

one hand and a make-up sponge in the other—looking very much like a painter at work on a masterpiece.

He's Mel Berns, our make-up man, and he is getting Shirley's beautiful face into TV make-up and ready for her role as "Shirley Partridge," widowed mom of a brood of five musician singer kids. As Mel works, Shirley chats softly about her three adorable "real life" sons—who just *happen* to be her very favorite subject—Patrick, Shaun and Ryan.

I sit in the make-up chair next to Shirley, because it'll be my turn next. I indicate that you are to come around an empty chair between you and me and have a seat on a small, regular type chair sitting near the make-up counter. "That empty chair," I say, pointing to the chair between us, "is for David when he gets here."

No sooner do I say his name than *presto!*—David appears! The sleep is gone from his sparkling hazel eyes, his tousled hair is shining and neatly combed, he has a big smile on his face—and he's looking directly at *you!* David stands very still for almost a minute—staring at you. Of course, he's surprised to see a new face on the set—but his look is more of curiosity than surprise. For here is a young girl not unlike the thousands and thousands of young girls who write to him every single day, and the millions who watch him on TV every Friday night. Yes, here's one of these *very girls* standing right in front of him and, to David, you are fascinating and interesting, for his work schedule has made it almost impossible for him to meet a girl like *you*—the very girl he wants to meet more than anyone else in the world. Suddenly, in a gesture quite unusual for our normally somewhat reticent and shy David Cassidy, he steps towards you, extends his hand and, in a warm, friendly voice, says, "Hello, my name is David Cassidy. What's yours?"

Within seconds, your hand is in David's. He shakes it gently, holds it for a moment and then says, "Well—cat got your tongue?"

There's something like a *click* inside your head and *you*—who a moment ago had been absolutely transported by the sudden and seemingly miraculous appearance of the *one boy* in the whole world you love most of all—snap back to Earth and you remember *who* you are and *where* you are! As you start to speak your name, David's face breaks into an understanding smile. You see, he too—as I said before—is a bit on the shy side, so he knows what you just went through. David continues to look at you as he thought-

fully puts his finger to his mouth—something he habitually does when he's in deep thought. The two of you just stand there for a little while. It's like you are somehow silently communicating with each other, talking to one another, getting to know one another in a sort of simple, natural, unmannered way.

"Good morning, David." Shirley's soft voice suddenly brings us all back to reality.

"Oh, good morning, *Mom!*" David says, stressing the word "mom" in a joking manner. Shirley smiles tolerantly. She knows this is David's way of teasing her a bit. You see, in real life Shirley is actually David's step-mom, but she is more like a pal or older sister. Now, on TV, Shirley *plays* his "real mom", so there's kind of like a Cassidy-family-joke in there when David puts Shirley on a bit by calling her "mom".

"O.K.," Mel says. "You're done, Shirley." Shirley gets up and David quickly hops into her make-up chair.

"No, you *don't*, David Cassidy!" I exclaim. "You get over there in *your* chair. It's *my* turn next!"

David laughingly obliges, giving my hair a yank as he goes by. Mel starts to work on my make-up and David suddenly is quiet—almost introspective. It's as though some faraway thought crossed his mind and he is just not with us for a few minutes. I see you surreptitiously steal a glance at David's reflection in the mirror, and I motion to you that it's all right. Though David hates *hates* to be stared at, he doesn't mind if someone looks at him with natural interest and curiosity. I indicate with my finger to my lips that we both should be quiet for awhile. Like I said before, it isn't that David is moody, but in the mornings he seems to drift from being very bright to being very quiet, and on *The Partridge Family* set we all have come to know and understand each other so well that we can bend our moods and frames of mind to suit our fellow cast members' moods and frames of mind. You smile knowingly and nod, indicating that you are already "one of us".

All at once a tall, blond-haired, big-eyed man peeps around the corner into the make-up area. It's Dave Madden, one of my very favorite people in the whole world. As Dave spots you, I sit breathlessly wondering for a moment or two what he's going to do—because Dave is the *super big PF tease of all time!* Besides his innate flair for comedy—not to mention his years of professional experience as a polished comedian—Dave has a bouyant and un-

"Oh—good morning, Mom!"

*more*

