6-square.

### 17...♞f8

White's attack is also very strong following 17...♙d7 18 ♗h5 ♗xd6 (18...♙xb5 19 ♗xh7+ ♗f8 20 ♗g6 ♗g8 21 ♗xe6 c4+ 22 ♗h1 ♗d4 23 ♙h6+-) 19 ♗xh7+ ♗f8 20 ♗f3 ♙c6 (20...♗e7 21 ♗e5 ♗f6 22 ♗g6+ ♗f7 23 ♙e2±; 20...♙xb5 21 ♙h6 ♙xh6 22 ♗xh6+ ♗g8 23 ♗xb5 ♗f8 24 ♗g6+ ♗h8 25 ♗g5 ♞e7 26 ♗xe6+-) 21 ♙h6 ♙xh6 22 ♗xh6+ ♗g8 23 ♗g6+ ♗h8 24 ♞e1, for instance, 24...♗f8 25 ♗g5 ♗g7 26 ♗h5+ ♗g8 27 ♙c4 ♗d7 28 ♙xe6+ ♞xe6 29 ♞xe6 ♗f6 30 ♗h4↑.

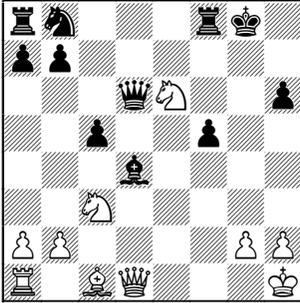
### 18 ♙c4



Black's queenside pieces are unable to rescue its king on time:

A2a. 18...h6; A2b. 18...♗h8; A2c. 18...♙d4+

A2a. 18...h6 19 ♙xe6+ ♙xe6 20 ♗xe6 ♙d4+ 21 ♗h1 ♗xd6



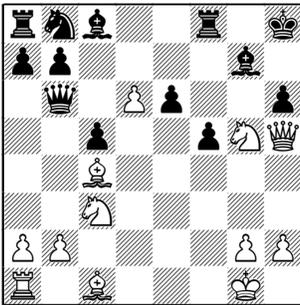
**22 ♖b3!**

22 ♖xf8 ♗xf8 23 ♖h5 ♘c6 24 ♙xh6 ♗f7 25 ♖h4 ♗g6 26 ♗f1 is unclear. White's knights are dreadful attackers and should be "traded" for rooks only with concrete benefits. We have no urgent reasons to start regaining the sacrificed material.

**22...♗f7 23 ♙f4 ♖b6 24 ♖b5 ♘c6 25 ♙c7 ♗a6 26 ♘d6± ♘e5 27 h3 ♘c4 28 ♖xf7 ♗xe6 29 ♘xh6+**

We have already levelled the material while our attack is still going on.

**A2b. 18...♙h8 19 ♖h5 h6**



**20 ♘b5!**

Again, this hit is better than grabbing back material by 20 ♘xe6

♙xe6 21 ♙xh6 ♙xc4 22 ♙xg7+ ♙xg7 23 ♗g5+=.

**20...♙d7**

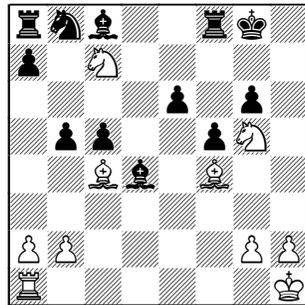
Or 20...a6 21 ♘c7 ♖b4 22 ♙f4 ♗xc4 23 ♙e5; 20...♘c6 21 ♙f4.

**21 ♙f4 ♘c6 22 ♘f7+ ♗xf7 23 ♗xf7 ♘a5 24 ♗xd7 ♘xc4 25 ♗f1 e5 26 ♙xh6 ♙xh6 27 ♖e6 ♙e3+ 28 ♙h1 ♗f8 29 ♗f3+-.**

**A2c. 18...♙d4+ 19 ♙h1 ♗xd6 20 ♖h5 ♗e7 21 ♙f4 ♗g7 22 ♘b5!**

22 ♘xe6 ♙xe6 23 ♙xe6+ ♙h8 24 ♙h6 ♗e5 25 ♙xf8 ♗xe6 26 ♘b5 ♘a6 27 ♘xd4 cxd4 28 ♙a3± should only be enough for a draw.

**22...♗g6 23 ♗xg6+ hxg6 24 ♘c7 b5**



**25 ♙xb5**

The alternative 25 ♘gxe6 bxc4 26 ♘xf8 ♙xf8 27 ♗c1 ♘a6 28 ♘xa8 seems to allow Black to equalise: 28...♘b4 29 ♗xc4 ♘d3 30 ♙d6+ ♙f7 31 h4 ♘xb2 32 ♗c2 ♙b7 33 ♙xc5 (33 ♘c7 ♙e4 34 ♙xc5 ♙xc2 35 ♙xd4 ♘c4 36 ♙xa7 ♙b1=) 33...♙xc5 34 ♗xc5 ♙xa8 35 ♗a5 ♙c6 36 ♗a6 ♙e8 37 ♙h2±. The small plus is for the opposite coloured bishops attack,

5 f4 c5 6 d5 0-0 7 ♖f3 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5 ♖e8

but it does not mean White has real chances to win.

