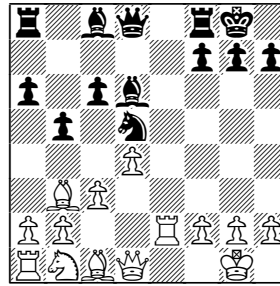


Chapter Three



The Mysterious Retreat: 13 ♖e2

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♗b3 0-0 8 c3 d5 9
exd5 ♘xd5 10 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 11 ♖xe5 c6
12 d4 ♗d6 13 ♖e2

What's the point behind 13 ♖e2?

Why does White play this 'mysterious' rook move? Well, it's actually a rather sophisticated plan. His intention is not to play ♗e3 and ♘d2, but rather ♘d2 directly, and then to establish the knight on the central e4-square. In doing this he blocks the e-file, attacks the bishop on d6 and can then develop accordingly.

Can Black play the usual ...♗h4?

Yes, but the situation is not so simple. There is a hidden point to 13 ♖e2 which means that Black must be vigilant and follow through in the correct manner. Let's take a look at what could

happen:

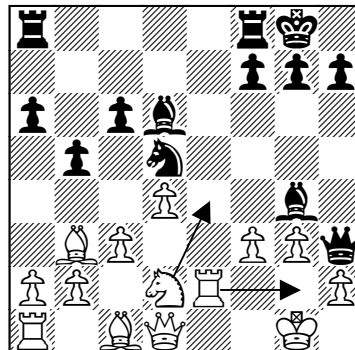
13...♗h4 14 g3 ♗h3

...and here White is able to develop the knight first:

15 ♘d2 ♗g4?!

Now White has an excellent defensive resource:

16 f3!

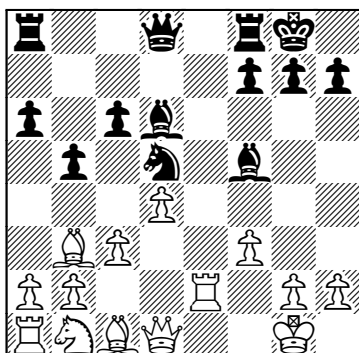


The rook guards the second rank so that Black cannot play 16...♗xg3. This means that after 15...♗g4?! 16 f3! White can develop in his desired manner.

The correct move is 15...♗f5!, which contains a tactical idea. In one of my games, B.Zuckerman-M.Pavlovic, New York 1987, White played 16 ♖e4 and after 16...♗g4 17 ♜xd6 Black has the excellent resource 17...♞h5!, when the position is virtually winning for him.

Returning to the tabiya after the sophisticated 13 ♖e2, in my opinion the best way for Black is with **13...♗g4!** provoking a weakness on g3 before moving the bishop back to f5 or h5. Both retreats are good, and they are analysed in depth in the theory section.

14 f3 ♗f5 reaches a position in the Marshall Attack in which we can clearly see the advantage of Black's bishop pair.



Sooner or later, White will be forced to exchange the bishop on b3 for the strong knight on d5. When this exchange of minor pieces occurs, Black will gain the possibility of a minority attack on the queenside, to add to positional factors such as the weakened h2-b8 diagonal. A perfect example of Black's play (with the similar 13...♗h5)

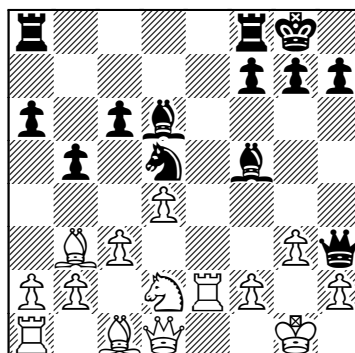
can be found in the game Kamsky-Ivanchuk, Linares 1991.

Theory

1 e4 e5 2 ♞f3 ♞c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♞f6 5 0-0 ♗e7 6 ♞e1 b5 7 ♗b3 0-0 8 c3 d5 9 exd5 ♞xd5 10 ♞xe5 ♞xe5 11 ♞xe5 c6 12 d4 ♗d6 13 ♖e2 ♗g4

I think that 13...♗g4 gives Black good play without having to learn much theory, and it also avoids some forced draws. I had played 13...♞h4 many times – with good results – but when it was discovered how effective 13...♗g4 was, 13...♞h4 took a back seat, even if it was just for practical reasons.

