Smack bang in the middle of the room stood an elderly couple bound together and standing face to face.

There was barely six inches between their heads but standing behind them, through the gap, was the target.

‘Fucker! I can’t do it. I can’t do it. I’m not that good!” he said quietly.

He screwed his eyes tight closed, like a kid does that doesn’t want to see something or wishing something he had seen won’t be there when he opens them. Unfortunately, when he did, he knew what was waiting. He also knew what would happen if he hesitated this time. Last time it was his back, this time it could be his arms or hands ........or head.

Billy slowed his breathing and pictured, just like he’d been taught. “*See the target in your mind. Every detail; every ambient element of the room; every contour of the entity; every aspect of the objective; Its position relative to the room and yourself. Become the target.*”

Billy pictured the scenario; the elderly couple; the target. He then blotted the couple out of his mind and focused on just the black and white image between them. Nothing else existed in that room. He took three, slow deep breaths. One....Two....Three and he was moving. He rounded the door, gun already raised, torch in his left hand under the butt. He blotted out the stifled screams emanating from the frightened pensioners when they realised what he was about to do. He steadied his hands and felt rather than aimed. All he saw was the objective.

Two shots rang out in rapid succession.

He couldn’t hear the couple anymore. No sounds. No movement. Nothing.

His gun was still raised, aiming at the inanimate object. There were no holes.

His mind was screaming at him.

‘Where’s the holes? There’s got to be holes!’

He tried to look away but his eyes were transfixed on the target. Suddenly a shoot rang out and he felt the searing pain as the training round hit his left bicep. It shook him out of his stupor and he immediately dropped the torch and retreated back behind the door. Clutching his upper arm in agony he shouted;

“Why did you shoot me?”

“Because you missed the target Billy.”

He didn’t want to ask the next question as he didn’t want to know the answer.

“What about the couple?”

Silence.

“Well?!”

“You missed them too Billy. You’re quite a lousy shot today aren’t you?”

He sunk down in relief.

“I on the other hand, am not.”

Billy screamed “No!” as two shots rang out. He heard the bodies drop.