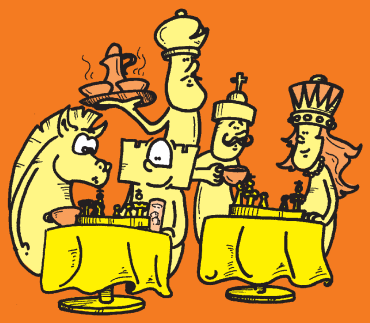


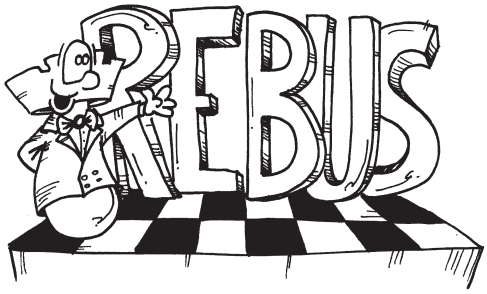
THE PUZZLING SIDE OF CHESS

Jeff Coakley

REBUS UPLOAD 02

number 207 January 28, 2022

This edition of *rebus uploads* presents three problems as usual, but two of them are twins which adds some extra fun. Also included is a picture rebus about making these puzzles.

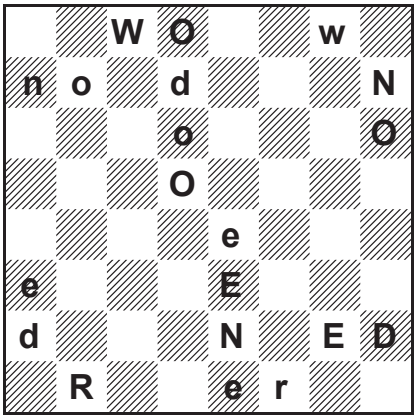


The rebuses below are mirror images of each other, with identical lettering reflected left to right. But the pieces look quite different *through the looking glass*. The curious effect is based on an idea from Wonderland by the wonderful Nina Omelchuk.

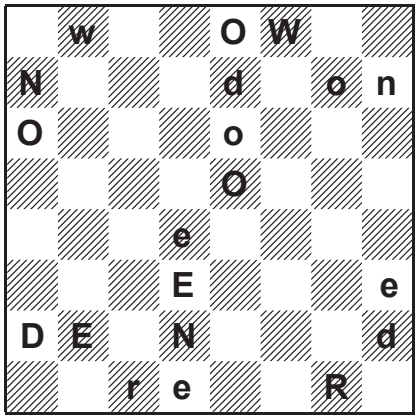
Rebus 78

"*wonder*"

a



b

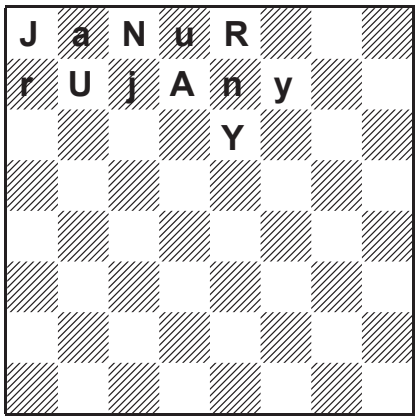


Each letter represents a different type of piece.
Uppercase is one colour, lowercase is the other.
Determine the position and the last move.

