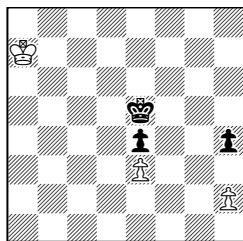
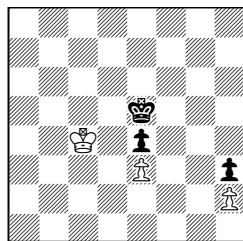


## Promises, promises - the promise of first studies – Gady Costeff

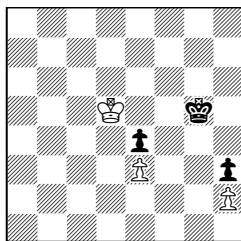
The Spanish priest Fernando Saavedra won immortality with his discovery of 6.c8=R!! but for most composers the first study is an emotional event rather than an artistic triumph. This is natural since mastery takes time and practice. Consequently, as the following examples show, the first study seems to tell us nothing about the future.



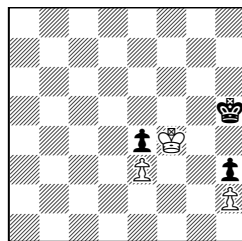
Win 3+3  
**1. ♖b6 ♖d5 2. ♖b5 h3 3. ♖b4! ♖d6 4. ♖c4 ♖e5**



**5. ♖c5 ♖e6 6. ♖d4 ♖f5 7. ♖d5 ♖g5!**

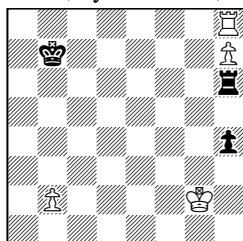


**8. ♖e5! 8. ♖xe4? ♖g4= 8... ♖h5 9. ♖f5 ♖h4! 10. ♖f4! ♖h5**

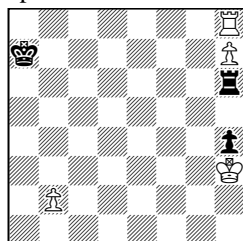


**11. ♖g3! ♖g5 12. ♖xh3 wins.**

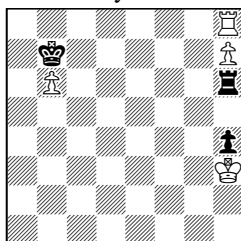
The white king travels from a7 to h3, avoiding the capture of Pe4 as part of an ongoing battle of reciprocal zugzwang. This polished study was published in *Beginner tourney Shakhmaty v SSSR*, 1955, by S. Afonin, a composer new to me. He published only 11 studies, all of them pawn studies.



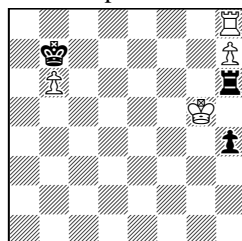
Win 4+3  
**1. ♖h3 ♖a7**



**2. b3! ♖b7 3. b4 ♖a7 4. b5 ♖b7 5. b6**

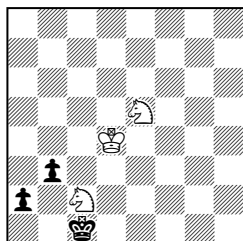


Reciprocal zugzwang  
**5... ♖h5 6. ♖g4 ♖h6 7. ♖g5**

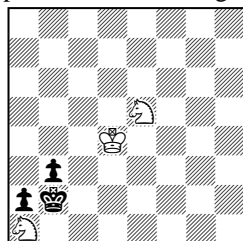


**White wins.**

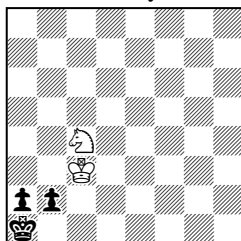
Systematic movement, reciprocal zugzwang, and the domination of Rh6, all based on a known theoretical position. The study appeared in 1949, when the composer was sixteen. Emilian Dobrescu became a renowned composer while retaining his fondness for systematic movement.



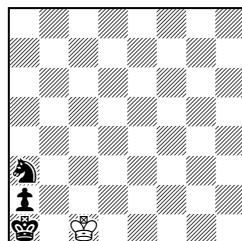
Draw 3+3  
**1. ♖a1 ♖b2**



**2. ♖c4+! ♖xa1 3. ♖c3 b2**

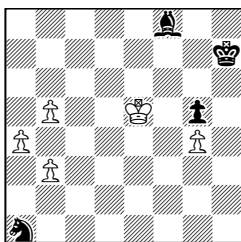


**4. ♖a3! b1=♖+ 4... b1=♖ 5. ♖c2+ 5. ♖c2 ♖xa3+ 6. ♖c1**

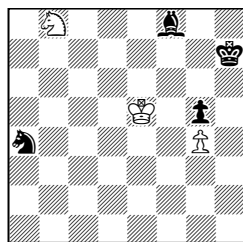


Reciprocal zugzwang  
 Black to move - draw

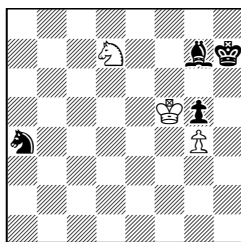
Everything in this 1957 study after 3.Kc3 is anticipated by Prokes, 1941. The final position is well known to every player. The composer never published another study, but Fadil Abdurahmanović went on to become a decent helpmate composer.



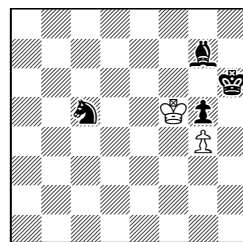
Draw 5+4  
**1.b6 ♖xb3 2.b7 ♖c5**  
**3.b8=♖ ♖xa4**



**4.♖d7 dual 4.♖f5**  
**♖h6 5.♖c6 ♖g7+**  
**5.♖f5**

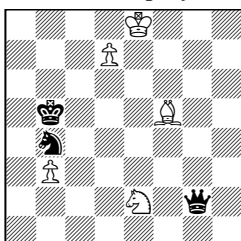


**♖h6 6.♖c5! ♖xc5**

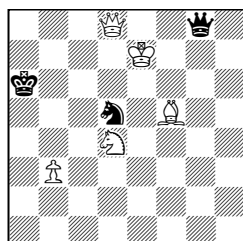


**Stalemate**

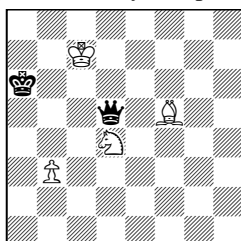
All pieces move into the stalemate position, with the promoted knight being subsequently sacrificed. The dual needs correcting, but otherwise it is a typical stalemate study. Following this 1928 debut, Genrikh Kasparyan went on to become the leading Soviet study composer.



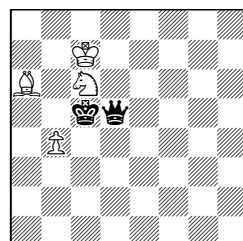
Win 5+3  
**1.♖d4+ ♖a6 2.d8=♖**  
**♖g8+ 3.♖e7 ♖d5+**



**4.♖d7 ♖b6+ 5.♖c7**  
**♖d5+ 6.♖xd5!**  
**♖xd5**



**7.♖c8+ ♖a5 8.♖c6+**  
**♖b5 9.♖a6+ ♖c5**  
**10.b4#**



**mate.**

Active play by both sides, with a queen sacrifice culminating with a beautiful mate. This study won 4<sup>th</sup> prize in the 1989 match *USSR vs Rest of the World*. Per the database, the composer A. Nikolaev, never published another study.