



# Ace of Spades: A Memoir

*David Matthews*

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**Ace of Spades: A Memoir** David Matthews

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

David Matthews was born on the line between races. His mother was white, but she disappeared when he was an infant, leaving him with pale skin and the prospect of a Jewish identity. His father was black, a journalist and activist who counted Malcolm X among his friends. So growing up in the Baltimore ghetto in the 1980s, Matthews had a choice. He took one look at the school lunchroom and chose white. But that choice took on new implications when he came home to a neighborhood where his chosen race was a liability, if not a hazard. In the years that followed, Matthews slipped in and out of identities as the situation demanded, making use of each to get what he needed. He read the culture around him, soaked up its expectations, biases, and passwords, and fashioned a character that could only exist in this generation in America, an exuberant, open-minded, opportunistic young man making up his life and identity on the fly.

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