

## When The Smoke Clears: An Urban Novel

Marquis "Cream" Cureton



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Virginia is for lovers, but in the heartless and unforgiving streets of Virginia's '7even Cities': where disillusioned hustler's pitch narcotics on project blocks without a conscience, disgruntled stick up kids terrorize the streets with their ambitions attached to ski masks and twin pistols, and dispirited young females strip themselves of their self-worth and sell their most sacred possessions all for a piece of the "Devil's Pie", love is an ideal often spoke about, but seldom seen. The 7even Cities, where the disenfranchised take to the streets to obtain the "American Dream" of lavish homes, luxury automobiles, and tailored garments, while the aristocracy relentlessly aim to squander their hopes with oppressive laws and a multi-million dollar penal system. This is Virginia through the clairvoyant eyes of Marquis "Cream" Cureton in his classic debut novel, "When the Smoke Clears: An Urban Novel". Inspired by true events, 'Cream' narrates the story of Secoya "Smoke" Harris, a promising college basketball player with ambitions as vast as the oceans are blue, who tip-toed the fine line between success and the streets. Originally from the gang infested streets of Compton, California, Smoke cant resist the lure of the underworld of the 7even Cities, and in one costly decision finds himself incarcerated in Virginia's Department of Corrections and marked for death by his big homie. His basketball career ruined and future bleak, Smoke apprehensively makes the decision to dive head first into the streets and get money the only way he sees possible-trafficking marijuana. Beef inevitable, bodies dropping, and indictments looming, Smoke drowns himself in a cloud of haze from the finest bud California has to offer in order to escape the harsh reality that in the streets nothing last forever, and no one ever wins; there are only those that survive the game and live to tell about it behind penitentiary walls, and those that lo

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