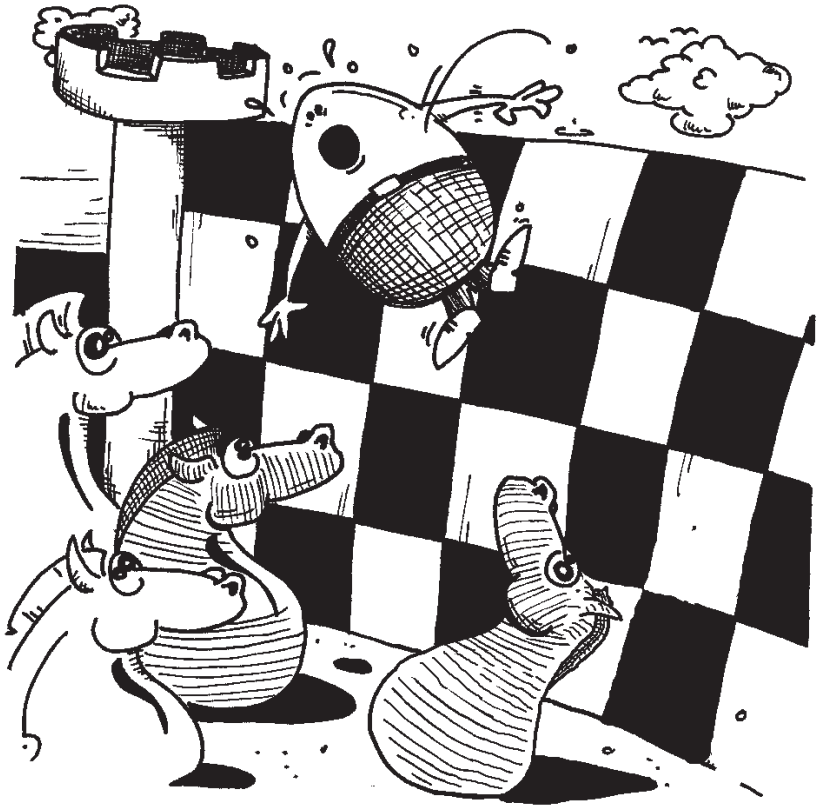
Our next puzzle, of medium hardness, features the maximum number of *potential king pairs*. There are six letters, each with one uppercase and one lowercase. Once the king is revealed, the rest of the solution is fairly easy. But where to start?

Rebus 79

"*January*"



Each letter represents a different type of piece.
Uppercase is one colour, lowercase is the other.
Determine the position and, if possible, the last move.



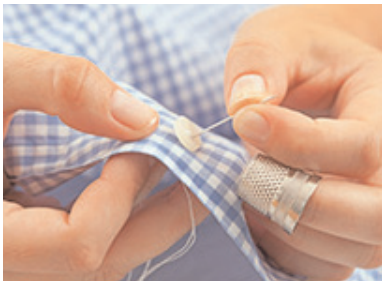
All the King's Horses

Rebuses have been around in one form or another for over 500 years. Lewis Carroll, of Wonderland fame, sometimes used rebuses in his correspondence. Though they were not mentioned in his 1890 essay entitled *Eight or Nine Wise Words about Letter-Writing*.

Before proceeding to the final chessboard puzzle, here is a picture rebus to amuse a different part of your brain. Or you can just skip it.

Riddle: "*Why do we keep making rebuses?*"









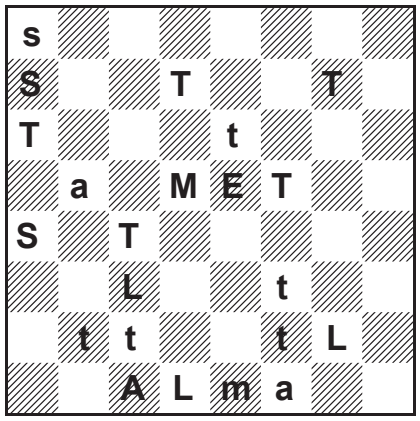



Identifying the kings is often the tricky part of a rebus. But sometimes it's the easiest, as in the following problem. The challenge in this case lies elsewhere.

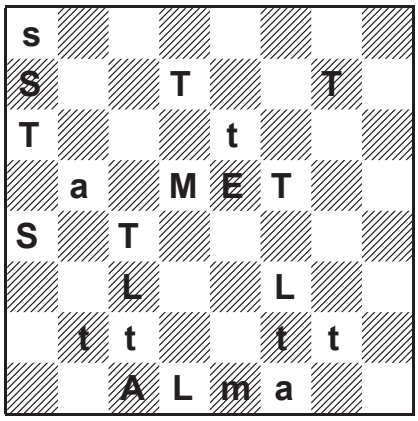
Rebus 80

"*stalemate*"

