



Trick or Treat

LISA ANNE VANCE

Angie Preston is a lonely operating room nurse. Rob Hendricks is a lonely fire fighter. Both are broken-hearted for different reasons, but neither of them wants a new romance. Can one night of passion at a Halloween party give them the love they weren't looking for?

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Trick or Treat

By

Lisa Anne Vance

Dedication

*To my wonderful children...try to remember
that although I'm your mother...I'm a woman,
too!*

*Special thanks to Ed Robbins (Robbie) for his technical
advice in writing this story.*

Part I

“What are you going to wear to the Halloween party tonight?” Paige spun the combination on her locker in the nurses’ lounge.

“I’ve decided not to go. I’m tired.” Angie avoided the disdainful look she knew her friend would flash her way.

“What?” Paige punched the upper corner of the locker door to un-stick it. “We’ve been planning this for weeks.”

Angie opened her own door and peered inside. “You’ve been planning this for weeks. Not me. I never wanted to go.” She stepped back and pulled her scrub top over her head, and kicked off her clogs. After untying the string on her pants, she wiggled and let them fall down to her ankles.

Paige followed suit, but stopped to admire her own scantily-clad figure in the full length mirror hanging on an adjacent wall. “You have to get over him, Angie. Ryan is a loser. Finding him in bed with another woman was a lucky break. You’re better off without him, and you know it.”

Some lucky break, Angie thought bitterly to herself. She sighed heavily as she took her jeans

off a hook. "I'm making progress." She saw the skeptical look on Paige's face. "Really."

"Come for one drink. If the party isn't any fun, you can leave...okay?"

"I don't have a costume to wear." Angie knew it wasn't much of an excuse, but she had to say *something*.

"Just wear your scrubs. Go as an operating room nurse."

"How exciting." Both women laughed.

Paige noticed a white uniform draped over a chair in the corner. "Hey, look." She picked it up and held it out in front of her to get a better look at it. "One of the students must have left this behind. Try it on. You can go as a sexy, young, student nurse."

Angie glanced over at it, shaking her head. "It's way too small. I can tell."

"Try the damn thing on, will you?"

Angie groaned. She undid the front zipper and stepped into it. "See? I can't even zipper it." She turned to face Paige.

She had only been able to get the zipper half way up, and quite a bit of her lacey, white bra was peeking over the top. The uniform was tight, pushing her breasts up and exaggerating her already ample cleavage.

Paige stood back, smiling. "You look so hot. Every man's fantasy." She put one hand on each

of Angie's shoulders and turned her towards the mirror. "We can pull your hair up like this..." She took a handful of Angie's long, blonde curls and pulled them away from her face. "Let a few curls fall loose..." She released a tendril on each side. "Oh, yeah. That looks great."

Angie frowned. "There are no pants to this uniform."

"Even better! Don't wear any." Paige laughed.

"What? Just wear this top?"

"Sure. It's long enough to pass as a dress."

Angie scowled. "No it's not. It's way too short." The uniform reached just an inch or so below her buttocks. "I can't even bend over." She took a few steps, turned her back to Paige and then reached down to show her. As expected, her thong panties were now in full bloom.

"C'mon. One drink. If you drop anything, I promise I'll pick it up for you."

Angie sighed, knowing she was defeated.

* * * *

Rob Hendricks had hoped his brother had gone to the Halloween bash without him. As Engine 51 pulled back into the fire station, he saw Pete waving at him.

"Hurry up, will ya? Pete stood there dressed in a ridiculous pirate's outfit.

Rob jumped down and rolled his eyes upward. "You look like an idiot."

"The women will be all over me." He smiled slyly, following Rob back to the locker room. "What are you going to wear?"

"I've decided not to go," he called over his shoulder, knowing the news would invoke a passionate protest.

"Ah, c'mon, man! I've been waiting for this night all month."

