



Ace of Spades: A Memoir

David Matthews

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A take-no-prisoners tale of growing up without knowing who you are

When David Matthews's mother abandoned him as an infant, she left him with white skin and the rumor that he might be half Jewish. For the next twenty years, he would be torn between his actual life as a black boy in the ghetto of 1980s Baltimore and a largely imagined world of white privilege.

While his father, a black activist who counted Malcolm X among his friends, worked long hours as managing editor at the Baltimore Afro-American, David spent his early years escaping wicked-stepmother types and nursing an eleven-hour-a-day TV habit alongside his grandmother in her old-folks-home apartment. In Reagan-era America, there was no box marked "Other," no multiculturalism or self-serving political correctness, only a young boy's need to make it in a clearly segregated world where white meant "have" and black meant "have not." Without particular allegiance to either, David careened in and out of community college, dead-end jobs, his father's life, and girls' pants.

A bracing yet hilarious reinvention of the American story of passing, *Ace of Spades* marks the debut of an irresistible and fiercely original new voice.

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