**25...♖e5 26 ♖e1!!**

A very nice tactical blow which underlines that White's attack is not yet exhausted. The bishop is immune in view of 26...exf4? 27 ♖e7 ♙g7 28 ♖e8± setting up a mating net.

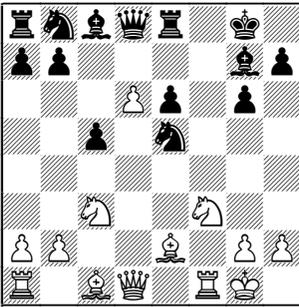
**26...♖d7 27 ♙c4+ ♗h8 28 ♖xa8 exf4 29 ♖e7 ♖f6 30 ♖xa7 ♙d7 31 ♖c7 ♙xb2 32 h4 ♙c6 33 ♖ce6 ♖a8 34 ♖c7↑**

I have the feeling that White can improve somehow on this variation.

**B. 13...♖e5**

This move aims to prevent ♙g5, followed up by ♗d2 and possible long castling.

**14 0-0**



**14...♖bc6**

Black can win the d6-pawn by 14...♖xf3+ 15 ♙xf3 ♙d4+ (15...♖c6 16 ♙xc6 bxc6 17 ♖e4±) 16 ♗h1 ♗xd6, but the lack of his dark-squared bishop should cost him dearly: 17 ♖b5 ♗d7 (17...♗b6 18 ♖xd4 cxd4 19 ♙h6 ♖d7 20 ♗d2±) 18 ♖xd4 cxd4 (18...♗xd4 19 ♖e2

♖c6 20 ♙e3 ♗e5 21 ♗f2 ♖d4 loses to 22 ♙c6) 19 ♗d3 ♖c6 20 ♙e4 ♗g7 21 ♙g5 e5 22 ♙f6 ♗f7 23 ♗g3 ♙d7 24 h4→. Probably, any reasonable plan for attack on the kingside should work, too.

**15 ♖xe5**

Simple and consistent. We aim to trade dark-squared bishops. 15 ♖e4 ♖xf3+ would misplace our bishop as from f3 it blocks the f-file, 16 ♙xf3 ♖f8 17 ♙g5 ♗b6.

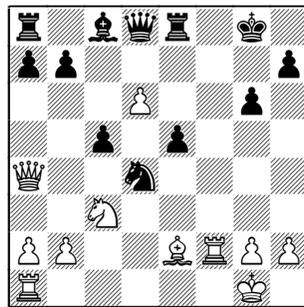
**15...♙xe5**

15...♖xe5 does not look good. I analysed in response 16 ♙e3 b6 17 ♖b5 ♖f8 18 ♗b3 ♖xf1+ 19 ♖xf1 ♖b8 20 ♖c7 ♗xd6 21 ♖e8±.

**16 ♙f4 ♙xf4**

Or 16...♙d4+ 17 ♗h1 ♖f8 (17...e5? 18 ♙h6) 18 ♗d2 ♙d7 19 ♙h6 ♖f5 20 ♙g4 leaves Black very passive, e.g. ♖xf1+ 21 ♖xf1 ♖e5 22 ♗f4 ♗e8 23 ♖e4. By the text Black wins tempi for development and a strong outpost on d4 for the knight. However, the structural defects on the kingside make his defence difficult as the dark-squares are gaping holes.

**17 ♖xf4 e5 18 ♖f2 ♖d4 19 ♗a4**



Suddenly the d6-pawn becomes

the focus of the battle. Look at the following variation:

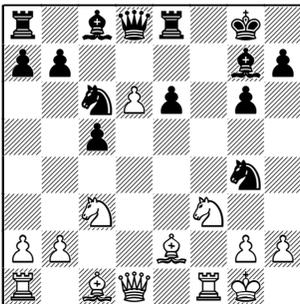
19...♙f5 20 ♖b5 ♜xb5 21 ♜xb5 ♚d7 22 ♚c4+ ♙e6 23 ♚e2 ♜f8 (23...♙g4 24 ♚f1 b6 25 ♜c7 ♚xd6 26 ♜xa8 ♙xa8 27 h3±) 24 ♚af1 ♙xf2 25 ♜xf2 ♚d8 26 ♜f6! White triumphs on the dark squares: 26...♙xa2 27 ♜c3 ♙f7 28 ♚xe5 b6 29 ♜d5 ♙xd5 30 ♚xd5+ ♜g7 31 ♙e6 ♙e8 32 ♚e5+ ♜f7 33 ♚f6+ ♜g8 34 ♙e7 ♜xe7 35 dxe7± ♚e8 36 h4 ♚f7 37 ♚e5 ♚e8 38 ♚e6+ ♜g7 39 g4 h5 40 g5. This variation perfectly illustrates White's positional goal.