"I'm tired and dirty. I just want to go home and get some sleep." He removed his helmet and placed it on the top shelf of his locker. "Go without me. You'll have a better chance of hooking up alone, anyway."

"No. You swore you'd come this time. I'm tired of your excuses."

Rob had no desire to meet another woman. Nickie had been the only love in his life, and her death hadn't changed his feelings. "Pete..." He took a deep breath and sighed. "I know you mean well, but I'm...not ready yet. I'll let you know when I am."

Pete lit a cigarette. "One drink. That's all I ask. Just take one small step, and I'll leave you alone."

Rob groaned. "Fine. One drink, and that's it. But I am *not* going to put on some stupid costume."

Pete's face lit up. "Just wear your gear. All

women fantasize about fire fighters."

"The last thing I want to be tonight is some babe's fantasy." He saw the disappointed look on his brother's face. "Besides, I'm filthy. I smell like smoke."

"Even better. Just take a quick shower. Please?"

Rob ran his fingers through his dark, curly hair and shook his head. "*One drink*," he repeated firmly.

* * * *

By the time the girls walked into the Bistro Hotel and Bar, the annual Halloween bash was in full swing. There were hundreds of patrons dressed in an array of costumes ranging from simple to elaborate. Angie almost tripped over the tail of a man wearing a dragon outfit.

"Hey! Watch the tail!" He shot her an angry look.

"It's too crowded," she screamed so Paige could hear her over the deafening noise level.

"What?"

"Forget it." Conversation would be impossible.

Angie followed her friend to a less crowded, remote bar set up in a corner. When a seat became available, she slid into it. "Rum and coke," she shouted to the bartender, "and a vodka and cranberry juice."

Paige had already struck up a conversation with two men. Angie watched her as she flirted shamelessly. Every so often she'd glance back and Angie could tell that she was talking about her. She ignored Paige's numerous gestures inviting her to join them. *One drink*, she reminded herself. *That's all I promised.*

* * * *

Rob and Pete made their way to the bar. Misty fog swirled out of witch's caldrons. Black and orange streamers hung from the ceiling amidst balloons, rubber spiders and fake cobwebs. The dance floor was packed. *What a fire trap*, Rob thought to himself as he scanned the room for the nearest exit. He ordered a beer and stood off to the side of a long bar.

"This is great," his brother shouted into his ear. "Aren't you glad I made you come along?"

"Yeah. Fantastic," he answered sarcastically. He drained his bottle of Bud and ordered another. Pete was engrossed in whatever a young blonde dressed as Frankenstein's bride was whispering to him. He noticed that three women were eyeing him, but he turned away from them, not returning their seductive smiles.

Rob casually watched the dancers gyrating out on the floor and shook his head as two obviously

drunk men shouted obscenities at each other. He noticed that a woman, who looked as bored as he felt, was watching them, too. She was wearing some sort of a sexy nurse costume. He shot her a small appreciative smile, but she turned away from him. A few minutes later, having nothing better to do, he made his way over to her.

"You look as though you're having as much fun as I am," he shouted, leaning in closer so she could hear him.

"Yeah."

"Can I buy you a drink?"

"No thanks. I'm leaving after I finish this one."

She was much prettier than she looked from across the room. Her ample breasts were straining against her white, low-cut nurse's uniform. The man seated next to her was dressed as the Statue of Liberty. One of the spokes in his crown kept jabbing her and she appeared to be past plain annoyance. She gave him a small, rough push.

Rob laughed. "Want to finish your drink outside on the deck?"

* * * *

Angie leaned back to get a better look at this stranger. Wearing a fire fighter's gear, his heavy coat was unbuttoned to reveal a sleeveless t-shirt and suspenders. His muscular chest did not go

unnoticed. He had deep blue eyes, and a nice, easy smile.

Why not? She followed him outside.

* * * *

As they escaped the crowded room, Pete grabbed Rob's arm. He concealed a hotel key card in his hand. "Just in case." He smiled as he tucked it into his brother's pocket. Before Rob could refuse, Pete disappeared.

