Amazing problems for *you* to solve: The Solutions

1.- Sam Loyd - Holyoke Transcrypt, 1876
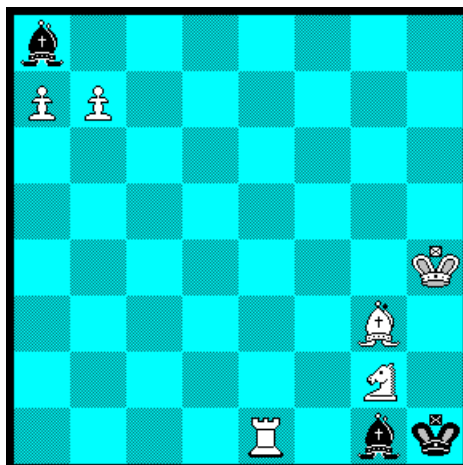
White to play and checkmate in 3 moves

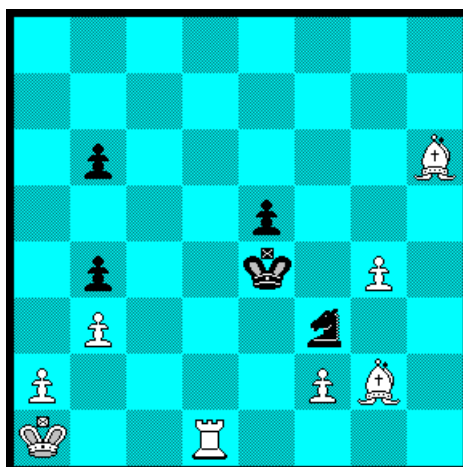**Solution:**

Trying   **1. bxa8=Q ?**   or   **1. bxa8=B ?**   is useless, because the Black King gets stalemated. The solution is:

1. bxa8=N !!,   Kxg2;   2. Nb6 !!,   any;   3. a8=Q++   or   a8=B++

The amazing *faraway subpromotion* seems at first paradoxical, as the new piece, the Knight, doesn't have time to take part in the mate !

However, it's absolutely necessary, as   **1. bxa8=Q**   or   **1. bxa8=B**   leave Black *stalemated*, and   **1. bxa8=R**   allows Black   **1. ..., Kxg2,**   removing the pin on the Bishop, so Black can go on with   **2. ..., Bxa7,**   and a mate in 3 would be impossible.

2.- H. A. Loveday, 1845

White to play and checkmate in 3 moves

This one begins mysteriously. The solution is:
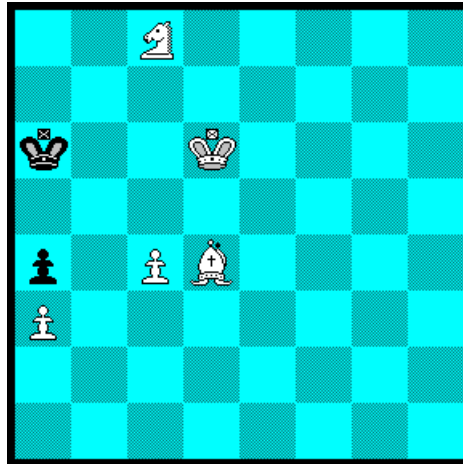
1. Bc1 !, b5;   2. Rd2 !, Kf4;   3. Rd4++

First, a somewhat mysterious move by the Bishop, which crosses the *critical square*, d2.
Then, the Rook gets to that square to *block* the Bishop and avoid stalemate.

Finally, a double check given by both pieces mates the Black King.

3.- Th. Herlin, "Le Palamede", 1845

White to play and checkmate in 4 moves

Solution:

This one is about ambushes and it does it very nicely. The solution is:

1.   Kc7, Ka5;   2. Bf6 !, Ka6;   3. Bd8 !, Ka5;   4. Kb7++

First, the King goes to the *critical square*, to prepare the *ambush*.
Then, the Bishop goes circles around this square to ambush *behind its King*.

Finally, a discovered check is given by the King, which exposes its enemy to the full power of the ambushed Bishop.

