

♠♥♦♣ THOSE #%@\$ PREEMPTS ♠♥♦♣

You pick up this hand.

S	South
♠	AQ4
♥	AK
♦	KJ7642
♣	A9

You have 21 HCP and 2 length points. Oh boy! This is definitely your hand. The problem is that East dealt and opened 3♠.

Now what do you do?

You can double, but what do you do if Partner advanced in Hearts? Making an overcall of 4♦ might leave you in a part score. Is Partner broke? Or, does he have a reasonable hand for a game. Or, is his hand good enough for a slam?

Your opponent's pre-empt put you to an absolute guess. If he had passed, you could have easily sussed out the best place and level to play at. But having to make your first bid so high, you can't get the information you need.

It is very reasonable to overcall 3NT with this hand. Your partner passes and this becomes the ultimate contract.

West leads the ♠6 and partner lays down this dummy:

N	North
♠	K
♥	Q652
♦	Q1085
♣	KJ76

West's Lead: ♠6

S	South
♠	AQ4
♥	AK
♦	KJ7642
♣	A9

Yikes! You have a cold slam in 6NT. East made a 3-level preemptive bid on a very weak suit. But it paid off, keeping you out of your slam contract. 3NT could easily go down if your partner's points were in the West hand, and he had led a Club. That's the reason East gambled on his opening bid.

The good news is that you can do the same thing to your opponents when you get the chance. Then they will be saying "those #%@\$ pre-empts."

This is the entire deal:

14 D	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ K ♥ Q652 ♦ Q1085 ♣ KJ76	P	P	P	3♠ 3NT
W West	E East				
♠ 65 ♥ 108743 ♦ 9 ♣ 85432	♠ J1098732 ♥ J9 ♦ A3 ♣ Q10				
	S South				
	♠ AQ4 ♥ AK ♦ KJ7642 ♣ A9				
		3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0			

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yysgylpa>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. If you don't want to see the opponents hands, click on the white area in the South hand before you start.

Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.