

the mixture of pleasure and pain

by Jerry Ratch

Then there was Allison, my “assistant” at this small college in the middle of the cornfields of Illinois where I taught for one year from 1970 to 1971. She was short with luscious curls of reddish-brown hair, and a burst of baby fat and freckles in her cheeks. Freckles scattered themselves over her arms and chest, stopping just below her breasts. There was something childlike about her. She was definitely not a woman of the world yet. She came from a farm outside St. Louis where her father raised horses for riding and lambs for eating. She'd been riding horses more or less from the day she was born. She had lambs for pets.

But Allison was so tight, poor thing, that it was a little like having sex with a virgin every time we did it. I could never understand how she could bear so much pain. I guess it was the mixture of pleasure and pain that kept her going, or maybe she was practicing to have children. And for birth control she only used a diaphragm and contraceptive cream. So I suppose there was some possibility that she could have gotten pregnant. The last time we saw each other was after a month-long road trip in a red, white and blue Pepsi van out to California, where we ended up in Laguna Beach. (We took tons of chances without her diaphragm on that road trip!) Then she returned to her family farm in Missouri, and we never saw each other again, after a year of pretty much non-stop, painful sex. Well, painful for her. For me, just a little awkward. Nobody likes hurting their lover, all the time.

