

Contents

Symbols	4
Acknowledgements	4
Introduction: Luck in Chess	5
Part 1: Getting Out of Jail	10
1 Typical Faults of the Superior Side	19
2 Reasons to be Cheerful – Summary	49
3 Fighting Out of Trouble	51
Part 2: Aspects of Luck	73
4 Infamy!	90
Part 3: The Successful Speculative Sacrifice	114
5 Why Play Speculative Sacrifices?	117
6 Why Do Defenders Fail? Can't Analyse, Won't Analyse	118
7 Motives for Playing Speculative Sacrifices	147
8 Ways and Means	157
9 When is a Speculative Sacrifice Not a Speculative Sacrifice?	166
Conclusion: How Not to Be Unlucky in Chess	169
Index of Players	175
Index of Openings	176

After 32 ♕d2 ♕f5 33 ♖b2 d4, White probably has to give up his bishop for the pawns. On the other hand, it is unlikely that he could lose the resulting endgame with three pawns for the piece. Alternatively, he can give back the pawn by the calm 32 ♖f1, and probably hold the game. Now he loses the exchange to a bishop skewer, and his position collapses.

32...♕f5 33 ♕f4+ ♖b7 34 ♖bb2 ♕xc2 35 ♖xc2 ♖xa2 0-1

You should be encouraged by games such as this. White was a strong player, graded in the region of 200 BCF (2200 Elo). If strong players can exhibit such weakness when ahead, then so can just about anyone.

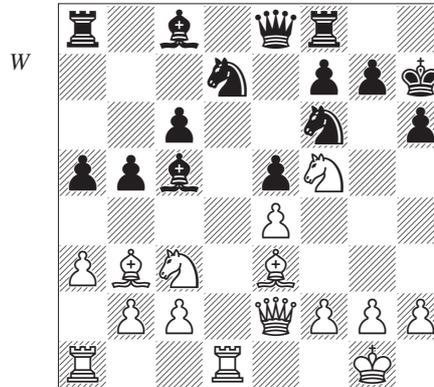
Source of Error 5: Going for Glory

On rare occasions the superior side, uncomfortable with a material advantage, will forego the extra material in order to attack. This is likely to occur when the advantage has been gained by clever attacking play. Out of inertia, and an overdose of adrenaline, the attacker keeps attacking. However, strangely, in the new phase of the attack, the lust for glory has become lazy, the analysis superficial.

In our first example (*see following diagram*), White plays a brilliant sacrifice but, when his opponent offers a pawn to mollify him, he refuses, keeps attacking and ironically himself falls victim to an attractive combination – and this time it's terminal.

15 ♖xd7!!

White pulls out a cracker. The point of this brilliant idea is that if White can distract the black knight from f6, then his queen can get to g4 and h5 to support a sacrificial attack against the king. It is an example of 'the sacrifice in order to sacrifice'.



Rutter – LeMoir

Hillingdon League 1977

15...♕xe3

Instead, 15...♖xd7 (keeping the guard on the c5-bishop) allows 16 ♕xh6!, whereupon 16...gxh6 fails to 17 ♖h5 with an early mate, so Black must reply to the bishop sacrifice with 16...g6, giving back the exchange and remaining a pawn down. In fact, White could carry on his attack instead of recapturing the exchange, the main line being 17 ♖g4! ♖f6 18 ♖g5 ♖d8 19 ♕xf8 ♕xf8 20 ♖d1! ♕d7 21 ♕xf7! gxf5 22 ♖xd7! ♖xd7 23 ♖g6+ ♖h8 24 ♖xf6+ ♕g7 25 ♖h4+ ♕h6 26 ♖xh6#.

Fearing the worst if he allows his king's position to be weakened, Black finds a better way to emerge a pawn down.

16 ♖e7 ♖d8 17 ♖d1?!

He could have played simply 17 ♖xe3 ♕xf5 18 ♖xf7 ♕g6 19 ♖xf8 with a solid extra pawn. The game might not be easy (or quick, or exciting...) to win after that, so White throws more fuel onto the fire. However, he hasn't analysed sufficiently thoroughly, and soon gets into trouble.

