

"UNCLE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS"
(EPISODE NO. 113)

12:30-1:30 P.M.

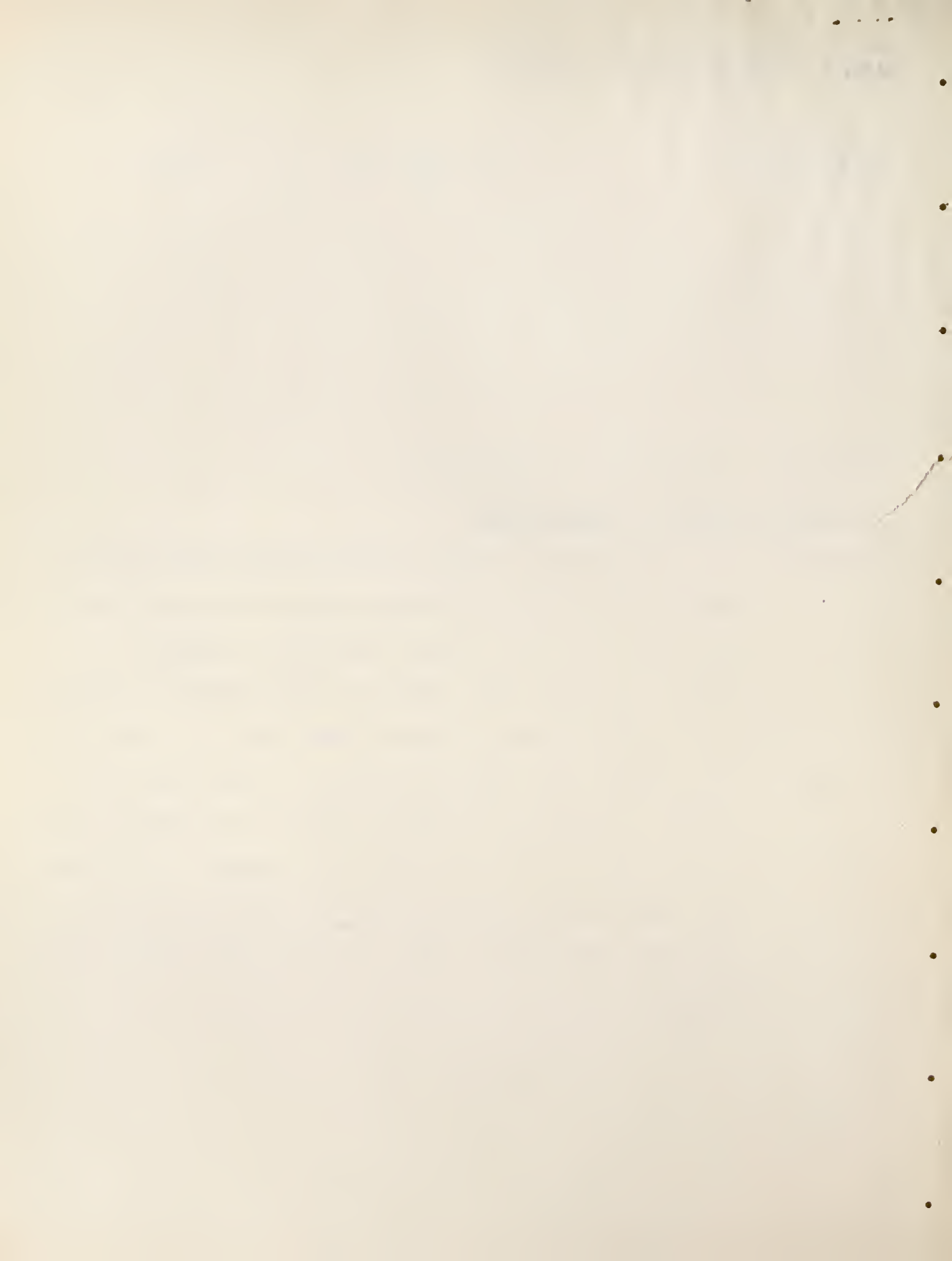
JULY 27, 1934

FRIDAY

ANNOUNCER: "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers"

ORCHESTRA; QUARTET: "RANGER SONG"

ANNOUNCER: Up in the National Forests, as Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers carry on their work of managing and protecting the forest resources, there are frequent colorful, or humorous, or dramatic incidents that break in on the routine of National Forest administration. Many of these have to do with fire, the forests' worst enemy, and today, we understand, our friends at the Pine Cone Ranger Station are going to tell us a true story of a fire incident that happened not so long ago. Well, here's ranger Jim Radlow alone in his office, doing what most Rangers hate - clerical work. Let's look in on him ----



JIM: (MUTTERING TO SELF) By George - that's the third time I've toted up this column and it won't come out the same way twice! ----Let's see now --- And 8's 113, and 9's 122, and ---

(JERRY ENTERS, SLAMS DOOR AFTER HIM, AND ----)

JERRY: (ANGRILY) For the love of Mike, Jim - listen here, will you --

JIM: Hi, Jerry! Looks like you're on the war-path. What's doing?