* * * *

The deck was also decorated in Halloween splendor, but much quieter. "This is better," he pulled a chair out for her to sit in. "My name is Rob."

"Angie." She took a small sip from her almost empty glass. "So, tell me Fireman Rob, if my hospital was ablaze, who would you rescue first? Me...or Old Lady Smithers in room 109?"

"That depends." He finished the beer in his glass and smiled. "What does she look like?"

"Oh, you are bad, Fireman Rob."

"You have no idea, Nurse Angie." His gaze slowly dropped to her neck, breasts, and hips. She watched his eyes as they ran the length of her long, tanned legs. She truly felt as though he was

undressing her with his eyes. Her face reddened when she realized an excitement was building deep within her.

They made idle conversation and he bought her another drink. She hated to admit it, but she was enjoying his attention. He was watching her intently and she couldn't resist the urge to tease the ice cubes with the tip of her tongue. He moved his chair closer to hers and she could almost feel the warmth of his body.

Her attraction to this stranger was alarming. She forced herself back to reality. "You smell like smoke. Is that fire fighter outfit authentic?"

He laughed. "Yeah. I have a friend at a fire station. He loaned it to me."

Angie spied Paige peeking at her from the doorway. She flashed the *thumbs up* sign and went back into the bar.

"Would you like to dance?" He looked deeply into her eyes.

"Out here?"

"Sure. Why not?"

He had a deep, sexy voice. He took her hand and pulled her up. Before she could resist, she was in his arms. He held her lightly at first. The distant music was still audible and they swayed to its' beat slowly.

"You smell wonderful." He almost purred the words into her ear and it sent shivers down her

spine.

He smelled good, too. Whatever cologne he was wearing was faint, and it made her want to be closer to him. His fingertips slid down the length of her arms until they finally rested on the small of her back. When he pulled her in, she was instantly aware of his muscular, hard body. She wrapped her arms around his neck and tilted her face up towards his.

“What are we doing?” Her eyes searched his for an answer.

He brought his face down closer to hers. His lips brushed against her cheek. A soft moan escaped from her throat as she met his mouth with her own. His tongue slid in to explore it. Rob’s hands gently cupped her buttocks. Angie wasn’t sure if her sudden desire was caused by her loneliness or the alcohol, but it wouldn’t be denied.

He nestled his face in her neck, kissing a trail up to her ear. His mouth was hot and wet. “I want you,” he whispered.

She pushed her hands inside his coat and ran her fingers across his chest. Then she brought them around to his back and pulled him closer. “I want you, too.” She didn’t know if she said it aloud or just imagined her response.

* * * *

Rob took a hold of her hand and led her back into the bar. They darted across the room, moving in and out of clusters of dancers and drinkers.

They paused in front of the elevators as Rob took the key card out of his pocket to read the room number. When the doors opened, he jumped inside, hastily yanking Angie in with him. He tapped the button for the fifth floor. Once the doors closed behind them, he pulled her into his arms again.

Rob pushed her up against the wall and buried his face into her neck. He slid his hand up her thigh and under her nurse's uniform. Tugging her flimsy panties to the side, he hurried to feel the flesh of her buttocks against his fingertips. Angie brought her leg up behind his and pulled him closer.

* * * *

"Hoo Boy," the security guard pulled his chair closer to the monitor on his desk so he could get a better look. He waved to another officer who immediately joined him, peering over his shoulder. A camera zoomed in on Angie and Rob in the elevator.

"Oh, yeah," the second officer sighed. "Trick...or...Treat!"

* * * *

The elevator bell rang as the doors opened. Glancing up at the room numbers written on the wall, Rob turned to the left. Angie was right behind him. They stopped in front of room 516 just long enough for another kiss.

They inched their way towards the bed, removing their clothing frantically. Ignoring her own inhibitions for once, Angie could hardly wait to feel his naked body against hers.

