



The Bride Takes a Groom

Lisa Berne

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Lisa Berne's Penhallow Dynasty continues with a pair of star-crossed childhood friends who meet again years later—and find love where they least expect it...

Katherine Brooke may be a fabulously wealthy heiress, but she's trapped, a pawn in her parents' ruthless game to marry her into the nobility. Then Captain Hugo Penhallow—so charming, as handsome as a Greek god—comes into her life once more, and suddenly she sees a chance to be free.

As a Penhallow, his is one of the highest names in the land, but still his family is facing ruin. So Katherine boldly proposes an exchange: *his* name for *her* money. But only if Hugo understands it's merely a practical arrangement, and that she's not surrendering herself entirely.

Back from eight years in America and determined to give his younger siblings a better life, Hugo agrees. He's never fallen in love, so why not? Yet neither of them guesses that this marriage will become far, far more than they ever dreamed of.

The Bride Takes a Groom Details

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Author : Lisa Berne

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From Reader Review The Bride Takes a Groom for online ebook

Bambi Unbridled says

The Bride Takes a Groom is the third book in the Penhallow Dynasty series, and my first read by this author. Penhallow is an esteemed and revered name in London society, and the family bucks tradition by marrying for love and maintaining close relationships throughout the family lines. I really liked everyone in the family, even Aunt Henrietta, who is a reformed stuffy matron sort.

Captain Hugo Penhallow has been in America fighting a war for the past 10 years or so, and has returned home after being shot and breaking his leg. He rushes back home to see his mother and siblings, and finds all the love he missed while he was away. Unfortunately he also quickly realizes their dire financial situation, and he sets out to remedy their lack of resources right away. I liked that Hugo was an amiable and easy-going fellow - nothing ever seemed to ruffle his feathers. His dedication to his family and even his bratty bride was admirable. I would have liked to spend more time in Hugo's head, and wished that his character had been developed more once the story was established.

Katherine Brooke is an obscenely wealthy heiress to a family with common origins. Her parents are crass and ostentatious, and they are very strict as they have hung their hat on trading Katherine for a title and elevated social standing. When childhood friend Hugo comes back into her life, Katherine views it as the perfect business transaction to get out from under her parents' thumb. Unfortunately, Katherine acts extremely cold and high brow, and I absolutely hated the way she treated Hugo and his family for over half the book. She was such a brat and unlikable in every way. I admit that she was mostly redeemed by the end of the book, but that didn't start until very late, nearly 80% if I remember correctly.

The romance between these two was hot and cold, with more time on the cold and frustrating spectrum than I prefer. Hugo was definitely more committed and caring, and we didn't see the same side of Katherine until tragedy struck. Luckily, the Penhallows made up for Katherine's lack and really kept the plot advancing when I grew tired of Katherine's attitude. I particularly loved their penchant for collecting stray and homely animals, particularly Sir Rodrigo, the featherless parrot. He added a wonderfully light and humorous aspect to the story.

I did enjoy Berne's writing style and all of the other characters besides Katherine, so I will definitely continue reading her in the future. First I must go read the back list from the Penhallow Dynasty as I am just dying to know how the previous couples met and fell in love.

I voluntarily read and reviewed an advanced copy of this book that I received from the publisher, Avon.

Michele says

Actual Rating: 3.5 Stars

See the full review at HarlequinJunkie.com

A spoiled heiress and a self-sacrificing hero were quite the fiery match in *The Bride Takes a Groom*, which was basically a friends to lovers *and* a marriage of convenience trope. After a very rocky beginning, this pair ended things on a wonderfully romantic note with a lovely HEA for all involved.

I'll be honest: even though I loved Lisa Berne's writing style and the overall storyline in this book, I struggled to get through the first half of it because of the heroine, Katherine. Trying to connect with her and make sense of her ever-changing moods was tough at times. I did end up truly liking her by the last third or so of the book thankfully. But Katherine came across as very spoiled, naive and coddled for the most part.

