



O My America!: A Novel

Johanna Kaplan

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A delightfully funny and moving novel about the singular life of a cantankerous Jewish-American writer and anarchist troublemaker, as remembered by his daughter

In 1972, sixty-four-year-old Ezra Slavin's heart gives out at an anti-war rally. A contentious and irascible Jewish-American writer, anarchist, and inadvertent guru to discontented youth, he leaves behind a large extended family of ex-wives, lovers, and children, most of whom had cut all ties with the infuriating intellectual provocateur years earlier. Out of the entire family, only one daughter, Merry, a journalist, can remember her father with her own critical, conflicted understanding, a saddened sympathy approaching love. As the day of his memorial approaches, she attempts to make sense of the puzzle of Ezra's life before all of its disparate, discordant elements come crashing together at the service.

The award-winning author of *Other People's Lives*, Johanna Kaplan creates a vivid cast of unforgettable characters who reveal the disparity between Ezra's long-suffering, neglected family, his admiring friends, and the youthful hangers-on—and, most notably, in the outrageously enigmatic Ezra himself. At once hilarious and poignant, *O My America!* offers a fascinating evocation of a time and place in America, a satiric history of the immigrant Jewish experience, and a wonderful portrait of an exasperating yet endearing anti-hero pursuing his unique vision of the American dream.

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