



HEARTBROKE
By Chelsea Bieker
pISBN:9781646221271
On Sale April 5th, 2022

FOUR STARRED PRE-PUB REVIEWS (*BOOKLIST, KIRKUS, LIBRARY JOURNAL, PUBLISHERS WEEKLY*)

Review coverage confirmed at *New York Times Book Review, NPR, BOMB, Los Angeles Review of Books, Alta* and more

Interview coverage confirmed at *Wall Street Journal, Belletrist Stacked, Portland Mercury, Moms Don't Have Time to Read Books* and more

First serial *The Cut*

Featured on Most Anticipated lists via *The Millions, LitHub, The Rumpus, Katie Couric Media*

Strong interest from *Time, Entertainment Weekly, Elle, KQED Forum, Wired* and more

**Forthcoming in person event:
4/5/22 7:00pmPT: In-person launch event at Powell's City of Books, in conversation with Kimberly King Parsons**

ADVANCE PRAISE/ADVANCE BOOKSELLER PRAISE

"[An] exemplary first collection... A powerful collection; highly recommended."—Library Journal, *Starred Review*

"Bieker flexes a gift for the short form in her searing first collection. Each story draws readers in, moving them to love Bieker's crusty characters before ending just in time to satisfy. . . The volume is turned way up on the corruption of these characters' relationships and the severity of their missteps; such big, loud behavior creates ample space to observe their pulsing humanity. Readers will get lost in this riot of a collection, like a sun-bleached fever dream."—*Booklist*, starred review

"Wrenching . . . Darkly comic. . . Throughout, Bieker's deeply human narrators bend the reader's ear with memorable stories."—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

The Millions, A Most Anticipated Book of the Year

"Set against the backdrop of sunny California, in these stories, you will encounter: teenagers flirting with danger, an entrepreneurial mother-son duo, a phone sex operator, a very sad kidnapper. Chelsea Bieker is back, baby!" —Katie Yee, *Lit Hub*, One of the Most Anticipated Books of the Year

"There is a Coen brothers-esque dark zaniness to their plots, which are full of hapless criminals and bumbling lovers, all filtered through lovely prose. . . In nearly all the stories, the mother-child relationship is the beating heart, a heart that is shot through with the poison of poverty, substance abuse, and disenfranchisement. But that Bieker finds such humor and poetry in that heart is a testament to both her skill and her tender affection for her wayward characters. Larger than life and darker than hell."—*Kirkus Reviews*, *Starred Review*

A Katie Couric Media Must-Read New Book Coming Next Year

"*Heartbroke* made me feel as though I were watching a great dancer who has gone really deep into the music, all vitality and grace and a sense of dazzling risk. Chelsea Bieker is an absolutely crackling talent." —Lauren Groff, author of *Matrix*

"*Heartbroke* is astonishing—every story is still lodged in my throat. Bieker's lacerated world is filled with violent men, desperate women, abandoned children, all fighting for survival, dignity, and redemption. Bieker is refreshingly unsentimental but relentlessly compassionate, and has a virtuosic ability to inhabit her characters' suffering without flinching. *Heartbroke* should come with a warning: Absolutely devastating." —Stephanie Danler, author of *Sweetbitter* and *Stray*

"Chelsea Bieker shies from nothing in these raucous, ecstatic stories, rendering the best and worst of us all in tales as devastating as they are sidesplittingly funny. Suspenseful as hell, thrumming with heat and humanity, Bieker brings her signature acoustical grace and pyrotechnic prose to this unforgettable landscape. Every page flickers with desire. For fans of Larry McMurtry's wild west and Mary Gaitskill's prickled darkness, *Heartbroke* is a place all its own, the white-hot in between." —T Kira Madden, author of *Long Live the Tribe of Fatherless Girls*

"*Heartbroke* is as haunting as it is hopeful, a striking miracle of a collection about bighearted outcasts, wayward dreamers, and hardheaded strugglers. Unbearably beautiful and brimming with longing, these stories display Bieker's full-throated wit, endless compassion, and stunning emotional intelligence." —Kimberly King Parsons, author of *Black Light*

"Wild and weird and rangy, *Heartbroke* deals in the aftermath of broken hearts, what happens when people pick up the shattered pieces of their lives and keep living. Chelsea Bieker is a true conduit of her characters' many voices and the many settings they find themselves in, taking us from a seaside shack on a toxic beach, to a crowded women's shelter, to a sunbaked raisin farm in California's central valley, and everywhere in between. And yet, the talent behind these stories is singular, confident and generational, a true force to be heralded. I binge read *Heartbroke* with one hand on my neck, the other on my heart, choked up and charmed and always awestruck at the souls Bieker channels, the worlds she conveys, the resilience she suggests belongs to us all, for the taking." —Allie Rowbottom, author of *Jell-O Girls*

Bookseller Praise

"This is THE contemporary short story collection that comes closest to capturing Flannery O'Connor's spirit, in my opinion. Once I started reading, I couldn't put it down, but it felt more like I couldn't look away." —Em Perper, Curious Iguana (Frederick, MD)

“Chelsea Bieker is one of my favorite writers, and she delivers again with "Heartbroke." Each story is a fierce testament to the best and worst of humanity, and Bieker's writing is unflinching and stark yet ultimately full of compassion. These stories will stay with you long after finishing.” —Sarah Cassavant, Subtext (St Paul, MN)

“I will read anything Bieker writes, but this short story collection is truly exceptional. It is a remarkable feat to create such long lasting characters in matter of a few pages. This will turn even the most skeptical of short story readers into the genre biggest fans.” —Stephanie Skees, The Novel Neighbor (St. Louis, MO)

“Another excellent, deeply uncomfortable work from Bieker. Her debut Godshot, haunts me still - it is absolutely a car crash that you can't look away from because of her phenomenal talent at writing. Heartbroke is more of the same - hard done by characters, scraping to get by. It is a collection of short stories, which I would usually steer clear of - and actually, I didn't realize it was short stories until after I requested the arc. I enjoyed my time with the stories, they're all fairly grim, but the glimpses into the lives of these characters is fascinating. I can't recommend Bieker's works enough.” —Sarah Guy, Chapters-Indigo (Ontario, Canada)