



Story of the *Heart*

BY CINDY ZIMMERMANN

*V*alentine's Day. Is there a single day of the year on which the pen is mightier? I think not. For this is the day devoted to the expression of love between intimate companions.

The history—or “herstory”—of deeply personal love stories becomes our destiny, because in the end, there is really only one story. And that is the story of the heart. Valentine's Day offers an opportunity to document, in our own handwriting, our own writing voice, our love for others. These are the writings our loved ones will treasure as our stories unfold. Life and love are full of surprises.

I was delightfully surprised in 2003, when my love at the time wrote to me, “Happy Valentine's Day 2003! Let's try all of these places! I love you,” on the inside cover of the book *Arizona Getaways for the Incurably Romantic*. With

our mutual love of travel, books, romance and writing, it was a wonderful, thoughtful gift. Little did I know it at the time, but the real gift was a friendship that would later evolve between the book's author, Pam Swartz, and myself. I should have known it when I first read page 31! In her chapter on setting the stage for a romantic getaway, she writes, “Give your partner a series of notes before you leave.” Of course, we had to become friends.

At the time, though, I was most touched by the added handwritten message; for it was those words, my love's writing voice, that personalized and documented our love story. His writing promised love and romance to follow. Had those words been emailed, texted, tweeted or whatever, I wouldn't have known for an absolute certainty that they

came from him, from his heart. Electronic communications do not have the authenticity of one's personal handwriting. Nor, most likely, would I still have a copy of his personal, intimate view of our relationship at that moment in time, February 2003.

Five short years later, 2008, this person, who represented an important chapter of my life, passed away. For this reason, in my heart, every day is Valentine's Day, another chance to write those we love of our feelings, our intentions, our appreciations—our heart stories of love. I want those I hold dear to know how grateful I am for their part in my "herstory."

Today, I'm going to write Pam Swartz. I want to be certain she knows how grateful I am for her books, her friendship and her support for Writing In Style. My love to you this Valentine season. Of course we will be friends

when we are fortunate enough for our paths to cross—we both love fine writing instruments, handwritten notes and this beautiful magazine!

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the name.

Writing in Style (writinginstyle.com) is Cindy Zimmermann's online resource for handwritten communication. View an interview between Zimmermann and Pam Swartz at the site: under "Tools," find "The ABCs of Successful Writing" and select the letter K.