JERRY: Oh, not a thing! -- not a THING! I just made my regular patrol of Windin' Creek Canyon to see if any trout fishermen are trying to burn us up with cigarettes or illegal campfires, and ---

JIM: Take your time, Jerry. You're not enough to start a forest fire, yourself! What trouble did you bump into down there?

JERRY: (CALMER) A kind I didn't expect. The canyon was quiet enough - no fishermen at all -- at least, not the kind I'm used to. I only met one near the whole stretch. But he was bad enough.

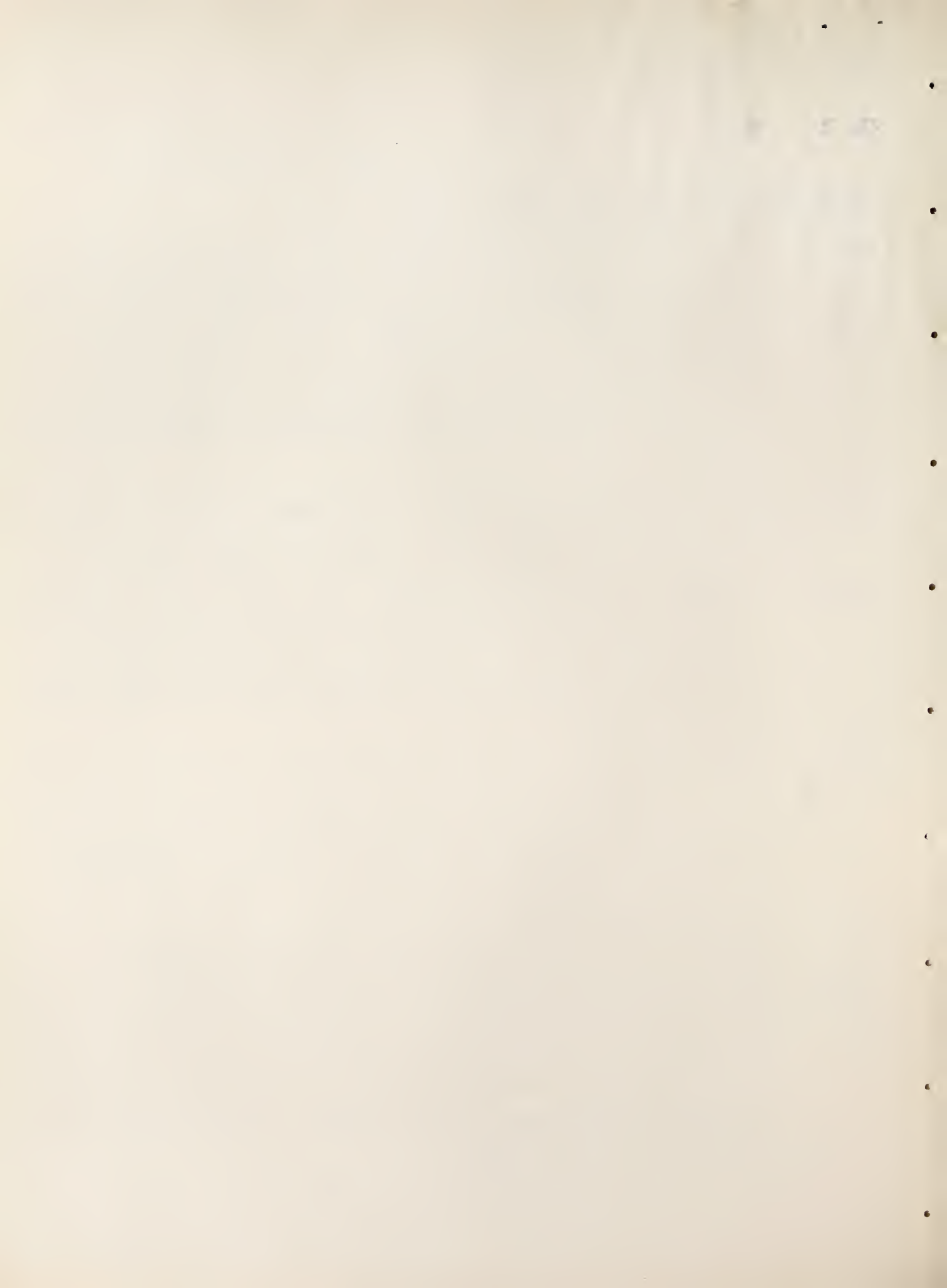
JIM: How do you mean?

