

## **EMBER'S FLAME**

**Also by  
LISA REED**

**SABRA'S SOUL**

**EMBER'S FLAME**

**by**

**LISA REED**

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Published in Great Britain by Twenty First Century Publishers Ltd.

A catalogue record of this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: 1-904433-15-4

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## **EMBER'S FLAME**

“He could focus on her intelligent conversations and the way her aqua blue eyes lit up when they were amused and turned almost gray when they were sad. It was easier to admire the strength she carried in her soul and the light she carried in her walk. Now, seeing her in five inch heels and hot pants...”

Ember Ty is majoring in journalism. Graced with stunning looks, she finances her studies by dancing in a strip club. She has a hot boyfriend in a rock band, a future writing about the music world, and yes, she's working hard to achieve it.

But it all starts to go wrong. There is a predator on the loose, and Ember is sucked into a nightmare that none of us would care to dream, let alone live.

Vulnerable and threatened, Ember is drawn into a love triangle that might never have been, with the man she is to marry and the man she knows she can never have.

## **LISA REED**

Lisa Reed is by vocation a sensational writer, by profession a teacher of children with special educational needs and, through her marriage to Dizzy Reed of Guns n' Roses, she is right at the centre of Californian rock.

A true Californian, where she still resides, Lisa is the mother of two beautiful daughters.

Lisa's debut novel, Sabra's Soul, took us to the heart of the California rock music scene, in a story of love, lust and betrayal.



## Chapter 1

“Fake!!! Fake!!! Fake!!! Why do they always end up fake?!!” The screeching voice reverberated off the canyon walls as the knife sliced into the soft flesh of the blonde’s bared breasts. Her inanimate body slammed into the hard-packed earth with each frenzied thrust. Her glazed eyes stared vacantly into the blackness, no longer seeing, as the crazed man she had so foolishly trusted continued his maniacal hacking.

Finally spent, he sat back on his haunches, his scrawny body dripping with the blood he had so carelessly spilled, and watched as the bloody and lifeless body thumped back onto the chaparral.

“Why Dixie?” the man heaved. “Why do you girls always end up being just another plastic surgeon’s hack job? Why are you always so phony?” He kneeled forward gazing at the mutilated body of the young beauty and sighed. “You really had potential, Dixie. Such a shame,” he muttered, wiping the back of his hand across his face, smearing the coagulating ooze along his cheekbones. He stood, wiping the blade of the knife on his jeans. “See ya, Dixie,” he mumbled, turning and hiking back up the rugged terrain to his Mercedes and into the darkness of Mulholland Drive.



## Chapter 2

“Good night, Spencer,” Ember Ty called out, lifting the heavy gym bag over her shoulder. “See you Thursday.”

“Okay, Heidi. Have a good night,” the DJ called back, using her stage name, and the only name that the clients in the club knew her by. Ember smiled and walked out the heavy door, leaving the pounding, smoky room behind her and stepping into the dimly-lit parking lot.

“Good night, Johnny,” she said, to the beefy security guard at the door. “Night, Heidi. Need me to walk you to your car?” Johnny asked sternly.

“No thanks, I am right here actually. See you later.”

Johnny nodded and went back to his post at the rear entrance. Ember glanced up at the marquee still flashing the words “Totally Nude” in bright neon as she started up the new bright yellow Volkswagen Beetle she called her own, and set off into the night, waving at a group of dancers who were emerging from the club as she drove off.

She turned on the stereo, blasting out the latest Guns n’ Roses CD, singing along. She rolled down the windows, letting the cold night air flow in, cooling her sweat-coated body. She cruised up La Cienega, towards her Hollywood apartment, and wondered how she was ever going to get up in time to make it to class in the morning. She thought about the midterms she had the following week and groaned.

Working as a dancer until two in the morning and going to school all day, for her bachelors degree in journalism, took its toll on her mind and body. However, she knew that if she ever wanted to get out of dancing for good, she had to get through this last semester and graduate.

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Unfortunately, any day job she could have gotten would not have paid the rent, nor the hefty tuition that was standard at UCLA.

Ember pulled her car up to the gated parking structure at her apartment on El Cerrito and Franklin, pushing the button and waiting for the dilapidated gates to open slowly.

“Hey, Baby.” A voice at her window startled her, and she jumped, turning to see a familiar face standing outside her door.

“Shit, Chasen, you scared the crap out of me,” she exclaimed, rolling the window down more. Chasen Maze leaned into the window, kissing Ember tenderly on the mouth.

