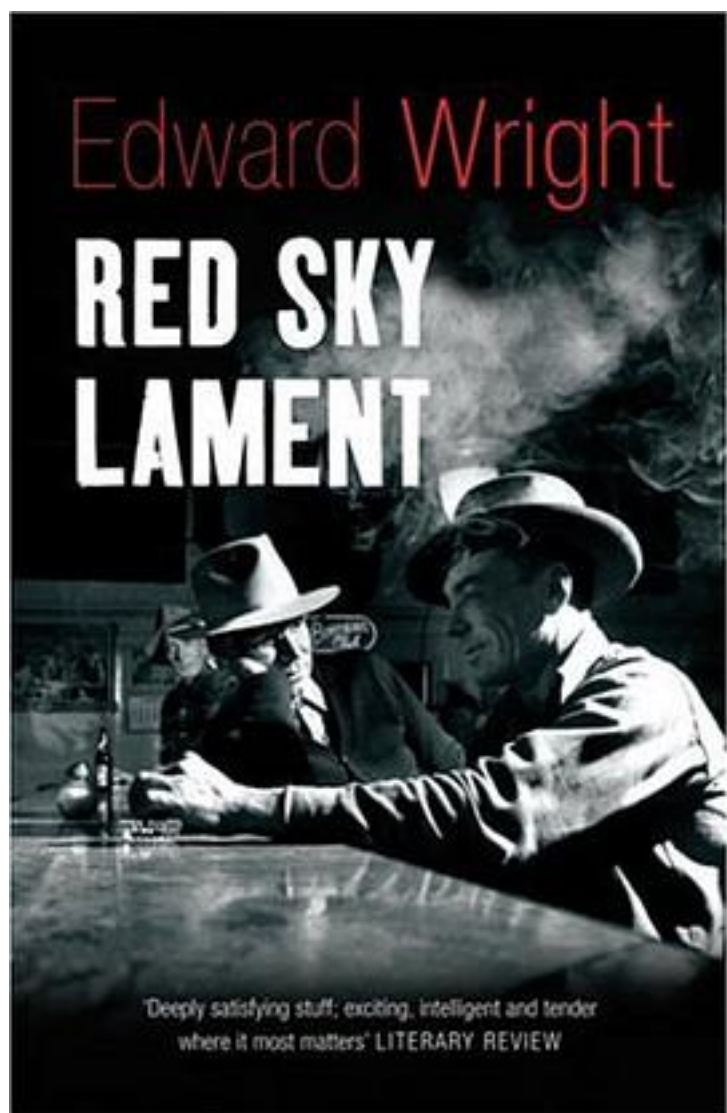


Red Sky Lament



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Los Angeles, late 1940s: As brush fires begin to eat at the dry grass in the hills rimming the San Fernando Valley, a more ominous threat is taking shape. All over Hollywood, the U.S. government is ordering people to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee as part of the crusade to uncover Communist influence in the movies. John Ray Horn has little use for politics, but as a former B-movie cowboy star who fell into prison and disgrace, he knows a few things about outsiders. And when his ex-lover Maggie O'Dare asks him to come to the aid of an old friend of hers who has been targeted by the committee, he can't refuse. Owen Bruder, a brilliantly talented but notoriously difficult screenwriter, is accused of having belonged to the Communist Party - a charge he strongly denies. If Horn can discover Bruder's secret accuser, they might have a chance to clear his name. But no one is willing to talk. People are scared - perhaps more frightened than they were in the Depression, or even the war. Hollywood has become a place run by fear and suspicion, where a whisper is all it takes to smear an innocent man. As Horn's search leads him to powerful figures in Hollywood, his investigation takes a sudden and deadly turn. He is forced to ask if those in authority are capable of murder in order to attain their political goals. And he finds that more people will die before all the secrets are laid bare. Now there's no mistaking the smell of fire in the air. It is just over the mountains, still unseen, but it's coming this way...

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