



## Fire Balls

*Tara Lain*

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Rodney Mansfield is tiny, flamboyant and, oh yeah, a black belt in karate. He is also one of southern California's greatest artists. Too bad the work of art he really wants is firefighter, Hunter Fallon. But the gorgeous "straight gay" guy could never want the Runtback of Notre Dame, so when Rodney's handsome, surfer friend, Jerry, develops an unexpected passion for the beautiful firefighter, Rodney breaks his own heart by helping Jerry land his man. And then Rod makes it worse by embarrassing Hunter when he protects him from a firehouse bully. Hunter hates gay guys like Rodney – doesn't he? Then why can't he get the powerful pipsqueak's face out of his mind... and cock out of his ass? And why does he risk his job and his life to rescue Rod from a burning building? Isn't it time for him to admit he's not an alpha male after all and that he is the property of the artist?

## Fire Balls Details

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## From Reader Review Fire Balls for online ebook

### Simsala says

4,5 stars

That hit all the right notes.

I adored Rodney - the little, big man. Out and proud flaming queen with a black belt in Karate and a spine of steel.

I loved Hunter the big, buff fireman trying to fulfill others expectations and so unhappy with it - until he meets Rodney...

Give me characters like that anytime and I'm a happy reader!

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### Gigi says

*[stance on cheating has gone up enough since then to knock off a star. The two MCs in this book, Hunter and Rodney, sleep together while Hunter is in a casual sexual relationship with Rodney's best friend Jerry. (hide spoiler)]*

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### Lauraadriana says

**OMG OMG OMG This was too CUTE!!!!**

I loved this book. Loved the characters!! LOVED!

Rodney Mansfield is a man that lives exactly like he wants to. He could care less what the world thinks of him, how he looks, how he dresses... **He is who he is.** Much like the Honey Badger, he is BADASS, and he just takes WHAT HE WANTS. He's an artist, a karate master, an OUT and proud gay man. He is outspoken, extroverted and for the most part oozes confidence. Except with one thing. His enormous crush on 'the most beautiful man he has ever seen', Hunter Fallon. The object of Rod's desires is a firefighter, nice guy, and soooo out of his league. Rod is convinced that his tiny puny fairy self could never catch a man like that. In that, he doubts himself.

One day while Rod is out for a run, Hunter happens to stop by a booth where Rod is exhibiting his work at an art festival. Hunter is impressed by Rod's paintings, and introduces himself. He is also interested in Rod's friend Jerry. A surfer dude with a big heart, but not much to say. Jerry seems interested in Hunter too, so they start going out. As poor Rod's heart breaks.

Hunter has been living his life to make his dad happy. His career choices, even the men he picks to date are dictated by what he thinks will please his father. He has always avoided men like Rodney. Too LOUD too NOTICEABLY GAY. A guy like Jerry that is who he should be interested in. Except Rod is the one he

really wants, Rod is the one that can give him what he's been missing.

These men were ABSOLUTELY great together, I loved the dynamics between them. The chemistry was SIZZLING and when they got their shit together, and finally took the plunge...**CUTEST FRIGGIN THING EVER!!!** Now I know people are gonna be all up in arms about (view spoiler) some stuff that goes down...But it was not bad enough for me to enjoy this couple any less.

It was funny, cute, hot, sweet, surprising, and did I mention HOT?

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### **Recommend. People MUST know Rodney!**

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#### **Anke says**

3.5 stars I liked this story a lot, especially Rodney:) but something was bothering me and it drives me a bit crazy to not being able to pin it down. Yes.I'm with MandyM that it was a bit rushed, on the other hand Rod's being the nice, helping friend felt like forever. First Jerry was a huge part of the story, then I had the feeling he was fading away. Perhaps it's best to say, it felt a bit unbalanced overall.

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#### **JustJen "Miss Conduct" says**

From the start, I was a little disappointed to read this was not a continuation of the previous story. I was really looking forward to reading more about how the threesome was making out. For the first quarter of this book, I kept trying to remember if I knew any of the characters from the previous story. While previous characters are mentioned here and there and actually make an appearance later on, this could easily be read as a stand alone.

I thought the first half of this went pretty slow. It picked up from that point, and then I could not put it down. Roman/Rodney is a crazy talented artist with a black belt in karate who makes no excuses for the way he lives. He has a thing for local fireman, Hunter. Unfortunately, so does Roman's assistant, Jerry, so Roman holds back and lets Jerry have a chance with him.

Circumstances change and stuff happens, and while I did not enjoy this as much as the first, I am hooked on these stories and can't wait to jump right into the next one.

