



Three French Hens

Lynsay Sands

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Previously published in the print anthologies *Five Gold Rings* and *A Historical Christmas Present*.

Brinna, a twelfth-century scullery maid, gets the chance to play a lady—and win the true love of an impoverished lord. Her fate changes when a new guest, Lady Joan, arrives at the castle. Desperate to escape her arranged marriage to Royce of Thurleah, Joan suggests that look-alike Brinna take her place at the Christmas festivities. Suddenly, Brinna finds herself being wooed by a true gentleman, getting perhaps the best Christmas present of all: a new life. A classic novella from New York Times bestselling author Lynsay Sands

Three French Hens Details

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From Reader Review Three French Hens for online ebook

Dianne says

For those of us who read a lot of Ms Sand's books but may shy away from anthologies for fear that we will not like all the authors in them, this is the perfect alternate. "Three French Hens" was previously published in the anthologies "Five Gold Rings" and "A Historical Christmas Present", so you can make sure you don't have those before you purchase this novella.

This was an entirely very sweet story of two young women one a scullery maid and the other a high born lady who switch identities during the Christmas season. The reason for this is that Lady Joan wants to get out of a pre-arranged marriage, and Brinna the scullery maid needs some coin to help her elderly friend Aggie retire.

Unfortunately or fortunately it depends on how you look at it, the ruse worked all too well and Brinna ends up falling for Lady Joan's betrothed Royce of Thurleah.

I had wondered how Ms Sands was going to dig her way out of this plot predicament, but I shouldn't have feared. Ms Sands did it and fairly well too. It may seem that the ploy is a little trite, but this is a Christmas novella and at this time of the year predictable, sweet and romantic is just what we all need to get through the holiday's.

Maura says

Brinna is a scullery maid who gets a chance to be a ladies maid, but finds that the woman she's waiting on looks exactly like her. Lady Joan is visiting so she can meet the man she's betrothed to, Lord Royce, who desperately needs the dowry Lady Joan is providing. Only she's not interested. So she gets Brinna to pose as her and spend the week with Royce. So what does Brinna do when she falls in love with Royce, but she knows she's deceiving him?

This was really cute. I suspend a lot of disbelief in novellas and accept that things happen quickly. These two fell in love in about a week, but at least half the week they weren't really interacting. Nevertheless, Brinna's experiences as a Lady were fairly amusing...especially when she gets herself into trouble, because then her peasant-dialect comes out. It was a predictable story, but a good one.

Judith Sherrod says

Such a lovely tale we weave.....

Maids, ladies, lovers, sinners. The Lady Joan didn't want to marry Lord Royce, the man her father betrothed her to. She wanted his cousin. Finding that the kitchen maid and she looked remarkably alike. She convinced the maid to take her place. Even up to the marriage itself. That's when she learned that she was actually the daughter.....well read it yourself.. worth it.

Caitlin says

A short, cute romance. It's more than a little improbable, and the joke the title is based on is an awkward stretch. Still, it's got some funny moments, and some sweet ones.

Sue Parker says

Lynsay tells a fun story of trading places and finding love. This is a nice fun short story. It's only 70 pages but well worth the read.

Cassy says

Cute short story

I liked this one so much better than the fairy godmother one. I do think this book would have been better if it was longer. I felt like the ending was rushed a bit. But it was meant to be short.

Maya says

The end felt very rushed after the truth was discovered but I really enjoyed reading it. I thought from the start that Brinna and Joan were twins, and Brinna had been stolen in infancy. Not the case, but I won't spoil more :)

K says

I'm really loving that Sands' is rereleasing her short stories individually. Otherwise I would have missed some really fun, good reads. I really enjoyed this one, and found that I couldn't put it down due to wanting to find out how the characters would get out of the mess they created. I also liked how the story as not too predictable, and ofcourse the humor and antics of the characters. I would def recommend this book, and other works by this author, to other readers.

Linda says

Careful what you wish for...

Previously published in the print anthologies Five Gold Rings and A Historical Christmas Present.

