



# The Thirtymile Fire: A Chronicle of Bravery and Betrayal

*John N. Maclean*

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**A riveting account of the deadly Thirtymile fire and the controversy and recriminations that raged in its aftermath, from our premier chronicler of wildfires and those who fight them**

The Thirtymile fire in the remote North Cascade range near the Canadian border in Washington began as a simple mop-up operation. In a few hours, a series of catastrophic errors led to the entrapment and deaths of four members of the fire crew—two teen-age girls and two young men. Each had brought order and meaning to their lives by joining the fire world. Then the very flames they pursued turned on them, extinguishing their lives. When the victims were blamed for their own deaths, the charge brought a storm of controversy that undermined the firefighting community.

Continuing a tradition established in his previous books, and by his father Norman's *Young Men and Fire*, John N. Maclean serves as an unflinching guide to the rogue fire's unexpected violence—which is almost matched by the passions released by the official verdict of the blaze. Weaving together the astonishing stories told by the witnesses, the victims' family members, and the official reports, Maclean produces a dramatic narrative of a catastrophe that has changed the way fire is fought. More than anything, it is a story of humanity at risk when wildfire, ancient and unpredictable, breaks loose



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