

Andriasian's Tactical Workout Book

**Challenge the
Champions**

700 Armenian Tactics

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Challenge the Champions

700 Armenian Tactics

Zaven Andriasian

Thinkers Publishing 2026



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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Editor’s note: The Elo levels of each chapter are the ratings attained by the players involved. A target for the reader, not an expectation!

Preface

I have known Zaven Andriasian for many years, both as a friend and as a colleague. We've worked together closely, including during the U.S. Championships, where his deep opening knowledge, strong analytical skills, and sharp tactical vision were invaluable to my preparation.

Zaven has always impressed me with his creative approach to chess and his passion for teaching. In *Andriasian's Tactical Workout*, he combines his extensive practical experience with his talent for clear explanation. The result is a well-structured and instructive collection of puzzles that will help players improve their tactical awareness and calculation technique.

This book reflects Zaven's professionalism and deep understanding of modern chess. I am confident that readers will benefit from his systematic approach and find inspiration in the quality of the material presented. It showcases Zaven's characteristic precision, fighting spirit, and love for the game.

GM Varuzhan Akobian

Introduction

Tactics are among the most exciting and decisive moments in chess. A single hidden idea, once discovered, can completely change the course of a game — transforming a difficult position into victory, or saving a seemingly hopeless one. These moments remind us of the creativity and resourcefulness that make chess so endlessly fascinating.

In this book, I have gathered a collection of tactical puzzles taken entirely from real games involving my colleagues, peers, and Armenian chess heroes. What makes them special is that every position reflects a critical moment where the player actually found the solution at the board, often under tournament pressure. Unlike composed studies, these examples show the kinds of opportunities and challenges that truly occur in practical play.

As a Grandmaster and chess coach with over ten years of teaching experience, I have seen how important it is for players at all levels to improve their tactical awareness. For that reason, this book is designed to be accessible to everyone: from simpler exercises suitable for beginners, to more demanding positions that will test advanced and experienced players. By working through them, you will sharpen your calculation, strengthen your pattern recognition, and develop the confidence to find such ideas in your own games.

It has been both a pleasure and a challenge to bring this collection together. My hope is that it will not only serve as effective training material, but also inspire you with the same excitement that the players themselves felt when they uncovered these tactics over the board.

GM Zaven Andriasian

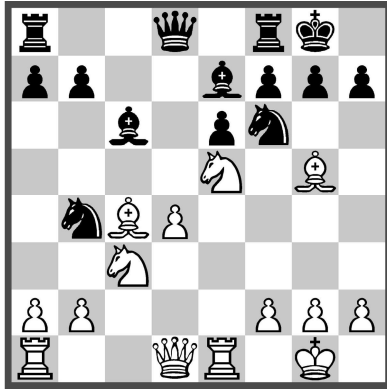


Exercises

Elo 2500

1

Hovhannisyan, R. – Anastasian, A.

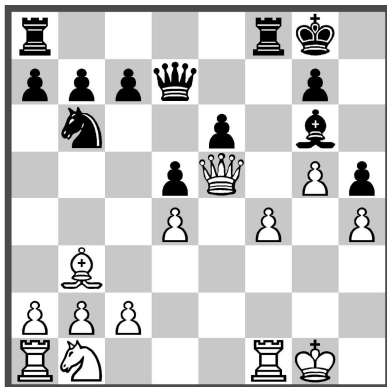


15.? +-

Finding weak spots in the defences is crucial to good chess. Go!

3

Petrosian, T. – Anastasian, A.

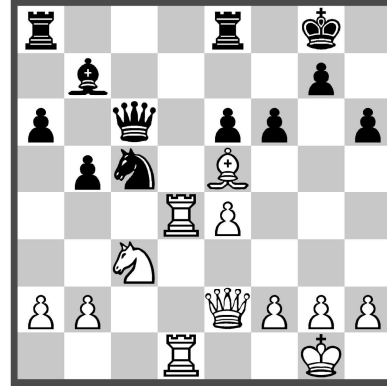


17...? +-

White's queen is on a juicy central square. However...

2

Anastasian, A. – Poghosyan, S.

