

On Display

by Paul de Denus

We ride up in the company truck, an uncomfortable jaunt in the boxed-in cab, the empty cargo bay banging away carrying only a toolbox and a bag of wigs. We have two stores to visit, one in Napa, the other in Sonoma and both include a change of clothing. Richard gets me started, tells me to undress the two women mannequins in the storefront window with instructions to leave their blouses on because he doesn't want to hear any complaints of naked boobies from some dusty spinster passing on the street. He then disappears into the store to find the next hideous fun-fashion for these two street watchers to wear.

The windows are tight and stifling, oven-hot from the combination of the sun and display lighting. The sweat has already begun to drip down my frozen face as I nervously wait for Richard to return. The two bald mannequins with Mona Lisa smiles stare absently out onto the street, both naked from the waist down, their blouses unbuttoned, each open side draped strategically over nonexistent nipples while I pose red-faced and dripping in the corner, awkwardly groping their skirts, high-heels and jewelry. Several people stop and peer in through the glass, curious to this stiff threesome set provocatively on display.