JERRY: Well, I find him sitting by a trout-hole under the Twisty Falls. He's got a big high-power rifle across his knees and his eyes are glued on a whopping big trout -- a regular Grand-maddy! ----waiting for a shot at it'.

JIM: Shootin' trout with a rifle, eh? That ain't so good.

JERRY: Oh, it's an old trick in some localities, you know.

JIM: Yep. It ain't as bad as waitin' dynamite, but it's bad enough. Killin' hundreds of little ones to get one or two big ones. No real sportsman would do it, though. -- What did this one have to say for himself?



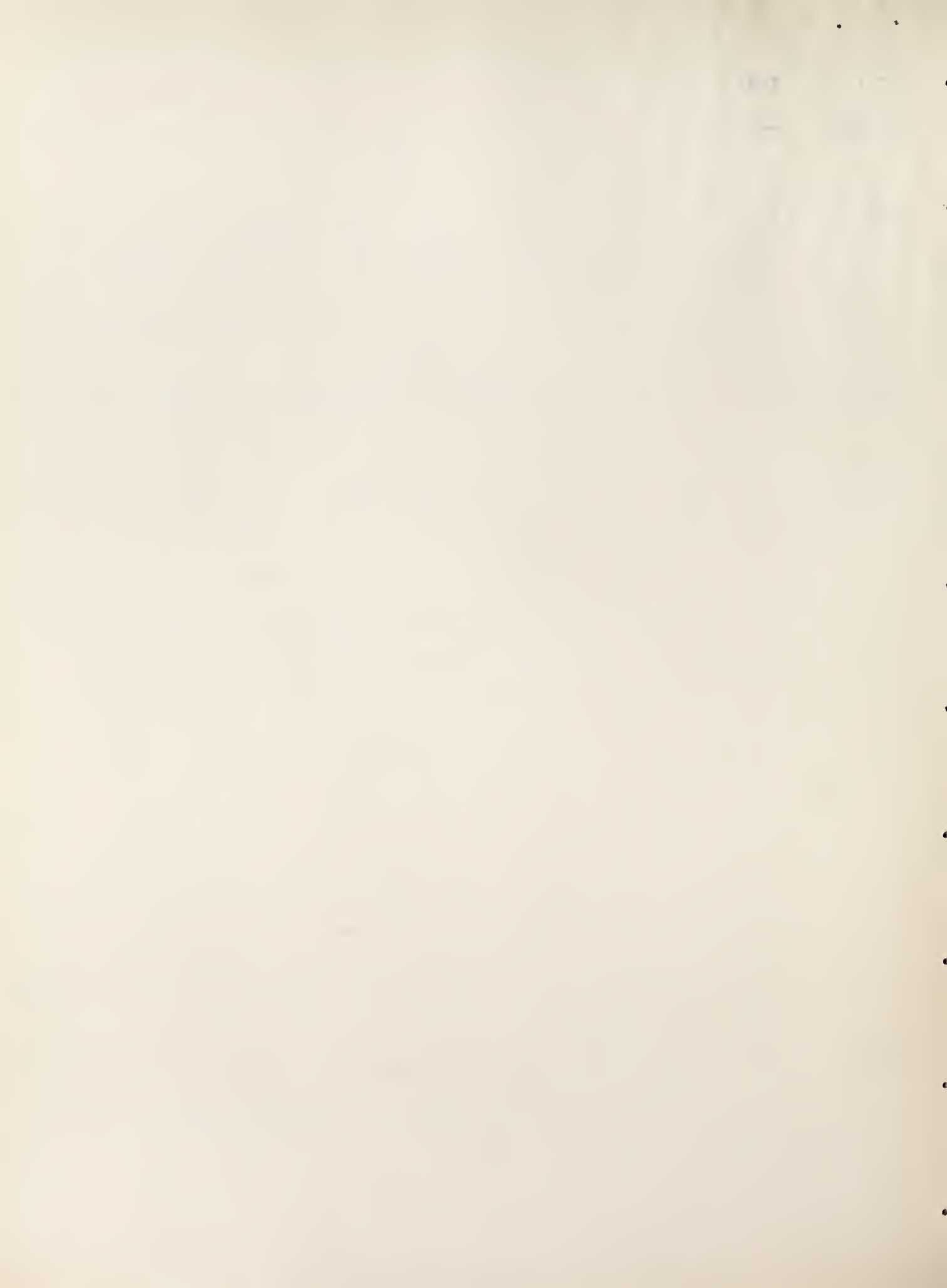
JERRY: He said he'd done it lots of times where he came from, and he'd heard about the big trout up here, and he thought ----

JIM: Uh huh. Same old story! Doin' what he used to do, an' not realizin' that if we're going to keep our fishing streams of any use to the public, we've got to have rules of sportsmanship. What did you do with him, Jerry?

