

We Are A Submarine Sailor

by Mike Hemming

We are not the first of them and we will not be the last. Our heritage runs back to the first submarine. This heritage line continues forward into an unseen future. Each generation is trained by the one before. This will remain so until there is no more use for submarines, which will be never.

If one of us goes aboard a new or old submarine, we are comfortable with the men there. For they are us and we are them. Stand us in a line in all our dress uniforms or naked in our coffins, we are the same. We are and forever will be submarine sailors. We are one.

We can have everything taken from us, uniforms, medals, our sanity and our lives, but we will always be recognized by others and ourselves as a submariner. This status can not be removed from us. Our Dolphins worn on our chests then, hung on our walls now, or later pinned on moldering uniforms in our graves mark us forever. We are first, last, and always men that stepped forward and worked long and hard to become what we are. We are unique among sailors for we sail down deep into dark and always dangerous waters. We do this not with foolhardy go-to-hell bravery, but with cool calculation and care. We challenge the dangers with training and practice. We know that the time for bravery will come when two shipmates close themselves in a flooding compartment, knowing that the whole boat and crew depends on them to control the flooding.

We believe in each other, because we must. Alone at sea, the crew and a pressure hull are all we have to reach the surface again. Men with confidence in each other dive and surface submarines countless times. Each man trained by others holds the lives of those shipmates in his hands. Dolphins are the symbol of this tradition.

Submarine hulls have numbers and men have hearts and souls. We carry those numbers in our hearts in life, and they mark our souls in death. Silver or Gold, Dolphins are the symbol of this.

To us Dolphins are it, no other symbol matters or means anything as important as they do.

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