Once she unzipped her uniform and stepped out of it, Rob kicked it aside. Angie fumbled with Rob's belt. She was trembling with desire. He unhooked her bra. As it fell to the floor, he lifted her up and carried her to the bed. She raised her arms above her head, anxiously waiting to feel him against her. He ripped off his t-shirt.

A neon light from outside the window barely lit up the room. Angie was able to make out Rob's muscular arms and chest. He unzipped his pants as he gazed down on her body. It was apparent that he was already aching for her, too.

He knelt on the bottom of the bed and bent over to kiss her ankles. First, the outside, and then the tender inside. Angie gasped as he kissed and licked her calves, slowly making his way up to her thighs. She had already parted them invitingly by

the time he approached her knees.

Rob opened his mouth and trailed the tip of his tongue across her skin. She grabbed onto each side of her pillowcase. She wasn't sure she could wait any longer. She tilted her head back, forcing it deeper into the pillow. She was moaning softly.

Rob kissed the inside of her thighs as she struggled to remove her panties. When he finally took her into his mouth, she exploded immediately. After she finished jerking her hips, he moved up to mount her.

Angie engulfed his mouth with her own as he guided himself into her. He moved slowly, then rhythmically. Each thrust brought them both closer to the release they desperately needed. He filled her completely as she arched her hips to receive all of him.

She could feel his heart pounding against her own thundering chest. His fingers caressed her breasts as he kissed them.

He whispered her name as he let himself explode inside of her. *Angie*. She was surprised he remembered her name. He rolled off of her onto his back, his arm draped across his eyes. Although drenched in sweat, as their breathing returned to normal, they drifted off to sleep.

Angie awakened sometime in the middle of the night, with the beginning of a headache. In the

darkness, she made out the shape of a man lying next to her. Her cheeks flushed as the memories flooded her brain. She was horrified.

What was I thinking? Her mind was whirling. Trembling, she quietly slid out of bed. It was wonderful, but it had also been a mistake. A lapse in judgment with potentially grave consequences.

I slept with a total stranger. She dressed as quickly as she could in the dark. *I don't even know if he used a condom.* Her anxiety grew with each admonishment. *I have to get out of here!*

Not bothering to comb her hair or check the mascara she was sure was smeared, she picked up her purse and quietly left the room. Her only relief was that the handsome man never stirred.

Part II

“How did you get home last night?” Paige was pulling on her scrubs before starting a case in the operating room.

“A cab.” Angie’s head was still throbbing as she opened her locker.

“Did that really hot guy dressed as a fire fighter make all your dreams come true?” She was laughing.

“I don’t want to talk about it.” Angie stepped into her clogs and pulled a cap over her hair.

“Awww, c’mon. I always share my details with you...”

“It’s not something I want to brag about,” she confessed. “I should have gone straight home after work.”

Paige frowned. “We’ll talk later. I have a ruptured appendix waiting for me.”

* * * *

Sunlight streaming in through the window nudged Rob awake later that same morning. It took him a few minutes to remember where he

was. He could still smell her perfume in the air. *Angie.*

He patted her side of the bed. It was cold. He wondered if she was in the bathroom. She wasn't. Except for the taste of her still on his lips, it was as if she was never there.

Why would she leave without even saying goodbye? *Who was that girl?*

He took a quick shower and then dressed. As he took out a five dollar bill to leave on the dresser for the maid, he noticed a badge lying on the floor. He bent over and picked it up. *Angela Preston, RN.* The photograph was the girl he had been with the night before.

What do you know? She really is a nurse.

* * * *

As much as she wanted to put the memories of the night before out of her mind, she couldn't. Fortunately, her performance as a scrub nurse had been well rehearsed.

Several hours later, both women took a break. Paige smiled brightly as she slid into the chair across from Angie's.

"So...what was his name?"

Angie groaned. "Rob. I think." Her cheeks flushed.