JERRY: Turned him over to the State Game Warden. I took the rifle away from him and turned it over to the Warden for evidence, too.

JIM: Good idea! You did just right, Jerry. -- I'd like to talk to that gent though -- telling him a little story might do him more good than legal punishment. -- You see, Jerry, it's always been a Forest Service idea that friendliness, a willingness to make allowance for the other fellow's viewpoint, saves more wood sometimes than putting him in jail under the strict letter of a law he didn't know about. Of course, a lot depends on the particular case, but generally speaking, where prison or a fine embitters a man, a firm but friendly talk is something he remembers with -- well, let's say a feeling of thankfulness that he didn't get any worse handed to him. -- It reminds me of a story I'm gonna tell this fellow -- I reckon we'd better go down there this afternoon.

JERRY: Tell me the story, Jim, while I pick up a smoke. I've been chewing gum for hours all through that tindersy canyon.



JIM: Yeah. Gum's a mighty fine substitute when you couldn't smoke -- Anyway, you remember that colored boy we had pleasin' up around the yard some the first spring you were he're?

JERRY: The little fellow we called "Smudge?" Sure! What's become of him, anyway?

JIM: Oh, I got him a better job - in town --- He was out of a job when I first saw him. Kinde nervous an' got the notion to send tenderfeet to, that they can live cheaper in the woods for a while, forgettin' that it takes experience to live and survive in the wilderness if you've always been used to civilized conveniences. How he got into Winding Creek Canyon, or was, I don't know, and he couldn't explain very clearly. One place was prob'ly like another to him, up here. Maybe thought he could live on trout. You can --- but first you've gotta catch your trout; which ain't so easy to some folks as catchin' a train, say.

Well, Jack Talty, who was assistant ranger up here before you came, was doin' the regular canyon patrol one summer. Afternoon when it was so dry you could start a fire by droppin' the label of a match-box! Talty was young an' spry, an' --mighty like you, Jerry. Bein' young, he gotadder over some forest violations than us old-timers could. He takes notice as they come, and deal with them on their merits.

Anyway, down around the Big Bend of the trout-stream Talty walks into a colored boy sittin' disconsolate on a bed of pine needles an' tryin' to shake the wackin's of a cigarette out of a mighty empty tobacco-sock --- and (PAGES OFF) -----

12-8-1
12-27-1
12-30-1

(MUSIC OF "CARRY ME BACK TO OLE VIRGINNY" - FADES)

(MERC HUMBLING TO HIMSELF. THEN APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS ----)

TULTY: (FROM SHORT DISTANCE) Hi, there! You can't use cigarettes in here! This is National Forest, and right now it's dry as tinder. Didn't you see the signs all down the trail -- "DANGEROUS FIRE AREA - NO SMOKING!?" What's your name? Where'd you come from?

SMUDGE: (SCARED) M-m-m-m's Sam-u-el, boss, bu-but folks calls me "Smudge." An ain't know, boss, an' -- an' -- True is, boss, Ah's jes' got wild from observation, an' Ah thinks maybe a li'l pull on a cigaroot would help.

TULTY: Well, I'll be damned! First time I've heard just slick for smoking in the National Forest! You mean to tell me ---?

SMUDGE: Gawd's wife, boss! An' Ah ain't got enough 'baccy in this sack to make even a teeny-weenie one! An ain't had nothin' to eat in two days. An the outa work a long time, boss, an' Ah thought (FADING OUT) if Ah run into the woods ----)

(MUSIC OF "HARD TIMES COME AGAIN" FADING TO --)

JIM: So, Jerry, this Smudge kid tells Tully the whole sad story of his forest venture. Fortunately, Tully had a ration in his pack and gave it to the poor li'l runt, along with a gentle talk about smoking in National Forests.

(FADEOUT)

TULTY: (FADING IN) Well, that ain't count to hold you for a while, Smudge. But I'd advise you to get back where you came from, where maybe you can pick up a job. After all, you're no Daniel Boone!

SMUDGE: No sah.