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Lynsay says

Have to admit that I almost didn't finish this book. Katherine was very unlikable in the beginning, so much so that I thought there'd be no redemption for her. Thankfully that wasn't the case. Though I don't think having readers hate the heroine first thing is a great idea.

The book is enjoyable, however I could have done without the random French, as well as going to secondary characters' pov.

Homelessghost says

The story ends with plenty of good fortune and luck. I was also wondering what happened to her family in the end although it didn't seem relevant. Overall, those parts are not that realistic but I'm a sucker for a happy ending and I will never complain about a too happy ending.

Bonus point for hero making sure about consent all the time. I like seeing that change in HR. No more of those "I know you want me and I will make you realize" heroes.

Adria (Musings and Reviews) says

Originally posted on Adria's Musings and Reviews (Blog post MAY have additional content such as playlists, interviews, giveaways, etc).

* A copy of this book was and provided by the publisher via NetGalley/Edelweiss for the purpose of an honest review. All conclusions are my own responsibility and I was not compensated for this review.

What's it About? Katherine Brooke has it all, looks, wealth, and youth but she is still just a pawn in her parents' ruthless plans to marry her off to the nobility. Enter childhood friend Hugo Penhallow. He has a name that is highly respected but his family is facing financial ruin and Katherine sees her chance to be free of her parent's control. She'll marry Hugo for his name and in return he gets her money. It's the perfect business arrangement. Or is it?

Overall reaction to the book? The Bride Takes a Groom is one of those books where a reader will enjoy the plot for the most part but won't particularly like the heroine and maybe even the hero. I fluctuated between "like" and ambivalence with the hero. I flat out disliked the heroine.

Hugo isn't a bad hero; he was just so easy going that he sometimes slipped into the spineless category. I don't think I've ever come across a spineless hero before. I have to say, I don't like it. He just didn't say or do much when it came to Katherine's behavior. I kept waiting for him to just give up on her and find a better woman to build a life with! Ugh, his taste in women had me questioning his intelligence and his self-confidence. His love and patience with his family was what balanced out his more negative traits, making him an okay character in my eyes. I never really felt he was someone that was made for the spotlight; he had more of a secondary character feel to me.

But oh my word but Katherine was the real problem of the story. Super rich and super entitled she was just the worst. She may have had good intentions in some cases, like with her charitable causes but those were always overshadowed by her attitude towards Hugo and his family! Supposedly she and Hugo had been childhood friends but you wouldn't know it by the way she behaved with him. Meanwhile he was all patience, warmth, and affection. I just couldn't understand why this silly pea brained creature was someone who would even be considered a heroine when she was just so frustrating. I'd go as far as to say she was a giant PITA. I would have been happier had she dropped off the face of the earth, leaving Hugo to find someone more worthy of his kind nature.

Needless to say that the romance suffered greatly because of Katherine's idiocy. I never felt their romance really went anywhere beyond lukewarm and that was because of Hugo's overtures. I couldn't cheer for these two as a couple because I just couldn't stand Katherine. Everything suffered because of her.

The Bride Takes a Groom isn't a terrible book though. I enjoyed Lisa Berne's writing style but because of two lackluster characters, one being a brat in need of a good kick in the pants, I don't think I got a really good idea of what this author is capable of. I did feel a little overwhelmed in the very beginning with all the chattering going on with the Penhallows. It felt like a character dump to me.

Click It or Skip It? Skip it. I am anxious to read the previous books in this series simply because I think this is just an unfortunate circumstance where the heroine was someone who should have been run over by a carriage.

Laura the Highland Hussy says

Review posted on Got Fiction?

I know, I know. 1 star. Guys, I never give 1 star to books. Buckle up. It's about to get bumpy.

In this book, Katherine is in a terrible position. Her parents have an obscene amount of money, but money can't buy class, isn't that the saying? Her parents have given her the best education money can buy, but she was caught making out with a teacher, he of course blamed her, and her poor young teenage heart learned that lust is bad (more on this later).

Her parents left her in that boarding school for a long time, so while they are terribly gauche and put on airs, she's very well-mannered. Her parents are trying to marry her off into the peerage so they can finally be

accepted. Katherine has felt as if she's never had any control over her life at all, and she's been so smothered she's about to scream.

