

# **The Chess Bible**

**Most Instructive Tips,  
Axioms, One-Liners  
& Mantras**

**Vishnu Warrior**

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## Key to Symbols

!	a good move
?	a weak move
!!	an excellent move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
□	only move
N	novelty
⊙	lead in development
⊙	zugzwang
=	equality
∞	unclear position
∞	with compensation for the sacrificed material
±	White stands slightly better
∓	Black stands slightly better
±	White has a serious advantage
∓	Black has a serious advantage
+−	White has a decisive advantage
−+	Black has a decisive advantage
→	with an attack
↑	with initiative
↔	with counterplay
Δ	with the idea of
⊃	better is
⊆	worse is
+	check
#	mate

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2. *Chess Master at Any Age* by Rolf Wetzell, 2001 Thinkers Press
3. *Thinking Fast & Slow* by Daniel Kahneman, 2012, Penguin
4. *Subliminal* by Leonard Mlodinow, 2012, Random House Audio
5. *Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual* by Mark Dvoretsky, 2020, Russel Enterprises
6. *45 Positional Methods and Techniques* by Valeri Bronzik, 2014, New In Chess
7. *Perfect your Chess* by Andrei Volokitin and Vladimir Grabinsky, 2022, Gambit Publications
8. *Mastering Chess Middlegames* by Alexander Panchenko, 2016, New In Chess

## Electronic resources

[Chessbase.com](https://www.chessbase.com)

# Biography

Vishnu Warriar is a Chess Expert hailing from the United States.

Growing up in the rainy Pacific Northwest, Vishnu spent his youth playing speed chess against chess hustlers at Crossroads Mall. He went on to train classically and began competing in state and national competitions.

He found his love for coaching when he was 16 when he started working for Chess4Life. Even today, Vishnu is heavily involved in coaching and training the next generation of students and currently works at the Chess Emporium in Phoenix. He is an adult improver and is working on getting his national master title.

Outside of chess, Vishnu is a husband and a father and works as a Consultant for a Fortune 500 company.

# Foreword

It has never been easier to improve your chess, yet at the same time, so hard and tricky. It is easy because there has never been such an abundance of information and resources. Yet it is hard and tricky because there are many traps and wrong directions with false promises... As a result, many improve their chess skills very quickly and increase their ratings hundreds of points in a short time. Many, though, spend years in confusion being unable to improve. What's the correct approach in this tricky world? How to get maximum value from the good resources and be in the 1st type of group – the fast improvers?

I believe the answer lies in the following:

1. Smart research before picking up a source to study from.
2. Learning from someone who has walked the talk, who has achieved what you want to, or has students who have done that.
3. Forget about the word “useful”. You won't be able to read and watch all the useful books and courses. Instead, change it to “the most effective.”

What's the most effective book for your level or the most effective course to get? As a Grandmaster and chess coach, who left his cozy life and started a company with a mission to help chess lovers unlock their full potential, I'm very happy that in the chess world there are people like Vishnu and that you picked his book.

Vishnu isn't an ordinary person; his methods of improvement aren't ordinary, and neither is he as a coach. When he won the Chicago Open, despite being 60th out of 116 in the starting list, many people were surprised. But they wouldn't be if they saw how smart and interesting his system of chess improvement is. Vishnu proved that his methods work and how important pattern recognition is. And exactly that's what he teaches in this book!

When I saw the draft of it I was blown away by the hard work he had done, the quality of the research, and how carefully he was choosing the examples. I want to congratulate you on having this book in your hands. You avoided traps, you found a man who has walked the talk and has spent years learning and preparing for you material that you can digest in a short period of time. And if your rating is somewhere between 1000-2000, this book will be one of the best books for you!

