

Chapter One

Never in a million years had Ginny ever thought she would wake up next to a gorgeous hunk of a man like Maximilian Devonshire! Maybe in her dreams, but never in real life. Yet here she was, lying next to a half-naked cowboy—wait a minute! Why was he only half-naked? Oh! And why was she fully dressed? What the... She couldn't remember what had transpired to bring about this turn of events. She was not sure whether she should be happy, relieved or mortified that she spent the night with Max.

Maximilian was a rancher in her neck of the woods, one that she knew about only from consistent rumors and talk in the small town of Evergreen, Wyoming. He had to be at least ten years her senior, and very rich and powerful. They didn't exactly travel in the same circles.

He was six-foot, eight inches of pure male, a bulky, gorgeous specimen of a man. Dark wavy hair fell just above dark brows, framing eyes as blue as the deepest ocean, and a smile that could light up a room, or so she'd been told, but... he also broke hearts for breakfast.

They had never actually met, let alone slept in the same bed together! Sitting up, Ginny rubbed the sleep from her eyes, trying to remember the night before. It was the Fourth of July picnic, with mounds of food, a chili cook-off, pies, cakes, cookies and every tasty morsel from within a hundred miles. She'd eaten until she hurt, danced until her feet were aching, and drank glass after glass of that delicious lemonade. Could the lemonade have been spiked? She couldn't remember anything after that—dancing, drinking lemonade—then nothing until she woke up next to the infamous Maximilian Devonshire.

Ginny was not the type to drink until she blacked out, waking up in a stranger's bed—not the type at all. Just the opposite; she despised that type of woman. She was a woman of substance, working her ranch alongside the men, holding the place together with stubborn pride and never admitting defeat. She had no room in her life for dalliances, or for tall, dark strangers who would wreak havoc on her well-planned life.

She had to flee; she had to get out without being discovered. Looking around, trying desperately to find her bearings, she slowly swung her feet over the side of the bed, taking care

to be quiet and not disturb the sleeping hunk next to her. Finally succeeding, she bent to look under the bed for her shoes. She just about jumped out of her skin when he reached out and grabbed her hand. Screaming, she tried to pull away and run, but he held tight.

"If I was going to hurt you, darlin', I had plenty of time to do it while you were passed out in my bed."

Ignoring the fact that he was right, she indignantly spat back at him, "Don't call me, darlin' and let go of my arm. I don't know how I ended up here, or what you have planned in that devious mind of yours, but you can forget it. I don't sleep around, or mess around, and I don't appreciate having my drink spiked. You got me drunk so you could ensnare me."

That gorgeous hunk had the audacity to laugh! A deep throaty laugh, showing her a set of perfect white teeth, lips that were made for kissing, and the sexiest dimple on his left cheek. Rolling onto his back, he put his arms behind his head, and stared up at her, giving her a full view of his large, tanned bare chest. A line of hair went from his chest down and continued under his jeans. Uncomfortable and mortified that she was staring, she closed her mouth and turned around to grab her shoes and leather jacket.

"Darlin', I can assure you that I didn't lay a hand on you last night—well, unless you count being carried and put to bed, or me taking off your jacket and shoes. I'll admit to that. You were drunk and all your dirty dancing was getting the cowhands riled up. I had to remove you before things got out of control, that's all. You wouldn't tell me where you lived, you were belligerent, rowdy, and at the risk of being arrested, so I brought you to my place. It's that simple."

Turning on him with all of the venom she could project in her eyes, Ginny started chucking things at him; first one shoe, then the other, then her jacket, hurling insults as she threw. "I was not drinking anything but lemonade. Someone spiked it, probably you trying to get me drunk. I assure you, I wouldn't know how to dirty dance if I tried, you goddamned, sorry son-of-a-bitch! Apparently, you are the one I needed to be saved from, not any riled-up cowhands. I didn't end up in their beds, did I?"

Stomping toward the bedroom door with all the dignity she could muster, her head throbbing, and not a clue where she was or how she would get home, she tried to put up a good front. That was until she saw a hulking mass of chest hair in front of her face, blocking her

dignified exit. Having no choice but to stop to avoid running into him, she gritted her teeth and said, "Excuse me, I wish to leave now."

"Aren't you forgetting something?"

Bewildered for a second, she realized that she had thrown her shoes and jacket at him, and she hadn't yet found her all her things. "What have you done with my phone and keys? Give them to me now; I want to leave. You are keeping me here against my will and I will file charges. I swear I will."

"That is about all the abuse I am going to take from you, little Miss Princess. You better start apologizing for hurling insults and objects at me, or so help me, you're in for a rude awakening."

