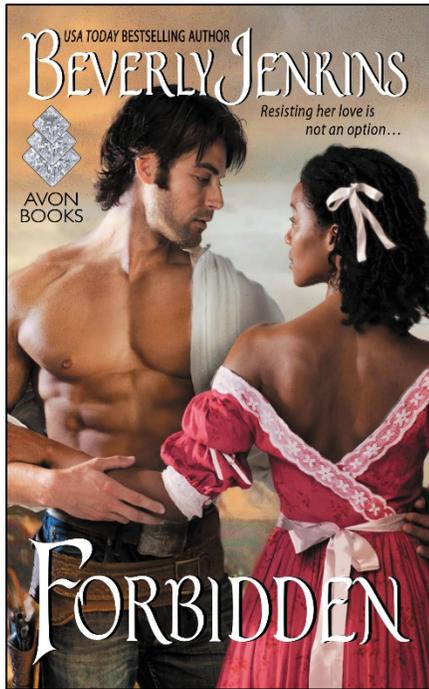




AVONBOOKS

Avon, an Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers  
195 Broadway, New York, NY 10007



*A new series, set in the Old West, by one of the diamonds of romance!*

## FORBIDDEN

By Beverly Jenkins

(Avon Books | on sale January 26, 2016 | ISBN: 9780062389008 | \$7.99 | eISBN: 9780062389015 | \$5.99)

“Jenkins has expertly explored a period in this country’s history that is difficult to romanticize.”

— RT Magazine 4 ½ Star “Top Pick”

“Jenkins combines vivid characters and sexual intensity with historical accuracy in a story and setting that will appeal to her core fans and newcomers alike.”

—Publishers Weekly

Any romance aficionado can—and will—tell you that Beverly Jenkins is a gem; and with Avon’s 75<sup>th</sup> “Diamond” Anniversary taking place this year, it seems that Jenkins is receiving the recognition she deserves as one of the true diamonds of romance. Known for her deeply emotional, intensely satisfying novels, Jenkins has a legion of dedicated fans. Since the publication of *Night Song* in 1994, Jenkins has been a darling of reviewers, fans, and her peers alike. 2015 was “the year of Beverly Jenkins,” with everyone from NPR to the National Book Festival, to documentary film makers, taking notice of this extraordinary author. Jenkins is kicking off 2016 with a bang, by launching a brand new historical romance series set in the old west, starting with *FORBIDDEN* (on-sale 1/26/2016).

*FORBIDDEN* is the kind of story where Jenkins really shines; set in a time period rife with socio-cultural inequality and upheaval, this is a sweeping tale of love defying boundaries of class and race, with characters complex enough to truly complement the rich historical landscape. Jenkins is one of the premier voices of diversity in the romance genre; she’s been written up in a bevy of articles about African-American writers in such publications as *The Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *People Magazine*, and *Vibe Magazine*. As Avon enter its 75<sup>th</sup> year “diamond” anniversary, it seems fitting that Beverly Jenkins launches a brand new series continuing in the tradition of what has made her so iconic in this genre.



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**MORE ABOUT THE BOOK:**

Rhine Fontaine is building the successful life he’s always dreamed of—one that depends upon him passing for White. But for the first time in years, he wishes he could step out from behind the façade. The reason: Eddy Carmichael, the young woman he rescued in the desert. Outspoken, defiant, and beautiful, Eddy tempts Rhine in ways that could cost him everything...and the price seems worth paying.

Eddy owes her life to Rhine, but she won’t risk her heart for him. As soon as she’s saved enough money from her cooking, she’ll leave this Nevada town and move to California. No matter how handsome he is, no matter how fiery the heat between them, Rhine will never be hers. Giving in for just one might quench this longing. Or it might ignite an affair as reckless and irresistible as it is forbidden...



**MORE ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

**Beverly Jenkins** has received numerous awards, including five Waldenbooks/Borders Group Best Sellers Awards, two Career Achievement Awards from Romantic Times Magazine, and a Golden Pen Award from the Black Writer’s Guild. Ms. Jenkins was named one of the Top Fifty Favorite African-American writers of the 20th Century by AABLC, the nation’s largest on-line African-American book club. She was recently nominated for the NAACP Image Award in Literature.

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**BEVERLY JENKINS’ EVENTS:**

**January 30, 2016**

Detroit, MI

1-4 PM @ The Book Connection

**April 6, 2016**

Durham, NC

Speaker at Duke University (w/ Katherine Ashe)

**February 20, 2016**

Baltimore, MD

Reginald Lewis Museum

**April 19, 2016**

Detroit, MI

Speaker at the Greater Detroit RWA

**March 4-5, 2016**

Albany, GA

Albany State University

**July 13-16, 2016**

San Diego, CA

RWA San Diego – Keynote Luncheon Speaker

**March 19, 2016**

Detroit, MI

Motown Writers Network Luncheon Keynote -  
Skillman Library

**Sept 23-24, 2016**

Oakland, CA

United California AA Book Club – Fall Into Fiction

**Sept. 30 – Oct 3, 2016**

New Orleans, LA

NOLA Story CON



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## PRAISE FOR BEVERLY JENKINS:

"Jenkins has expertly explored a period in this country's history that is difficult to romanticize. An interesting aspect to this particular story is the love that develops between seemingly social opposites. Tolerance is not a high priority in 19th century America and finding love across the color line can be dangerous."

— *RT Magazine* 4 ½ Star "Top Pick" on *Forbidden*

"Jenkins combines vivid characters and sexual intensity with historical accuracy in a story and setting that will appeal to her core fans and newcomers alike."

