



But, as it turned out, it wasn't the well-meaning sort that David had to worry about.

He'd arranged to hire a Volkswagen camper 'bus', as he termed it, and had only just picked it up in Rome when someone 'intruded' in the very worst way possible . . . A thief broke in and stole David's passport, his camera, his driving licence and a hefty wad of travellers' cheques! Of course, he was insured. But still it seemed for a moment as though Fate was refusing to leave him alone. Even the holiday he'd been

looking forward to so much had to start off on a bad footing.

But, although David was naturally a little depressed when it actually happened, he soon managed to put all that behind him and turn his attention to the beauties of Italy. "I'd had an itch to travel Europe since I was quite a kid," he confessed, "So I was all ready to be impressed. And I sure was!"

One place that won his heart entirely was

Cortina d'Ampezzo, a little village in the Italian Alps where he settled for all of two weeks and got himself into skiing—a sport he's been crazy for ever since.

But for much of the time he was on the move, staying overnight in small, intimate, off-the-beat inns. In fact, he managed to live more cheaply than any time since he'd been an out of work actor!

"The inns were comfortable, the food magnificent—and all for three dollars a day!" he pointed out triumphantly. As well as Italy, he also managed to see something of France and Switzerland, and his only big disappointment throughout his travels was Paris. Of course, he wasn't there in Spring time, but David figured that there was more than the season to blame for his instinctive dislike:

"Somehow it didn't seem a genuine place," he explained. "I'm not one for big cities anyhow, but I felt even more than usual that Paris was putting up a front, that it was all one big façade and that, however long I stuck around, I'd never become a part of that set up. I guess it just wasn't my style."

HITCH —HIKERS

So there was no temptation to linger in Paris, and in the main David kept pretty well on the move. But, if ever the road seemed to be getting rather long and lonely, he'd stop and pick up some friendly looking hitch-hikers and they'd maybe all shack up in the same place that night.

"The most I ever picked up together must've been ten," he laughed, "and then the springs on the bus started to creak so I reckoned I'd best call a halt! With any more the sides would have started to bulge!"

While David was making new friends on the road and gliding down snowy Alpine slopes with ever-increasing proficiency, preparations were in full swing for his imminent arrival in London. Jim Flood was going to be over in London to meet him off the plane; meanwhile Caroline Feiffer was fixing up for him to stay somewhere.

On all later visits hotels were going to present an insuperable problem, but at this stage David wasn't quite the household name he was to become all too soon in Britain. Back in 1972 there were still a lot of people around who were asking: "David Cassidy? Never heard of him. Who on earth is he anyway?"

As it turned out, the Dorchester Hotel were in

much the same position . . . Of course, they knew who he was, but they were under the impression that very few other people in England knew much about him. So they were expecting a nice quiet time. They had no idea at all what they were letting themselves in for when they took a booking for Mr. Cassidy of a first floor suite of rooms overlooking the Park.

All too soon they were going to find out!

Even David was taken by surprise when he found such an ecstatic welcoming party at the airport. He'd boarded the plane in Rome on the afternoon of Saturday 5th February, feeling just a little bit sad that his vacation and the wonderful freedom he'd found were coming to an end.

Also he was a bit nervous. After all, he was supposed to be making some public appearances in Britain and promoting his records, but he could hardly believe that many people over here would be that interested in him, and he was rather worried that something might flop, or that he wouldn't live up to expectations or something.

So, as the plane touched down, his stomach was a mixture of excitement and horrifyingly active butterflies. He'd expected to carry on his rôle as 'ordinary tourist' in London just the same as in Italy. But, as he was about to step off the plane, he found himself shepherded along by security police and he got the news about all the fans who were crowding around outside in the hope of glimpsing their idol.

The police were very sensibly worried about possible trouble, and even injury, if the girls actually caught sight of David, so they'd laid plans to smuggle him out of a side entrance straight into a waiting car.

They carried out their plan—to the shattering disappointment of hundreds of loyal and patient fans. But not before some of the girls had fleetingly seen a pair of shaggy, furry boots, looking to all the world like a couple of polar bear cubs . . . on the feet of David Cassidy. He had arrived. He was in London. In the flesh. And, in spite of all their disappointment, for the moment that was enough.



DON'T MISS PART 55
OF THE DAVID CASSIDY STORY
WHICH WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE
MAY ISSUE OF

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