

RETURN OF THE BRIDGE
PHILOSOPHER

James S. Kauder



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Hand 1

LOVE STORY

One of the bridge players at the Cavendish West Club is a beautiful young woman. I've fallen in love with her. She's several years younger than I. No matter. As soon as this hand is over, I'm going to ask her out on a date.

Playing rubber bridge, I hold:

♠ 6 5 ♥ A K 10 7 4 ♦ Q 6 5 ♣ K 9 7

Sitting South, I open the bidding with One Heart. West Passes and partner responds Three No-Trump, which we play as a strong major suit raise. I have nothing extra, so I bid Four Hearts. West Passes and partner raises me to Six Hearts, which all Pass.

The Bidding:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
—	—	1 ♥	Pass
3NT	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West leads the queen of spades and North puts down this dummy:

North

♠ A K 7
♥ 8 5 3 2
♦ A K 8
♣ A 10 8

South

♠ 6 5
♥ A K 10 7 4
♦ Q 6 5
♣ K 9 7

I win the king of spades in dummy and play the ace and king of hearts. West follows to the first heart but he discards a spade on the second heart, East having started with the queen-jack third of hearts.

To make Six Hearts, I plan to eliminate the spades and diamonds and then throw East on play for a club return. With this line of play, I can win three tricks in clubs as long as the queen and jack of clubs are held separately.

Which suit should I eliminate first? If I play the diamonds first and East holds a doubleton, East will be able to avert the endplay by ruffing the third diamond and exiting with a spade. On the other hand, if I play the spades first, East will be able to avert the endplay only if the spades break seven-one and East is able to ruff the second round of spades.

I begin with the spades, playing the ace of spades and ruffing the third round of spades. East follows, having started with three spades. I continue with the ace, king and queen of diamonds. On the third round of diamonds, West shows void, discarding a spade.

Before putting East on play with a trump, I stop to count his hand. East began with three spades, three hearts, and five diamonds. East therefore holds only two clubs.

Since East holds only two clubs, I change my game plan. Instead of playing a heart and forcing East to break the clubs, I cash the ace and king of clubs.

East's remaining cards consist of the queen of hearts and the last two diamonds. I lead a trump to East's queen. East wins the heart and is forced to return a diamond. This allows me to ruff in hand and pitch dummy's losing club, so I make Six Hearts.

The complete hand:

	North	
	♠ A K 7	
	♥ 8 5 3 2	
	♦ A K 8	
	♣ A 10 8	
West		East
♠ Q J 10 8 3		♠ 9 4 2
♥ 6		♥ Q J 9
♦ 9 4		♦ J 10 7 3 2
♣ Q J 5 4 3		♣ 6 2
	South	
	♠ 6 5	
	♥ A K 10 7 4	
	♦ Q 6 5	
	♣ K 9 7	

After the hand is over, I speak to my lady love. “I’m very fond of you,” I say, “Will you join me for lunch or dinner sometime.”

“I like you too,” she says, “but I have a boy friend. On the other hand, I think my mother would be perfect for you. Would you like to take my mother out on a date?” she asks.

