

Aauugaah... battle stations missile...aauugaah

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Poetry

Hail Mary, full of grace...

Commanding officer, executive officer & missile officer confirm message

To fire all missiles as pretargeted...

The Lord is with thee...

CO, XO & MO arm missiles with each's key (no one person can arm missiles)...

Blessed art thou among women...

Open outer hatches for all missiles...

And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus...

Countdown activation of launch readiness of propulsion system all missiles...

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners...

Countdown air pressurization launch readiness all missile tubes...

Now and at the hour of our death...

Launch countdown 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1...bypass!!!

Repeated 15 more times...for each missile.

Amen.

This happened at least once a week as commanded by top secret high tech communication from COMSUBLANT (Commander Submarines Atlantic) so one never knew if it was the real thing. All we know is that if those birds fly, we will have unleashed more explosive power than all the weapons combined used by all combatants in World War II. Launching meant that there is a full scale nuclear war going on and that we will likely return to nothing, that our families are dead, and that our mission of deterrence has failed. And our missiles will kill 250 million Soviets. Going through this was incredibly tense coped with only by a courageous masculine "tough guy" numbing focus on the tasks at hand. Looking back, it was a mind-boggling paradox that by doing what we were doing as if it was not happening made it not

happen. I never thought about it until Ron Reagan died. I then was overwhelmed with flashbacks realizing that somehow somehow we kept the Soviets at bay until the time was right for President Reagan's eye-ball to eye-ball "let us be friends" or "match us with the next generation of weapons." None of us ever believed that we could have won without firing those missiles. For us, the Soviets were eternal giant undefeatable monsters about which nothing could be done except coexistence by mutual assured destruction. I tremble realizing that we laid the groundwork so Ron Reagan could bring the Soviets to capitulate without firing a shot! I guess we proved what Plato said, "If you want peace, prepare for war."

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