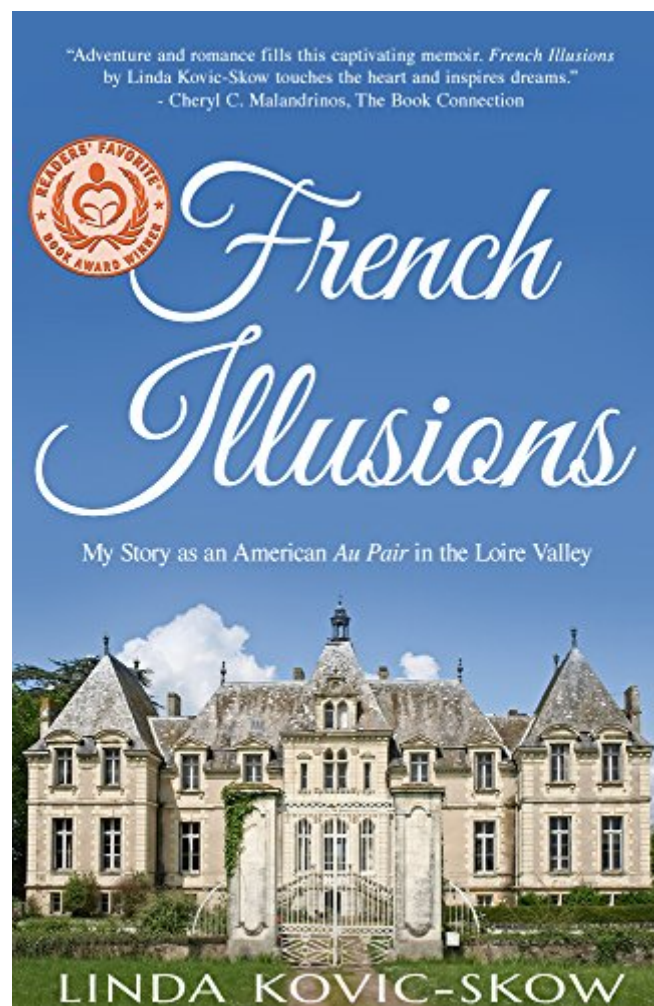




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My Story As An American Au Pair In The Loire Valley (French Illusions Book 1)



Synopsis

She told a futile lie. She knew she would be caught. It's 1979 and twenty-one-year-old Linda needs to learn a language fast in order to fulfill her dream of becoming an international flight attendant. Broke yet determined, she pushes aside feelings of guilt, pretends to speak French on her application and secures a nanny position for a wealthy family 5,000 miles from home. Will Linda be able to redeem herself once she arrives at the Chateau de Montclair? How will she communicate with the family, especially the children? As she struggles to adapt to her challenging new environment, Linda signs up and attends language classes at the local university. When she encounters Adam, a handsome young student, her life becomes more complicated - much more complicated. You'll find this unusual story, based on Linda's diary, even more appealing because it's true. Pick up the first book in the French Illusions Series now, with one click, and join Linda on her adventure of discovery and romance in an extraordinary part of the world. **2016 IAN Book of the Year Award Winner****2014 Readers' Favorite Book Award Winner**

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Customer Reviews

Linda Kovic-Skow wants to be an international stewardess. One of the requirements of International

airlines is that stewardesses must speak English and another language (Spanish, French or German). Not knowing a word of French, she decides to work an au-pair in France and learn French along the way. She ends up working as an au-pair for a wealthy French family (who lives in a castle) in the Loire Valley. However, she left out one minor detail on her au-pair application - she doesn't speak French. The French family aren't thrilled with news, but with no other au-pairs available, decide to hire her. The ending was rushed since she leaves the reader hanging, leaving unanswered questions about her romance with another student. To find out what happens, you need to buy her next book. Overall an entertaining read.