Three French Hens by Lynsay Sands is an entertaining festive historical novella. I read it within A Historical Christmas Present anthology in which it was one of three stories. It's a standalone read not related to any series. This sweet romance details what happens when two women – a scullery maid and a spoiled highborn lady - switch identities. Lady Joan wants to get out of a pre-arranged marriage. Brinna, the scullery maid, would like to help her elderly friend, Aggie, retire and not have to worry about finances. Brinna plays her hand too well as, while playacting as Lady Joan, she falls in love with Lady Joan's betrothed, Royce, dooming Brinna to a broken heart.

I really liked both lead characters. They were caring and strong – both inside and out. Lady Joan was full of herself. I pity the man who ends up with her. Brinna's chaperone while impersonating Lady Joan was an entitled hoot. Some of the stories she told to justify Brinna's behavior as Brinna struggled with adapting to the different class norms were absolutely hilarious.

Following please find a few of my favorite quotes Three French Hens:

“Were you hurt? Is anything broken?”

“Nay.” She signed wryly. “But the snow went up me skirts so far me arse is a block of ice.”

“She hurt her hand.” Sabrina managed a frown. “Terrible, really. Awful accident. Sad. Horribly painful. She almost lost full use of her hand.”

“Whatever happened?” he asked.

“Happened?” Sabrina blinked at the question, her face going blank briefly, then filling with desperation.

“She... er... she... er... pricked her finger doing embroidery!” she finished triumphantly, and Brinna nearly groaned aloud as what sounded suspiciously like a snort of laughter burst from Lord Thurleah.

“Is everything all right, ladies?”

Sabrina whirled to face both men as they dismounted. “Oh, my, yes. Everything is fine. Why ever would you think otherwise?”

Brinna could just see Lord Thurleah's face as he arched one eyebrow, his lips appearing to struggle to hold back an amused smile. “Mayhap because Lady Joan has fallen in the snow?”

“Fallen?” Lady Sabrina's genuine horror seemed to suggest ladies simply did not do anything as embarrassing as fall off the back of the wagon into the snow.

She gasped, “Oh, nay. You must be mistaken, my lord. Why Lady Joan would never have fallen. She is the epitome of grace and beauty. She is as nimble as a fawn, as graceful as a swan. She is ---“

“Presently lying in the snow,” Lord Thurleah pointed out dryly.

I was wracking my brain while inhaling this read, trying to figure out how the author was ever going to be able to provide Brinna and Royce the happy ending they deserved. I didn't see a way, but, I shouldn't have doubted her, as she pulled one off that left me happy as can be! If you enjoy escaping into quick, sweet and humorous Christmas romances, Three French Hens is a wonderful option!

My full review is published at Reading Between the Wines Book Club. Please check it out there:
<http://www.readingbetweenthewinesbook...>

Rebecca (everyday reader) says

A spoiled rich girl, Joan, trades places with a look-a-like servant girl to get out of an arranged marriage her

father planned. During the switch Brinna, the maid, falls in love with Royce, the fiance, and vice-versa. Joan runs off to marry someone else and the two are left confused, and a family secret comes to life. Good read!!

Cherie says

The story is a little convoluted. I liked the hero and heroine but the secondary characters were not likeable. I don't think anything was improved with the sex scene but...

The stress comes from Brinna pretending to be Joan who she resembles quite amazingly. I don't really like stories that depend on deception but thankfully it was short. Not a favorite of mine.

xiaomao says

The story was extremely silly and not in a good way. Bland characters, especially the hero. The reveal at the end seemed like a lazy, half-assed way of resolving the conflicts. At least the happy ending was predictably happy.

◆?Kelly?◆ says

A well written "Prince and the Pauper" kind of short story. I liked Brinna but the real Joan was a self serving bitch and her cousin Sabrina was only marginally better. I really enjoyed this Christmas novella. Short and sweet. :)

Sherrie says

A short sweet story. By Lynsay Sands

Terree says

This was a fun little Christmas novella good for an afternoon read. It is a stand alone title, so the entire story is having to be told in the 60 or so pages, including the character developement. It went fairly well until almost the end, then there was a BIG jumble when the wedding scene came and the "who's little girl are you" story came out... it was very hard to follow, and I had to read it about 4 times befor I understood the majority... I finally gave up and moved on! Like most novella's it wraps up too quick and neat, but it is what it is, like I said, a fun afternoon read.