International Grandmaster, Founder and CEO of ChessMood,  
Avetik Grigoryan



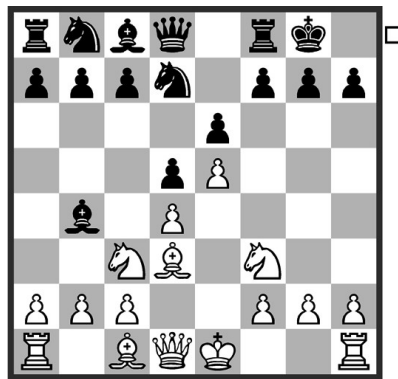


# **The Middlegame**

### 79/ Be careful about the Greek Gift sacrifice

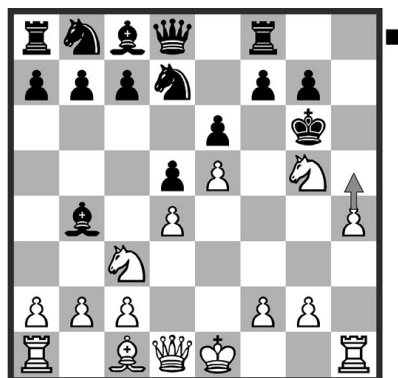
The Greek Gift sacrifice is a typical sacrifice of a bishop with White playing  $\text{♗xh7+}$  (or Black playing  $\text{...♗xh2+}$ ) followed by  $\text{♘g5}$  and a queen infiltration. Now, how do you know if the sacrifice is sound or if it's not? Let us take a look at two examples.

The first one occurs in the classical version of the French Defense. After **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♗fd7 5.♗f3 ♖b4 6.♖d3 0-0??** This looks like a natural move but is a very big mistake!



Position after: 6... 0-0??

Notice how White's bishop points towards Black's king. White can sacrifice the bishop with **7.♗xh7+! ♖xh7 8.♘g5+** which forces Black to give up the queen to prevent mate: If **8...♔g8 9.♙h5** threatening **10.♙h7#** is devastating, and once again Black must give up the queen to prevent mate. Note you can't run away with **9...♖e8** as after **10.♙xf7+ ♔h8 11.♙h5+ ♔g8 12.♙h7+ ♔f8 13.♙h8+ ♔e7 14.♙xg7#** is mate. **8...♔h6 9.♗xf7+** wins the queen. **8...♔g6 9.h4!**



Position after: 9. h4!

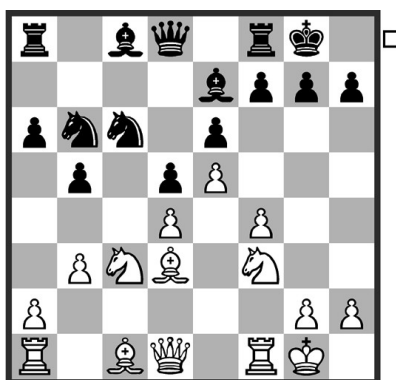
The threat of 10.h5+ ♔h6 (10...♔f5 11.♖f3#) 11.♘xf7+, winning the queen is devastating. Now we shall look at an example when the Greek gift sacrifice does not work.

*Following annotations given by Speelman. All credit to him.*

♁ Van der Berg, Jan

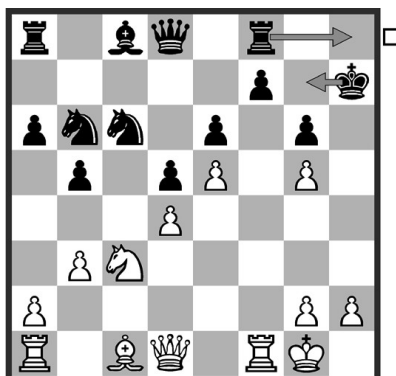
♁ Vitali

♁ Biel 2001



**13. ♔xh7+?! JS** Yes, Jan did get some play, but the Greek bishop sacrifice needs pieces to follow it up and here with the bishop controlling g5 (and so ready to capture ♘g5) it ought not to work. White should prefer something like 13. ♘e2!? Threatening 14. ♖c2. 13... g6 14. g4 with good chances for a kingside attack.