Paige laughed. "At least he was hot."

"Yeah. What a relief," she answered sarcastically.

"Are you going to see him again?"

Angie looked up in surprise. "*What?* I was drunk, Paige. I'm not even sure his name was Rob. I just hope I walked away without getting any kind of disease."

"Oh my God...he *did* wear a condom, didn't he?"

Angie was close to tears. "I have no idea."

Another nurse joined them and they changed the subject of conversation. It was bad enough that Paige was witness to her scandalous antics. She didn't want the whole hospital talking about it.

* * * *

Pete could hardly wait to call his brother. The last time he saw him, he looked as though he was going to get lucky. He hoped so. Rob was the greatest guy he knew. His wife's death shook him to the core, and there were times he worried that he'd never get over it. Maybe this was the start he needed.

* * * *

Rob heard a knock on the front door as he was

feeding his dog. Jack was too hungry to bark.

It was Pete. Smiling like a sly fox.

"Ho, ho, bro! Did you have a good time last night?" He pushed past Rob and took a seat on the couch.

"Yeah. It was all right."

"All right? That's it? Did you use the room? I was hoping one of us would need it."

Rob ran his fingers through his hair and sat down. "Yeah. We did."

"And?"

"It was...hot at first."

"At first?"

"Her name is Angie. I really don't know anything about her. She was gone before I woke up. She really is a nurse, though. I found her ID badge on the floor when I left this morning."

Pete frowned. "Did she leave you her telephone number?"

"No. Nothing. I think she dropped her ID badge by accident. I get the impression she was only interested in a one-night stand."

"Maybe she's married or something," Pete offered.

"Yeah, maybe. I guess I'll never know."

"Would you see her again if you could?"

Rob sighed. "Sure. I've never been one to use a person like that." He stood up and went into the kitchen. "Want a beer?"

"Is there a name of a hospital on the ID badge?"

"Yeah, but what do you want me to do? Go look for her?"

Pete took the beer and opened it. "Why not? I bet that badge is important to her. She'll want it back."

"Maybe I'll just mail it to the hospital. She might not be too happy to see me again."

"If she's not...then she'll just take it and thank you."

"I'll think about it."

* * * *

"Lose something?" Paige was combing her hair in front of the mirror as Angie dumped her purse.

"My ID badge. I can't find it anywhere."

"When was the last time you had it?"

"I don't know," she sighed. "I remember swiping out last night before we left for the Halloween party, and I haven't seen it since."

"Did you look in your car?"

"Yeah. I ran out there a few hours ago to check, but it wasn't there either." Moments from the night before flashed into her mind. Rob smiling as he invited her outside to have a drink on the deck. His deep voice purring, "You smell wonderful" into her ear. The way he felt against her as they danced. She grabbed the contents of her purse and

shoved them back in. She remembered how she was trembling when she unzipped her nurse's uniform in the hotel room.

"Oh my, God!" She turned to face Paige with a look of horror on her face. "I must have dropped my ID badge in the hotel last night."

"Call the club. Maybe someone found it and turned it in."

"No, not the club. The hotel room." Angie raked her fingers through her hair.

"Then call the hotel. Do you remember what room you were in?"

"No," she answered, her cheeks flushing.

Several minutes later she was on the phone to the hotel. She sighed heavily as she hung up the receiver. "They didn't find it."

"Then you'll just have to get a new one."

* * * *

Rob and Pete parked the car in the Visitor's Parking Lot of Berlin Community Hospital. They walked into the lobby and stopped at the security desk.

"I found an ID badge. I think it might belong to one of the nurses who work here."

"I'll take it." The guard reached for it without looking up.

"I was wondering if I could...give it to her in-

person."

"No, but I'll make sure she gets it."

"We, uh, met her last night, but forgot to get her number. Is she working right now?" Pete attempted to flash an innocent smile.

John Spack eyed them cautiously. "I can't give you that information. *If* she works here, I'll make sure she gets the badge."