**19...♙e6 20 ♙c4 ♜h8 21 ♙xe6 ♜xe6 22 ♜e4 ♚h4 23 ♙e1 ♜xd6 24 g3 ♚g4 25 ♚c4 ♙b6 26 ♚f1**

Black's defence remains difficult, for instance, 26...♚c8 27 ♜g5 ♜e6 28 ♜f7+ ♜g8 29 ♜xe5±.

**C. 13...♜c6 14 0-0**

The thematic 14 ♙g5 is not precise due to 14...♚b6 and White must put his queen on d2 which might prove not too useful: 15 ♚d2 ♜d4 16 ♜xd4 cxd4 17 ♙xg4 dxc3 18 bxc3 ♙e5.



- C1. 14...♜f8
- C2. 14...♜f6
- C3. 14...♜d4
- C4. 14...♙d7

14...e5? hardly deserves attention due to 15 ♜g5 ♜h6 16 ♚d5+ ♜h8 17 ♜f7±.

**C1. 14...♜f8**

An attempt to anticipate White's play on the f-file. The problem with this move is that Black's queen becomes very passive after:

**15.♜h1!**

This transposes to line E. Instead,

15 ♙g5 ♙d4+! is a draw. In the paper edition I examined only 15...♚d7 (15...♚b6? is bad due to 16 ♜a4 ♚a5 17 ♜c1±.) 16 ♜e4 b6

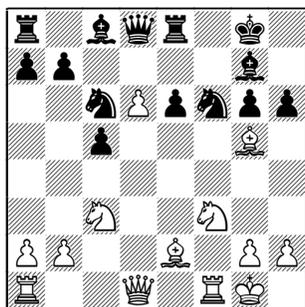


17 ♜fd2! ♜ge5 18 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 19 ♙b5 ♙b7 20 ♚b3

**C2. 14...♜f6 15 ♙g5 h6**

This move solves the problem with the awkward pin, but produces a fatal weakness on g6.

5 f4 c5 6 d5 0-0 7 ♖f3 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5 ♞e8



**16 ♙xf6**

16 ♙h4 loses a tempo: 16...g5 17 ♙f2 b6∞.

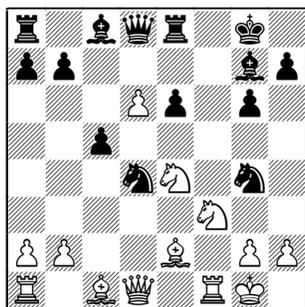
**16...♙xf6 17 ♗d3 ♘g7 18 ♞ad1 ♙d7 19 ♗e4 ♞f8 20 ♙d3 ♙e8 21 ♙c4±**

Black cannot defend everything: 21...♙d7 22 ♖b5 or 21...♖d4 22 ♖e5 with heavy pressure.

**C3. 14...♖d4**

This move looks Black's most natural reaction. I often face it in blitz games.

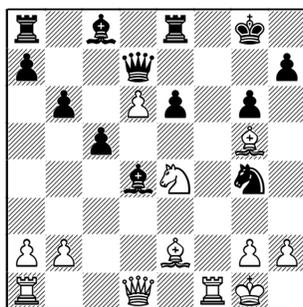
**15 ♖e4**



Reviving the plan with ♙g5.

C3a. 15...b6?; C3b. 15...♖f6?; C3c. 15...♖f5?; C3d. 15...♞f8; C3e. 15...h6

**C3a. 15...b6? 16 ♙g5 ♗d7 17 ♖xd4 ♙xd4+**



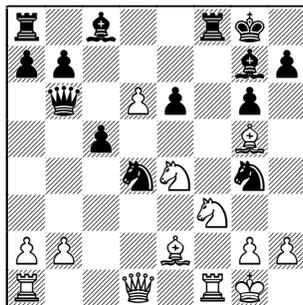
**18 ♗xd4!!+- cxd4 19 ♙xg4 ♗a4 20 b3.**

A funny position. I have won already a couple of games like that, so keep it in mind.

**C3b. 15...♖f6? 16 ♙g5± ♖xe4 17 ♙xd8 ♞xd8 18 ♗e1 ♖xd6 19 ♞d1±** W.Arencibia-Peredun, Toronto 2003.

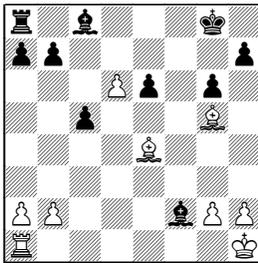
**C3c. 15...♖f5? 16 ♙g5 ♗b6 17 d7 c4+ 18 ♖h1 ♙xd7 19 ♗xd7 h6 20 ♙xc4±**, Berkovich-Shahal, Beersheba 1991.