13...♞h4 14 g3 ♞h3 15 ♜d2 ♗f5 was for many years the main line.



In Lugano 1987, Morovic played 16 ♗xd5 cxd5 17 f3 against me. After 17...♞ae8 18 ♞f1 h5! 19 ♗e3 h4 20 ♗f2 ♗g6 (some months later Pinter played the even stronger 20...♗d7 against Grünfeld, at the Zagreb Interzonal, and won as well) 21 a4 ♞e6! I reached a good position which I managed to convert into a win.

A few months later I got a chance to introduce the tactical point mentioned above with 16 ♖e4? ♗g4! 17 ♘xd6 ♙h5! (Zuckerman-Pavlovic, New York 1987), and further on John Nunn also adopted this line, with good results.

I switched to 13...♗g4 as my main move after my game against Lanc (Copenhagen 1987). In that game my opponent met 13...♙h4 14 g3 ♙h3 with the interesting 15 ♙f1!?. Following 15...♙h5 16 f3 ♗f5, Lanc should have played 17 ♙f2! ♙g6 18 ♗xd5 cxd5. Black has typical compensation in this position, but even so I started to prefer 13...♗g4.

14 f3

Now we will look at:

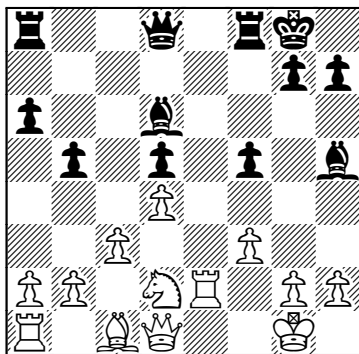
A: 14...♗h5

B: 14...♗f5

A) 14...♗h5

Forcing White to exchange on d5, since 15 ♘d2 ♖f4 is good for Black.

15 ♗xd5 cxd5 16 ♘d2 f5!?

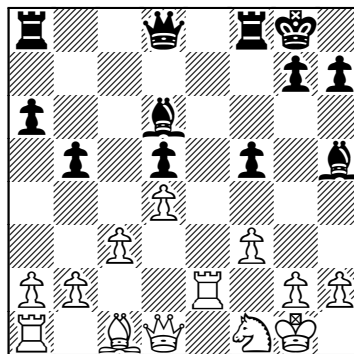


This is a strong move. Black wants to clamp White's pieces with ...f5-f4 and then to try to open the queenside, which would give him ideal play in this line.

I played less precisely in my second Marshall encounter with my compatriot, GM Todorovic: 16...♙c7 17 h3!? f5 allowed White to reveal his idea with 18 ♘b3! (G.Todorovic-M.Pavlovic, Becici 1993).

17 ♘b3

17 ♙b3 ♗f7 18 ♖f1 f4 19 ♗d2 ♙d7 20 ♙ae1 a5 21 ♙d1 a4 22 a3 ♗g6! was fine for Black in G.Kamsky-V.Ivanchuk, Linares 1991, a game Black went on to win.



17...f4 18 a4 ♗e8 19 b3 ♙c8 20 axb5 ♗xb5 21 ♙c2 ♙b6 22 ♗b2 ♙fe8 23 ♙f2 ♗e7!

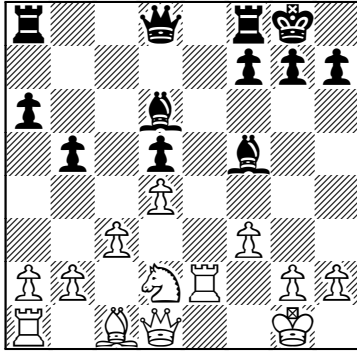
Again Black is doing very well, B.Perenyi-P.Blatny, Hajduszoszlo 1987.