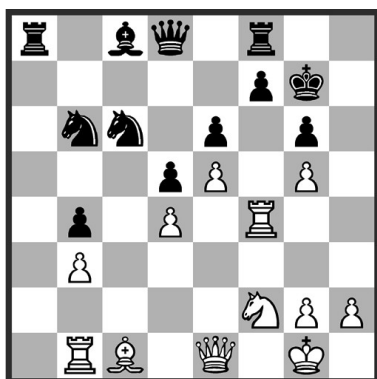
**13... ♔xh7 14. ♘g5+ ♔xg5 15. fxg5 g6**



Position after: 15... g6

Black prepares ...♔g7 and ...♖h8. The player, Jan, himself notes: "I am hoping that if I move all my pieces over to the kingside I might be able to sacrifice something to break through. The problem is that my bishop won't have any targets, so the sacrifice is ultimately unsound", In fact, as the game continues we can see that Black is able to defend. After 16. ♕e1 ♔g7 17. ♖f4 (17. ♗h4 ♖h8 18. ♗f4 may have been a more promising setup...White does have real play. Indeed Houdini is giving Black only half a pawn, which is very little when he is a piece for just one pawn ahead.

17...b4 18. ♘d1 a5 19. ♘f2 The knight is on its way. a4 20. ♖b1 axb3 21. axb3



Position after: 21. axb3

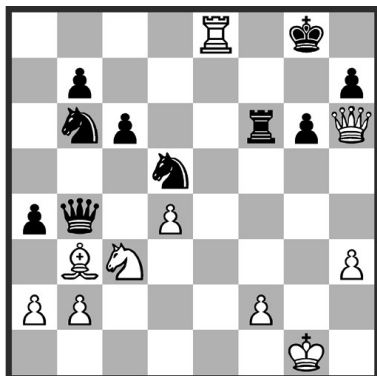
Here Black should play 21...♗a6 with the idea of preventing 22. ♘g4 by going 22....♗d3, at which point the bishop will be able to come into the defense.

Here it is clear the sacrifice did not work. For a Greek Gift sacrifice to be successful you need to

1. Be able to play ♘g5+ (or ...♘g4+) immediately after the sacrifice
2. The opponent should not be allowed to exchange on g5 or g4 with ♗xg5 or ...♗xg4.
3. The queen should be on her starting square so she can go to potentially c2/c7, d3/d6, h5/h4 for a follow-up check, or even g4/g5 if the king comes out to g6/g3 after the knight check.
4. If you haven't castled, the pawn coming to h4 and the potential opening of the h-file opening the ♖h1 or ♖h8 would be devastating. If you did castle, the Greek Gift may still be strong but you will need to assess the sacrifice and back it with good calculation.



Black has defended his king and is up a piece. The position is still complicated, but Black has mostly consolidated and staved off the first wave of the onslaught and can begin slowly unraveling to realize his advantage. However, the game continuation was **25...f5??** This gives White exactly what he wants. **26. gxf6 ♖xf6 27. ♖e8+**

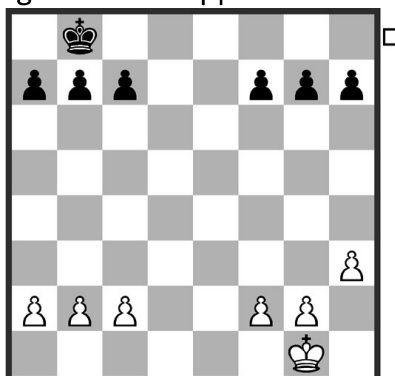


Position after: 27. ♖e8+

**27...♖f8** (27... ♔f7 28. ♖b8 axb3 29. ♕xh7+ ♔e6 30. ♖e8+ ♔d6 (30... ♘e7 31. a3 ♕d6 32. ♘e4) 31. ♘e4#) **28. a3! ♕d6** (28...axb3 29. axb4 ♖xe8 30. ♘xd5 ♖e1+ 31. ♔g2 ♘xd5 32. b5 ♖e7 33. ♕c1 +- ) **29. ♘e4**  
**1-0**

81/ When you castle on opposite sides, it is a race to attack the opponent's king. You do so by using the concept of a pawn storm. In these situations you especially want to avoid pushing a pawn in front of your own king, as it will save your opponent two full tempi to attack you.

Training Position - Opposite Sides Castling



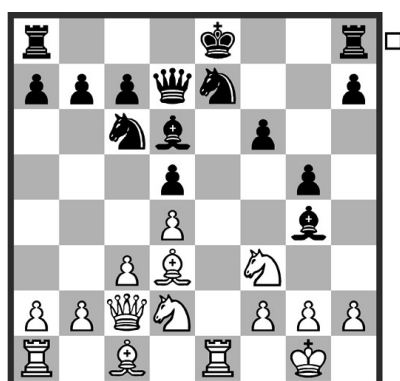
Consider the following training position. In order for White to “force” one of the files open it will take him at least 5 moves. The only way for files to open is through the exchange of pawns and you can only do that when you have pawn tension - two pawns attacking each other.