TULTY: I'll be back up this way inside of a coupla hours and I'll show you an easy way out of the Canyon. Until then, so long, Smudge, and (LAUGHING) don't try to shake even a leenie-wadgie one out of that empty sack. (FADING OUT) This forest's as dry as tinder, and --

SMUDGE: Lowdy! Looked like li'l Sam-u-el was hailed for the culatooes that time. That's a real nice man! Hands me his grub instead of pinchin' me! Sumbine Ah's wife do salvin' for him, what ---Huh? (SOUND OF BRUSH CRACKLING) Dat Ranger comin' back? Hope he ain't changed his mind 'bout us, an' -- No Sah. That's 'touter side the creek. Ranger went down this side. Huh! Two uv 'em, an' ---Lowdy! They's both smokin' Lowdy for dem dey jes' does the Ranger -- They's stoopin'! Reck'n they seen me.

FISHERMAN: (FROM ACROSS CREEK) Hello, Restus! How's luck?

SMUDGE: Lady Luck she said an' buried! -- for you fellas, too, if de Ranger seen you smokin' dem nice tallor-made oileroots. He jes' passed, out on dis side.

FISHERMAN: (OFF) Which way was the Ranger going, Rastus?

SWUDGE: Down.

FISHERMAN: (LAUGHING) OK we're going up. We should worry, Jake.

Come on. --- So long, Rastus, Good luck!

SWUDGE: Same to you gen'l'men, but if Ah was you Ah wouldn't smoke none. Dat Ranger he ses to me, ses he: 'Dis forest dry as tinder, an' (FADE) No good citizen's a wine start a fire---

(FIRST SUGGESTION OF FIRE TERROR-MUSIC, THEN FADE IT TO)

JIM: Well, Jerry, about two hours later I'm sittin' here in the office thinkin' how nice an' quiet things are, when the telephone rings an' the fat's sure in the fire! ---

(FADE RANGER AS NARRATOR TO TELEPHONE BELL RINGING. RESUME TERROR-MUSIC

FAINTLY, BUT CRESCENDO AS EXCITEMENT INCREASES. FADE IN RANGER JIM ROBBINS IN DIRECT ACTION, HIS MANNER AND SPEECH INCREASINGLY RAPID)

JIM: (ANSWERING PHONE SNAPPILY) Forest Service! Ranger Robbins speaking! -- Windy Mountain Lookout? Hello, Hargis! What's on your mind? -- Eh! Let me get that again! -- 98 degrees southeast of Windy! OK Hargis! Now hang up and give Bald Peak a chance. Lookout there may be ringing me now! Hello! Oh, there you are, Bald Peak. Got an angle on that smoke, Tom? Yes? --- 78 northwest? OK! Hold the line while I pull the angle strings on the finder-map here -- (MUTTERING RAPIDLY OVER MAP) 98 on Windy Mountain -- 78 on Bald Peak lookout. Angle strings meet at -- (GRABBING PHONE) Sue's in the Winding Creek Canyon, Tom, just below the Big Bend! - Looks bad, you say? Coming up fast? All right! Stand by in case of calls, and tell Windy Mountain! -

JIM:
 (CONT'D) Hello, Windin' Creek? (JIGGLES THE HOOK) Windin' Creek
 operator! Ranger Robbins speakin'! Fire in the Canyon!
 Tell the sawmill to blow its siren for the Pine Cone
 volunteers! This'll give 'em a chance to try out their
 new citizens' fire-fightin' organization. Tell their Captain,
 Bill Rivers, to meet me at the canyon trailhead with shovels,
 axes, mattocks and canteens! Minutes count! Let's go!

(SIREN HEARD FAINTLY)

JIM: Good girl! I hear it! Thanks! (SLAMS RECEIVER ON HOOK AND
 SHOUTS ACROSS TO QUARTERS) Hi, Boss! I'm on the jump.
 Fire in Windin' Creek Canyon! Tulty's already down there
 somewhere. You'll have to take charge of the station with us
 both away -- (VOICES FADE)

JIM: (TO JERRY) Well, Jerry, I got out the old fliiver an' made
 the trail-head where the road ends in somethin' under a thin
 flat -- just before the Pine Cone volunteers -- a fine bunch
 of boys! -- rolls in on a truck.

(TERROR MUSIC FULL BLAST - SOUNDS OF RACING ENGINES - HORNS HONKING -
 MEN SHOUTING -- ALL SOUNDS SUGGESTIVE OF SINISTER DRAMA -- TENSION --
 SPEED!)

JIM: (IN DIRECT ACTION) Good work, boys! The rest's footwork an'
 laugh spin! Each man grab whatever equipment he can handle.
 Never mind the canteens. Plenty of water in the creek. Wow!
 Look at that rock mushroom down there! Sue's a humdinger,
 boys! Minutes count! Let's go.

