



THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

PROOF GAMES: Artificial Non-Reality

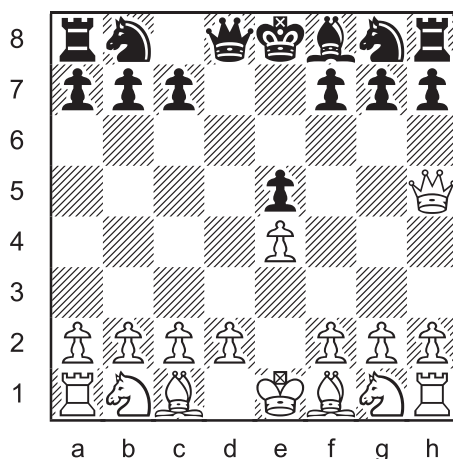
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The task in a *proof game* is to show how a given position can be reached in a legal game. The puzzles in this column have a *move stipulation*. The position must be reached in a precise number of moves, no more and no less. The first two problems are proof games in 4.0 which means four moves by each side.

The positions may be nonsensical, and the strategy dispensable, but the moves are legal.

Proof Game 78

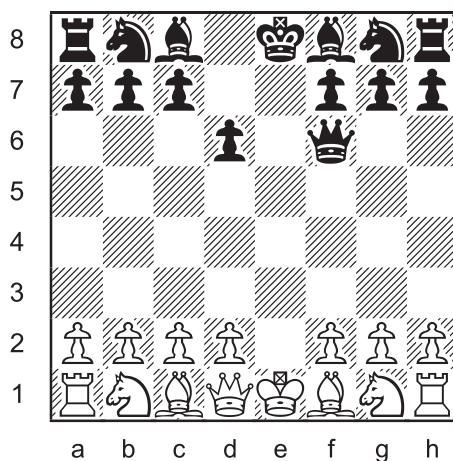


This position, with White to play, was reached in a game after each player made exactly four moves. What were the moves?



The Book of Mystery, translated from ancient Sanskrit by ace detective Harmonius Hound. An essential reference for the investigation of unexplained chess phenomena.

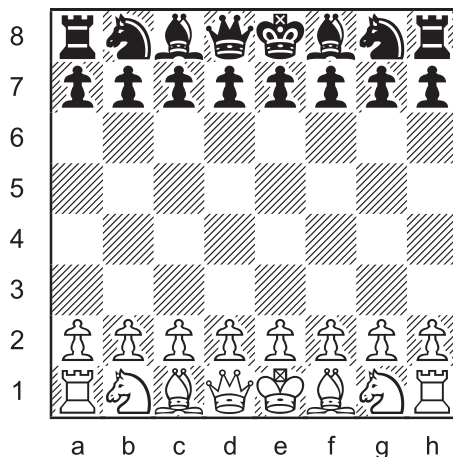
Proof Game 79



This position was reached after Black's fourth turn. What were the moves?

A *synthetic game* is similar to a proof game. But instead of finding the move sequence that leads to a given position, the task is to compose a game that ends with a particular move.

Synthetic Game 38

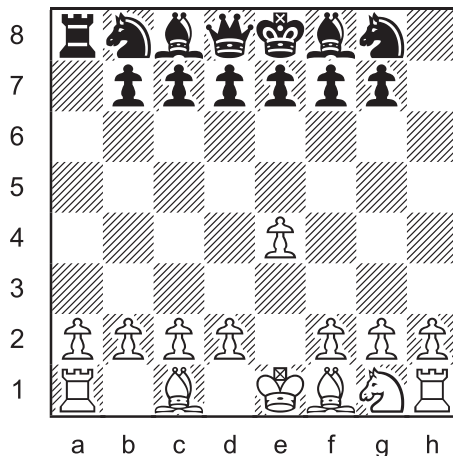


Compose a game that ends with the move **4...Ne5#**



The proof game below is 5.0 moves. One full turn longer than the standard *Puzzling Side* "shorties". Two steps more mysterious.

Longer Proof Game 55 (5.0 moves)



This position was reached after Black's fifth turn. What were the moves?

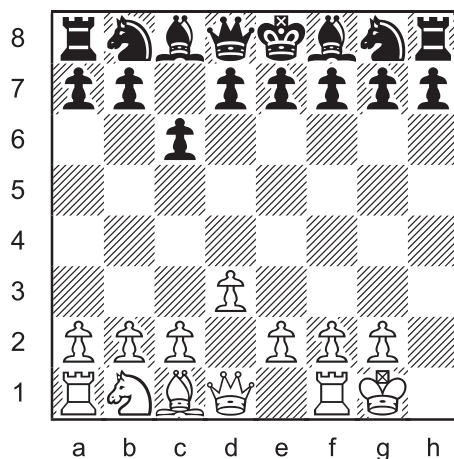
PG SHOWCASE

The following proof games exceed the normal limits of solvability for most chess detectives. They are presented here, not as puzzles, but as artistic endeavours, demonstrating some of the compositional possibilities in this type of retro problem.