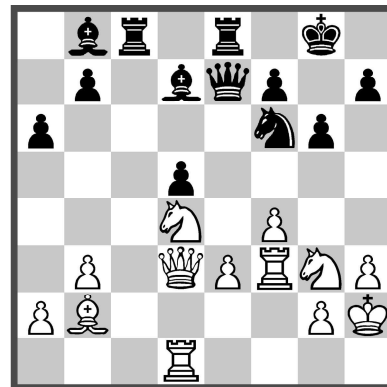


22.? +-

Black's pieces are concentrated on the queenside. Exploit this fact.

4

Anastasian, A. – Babujian, L.

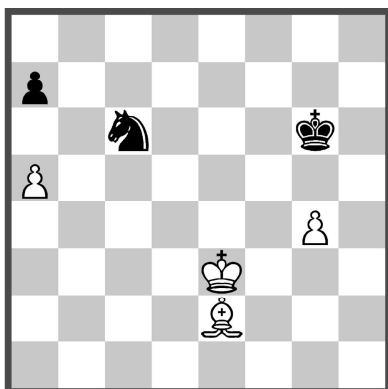


25.? +-

The white pieces are ready for a kingside attack.

5

Anastasian, A. – Harika, D.

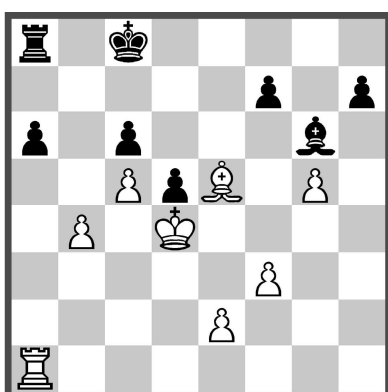


□ 49.? +-

Let the bishop show that it is stronger in open positions.

7

Anastasian, A. – Petrosian, T.

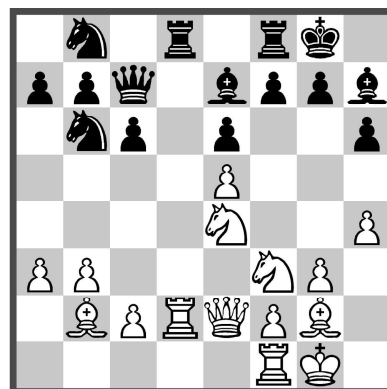


□ 29.? +-

Time for a breakthrough!

6

Anastasian, A. – Wichmann, C.

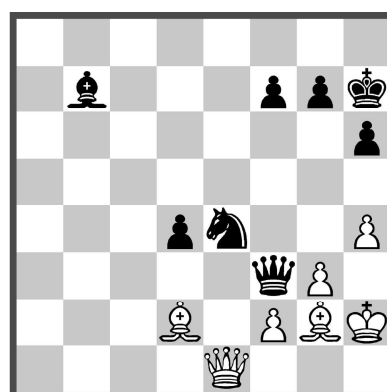


□ 18.? +-

Use the e5-pawn to create a strong attack.

8

Allahverdiev, A. – Anastasian, A.

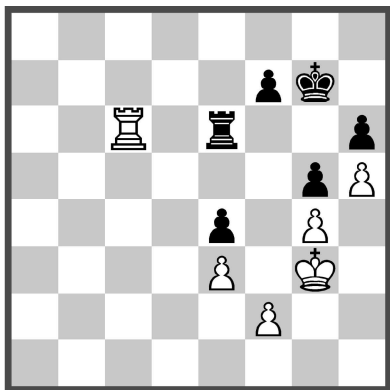


■ 48...? →+

Utilise the knight's forking ability.

9

Anastasian, A. – Sareen, V.

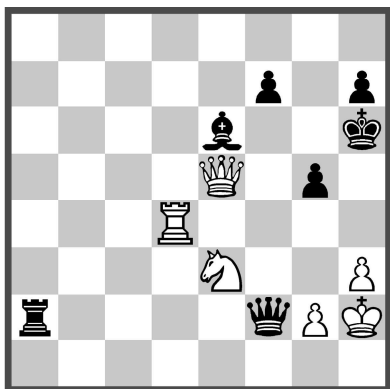


45.? +-

There's a way to win this seemingly equal position.

11

Anastasian, A. – Khmelniker, I.