WHISTLING AND SOUNDS OF MANY FEET SLIDING, RUNNING, JUMPING. TERROR
MUSIC IN BACKGROUND OF DIALOGUE)

1st
VOICE: Wonder what started it?

2nd
VOICE: Aw, some tenderfoot with a cigarette?

1st
VOICE: Or left a campfire burning?

2nd
VOICE: Thought they weren't allowing campfires down there?

JIM: That don't help us a'er the sitchiff's zone. Step lively,
boys! Minutes count!

(TERROR-MUSIC RISES FORTISSIMO WITH SHOUTS OF MEN INCREASING SPEED.
THEN MUSIC SOFTENS ENOUGH TO ALLOW CONTINUED DIALOGUE)

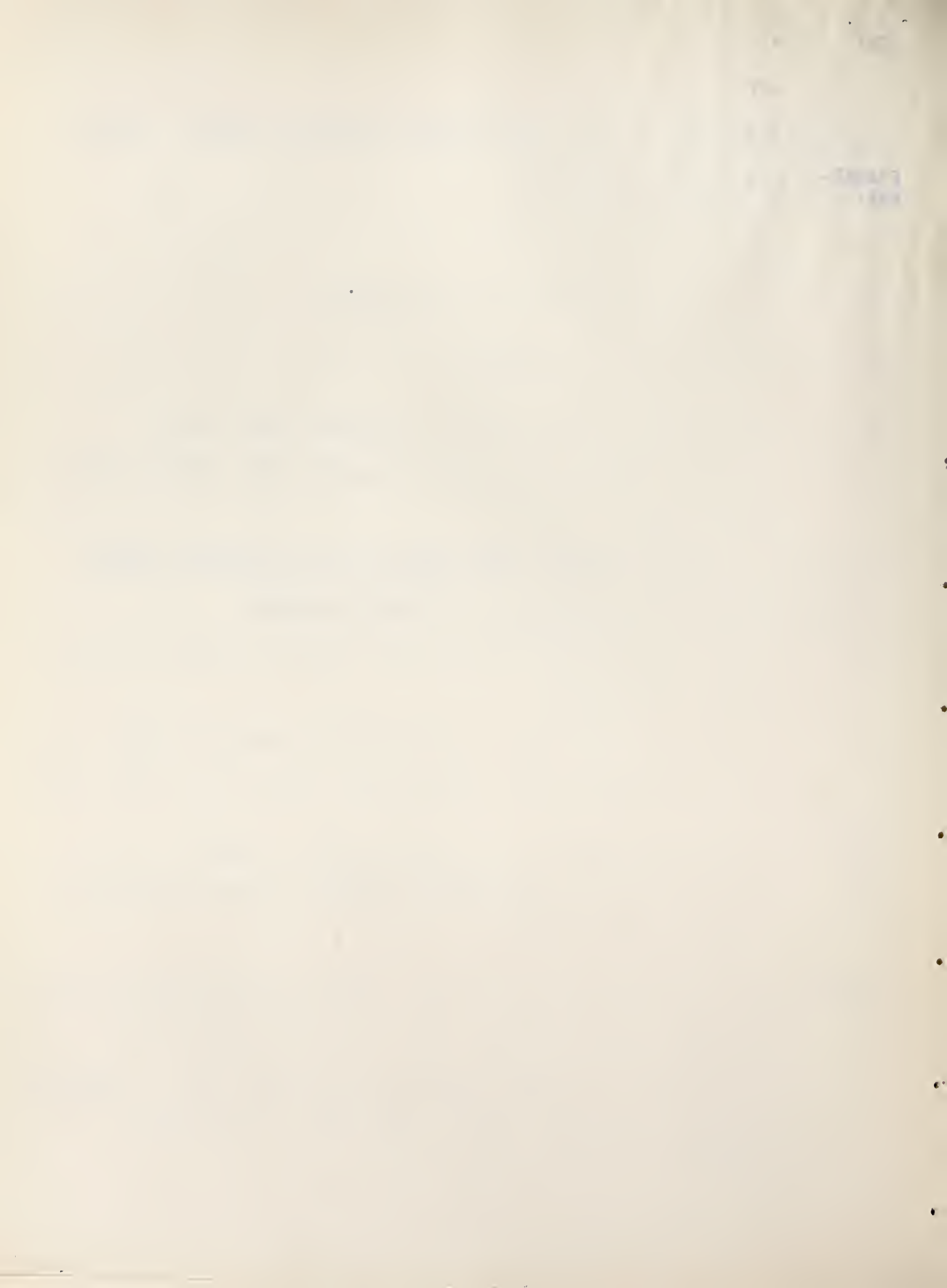
VOICE: Coupla fellas coming up the trail, Ranger! Maybe they know
sum't'n about this.