This showcase continues our recent theme of “artificial castling”. We start with a “real gem” by German composer Thomas Thannheiser. Brilliant in its complex simplicity.

Longer Proof Game 56 (8.0 moves)

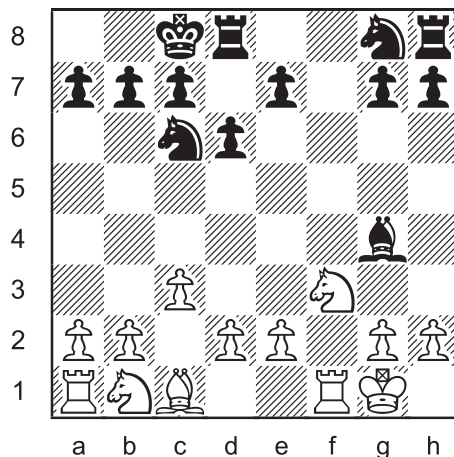


This position was reached after Black's eighth turn. What were the moves?



Next up is a doubleplus beauty by British retro specialist Andrew Buchanan. Apparently both sides have castled. Can you guess who is faking?

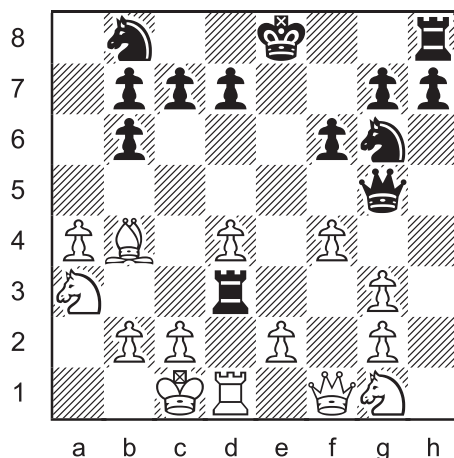
Longer Proof Game 57 (9.5 moves)



This position was reached after White's tenth turn. What were the moves?

In this week's grand finale, by French composer Michel Caillaud, the question might be asked, "Has Black lost the *right to castle*?"

Longer Proof Game 58 (17.5 moves)



This position was reached after White's eighteenth turn. What were the moves?

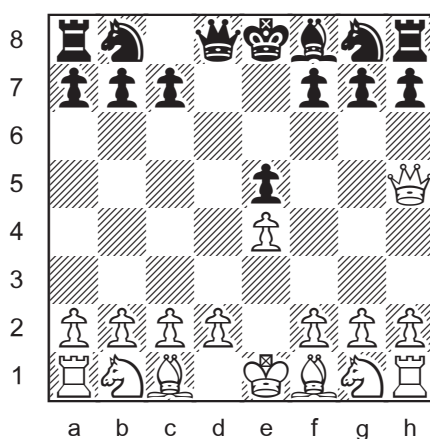
SOLUTIONS

Proof games 78, 79, synthetic game 38, and longer PGs 55 and 55b are by J. Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2018). Proof game 78 is from *Winning Chess Puzzles For Kids Volume 2* (2010).

PDF hyperlinks. You can advance to the solution of any puzzle by clicking on the underlined title above the diagram. To return to the puzzle, click on the title above the solution diagram.

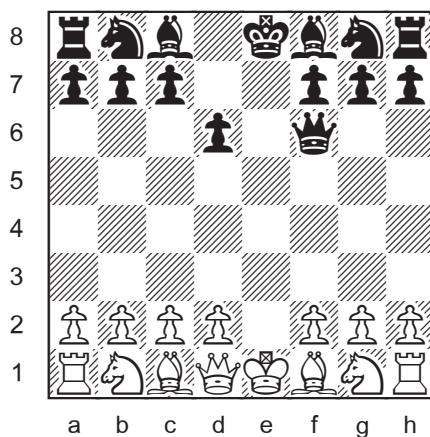
Archives. Past columns and a detailed index of problem-types and composers are available in the *Puzzling Side of Chess* archives.

