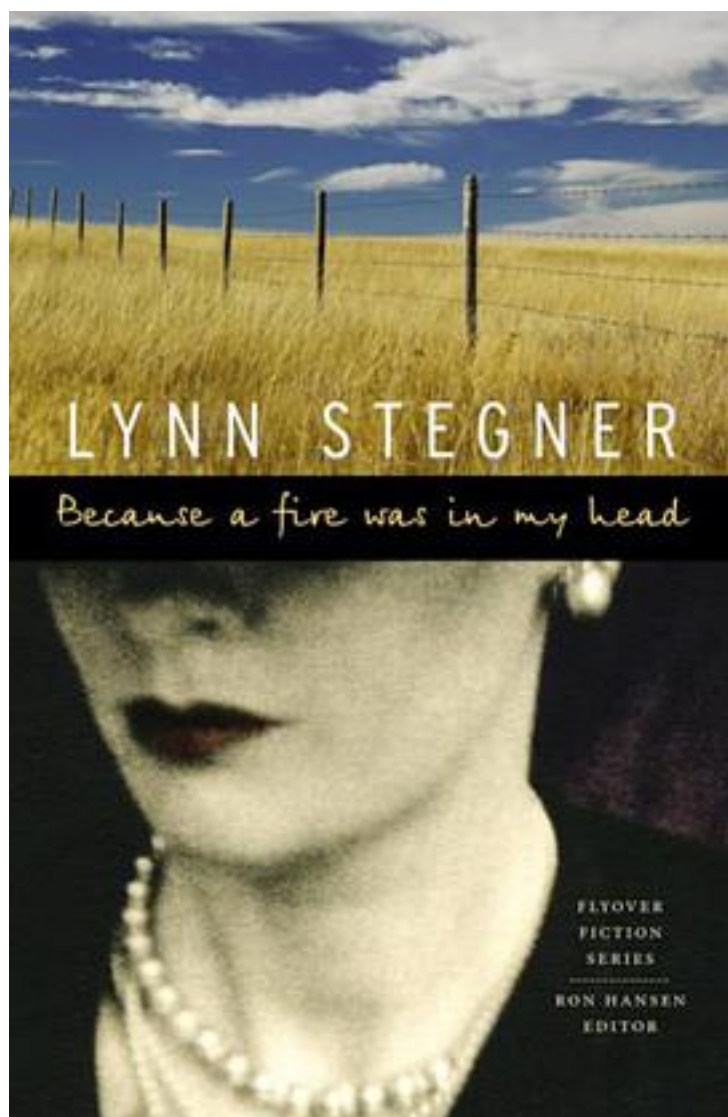


Because a Fire Was in My Head



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Kate Riley is not the sort of heroine we meet in most American novels. Self-centred, shape-shifting, driven from one man to another and one city to the next, she is all too real but not at all the loyal and steady homebody of idealized womanhood. When we first encounter her, Kate is about to undergo exploratory brain surgery for a condition she herself has fabricated. Sobered by the gravity of the procedure, she commences a journey of memory that takes us back to the Saskatchewan village where she grew up and to the singular event that altered her forever and irrevocably set the course of her life. From her childhood, in which she was held captive to a mother gone mad, through her adult life, which unfolds as a mesmerizing sequence of men, abandoned children, and perpetual movement, Kate's story is one of desperation and remarkable invention, a strangely American tale, narrated by one of our most original writers.

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