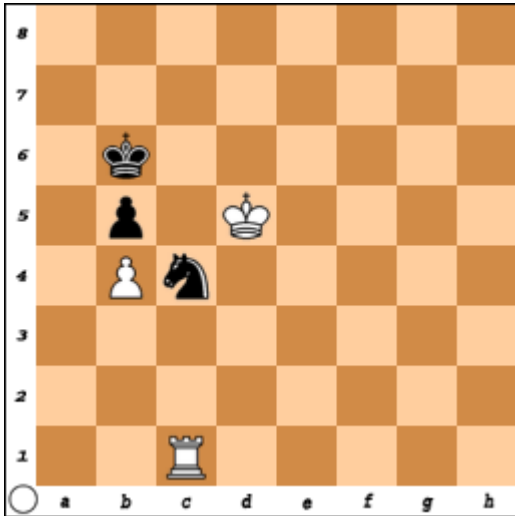


I was a witness to an interesting game once at the library. An endgame to be more precise.

The opponents seemed to know each other and were 2nd or 3rd graders.

The position, when I first saw it was such:

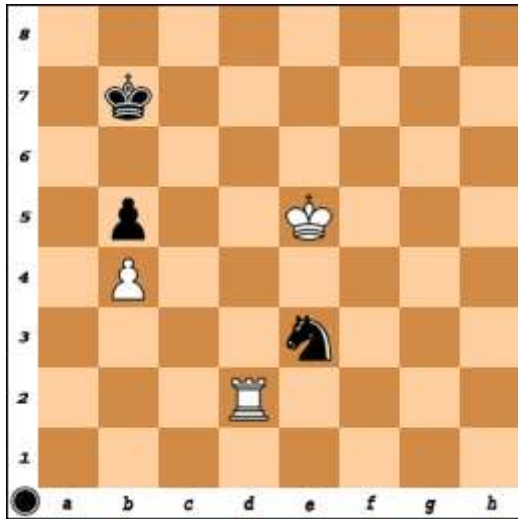


Experienced players know that the Rook(R) vs Knight(N) game, i.e. nothing left but the R and the N, is a *BOOK DRAW*. That means that the theory says R can't beat N if the N makes the right moves. I personally witnessed such a situation in a Chicago Open game between two grandmasters. After about 10 minutes of trying the grandmasters shook hands and agreed to a draw.

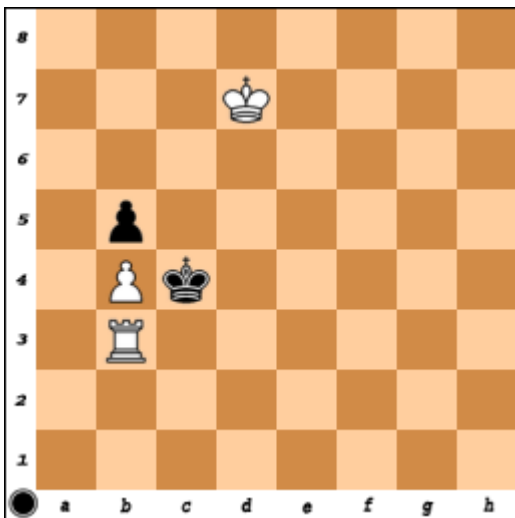
So what black has to do is exchange pawns to have a chance for a draw.

There were, however other difficulties for black: trash talking and advice offered by white player. He kept repeating "You're gonna lose, you're gonna lose." At this point (see below) he suggested black move his N to g4, even though it's clear there is a much better move Nc4+ (check, forking the rook). Black, apparently thinking the opponent was a better player and "knew better" or maybe NOT THINKING FOR HIMSELF AT ALL, took the suggestion.

Later, black lost his N and white player continued his brainwashing campaign: "I'm gonna win, I'm gonna win."



White was no star player and blundered his rook like so (it's black's move in the diagram below):



Black captured white's R and pawn in the next two moves leaving white in a lurch. White was not giving up the game or the trash talking campaign : "You can't win, you can't win."

Black did promote his b-pawn to a Queen and checkmated white. As expected,

Instead of polite and proper handshake and "Good game" white offered "I didn't play full force".

There are a few lessons to be learned from this simple endgame.

Number 1: (the easiest): know that N vs R endgame is drawn for the N, if you're careful.

Number 2: Instead of trash talking (or talking during the game) shut your mouth

And use the remaining brain power to find better moves.

Number 3: Don't take your opponent's advice. He/she is playing AGAINST you Not FOR you. Think for yourself!

Number 4: Be polite in losing OR winning. You'll get much more out of it. If you're nice to your opponent, he/she may be willing to analyze the game you Just finished and show you better moves or teach you something new. If you're unpleasant, who'd want to deal with you?

Good luck!