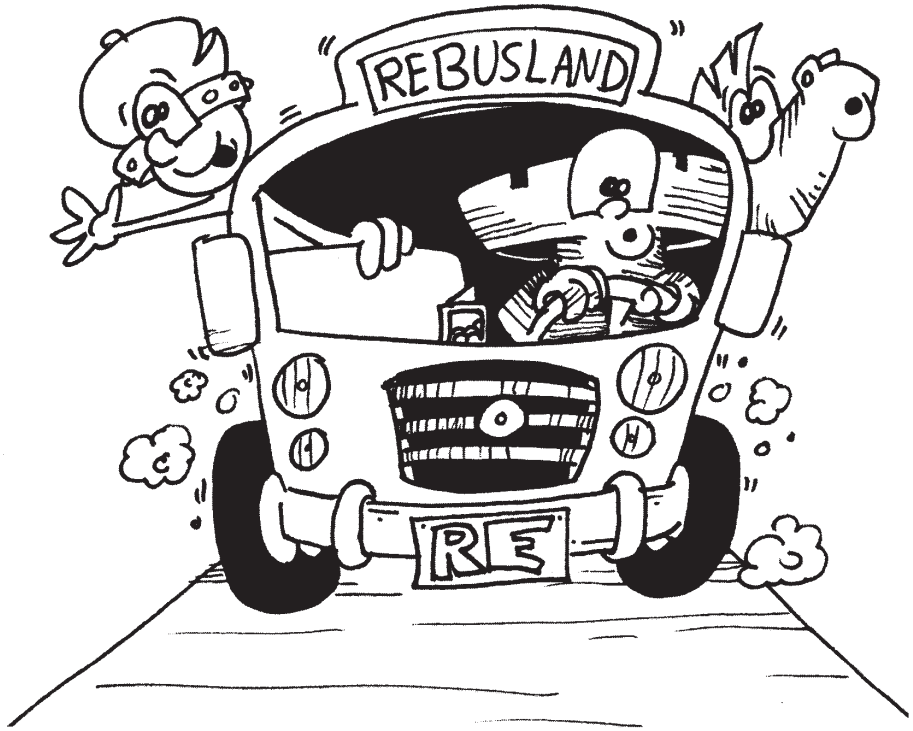
a



b (L/g2 ↔ t/f3)



Each letter represents a different type of piece.
Uppercase is one colour, lowercase is the other.
Determine the position and, if possible, the last move.



If you are looking for more chess rebuses, check out the *rebus index* in the appendix to column 188 (Rebusland). It lists over 200 problems, most of which are readily available online.

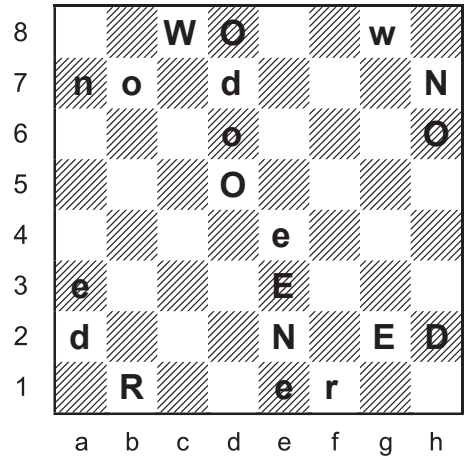
SOLUTIONS

All chess rebuses are joint compositions by Andrey Frolkin and Jeff Coakley, *Puzzling Side of Chess* (2022).

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 an index of problem-types, composers, and side themes are available in the *Puzzling Side of Chess* archives.

Rebus 78a

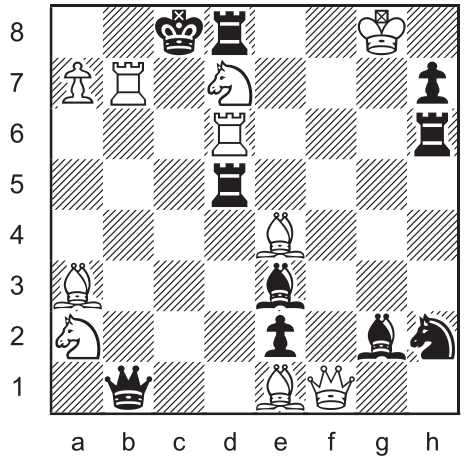


"wonder"

W = king
O = rook
N = pawn
D = knight
E = bishop
R = queen

caps = black

last move:
1...0-0-0+



(10 + 10)

♔ = (RW) Letters with one uppercase, one lowercase.