Hugo is the eldest in a family of eccentrics, I guess. His family is a house full of nannies. I have no other word for them. They are all immature and ridiculous. His mother was so silly. Just silly. Not a lick of sense amongst them. He's constantly being described as a Greek god, and that was so pointless. Seriously. Once was enough. He's back from the sea, he's in the Navy I believe, and he's decided based on a letter from his mother, that he's going to propose to Katherine. They were neighbors in their youth and he remembers liking her well enough, she has money, he has one of the oldest names in England, so win-win.

Guys.

Katherine sees Hugo and instantly she feels lust. It's uncomfortable, especially as she desires nothing but control, and these feelings for Hugo are uncontrollable. However, she figures she'll ignore it or something. She asks him to marry her for her money, and she'll get freedom and control. They both get their wishes. But...

You know there's a but here, right?

Hugo is super laid back. He recognizes early on that Katherine seems to prize control, so he's okay with her taking over. However, she's just a horrible person. Once they get engaged, she goes to her parents, tells them she'll be getting married, then tells them her monetary demands and basically says peace out, folks. I'm leaving. It's an awkward scene for Hugo, but it shows that Katherine is just...immature and mean. This entire book felt as if everyone was much younger than they truly were.

Now, her parents are supposed to be just horrible, terrible, awful human beings. I saw two very rich middle class parents who wanted the best for their daughter. And yes, they are incredibly gauche and vulgar, and they want to ride Katherine's coattails all the way to London. I get it. They were bad parents. But they weren't evil. They weren't that bad. There's a comeuppance scene for them at the end, and it felt so wrong. Like, they weren't that bad, so why write that scene in. It's supposed to be freeing to Katherine, but yet again, she just comes off spoiled and immature and makes rash decisions.

SPOILERS

This is a terrible romance. It's more a book about Katherine finding herself, and I sure don't like who she is. It took 200 pages for me to DNF, and really I skipped to the end anyway, but Hugo is a side character, a foot note, a cardboard cutout of a hero. He is bland, he has very little in the way of page time, and he by 200 pages in is thinking (even if only for a split second) of hooking up with another woman, and I can't say that I blame him.

Katherine thinks she's acting polished and proper but really comes off constantly as stiff and priggish to everyone. At first, you don't blame her since her upbringing was absolutely horrid, but by 200 pages into a 300 page book, we should see some sort of change. At 2/3 of the way through this book, she should have at least an inkling of who she's becoming. But she's still horrible. And seriously, this far in, there should be a connection between the hero and heroine. This is a book about Katherine trying to figure out who she is now that she's achieved her goal of being free and in control. And Hugo is just along for the ride.

Avoid this book. It's really tedious. The characters are silly and behave much younger than their ages. It's not what I've come to expect from Avon books.

I'd also like to add that I decided to read the first book in this series immediately after to see if I'd have the same problems, and I did. This author is not for me, at all, in any shape way or form. I won't be reading her again.

***ARC courtesy of Avon

Gayner says

This is a book that will make you cry. Two people, one broken in body the other broken in spirit. It starts out with action and ends with love and action. Well worth the read. This is my first time to read anything by Lisa Berne, I'll be looking forward to reading more of her work.

Stacee says

1.5 stars?

I loved the idea of a marriage contract slash childhood friends to more story. I was especially excited after seeing several high reviews already posted. Sadly this one was disappointing.

I didn't like Katherine. She's a spoiled brat and definitely acts like one. I understand that her home life is arguably horrible, but I would have thought it made her nicer towards people, not so hateful. Hugo has potential, but he's so laid back and it came across as not caring about anything. Even when he talks about the things he's passionate about, those feelings didn't come across.

Plot wise, it felt like I was reading 5 different stories. Everything was disjointed and with so many characters and plot points and random POVs scattered about, the story didn't flow. The chemistry was just okay, but I never saw the relationship go from friendship to love. Oh, and the random French words thrown about were quite annoying.

