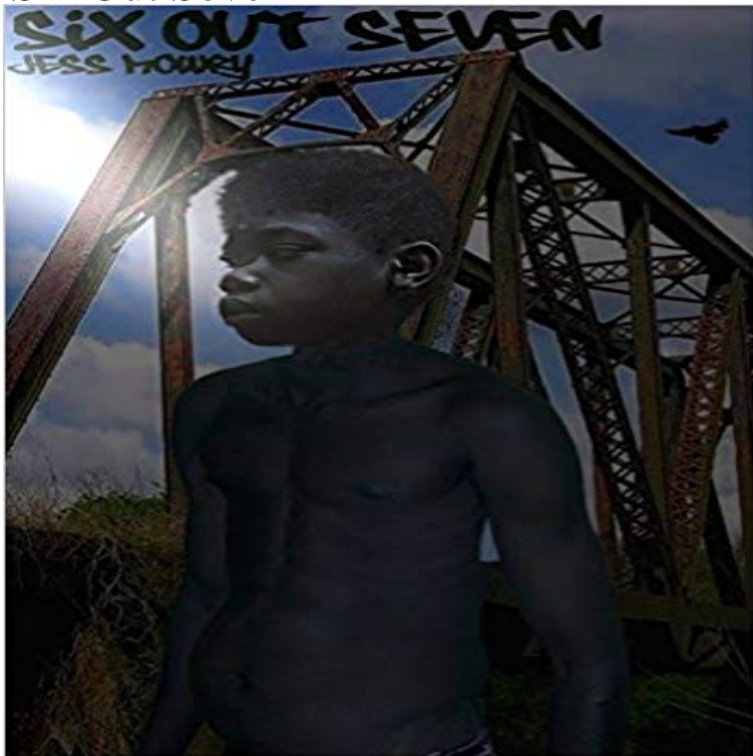


Six Out Seven



Like *Way Past Cool*, Mowry's powerful third novel tells a story of coming-of-age young, black and poor in America; a tale about a 13-year-old boy from the rural South seeking escape from the ghosts of racism still haunting his little town. Bright, handsome Corbitt Wainwright sees no future in Bridge-end, Mississippi. When his father is sent to prison for attacking a racist white man and he himself becomes involved in a deadly dispute over a catfish, Corbitt flees in hopes of finding life better in Oakland, California. Instead, he becomes enmeshed in a net of guns, gangs and crack, black-on-black crime, violent police and urban-flavored racism. Except for Lactameon, a fat, 13-year-old gang mascot, Oakland might have been another dead end for Corbitt. When they eventually come together, the two boys rescue a starving one-eyed urchin named Ethan from death on the streets. Mowry has an unerring ear for gritty street talk, a vivid and graphic sense of place, whether in Mississippi woods or an Oakland alley, and an unflinching view of the side of America -- a world where black youth have few options -- that most more fortunate Americans prefer not to see or deal with. Drawing upon a wondrously eclectic background of rap and rock music, contemporary and classic movies, street slang, books, Voodoo and ghosts, he synthesizes a whole new mix of adventure fiction; perhaps the only *There And Back Again* in African-American literature.

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