

# A STUDY IN SILVER

---

A second collection  
of bridge stories



David Silver

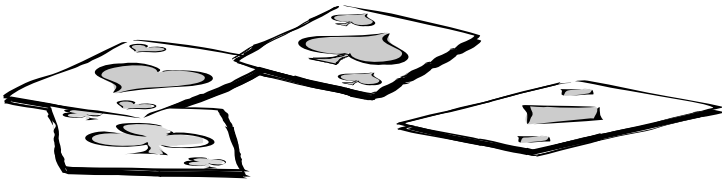
A STUDY  
IN SILVER



# A STUDY IN SILVER

---

A second collection  
of bridge stories



David Silver

Copyright © 1998 David Silver

All rights reserved. It is illegal to reproduce any portion of this material except by special arrangement with the publisher. Reproduction of this material without authorization, by any duplication process whatsoever, is a violation of copyright.

Master Point Press  
331 Douglas Ave.

Toronto, ON

M5M 1H2 (416) 781-1831

Internet: [www.masterpointpress.com](http://www.masterpointpress.com)  
[www.masteringbridge.com](http://www.masteringbridge.com)  
[www.ebooksbridge.com](http://www.ebooksbridge.com)  
[www.bridgeblogging.com](http://www.bridgeblogging.com)

Email: [info@masterpointpress.com](mailto:info@masterpointpress.com)

### **Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data**

Silver, David, 1934-

A Study in Silver: a second collection of bridge stories

ISBN 978-1-55494-048-6

1. Contract bridge - Fiction. 2. Canadian wit and humor (English).\* I. Title

PS8587.I272S78 1998 C813'.54 C97-932424-6  
PR9199.3.S54S78 1998

*Cover design:* Sue Peden

*Interior design:* Olena Serbyn

*Editor:* Ray Lee

*Hand analysis:* Linda Lee

*To Bruce Gowdy:  
a good sport,  
a great bridge player,  
and a wonderful human being  
away from the bridge table*

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The more perceptive among our readers will notice that all of the stories in this book derive at least a part of their plot-line or characterization from certain of the classics of literature and the screen. They may be interested to compare the bridge versions with the originals, which are:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Chapter 1  | any alien abduction book or movie                              |
| Chapter 2  | <i>A Study in Scarlet</i> <i>Sir A. Conan Doyle</i>            |
| Chapter 3  | <i>The Red-Headed League</i> <i>Sir A. Conan Doyle</i>         |
| Chapter 4  | <i>Moby Dick</i> <i>Herman Melville</i>                        |
| Chapter 5  | <i>Heart of Darkness</i> <i>Joseph Conrad</i>                  |
| Chapter 6  | <i>Microserfs</i> <i>Douglas Copeland</i>                      |
| Chapter 7  | <i>An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge</i> <i>Ambrose Bierce</i> |
| Chapter 8  | <i>The Four Feathers</i> <i>1939 movie</i>                     |
| Chapter 9  | <i>The Prisoner of Zenda</i> <i>Anthony Hope</i>               |
| Chapter 10 | <i>A Scandal in Bohemia</i> <i>Sir A. Conan Doyle</i>          |
| Chapter 11 | <i>The Maltese Falcon</i> <i>1941 movie</i>                    |
| Chapter 12 | <i>The Final Problem</i> <i>Sir A. Conan Doyle</i>             |

# CONTENTS

1. THE S-FILES .....9
2. A STUDY IN SILVER .....17
3. THE GRAY-HEADED LEAGUE .....27
4. HUNTING THE GREAT WHITE WHALE ..39
5. HEARTS OF DARKNESS .....47
6. FREE BIRD SEED .....57
7. AN OCCURRENCE AT THE SPINGOLD ...67
8. THE FOUR FEATHERS .....77
- The Legend of Zelda*
9. THE PRISONER OF ZELDA .....89
10. A SCANDAL IN RURITANIA .....97
11. THE RURITANIAN FALCON .....107
12. RECTIFYING THE COUNT .....117







