

THE SADNESS BEHIND DAVID CASSIDY'S SMILE

was just after the first show in Manchester of David's Spring trip to country. At last, the few remaining I had been ushered from the hall, my eyes red from crying and the draining excitement of seeing David Bruce Cassidy, the boy of their dreams, in the flesh. For just under an hour David had given an unbelievable performance on stage . . . a twisting . . . singing . . . singing figure so near yet far away from the outstretched pleading hands of his audience. Now was dripping with perspiration . . . his hair plastered as he dried himself with a towel amidst the many people who travel with him on these tours. He is tired . . . he was shaken and he was awfully nervous at the hysteria he'd witnessed from his British fans out there.

"Sometimes it just gets too much," he confessed. "It's great to see all the enthusiasm but really I worry so much that someone will get hurt." His finely sculpted features looked even more drawn than when I had last seen him in the States and he was quite openly showing the strain of too many nights, too much travel, too many obligations. There are many people close to David who worry about him a lot. I wonder if even his fans know just how close David is to the point of total physical collapse - and all because he wants to please the people who had made him a star. The answer is very clear and David ought to act on it - *slow down or he might really be in trouble later on!* To understand the sadness and the insecurities that surround David you really have to go back to his childhood. Born into a showbusiness family - his father was a well known actor, Jack Cassidy - David pretty soon caught the acting bug that hits so many kids of famous show folk in Hollywood. At the tender age of five his young world was cruelly torn apart . . . his father and mother divorced. Bewildered and shattered, he went overnight from a normal little boy to a young boy with adult responsibilities.

One moment he was a carefree, ideal stage struck boy who looked up to his mother and father and the next was being told that his father no longer loved his mother, that they were splitting and that, worse still, his father had found another woman to love more. It was all more than a tough on a small boy of five years . . . The years passed and David's stepmother, Shirley Jones, then a big musical star tried patiently and quietly to heal the rift in David's life . . . to mend up the relationship he'd once shared with his father and to in some way compensate for David's earlier

nightmares. Later, there were to be other tragedies in his life . . . however small. Childhood illnesses . . . both scary and confusing . . . doctors . . . more doctors . . . and all the while a strange hardening of David's nature as though to protect himself from any further hurt he was growing an invisible shell around him that said *keep-out . . . stay away . . . I don't need you . . . I can manage . . . I want to make it on my own.*

With the boy becoming a man the shell and the resolution grew even more strong. David had few people he could really trust . . . could really confide in . . . could entrust his badly scarred life to. Ambitiously, he made his way to New York and his first lucky break. He landed a small part in a Broadway production only to have it fold in a matter of days! Later, no less than two of his well loved and adored dogs were to die on him leaving him more desolate and more convinced than ever that he had a jinx following

him that would plague and destroy any small piece of happiness that might come his way . . .

Then came *The Partridge Family* and, as you know, the rest is history. But with the fame and the fortune has come ever new worries . . . greater pressures and more terrible emotional and physical demands on David as a person. The pace that David Bruce Cassidy has set himself is too great for any man and at last even he is beginning to realise it. Never over strong, he is now terrified that his health will give way and that all the work and dedication will have been for nothing. He is plagued by doubts as to his actual work targets. As Keith Partridge in the television series he presents a totally different

picture to his own real life picture. David is now a man and in the show he is still being shown as a boy. This, David feels he can no longer tolerate. Expect soon, as we predicted before, that David may be leaving the series. Expect too, a far different David Cassidy on record. Much closer to his style on *Rock Me Baby* than his style on *Looking Thru the Eyes of Love*. David is fighting and fighting hard to change his image and he crosses his fingers that his fans will understand the reason for that change and not forsake him or reject him.

Let's all try . . . by just loving him that bit more . . . to put some of his fears and torments to rest at last.

