

My Partner's a Fool!

by Rich Waugh

It was our regular Friday game at Bridge Ace,
I had not an inkling what was about take place.
We started the day against Carol and Jay,
And on two out of three, things didn't go our way.

Our opponents, round two, were Michael and Jean,
The last time we played them, I'd gone down thirteen!
I was hoping against hope for more than one good board,
But here, once again, two bottoms we scored.

We moved on to three, where we found Ron and Carol,
They said playing us was, "Like shooting fish in a barrel."
On the fourth round, we played Gwen and Jackie.
Things didn't get better – they got even more whacky.

After twelve boards, our game was mediocre,
I had played a few hands just like a joker.
My partner had not taken one winning finesse,
And neither had I, I'm ashamed to confess.

My partner's poor bidding was giving me troubles,
And don't get me started on some of his doubles.
He'd even forgotten two notrump is Jacoby.
I wanted to throw him into Lake Okeechobee!

On round number five, we faced Billy and Larry.
If we couldn't beat them, I'd commit hara-kiri!
I was hopeful that now our fortunes would reverse.
I knew, at any rate, things couldn't get any worse.

As I sorted my cards to play board thirteen,
I was feeling the need for a jolt of caffeine.
I knew, for this session, we had a lot to make up,
A fresh cup of coffee just might help me wake up.

Board 13
North Deals
Both Vul

			♠ 6
	N		♥ 9 3
W		E	♦ A K Q J 10 9 4 2
	S		♣ 5 4

North was the dealer and he quietly passed.
"Think about this hand, don't fret over the last."
I counseled myself. I remembered those words,
From a bridge lesson I'd taken with three other nerds.

My hand was worth just ten in high cards,
But the eight solid diamonds I could not disregard.
I pondered my opening. What should it be?
Should I bid five, four or three?

And then I remembered an obscure convention,
(Or had I dreamed up my own bridge invention?)
My three notrump bid was a bit of a gamble,
But I hoped for nine tricks that I could unscramble.

My stupid old partner could not take a joke,
And out of his stupor, he abruptly awoke.
As he bid seven diamonds, his affection was vehement.
Could it be he'd forgot our three notrump agreement?

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♠ J 10 9 8			
♥ Q 10			
♦ 7 6 5			
♣ 8 7 3 2			
♠ A 4 3 2	♠ 6		
♥ A 7 6 5 2	♥ 9 3		
♦ —	♦ A K Q J 10 9 4 2		
♣ A K Q J	♣ 5 4		
	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin: 2px;"> N W E S </div>		
	♠ K Q 7 5		
	♥ K J 8 4		
	♦ 8 3		
	♣ 10 9 6		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	3 NT	Pass
7 ♦!	All pass		
Lead: ♠ J			

When he bid the grand slam, I'm the first to admit,
 I was sure as could be we had a very good fit.
 With my eight card suit, if partner had four,
 We had diamonds and diamonds and diamonds galore!

Without hesitation, North led the spade jack.
 Partner won with the ace and a spade came right back.
 He ruffed with the nine, then led the trump ace.
 When he discarded a heart, I was a charity case.

Did I see what I saw? Was partner a chump?
 He'd just bid a grand slam without any trump!
 I'd figured someone might have started with none,
 But not my own partner, the son of a gun.

When I saw him show out, I gave up all hope,
 I mumbled some comment like, "Partner's a dope."
 To bid a grand with no trumps, you know I was thinking,
 That my partner must have been covertly drinking!

He played out the hand with theatrical flair.
 He pulled all their trumps and didn't stop there,
 He ran all my diamonds, right down to the deuce.
 I couldn't believe he could be so obtuse.

On the last of the diamonds, he threw off an ace!
 Then proceeded to laugh at the look on my face.
 He took all the tricks and that was a thrill,
 But this deal was queerer than a three dollar bill.

When the board was complete and the dust had all settled,
 I apologized to partner for acting so nettled.
 I asked how he knew to bid grand slam with a void.
 He answered politely, but was clearly annoyed.

Partner explained, as he tallied the score,
 "You promised seven tricks and I had six more.
 Seven notrump was no good, if I can be candid,
 For all of your diamond tricks would have been stranded."

The moral of this deal is not so fantastic,
 If I may offer advice, without sounding bombastic:
 Don't lose your temper; you should always stay cool,
 And trust that your partner is not an April Fool!

NOTE: My 3NT opening bid was the "Gambling 3NT" promising a solid seven- or eight-card suit.