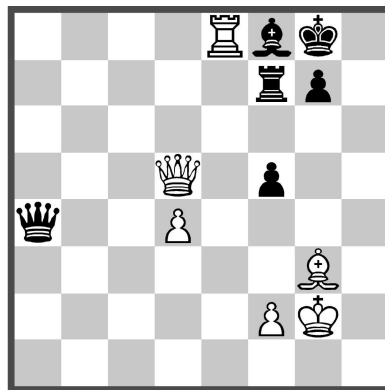


35.? +-

How can we weaken the position of the black king?

10

Anastasian, A. – Gagunashvili, M.

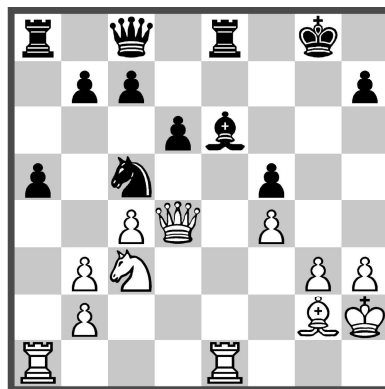


42.? +-

How can we exploit the pin?

12

Anastasian, A. – Duman, A.

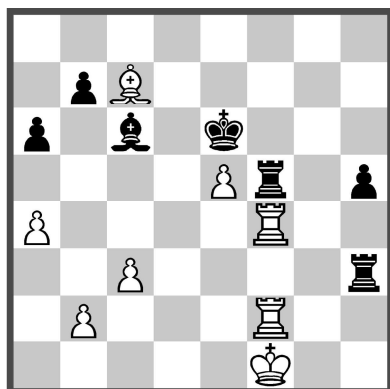


20.? +-

Defend the b3-pawn, or...?

13

Babaev, R. – Anastasian, A.

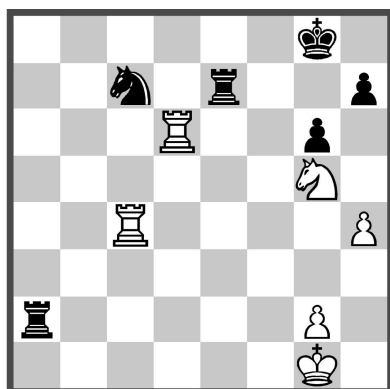


36...? –+

How can we exploit the back rank?

15

Anastasian, A. – Stojanovski, D.

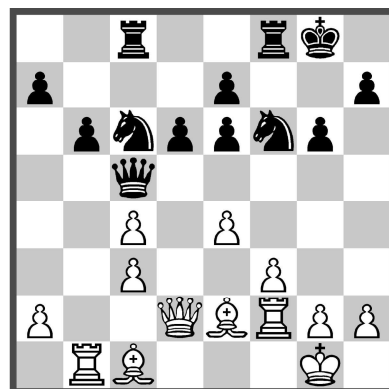


33.? +–

Knights again but...where is the fork?

14

Li, G. – Anastasian, A.

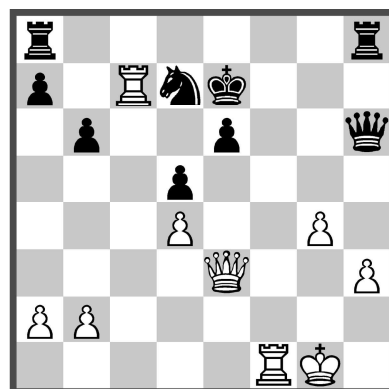


16...? –+

The pin and the fork are a deadly combo.

16

Anastasian, A. – Chatalbashev, B.

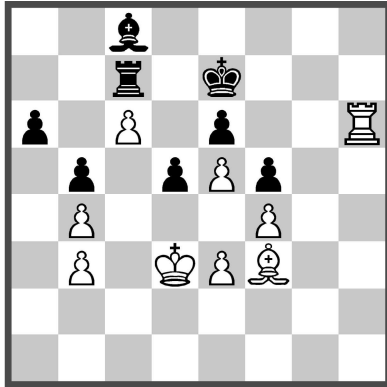


33.? +–

The faster attacker wins!

17

Anastasian, A. – Sorokin, M.