4.- A. Anderssen, Leipzig, 1849
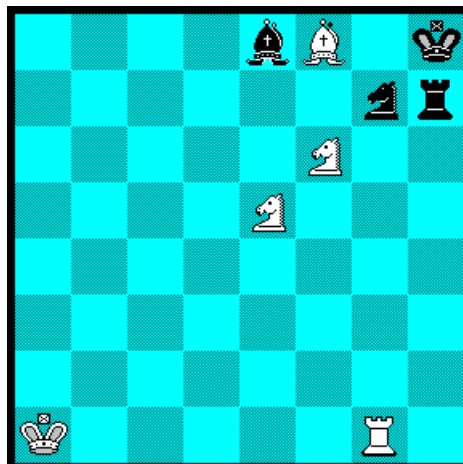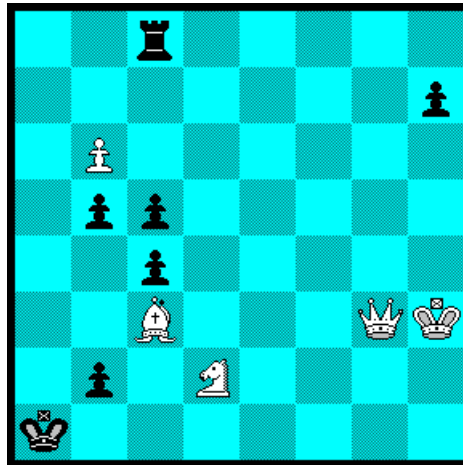

White to play and checkmate in 3 moves

This kind of problem is known as *"aristocratic"*, as there are no pawns. The solution is:

1. Kb1 !, Bh5;   2. Rg6 !, Rh6;   3. Bxg7++

The main idea is *blocking*, with an *interference* in g6.
If   2. ..., Bxg6+,   3. Nxg6++,   and if   2. ..., B any other;   3. Nf7++.

5.- H. Turton, "The Illustrated London News", 1856

White to play and checkmate in 3 moves

Solution:

This one is tricky. The Bishop should travel far to battle thin air. The solution is:

1. Bh8 !, b4; 2. Qg7 !, Ra8; 3. Qxb2++

Notice that *1. Bh8!*   threatens   *2. Qa3++,*   so   *2. ... b4*   is needed to prevent that.
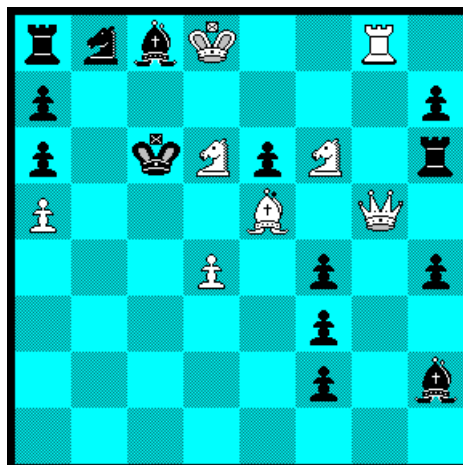Then, *2. Qg7!*   threatens   *3. Qa7++,*   and once again   *2. ... Ra8*   is necessary to avert it.

The essential ideas are as follows:

First, we have the Bishop *crossing* through the critical square *g7* to clear the line.
Then, the critical square is *occupied* by the Queen.

Finally, White mates using the more powerful piece supported by the less powerful one.

6.- F. Giegold, Baviera 1963

White to play and checkmate in 4 moves

7.- E. Giese, Neue Leipzig Zeitung, 1933

White to play and checkmate in 3 moves

8.- Unknown author

White to play and checkmate in 5 moves

Solution:

This incredible problem requires no less than *4 consecutive underpromotions*. The solution is:

1. d8=B !, Rxd8; 2. cxd8=B !, Rxd8; 3. b8=B !, Rxb8; 4. axb8=B !, Bxf7; 5. Bxe5++

Every underpromotion to a Bishop threatens an inmediate mate, so all black moves are nearly forced
(or else an even shorter mate takes place) until the last Bishop cannot be captured and at long last gives mate !

Notice that promoting to a Queen instead of a Bishop would leave Black *stalemated* after the Rooks are sacrificed
giving delaying checks to the White King, so a mate in 5 would not be possible.