17...♕d4 18 ♖xe5

He is committed now. If he plays 18 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 19 ♕xf7, Black has 19...♖f8! winning

back his pawn at least; e.g., 20 ♖a2 ♕xc3 21 bxc3 ♜xa3, when the c-pawn also disappears.

18...♕xe5! 19 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 20 ♕xf7

This allows Black to take the initiative, which he uses to open a sudden attack.

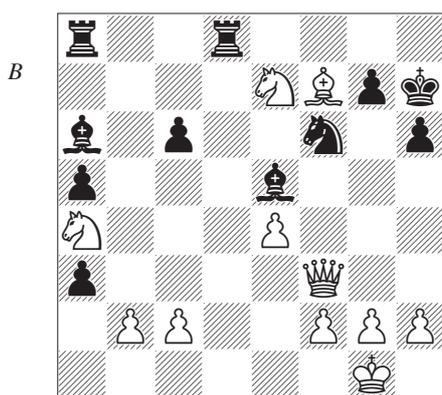
20...b4!?

Black's idea is double-edged. It would have been safer to knock back the bishop by 20...♜a7, after which he could double rooks on the d-file.

21 ♖a4

The knight is sidelined here. That would be OK if he had time to get into the weak c5-square, but Black is planning to attack.

21...♕a6 22 ♜f3 bxa3 23 ♖e7! (D)



The pretty threat is 24 ♜f5+ ♕h8 25 ♖g6+ ♕h7 26 ♖f8++ ♕h8 27 ♜h7+! ♖xh7 28 ♖g6#. Black is teetering on the edge of the abyss, but locates an amazing foothold.

23...g6!! 24 bxa3

Black's king hides behind White's minor pieces after 24 ♕xg6+ ♕g7 25 bxa3 (Black threatened 25...a2!) 25...♜ab8 26 ♖c3 ♕xc3 27 h3 (or 27 ♖f5+ ♕xg6 28 ♜g3+ ♖g4! – opening the line to g7 so that the c3-bishop can prevent mate there – 29 ♜xg4+ ♕h7 30 h3 ♕c8 with a small material advantage for Black) 27...♜b1+ 28 ♕h2 ♕e5+ 29 g3 ♜dd1

30 ♖xc6 ♕xg3+ 31 ♕xg3 ♜g1+ 32 ♕h2 ♜xg6 and Black's many pieces should be somewhat better than the queen.

The move played allows the rook to penetrate along the b-file. Forced onto the defensive, White's resistance quickly collapses.

24...♜ab8 25 ♕b3 ♜d2 26 g3

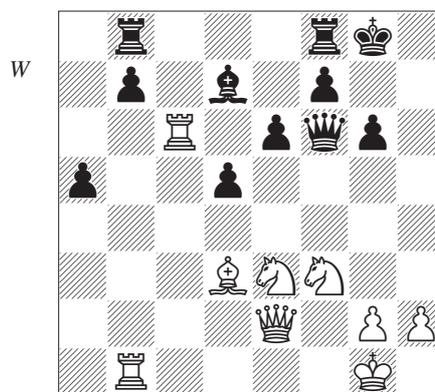
It was much better to block the diagonal of the light-squared bishop by 26 c4!. Now comes a nice finish.

26...♕e2 27 ♜e3 ♜d1+ 28 ♕g2 ♕f1+ 29 ♕f3 ♕d4 30 ♜f4 ♜xb3+!

Foreseen a long way back. After 31 cxb3 ♜d3+, White must give up his queen.

0-1

In the next example, the lazy nature of the superior side's lust for glory is particularly stark.



LeMoir – Daugman
Norfolk Open 2000

White is two pieces for four pawns ahead. He could win quietly by keeping it simple. For instance, 25 ♜cb6 ♕c6 26 ♖g4 followed by playing a knight into e5. However, he sees a combination and throws one of his surplus pieces into the fray.