



The room lights are turned out and the targets become the stars of the show.

When all are ready, the signal is given to fire-at-will. There is no rush to shoot.

Each man enters his own world of concentration, setting his own pace.

The noise comes almost as a surprise--I've forgotten that the proof is in the firing.

I expected that this was where it would get boring but my companion, having a great deal more knowl-



edge of the subject than I, began to point out things for me to notice: Ron's economy of motion--he never moves his head or takes his eye from the target as he loads each cartridge--he has taken such care with his set-up that his hand knows exactly where the ammunition is, without fumbling or searching.

Nick takes a complete break after each shot and starts over, re-sighting for each additional shot.

Mike positions himself (almost certainly unintentionally) just like his father, though with small but distinct differences in

his style.

Don is the text-book shooter...doing everything precisely and with dogged attention to detail.

Jim, (a newer member of the team) takes the best from each of his teammates and is working to develop a style of his own.

When everyone has finished the round, the lights come up and I breathe, again.

At this point the guys are not talking much. They move around purposefully--re-adjusting gear. Tall poles move in, ammo boxes are moved to one arm of the pole, mats are moved out of the way and new targets are tacked up.

Again, the lights go out and everything gets quiet. This time they stand and the shooters become silhouettes against the brightly lit target area.

They use the poles to hold the ammo and rest their rifles and I think that this shouldn't be too bad, what with the support from the poles. But when they begin to shoot, I see that the poles only provide support for the rifles between shots. The guns are heavy and this is where the shooting coats are invaluable in lending their strength to the shooters, already straining to hold their targets.



The room is cool but the effort required to hold this position has each of the men breaking out into a light sweat. In between shots the barrel of the gun goes quickly back to the pole while the shooter takes a few well deserved deep breaths and then returns to his stance. When asked which of the positions is the most difficult, "this one" is the quick and unanimous answer.

The lights come back on and I'm starting to ache--it hurts just to watch. Again they move things around and hang new targets, getting ready for the third and final round.