**C3d. 15...♞f8 16 ♙g5 ♗b6**



**17 ♖fd2!**

I could not find a tangible advantage after 17 ♖xd4 ♙xd4+ 18 ♗h1 ♜xf1+ 19 ♜xf1 ♜c6 (19...♜xb2 20 ♜c1 ♖e5 21 ♜b1 ♜xa2 22 ♙h6 ♙d7 23 ♜xb7+–) 20 ♙f3 (20 ♙xg4 ♜xe4 21 ♙f3 ♜e5 22 ♙e7 ♙d7 23 ♜e1 ♜f5 24 b3 ♜b8 25 ♜e2 b5 26 ♙g4=) 20...♜xe4 21 ♙xe4 ♖f2+ 22 ♜xf2 ♙xf2



I have devoted a lot of time to this endgame. White wins the exchange with ♙xb7, followed by d7. The question is, is that enough for an edge. My final judgment is that the position should be drawish. So we better switch to a slower positional treatment. Our goal for the next few moves will be not to win immediately, but to enforce domination in the centre.

**17...♜xf1+**

Alternative is 17...♖e5 18 ♜xf8+ ♗xf8 19 ♜f1+ ♖f7 20 ♖c4 with strong pressure, for instance, 20...♜c6 21 ♙f3 ♜b5 22 a4± ♖xf3+ 23 ♗h1! ♜d7 24 ♜xf3+–.

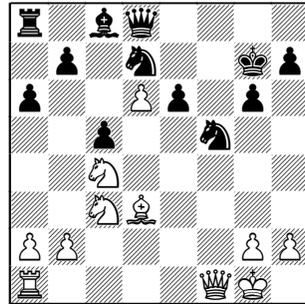
**18 ♜xf1 ♖e5 19 ♙f6 ♖d7 20 ♙xg7 ♗xg7 21 ♙d3 ♖f5**

21...♜xb2 loses to 22 ♖c4 ♜b4 23 ♜b1 ♜a4 24 ♜f4+–.

**22 ♖c4 ♜d8 23 ♖c3!**

23 ♜f3 ♜b8 24 a4 b6 25 ♜f1 ♙a6 26 ♜f4 offers good compensation, but the text is linked with the clear positional idea to kill the f5-knight. Then White's knights and the d6-pawn will rule over the board.

**23...a6**



**24 ♙xf5! gx5 25 ♜e1 ♜f6 26 ♜f2 b5**

Or 26...♜d4 27 ♜xe6 ♜xc4 28 ♜xf5+–.

**27 ♖a5**

Black's queenside is not less vulnerable, for instance, 27...h6 28 ♗h1 ♜g6 29 ♜f3 ♜b8 30 ♜c6 ♗h8 31 ♜c7±.

**27...♖e5 28 ♖b3 c4 29 ♖c5 ♗f7 30 a3 ♖d3 31 ♖xd3 cxd3 32 ♜d1 ♙d7 33 ♜xd3±.**

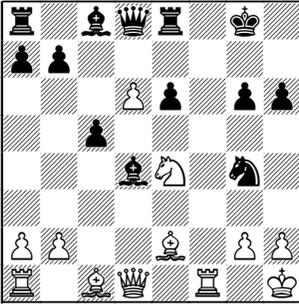
**C3e. 15...h6**

The previous variations showed that Black suffers when White's bishop reaches g5. Therefore, the text is a logical and testing attempt. Its big drawback though is the weakening of the g6-square.

**16 ♖xd4! ♙xd4+ 17 ♗h1**

It seems that Black is lost, be he still has a nice counterblow:

5 f4 c5 6 d5 0-0 7 ♖f3 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5 ♞e8



17... ♖xh2 18 ♜f4!± g5 19 ♜f2  
 ♙xf2 20 ♖xf2 ♜f8 21 ♖d3!

This ends the tactical inter-  
 change in White's favour. 21 ♖e4 b6  
 22 ♖d3 ♖d7 23 ♖xh2 is bad in view  
 of ♙b7 24 ♙e3 ♖ad8 25 ♖d1 ♖h7 26  
 ♖c3 ♖xd3 27 ♙xd3 ♙d5±.

21... ♜xf2 22 ♖g6+ ♖f8 23  
 ♖xh6+ ♖g8 24 ♖g6+ ♖h8 25  
 ♙d2±.

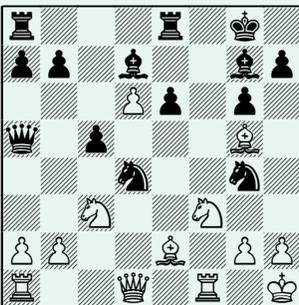
**C4. 14... ♙d7 15 ♖h1!**

15 ♙g5 ♖b6 16 ♖a4 ♖a5 17 ♜c1 c4  
 is not impressive for White.

**15... ♖d4**

15... ♜f8 transposes to line E  
 14... ♜f8.

