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**An Igniting Attraction**  
To Protect & Serve, Heroes in Uniform  
*Book One*

by

Stef Ann Holm  
*USA Today Bestselling Author*

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AN IGNITING ATTRACTION

**Awards & Accolades**

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"...delightful romance... shows that you are never too young or too old for romance."

~ *Booklist*

"Holm's comedic flair is much in evidence in this fast-paced story, and she handles the emotional moments with equal skill. The characters are quite memorable too—especially Tony and his yummy firefighter friends." 4 STARS!

~ *Contemporary Romance Reviews*

"...plenty of smoldering romance..."

~ *A Romance Review*

"...a fascinating contemporary novel that readers are sure to enjoy."

~ *Romance Reviews Today*

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Natalie rang the doorbell, drawing in a deep breath of chilly air while she waited; her cheeks and nose were already cold. She hadn't thought to put her coat on—in fact, she really hadn't thought anything through.

She heard footfalls, then the door opened, and Tony Cruz's wide shoulders filled the opening.

"I brought you a bottle of wine," she uttered without preamble.

She recalled how yesterday, at the shop, he had seemed very restrained. She'd greeted him with her mind elsewhere and had been unable to offer her undivided condolences over his news. She thought this goodwill gesture might somehow make him feel better.

He put his forearm over the doorframe and leaned his body forward without speaking. Black lashes spiked his eyes. His eyes were darker than she recalled, a brown that was remote and distant.

"I'm sorry probably doesn't help... but I'm sorry." She tried to make her voice sound casual, nondescript. Understanding, yet not as if she'd come to be his confidante or therapist.

His gaze pierced the short distance between them, his mouth grim. Tired lines bracketed the corners of his eyes. He appeared as if he hadn't slept much lately. His clipped black hair was ruffled, and she fought a strange urge to smooth it.

The rich timbre of his voice enveloped her when he asked, "You want to come inside and help me drink it?"

She licked her dry lips, looked past him into the large, empty living room. Indecision caused her to hesitate. She hadn't really thought about drinking the wine with him. Or maybe she hadn't wanted to acknowledge the thought had crossed her mind.

"I can't stay long. I have to..."

She didn't have to do anything.

Today was Sunday. Her store was closed. All that was waiting for her at home was a house to clean and laundry to wash.

Tony took the bottle of merlot from her, then stepped aside. She urged her feet forward. She held back a little, letting him take the lead and bring her into the house.

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