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#### **MsMiz (Tina) says**

I was so excited when LA said lets read this!! Yeah....fun loving, flaming hot boys with sexy firefighters...BRING IT BABY. What you will get with this book is a serious look into self-esteem, love,

self-awareness, finding your true self and living your own dreams. Not to mention a healthy dose of don't judge a book by its cover. There were a lot of heavy moments in this book that were very well handled. On the other hand, while these men were in heavy turmoil throughout the book, they did get away with cheating. Cheating in the sense that friends do not have sex with the dudes their friends are having sex with unless they know. Even though it was still casual between Hunter and Jerry, it was not right for Rod and Hunter to do what they did. I do have to say though that was an amazing scene that put so much into perspective of who Rod and Hunter were meant be. Without those sex scenes I am not sure how Tara would have advanced the story line and the story progressed in away that there was no hurt in the end.

Those of you who are staunch 'no cheating' campers will totally and completely throw this book in the fire.

Honestly, Rod is an amazingly written character. He has a depth that surprised me!! Now I need to go read *Volley Balls*. Gotta love the names of these books!

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### **BWT (Belen) says**

Nick J. Russo delivers a good performance with individual character voices and plenty of emotion, but not good enough to get me over the issues I had with the story itself.

The dialogue felt forced, the main characters, Hunter and Rod, date other men through more than half of the book, and Rod and Hunter have sex with each other when Hunter is still dating/having sex with Rod's friend.

So..not my jam, but the narration was fun.

Story=2 Stars, Narration=4 Stars; Total=3 Stars

*Audio copy of *Fire Balls (Balls to the Wall #2)* provided by Dreamspinner Press in exchange of an honest review.*

*This review has been cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.*

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### **Susan65 says**

I really like Tara Lain's writing style and this series is really, really good. Rod was just an amazing character...he was who he was and the way he was and he didn't apologize to anyone for being himself. Small but in charge..that was Rodney.

Hunter was a beautiful, out but not, firefighter who was living his life to please his father instead of himself. I was glad to see his family rally around him and force him to do what was right for him...even if he thought his father wouldn't approve.

Rod and Hunter were hot together but it took way toooooooo long for them to get together....way too long.

I hated that Hunter was seeing Jerry...hated it. But Jerry, goofball that he is, was just too luvable to hate and in the end he knew that Hunter was not his type. I was glad it never affected his friendship with Rodney.

I bet the next one is about Jerry...maybe it will be called Goof Balls?

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### **Macky says**

This is a really enjoyable series and I'm rereading the first three after just buying book 4 (Snow Balls) which I thoroughly enjoyed. Having gone through them all again, I have to say this is my favourite. Rodney and Hunters story reminds me of the film "Roxanne" ( based on Cyrano De Bergerac ). Rodney - an artist who paints nudes - is totally smitten with the gorgeous gay, but macho in looks, Hunter. Hunter is out but stays under the radar because he's a fireman and getting stick from some of his colleagues, Rodney is out, proud and uber flamboyant so feeling Hunter wouldn't want to be with someone like him he helps his surfer dude friend Jerry, who is super laid back but more ' manly', get together with Hunter. Jerry, who is so loveable and almost naive inadvertently gets Hunter to pose for Rodney and from then on sparks fly!

I absolutely loved this romance, Rodney and Hunter are on fire together and their love story is smoking - literally. None of these are long books but they are so satisfying and a break from some of the more intense books in the genre. Great!

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### **Valentina Heart says**

How can I say this and not repeat the exact same words I've already said at least two times... I *adore* Tara's men. There, I've done it again, just can't help myself. She loves the arts and has a tendency of combining it with something hard, manly, HOT!... but even there she is unique, because her unconventional pairings usually come with a twist.

Rodney is a rather famous artist who is small, flamboyant and dangerous, that's right, the little guy has a black belt in karate and doesn't take bullshit at all. There's also another interesting thing about Rodney, something that really appealed to me, his penchant for dominance and hard topping. Don't you just love him?

Anyway, Rodney has the hots for a certain hunk, who is pure candy in his fireman suit. If Rodney does a bit of stalking, that's okay too, because no one really knows he's passing by the fire station to see Hunter, he could just be taking a stroll.

But despite Rodney's direct way, things don't work out exactly as he'd hoped they would. His friend Jerry sees Hunter and instantly wants him, and Rodney is just not the kind of man who will deny his friend, besides, Hunter obviously wants Jerry, a surfer who doesn't even look gay, more than he might ever want a flamboyant artist.