♗ = (DN) Letters not on 1st or 8th rank.

If R = ♔

E ≠ ♕♗ Both kings in check (e4 g2).
E ≠ ♘ Both kings in check (a3 e3).
E = ♖ Check (e1)?
D ≠ ♕♗ Impossible double check (a2).
D ≠ ♘ Both kings in check (h2).
D = ♙
caps = black If caps = white
Impossible double check (pawn a2)

Since a white rook cannot be promoted on e1 and no discovery is possible, the rook check is illegal.
So R ≠ ♔

W = ♔

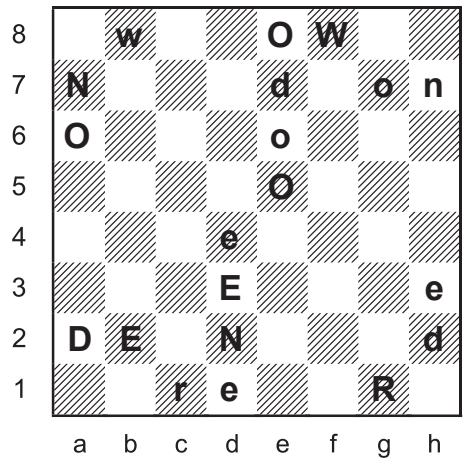
O ≠ ♕♗ Both kings in check (b7 d5).
O ≠ ♘ Both kings in check (d6 h6).
O = ♖ Check (d8).

Rebus 78a *continued*

N ≠ ♕♗ Impossible double check (h7).
N ≠ ♘ Both kings in check (a7).
N = ♗
caps = black If caps = white Impossible double check (h7).
last move: **1...0-0-0+** Only way to explain rook check.
Promotion to black rook on d8 is impossible.

D = ♘ D ≠ ♕♗ Both kings in check (d7).
E = ♗ E ≠ ♕ Impossible double check (g2).
R = ♕

Rebus 78b

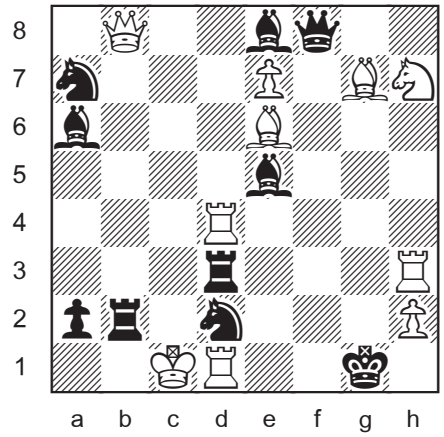


"*wonder*"

