

STRIP OF A LIFETIME

IT WAS ALL A LAUGH TO BEGIN WITH, BUT AS **IVAN SMITH** DISCOVERED, A WEEKEND AT A NUDIST RESORT IS FULL OF DODGY, DANGLY BITS

WARNING:

in the next few pages I am going to be naked. This is unpleasant for all of us, so I want you to imagine a big bunch of flowers hovering around my middle. They can be whatever flowers you like.

Just like mad scientists and Iraqi dictators, nudists (or "naturists", depending how much you want to dress it up) just want to be left alone to do their own thing. With River Island Nature Retreat, they've succeeded.

River Island is located in a hidden valley up a rough track, 40km north-west of Mittagong, NSW. Never mind nudism: they could be breeding a race of giant mole men here and no-one would know. Not until it was too late, anyway.

I've picked this resort for two reasons, the first of which is image. Part of the trouble with nudism is that the wrong people do it. If you go to the average nudie beach, the last thing you're going to see is Elle Macpherson playing in the surf, bits out. No, you're going to see two fat blokes playing frisbee.

And they won't be young fat blokes, either; they'll be ageing flower children of the mid-'60s, who still think the best way to rebel and drop out is to show everyone their old feller. Take that, Mum and Dad. The frisbee thing probably came later.

I call the office of naturist mag *Australian Sun and Health* to ask them where the young people are. River Island, I am told, is where I might find "that kind of thing". He sounds suspicious, as though the place might really be a front for giant mole men.

The other reason I'm here is because it isn't actually a club, unlike a lot of others. This means that I can drop in at any time and top up my nudity without being bothered by a billion rules and regulations. Like a lot of "anti-establishment" organisations, the nudists can be as uptight as anyone else (I once crossed the Anti-Nazi League and regretted it, and don't mess with Greenpeace).

In my search for a suitable "clothes-free environment", I uncover (sorry) many

Two small snags spoiled their enjoyment