## THE S-FILES

**REQUEST PERMISSION TO TRANSMIT.**

*\*\* Permission granted, GRID 4321, Circuit A4655 \*\**

**AM IN POSSESSION OF TWO TERRAN LIFE FORMS, PLEASE INSTRUCT.**

*\*\* Describe \*\**

**SUBJECTS CORRESPOND TO EARTH SURFACE SCAN #43321, BIPEDS, APPROXIMATELY 40 MARSECS IN HEIGHT, 600 AND 990 MARPACS IN MASS, NO OBSERVABLE SEXUAL ORIENTATION. EARTH DESIGNATIONS "SILVER" AND "HAMBLY". UNLIKE PREVIOUS CONTACTS, THESE SUBJECTS SHOW NO REVULSION OR FEAR AT MY APPEARANCE.**

*\*\* Interrogate \*\**

**SUBJECTS SAY THAT I LOOK AND SMELL LIKE AN ORDINARY BRIDGE PLAYER EXCEPT FOR MY COLOUR AND MY SIX EXTRA LIMBS. ALSO THAT I EXCRETE IN GREATER QUANTITIES.**

*\*\* Information request: Bridge Player:\*

*[Searching data] [Background transmission] ---Cards---Games---Social*

problems---Deviant Behaviour---[EOT] ; Interrogate re scientific status of civilization-- technological advances \*\*

**SUBJECTS REFUSE TO DISCUSS ANYTHING BUT RECENT EXPERIENCES AT BRIDGE TOURNAMENT. REQUEST PERMISSION TO COMPLY---IMMINENT DANGER MUTUAL DESTRUCTION OF SUBJECTS IF CONFLICTS NOT RESOLVED.**

**\*\*Affirmative \*\***

**SUBJECT "SILVER" CLAIMS TEAM GAME LOST BECAUSE SUBJECT "HAMBLY" MISPLAYED FOUR HEARTS. HAND FOLLOWS.**

<b>SILVER</b>																															
	♠ A 7																														
	♥ A J 7 6 3																														
	♦ K 7 4																														
	♣ J 10 9																														
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; padding-bottom: 5px;"><b>WEST</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 15px;">♠</td> <td>K Q J 10 9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♥</td> <td>9 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♦</td> <td>Q J 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♣</td> <td>K Q 3</td> </tr> </table>	<b>WEST</b>		♠	K Q J 10 9	♥	9 4	♦	Q J 5	♣	K Q 3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="width: 20px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="width: 20px;"></td> <td style="text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">S</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; padding-bottom: 5px;"><b>EAST</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 15px;">♠</td> <td>8 6 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♥</td> <td>10 8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♦</td> <td>10 9 8 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♣</td> <td>8 7 6 5</td> </tr> </table>	<b>EAST</b>		♠	8 6 4	♥	10 8	♦	10 9 8 3	♣	8 7 6 5
<b>WEST</b>																															
♠	K Q J 10 9																														
♥	9 4																														
♦	Q J 5																														
♣	K Q 3																														
	N																														
W		E																													
	S																														
<b>EAST</b>																															
♠	8 6 4																														
♥	10 8																														
♦	10 9 8 3																														
♣	8 7 6 5																														
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; padding-bottom: 5px;"><b>HAMBLY</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 15px;">♠</td> <td>5 3 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♥</td> <td>K Q 5 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♦</td> <td>A 6 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♣</td> <td>A 4 2</td> </tr> </table>			<b>HAMBLY</b>		♠	5 3 2	♥	K Q 5 2	♦	A 6 2	♣	A 4 2																			
<b>HAMBLY</b>																															
♠	5 3 2																														
♥	K Q 5 2																														
♦	A 6 2																														
♣	A 4 2																														

**SUBJECT "HAMBLY" DUCKED THE KING OF SPADES OPENING LEAD AND WON THE CONTINUATION WITH ACE IN THE DUMMY. SUBJECT "HAMBLY" THEN DREW TRUMPS ENDING IN DUMMY AND TOOK A CLUB FINESSE. LATER, SUBJECT ""HAMBLY" TOOK ANOTHER CLUB FINESSE. SUBJECT CLAIMS THAT THE REPEATED CLUB FINESSE MAKES CONTRACT 75% AND HIS LINE OF PLAY WAS CORRECT. HE LOST ONE SPADE, ONE DIAMOND,**

