FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Flying By Night
Lorna Tedder
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Kestrel Firehawk wants a child. She waits on Beltane, the last night of April, for her two husbands to arrive and start the ritual that will fulfill her plan. Beltane is a special night, granting bounty and fertility, and the ritual goes well, but when Kestrel returns from a quick run to an all-night grocery, she discovers both her husbands lying in their own blood, their limbs twisted and ritual symbols carved on their still bodies. She cannot call the police. The murder weapon is an athame, her own witch blade.

Detective Dylan MacCool doesn't believe in much of anything but the sure aim and cold metal of his Beretta. When he enters the Firehawk residence, he is shaken. The murders were gruesome, but he has seen worse. By the accounts of their neighbors, the victims were fine men, one an attorney and the other an artist. This was not strange-many murders were of people who did not deserve to die. However, both men appeared to be lovers of the same woman who lived with them, a woman whose photographs haunt Dylan. She'd disappeared and seemed to be the murderer, but things just didn't add up to the detective.

Both drawn and repelled by the woman's lifestyle, he continues to seek clues that might solve the murders before the trail might cool and the thick file would be dropped into his bulging file cabinet of unsolved crimes. When his own partner admits to being a witch, Dylan is drawn even further into a world as alien to him as another galaxy, a place where stones like celestite come "alive in your hand like a small bird with its heart thrashing in its chest against your palm."

The author, who has also written Access, a New Age Thriller, fills this novel with real witchcraft and true rituals, such as the Great Rite performed at Beltane, a rite to make the fields fertile and to honor the gods through pleasure and gratitude. Tedder takes on the polyandrous and polygamist lifestyles of many in the pagan community with unflinching lack of apology. Throughout the book, the pagan community is seen for what it is: both light and shadow. Magick is on every page, the mystery is revealed in layers, an onion peeled back, skin by skin. The story takes several unexpected turns in a complex weave of people and ways of life often

unseen.

Carol Lynn Stewart