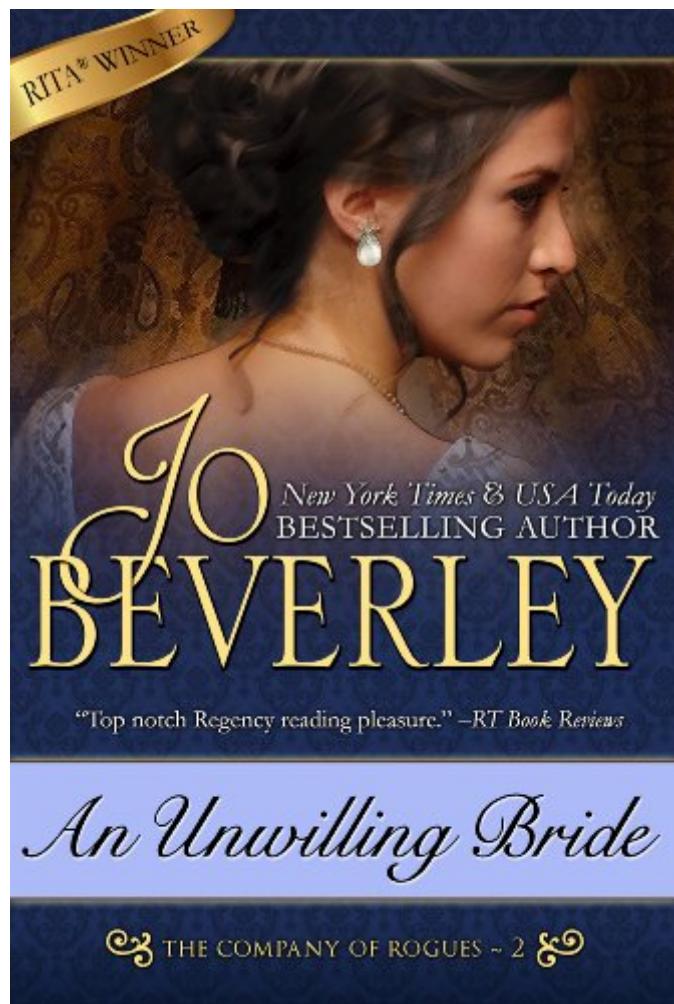


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# An Unwilling Bride (The Company Of Rogues Series, Book 2)



## **Synopsis**

The Duchess of Belcraven committed a folly, and bore her husband another man's child. But Lucien was a third son, so all was patched over. Then the two older boys drowned, leaving disaster. Now, over twenty years later, the duke learns he has a legitimate daughter—Beth Armitage, a child of his blood—and he compels Lucien and Beth to marry. Lucien, now the arrogant ducal heir, is devastated to learn he is not his father's child and that the only way to his fortune is through his unwilling bride: an independent schoolteacher raised in the principles of the Rights of Women. Can there be any common ground? **AWARDS:** Romance Writers of America RITA Award, Winner **Best Regency Romance, Romantic Times** **REVIEWS:** "...vivid and mesmerizing characters . Top notch Regency reading pleasure." ~Romantic Times"..."reading about these two intelligent, strong people was such a treat." ~All About Romance **ABOUT Jo Beverley:** The NYT bestselling author of over thirty historical romance novels, all set in her native England in the medieval, Georgian, and Regency periods, Jo Beverley firmly believes that reading should be fun, and every book should leave the reader with a smile. You can find Jo on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/jo.beverley](http://www.facebook.com/jo.beverley) and at [www.wordwenches.com](http://www.wordwenches.com), where she blogs regularly.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Sigh -- so many readers latch on to one small incident and trash the whole thing because of it, and all without looking at the whole. As to the issue of abuse, Jo Beverley is known for dealing with difficult and sometimes uncomfortable (to be kind) issues. Abuse is one of the issues addressed in "An Unwilling Bride." Yes, the reader can be rightly concerned about the hero's temper and the one (count 'em, one) time Lucien backhands his wife. I am NOT justifying his behavior, but reading his reaction and all that follows, he seems to be even more upset about it than she is. Lucien is appalled at himself. It is also true that he is at times emotionally cruel to Beth early on, but it is the result of a very serious misunderstanding that she caused and a backlash from his own pain. As unpleasant as that is, it's real; people really do lash out at others when they themselves are in pain, particularly if the other person manages to add to the load. In addition, she is a virago early in their relationship, due in large part to her trying to get out of a marriage she doesn't want. Nevertheless, she is truly obnoxious at times and there is a portion of the book in which the reader may not like either character. Both are dealing with very difficult situations they feel powerless to change, and both have very strong, independent-minded personalities. Friction is inevitable. Moreover, responses that so berate Lucien fail to recognize that people are imperfect; they make mistakes. Odd how Lucien is condemned for one terrible mistake and the rest of his character, which is very fine indeed, is overlooked. At least Beth comes to realize that she started their problems (not "is responsible for his hitting her") and continued to exacerbate them. Like all relationships, both are responsible.

I usually don't bother with negative reviews, but what some of the other reviewers have said has bothered me so much, I felt there were a few things I would like to weigh in on. Perhaps I just expected too much from the book, but I found it to be a very troubling read that left me with a feeling of sadness for the characters at the end. In fact, although I finished the book, I almost wish I hadn't due to the disappointment from what started as such a promising story. When reading books such as this it is absolutely important to take the story in its historical context as other reviewers have suggested. However, I do not think historical context should be used as an excuse for the characters to treat others so badly and to be so self-centered. I found almost all of the characters to be pretty vapid, immature, and downright obnoxious for most of the story. They act like spoilt and bored teenagers caught up in teenage angst and trapped by emotions which Beverley used as an excuse for her characters to be down-right awful to each other. I kept reading because I saw such potential for real character growth. There were so many moments filled with potential for someone, anyone to really step-up and show what true love is, but it just never seemed to happen. They would

get so close and then fall back on the same self-centered and self-righteous patterns of behavior. This choice by Beverley left me with a novel full of potential, disappointment, and characters that I just never could like, which is a shame because I so wanted to like them.

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