**AND TWO CLUBS. ANALYZE PLEASE.**

*\*\*Contract is 100% certain. Impossible to fail when South is declarer \*\**

**SUBJECT "HAMBLY" REQUESTS CLARIFICATION.**

*\*\*Not necessary: winning line obvious \*\**

**RECOMMEND CLARIFICATION, SUBJECT "HAMBLY" IS ROLLING ON THE GROUND AND MAKING UNINTELLIGIBLE SOUNDS.**

*\*\*Clarification: Duck king of spades, win continuation. Draw trumps ending in South hand. Ruff South's last spade in the dummy and then play A, K, and another diamond. Even if West unblocks QJ of diamonds and East wins third round, declarer ducks club lead to West. West must return club into declarer's tenace or yield ruff and sluff. Location of missing club honour irrelevant to outcome \*\**

**SUBJECT "HAMBLY" CLAIMS TEAM GAME LOST BECAUSE SUBJECT "SILVER" MISPLAYED SEVEN SPADES. HAND FOLLOWS.**

<b>HAMBLY</b>					
	♠ A K 6 4				
	♥ 8				
	♦ Q 7 6 5 3 2				
	♣ A 4				
<b>WEST</b>	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W      E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W      E	S	<b>EAST</b>
N					
W      E					
S					
♠ 10		♠ 9 3 2			
♥ K 10 3		♥ Q J 4 2			
♦ J 9 8 4		♦ 10			
♣ J 10 8 6 3		♣ Q 9 7 5 2			
<b>SILVER</b>					
♠ Q J 8 7 5					
♥ A 9 7 6 5					
♦ A K					
♣ K					

**BOTH SUBJECTS REFUSE TO DISCUSS THE BIDDING. SUBJECT "SILVER" (SOUTH) WON THE CLUB LEAD, DREW TRUMPS AND THEN PLAYED THE  $\spadesuit$ A AND  $\spadesuit$ K. HE CLAIMS THAT THE BAD TRUMP SPLIT AND THE 4-1 DIAMOND DISTRIBUTION MAKES THE HAND IMPOSSIBLE TO MANAGE. WITH ONLY ONE DUMMY ENTRY, THE DIAMONDS COULD BE ESTABLISHED, BUT THERE WAS NO WAY TO RETURN TO CASH THEM. ANALYZE PLEASE.**

*\*\*Declarer wins club lead, cashes queen of spades and ace of diamonds. When both opponents follow, declarer claims 13 tricks \*\**

**SUBJECT "SILVER" REQUESTS CLARIFICATION.**

*\*\*Are you certain that you have captured sentient life forms? \*\**

**[SEARCHING DATA] THESE TWO ARE DEFINITELY IN THE HIGHEST CATEGORY OF EVOLUTION ON THIS PLANET. EACH CLAIMS THE OTHER IS THE LOWEST LEVEL OF TERRAN INTELLIGENCE.**

*\*\*Which is correct? \*\**

**[SEARCHING DATA] BOTH. URGENTLY RECOMMEND CLARIFICATION OF GRAND SLAM CLAIM AS SUBJECT "SILVER" IS TURNING PURPLE AND HIS VITAL SIGNS ARE VERY WEAK.**

*\*\*Declarer wins  $\clubsuit$ K in hand, cashes  $\spadesuit$ A and  $\spadesuit$ Q and travels to dummy with  $\spadesuit$ A. Then  $\clubsuit$ A is cashed and declarer discards  $\spadesuit$ K. A diamond is ruffed in hand and declarer returns to the dummy with king of spades and ruffs another diamond, establishing the suit. Later, he can ruff a heart with dummy's last spade and cash three more diamonds \*\**

**SUBJECT "HAMBLY" CLAIMS TEAM GAME LOST BECAUSE SUBJECT "SILVER" MISPLAYED THREE NOTRUMPS. HAND FOLLOWS.**

HAMBLY

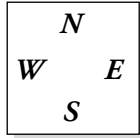
♠ 5 2  
♥ J 10 5  
♦ A 7 3  
♣ Q 8 7 6 3