Proof Game 78



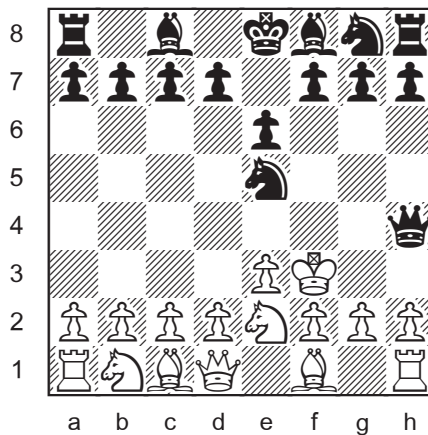
1.e4 d5 2.Qh5 Bg4 3.Qxd5 Bh5 4.Qxh5 e5
A tricky switchback capture on h5.

Proof Game 79



1.e3 d5 2.e4 Qd6 3.exd5 Qf6 4.d6 exd6
White pawn tempo and deceptive black queen.

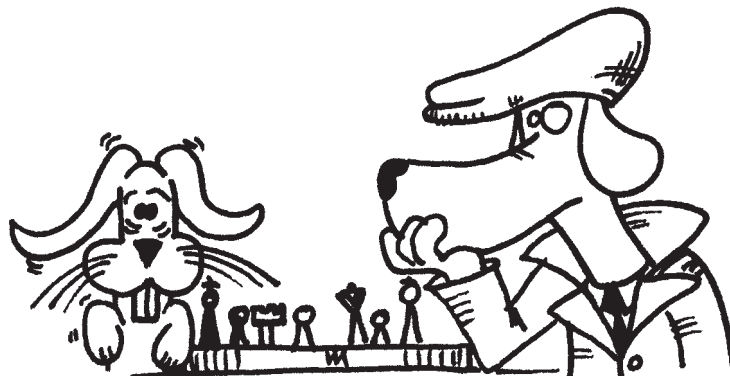
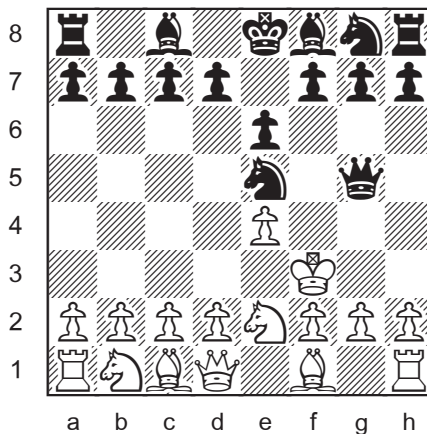
Synthetic Game 38



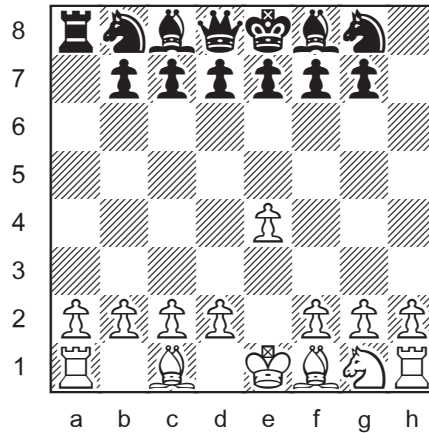
1.e3 Nc6 2.Ke2 e6 3.Kf3 Qh4 4.Ne2 Ne5#

Black's moves can be played in different orders. White can also play 4.Be2 or 4.Qe2.

A similar game is 1.e4 Nc6 2.Ke2 e6 3.Kf3 Qg5 4.Ne2 Ne5#.
See diagram below.



Longer Proof Game 55 (5.0 moves)

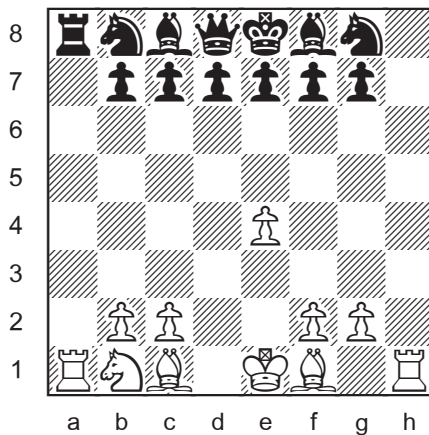


1.e4 h5 2.Qxh5 a5 3.Qxa5 Rh3 4.Na3 Rxa3 5.Qxa8 Rxa8

An impostor black rook, grinning on a8.

Here is a longer cooler version with three additional captures and two open rook files.