"Apolo—to you? For what? For kidnapping me? You've got to be kidding me! I would sooner eat dirt than apologize to you, and you have three seconds to let me pass or I start screaming at the top of my lungs."

"Go ahead and scream. Scream all you want; no one can hear you. We are a hundred miles away from anyone, and all my help is off for the weekend."

Suddenly feeling very small and insignificant, Ginny started to back away, looking for a place to run, or something to hit him over the head with.

"How about that apology now, darlin'?"

"I told you to stop calling me darling, and get away from me! People are out looking for me right now. They will know you took me from the dance. Someone had to have seen you take me away. Every second you keep me here against my will you are risking being arrested, losing this house and all that you own."

"Hmm, I think you need to try that again. That wasn't a proper apology at all."

"I have nothing to apologize for. You should be apologizing to me. Now, get the hell out of my way!" She charged full force into him trying to knock him out of the doorway. She regretted it the minute she collided with that hard body and almost knocked the air out of herself. She staggered back until he caught her, his arms locked around her back, trapping her effectively against his chest.

Fighting for her life now, Ginny kicked, head-butted, bit, kned, and screamed at the top of her lungs, only to be turned around and wrapped more tightly in his arms, where she had less access to his private parts. He held her tight against his chest, put his mouth close to her ear, and

ordered her to stop screaming or she'd have hell to pay. Ginny screamed louder and fought harder, making direct contact with his chin with the back of her head, leaving her head stinging and throbbing. She just hoped that it hurt him even more than it hurt her.

Her feet left the floor as he hefted her up and turned her around and over his thigh. Not sure what he had planned and not anxious to find out, Ginny continued to kick and scream to no avail. He had her bent over his knee, which he had propped up on a wooden chest at the foot of the bed. She was hanging precariously with her head facing the floor, her hands trapped in his grasp at the small of her back, her feet dangling off the ground, and her ass facing upwards. This was not a good position to be in at any time, but especially not in a stranger's bedroom with no one around to come to her aid. Realizing that maybe she should reconsider her approach to the situation, she thought briefly about pleading with him to let her go, but her pride once again got in her way and instead she started hurling insults and cussing up a blue streak.

Thwack! That shut her up—for a second! But mostly it just made her angrier and more fluent in the language of insults and swearing. "Ow, stop that. Stop hitting me. Damn you!" He spanked her ass harder with each smack. She couldn't believe how much it hurt—both her pride and her bottom! "Let me go this instant you son-of-a-bitch, you bastard, I mea—Ow! Let me go! You have no right to touch me! I'm going to call the police the second I am out of here."

It went on for what seemed to be an eternity, her hurling insults and threats; him quiet, but keeping up a steady rhythm of swats to her burning ass. His hand was as hard as steel, bringing immense pain with each new swat to her cheeks, first one cheek, then the other, sometimes right in the middle covering both cheeks.

Finally, when she could no longer take the pain and she felt like she had lost the battle, she decided to try talking to him, reasoning with him. "Max, please stop spanking me. Can we talk like two adults?"

"Go ahead and talk, darlin'. I'll stop after I've heard an acceptable apology, and after I feel you've been punished enough." The brutal spanks continued, coming even faster now.

"Okay, okay, please stop. I'm sorry, please—ow! That hurts so much! I can't take any more, please stop."

"Still not good enough. Try again."

"Noooo! Please, no, I'm sorry, Max—for throwing things, for yelling at you, and even for biting you. Please stop spanking me. Ow!"

"And?" The barrage continued.

What the hell could she have forgotten? At this point she'd have apologized for being born. "And for head butting you... Owie! Please, just stop. Please, please, I'm sorry and I will never do anything like that ever again."

"And?"

"And I don't know what else. I can't think; it hurts so much. Please just... just stop!"

"How about for accusing me of getting you drunk, kidnapping you, lying, hurling insults and swearing at me? Hmm? I think that calls for another kind of punishment altogether."

"Please, you have punished me enough. I am sorry, so sorry about everything."

He was merciless. He only stopped momentarily and she started to relax, to catch her breath only to feel panic well up in her throat as he rubbed his hand up her legs, pulling her skirt up along with it. She started kicking and struggling anew, pleading and begging him to stop.

He ignored her once again. "I think you need to learn a few more lessons before I am done punishing you, little one."

"No, please! I have learned. I will never throw things, hit, scratch, bite, cuss or any of the other things you said, please no more!"

She believed that no punishment could have been worse than lying over a perfect stranger's knee, skirt up around her waist, legs dangling with her ass burning from being spanked—until she discovered that there was more, he had even more devious things planned for her.

She felt his large, warm hand cover her cheek and slide its way under her panties, rubbing both her cheeks in a circular motion. "Max, please stop, don't do this please. I beg you, please stop. I've been punished more than I've ever been punished in my life. I've learned my lesson, ten times over. Please, no more."

