

**Success**  
**By David Silver**

He was in a dark place, a narrow passageway with the barest glimmer of light sufficient to avoid the panic of claustrophobia but insufficient to show him the way ahead. He crawled forward gingerly. The surface was tiled, with occasional residues of a malodorous substance. He tried to stand but was unable to; some unseen force kept dragging him downward. He edged, inch by painful inch, feeling decidedly nauseous and dizzy. A raging thirst came upon him but he had nothing about his person with which to assuage it.

Minutes, or perhaps hours, passed. His knees became sore from friction with the unforgiving surface.

Suddenly, and with relief, he came across some sort of barrier. It was a doorway! He hauled himself to his feet by grabbing hold of the handle. If he could get through this he'd be free and relieved of his misery. He started to push but nothing happened. He tried harder. The edges of panic came on. The harder he pushed the more it seemed to resist. He began to fade with exhaustion.

Some time later a light came on and shone from the other side of the door through the glass panel. He could now make out some lettering. 'Pull To Open' it said.

He pulled on the handle and made his way into the rear entrance of the tenth pub of the evening.

***Ten-Minute Challenge, 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017***