

The Firefighter

By Samuel Kuhns

You know what I never understood? Why do we force people to evacuate before a wildfire? I mean what better opportunity do we have to chlorinate the gene pool? You wanna talk about what it means to be a hero? DON'T tell people they have to leave their houses. Let 'em figure it out on their own, and if they don't oh well. We are in the midst of a global climate crisis. Directly tied to that crisis, is the problem of overpopulation, and you know which part of that population is the most responsible for the climate crisis? The kind of people that are too dumb to realize they're in danger. The same stupid fuckers that can't control their need to compensate for their abnormally small penises by driving trucks that quadruple their carbon footprint. If they want to be on their couch watching Rush Limbaugh when the wildfire turns them into a poorly seasoned roast, I say they should go for it. Let 'em burn- if they don't, they might have more kids. In fact, they will almost certainly have lots more kids... that will think the same way as them... and will also have abnormally small penises. We're saving the problem. We're out there breaking our backs digging ditches, breathing in smoke, literally risking life and limb, all so these stupid fuckers can keep on living in a way that makes the fires we're fighting more frequent, more intense and more difficult to control. We are preserving the issue, and we're the ones who are suffering for it, not them. It's us. We're the ones going out and hoping that none of our friends get hit by a falling branch or have a heart attack from over-exerting themselves while breathing in more smoke than air. And then they have the audacity to act like they support us. I swear to God if I see one more "Thank You Firefighters!" sticker on the bumper of an F-350 I'm gonna lay my fucking pulaski into the side of his bed. Better yet, his hood that way he has to look at it everywhere he goes so he'll never forget he's a hypocritical piece of shit that is part of the problem. You wanna thank me, drive a fucking honda civic.

I'm sorry, I shouldn't be making you listen to me bitch and moan and wallow in my pessimism. I just... I... I can't stop thinking about why we do what we do. Everyone calls us heroes, puts us on a pedestal for saving all of humanity from the deadliest fires and blah blah blah... As if we don't enjoy the risk. As if we don't do it because it's rewarding in a way that no other job on Earth could possibly be. As if we're making a sacrifice by jumping out of planes and doing badass shit that we wouldn't trade in a million years from some waste-of-a-life desk job. Which brings me back to my earlier point, we're saving the lives of people who waste them and use them to destroy our planet for the few of us who are actually making something of themselves, so why do we do it? Why did Rick get killed in that fire? Why am I waking up from nightmare after nightmare where I watch it happen over and over... Why am I still going out there and putting my life on the line for these fucks! I... I...

I felled the tree.

I felled the tree. There was no burning branch. Well, there was, there was a lot of them, obviously, but that's not what happened. I was dropping snags on a line we were cutting... and we were fine we had it but we... I missed a widowmaker a hundred yards back from where I was and by the time I got to it it was about twenty seconds from crowning the fire, so I started to hurry and I was trynna be careful, I was trying to be smart and I swear I eyed that tree up and down and I knew where it was gonna fall, I knew where it was gonna fall but it didn't it just didn't fall where it was supposed and it started swinging to the right back towards the line and I saw where it was going and I tried to scream something and maybe I did I don't even know, but it ... it didn't make a difference if I did. Mikey said he saw Rick get hit by a branch that had fallen. I don't know if that's really what he thought he saw or... I don't know. All I know is what I saw happen.

I killed Rick.