

ballyhoo—he just disappeared. Suddenly there were no more records and, surprisingly for a man who had only months before been so incredibly popular, no one seemed to care. Then came what David calls his thawing out period—“when I became human again”.

He spent a considerable amount of time touring the world, seeing all the things he had missed when he'd been surrounded by security men. He took care to disguise himself—wearing glasses, tucking his hair into a cap, and dressing sloppily. It worked because for much of the time he travelled unrecognised.

He didn't listen to the radio, he didn't buy one record, he avoided any club or bar where there might be any sort of music being played. He ignored his guitar and he didn't sing a note. He did anything to avoid music.

“I just knew that I wasn't happy emotionally. I'd had five or six years with absolutely no loving relationships, and I knew that wasn't right. I didn't know what it was like to be in love, or how it would feel, I just knew that I wasn't whole and that I had a passion for romance and no chance of fulfilling it.

“In fact that got me into trouble, and since then I've had my heart trodden on a couple of times. But that's all part of growing up. I've just been going through what men

go through when they're ten years younger. Now I've caught up.”

One of the more unfortunate things David fitted into his thawing out period was getting married to beautiful actress Kay Lenz. Even though their relationship dragged on for three years, he now admits that it was doomed. “I was going through so much and changing so many times, she couldn't possibly understand what was going on, and

**“After years without music I heard a Police record, and it made me feel that I was 16 again”**

neither did I for that matter. It's only in the last couple of years that I've settled—I'm like another person.

“Looking back to those early days, is like looking back to another life, as though I was someone else. It's like I was an actor throwing an enormous party for all those people. I was just lucky that I didn't choose drugs as a way out from those problems, otherwise I could have easily been on the casualty list like so many of my friends.”

What changed everything for a second time in his life came when he turned on the car radio a couple

of years ago and heard a record by The Police. “It was so exciting, it made me feel that I was 16 again. After years being without music, I was suddenly in love with it again. I suppose I'd also become bored... after all, your mid-20s is very young to retire, and I didn't have anything to do except thaw out, and I'd finished that.”

David's way back was rather tentative, firstly playing guitar and singing to himself at his ranch near Santa Barbara in California, where he breeds thoroughbred racehorses. Then he did some straight acting in small theatres around the States, and a couple of TV movies. When he took the lead in *Joseph And The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* on Broadway, it was the first time he had sung on stage for six years.

“It was so exciting,” he recalls, “it was just like starting all over again.” As a result, David is now doing what he would have regarded as quite unthinkable only a couple of years ago—making a comeback as a pop singer. His latest single, *The Last Kiss*, has just been released, to be followed by an album in the spring and possibly some concerts.

Normally, the sound of artists going on about their latest music is fairly nauseating. They always claim that it's the best thing they've done, even if it's only fit for the dustbin. Nevertheless, there's something irresistibly infectious about the way

David talks about his music. You know that he's gone through a heck of a lot to get where he is now.

“Some of my friends have said that I'm mad to get into it all over again for a second time. They tell me that I'm playing with fire and that the same thing could happen a second time—that I could have spent all that time and yet find myself back where I started.”

Frankly, this seems unlikely. After all, the name of David Cassidy no longer sends girls into ecstasy—there's a whole bunch of new names now—and he's been away long enough to let those memories fade into oblivion. Significantly, throughout our meeting in the reception of London's Savoy Hotel, no one asked for his autograph.

But then it's true that a couple of hits could quickly change all that. After all, the looks are still there, not to mention the know-how of a star who can whip an audience into hysterics simply by undoing one button of his shirt. If it does happen, then David insists that he'll be able to cope without too much difficulty.

“This time I'll be in control, I'll take care of my business. There won't be people telling me what I will and will not be doing. I will be in charge of everything, even my merchandising. This time, I'll make sure that if they have a photo of me on a cornflakes packet, then at least it'll be a nice one!”