**16 ♙g5 ♖a5**



White completed development

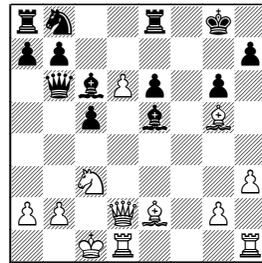
and now he takes aim at Black's  
 most sensitive point, f6:

**17 ♖d2!? ♖e5 18 ♖de4±**

The imminent 19 ♖f6+ promises  
 White a pleasant game.

**D. 13... ♙d7**

At first I thought that the some-  
 what slow regrouping of Black  
 should give White a chance for op-  
 posite attacks and analysed 14 ♙g5  
 ♖b6 15 ♖d2 ♙c6? 16 h3 ♖e5 17 ♖xe5  
 ♙xe5 18 0-0-0!

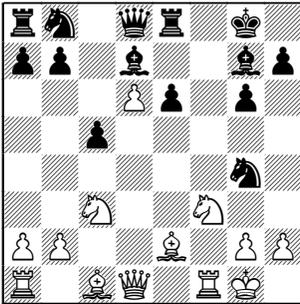


Incredibly, Black might be be-  
 yond salvation here! He seems  
 helpless against h4-h5, for instance,  
 18... ♖d7 19 h4! ♙xg2 20 ♜hg1 ♙h3  
 (Or 20... ♙d5 21 h5 ♖xd6 22 hxg6  
 hxg6 23 ♙h6 ♖h8 24 ♖e3+- in-  
 tending 24 ♖h3) 21 h5 ♙f5 22 hxg6  
 hxg6 23 ♙h6 ♖b4 (23... ♙d4 24  
 ♜xg6+ ♙xg6 25 ♖g5 ♖h7 26 ♜h1+-)  
 24 ♙d3 ♖d4 25 ♜xg6+ ♙xg6 26 ♖g2  
 ♙g7 27 ♖xg6 ♖f8 28 ♖g5+-.

However, 15... ♖c6! puts to the  
 test the whole White concept. Af-  
 ter many fruitless attempts, I had  
 to give up. I must say I was rath-  
 er disappointed. I had to return to  
 the positional treatment with short  
 castling:

**14 0-0**

White achieves good results with 14 ♖g5, but Rybka's first line 14...♗h6 is rather unpleasant. Then 15 0-0 ♖f5 16 ♗d3 h6? fails to 17 ♗xf5 gxf5 18 ♖h5!! hxg5 19 ♗xg5 ♖b6 20 ♗h6 c4+ 21 ♖h1 ♖d4 22 ♗xg7 ♖xg7 23 ♖g5+ ♖f8 24 ♖f3♞, but 16...♖f6! repels the attack. You can see **game 10 Vasilchenko-Kovalev**, Katowice 1990.



D1. 14...♖b6

D2. 14...♗c6

14...♗c6 15.♖h1 transposes to line C4.

### D1. 14...♖b6

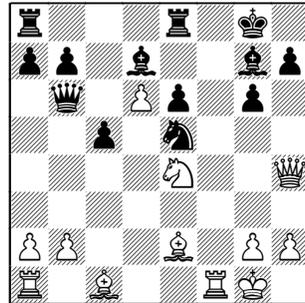
Computer's suggestion. Black is eager to win more material – the exchange or the d6-pawn. The flip-side is that he leaves his king at the mercy of our pieces. Perhaps White has various good options, but I was satisfied with the first and most straightforward variation I tried:

#### 15 ♖e1 ♗c6

Our attack runs smoothly after 15...♖xd6 16 ♖h4 ♗e5 (16...h5 17 h3 ♗e5 18 ♗e4 ♗xf3+ 19 ♖xf3 ♖d4+ 20 ♗e3 ♖xb2 21 ♖af1±) 17 ♗e4 ♗xf3+ 18 ♖xf3 ♖e5 19 ♗g5 ♗c6 20 ♗f6+

♗xf6 21 ♗xf6 ♖xe2 22 ♖h6 ♖e7 23 ♗xe7 ♗d7 24 ♖f2±. This variation clearly shows that Black's active 14th move is rather dubious.

**16 ♖h4 ♗ce5 17 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 18 ♗e4**



Our strategy is simple – we aim to remove the g7-bishop.

#### 18...♖f8

Black can discourage 18 ♗h6 by 18...♖b4. Then we can reroute our bishop to f6: 19 ♗g5 ♖xb2 20 ♗f6 ♖f8 21 ♖ae1!

21 ♗xg7 ♖xg7 22 ♖e7+ ♖g8 would transpose to the main line.

21...♖d4+ 22 ♖h1 ♖ae8 23 ♖f4! h6 24 ♖g3!

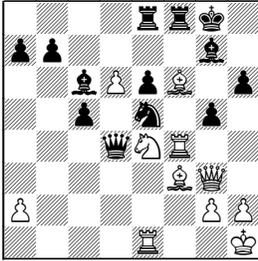
24 ♗xg7 ♖xf4 25 ♖xh6 ♗f7 26 ♖xf4 ♖xg7 27 ♖f1 ♖f8 28 ♗xc5 ♖xf4 29 ♖xf4 e5 30 ♖f1 ♗f5 31 g4 ♖c8 32 gxf5 ♖xc5 33 d7 gxf5 34 ♖xf5 ♗d8 35 ♖g5+ ♖f8 36 ♗f3 also favours White, but the text is much more entertaining.

