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## DIAMONDS TAKE FOREVER

**NEW MULTI-CULTURAL NOVEL FROM AVON TRADE PAPERBACKS  
OFFERS INSIGHT ON ARAB-AMERICAN "RELATIONS"**

NEW YORK, NY, AUGUST 15, 2005 – **DIAMONDS TAKE FOREVER** (Avon Trade Paperbacks, ISBN 0060754745, \$12.95, on sale 11/22/05), the debut novel from Iraqi-American author Jessica Jiji, a news editor for the United Nations, provides red-hot perspective on Arab-American affairs.

### **The Hook:**

This romantic escapade, featuring metro chic's first Jewish-Arab-American heroine, may surprise some of the author's UN colleagues – this expert on international relations pens a wickedly passionate love story.

Avon Trade Paperbacks, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, widely regarded as the industry leader in publishing ethnic "metro chic" novels for mainstream audiences, has no qualms making love in times of war. Lyssa Keusch, senior editor for Morrow/Avon, notes, "Jessica Jiji has a talented and edgy voice rarely seen in women's fiction. She draws from her own experience in this novel, writing with wit and humor about an unlikely Jewish-Arab-American protagonist trying to find love in New York City and success in the international radio press corps."

### **The Story:**

Michelle Benamou has lost everything she ever lusted after, including her hard-bodied ex-Marine boyfriend and her share of their cozy, cheap apartment in Queens. Although her Moroccan relatives worry she's over the hill because she's nearly 30 and still single, Michelle learns that the only ordeal worse than dating hell is trying to find an affordable place to live in Manhattan. When massive changes start sweeping across her workplace, the Canadian Broadcasting Company, she has the opportunity to move from news producer to on-air reporter...if she can only stop making inappropriate comments to a top company executive. As if she doesn't have enough problems, a past flame flares back into her life – but time, distance and his soon-to-be-ex-wife threaten to snuff these rekindling relations before the fire catches and romance gets hot. (Note: Jiji's "Avon's Little Black Book" entry includes a glossary of international terms of endearment, as well as a romantic guide to trysting spots in New York City.)

### **The Inspiration:**

In a recent Voice of America interview, broadcast from the Romance Writers of America Conference in Reno, Jiji reveals why writing in this genre attracts her: "I work at the United Nations. I deal with a lot of body counts. I write about AIDS, refugees, wars. I mean the worst blights on the planet." In her free time, she says, she has little energy left to grapple with international policy studies, so she writes chick-lit instead. "I think it keeps me sane," she adds.

### **About the Author:**

Jessica Jiji, who is half-Iraqi and half-Bronx, has worked at the United Nations for more than a decade, including as an official spokesperson. She currently works as a UN news editor and lives in her native New York City.

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