



sort of pleasure through my work really thrilled me!

"If I could have slammed my front door and walked all over L.A. without anybody recognising me, I'd have been disappointed as hell! Yet there were days when I thought — and said — that this was how I'd like things to be! And, when I said and thought that, I can honestly tell you that I believed it!

"Sure, it's nice to have some peace and quiet . . . But it's even nicer to be given proof that there are thousands of folks in the world who love you and who are willing to give up their time in the hope of seeing you.

"Recently, I've been lucky, because I've managed to retain some privacy without withdrawing from the world of concerts and movies. And it'll be just great if I can keep it that way."

But what if he ever had to choose between the two? I wondered.

"Oh, I don't know . . . I can't speak for the future. You know, something might arise that would change my point of view completely. And I'm afraid that I can't predict the future with any accuracy!

"But I can certainly say that — any time up to now — I'd have chosen to keep the success, unless I'd felt that I might be hurting someone else or endangering my own health by doing that.

How would you like to go to a college
and find a guy like David in your class?

"That was why I kind of went into retreat at the beginning of this year . . . Because I badly needed some time to refuel. But I always planned on coming back and taking up where I'd left off. It was certainly never a case of 'dropping-out', like some folks reported it."

So could David honestly say that he had *no* regrets? Did he feel that there was *nothing* he'd missed out on through being a superstar?

He thought for a moment before answering:

NO REGRETS

"No, I've no regrets. How could I have, when I've gotten all the success I ever dreamed of — and a whole lot more besides!

"And I figure I don't really have the right to complain about missing out on *anything* when I've been so lucky and there are folks in the world who have missed out on just about *everything!*"

Still, when pushed, David did admit that he could think of one or two things: "Like romance, I guess. Which probably sounds crazy coming from a guy who gets hundreds of love letters each week! But I'm talking now about the romance between two people who love and care for each other . . . Who want to share everything and devote their whole lives to one another.

"The way my life is right now I don't have either the time or the emotional resources going spare for that kind of relationship. But I still have faith that the time

will come. And, by then, I hope that I'll know enough about loving to make that relationship a fuller and more wonderful one for the girl and for me too."

David mentioned something else. And again he was a bit worried that it might sound crazy.

"In a strange sort of way I miss the fun of being poor," he told me. "Sure, I love being able to buy the things I want and need. I've got a fantastic house, an outta-sight car, some really beautiful horses — all things that I could never have had if I'd stayed on the bread-line!

"But, even so, I sometimes look back on the old days with a kind of regret. You get a sort of kick out of knowing that you've only got a dollar to last you through the week — and somehow managing to pull through. You get to be very resourceful in inventing substitutes for all the things you can't afford . . . Like furniture and entertainment, for instance.

"And now I sometimes catch myself wishing that I couldn't get everything quite so easily!

"There is a very narrow-line," he went on, "between you staying in control of your own success, or that success taking you over and smashing you. That's a heavy price to pay, because then you lose everything . . . Success, happiness, and — most important of all — your self-respect.

"So far I think I can say that I've managed to keep on the right side of that line.

"And that's how I'd like to stay."