White will have to get the pawn to b6 when, whether Black decides to exchange on b6 or not exchange on b6, White will be able to open at least one file. Note that if White launched his a-pawn to a6 and left the b-pawn on b5, then Black could keep the files shut with ...b6. On the other side of the board though, Black will be faster since Black only has to make 3 moves to create pawn tension with ...h5, ...g5, ...g4 instead of 5 moves. Whites move of h3, although creating breathing room on the back row for his king, helps accelerate Black’s attack by 2 full moves!

Let us see a game where this concept is illustrated in practice.

♁ Grau, Roberto  
 ♚ Nimzowitsch, Aron  
 🌐 San Remo ITA 1930

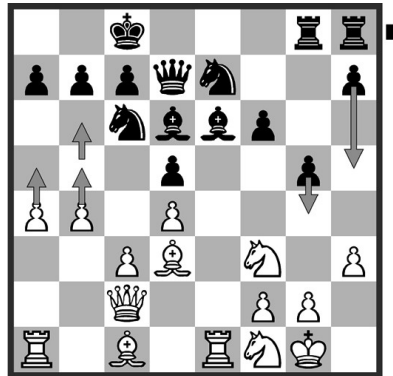
The game started as an exciting exchange French (sarcasm). However, whoever said the exchange French is dull and dry hasn’t seen this game! **1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. exd5 exd5 4. ♘d3 ♘c6 5. c3 ♘d6 6. ♘f3 ♘ge7 7. ♚c2 ♘g4 8. ♘bd2 ♚d7 9. O-O f6 10. ♖e1 g5**



Position after: 10... g5

We have reached an exciting position where Black has started his kingside expansion and is willing to sacrifice the h7-pawn for open files. White declines to accept

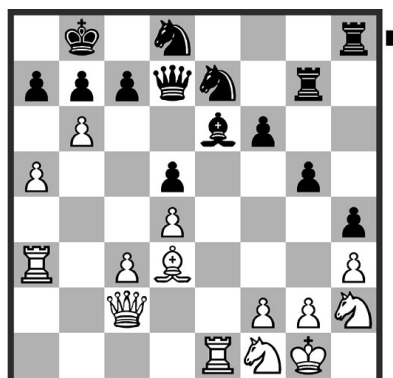
Black's offer and instead opts for 11. h3 to kick Black's bishop. After 11... ♖e6 12. ♘f1 O-O-O 13. b4 ♖dg8 14. a4 we reach the following key position:



Position after: 14. a4

White is at least 3 moves away before he can force open the a- or b-files. However, Black is only 2 moves away from playing ...h5 and ...g4 to put pressure on the h3-pawn and the knight on f3. Also, Black's rooks are already optimally placed bearing down against the white king, his bishops are pointing towards the kingside, whereas White's bishop on c1 hinders his rooks from connecting and is ineffective in helping his queenside attack. Nimzowitsch now played the very strong and prophylactic move 14... ♞d8.

White continued his expansion with 15. b5 h5 16. ♘3h2 ♖g7 17. a5 ♔b8 18. ♙a3 ♙xa3 19. ♖xa3 h4 20. b6



Position after: 20. b6

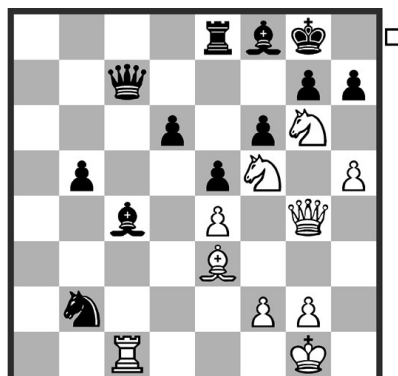
It is important to note that Black did not rush with 19...g4 as White could have closed the position with 20. h4. However, now Black will play ...g4 to force open the g-file and have his rooks bearing down on the white king. Even though he has



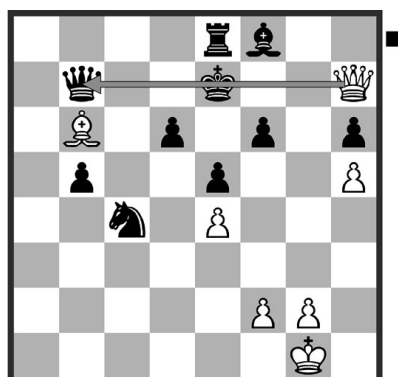
### 148/ Always look at the entire chessboard.

