

Red Button

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'Mr President, it's time.'

The space station is waiting, the plan is set. Just one more thing, press the red button.

"Are you sure there is no other way? It all seems like such a great waste!"

"Mr President, we have been over this a hundred times. There is no other way."

"Very well, General, show me the way." The General breathed a small sigh of relief and directed the President through the labyrinth of halls and passages in the newly completed space station orbiting the Earth at high-altitude. There was a sense of urgency about this whole affair, but the President was not in a hurry to reach the destination. Once there a computer screen prompted him for a retinal scan to confirm his identity.

"Code name, Alpha & Omega," he spoke into the security screen.

"Identity and intention confirmed," the computer responded with calm indifference. "Please enter and proceed to panel Omega." The president took one final look at the General, and entered the chamber marked Omega. In the chamber was only one panel rising from the floor, on a single column with a single red button in the middle. The president knew that pressing that button would launch every nuclear weapon his country possessed and subsequently trigger a response from every other country with nuclear weapons to launch all in response. He also knew the red button before him was totally unnecessary and he could have initiated the sequence at his command, but the button made everything seem so much more final and decisive.

"God forgive me," he whispered to himself and tried to remind himself why he was doing this. The world had become corrupt. Everything was failing, the economy, the atmosphere, world health, law and order, all gone. It was all anarchy now and humans needed a do over. That's what the chosen people in hibernation on the station would do; they would be the world's second chance.

The President look at the Red Button again, lifted his hand, and pressed it.