

By BOB CORTLANDT

The man in the middle—that's what David Cassidy has been for many years. And the twenty-one-year old boy-man is beginning to revolt. He's seen, from the inside, several disastrous and near-disastrous family squabbles that matured him at an age when most boys were just beginning to see the inside of a toy car. And at the age of twenty-one, too mature for a boy, with the wisdom only experience and the harsher realities of life can bring, he's ready to say, "Give me a break, Dad. Let me stay out of the next squabble."

David's break with his father has become almost a necessity. While Jack Cassidy has never—and would never—purposely inflict pain on his son, he, as a father, is well aware of the hurt he *had* to cause David as a youth—hurt no father enjoys causing, but hurt that, nevertheless, was necessary. It was a hurt that helped Jack himself to grow up. But Jack was older—and wiser—and could more easily cope with the harshness of those terrible things like divorce, suffering, and cruelty. He was more aware of their existence in the world—and David was just a child.

David's decision was far from easy—it had been thought out well in advance. What he needed was an emotional break from the trials and tribulations of his families' strife and time to find out for him-

self just how much a part of him was, in actuality, his father. He needed solitude, during his free hours off from *The Partridge Family* set at the studio—where he co-stars with stepmom Shirley Jones—a time to think, to be alone, to discover love. For David, love has always been associated with pain—the agonizing pain and fear that broken marriages and troubled homes can bring. Brought up from the start by loving parents who just could not get along, David has never had a "settled" existence, secure in the love and affection that a child—or even an adult—craves. Permanence was never defined for this boy, and thus his own need to be loved never fully realized.

(Continued on page 62)

