


Double Deception

We've mentioned how much pleasure bridge players derive from a dastardly bit of trickery now and again. The deception you are about to see was all the more fun because *both* defenders had to be in on the joke.

This looks like a routine contract, wouldn't you say? West leads the ♥Q won by declarer's ace. Declarer runs the diamond nine, losing to East's king. Back comes a heart, but now dummy's diamonds are good and declarer romps home with ten tricks. Bridge is an easy game! But when the deal was played in real life, East and West conspired to make declarer's life not quite so easy.

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

♠ K 2 ♥ Q J 10 4 2 ♦ J 4 2 ♣ 10 4 3	♠ 10 6 ♥ 7 6 3 ♦ A Q 10 6 5 3 ♣ 8 7	♠ Q J 5 4 3 ♥ 9 8 5 ♦ K 7 ♣ Q J 9	
			
	♠ A 9 8 7 ♥ A K ♦ 9 8 ♣ A K 6 5 2		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♣
Pass	3 NT	All pass	2 NT
3 NT by South			
Lead: ♥ Q			

East started the fun at trick two by ducking the diamond! Now declarer had a choice to make. Should he play West to have started with ♦KJx, in which case the diamonds will run? Or, should he play for 3-3 clubs and get to nine tricks that way? Declarer decided to try diamonds first and led a second round of the suit. Now West realized that playing low would be fatal for the defense, making it plain to declarer that West had not started with KJx, that the diamonds were not coming in and therefore that dummy's ace must be played. So, to keep the deception alive, West squandered the jack on the second round of diamonds! Our duped declarer confidently finessed dummy's queen, which was taken by East's king. Dummy was now officially dead and declarer was down.

Nice play by both defenders, but declarer could have given himself a second way to win. After the diamond nine holds the trick he should duck a club, win the heart return, and cash the ♣AK. If the suit is 3-3 then there are nine tricks without the diamonds ... if the suit does not break then he must rely on a lucky diamond situation.