

'The magazines say good things about me—but ugh!'

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Marcus Welby, M.D., two years ago. I think it was the first thing he ever did. The next day I told my people to get on him, and the day after that the photographer started shooting picture layouts.

"He has the Look. It's something the kids can empathise with—an emaciated, wistful quality. They've all had it, going back to Rudy Vallee, who was probably the first.

"Look at Sinatra when he started. Elvis Presley was the same way—he didn't have a bone in his face, just a skinny kid with a big shock of black hair.

"We started running small pictures of David Cassidy on the covers of our magazines. Bobby Sherman had been on the covers for 25 or 30 consecutive issues. Gradually the pictures of David got bigger and Bobby's smaller.

"By the time David's record came out, every teenager in the country knew who he was."

THE record, I Think I Love You, sold more than three million copies. Cassidy says: "They released it because they thought the young kids might eat it up. I don't know whether I'll be able to live it down."

He adds: "I never thought of myself as a teenage idol—I don't want to be a teenage idol. I can't go out any more because I'm recognised wherever I go, so I stay home a lot."

Home is a rambling, multi-level house in the Hollywood hills, with colourful and sometimes campy decor, an upright piano, a pool table, a sunken bathtub and a tiny swimming pool.

David formerly lived in an old house in Hollywood's rustic Laurel Canyon, which he describes as "early orange

crate". But word of its location got out to the teenage underground, and he found groups of little visitors waiting on his doorstep when he got home and a steady stream of girls ringing his bell on weekends.

When he moved, he rented a truck. He and some friends loaded it and drove through the dead of night to the new place. He lives in the new house with a friend from his high school days named Sam Hyman and two mongrel dogs named Sheesh and Sam.

When *The Partridge Family* is out of production, David sleeps until noon. In the evening he may have friends in—most of them musicians. "I have lots of guitars," he says, "and we sit around jamming and singing."

Two afternoons a week are reserved for the magazine photographers and interviewers. Cassidy says: "The magazines say good things about me—but, ugh."

The magazines have names such as *Tiger Beat*, *Spec*, *Fave*, *Flip*, *Star Time* and *Teen Pin-Ups*. They grind out constant variations on the same theme: *The REAL David Cassidy*; *David Cassidy, Star: Is the Price Too High?*; *David Cassidy: Why He Almost Became a Dropout from Life*; *Living with David—His Roommate's Personal Story*; *David's Six Special Loves*.

The little girls write him letters: "I am 9 years old, but I am almost 10. My aunt has the record called *The Partridge Album*. My aunt is 11 years old."

"I've always dreamed I was going steady with you but now I blush whenever I think about it. I heard that you are 20 years old."

"I hope my letters have been getting to you. I'm just wondering because I haven't got any back from



you. If you think I have a boyfriend, I don't."

"I thought you sounded like a nice person, and I really don't meet up with nice people."

"There are a lot of people out there who care," says Cassidy. "They see me as something. For me to destroy that image would hurt them. I feel a responsibility towards them."

"But it's a strange feeling to walk into a hotel foyer and see 20 or 30 of them waiting. For some reason they all scream, but when I go up to talk to them, they can't think of anything to say."

"My next vacation, I'm going to Jamaica. They don't see *The Partridge Family*

there, so nobody will recognise me."

"He's a private person," says his stepmother, Shirley Jones, who plays his mother in *The Partridge Family*.

"His contemporaries pooh-pooh the family TV series, and his friends put down the whole teenage idol thing. He really feels as if he is coping out on his friends."

"We can't conceive the idea of the teenage idol," says David's friend Sam Hyman. "David's not ego-tripping. He can be the life of the party, but he's not 'on' all the time."

"He's confident in himself. He doesn't go for fads or do something just because it's popular. Nowadays it's the thing to be