Longer Proof Game 55b (7.0 moves)



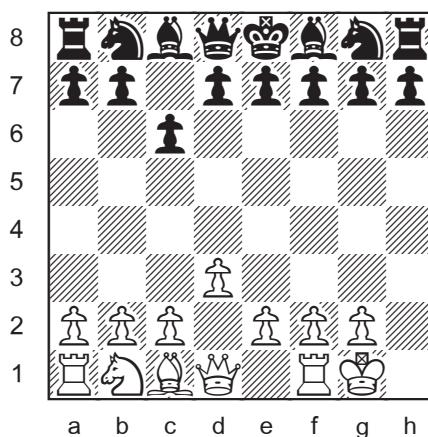
1.e4 h5 2.Qxh5 a5 3.Qxa5 Rxh2 4.Nh3 Rxh3
5.d3 Rxd3 6.a3 Rxa3 7.Qxa8 Rxa8



Longer Proof Game 56 (8.0 moves)

Thomas Thannheiser 2016

Schach



1.d3 c6 2.Kd2 Qc7 3.Ke3 Qxh2 4.Kf3 Qxg1
5.Kg3 Qxf1 6.Kh2 Qe1 7.Rf1 Qa5 8.Kg1 Qd8

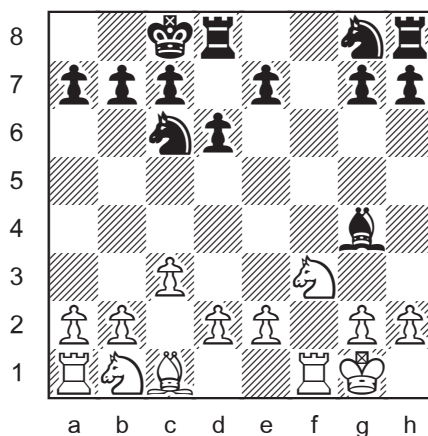
Whose journey is stranger, the white king's or the black queen's?

Longer Proof Game 57 (9.5 moves)

Andrew Buchanan 2013

Problem Paradise

after Bernd Gräfrath 2013



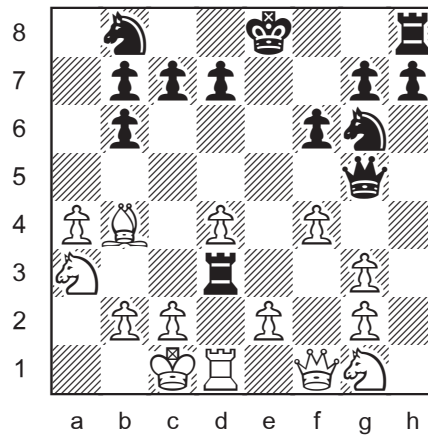
1.c3 d6 2.Qb3 Bg4 3.Qxf7+ Kd7 4.Qxf8 Qxf8 5.Kd1 Qxf2
6.Nf3 Qxf1+ 7.Rxf1 Nc6 8.Ke1 Rd8 9.Kf2 Kc8 10.Kg1

Artificial 0-0 by White. Artificial 0-0-0 by Black.
Everybody's faking!

Longer Proof Game 58 (17.5 moves)

Michel Caillaud 1991

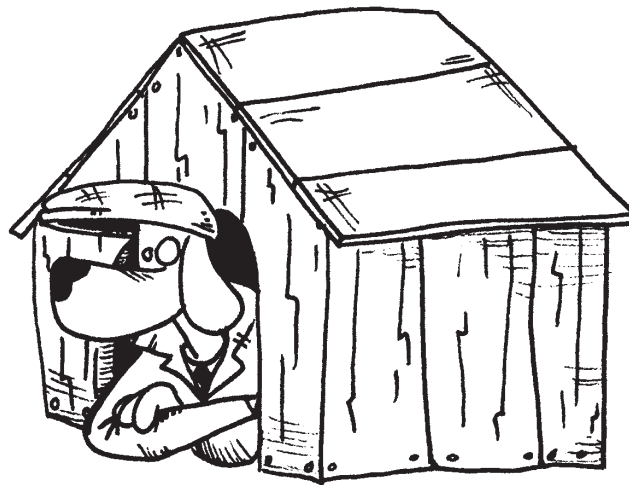
Phénix



1.d4 e6 2.Bd2 Bd6 3.Bb4 Bg3 4.hxg3 Ne7 5.Rh6 0-0
6.Rxe6 Ng6 7.Re8 Qg5 8.Rxc8 f6 9.Re8 Kf7 10.Re6 Rh8
11.Rb6 axb6 12.f4 Ra3 13.Kd2 Rf3 14.a4 Rxf1 15.Na3 Rf3
16.Qf1 Ke8 17.Rd1 Rd3+ 18.Kc1

Fake queenside castling by White. Uncastling kingside by Black.

Non-reality is not always what it seems.



Until next time!

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