B) 14...♗f5 15 g3

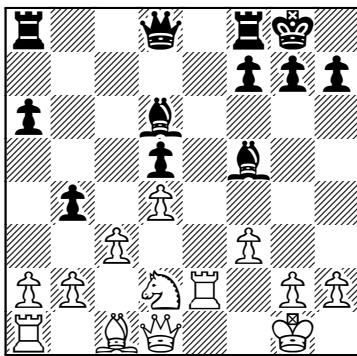
This is an interesting idea which was first played by the Czech GM Mokry, and more recently by Anand. White wants to avoid taking on d5 and

intends to put his knight on e4.

An important alternative is the standard 15 ♗xd5 cxd5 16 ♘d2.



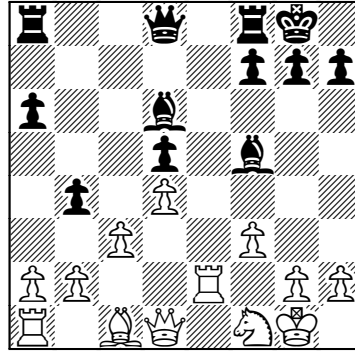
In comparison to Line A, above, Black no longer has the ...f5-f4 idea. On the other hand, his light-squared bishop is much better placed. After 16...b4 White has a decision to make:



a) 17 cxb4 ♗d3 18 ♖f2 (18 ♖e1 ♗xh2+ 19 ♖xh2 ♗h4+ 20 ♖g1 ♗xd4+ 21 ♖h2 ♗h4+ is a draw by perpetual check) 18...♗c7 19 g3 (19 ♘f1 ♗xf1 20 ♖xf1 ♗xh2 21 ♖c2 ♗b6 22 ♗d3 ♗f6 23 ♗e3 ♗g3! 24 ♖e2 ♖fe8 25 ♖h1 h6 26 ♖d1 ♖e6 27 ♗d2 ♖ae8 left Black with promising compensation in the game

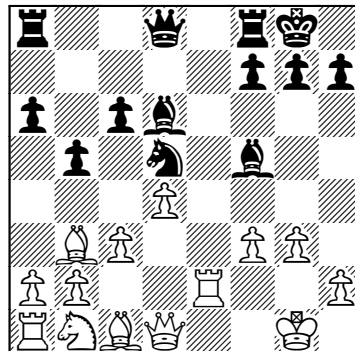
V.Kotronias-I.Sokolov Elenite 1992) 19...♗c2 20 ♗f1 ♖fe8 21 ♘c4 ♗xg3 22 hxg3 ♗d3! 23 ♗xd3 ♗xg3, with a draw by perpetual check, is just one of many interesting possibilities here.

b) 17 ♘f1 is also important:



17...bxc3 18 bxc3 ♗c7 19 ♖e3 (in the event of 19 ♗d2 ♗d3 20 ♖e3 ♗xf1 Black regains his pawn with some advantage) 19...♖fc8 20 ♗d2 ♗g6! (preparing ...f5-f4) 21 ♗e1 f5 (just in time to prevent White's intended ♗g3) 22 ♖e2 f4 and Black was better in G.Todorovic-M.Pavlovic, Vrnjacka Banja 1990.

Returning to 15 g3:



15...♗c7 16 ♖f2 ♗d7!

Preventing White's knight from coming to d2 and e4, since 17 ♘d2 is met by 17...♙d3 18 ♖e1 ♗h3 when Black is fine.

16...♗d7 is an improvement over the game K.Mokry-K.Panczyk, Breitenbrunn 1984. After 16...h5 17 ♘d2 ♗f6 18 ♗f1 ♙h3 19 ♙g5 ♘d5 20 ♗d3 White had solved all of his problems and stood better.

17 ♙xd5 cxd5 18 ♘d2 ♙d3 19 ♖e3 ♙g6 20 ♗f1 a5 21 a3

V.Anand-L.Aronian, World Championship, Mexico City 2007, ended in a draw here. We've reached a typical position in which Black's bishops once

again fully compensate for the pawn deficit.