“Sorry. Can I come up?” Chasen asked leaning his slender frame against the car door.

“I guess. I am pretty beat though and have to get up for school in the morning,” Ember replied reluctantly. All she really wanted to do was hit the sheets for some much needed sleep, but he looked so adorable standing there with a boyish smirk, that she had to relent. Chasen jumped on the hood of her car as she drove through the now open gates and into her parking spot. She got out of the car, reaching behind her to grab her dance bag as Chasen grabbed her around the waist and began nuzzling her neck.

“I missed you,” he murmured, fondly.

Ember smiled weakly, exhausted and not ready for his advances.

“How was work?”

“Tiring,” she answered, hoping he would get the hint.

“Anything exciting happen?”

Ember turned and slammed the door walking out of Chasen’s embrace. “The millionaires came in. So that was good. I made about seven hundred.”

“Shit! That is awesome, baby,” Chasen exclaimed, wrapping his arm around her waist again as they walked to the elevator.

Ember forced a smile. “I guess. It pays the tuition, so I can finally get that degree and get a real career.”

Chasen laughed. “You are going to be one sexy, rock journalist.”

Ember pushed the elevator button as they got in and shifted her heavy bag to her other shoulder. “How was rehearsal?” she asked, as Chasen nuzzled against her.

“You know. Jeremy and Gavin were fighting over whose guitar parts are more important, and Hal and Toby were drinking as much beer as they possibly could,” Chasen remarked, speaking of his band, The Yaks. “The good news, however, is that the record company scheduled a European

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Festival tour and then we are going to be on the main stage of the Warped tour after that.”

“Wow, Chasen, that is great,” Ember exclaimed with an authentic smile this time, as the elevator shuddered to a stop at her floor. She stepped out and Chasen grabbed her hand, walking down the long hallway to her two bedroom place.

“I figured that we could celebrate this weekend, since it will be our six month anniversary on top of all this other great shit.”

“Sounds fun,” Ember replied. She opened her apartment door to a view of her roommate, Devon, making out with an unknown guy on their couch. Devon jumped when the door opened and Ember stifled a laugh.

“Sorry,” she said.

“”Oh, hey,” Devon said, dazedly. “Um, Ember, this is Ashton. Ashton, this is my roommate Ember and her boyfriend, Chasen. We just met at the Whiskey,” Devon said with a giggle.

Ember waved at the handsome young man and threw her bag down on the floor.

“Hey, man. What’s up?” Chasen asked, recognizing Ashton from another well-known band, Freako Eighty Five.

“Chasen, hey. You know, just hanging,” Ashton answered, shaking Chasen’s hand. Devon shifted on the couch, adjusting the disheveled tank top over her heavy bosom.

“Um, Ash, you want to go back and watch some TV in my room?” She asked softly. Ashton nodded and stood to follow her. “Nice to see you, Chasen. Nice meeting you, Ember.”

Ember waved again from the kitchen, unable to speak since she was in mid-swallow. Chasen laughed and sauntered into the kitchen wrapping Ember into a bear hug. “Devon always seems to have a new one, doesn’t she?” he said, kissing her neck and tracing his palms down her spine.

Ember sighed, knowing that there was no way she would get any sleep tonight. It had been three days since they had seen each other, with her working, schooling and interning at the magazine in Century City, and Chasen cooped up in the studio out in the Valley. She relaxed into Chasen’s embrace as his fingers gently kneaded her tired muscles.

“You want to go watch TV too?” he teased. Ember laughed and looked up into Chasen’s hazel eyes.

“You know I missed you too,” she said sweetly. Chasen tilted her chin higher and lowered his lips to kiss her. She gave into his mouth, deepening the kiss and running her own hands over his solid chest. Chasen gently

took a hold of her hand and led her to the master bedroom, closing and locking the door with a click.

Ember sat on the bed, fighting fatigue, as Chasen shed his shirt, revealing the multitude of tattoos, covering his well toned torso. He made his way over and gently kissed her, pushing off the straps of her tank top, lowering it until her ample breasts fell loose. Chasen stood back to admire their beauty and lowered his face to nuzzle between them. Ember closed her eyes as he began the ritual of fondling and loving, all thoughts of morning class disappearing as Chasen removed the rest of her clothes and laid her back against the bed. When he entered her she was wide awake and the only thoughts were those of the pleasure Chasen's stroking created. In one intense wave of ecstasy it was over and Chasen rolled off of her with a kiss. Ember leaned up on one elbow and looked at his handsome face, his eyes already closed. Chasen felt her stare and opened them, the lids heavy.

