

# David Cassidy Shattered:

## Dad Leaves Shirley Jones

■ Shirley Jones was out buying a few things for Jack to take with him—he was heading east to go back on the stage in "Cyrano." They had spent their wonderful young days on stage together. But now there'll be no more beautiful duets for Jack and Shirley. Instead, she was also buying him some things he would take with him to his new pad—he was leaving their beautiful Beverly Hills home and the three boys, Shaun, Patrick and Ryan. David, on vacation, would be in Italy when the news reached him. Already the product of one unhappy marriage, he would be shattered by this new upheaval. In the fifteen years of his father's marriage he had come to think of Shirley as a second mother, and had loved and grown with his half-brothers. Now it would be hard for him to think of himself as part of a real family.

For Shirley and Jack it had been 15 wonderful, crazy, exciting, happy, sad years. Lately, their life together was full of more drama than any role either had ever played. They fought too often to go on. They had to break up.

"But it's just a trial separation," he said sadly. "I have no desire to get a divorce." Does Shirley? "I'm sure not." So why are you moving out of the house? "I'm afraid it's necessary to work things out. And we do want to work them out."

When asked if a specific action by either had caused the separation, Jack vehemently denied it—and also denied any third party. But it's no secret, Shirley had been publicly embarrassed and personally and privately hurt by the repeated rumors of Jack's fun-and-games. It was tough enough when she wasn't



working. But then it was doubly difficult when she became so very busy on the series. She would leave the house in the early, dark hours of the morning, come home after dark. Sure, she had to be uptight.

And what about those times when she'd come home and find Jack wasn't there. Sure, he had his problems, too. His pilot didn't sell, then a film deal fell thru. Finally, he was happily busy producing a play he had written. Then, that, too collapsed. He, too, was uptight.

Then, Jack went to New York to do a special for ABC. His old friend Stanley Prager directed him. A few weeks later, in L.A. Stanley died.

"It just seemed like too much all at once happened," Jack said. He was thinking how to tell the boys, his sons, about moving away. Jack and Shirley agreed they wouldn't tell them anything—especially the youngest, Ryan, until two days before daddy was leaving—for he-didn't-know-where.

The night before they separated, Shirley and Jack had a dinner party at home—for friends Sheila (MacRae) and Ron Wayne. They all knew it was a "last supper."

"We just have to do it this way," Jack mumbled and shook his head in disbelief. "It's not 'anger time'. It would be easy if we hated each other. But, when you love one another that's when it's difficult."

Obviously, Shirley was thinking, "When you love someone, how can you do those things you know will hurt that someone?"

Sure, the odds are in favor of their reconciling—again. But, is it ever the same? And—you'll get good odds in Hollywood from the friends of Shirley that she won't take him back. ■

by Army Archerd