W = queen
O = bishop
N = knight
D = pawn
E = rook
R = king

caps = black

last move:
1.0-0-0+

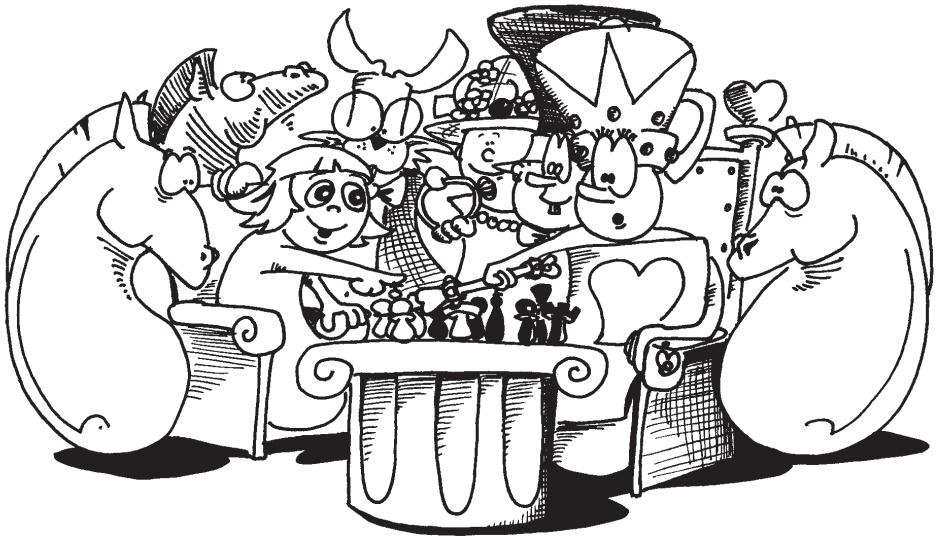


(10 + 10)

The analysis of the reflected twin is the same logic mirrored, with every letter switching its piece assignment. R↔W, E↔O, D↔N.

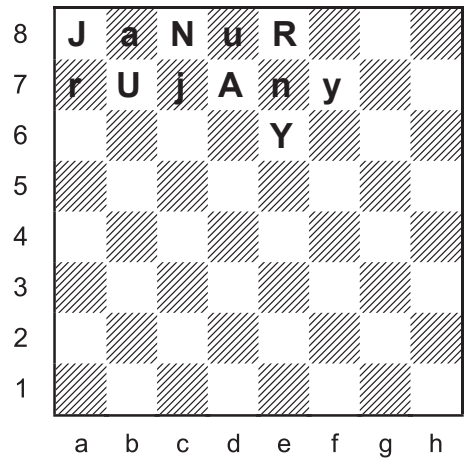
last move: **1.0-0-0+**

Two more mirror rebuses can be found in these great magazines: *Problemas 37* (January 2022) and *StrateGems* (July 2022).



Rebus 79

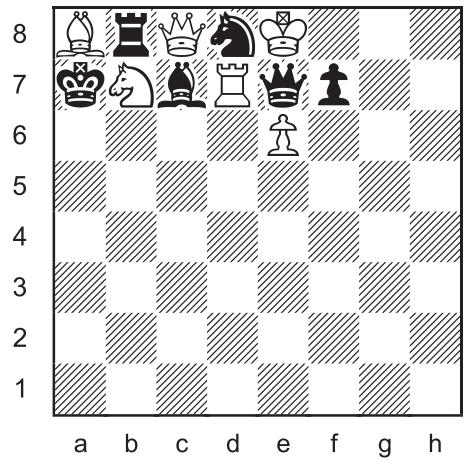
"*January*"



J = bishop
A = rook
N = queen
U = knight
R = king
Y = pawn

caps = white

last move:
1...Q>e7+



(6 + 6)

Y = ♗ Only letter not on 8th rank.

♔ ≠ (JUN) Regardless of piece assignment, there would be impossible multiple checks by queen and rook.

♔ ≠ A Regardless of piece assignment, there would be an impossible check by a queen or rook (a8 c8 d8).

R = ♔

A = ♖ JUN ≠ ♖ Impossible check (a8 d8 e7).

N = ♕ JU ≠ ♕ Impossible check (a8 d8).

The king on e8 is in <u>check</u> by the queen on e7.

J = ♗ J ≠ ♘ Impossible double check (c7).

U = ♘

caps = white If caps = black Impossible double check (pawn f7).

last move: **1...Q>e7+**

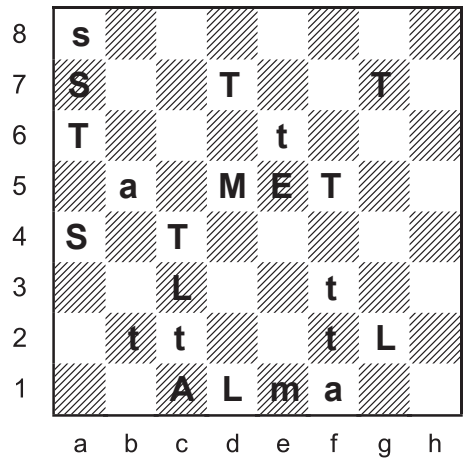
This move may or may not have been a capture and its departure square is unknown.