"What?" he asked.

"Nothing," Ember replied lying back down, somehow still unfulfilled, even though they had both made climax. Chasen wrapped her against him and fell asleep murmuring, "Love you, Em."

Ember stared at the ceiling and sighed. She gently removed Chasen's arm and went into the bathroom to shower, knowing that she would much rather sleep an extra half hour in the morning. It was going to be a very long day as it was.

### Chapter 3

Ember walked in from school, throwing her books down and flopping, exhausted, onto the couch. She closed her aching blue eyes and hoped that sleep would come quickly.

“Hi,” Devon said, emerging from her bedroom, fresh and suntanned after spending the day at the apartment complex pool. “How was class?”

“I don’t remember. Too tired,” Ember mumbled from under her arm.

Devon laughed. “I don’t know why you do that to yourself. With that phenomenal body, you make enough money dancing that you don’t need to get a degree.”

“Very funny. In case you forgot, our bodies will age eventually and I won’t be able to strip with sagging knees.”

“By then, honey, I will be married to some richer than shit guy and won’t have to work at all. Then he can pay for my knee lifting surgery.” Devon laughed, pulling her long blonde hair back into a scrunchie.

“You amaze me, Devon. I personally don’t want to depend on some sugar daddy for the rest of my life. I want to marry for love and not worry about how much money he makes.”

“I can just as easily fall in love with a rich guy as a poor jobless musician,” Devon said with a wink.

“Haha. Who said I was in love with Chasen? And he isn’t jobless. He got that advance from the record company and is getting by on that,” Ember said, defensively.

“My, aren’t we touchy today. Get some sleep, you look like hell.”

“Thanks a lot,” Ember retorted with a scowl even though she knew it was true.

Lisa Reed

“Oh, and you know that guy I brought home last night?”

“Mmmhmm, the looker.”

“Mmmmm, yeah, him. Anyway his band is playing at the Palace tonight as a warm-up to their big tour, and I want you to come with me. Take a nap and put some cucumbers on those baby blues of yours. We are leaving at nine,” Devon added. “I am meeting him for coffee right now, so I will see you tonight.”

“Okky dokky,” Ember muttered, as the hands of sleep over took her tired brain. Devon laughed again and shut the apartment door quietly.

She woke just as Devon was returning. The phone was ringing and she heard her roommate’s lilting laugh as she answered it. “Yes, Chasen, Sleeping Beauty has arisen,” she said, looking over at Ember who was rubbing her eyes and stretching. Devon handed her the phone and went whistling into her room.

“Hello?”

“Hi, baby. How was school?” Chasen’s voice rang out through the handset.

“Ok. Where are you?” Ember asked with a yawn.

“At the studio. The tour starts next week and we have to pump it up now,” Chasen answered.

“Next week? I thought you weren’t leaving until next month,” Ember said confused.

“Well, I guess the record company has other plans for us now. They want us to get out there and get started. Besides, we still have this weekend.”

“Yeah, I guess,” Ember said softly. “Are you coming over tonight? I don’t have to work and I have no class tomorrow.”

“Ooh, tempting, I would love to, but I think we will be in here all night.”

“Oh well. I will just go out with Devon and her new found love.”

“Have fun. I will be thinking about you,” Chasen said sweetly. “Last night was pretty awesome by the way. I love licking that sweat off of you.”

Ember laughed. “Good thing, since I was pretty sweaty and someone wouldn’t let me take a shower first.”

“No way. It is much too sexy knowing that you worked up that sweat taking your clothes off for a bunch of strangers and I am the only one allowed to taste it,” Chasen added.

“Okay, Mister. You are going to get me all hot and bothered and you aren’t here to take care of it,” Ember teased.

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"That's the point. Make you miss me so that you won't have too much fun without me."

Ember laughed. "I gotta go. Come over tomorrow then?"

"First thing."

"Great, see you then."

"Love you," Chasen added as Ember hung up. She replaced the handset and wondered if he really did love her and if she felt the same way about him.



## Chapter 4

Ember sipped her Mudslide upstairs in the Palace's VIP bar. Freako Eighty Five was due to go on stage next, and she and Devon were taking a break from the sold out crowd. "So, Chasen has done it," Ember said taking another drink.

"Done what?" Devon asked, flipping her long blond locks back over her bared back.