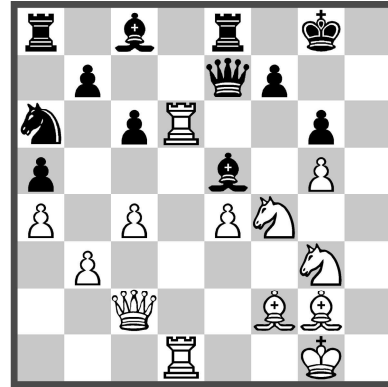


□ 55.? +-

Save the c6-pawn at any cost!

18

Anastasian, A. – D. Rio de Angelis, S.

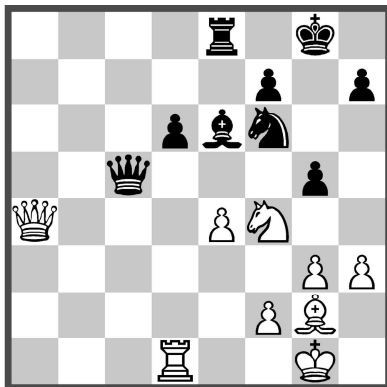


□ 36.? +-

Going all-in is sometimes the answer!

19

Anastasian, A. – Nalbandian, T.

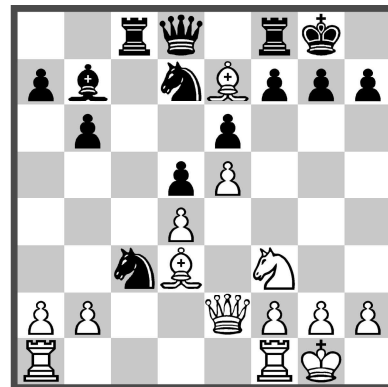


□ 33.? +-

A battle of the knights.

20

Yegiazarian, A. – Anastasian, A.

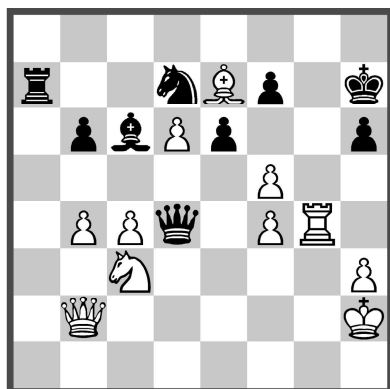


□ 15.? +-

The king is the only piece more important than the queen!

21

Ivanisevic, I. – Anastasian, A.

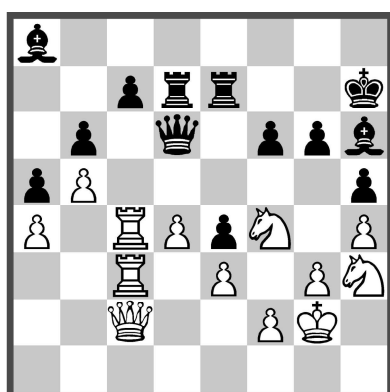


51...? +-

Both sides are attacking, but Black's queen is more active.

23

Anastasian, A. – Roeder, M.

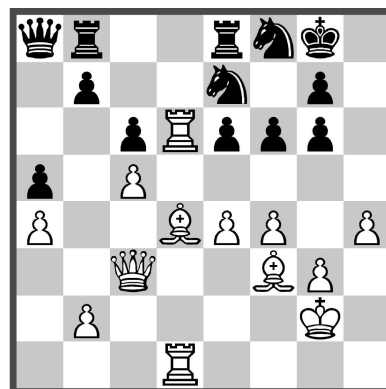


38.? +-

Focus on Black's weakest spots.

22

Anastasian, A. – Abdelnabbi, I.

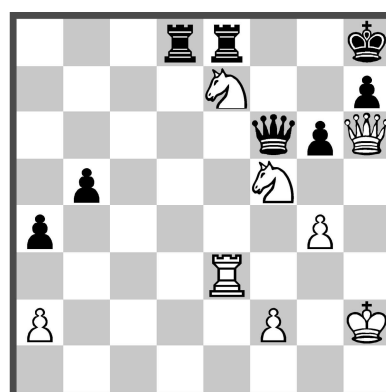


40.? +-

Strike the weakest point!

24

Anastasian, A. – Tiviakov, S.



41.? +-

We need to open the h-file.