—*Publishers Weekly* on *Forbidden*

"Heading for superstar status."

—*Detroit Free Press* on *Edge of Dawn*

"Beverly Jenkins outdoes herself with *Edge of Midnight*, a beautifully written, not-to-be missed book that had me enthralled from the first page to the last. Exciting, sexy and thoroughly romantic—*Edge of Midnight* is sure to keep you up into the wee hours!"

—Carla Neggers, *USA Today* bestselling author

"A story like none other, and done in a way that only Beverly Jenkins can do. Simply superb!"

—Brenda Jackson, *New York Times* bestselling author on *A Second Helping*

"Pure delight."

—*Booklist* on *A Wish and a Prayer*

"This series is a winner."

—*Minneapolis Examiner* on *A Wish and a Prayer*

"Her stories are delicious and always leave behind both feelings of satisfaction and want...for her next novel."

—*Fresh Fiction*

"Beverly Jenkins charms in a way that only she can with this heartwarming story of love, community, and family. She giftwraps her tale artfully with splatterings of places and people from her beloved historical novels.... Bring on the Blessings is a tasty reading confection that you'll savor long after the story ends."

—Angela Benson, *Essence* bestselling author

"Appealing, well-depicted characters, zippy dialog, intriguing snippets of California history, and a quickly paced plot make this refreshing multicultural Western a rewarding read."

—*Library Journal* on *Destiny's Captive*



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BOOK NEWS & FEATURES

## Beverly Jenkins Wraps Bitter History In Sweet Romance

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Beverly Jenkins says her mission is to write about the parts of black history you don't learn in school — and wrap them up in a good love story.

Historical romance is big business — it's the most popular subgenre of a billion-dollar industry. You can read about pirates, knights, Regency rakes and just about anything else. But for a long time, you couldn't read about black history. Until Beverly Jenkins came along.

Jenkins calls herself a "kitchen table historian." She doesn't have a history degree, but she does have a mission: To light up the parts of black history you don't learn in school.

"You know we were slaves, brought here as slaves, freed in '65. Disappeared from the planet; I like to say the Borg took us from the planet for a hundred years and we're suddenly discovering rioting in Watts in the mid '60s," she says. "So I have that whole century that I get to bring forth and I'm proud to do it."

Yes, that was a *Star Trek* reference — Jenkins loves romance, but she says she likes to cleanse her palate with other genres, everything from fantasy to Junot Diaz to books about birds. Because sometimes it's hard to write happy endings set during a very unhappy time. "I tell my fans I do the crying for them," Jenkins says.

She put out her first book — *Night Song*, about a Kansas schoolteacher and a cavalry officer — in 1994. She calls that the Summer of Black Love, because several other African American romance writers got their start that year. It wasn't easy. Jenkins says publishers liked her work, but couldn't get their heads around a black historical novel that wasn't based on slavery.

"They didn't have a box for it," she says. "They didn't know what to do about free black people in a black town in Kansas. Kansas? Free black people? You kidding me?" But Jenkins refused to be discouraged. She's written dozens of books since *Night Song* and attracted an enthusiastic following, especially online — her fans refer to her Facebook page as Bevyville.

We're here to meet some of them, at the Romance Writers of America convention in New York City. Jenkins is standing in a huge hotel ballroom set up with tables and stacks of books; outside, fans wait in line to get autographs from their favorites authors.

"It's going to be interesting to see the dynamics of who's here and who's not," Jenkins says as she looks around the ballroom. She is the only black author in the room. "I'm the only chip in the cookie," she jokes. All the other black writers here this weekend, Jenkins adds, are at a diversity panel. And then she gives me a look that sadly doesn't translate into print.



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At first, Jenkins is alone; the mostly white attendees glance at her table and walk on by. "It's an interesting experience to see people avert their eyes when they walk by you," she reflects, later that day. "People say, 'Well, I can't relate.' But you can relate to shapeshifters, you can relate to vampires, you can relate to werewolves, but you can't relate to a story written by and about black Americans? I got a problem with that."

Eventually, though, fans both white and black start wandering up — Jenkins takes a discreet look at everyone's badge, so she can greet them by name. They come for the books with the sexy gunslingers and cowboys on the covers — and some of them come for much more.

Michelle Ford gets a little choked up when she stopped by to thank Jenkins for representing black faces in romance. She's a lifelong romance reader who now works in publicity and marketing for Kensington, a romance publisher.

As a young girl, when I started reading historical romance, I never saw anyone who looked like me. ... And then I picked up a Beverly Jenkins book. "As a young girl, when I started reading historical romance, I never saw anyone who looked like me. The descriptions, you know, were always these waifish girls with long, flowing blonde hair, and it was always a fantasy. It didn't ever seem that I could relate to anyone in those books. And then I picked up a Beverly Jenkins book."

Authors Piper Huguley and her friend Kianna Alexander stop and say hello — they both write historical romance, and they both credit Jenkins with mentoring and inspiring them. "She's paved the way, there's really no other way to put it," says Huguley. "In terms of just letting people know that there is an audience out there that's hungry to read a different kind of historical, an American story, featuring American people."

Alexander snuck her grandmother's copy of *Night Song* when she was just sixteen. "And I think if I had not picked up that book that day, I probably would never have picked up a pen to write."

Jenkins says she's just trying to widen the path for younger authors, "so that maybe Piper and Kianna won't have to struggle as much as I did."

And for the rest of us, she has this advice: "Love is a good thing. Read a romance. It'll improve your life!"