8 Attack and Defence

When we looked at Check (& Checkmate), we saw that a king has three possible ways out: Take – Block – Move. When one of the other chessmen is under attack, there is a fourth possibility as well, that of protecting (defending) it: Take – Block – Move – Protect.

Black to move.
White’s queen attacks both black pieces.

T?
Yes.
Bh6xg7 is a very good defence.

White to move.
The bishop is under attack.

T? Yes. a4xb5.
B? Not possible.
M? Possible.
P? Possible (Ra1-c1).
T is clearly preferable.
It must be Black to move – his king is in check.

T? No.
B? Yes (Rb8-b7).
M? No.
P? Can’t apply – it’s check.
Therefore Rb8-b7 is the only move.

Again it must be Black’s move – the king is in check from the Ba2.
Therefore Qg7-f7 is the only legal move.

In reply – checks? 2, one of them mate. (answer)

Black to move.

The rook is under fire from the Bb4.

Therefore choose a rook move. (answer)

Obviously Black to move.

Therefore Kh8-g8 is the only move.

Black to move.

The Nf7 is attacked by the Rf1.

Therefore choose to protect the knight.

Some experience is required to see the back rank mate threat (Rf1 x-rays f8) and therefore choose to protect the knight.

Watch out for the dangerous REFLEX – “she’s attacked it, where shall I move it?”

White to move.

The Be4 attacks the Nf3.

T? No.
B? No (impossible).
M? No.
P? Yes (Kg1-g2).
Therefore probably Kg1-g2, but it isn’t obligatory, so there could be something better.

Black to move.
The Re1 attacks the Qe8.
T? Yes (Qe8xe1).
B? Yes (Rf7-e7 or Rf6-e6).
M? Yes (many).
P? Yes (Rf7-f8).
So, it’s a value judgement; one where Checks & Captures are more important than the Reflex. Of course, here either check wins, but only the one queen move does.
White to move.
The king is in check from the Bd5, so we know P is ruled out.
T? Yes (c4xb5).
B? Yes (Bf1-g2).
M? Yes (Kh1-g1).
Again a wide choice, but ones higher up the list are the most likely, so c4xd5 (if you can’t find anything better).

ANSWERS
- 4th diagram:
Ba2xf7+ and Qa7xf7 mate!

- 5th diagram:
There is nothing special, just important to avoid the squares e3, e2 and e1!