



**David Cassidy Talks About
His Stepmother Shirley Jones:**

**"I WANTED
HER TO BE
MEAN
TO ME"**

"Jim, would you teach me how to drive?" It was 1965, and the boy asking me the question was 15-year-old David Cassidy. A short, round-faced kid with huge blue eyes straight out of a Keane painting, David had a wistful way of getting around adults and persuading them to do what he wanted. Perhaps it was a certain pathos that lurked about the eyes, perhaps the cherubic innocence he projected—but whatever it was, you felt sorry for him somehow and wanted to help him. Actually, Dave had a mischievous streak a mile wide, and was much given to practical jokes, as were the boys he hung around with at the time in Westwood, a Los Angeles suburb. But there was still that occasional air of sadness and isolation about him that tended to make you forgive any misbehavior. Reluctantly—with visions of a wrecked car and canceled insurance—I agreed to teach him how to drive. I drove him to an empty parking lot in Century City one evening, let him take over the wheel, and sat in the passenger's seat and watched as he slowly drove around and around the lot with nary a slip. My car survived the lesson in good shape, and so did I. I was living in Westwood, near the UCLA campus, when I met David Cassidy. A friend of his who was helping me with some minor office chores brought him around one day, and he took to dropping over occasionally to visit, raid the icebox and avail himself of the chance to talk over his problems with an adult who was not a parent—something that seems important to many teenagers. One of his problems at the time, and possibly the reason he had asked me, rather than his father, to teach him to drive, was that he felt somewhat isolated from his dad, Jack Cassidy, the Broadway and television star (at right with Shirley Jones). Jack had married Shirley when David was seven, following his divorce from David's (Continued on page 101)