WEST

♠ A J 10 9 3  
♥ 9 8 3  
♦ K J 5  
♣ K 4

EAST

♠ 8 7 4  
♥ K 7 4 2  
♦ 10 9 8  
♣ J 10 2



SILVER

♠ K Q 6  
♥ A Q 6  
♦ Q 6 4 2  
♣ A 9 5

**SUBJECT "SILVER" (SOUTH) WON THE JACK OF SPADES LEAD AND ATTEMPTED TO PLAY ACE AND ANOTHER CLUB TO THE QUEEN. LHO PLAYED THE KING OF CLUBS ON THE ACE. EAST COULD NOT BE PREVENTED FROM GAINING THE LEAD BEFORE DECLARER COULD SET UP NINE TRICKS. SUBJECT "SILVER" CLAIMS THAT WEST MADE AN EXPERT PLAY TO BEAT AN ODDS ON GAME. ANALYZE.**

*\*\*Negative: terminate subject "Silver" immediately \*\**

**SUBJECT "HAMBLY" REQUESTS THAT SUBJECT "SILVER" NOT BE TERMINATED.**

*\*\*Assure subject "Hambly" that a better partner can be found by selecting any terran life form at random \*\**

**SUBJECT "HAMBLY" IS AFRAID THAT WHEN SUBJECT "SILVER" IS TERMINATED, SUBJECT "HAMBLY" WILL BECOME THE WORST BRIDGE PLAYER ON TERRA.**

*\*\*Subject "Hambly" shows signs of rudimentary intelligence: retain subject "Silver" and proceed with interrogation. Clarification of three notrump contract follows: declarer wins spade lead and leads low club towards dummy's queen. if LHO rises with club king then nine tricks are on top: one spade, four clubs, three hearts and one diamond. Success of heart finesse is assumed for contract to be made: if LHO ducks club king, declarer wins queen of clubs in dummy and ducks a club into LHO's now singleton king. A diamond switch forces a low diamond from dummy in order to preserve ace for a dummy entry. Ace of clubs drops RHO's club jack and clears the suit \*\**

**SUBJECT "SILVER" POINTS OUT THAT LHO MIGHT HAVE THREE CLUBS TO THE KING AND THEN EAST WILL GAIN THE LEAD WITH HIS DOUBLETON JACK, LEAD A SPADE THROUGH DECLARER AND THE CONTRACT WILL FAIL. CLARIFY.**

*\*\*The probability of RHO's holding club doubleton is 34%, just as for LHO. But if LHO holds three clubs king he is less likely to hold a five-card spade suit. If LHO has only four spades contract cannot be beaten with a spade lead. This line of play far superior to any other; further explanation beyond mental capacities of subject "Silver" \*\**

**SUBJECTS REQUEST THAT WE PLAY WITH THEM IN THE SUMMER NATIONALS. SUBJECTS CLAIM THAT WITH THEIR EXPERIENCE AND OUR ABILITY WE CAN WIN SPINGOLD EASILY.**

*\*\*Negative: probability of winning anything with "Silver" and "Hambly" approximately 0.00000001: proceed to Summer Nationals and register for Life Masters Open Pairs. \*\**

**AFFIRMATIVE: YOU DO NOT THINK THEY WILL NOTICE OUR APPEARANCE?**

*\*\*[Searching data] Tell them we are part of the Blue Team [EOT] \*\**

# A STUDY IN SILVER

For more than twenty years David Silver's bridge writings have appeared in such publications as the *New York Times*, the *American Contract Bridge League Bulletin*, and *Canadian Master Point* magazine. In this second collection of humorous bridge stories, the author of *Tales Out Of School* turns his satirical eye on the world of movies and literature: Sherlock Holmes, Moby Dick, the X Files, and even Dracula cannot escape involvement in Professor Silver's adventures. As always, a wide selection of fascinating bridge hands makes the stories even more enjoyable.

## Praise for 'Tales Out Of School' by David Silver

*"One of the funniest bridge books ever written"* Ted Horning, TORONTO STAR

*"Hilarious"* Alan Truscott, NEW YORK TIMES

*"I hope this author appears with another book soon"* BRIDGE magazine

*"The funniest bridge book I have ever read"* Bob Sievers, NET REVIEWS



A nineteenth-century literature specialist by training, and a non-playing bridge expert by marriage, David Silver is a technical writer and college professor. A life-long squash enthusiast, he has returned to competitive bridge because he now needs a sport he can play sitting down. An active tournament player in the fifties and sixties, David has partnered all the leading Canadian bridge players of his generation, once. He lives in Toronto with his wife, Barbara, two grown children, and an elderly dog.