#### 24...♗c6

24...♖f7 25 ♖d1 ♖b2 26 ♖f2! cuts the black queen off from e5, winning material: 26...♖ef8 27 ♗f3 ♖xf2 28 ♖xf2 ♗xf6 29 ♗xc5±.

#### 25 ♗f3 g5

5 f4 c5 6 d5 0-0 7 ♖f3 e6 8 ♙e2 exd5 9 cxd5 ♞e8

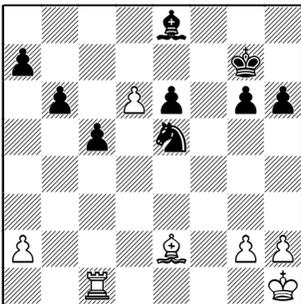


An amazing position where all the pieces on the board seem to be cross-pinned. White wins now with the cold-blooded 26 h4 ♖xf3 27 hxg5.

**19 ♙h6 ♜xb2 20 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 21 ♜e7+ ♖g8 22 ♖g5**

The endgame after 22 ♖f6+ ♞xf6 23 ♜xf6 ♜xe2 24 ♞ae1 ♖f3+ is unclear. As a rule in this system, an extra exchange does not guarantee White an advantage even in the endgame. It is better to have an attack.

**22...♞d4+ 23 ♖h1 ♜h4 24 ♞xf8+ ♞xf8 25 ♞f1 ♞e8 26 ♜f6 h6 27 ♖h7 ♜xf6 28 ♖xf6+ ♖g7 29 ♖xe8+ ♙xe8 30 ♞c1 b6**



This version of the endgame is better for White since his rook is

very active. Play can continue with 31 ♞c3 ♖f7 32 ♞d3 ♙b5 33 ♞e3 ♖xd6 34 ♞xe6 (34 ♙xb5 ♖xb5 35 ♞xe6 ♖f7 36 ♞c6 ♖d4 37 ♞c7+ ♖e6 38 ♞xa7±) 34...♙xe2 35 ♞xd6 ♙c4 36 a3 ♖f7 37 ♖g1±.

## D2. 14...♙c6

Black plays very solidly. After ♖b8-d7 the critical f6-square will be well defended, the e4-square will also be under control, all the threats connected with advancing the d-pawn will evaporate. The only drawback of this approach is that Black is too passive and e6 becomes vulnerable. White's main resource is ♖b5, threatening with ♖c7.

## 15 ♖g5

I rejected 15 ♙g5 ♜b6 16 ♞d2 due to 16...h6! (16...♖d7 was unclear in Kantorik-Likavsky, Ostrava 2005: 17 ♞ae1 c4+ 18 ♖h1 ♞c5 19 h3 ♖ge5 20 ♙e3 ♞a5 21 ♖d4 ♞ac8∞) 17 ♙e7 c4+ 18 ♖h1 ♖e3

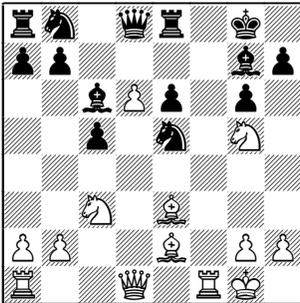
18...♖f2+ 19 ♞xf2 ♜xf2 20 ♞f1 is promising for White: 20...♞c5 21 ♖h4 g5 22 ♖g6 (22 ♙h5 gxh4 23 ♙f7+ ♖h7 24 ♙xe8 h3 25 ♞c2+ ♖h8 26 ♙xc6 ♖xc6 27 ♙f6=) 22...♙d7 (22...♖d7 23 ♙g4 ♞d4 24 ♙xe6+ ♖h7 25 ♞c2 ♞d3 26 ♞f2+-) 23 ♙f6 (23 ♖f8 ♞xf8 24 ♙xf8 ♖c6 25 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 26 ♞c2 ♞e3 27 ♙xc4 ♞f8∞) 23...♖c6 24 h4±. After the text however, White has nothing better than the drawish variation:

19 ♞fe1 ♖d7 20 ♖d1 ♖f5 21 ♙xc4 ♖c5 22 ♙xe6+ ♖xe6 23 ♞xe6 ♙xf3 24 gxf3 ♞xe7 25 ♞xe7 ♖xe7 26 dxe7=.

**15...♖e5**

Again, it is wrong to grab the exchange: 15...♗d4+ 16 ♔h1 ♖f2+ 17 ♜xf2 ♗xf2 18 ♜f1 h6 19 ♜xf2 hgx5 20 ♜g3 with attack.

