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MEN WHO FACE DEATH IN THE REGULAR LINE OF THEIR WORK FOR UNCLE SAM
W. A. DUpuy

Take, for instance, the case of Ranger Edward C. Pulaski. Ranger Pulaski is a direct descendant of Count Pulaski, the Polish exile who fought so long and well during the revolutionary war in behalf of the nation that was to be. In fact, the descent of this young forest ranger is such that to him would come the title of count were it the habit to keep track of such things in democratic America. The forest ranger cares nothing for the title which he might claim as a descendant of the Polish exile, but he gives abundant evidence of the fighting spirit of that gentleman.

It was three years ago that forest fires were running riot in the high mountains of Idaho and that fighters were being recruited from railroad gangs, military posts and wherever else able-bodied men were to be had. This was the disastrous year for fire fighters. Hundreds of them gave their lives in a single season to fighting these battles of the wilds. It was an expedition to fight a battle of this sort which Pulaski led when he met a big emergency such as near the souls of lesser men.

Pulaski and his forty men had been fighting hand in hand against the flames as they pushed up a steep mountain side and licked into the heart of a forest of great virgin trees, such as is the pride of every ranger. Not until the heat became unbearable would these men retreat and begin the erection of a new line of defense. But the very effectiveness of their fighting proved their own undoing.

The flames which they had held back on a long stretch of mountain side beat around them to right and left, and thus outflanked and utterly defeated them. So busy were they with the enemy in front that they did not realize that the flames had met behind them and cut off all retreat until they found themselves on a steadily vanishing island of green in a red sea of fire. Pulaski ordered his men to cling together while he reconnoitered in all directions to see if there was any avenue of escape. He found that there was none, but he also found the tunnel of an ancient and abandoned mine. This offered the only hope of escape from the flames that were rapidly closing in upon the band of fighters.

Pulaski hurried the men into this tunnel. The flames roared through the great pine trees outside, and the smoke of the fire drove the men farther and farther into the tunnel. The timbers of that passage caught fire and the tunnel itself steadily burned inward. The smoke thus gradually bore down upon the forty. Panic seized the men and they rushed toward the mouth of the tunnel, thus fleeing unknowingly into the flood of flame that was still outside. Pulaski blocked the way. He threw the men back into the tunnel, and ordered them to lie upon their faces, for the air was best nearest the ground. Revolver in hand he drove them back from certain death time

time, and maintained his post upright while the other members of the party sought solace in the better air on the ground. After five hours the tunnel became a madhouse, and its occupants beat themselves into insensibility against its walls.

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Finally the flames ~~broc~~ past and the indomitable ranger piloted his party to the breathable air on the outside. Not all his men survived. Five had not sufficient strength to endure the torture, and died in the tunnel. Palinski's eyes were barely saved by being given the promptest of medical attention