"I was hoping to see her again..."

The security guard yanked the ID badge out of Rob's hand. "What are you? Some kind of stalker? If she wanted you to have her number, she would have given it to you. Now...is there anything else I can do for you?"

"No. Thanks." Rob turned and made his way back out of the lobby.

"That sucks."

"He was only protecting her. It's understandable."

"What are you going to do now?"

Rob remembered how soft Angie's skin was. The sound of her breath against his face when she sighed. He immediately ached to be with her again. "Nothing I can do," he answered flatly.

* * * *

The next morning, the hospital security guard stopped Angie as she walked into work. "I have

something for you." He took her ID badge out of the drawer and handed it to her.

"Oh my, God, John! Where did you find it?"

"Two guys dropped it off yesterday."

Angie's heart began to beat wildly. "What did they look like?"

The guard scowled. "I don't remember. They asked to speak to you, but I informed them that wasn't possible."

She tried to hide her eagerness. "I don't suppose he left his name or number?" She looked hopeful.

"What am I? Some kind of dating service?" He shook his head impatiently. "I didn't ask, and he didn't offer."

"Oh." Angie felt disappointed. "Thanks anyway." She remembered the way Rob gently tilted her face up towards his the first time he kissed her. *Why can't I stop thinking about him?*

* * * *

Several days later, Angie's ex-boyfriend called. "Hey babe, how are you? I've been thinking about you a lot."

Angie felt herself stiffen. "What's the matter? New girlfriend give you the boot already?"

"That was a mistake. I miss you."

"Ryan..." she took a deep breath. "Don't call

me anymore. It's over."

"Aww, c'mon, honey. Give me another chance. I'll make it up to you. I promise."

Angie rolled her eyes upward. "No, Ryan. Save your promises for someone who will believe you. Do us both a favor, and lose my number." With that, she hung up on him.

"Wow." Paige had been listening in on the conversation. "I never thought I'd hear those words come out of your mouth." She smiled. "Good for you."

Angie had surprised herself, as well. She wasted three years on Ryan, always hoping that he would change. He never did. If anything, he got worse. He took advantage of her generosity and forgiving nature. Half of the time, he ignored her. She did everything she could think of to make herself more interesting to him, to no avail.

It wasn't until her night with Rob that she realized what it was like to have a man's total attention. It was only a few hours, but...she liked it. And she wanted to have it again.

"I have an idea," she smiled mischievously at Paige. "Let's go out tonight after work."

"Sure!" Paige brightened at the suggestion. "Where do you want to go?"

"How about the club we went to on Halloween? That was fun."

Paige laughed. "I can't believe it. You want to

see if that guy Rob is there. Don't you?"

"No." Angie tried to look disinterested. "I just thought..."

Paige laughed and interrupted her. "Don't give me that. I know you too well. Let's do it."

It was a slow night at *The Bistro*. A few men stopped by their table, but the girls sent them on their way. Paige was tempted to take one of them up on his offer to buy her a drink, but she didn't want to leave Angie alone. By 11PM they were both ready to go home to bed.

"Sorry, sweetie," Paige tried to comfort her friend. "It was a good idea, but the chances of running into Rob again were slim."

"I know. I was just hoping..."

* * * *

Pete was waiting for his brother when he finished his shift at the fire station. "Let's grab a beer."

"I'm kind of tired." Rob slid out of his gear.

"I thought maybe we could stop by that club we went to on Halloween. Maybe..." He smiled. "Maybe that girl might be there."

Rob brightened at the thought. "I guess one beer wouldn't hurt." He tried not to look too hopeful.

The guys walked into the club at 11:30PM. There were only a few people sitting at the bar. Every time the doors opened, Rob looked up, hoping that it was Angie. It never was. An hour later, he finished his beer and told Pete he was heading home. He fell asleep, thinking about his night with the girl who occupied his thoughts more than he wanted.

