

"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. As the boy's distraught parents navigate the mystery of what's become of their son, the circumstances surrounding his vanishing and other events on that night reverberate through the lives of seemingly disconnected strangers: a comic book illustrator in town for a weekend of debauchery; a 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 scheming gutter punk; a band of misfit runaways. These "urban nomads," each with a past to hide and a pain to nurture, search for salvation as they barrel toward destruction, weaving their way through a neon underworld of sex, drugs, and the spinning wheels of chance.

"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*

"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*

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A RANDOM HOUSE TRADE PAPERBACK



BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN

CHARLES BOCK



RANDOM HOUSE

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

# BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN

A Novel



"One word: bravo."

—*The New York Times Book Review*

CHARLES BOCK