

Capricious Cupid

By Marilyn Reeves

In a large senior community like Windsor Gardens where resident ages range from 55 on up, romantic connections of every description abound: old married couples, newly married couples, unmarried couples in committed relationships, and a few single people who enjoy playing the field.

But many of us – perhaps the majority of us – seldom if ever date. Instead, we find ourselves enjoying a sort of second go-round of pre-adolescent-type crushes and flirtations, or friendships with the opposite sex that are sometimes flavored with just the tiniest dollop of romance. Sometimes all it takes is a brief, friendly encounter with someone we think is rather special to put a smile on our faces and a spring in our step for the rest of the day.

But given that premise, imagine the confusion caused by a Capricious Cupid one Valentine's Day a few years back. For me it began when I found an envelope that had been slipped under my door. "Oh, my, what's this?" I said, as I bent over and picked it up off the floor. Inside I found a Valentine signed "Your Secret Admirer!"

"Oh, my goodness, who could it be?" I said. It was one thing to find Christmas cards from my neighbors similarly placed under my door during the Holidays, but a single Valentine from an anonymous admirer suggested something ... slightly more. I was bewildered and intrigued, not to mention anxious to find out who it was!

Well, as it turned out, I wasn't the only recipient of an unsigned Valentine that day. Apparently, everyone in the building got one, too! I try to imagine all the thoughts running through the various individuals' minds.

A single man who lived downstairs thinking: "Who is this from? Could it be the nice lady who lives next door? I like her but I didn't think she liked me. At least not in that way. Or ... oh, no! It's probably from the one who kept flirting with me in the Laundry Room until I finally changed my laundry time."

The old widow who lived down the hall saying to herself: "Oh, how nice! I always knew he liked me. He is so handsome. I just wish I were 30 years younger!"

The young hottie barely old enough to have received her first AARP magazine laughing: "Oh, I know who this is from. Why didn't he just sign it? Or call and ask me for a date, so I could turn him down?"

Until we all learned that every resident in the building had received a similar card from the same "Secret Admirer" our Capricious Cupid had the entire building in an uproar. People were giving each other sidelong glances as we passed in the hall, wondering if this is the one we should thank for the anonymous Valentine.

None of us ever found out the name of our Secret Admirer, but for a few hours that Valentine's Day those unsigned cards had us all reconsidering our neighbors in a whole new light.