Yes, it's that simple! Look at the whole thing! Especially when you are attacking, it is easy to get "tunnel" vision and only focus on moves near your opponent king and thus forget to look at the other parts of the board.

♁ Vasiukov, Evgeni  
 ♀ Matanovic, Aleksandar  
 ♁ Skopje 1970



White is 2 pawns down and unless his attack crashes through he will be worse. Although White has many pieces on the kingside, the winning move in this position is actually on the queenside with **32. ♖b6!** [32. h6 hxg6; 32. ♘h6+ gxh6 33. ♘e7+ ♔f7 34. ♙g8+ ♔xe7; 32. ♖xc4 ♘xc4] **32... ♙b7** No other move suffices. If 32... ♙xb6 33. ♘xf8 ♙c7 34. ♘d7! while 32... ♙f7 33. ♘xe5 is good enough. After **32... ♙b7 33. ♖xc4 ♘xc4 34. ♘h6+ ♔f7 35. ♙g8+ ♔xe7 36. ♙xh7+ +-**



Position after: 37. ♙xh7+

White won the queen and went on to win the game shortly afterwards. There are quite a few things to take away from this position:

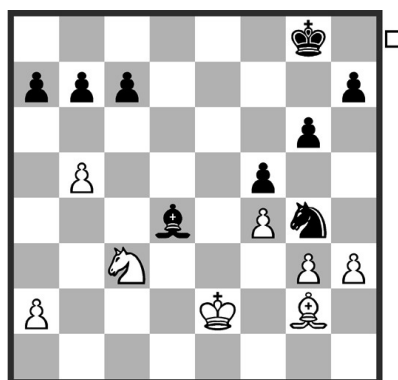
1. Don't get tunnel vision and only look at one side of the board;
2. The subtle move ♖b6, shifting Black's queen to b7, allows for the final skewer tactic at the end. Every move matters in chess and makes a subtle difference on the position;
3. Finding a move such as ♖b6 not only stems from experience, nor avoiding tunnel vision, but also from recognizing the correct weak spot. g7 is the target weak spot, however White's brute force method of ♖h6 or h6 in the initial position doesn't achieve anything. Therefore, we come upon the realization: what if we are able to distract one of Black's pieces away from the defense of g7?

149/ Just because a piece is in danger doesn't mean that you have to move it. Look for inbetween moves.

♟ Zakharchenko

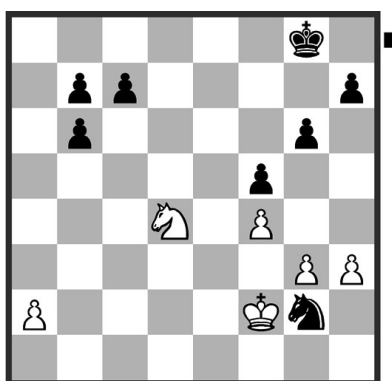
♟ Savchenko

♟ Ukraine 2004



If you watch *GothamChess* you will hear him talk about Danger Levels. Basically if you are in danger, as long as you are able to create an equal or stronger threat, then you don't have to move the piece in danger.

If White moves the knight, then Black can move the knight on g4 away from danger. Meanwhile, if White captures the knight, then it will lead to a bishops of opposite color endgame. However, White finds a nice tactical shot to win a piece. **1. b6!** If Black takes the knight, then White will capture one of the pawns and queen the following turn. After **1...axb6** (1...cxb6 would lead to the same) **2. ♖b5 ♘e3 3. ♘xd4 ♘xg2 4. ♔f2 +-**



Position after: 4. ♔f2+-

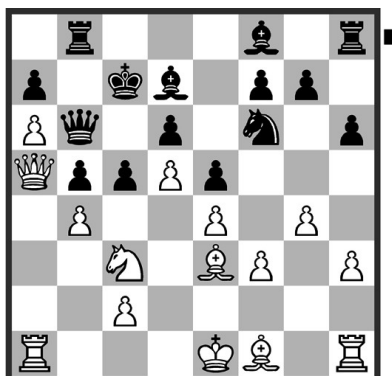
Black's knight is trapped.