Three or more potential king pairs in a rebus is called the *Elvis effect*. Those with six are nicknamed *Presleys*.

Long live the king!

Rebus 80a

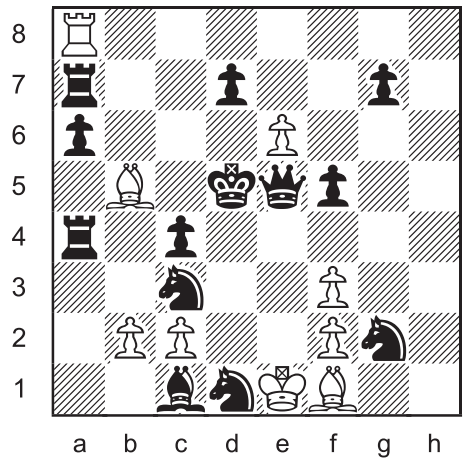
"stalemate"



S = rook
T = pawn
A = bishop
L = knight
E = queen
M = king

caps = black

last move:
1...Ne3>g2#



(9 + 13)

M = ♔ Only letter with one uppercase, one lowercase.

♙ = (ET) Letters not on 1st or 8th rank.

L ≠ ♕ Impossible double check (c3 d1).

The king on e1 is in <u>check</u> by letter L (♖d1, ♗c3, or ♘g2).

E = ♕ A ≠ ♕ Both kings in check (b5).
S ≠ ♕ Both kings in check (a8).
T ≠ ♕ Both kings in check (e6).

The king on e1 is in <u>double check</u> (♕e5).

T = ♙

caps = black If caps = white Both kings in check (pawn e6).

A = ♗ S ≠ ♗ Both kings in check (a8).
L ≠ ♗ Impossible double check (c3 e5).

LS = (♖♘)

If L = ♖, the last move was 1...e2xd1=R++. Before that move, there was a black pawn on e2 and white piece on d1. See diagram next page.

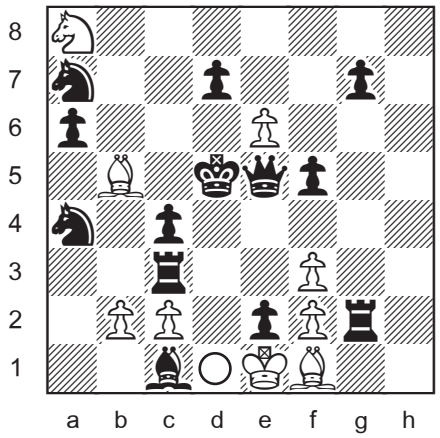
REBUS page 3

Why do we keep making rebuses?

"Because so many people are asking for more."

beak-Oz-sew-men-E-pea-pull-R-ass-king-4-Moor

Rebus 80a continued



try: L = rook S = knight
before 1...e2xd1=R++

The position is illegal because White had no move on the previous turn, regardless of which type of piece is on d1. A situation called *retrostalemate*.

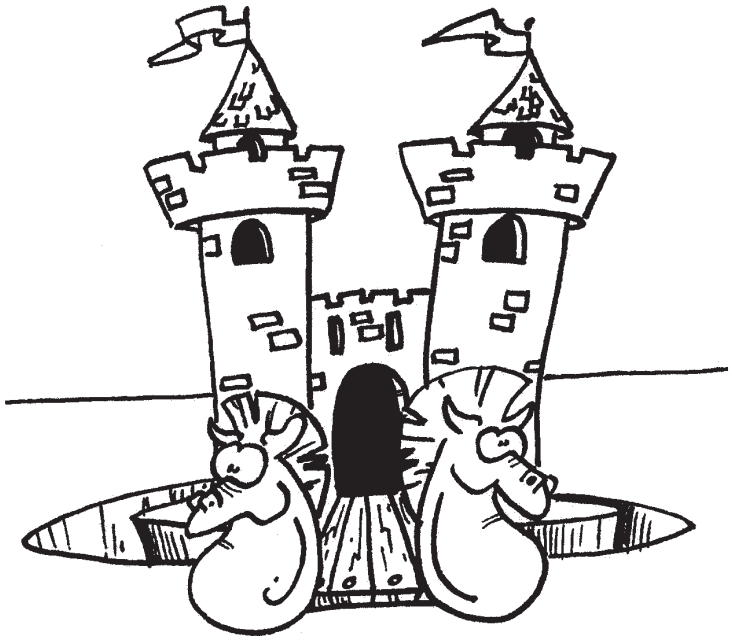
The last move was not Na8, Bb5, Nd1, Qd1, or Rd1 because Black would be in check before those moves. It was not Kd2-e1 because the white king on d2 would be in an impossible check from the bishop on c1.