There is just one thing about Hunter even he doesn't want to admit himself. Jerry is great, wonderful even, but he likes taking it up the ass just as much as Hunter does.

After a lot of denial, a certain fire and Rodney showing off his skill, the couple does steer toward one another as was meant to be, and the hard and hot is more than enough to steam up the windows.

Rodney really was amazing. His insecurity was perfectly masked with his outspoken way and tendency toward drama. I liked how he was a dangerous top in a small package and wasn't afraid of saying/showing exactly who he was. Hunter did get on my nerves a bit, but that was to be expected as he was closeted in his mind as much as he was out to everyone else. Those types of characters just have to irritate me a bit. But precisely for that reason, Rodney was perfect for him. Hunter needed someone to bring him to heel. Or so was my take on the story.

I have to say for those who have issues with it, there are a couple of scenes of cheating in the story. It was done nicely when it came to explanations and it was pretty obvious Jerry's mind was elsewhere. But I just figured I was gonna mention it for those who mind the very idea of it.

There wasn't anything I disliked about the story. It was written very well with thought on details when it came to art as well as firemen, I just needed it to be longer. The characters would have been more developed that way and the relationship between Rodney and Hunter would have had the chance to really shine. I am a BDSM fan, and those two just screamed the lifestyle at me. So yes, I did need more of their lives and the details that made them tick.

All of that said, this one is something I recommend. I know people will love Rodney the 'fire ball' and the relationship between these two men. Their gentle side as well as the hard edges. Tara molds guys as she does words, and the final product is always something extraordinary. She plays at my love for contemporary and always gives the best to a fan.

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### **Eli Easton says**

I really enjoyed this one. I loved the character of Rodney - very unique and fun. I loved that he was a serious bad ass despite being small and fem on the surface. And Hunter was a nice change from the normal alpha male firefighter. The writing was very good and I found myself highlighting a number of clever passages. The sex was hot and the angst was not too angst (I prefer light angst), and it felt natural and not just tacked on. The only thing I didn't care for was the cheesy title. IMHO the book, and author, deserve better. I'll be looking for more by this author.

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### **Mandy\*reads obsessively\* says**

3.5\*

Where to start, Rodney is a piece of work! Smart, nice, hiding a lot behind his extroverted ways, and Hunter was a good guy.

I liked the story, it was fun and hot, I just wasn't quite sure why Rodney fell in love with Hunter, at least not when he did, right at the beginning. I understood Hunter, Rodney helped him see who he really was and what he was doing with his life.

Not sure how I feel about the Jerry/Hunter storyline part of the story, but I did like Jerry a lot!

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~◊~**Doxi(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~◊~ says**

How can you take a book with a title like *Fire Balls* seriously? There was fire here (and a hot firefighter), but no fire balls, unless this is meant to be symbolic for like actual testicles on fire or something, but, wait, nope, that wasn't included either.

The best word for this book is cartoonish. The characters and plot were trite. Everything was rushed. The entire book took place in a matter of days (time was hard to track). There was zero character development, minus a lot of "I gotta date me a real man's man who happens to like cock" on Hunter's part and even more of "I'm not worthy. I'm so fucking short! Hunter will never, ever lurve me, sob, sob, poor me" on Rod's part (and seriously, what kind of a name is Rodney?).

Throw in an angry homophobe who acts like a 10-year-old cartoon bully, a math professor and surfer (both Hunter and Rod date other guys through half the book), a dad in a wheelchair (my daddy won't love me if I'm not all alpha and have a manly boyfriend!), a fire (and a fire RESCUE, people), incredible art (painted and sold for six figures in a matter of DAYS!), and you have yourself...you have yourself THIS book.

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Everyone seemed to be screwing everyone, and infidelity was completely brushed aside (like not even discussed, like, AT ALL). And then it was over.

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**Katrina Passick Lumsden says**

Was there an irritating plot device Lain *didn't* use in this one? Stereotypical characters, cheating, quasi closet case asshole who demeans effeminate gay men, effeminate gay men with "hidden depths", poetry douchebaggery, and characters who date other people throughout most of the book. Why is it that these assholes can be single for years, but as soon their "soul mate" shows up, so does some other potential love interest, and *that's* who they cling to? I hate that shit.

Note to authors: stop doing that.

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**Summer says**

4.5 Stars!

I definately like this one better than the first of the series. I think it was because there was more development of the relationship. I also liked how the flamboyant smaller man was the top. This is one of those stories where the two MC's don't just fall in love and jump in bed right away. They each have dates with different men to start with. I like the Laguna beach setting and am currious who the next story in the series is going to be about.

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