JIM: Maybe -- but they won't say much if they know too much!
Still -- I can use 'em -- Hey, boys! See that fire down there?

FISHER-
MEN: Fire? No! What! -- a fire? Is there a fire?

JIM: Just started up! See anybody besides yourselves down there --
a Ranger for instance?

FISHER-
MAN: No. We didn't see any Ranger. Haven't seen nobody at all.
Oh yeah -- come to think -- yee -- we saw a colored boy --
sittin' down' noddin'. Maybe he was smokin' and quit when he
saw us -- he don't smoke -- especially in the woods.



JIM: A colored boy - call 'em - well - no time to talk now. Leave your
tools and other duffle here, boys, and grab one of these
shovels. We'll need every man -

FISHER-
MAN: But god! We got to get back to town! We don't know a thing
about fire-fightin' anyway!

JIM: Then now's a good time to learn what forest-fire means!

FISHER-
MAN: But we got to get back --

JIM: Sorry, boys. This is an emergency. We need all hands you want
to help -- Come on, now. Minutes count! Let's go!

(TERROR MUSIC RESUMES FOREBODING AS MEN PROCEED, WITH FISHERMEN PROTESTING
EVERY STEP. HIGH PITCH OF MUSIC SUGGESTION OF SPEED AND TENSION THEN
MADE TO --)

JIM: (TO JERRY) Well, Jerry, we got to that fire with those two
lenderfeet kicking all the way. We found the blaze, early one
dawn, toward the creek. There wasn't much breeze but it should
ave been fanning the flames away from the creek. It would have,
but for two men we found already on the job, working on the
leeward side; letting our men down toward the creek; working like a
couple of veteran smoke-eaters to keep our men from getting to the
timber up above the canyon wall. One was an under-pourished
negro boy. The other looked like a negro, too. But for the
situation but I couldn't have recognized Tully. They were both
half-naked, using their shirts soaked in creek-water; sleeping at
the fire's sides; holding our as best they could 'till help came!
Just as we blew in and got busy, the negro boy suddenly, rolled
over -- half-strangled with smoke, the rest of his clothes blown
buried off him. Tully wasn't much better off --

CONTINUED TERROR-MUSIC, FADES TO DIRECT ACTION AGAIN)

(JIM) Get that boy to water, somebody! He'll roast where he's lying! Not you, Tully! You're about ready to drop yourself! You go back and get some air! -- That's right, El! The air's just eaten too much smoke. Bring air to. I'll wait to moblize him when I've got more time -- Lean on it, boys! Trench across this side and shovel the dirt into the fire-edge! Cut away! Load brush, there! Axes! Axes! Hi! - you Lew Fishermen! Stand back over this way - you air! - you there! Throw back, or dirt down with your shovels every spark that jumps the line! LEAN ON IT, BOYS!

CONTINUED TERROR-MUSIC AT HIGHEST PITCH -- SHOUTS OF MEN -- CLICK AND CLANK OF SPADES, MATTOCKS, AXES. THEN MUSIC FADES ---)

(JIM: (TO JERRY) We fought our hard for a couple hours. Twice again Lew Fishermen tried to desert on us, but (LAUGHING) the Pine Cone boys headed 'em back. After two hours we got her under control, thanks to the earlier work of Tully and that colored boy in keeping her from the barrier timber above. The creek cascaded over on the other side. By the time we could afford to lean on our shovels and breathe, I was about ready to look into what started this. Tully, close as an Egyptian and with his eyebrows aimed off, brought up the colored boy, who'd by this time dissolved his overdose of smoke ---

(FADE-IN TO SOFT MUSIC OF "CARRY ME BACK TO OLE VIRGINIA")

JIM: Hello there, boy? How d'ya feel now?

BUNDO: Oh, An's OK now. Jim's kinda queer in me mind.

JIM: Tully, just what does he say about this?

BUNDO: That's one thing we couldn't waste time on, Jim. He didn't start it. In fact, if it wasn't for Budge -- this colored boy -- the whole watershed mighta burned up. I got out as I was coming downstream, just as he was trying to roll a of smoke.

JIM: Eh? -- cigarette, huh?

BUNDO: But he ain't lit it, or no' other after I left him. He lit up the half-made one, after I'd backed to him, and I looked at him as he lit up his tobacco. I went on downstream - saw nothing else - but about a mile further down I found a campfire, but only illegal but left burning by whoever had built it. I wanted it cool; but started back up in a hurry to see if I could persuade whoever -

JIM: (INTERRUPTING QUICKLY) Hey, listen, you fishermen! Their you said? Nobody never told me till I say so!