Lastly, the last move was not b7xa8=N because it would require too many captures. Black is missing <u>three</u> pieces: bishop and bh-pawns. One was captured by the white pawn on f3. White has two light-square bishops. To promote on a light square (c8, e8, or g8), the white d-pawn or h-pawn made a capture. For a white pawn to be on b7 (before b7xa8), it captured earlier from the a-file. That accounts for all missing black pieces. No piece is available for capture on a8.

So L ≠ ♖

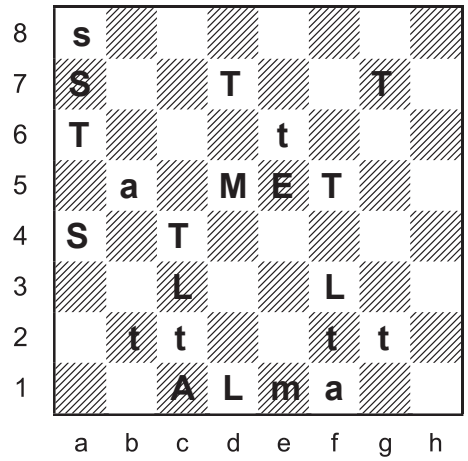
S = ♖

L = ♘ Last move: 1...Ne3>g2# This may or may not have been a capture.



Rebus 80b

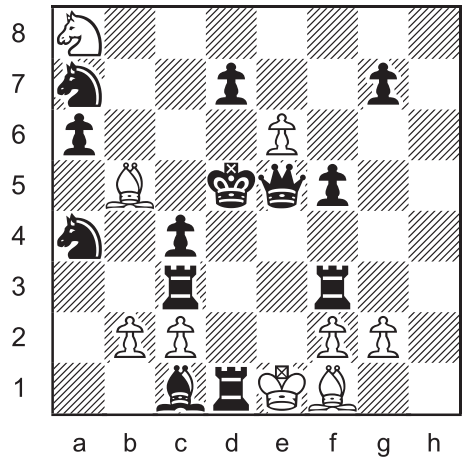
"stalemate"



S = knight
T = pawn
A = bishop
L = rook
E = queen
M = king

caps = black

last 2 moves:
1.b7xa8=N
...e2xd1=R+



(9+ 13)

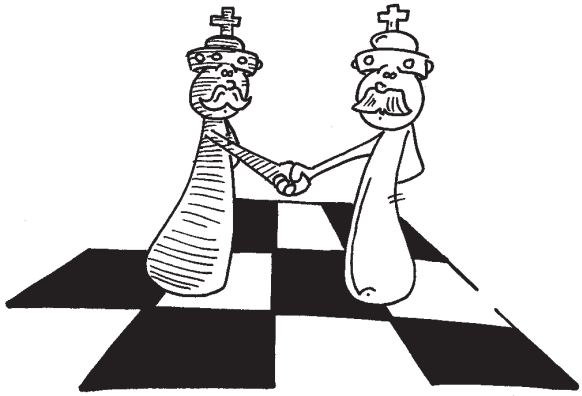
The only change from 80a is switching t/f3 and L/g2. The analysis is the same up to the point where LS = (♖♘).

S = ♘ L ≠ ♘ Impossible double check (e5 f3).

L = ♖ Double check (d1 e5).

last move: 1...e2xd1=R++ The type of piece captured is unknown.

The position is legal because this time there is no retrostalemate. White has a possible move on the previous turn: b7xa8=N. Without doubled white f-pawns, there are enough missing black pieces to account for a capture on a8.



Until next time!