



Arthur Winfield Knight

McQueen

The color gradually drained out of the sky, until it had the hue of a ripe olive. He could see the lights from Wall an hour before he got there, driving across the Badlands. The town was famous for having the World's Largest Drugstore. There were signs along the highway saying veterans could get free coffee and anybody could get free ice water at the soda fountain. He knew temperatures hit 120 degrees during the summer. Maybe he'd imagined the lights in the sky. Wall had fewer than a thousand residents, and most of them lived in shacks or trailers that smelled of dog shit and disinfectant. Screaming kids in diapers watched television, Oprah burning a hole in the back of their eyes. The Indians down the road at Pine Ridge couldn't be much more impoverished, their yards filled with broken down cars and defunct washing machines that were spectral in the moonlight. He thought, momentarily, about stopping for a cup of coffee, but he sped past the Wall exit.

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Arthur Winfield Knight, a native San Franciscan, now lives on the high plains of northern Nevada. He is the author of *Misfits Country*.