**16 ♗e3**



**16...b6**

Recommendation of the ECO, vol. A, 4th edition. Black keeps his knight on b8 in order to meet 17 ♖b5 by 17...♖a6. This is an arguable concept, since after 18 ♗f4 White has an obvious initiative, for instance: 18...c4 (Or 18...h6 19 ♜b1 ♖b4 20 ♖h3 ♜d7 21 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 22 ♜xg6+ ♜g7 23 ♜xg7+ ♗xg7 24 ♖c7 ♗xb2 25 ♜ab1 ♗d4+ 26 ♔h1 ♖d5 27 ♖xa8 ♜xa8 28 ♖f4 ♖xf4 29 ♜xf4 ♜d8 30 ♜bf1↑) 19 ♖d4 ♜xd6 20 ♗xc4 ♖c5 21 ♜c1 h6 22 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 23 ♖xc6 hgx5 24 ♜xd6 (24 ♖xe5 ♜xe5) 24...♗xd6 25 b4 ♖b7 26 ♜cd1↑. Still, I will examine as a main line another variation, which also provides full compensation for the pawn.

Let us examine now 16...♖bd7 17 ♖b5 (17 ♜e1 is another interesting option) 17...h6 18 ♖h3 ♗xb5

18...♖g4 19 ♗xg4 ♗xb5 20 ♗e2 ♗xe2 21 ♜xe2 leaves Black with sev-

eral weaknesses, e.g. 21...g5 22 ♖f2 ♗f8 23 h4↑.

19 ♗xb5 ♜b6 20 ♜a4 ♜ad8 21 ♖f4 g5 22 ♖h5 ♗h8 23 ♜ad1. White's game is easier as his pieces are more active.

**17 ♖d2**

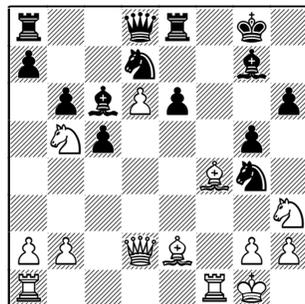
I suppose that this calm development might be most unpleasant to Black. Besides 17 ♖b5!?, which I mentioned in the previous paragraph, we should also have in mind 17 ♜c1 ♖bd7 18 ♖b5 h6 19 ♖xe6 ♜xe6 20 ♜b3 ♖f8 21 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 22 ♜xe6+ ♜f7 or 17 a4 ♖bd7 18 ♖b5 h6 19 ♖xe6 ♜xe6 20 ♜b3 ♖f8 21 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 22 ♜xe6+ ♔h7 23 ♜f1 ♜e8, but it seems that Black is holding there. By the way, ECO only mentions 17 ♖ge4?!

**17...♖bd7**

Black protected everything, but his position is passive. We should seek targets on the queenside

**18 ♖b5 h6 19 ♖h3 ♖g4 20 ♗f4 g5**

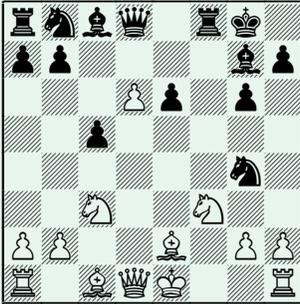
Or 20...♗xb5 21 ♗xb5±.



**21 ♗xg5! hgx5 22 ♗xg5 ♖gf6 23 ♜f4.**

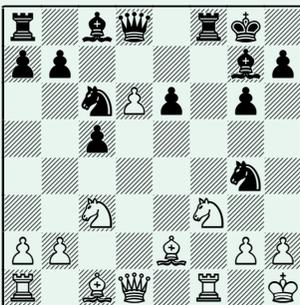
White maintains pressure on the kingside.

**E. 14...♞f8**



This move is in no way trivial! Black makes a second move with the rook while leaving his queenside undeveloped. However it addresses the main flaw of Black's position – the weakness of the f-file. I admit that I simply omitted this move when making the list of candidate moves. Of course I was not aware of the game J. Watson-A Minasian, Los Angeles 1993 which is not in Megabase. Understandably, White was taken by surprise and his reply was already a mistake – 15 ♙g5 ♞b6 15 ♞d2 ♙d7! 16 ♙e7 ♞f5! and Black is on top. It is better to continue:

**15 0-0 ♘c6 16 ♙h1!?**



Only this move allows White to

stay in the battle for the opening advantage. The more natural 15 ♙g5 stumbles into 15...♙d4+! 16 ♘xd4 ♞xf1+ 17 ♞xf1 ♞xg5 18 ♘xc6 ♞e3+ with perpetual check. The prophylactic retreat of White's king leads to a tangled game with tons of possibilities for both sides. I analysed mostly:

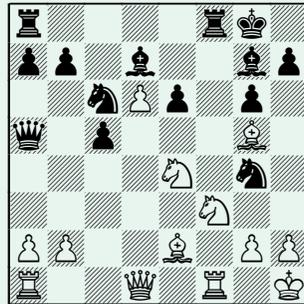
E1. 15...♙d7 and

E2. 15...b6

**E1. 15...♙d7 16 ♙g5 ♞a5**

Or 16...♞b6 17 ♘a4 ♞a5 18 ♙d2 ♘b4 19 a3 ♙xa4 20 ♞c1 b5 21 axb4 cxb4 22 h3.