Linda goes to work as an au pair in France, lying about the fact that she cannot speak French. Her French "family" accepts this (rather important) shortcoming nonetheless, and Linda honestly try to overcome this by searching for decent French lessons. However, in a sense, the book should not rate 4 stars!! Linda misleads her employers by being unable to speak a word of French (2 small kids and a baby which arrives while she is in residence). So the attitude of the little elder daughter is understandable -- an au pair with whom she cannot easily communicate! Strangely enough, this clash between cultures is what makes one go on reading the book. On the one hand, an aristocratic, refined and wealthy French lady, and on the other hand our author, a rather typical touchy American woman of twenty-two. She has a certain sense of entitlement ... And it is this clash of cultures which makes the story interesting, although I doubt that the author saw it that way. Often when she describes what her employer and her attitude say, one gets the uncomfortable idea that she is exaggerating. After all, Madame of the chateau seems to do all the major cooking, and boy, can she cook, while Linda gives her no compliments for the many delicious meals. And life with two smallies and a baby is no joke. So, okay, she gives Linda too many chores (I have no idea what an au pair is supposed to do or not do). But I really felt that Linda was not totally honest about her employer's nastiness towards her. I might be wrong. After all, this story comes from the 70's. Purely subjective: I felt that if Linda approached her madame in a more humble manner (given that she mislead the family in her application and could not speak a word of French) she might have won her over. As it is, her sense of "entitlement" stays to the fore. So, a reluctant 4 stars, because I wanted to see how this culture clash would end and therefore found the story very interesting. Unfortunately, the end is a damp squid. No matter, Linda, I read on and on ... You're a good writer.

.I BECAME ENGROSSED IN THE BOOK IMMEDIATELY, HOWEVER IN AN ATTEMPT TO LOCATE WHERE THIS AU PAIR WAS REALLY LIVING AS I LIVED IN THE AREA SHE WAS

LIVING FOR THREE YEARS, I CAME ACROSS A REVIEW WHICH WAS A SPOILER FOR ME. I HAVEN'T PICKED UP THE BOOK SINCE. WINTER IS COMING AND I DO READ MORE. SADLY AS IT TURNS OUT THE CITIES, TOWNS AND THE FAMILY ARE ALL FICTIONAL WHICH ALSO TOOK AWAY A LOT FROM ME. I THINK THE AU PAIR IS TRYING TO PROTECT THIS FAMILY FROM ANY LOCAL GOSSIP OR FINGER POINTING.

I really enjoyed this book and was sorry to see it end. Linda was brave to apply for a job requiring proficiency in a language she did not know. She was gutsy to lie and say she spoke French. What if her employers spoke no English? Fortunately they did but the children in her care did not so this was a very challenging job. Linda had a plan for her future career that required fluency so she was determined to learn French. Where better to do so than by living in France with a French family? I loved her independent spirit and endurance. Her adventures, her studies, her ability to make friends were enjoyable to read. I also admired that she had a goal and put up with a very nasty employer who treated her like a maid when her job title was Nanny. She did this without complaint until finally it became too much. Her adventures will continue in the next book. That's the only thing I didn't like. I wanted this book to go on and on. I took French in high school a very long time ago and that made this book all the more enjoyable with all the French expressions some of which I remembered.

I thoroughly enjoyed *French Illusion : My Story as an American Au Pair in the Loire Valley*. I found the book easy to read and written in a way that drew you in. I was kept engaged throughout with a nice balance of dialogue and narrative. The French conversation was also written in a way that was easy to understand and follow. Even though the story was about day to day life as an au pair I didn't find it at all boring but interesting. The challenges of living with a French family with high expectations and having Madame Dubious being so difficult to please gave some edge and tension to the story. I admired Linda's tenacity in staying as long as she did considering the circumstances and it was fortunate she did have some friends she had made which helped her isolation. An engaging read.

I enjoyed the memoir "French Illusions" immensely. I read it both as the Kindle version, and also listened to the audio book. Linda Kovic-Skow tells with humour and a delightful writing style of her years as an au-pair girl with an aristocratic French family. Her hopes for an exciting adventure are squashed when she is faced with the reality of being at the merciless beck and call of her French host family. Of course, taking place in France, a romantic affair of the heart is thrown in. I couldn't

put the book down in order to see if it all ended in tears or in a happy outcome for young Linda. I enjoyed revisiting the book with the audio vision that brought the story to life, and I was delighted to freshen up my French a bit at the same time.

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