"He said he loved me. Twice now."

"Shit," Devon exclaimed leaning forward with a smirk. "Did you say it back?"

"No. I don't know if I really love him or not. Isn't that terrible?"

"No. At least you are honest," Devon said, smiling flirtatiously at a handsome punk rocker as he walked past the table.

"I mean, it has been six months. Don't you think I would know by now if I loved him or not?"

"If you loved him, Em, you would know the first day."

"You think?"

"I know it. That is why I just keep going through the hotties until I find that one who clicks right away. And you know, Ashton may just be it," Devon offered with a smile. "Either that or he is just REALLY good in bed."

Ember laughed. "Come on Dev, I am trying to be serious. I like Chasen. A lot! It has been six months of great conversation, great sex. But I don't know if I really 'love him', love him."

"Isn't he leaving for tour soon?"

"Next week."

“Well that will be the test. If you miss him like crazy and want him to hurry home as fast as he can, then you will know that it is meant to be and that you do love him. If you just miss the companionship and having someone there whenever you are horny, then it is just a friendship with perks,” Devon said, in her own simple philosophy.

“Gee thanks, oh wise relationship guru. Why am I even asking you? You are the girl who is waiting for Mr. Rich, not Mr. Right.”

“Hey, I take offense to that. Besides, Ashton is far from rich. For now.” She giggled. “Hey they are starting, let’s go down to the stage and watch them,” Devon said, pulling her pass out of her purse and pasting it onto her shirt, stretched tightly across her chest. She placed it at the top of the massive mound for effect and stood, straightening her skirt.

Ember laid down a five dollar bill for a tip and followed her friend out of the room to the stage area.

The lights dimmed and the band began to play. Ember made herself comfortable against a guitar rack, watching as the quartet of young tattooed men burst into a rhythmic, steady beat. She found herself moving in time with them, loving the sound. Devon smiled back at her. “Told you they were good.”

Ember laughed and turned her attention to the stage. Just then the singer came strutting out, confident and comfortable, amidst the sudden eruption of screams from the crowd. Ember focused on him and found her mouth dropping in awe. Quickly she blinked back to her senses and laughed self consciously. She tapped Devon on the shoulder yelling above the music, “HOTTIE!”

Devon laughed and nodded, returning her sights on Ashton, who was ripping into a guitar solo. Ember took in the singer’s appearance, memorizing every nuance. He was clad in black Dickies work pants and thick soled leather shoes. Multicolored tattoos were strewn about a perfectly formed torso and ripped arms. His face was a mix of sculptured cheeks and pouty lips, framing the most intense green eyes that Ember had ever encountered. His hair was longish, just brushing the tops of his shoulders, and the color of burnt sand, reminiscent of one who spends a lot of time on the beach. Ember clutched at her stomach as he turned his eyes in her direction. He was stunning. “What is his name and is he single?” she asked Devon, jokingly.

“His name is Korrin and unfortunately no. He has been going out with some model bitch named Tanti. I hear she is a real pain in the ass,” Devon replied.

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"How do you know so much after being with Ashton only one night?" Ember asked amazed.

"We didn't only have sex, Em." Devon laughed in reply.

Ember smiled and sat back to watch the show, enjoying the new view immensely.

Ember sat back in the VIP lounge with Devon, waiting for Ashton to meet her there. He soon walked in, followed by Korrin and a tall, wispy, thin brunette who could only be the girlfriend, Tanti.

"Hey, beautiful," Ashton said, pulling Devon in for a sultry kiss. "Kor, this is the girl I was telling you about. Devon, this is Korrin and Tanti. And this is Ember, Devon's roommate."

Korrin looked up, focusing on Ember. His eyes widened with interest as they made contact with her piercing blue orbs. He faltered momentarily as he was struck by instant attraction.

Tanti pulled him closer and cocked her head. "Ember. That is an interesting name," she smirked, cattily.

"So is Tanti," Ember responded with confidence.

"Embers flying off of a camp fire is one of my favorite sights," Korrin added with a smile, causing Tanti to stiffen with jealousy.

"I did a shoot once, for Vogue, with a fire. Too damn hot if you ask me. I think I even got a burn from one of those flying embers."

"Well, I happen to think that fire is one of the most beautiful and dangerous elements on Earth," Korrin added, smiling at the stunning, chocolate haired girl in front of him.

"I agree," Ember replied, returning the smile.

