

THE DAVID CASSIDY STORY

PART 54

By the end of 1971 David was feeling highly satisfied with the way his career seemed to be developing. But he was also feeling absolutely shattered! Exhaustion laid him open to any and every germ that came his way, which didn't cheer him up any. And he was due to make his first visit to Great Britain early in 1971—February to be precise.

Clearly something had to be done if he wasn't to be driven right into the ground. "The Partridge Family" had quit filming for the season, leaving David without any definite commitments until his British dates. Of course, he could easily have found a million and one things to fill in the intervening couple of months . . . magazines were clamouring for interviews and photos, left right and centre. But David had given up the last year of his life to these folks, and he reckoned that he was about due for a break from it all—if only to preserve his sanity!

So it was decided that he should go on a long vacation. On his own. That caused a few arguments! Since The Partridge Family had been on the air, David had hardly stepped out of his house on his own . . . and now he was suggesting—even insisting—that he should go for a six week vacation completely alone! At first everyone—his manager included—opposed the idea. Suppose someone recognised David, spread the word around and he got mobbed? There'd be no army of friends and security men to fight them off . . . But, as David pointed out, the surest way of attracting

attention would be to arrive at his chosen destination armed to the teeth and with a false moustache! He'd learned that lesson earlier in his career.

His sensible arguments convinced everybody in the end. He was to go alone, free to drive wherever he fancied—just like any ordinary American tourist. And, with a bit of luck, everybody would accept him as such, especially in Italy where he wasn't quite so well known as in the U.S.A. or Britain.

All plans were kept absolutely secret. No hints were given to the press, though some guesses were made. But to all callers David was just 'out of town for a while'.

At last he was free!

FREEDOM

Occasionally he made contact with Ruth Arons and Jim Flood, then his publicist, back in Hollywood. After all, he realised that they might be worried and want confirmation that he was still alive from time to time. But, apart from that, he could be entirely selfish and just think about what *he* wanted to do for a while.

This sense of freedom was almost a holiday in itself: "I guess I'd almost forgotten what it was like to be alone," he commented. "I'd gotten used to being surrounded by folks most everywhere I went, except the john! Sure, they were all folks who were trying to be helpful and look after me. But it doesn't take long for that kind of treatment to get to feel kind of claustrophobic," he smiled. "And it was great to know that the initiative lay with me for a while . . . I could pick up with folks if I liked, or I could just carry on by myself, secure in the knowledge that no well-meaning person would intrude."