Early the next morning, Rob got dressed and drove over to the Heaven's Gate Cemetery. He had stopped to buy a bouquet of pink roses to put on Nickie's grave. They were her favorite.

He sat down on the ground across from her tombstone, as he had done hundreds of times since she died.

"I miss you so much." He touched the corner of her tombstone lovingly. "I...met a girl," he whispered. "I never thought I would, but she just...sort of walked into my life one night."

Rob thought back to the day Nickie died. "I want you to go on," she had whispered. "I don't want you to be alone." He didn't want to hear it, and tried his best to quiet her. "No," she insisted. "Rob, please. I love you with all my heart. You were the best husband any girl could ever want. You made me happier than I ever thought possible. I wish we could spend the rest of our

lives together, but we can't. I'm grateful for the time we did have."

He remembered how hard it was for him to control himself. He was engulfed in grief. For the first time in his life, he was completely helpless. There was nothing he could do to save his wife.

"Someday, you'll meet another woman. I want you to fall in love again. I want you to be happy, Rob. Please."

She was so weak and tired. They both knew it wouldn't be long. That day would be their last and he cherished every word. He held her hand until it went cold in his.

Tears stung his eyes as he recalled every detail of that morning, five years before. "I *did* meet someone, Nickie. Just as you said I would." He wiped his face with the back of his hand. "But I can't find her now." His voice was filled with loneliness as he gently arranged the roses on Nickie's grave.

* * * *

Two weeks later, Paige placed a bag of popcorn into the microwave oven in the nurses' lounge. She had every intention of getting back there before it was finished popping but, she didn't. By the time she returned, the room was filled with smoke.

"Oh, no!" She frantically waved a towel in the air hoping to dispel the smoke before it triggered the fire alarm.

Angie stepped out of the bathroom moments later. "Oh, no! You burnt your popcorn?" She grabbed a magazine and waved it above her head.

They were too late. The fire alarm began to screech. "We're in trouble now," she laughed.

Whenever the alarm sounded, the fire station was required to respond, even if there was no fire. The safety of the patients was at stake.

Two security guards barged into the nurses' lounge. Mike Brown shook his head. "How many times do you nurses have to be told not to microwave popcorn? It always burns." He was annoyed.

"But it's so good," Paige protested.

"I'll be back with the firemen," he called over his shoulder as he left to meet them at the front entrance.

* * * *

"Christ! Another fire alarm at Berlin Community," the Fire Captain called as the siren wailed. "Probably a false alarm I bet."

Rob jumped up from his bunk. "*Berlin Community?*" His heart was thumping.

By the time they arrived, the smoke had all but disappeared. The odor would linger on for hours, as they all knew from experience.

The firefighters were informed about the burning popcorn as they trudged through the halls to the operating room nurses' lounge. The only one happy to be there, was Rob. He searched the faces of the nurses he passed, looking for Angie's.

As they entered the room, two women were setting up an electric fan. He heard one of them apologizing. When she turned around, he was facing Angie. They looked at each other in surprise.

* * * *

Angie's heart began to race as she looked into the eyes of her mystery man. Her cheeks flushed and her hands were trembling. "You're a *real* fire fighter?"

He smiled. "You're a real nurse."

They both fought off the urge to run into each other's arms.

"I came to save Old Lady Smithers in room 109," he teased.

"What about me?" Angie was shaking so badly, she could hardly talk.

"Don't worry. I'll come back and throw you over my shoulder," he assured her, "and take you to safety."

"Promise?"

"I promise."

About the Author

Lisa Anne Vance has been a registered nurse for more than 25 years. She now works as a Nursing Supervisor in a community hospital. She has three grown children and three small, but adorable grandchildren.

Although writing is her passion, she has been known to dabble in photography, sky diving and Stand-Up comedy. Her divorce ten years ago has inspired her to write more murder mysteries than love stories, but she remains a hopeful romantic.