"I can tell by your red, burning ass that you have been punished, but I think you need a little more before I can accept your apology. Now be a good little girl and keep begging my forgiveness, and apologizing to me. Are you sorry?" he asked, all the while rubbing in circular motions.

"Yes, I am sorry."

"How sorry?"

"I'm as sorry as I've ever been for anything in my whole life."

"And?"

"And I beg your forgiveness, please."

"Okay, I think you deserve at least twenty more good smacks, then we'll see if we are done."

"Please, Max. I don't think I can take anymore of this."

"I want you to remember each one of these smacks to your ass. Don't ever assault my character again. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, I will remember—you don't need to spank me anymore. I won't assault your character or your body ever again, you taught me that."

"Oh, but I must. I can't let you off that easy, darlin'."

"What? Easy? There is nothing easy about the way you spanked me. Please, no more. It hurts so much."

"It is a punishment. It is supposed to hurt, so you will remember it."

"I will, I promise you that! That is the worst licking I ever got in my life, and I used to get them quite a lot from my papa."

"I bet you did. Now, I'm going to pull these sexy, lacy panties down around your knees and spank that red ass until I feel you've been punished enough. Do you understand?"

"No! You can't! Not my panties. Please, not my panties. I have been punished enough. Please... no more."

Her pleas fell on deaf ears, it seemed, as his hand caressed her hot cheeks. Then, he started pulling her panties down, her struggles only assisting him in getting them down faster.

"I will tell you why you are being punished while I spank you, then you will see why I am not done yet."

"Please, Max, no!"

"Yes, little one, yes. I will make this sting more than the last time. This spanking on your bare ass will be hard and fast, and not soon forgotten. Are you ready for the first twenty?"

"No!"

"Okay, here we go, count them for me."

She said nothing. Even after two hearty spansks, her silence continued.

"They don't count if you don't say it out loud." Another and another fell.

"One! Please st—" Smack. "Two, please!" Smack. "Three, ow pleas—" Smack. "Four, Max, pl—" And so it went until he reached twenty, no amount of begging or pleading would deter him from his task.

"I told you that you were dirty dancing and getting the cowhands all riled up." The whole time he kept up a steady rhythm of smacks. "You threw your shoes at my head and accused me of lying and getting you drunk. That is an assault on my character, and an insult to me—especially after I saved you from a bunch of horny, lonely, rowdy cowboys." Spank after spank emphasized each word.

"Owie... I'm sorry, Max, truly I am. I see now that you did save me. You only had my best interest at heart. I was drunk, but I wasn't drinking anything but lemonade. Oh, I must have been out of my head, I really don't know how to dirty dance—I promise you." Fiery spank after spank continued. "Please stop, it hurts. I am a good girl, I swear. I don't sleep around. I work hard, avoid men, and stay away from trouble. This has taught me a lesson I will never forget. I will never go to another party—I promise. Please just stop spanking me. I'm begging you, sir."

It must have been the 'sir' that got him, or he finally believed that she was sorry because he stopped spanking and started rubbing in that circular motion which was somehow erotic, especially in this vulnerable position with her ass bared and on display, pointed to the ceiling.

"You're sorry?"

"Yes, sir, I promise you that!"

"You believe me that I wasn't trying to hurt you—I didn't kidnap you. I only brought you here because you were too drunk to drive, I didn't know where you lived, and I didn't trust some of the men to not follow you home.

"Yes, sir, and thank you for saving me. I hope you can forgive me, but waking up the way I did, I was so confused, and didn't remember anything from last night."

"Okay, darlin', I'm going to put you down and we are going to start this morning all over again. We will have some coffee and breakfast, talk and get to know each other."

"Yes, sir, whatever you say."

The second her feet touched the ground, Ginny bent over, grabbing her panties to pull them up, wincing as the lace rubbed over her throbbing cheeks. Gingerly rubbing her behind with both hands, she knew she would not be able to sit on any surface for days.

"The bathroom is through that door, the kitchen is downstairs and to the right of the staircase. Feel free to shower; I suggest rubbing an ample supply of lotion on those red cheeks. I can do that for you if you like."

"No! That's okay, really, thanks for the offer, but I've had enough humiliation to last a lifetime."

"Suit yourself, but it will help soothe the pain. Everything you need is in the bathroom; I'll go get breakfast started." Turning to leave, he had a thought, "Don't think about leaving, you would be lost for weeks just on my property. It spans hundreds of miles."

"I won't try. I don't know where I am, plus I wouldn't dare anger you again. I couldn't take another second of that pain."

"Good girl, glad we understand each other."