**17 ♘e4**



Black has a wide choice, but I will examine only the first line of the engines. White is eyeing the c5-square as well as the kingside, for instance, 17...♞c8 18 ♞c1 or 17...♞f5 18 ♘fd2 ♞xf1+ 19 ♙xf1 ♞ce5 20 ♙e2 ♘h6 21 ♘b3±.

**17...♞b4 18 ♞c2 ♞f5 19 a3 ♞b6**

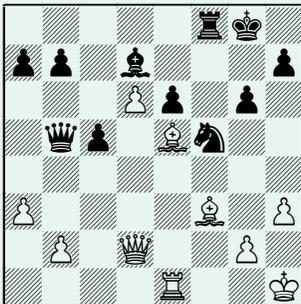
The forced variation 19...♞a5 20 h3 ♘ge5 21 ♘xe5 ♞xe5 22 ♘f6+ ♙xf6 23 ♙xf6 ♘d4 24 ♞c1 ♞f5 looks acceptable for Black, but 25 b4!! gains an edge. (25 ♞h6 ♙xf6 26 ♞xf6 ♘xe2

27 ♖xg6+ hxg6 28 ♜xg6+ ♔h8 29 ♜f1 ♔d2= is only a draw) 25...♜b6 26 ♖xf5 ♘xe2 27 ♜e3 exf5 28 ♜e7 ♘g3+ 29 ♔h2 ♘h5 30 ♜xd7 ♘xf6 31 ♜e6+ ♔g7 32 ♜e7+ ♔g8 33 ♜xf6 ♜e8 34 bxc5 ♜xc5 35 ♔d1±.

**20 h3 ♘ge5**

Or 20...♘f6 21 ♘xf6+ ♔xf6 22 ♔d3 ♔xg5 23 ♔xf5 gxf5 24 ♘xg5 ♘d4 25 ♜f2 ♜xd6 26 ♜h4 ♜e7 27 b4 b6 28 bxc5 bxc5 29 ♖ab1 ♔c6 30 ♜fc1± where c5 is hanging.

**21 ♘xe5 ♖xe5 22 ♘f6+ ♔xf6 23 ♔xf6 ♘d4 24 ♔d2 ♜f5 25 ♖xf5 ♘xf5 26 ♔e5 ♜b3 27 ♔f3 ♜f8 28 ♜e1 ♜b5**



The f5-knight covers the castling position, but White can break through the other wing:

**29 b4!**

29 a4 ♜b6 30 ♔e4 is only equal: 30...♔xa4 31 ♔xf5 ♖xf5 32 ♜h6 ♜f7 33 ♜e4 ♔c2 34 ♜f4 ♔f5 35 ♜h4 ♜c6=.

**29...b6 30 ♔h2 h6 31 ♔a1 ♖c4 32 ♜c1±**

Black is too passive.

**E2. 15...b6**

This move was proposed by one of our readers who sent me his analysis. Black bolsters the weak c5-

pawn and ensures an active development for the c8-bishop. White has full compensation for the pawn, but I'm not sure which is his best line. Typically for the whole system, play is very complex and needs practical tests.

**16 ♘e4 ♔d7 17 ♘fg5 ♘f6**



**18 ♔c4**

18 ♘xf6+ ♖xf6 19 ♖xf6 ♔xf6 20 ♔f3 ♔d4 21 ♜e1 ♜b8 22 ♔f4 (22 ♘h7 ♔xh7 23 ♜h4+ ♔g8 24 ♔xc6=) 22...♘d8 23 ♔e5 ♔b7 looks unclear.

**18...♘xe4 19 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 20 ♘xe4 ♔g7 21 ♘g5**

Perhaps I should stop here with the assessment "compensation", but here are some more moves:

**21...♜e8**

Or 21...♘d8 22 ♜f3 ♜b8 23 ♔f4! (23 ♘e4 ♘f7 24 ♘f6+ ♔xf6 25 ♜xf6 b5 26 ♔e2 ♜xd6 27 ♔e3 e5 28 ♜xd6 ♘xd6 29 ♔xc5=) 23...b5 24 ♔xe6+ ♘xe6 25 ♘xe6 ♜xe6 26 d7 ♔xd7 27 ♔xb8 ♔c6 28 ♜f2 ♔d4 29 ♜e1↑

**22 ♜e2 ♘e5 23 ♔b3 ♜f8 24 ♔xe6+ ♔xe6 25 ♘xe6 ♜xd6 26 ♘xg7 ♘f7 27 ♔d2 ♔xg7 28 ♔c3+ ♔g8 29 ♔d1 ♜f8 30 ♜e6 ♜e8 31 ♜f6↑.**