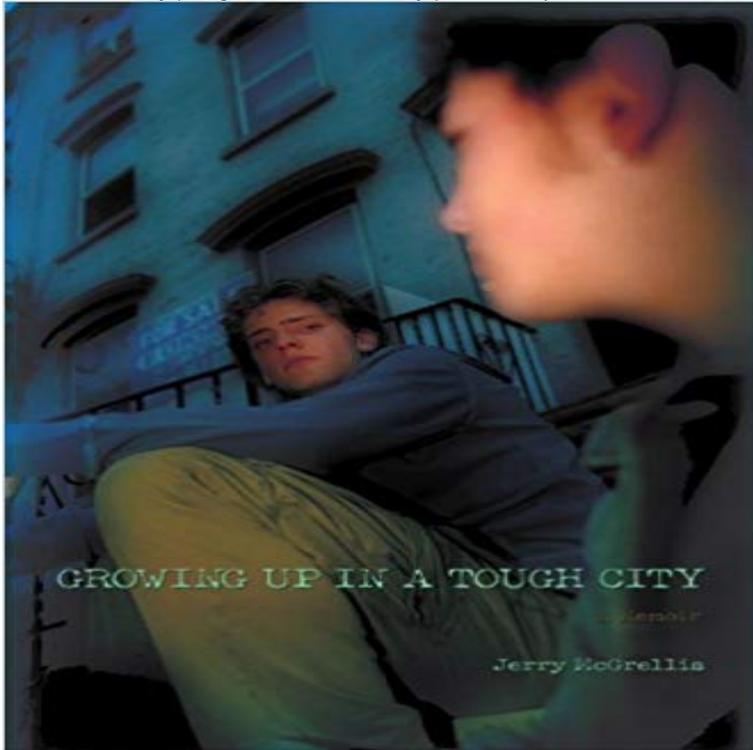


## Growing up in a Tough City



Growing up in Jersey City, New Jersey, from 1966 to 1979, Tony quickly learns that there are few rules on the streets. A child born in the city has to learn fast, and Tony is no exception. From the beginning day of first grade in Catholic school in 1966, Tony creates friendships that will last a lifetime. There's Chubs, one of the leaders of the group and the toughest boy in the class; Patty, a skinny blond kid with a penchant for making people laugh; Mickey, the boy who loves sports; and Chucky, a short kid who always bounces when he walks. Through the school years and the summer months, the boys play football, basketball, and baseball—and land in a whole lot of trouble. Tony has his first fight while walking home from first grade one day and soon learns from his mother, It is a tough world and you have to be tough, too. Yet in this rough city, the boys protect each other and learn the importance of honor and loyalty. But they also realize that escaping from the inner city isn't as easy as they think. The fictionalized memoir of author Jerry McGrellis, *Growing Up in a Tough City* speaks to the carefree days of the past while simultaneously focusing on the current problems of inner-city youth.

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