



## Beautiful Children: A Novel

By Charles Bock

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**The *New York Times* bestseller by the author of the forthcoming novel *Alice & Oliver* | Winner of the Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters | A *New York Times* Notable Book**

**“One word: bravo.”—*The New York Times Book Review***

**“Truly powerful . . . *Beautiful Children* dazzles its readers on almost every page. . . . [Charles Bock] knows how to tug at your heart, and he knows how to make you laugh out loud, often on the same page, sometimes in the same sentence.”—*Newsweek***

One Saturday night in Las Vegas, twelve-year-old Newell Ewing goes out with a friend and doesn't come home. In the aftermath of his disappearance, his mother, Lorraine, makes daily pilgrimages to her son's room and tortures herself with memories. Equally distraught, the boy's father, Lincoln, finds himself wanting to comfort his wife even as he yearns for solace, a loving touch, any kind of intimacy.

As the Ewings navigate the mystery of what's become of their son, the circumstances surrounding Newell's vanishing and other events on that same night reverberate through the lives of seemingly disconnected strangers: a comic book illustrator in town for a weekend of debauchery; a painfully shy and possibly disturbed young artist; a stripper who imagines moments from her life as if they were movie scenes; a bubbly teenage wiccan anarchist; a dangerous and scheming gutter punk; a band of misfit runaways. The people of *Beautiful Children* are “urban nomads,” each with a past to hide and a pain to nurture, every one of them searching for salvation and barreling toward destruction, weaving their way through a neon underworld of sex, drugs, and the spinning wheels of chance.

In this masterly debut novel, Charles Bock mixes incandescent prose with devious humor to capture Las Vegas with unprecedented scope and nuance and to provide a glimpse into a microcosm of modern America. *Beautiful Children* is an odyssey of heartache and redemption heralding the arrival of a major new writer.

### **Praise for *Beautiful Children***

“Exceptional . . . This novel deserves to be read more than once because of the extraordinary importance of its subject matter.”—*The Washington Post Book World*

“Magnificent . . . a hugely ambitious novel that succeeds . . . *Beautiful Children* manages to feel completely of its moment while remaining unaffected by literary trends. . . . Charles Bock is the real thing.”—*The New Republic*

“A wildly satisfying and disturbing literary journey, led by an author of blazing talent.”—*The Dallas Morning News*

“Wholly original—dirty, fast, and hypnotic. The sentences flicker and skip and whirl.”—*Esquire*

“An anxious, angry, honest first novel filled with compassion and clarity . . . The language has a rhythm wholly its own—at moments it is stunning, near genius.”—**A. M. Homes**

“From start to finish, Bock never stops tantalizing the reader.”—*San Francisco Chronicle*

“Rich and compelling . . . captures the hallucinogenic setting like a fever dream.”—*Los Angeles Times*

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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### **Beautiful Children: A Novel By Charles Bock Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A wide-ranging portrait of an almost mythically depraved Las Vegas, this sweeping debut takes in everything from the bland misery of suburban Nevada to the exploitative Vegas sex industry. At the nexus of this Dickensian universe is Newell Ewing, a hyperactive 12-year-old boy with a comic-book obsession. One Saturday night, Newell disappears after going out with his socially awkward, considerably older friend. Orbiting around that central mystery are a web of sufferers: Newell's distraught parents, clinging onto a fraught but tender marriage; a growth-stunted comic book illustrator; a stripper who sacrifices bodily integrity for success; and a gang of street kids. Into their varying Vegas tableaux, Bock stuffs an overwhelming amount of evocative detail and brutally revealing dialogue (sometimes in the form of online chats). The story occasionally gets lost in amateur skin flicks, unmentionable body alterations and tattoos, and the greasy cruelty of adolescents, all of which are given unflinching and often deft closeups. The bleak, orgiastic final sequence, drawing together the disparate plot threads, feels contrived, but Bock's Vegas has hope, compassion and humor, and his set pieces are sharp and accomplished. (*Jan.*)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

This novel about Vegas has been the subject of considerable hype, including a full feature on Bock in the *New York Times Magazine*. Only a few reviewers found Bock's debut *Beautiful Children* brilliant, but to elicit such a reaction, Bock needs the critical equivalent of a straight flush. He needs readers who are willing to accept pages and pages of explicit sexual description, an unorthodox narrative structure, unlikable characters, and an ending that may not satisfy the logic of the missing-person plot. For readers willing to accept all these, or for readers heavily invested in the book's milieu, *Beautiful Children* will provide ample payoff. But many readers will find this crowded intersection of postmodern storytelling and postadolescent characters a mere full house.

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## Review

"Bock's vision and voice create a fictional landscape as corruptly compelling as Vegas, and as beautiful as the illusions its characters cling to for survival. . . . One word: bravo."

—*The New York Times Book Review*

"An affecting story . . . truly powerful . . . *Beautiful Children* Dazzles its readers on almost every page. . . . [Charles Bock] knows how to tug at your heart, and he knows how to make you laugh out loud, often on the same page, sometimes in the same sentence."

—*Newsweek*

"Wholly original—dirty, fast, and hypnotic. The sentences flicker and skip and whirl, like the neon city Bock writes about. It will change the way you look at Las Vegas."

—*Esquire*

"Exceptional . . . [Bock's] ability to share a deep understanding of America's million or so lost street kids and their tormented parents gives the book a whiff of greatness. . . . This novel deserves to be read more than once because of the extraordinary importance of its subject matter."

—*The Washington Post Book World*

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*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Philip Raber:**

Hey guys, do you want to find a new book to read? Maybe the book with the concept Beautiful Children: A Novel suitable to you? The particular book was written by renowned writer in this era. Typically the book untitled Beautiful Children: A Novel is the main one of several books in which everyone reads now. This book was inspired many men and women in the world. When you read this review you will enter the new age that you ever know prior to. The author explained their concept in the simple way, and so all of people can easily recognize the core of this review. This book will give you a wide range of information about this world now. So you can see the represented of the world within this book.

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Reading a book to become new life style in this yr; every people loves to examine a book. When you examine a book you can get a lot of benefit. When you read books, you can improve your knowledge, mainly because book has a lot of information upon it. The information that you will get depends on what forms of book that you have read. In order to get information about your study, you can read education books, but if you act like you want to entertain yourself read a fiction books, this sort of us novel, comics, along with soon. The Beautiful Children: A Novel will give you new experience in studying a book.

#### **John Tovar:**

Don't be worry when you are afraid that this book will filled the space in your house, you can have it in e-book way, more simple and reachable. That Beautiful Children: A Novel can give you a lot of close friends because by you checking out this one book you have issue that they don't and make you more like an interesting person. That book can be one of a step for you to get success. This publication offer you information that maybe your friend doesn't realize, by knowing more than other make you to be great individuals. So , why hesitate? Let me have Beautiful Children: A Novel.

**Mary Tobin:**

Do you like reading a book? Confuse to looking for your best book? Or your book ended up being rare? Why so many concern for the book? But any people feel that they enjoy intended for reading. Some people likes reading, not only science book but novel and Beautiful Children: A Novel or perhaps others sources were given expertise for you. After you know how the great a book, you feel need to read more and more. Science guide was created for teacher or students especially. Those publications are helping them to bring their knowledge. In some other case, beside science reserve, any other book likes Beautiful Children: A Novel to make your spare time more colorful. Many types of book like this one.

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