

DAVID GRIES OUT:

Why Do You Hate Me?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

David put the letter down. His hands seemed to tremble a little as he picked up the cup of coffee from the table.

He didn't usually drink coffee, but now he felt he needed the bittersweet warmth it offered. He set the coffee down softly but kept his hands cupped around the ceramic mug. He wanted to draw its warmth into his body to erase the chill he had felt since he read the letter.

With a deep sigh, he rubbed his forehead, trying to think of a way he could talk to the girl who had written the poison pen letter. He had so much to tell her—so much of the truth!

Why did people always accept others by what appeared on the surface? He had learned, through his own experiences, that a person should wait and find out all the facts of a situation before condemning a person. Why, then, did a fan who was once loyal and loving suddenly decide he was a conceited person not worth knowing or caring about?

He stood up and walked to the stove. As he poured more of the hot dark cof-



fee into his cup, he tried to remember exactly what happened that night she said she had waited for him.

The concert had been a good one. The audience, as always, was terrific and gave David a tremendous feeling of love and affection for each person who was there. He hated to see the concert end, even though his own body

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and voice were tense with exhaustion.

As he had taken his final bow, he was suddenly whisked off-stage by the security guards that seemed to be everywhere. They slipped out a side door and found their way safely back to his hotel. They always did this because they were afraid that the fans might have been too excited to act calmly if David appeared at the exit.

Everyone realized how much David wanted to meet his audience but there had been too many incidents in the past when girls had fainted in the excitement and been trampled by others trying to touch him. There had even been times when fights had broken out as girls tried to be the one to reach him first.

He knew it was all true. But how could he convince the letter-writer of this? How could he tell her that because he loved his fans and was concerned with their safety, he had allowed the guards to sneak him out that night as they did at every concert?

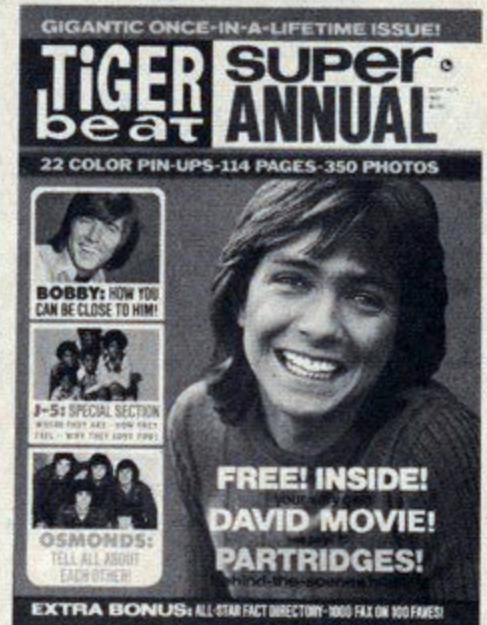
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