9.- U. Schirdewan, 1941
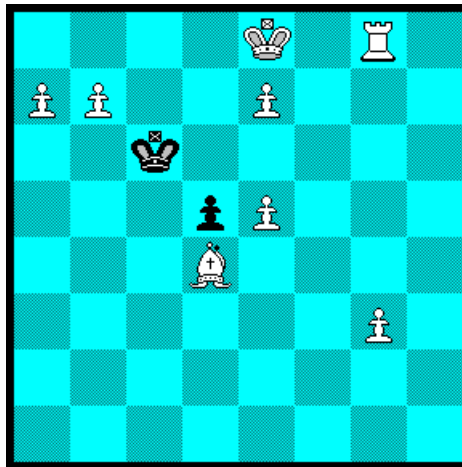
White to play and checkmate in 3 moves

Solution:

This composition illustrates two consecutive underpromotions. The solution is:

1. b8=R !, Kc7; 2. a8=B !, Kxb8; 3. Kd7++

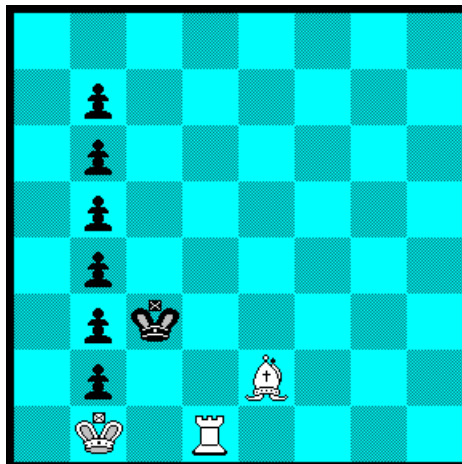Promoting the b-pawn to a Queen would result in *stalemate*.
Also, after promoting the a-pawn to a Queen, Black plays *1 ... Kb5 !* and no mate in 3 is possible.
The correct move is *1. b8=R !* , as the Rook avoids the stalemate and attracts the King to a mating net.

The second underpromotion to a Bishop is also necessary, as a Queen would stalemate again,
and a Rook would allow the Black King to go back.
Finally, White's King delivers discovered checkmate. Very nice !.

10.- W. Weber (Die Schwalbe, 1931)

White to play and checkmate in 7 moves

11.- K. Richter, (Nachtausgabe, 1938)
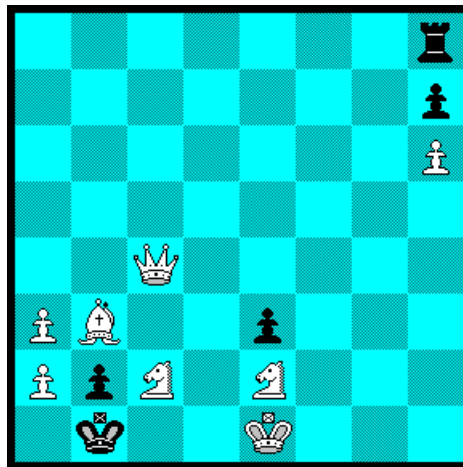
White to play and checkmate in 3 moves

Solution:

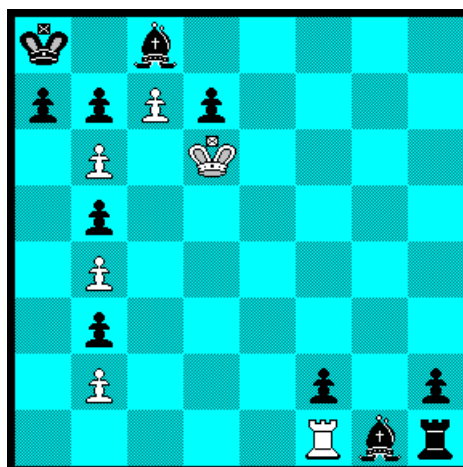Trying to attack the Black King directly is bound to prove useless.

In fact, White has to battle the Black Rook first !. The solution is:

1. Qg8 !!, Rxg8; 2. Bxg8, Kxc2; 3. Bxh7++

Amazing indeed !.

12.- K. Piltz, (Bremer Zeitung, 1938)

White to play and checkmate in 7 moves

Solution:

More humour in chess !

**Here, the White Rook needs to take the Black pawn at column "a" while giving mate
but without ever letting free the Black pieces trapped at the right corner.**

This results in a most funny *hide-and-seek* game ! The solution is:

**1. Ra1, a7-a6; 2. Rf1, a6-a5; 3. Ra1, a5-a4; 4. Rf1, a4-a3;
5. Ra1, a3-a2; 6. Rf1, a2-a1=Q; 7. Rxa1++**

If this doesn't bring a smile to your face, nothing in chess will do !