

more likely that there's a message in the music for them, even if they couldn't make a literal translation of the lyrics in a thousand years!

I wonder how I got myself onto this track anyhow? Oh, yeah, I remember . . . I was telling you about last year in Italy.

Well, we used to have these music sessions in the evenings when we'd come back in off the slopes and had dinner. We'd all gather round with a big, blazing fire glowing, and it came to be a sort of custom that I'd start off the music by giving them some songs and playing my guitar.

That really gave me a thrill. And it was a kind of thrill that's been shut off from me most times for the last few years. Of course, in itself it couldn't compare with the exhilaration I get from playing a vast hall thronged with folks who've come — maybe a hundred miles — to hear my music. That sure is a wonderful sensation, I can tell you! And I guess there can't be anything to touch it in its own way, in the whole world.

But Italy was wonderful in a different way. It was all so intimate and relaxed. My name meant nothing to those people there, so I had nothing to live up to . . . I didn't feel any responsibility to them. I could try out improvising something new and, if it went wrong, I could just shrug my shoulders and smile and we moved on to something else.

JUST PLAIN DAVID

Another thing was that, when I got friendly with people and they were nice and friendly right back. I never had that nagging doubt at the back of my mind about whether they really did like me or not! You've just got no idea how refreshing that was! To feel that I was wanted and liked, simply for what I was as a person rather than because I was David Cassidy, an international star.

Of course, I don't spend my whole life testing out my friends and being suspicious of people — don't think that! I've gotten a whole lot of close friends back in L.A. and the States generally who are great people and who I can relax with completely in just the same way.

But I can tell you this: you only have to sell a few million records to realise how

shallow some folks' ideas of friendship are!

Talk about trying to get back to the point! I'm not sure I ever did *have* a point in this letter to get back to! But I guess that's partly what I like about letters . . . You can ramble along and nobody can criticize you; because, after all, a letter's a personal way of talking to somebody you can't be with in person. And it's a cinch that, if I was *talking* to you right now, I sure wouldn't be keeping to the point anyhow! So, who cares?

What I think I was gradually making my way around to saying was that I finally *did* make up my mind to go over to Italy again. Well, I've only recently gotten back here to L.A.

INDECISION

But now I've told you a bit about last year's vacation there, I guess you can maybe understand why I was split two ways about it for a while. It had all been so perfect that I was afraid of bursting the bubble. It would have been so much worse to be miserable some place where I'd got happy memories than to be miserable somewhere it didn't matter.

Well, I thought all this over and weighed it up and the Italian magnet turned out to be too strong for all my doubts!

That was when I half decided to spend Christmas snow skiing in Italy. But then that had to fall through, and I sort of resigned myself to 'no Italy' for a while yet.

I stayed around in California, doing exciting things like catching 'flu and — of course — getting my group together for my concert tour in Europe.

I thought it would take me an awful lot longer than it actually did to shape up the group and a new stage routine. Of course, it was a big help that I've worked with the guys before, so all the basics could go without saying.

Even so, we worked real hard for a couple of weeks after Christmas. And it was soon obvious to me that the big danger wasn't that we wouldn't be ready in time, but that we'd have maybe gotten a bit stale if we didn't take a break pretty soon!

But now I guess I'd better get me right back to working on the programmes we've got lined up for you.