**150/ Move order matters. When you are calculating, always double check the move order both for yourself and your opponent.**

♟ Yin, Evan

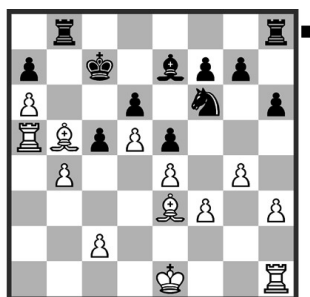
♟ Warriar, Krishnan

♟ Tucson 2020



In round 1 of the tournament I found myself paired down and in a horrible position. My opponent outplayed me in the opening and all of my pieces are badly placed. Even worse than my poor piece position, though, was that I honestly had no idea what my plan was (Survive I guess?). My opponent has turned up the pressure and can win the pawn on b5. Which way should White take the pawn? With the knight or the bishop? Oddly enough, according to Stockfish, the best move is the non-human 27. ♔a2

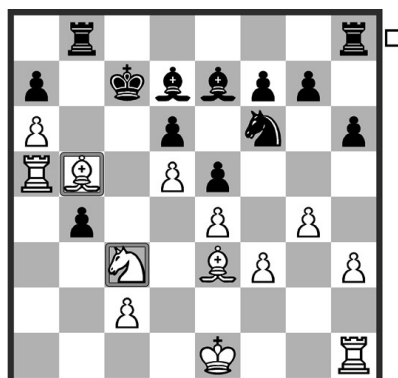
If you said 27. ♘xb5+ good job. After 27... ♙xb5 28. ♙xb5 ♚xa5 29. ♖xa5



Position after: 29. ♖xa5

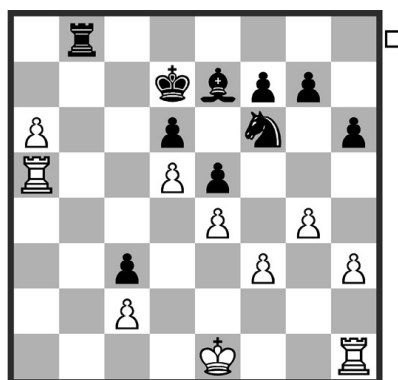
White has a stable advantage and Black doesn't have any counterplay. Taking on b4 is impossible as it would allow ♙xa7, after which the a-pawn would be a monster. Instead, I got a bit lucky and my opponent played 27. ♙xb5

I believe my opponent was thinking I would recapture on b5 and he would be able to retain the knight and pressurize a7. However, his move allows the in-between move 27... ♚xa5 28. ♖xa5 cxb4



Position after: 28... cxb4

Suddenly, White's knight and bishop are both in danger and White must play **29.** ♖xd7 ♔xd7 (29...bxc3 is far weaker as 30. ♙b5 blocks Black's pieces out.). **30.** ♙xa7 bxc3 **31.** ♙xb8 ♖xb8



Position after: 31... ♖xb8

The skirmish is over and the dust has cleared. Black has two pieces for the rook and the pawn. Sure, c3 is probably dropping soon, but Black should be able to round up a7, both of which occurred later in the game.

However, more important than anything is that White's initiative and pressure has been reduced and Black can actually form a half decent plan now: stop the a-pawn and maneuver the bishop to c5 or d4, where it will be solidly defended and vastly improved from its current position, at which point Black can figure out how to progress based on White's play.

I can only imagine how psychologically difficult this position must have been for my opponent to deal with as the momentum has changed and he is no longer pressing, but must reset his focus to maintaining equality.

**151/ Sometimes you have to call the bluff. "A sacrifice is best refuted by accepting it."**

**— Wilhelm Steinitz.**

♙ Warriar, Krishnan

♚ He, Samuel

♁ Washington 2013