Overall, it had a lot of potential. I liked the synopsis and how Katherine wanted control of her situation. For me, it was a bit of a struggle to read and I'm not sure why I didn't DNF. I will not be reading any others of the series.

Huge thanks to Avon Books for providing the arc free of charge

Debbie says

2.5 stars

I have to admit I really struggled with this book. I picked it up and put it down several times simply because the heroine really rubbed me the wrong way. Katherine has had a tough upbringing, there is no denying that. However, I have to say she is certainly lucky Hugo and his family are so kind hearted to give her a chance

and believe there is something more beneath the surface. I'd have to say with a majority of other people she would have been dismissed as being a royal PITA because wow! Some of the things she says and does would have made me want to slap her. Yes, she has these random grand gestures of charity but still it took a good long while before I even found her tolerable. By the end she definitely made some strides towards likability but it was a little too late and she never endeared herself to me.

Hugo on the other hand was so congenial and took everything in stride that he almost came across as spineless. I wanted to cheer whenever he ever showed a hint of being disgruntled with Katherine's attitude, words and actions because I felt there is a fine line between being easy going and being a door mat.

The storyline itself seemed disjointed as well and a few times it felt like sub-plots were thrown in at random. I think if it had been a little more focused it would have been a enjoyable book because it could have focused more on developing the characters. Unfortunately this book just didn't hit the high notes for me.

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

The Bride Takes a Groom by Lisa Berne is book three in The Penhallow Dynasty series. This is the story of Katherine Brooke and Captain Hugo Penhallow. I have read the previous book but feel you can make this a standalone book if you choose to do so.

Katherine and Hugo once where childhood friends and Katherine loved his family, but then he went off to school and into service. In addition, her father inherited money from the death of her grandfather which set off a chain of events that changed her life. Her family moved into another house, became distance and crew in addition they sent her off to school where she was surrounded by more cruelty. Now they plan to marry her off to a tittle and her life still won't be hers. Hugo was injured during his time in service and now returning home he finds that the money he has been sending back wasn't enough and that his family is in need.

Katherine and Hugo come to understand that they will marry with both getting something out of it...for Katherine, her freedom and Hugo will get her money to help his family. We watch as Katherine starts to become the person she should have been and not the person her cruel parents seem to turn her into.

Really enjoyed this book!

Barbara Rogers says

Series: The Penhallow Dynasty #3

Publication Date: 4/24/18

World's coldest heiress meets world's most likable hero – how in the world can this ever work? It can, and it is lovely to see. This is a well written and well-plotted book with a lovable hero and a heroine you will love to hate – at least for a fair amount of the book.

Hugo Penhallow is a much-loved member of the prestigious Penhallow family. He's not a peer, but his family name is so revered that he might as well be a duke. Hugo's immediate family - mother, sister and three brothers - are impoverished. His father had spent his life on research rather than providing for his family and now things were getting really bad. Hugo, an army captain, was injured in the Americas (Canada) and had to leave the service. He had been sending a portion of his income to his mother and his

cousin Gabriel had also granted Hugo's mother a stipend. Hugo thought that was enough to get by until he got home and saw the state of affairs. Hugo loved his family beyond reason. They were just a loving, caring, involved family – all of them – and Hugo couldn't stand to see them impoverished. It was his responsibility to care for them. Before he'd arrived, he'd already decided to look up Katherine Brooke (a very wealthy heiress) who he remembered fondly from his childhood and ask for her hand in marriage. It would be a marriage of convenience only because he had never fallen in love and just assumed that he never would.