Korrin lowered his eyes coyly and felt Tanti's fingers grip into his arm possessively.

"Time to go to the after party, Kor," she said icily, glaring at Ember.

"You're right. Ashton, are your friends going to be joining us?"

"Ember, you coming with us?" Devon asked, her arm slung casually through Ashton's.

"Unfortunately no. I told Chasen that I would call him at the studio when I got home. I don't want to call there too late," she said, knowing, by the look on Tanti's face, that tagging along would just start trouble. Ember stood and hugged Devon goodbye. She sauntered out of the club, not noticing the two pairs of eyes following her departure. One frozen in anger, the other burning with attraction.



## Chapter 5

“Where are we going to go, Charlie?” the fiery red head said with a seductive smile, as she climbed into the dark blue Mercedes.

“I’m having a party up in the canyon. Lots of famous people are going to be there, Savannah,” the man she called Charlie replied.

“Ooh, I love movie stars,” Savannah squealed, fastening the seat belt and fluffing up her bouncy red hair in the visor’s mirror.

The man smiled and licked his lips nervously, pushing his glasses further up his nose. “And rock stars. I know you dancers love rock stars.”

Savannah laughed. “But not as much as I love doctors, Charliepoo,” she teased, running a painted talon seductively down the man’s arm.

“And I love your real breasts,” the man muttered, reaching over, unabashedly cradling Savannah’s large mounds in his palm. Savannah giggled and gently pushed the man’s hand away, letting her own hand slide down to rest on his thigh. “Charlie Charlie, not here in front of the club. I would get in trouble,” she purred. “Besides, I wouldn’t want to be spoiled before meeting all those movie stars.”

The man frowned and threw the car into gear. He pushed the car out onto the busy Sunset Boulevard with a shriek of burning tires.

Savannah laughed and leaned against the soft leather of the luxury seats. “Trust me, Charlie, I am worth the wait.”

The man smirked as they sped down the street, away from The Body Shop strip club, making his way towards the canyon. “I am sure you are, baby.”



## Chapter 6

“Ember, wake up,” Devon’s slurred voice shouted, as she bounced up and down on the pillow top mattress of Ember’s bed.

“What the hell?” Ember said sitting up, rubbing at her sleep filled eyes.

“Boy did you create some tension there with the super model and the rock star.”

“What are you talking about?”

“Dude, after you left we went over to On the Rox with Korrin and Tanti. She was so pissed that he flirted with you that she created the biggest, whining, screaming bitch session ever. Finally, he told her to piss off and she stormed out of the club. After her slapping him across the face,” Devon continued.

“I still don’t see how that is my fault. All I did was talk to the guy,” Ember said as a bubble of satisfaction tickled her stomach.

“According to Ashton, Tanti has never thrown that big of a fit over another girl. Seems that before Korrin laid eyes on you, he had never even spoken to another chick. Miss Super Model has him seriously whipped.”

“Come on, Devon,” Ember replied. “You are imagining things. They probably had a fight about something else. Besides, why should I care if people I just met had a lover’s spat?”

“Spare me, Em. I saw that spark between you and Korrin,” Devon teased, falling back on the mattress next to her friend.

Ember felt herself flush, “Get off. I have Chasen and he has Tanti. The End.”

Lisa Reed

“Whatever. I saw sparks and so did Tanti. Thus the bitch slap. Anyway, I just wanted to tell you that they are having a party at the Viper Room for their drummer, Benjamin’s, birthday tomorrow night, and I want you to come. See if you can get them fighting again!”

“I don’t know. Chasen and I are supposed to go out tomorrow and Saturday for our anniversary. He leaves for some tour on Monday and I don’t have to work at the club until Sunday night.”

“Well, bring him to the party. That should really spice things up between you and Korrin,” Devon said laughing.

“There is no spice with Korrin. Shut up. Where is Ashton anyway? Don’t you need to go get laid or something?” Ember replied, barely containing her embarrassed smirk.

“He passed out after the third round,” Devon answered, flipping her blonde hair back with a grin. “But I am sure he will be ready for round four in the morning,” she teased.

“Get out of here you nymph,” Ember said, playfully hitting her best friend with a pillow.

Devon laughed again and waved as she made her way back to her room. Ember fell back against the pillows, closing her eyes as a vision of Korrin came to her mind. With a sigh she shook off the feeling of desire stirring in her stomach and forced herself towards sleep. “He is way off limits,” she muttered to herself, before flipping over and burying her head in the blankets.