FISHERMEN: But listen, Ranger - we - we gotta get back --

JIM: But not that yet -- So on, Tully.

TALTY: I didn't overtake anybody. But suddenly I saw smoke ahead of me - upstream. Found this blaze going strong, and Sledge here - this colored boy - tryin' to put it out all by himself! He was dancin' around, wavin' and slappin' with his hands soaked in water, and (LAUGHING) shoutin' something I'd said to him: "Dis forest's dry as tinder, an' no good citizen's a-goin' start no fire!" Apparently he'd picked up a line item and was now keen putting it into practice. He was a-wine put out somebody else's fish, by Jiminy!

JIM: Good work, boy! And hey, now, Sledge, did you see anybody else around that might have started a fire?

SMUDGE: Yesir! An' An' told 'em, An' did - they should' be a-goin'! (QUITE CASUALLY) Dem's new over here - An' had An' laid!

JIM: These two fisherboys? Huh? (PAUSE - THEN THOUGHTFULLY) Ye-ah! Gosh to think they were the only ones we met that were coming upstream -- May be the campfire builders you didn't see 'em, Talty. (LOUDLY) Hey there! You fisherboys are headin' the wrong way again! Come over here a minute! The Assistant Ranger wants to see - you - installin'--

(FINAL FAINT TERROR MUSIC; THEN FADE TO RANGER CONCLUDING THE STORY)

VIM: Well, there was little more to it, Jerry. At first it was the word of these two fishermen against that of one colored boy. But the way they had acted generally, I felt like believing the boy's statement. Mind you, he didn't say they started the fire, but that he had seen them both smoking as they travelled - which is mighty dangerous business in the forest. Finally, under persistent questioning, they broke and admitted they'd smoked and had camped overnight further down. They swore, though, they didn't start that blaze, and also that they'd carefull' put out their campfire a mile below when they left. Tully had to tell them that they hadn't; he'd had to sand down their red-hot ashes an hour after they broke camp. If we hadn't had one fire, we'd prob'ly had another --- with fellows like that!

And it wasse he right sore the way they tried to throw suspicion on the colored boy about smoking. That boy oughta get a medal for good citizenship, if they only would give medals for that instead of more spectacular heroism. But I gave him a job around the yard to tide him over until I landed him that waiter job with Herry Grubb - you know, Grubb's Grab-Station -- in town.

JERRY: That did you do with the two fishermen?

JIM: Turned 'em over to the nearest Justice of the Peace. Carlson's took myself under the circumstances. The Judge fined 'em on at least three counts -- smoking in the forest, boiling campfire in forbidden area, and leaving a campfire burning in the forest. When the Judge figured he'd about scared 'em speechless, he suspended half the fines on all counts, but took it out of 'em in a certain lecture that woulda made your hair curl and your whiskers stiffen out straight!

JERRY: (INDIGNANTLY) He shouldn't have suspended nothin'! Those fellows shoulda got the limit!

JIM: No, son. When you've been in the Forest Service as long as I have, you'll find it works better to educate rather than punish. The example of that colored boy educated those two fishermen more than the fines or the Judge's lecture did. And that little story about Sledge is goin' to make this trout-shootin' brother you just told me about feel mighty ashamed of hisself, too! After all, Jerry, most folks ain't bad at heart. They're just plain ignorant at times, - like this trout-shooter - or selfish, like these fishermen who care out for their own fun and hang anybody's else's -- but most often they're just plain thoughtless. I remember another time --

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(PAMROY TO SC-110)

ALBANY: Talks, the story you have just heard is given us by Stephen Chalmers, well known writer of western reader stories and author of "The Affair of the Galloway Tree," "Larabee of the Rangers," and other popular novels. The story you just heard, Mr. Chalmers says, is a true one, showing the terror of fire in the forest, what it means, how easily fire is started, and what one of the bravest of American citizens -- the colored boy known as "Sledge" -- felt and did about a particular fire. "Although few citizens," says Mr. Chalmers, "they ever get a chance to do what Sledge did -- and kept on doing till he fell senseless! -- it is up to all of us, in spirit, at least, to cooperate with the United States Forest Service in the protection and preservation of our National Forests. They are ours and mine -- a glorious heritage."

The National Broadcasting Company, and the United States Forest Service with whose cooperation this program is presented, wish to express to you, Mr. Chalmers, their sincere thanks.

Next Friday at this time, Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers will be with us again.

11/7/17/34
11:55 A.M.

ADDITIONAL
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