Katherine Brooke hardly remembers her childhood before her father inherited all of her grandfather's wealth. She had closed all of that away. She had been a sweet, loving child who very much enjoyed her closest neighbors – the Penhallow family – especially Hugo. She was bereft when he went away to school and then into the army. Then, her grasping, greedy, social-climbing parents inherited all of her grandfather's wealth - they moved into a newly built garish mansion and Katherine became a pawn. Katherine was constantly belittled by her parents, nothing she ever did was good enough – she had to be absolutely perfect in everything and perfect was defined by her parents. Then she was sent to the most gosh-awful school where they were probably worse than her parents. Some readers have written reviews saying she was spoiled. Well, I don't see it. Yes, she was provided with clothes (which she hated), jewels (which she hated) and all the luxuries. The clothes and jewels weren't of a style she would have preferred and she was denied any of the luxuries that were important to her. She was like a bird in a cage – lovely but denied all freedoms. Her parents were cold, boorish and very unloving – her only use to them was to provide them a social status when she married. All she wanted was to get away – to be alone – and she saw her chance when Hugo Penhallow called at her home.

After Hugo meets Katherine again, he wonders where the lovely little Kate he knew had gone. She had been replaced by a shrew. When she proposes to him, they strike a bargain that can only bring unhappiness to both of them. However – she needs her freedom and he needs her money so they strike the bargain made in hell.

Hugo doesn't change throughout the book. He is always calm, caring, devoted to his family, happy, cheerful, etc. Katherine, however, is like a caterpillar coming out of its cocoon as a lovely butterfly. It takes her a while, it doesn't happen overnight – and she has setbacks along the way, but, in the end, it is a lovely thing. It would have been nice to see a bit of temper from him on occasion - but then -- I guess that wouldn't have been what Katherine needed from him.

This wasn't an 'exciting' book that kept you turning the pages to see what would happen next. There were no real villains (other than her parents) who were trying to create havoc. It also had surprisingly little angst - given Katherine's history. It was a slow and steady read with a constant growth to our heroine.

I particularly liked senor Rodrigo, the parrot. He was delightful and added a nice bit of humor. Another thing I liked was telling part of the story through the family letters. It was lovely to see the inner thoughts of the other family members – particularly the twin boys who were at school.

This book is part of a series, but can easily be read and understood as a stand-alone.

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"I requested and received this e-book at no cost to me and volunteered to read it; my review is my honest

opinion and given without any influence by the author or publisher."

Amandine says

J'ai mis du temps à apprécier Katherine... mais au final, son personnage évolue tant que je suis admirative devant elle. ❤ Hugo m'a beaucoup plu, avec sa patience, son sourire, son attitude simple. ❤ Quoi que leur amour est venu trop soudainement à mon goût, j'ai aimé leur relation. Une fois la confiance installée, ils se soutiennent et s'aiment. ❤

Leah says

2.5 stars? i did like it....but it didnt?

Jessica Grogan says

The first half of this book was excellent which is why I gave it three stars. It went off the rails for the second half, however, and made it a much more tedious read in the end.

The plot in the blurb was resolved around the 40% mark. Part of what kept me reading up to that point was my curiosity as to whether Katherine became a better person or not. I was looking forward to watching Katherine and Hugo get to know each other again and fall in love. Somehow I felt robbed of that.

Katherine is beyond awful at the beginning. She's a complete snob to everyone. But you know what? By the end I found myself liking her much more and realized she didn't truly know who she was either. And I even kind of felt bad for judging her.

Hugo was crazy laid back throughout the entire book and very few things rattled him. And that's about all I really learned about him. That, and the fact he loves his family.

A TON of stuff happened in this book. Unfortunately, this made it seem as if the author just threw a bunch of scenarios into a bowl and then randomly picked one as she went along. I praise her for trying a different formula than H and h meet, conflict happens, conflict resolves but I kind of prefer it. Especially when there are lots of small conflicts that only last a chapter or two before their resolution.

If you love letters written between characters, this book is for you. I happen to love this but there were just too many letters. I got to the point that I was skipping them completely.

Though this wasn't really my cup of tea, I will still read Lisa Berne again.

*I received an eARC from Edelweiss and the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Deana Smiel says

Lisa Berne has a unique style that didn't grate like some stream of bizarre conscience books can. I liked the relationship. Hugo was a man's man but not arrogant or autocratic in any way which I enjoyed. His family is just darling all the way around. I enjoyed this one and while I want to read the next one I don't think I'll go back and read the first two.
