

come with no set agenda to plug — and nothing to hide. The topic of Enigma came up quickly, and he made no attempt to hedge.

"The bottom dropped out of Enigma two weeks before my single came out," he said. "They fired all the regional promotional people. They fired all the regional sales people. They had no money to operate."

"So, you can only imagine how I felt. I spent the last year and a half working on this record, trying to make it happen. I had to deliver the record four months in advance, because this record company operated differently from everybody else and I had to go along with it. Finally, I'm waiting like a racehorse, like I've been training for years. And two weeks before the single comes out — after I had already been out and done conventions and everything — they drop the bomb."

In Cassidy's words, the company's revelation was "like a very cruel joke to me." It was even more cruel, and ironic, when you realize Cassidy's last three record deals had collapsed in exactly the same way. Consider:

● The week his European-only album *ROMANCE* hit the British Top 20 in 1985, his record company, Arista/Ariola, was bought out by RCA.

"All the people at Arista in the U.K. left... everybody else was fired," he said. "All the artists that had records out at the time died. They came back and wanted to make another album with me. But by that time, the taste in my mouth was really bad about them."

● Despite the Ariola buyout, Cassidy went ahead with a month-long tour of Britain, his first since 1974, that culminated in a sold-out, two-night stand at London's Royal Albert Hall. Those two shows were taped, and a Cassidy-produced double-live album and video were released in 1986 on the London-based Starblend label.

"Starblend was a crooked record company that just basically pitched me on the idea of putting it out for the fans," he said. "They did, but they owe me a lot of money and I can't get it out of them. I've taken them to court and they basically bled the company dry to look like the company had no assets. That's the way crooks do business."

● Cassidy spent much of 1988 working on an album for MCA Records. But after MCA was bought out and new management was brought in, the deal fell apart. "The deal with MCA has been finalized," he said in June of 1989. "I'm no longer associated with MCA. I'm very pleased that it worked out the way it did, because the company was not supportive of me doing what I want to do today."

After each of the deals went sour, Cassidy did the same thing — he retreated. Sometimes for months on end. "I didn't try to write songs after that. I didn't try to get people interested in me. It took all the wind out of my sails."

But thanks to three years of intense analysis, which he completed early in 1990, Cassidy had a fresh outlook on life. When Enigma began to founder, he refused to retreat.

"Well, what do you do?" he asked. "Do you throw another year and a half of your life away and say 'Oh well'? Or do you say, 'I don't care what it takes, I'm going to make this happen. I don't care that you don't have any money. I know I won't be able to compete on a lot of levels.' Retail? I was dead. I had nobody to sell the record. There weren't records in stores, OK. But I can still come out of it and have people be aware of what I've done and people will still hear it."

"That was because I have enough people out there who are interested and care, who've said to me, in radio, 'we really want to play it.' So I went and thought, 'If I have allies in radio, I'm going to go back and support them.' So I made a point of trying to go to an awful lot of key markets and made myself available to them for promotions."



Cassidy started his promotional surge in July. He went everywhere, appeared on every television show, shook countless hands, signed countless autographs, and took countless photographs. He sang the national anthem before a pre-season Tampa Bay football game and even played the wedding march, on electric guitar, for a couple who had won a radio station promotion in Baltimore. In Toledo, Ohio, he emceed a celebrity-studded radio station promotion and ended up climbing on stage with Vixen to jam on *Sympathy for the Devil*.

All this legwork helped propel *Lyn' to Myself* up the *Billboard* charts. In its first week, 73 stations added *Lyn'* to their playlists, making it the third-most added song on radio that week. At its peak, the record was on the playlists of nearly 200 radio stations across the country. In more than 60 major markets, the record hit the Top 15, going as high as No. 3 for two straight weeks at WZOK-FM in Rockford, Illinois.

"It owned my life," Cassidy said of the promotion schedule. "But I'm glad I did it, because it was the only way it could be done. The company basically had no money to operate and it was all on my shoulders. So, yeah, given the circumstances, I had a smash record. 'Cause anybody else would have stiffed dead in the water. Given those odds, I did great. But you can't compete in the marketplace with a peashooter when everyone else has Uzis."

There was a time in the 1970s when it was

Cassidy who was packing the heavy record company artillery. From October 1970 to February 1973, Cassidy, both solo and with the Partridges, amassed 11 Top 40 singles and six gold albums in America. The biggest hit, *I Think I Love You*, soared to No. 1 in the U.S. and sold more than five million copies worldwide. In England, Cassidy did even better. Between March 1971 and November 1975, he sent 14 singles into the British Top 20, including the No. 1 hits *How Can I Be Sure* and *Daydreamer*. And unlike the tour of small theaters and intimate clubs he has now embarked on, Cassidy's tours used to be huge. He sold out Madison Square Garden, the Garden State Arts Center, Wembley Stadium, White City Stadium. Everywhere he played, the fans flocked.

But the Beatles-like hysteria generated by his records and sold-out world tours was not something he had set out to cultivate. Rock and roll, in fact, had barely been born in 1953, the year a three-year-old David Cassidy set his sights on being an entertainer. The young Cassidy made his career choice after seeing his father, the late Jack Cassidy, captivate a Broadway audience as the star of the musical *Wish You Were Here* at New York's Imperial Theater. "It was the first time I remember seeing my father on stage," Cassidy once said. "As my mom drove me home, I remember telling her, 'I want to do that.' She told me to wait until I graduated from high school."

It's no wonder that Cassidy, as an impressionable toddler, was so awe-struck by his

father's stage presence. The elder Cassidy, who would go on to earn a Tony Award in 1963 for *She Loves Me*, was an imposing figure. He possessed a razor-sharp wit, an impeccable sense of style, and a disarming, radiant magnetism. And then there was his voice, a booming Irish-tinged baritone perfectly suited for the stage. Broadway's elite regarded him highly, grandly dubbing him "The Prince of Players."

As good a performer as Jack Cassidy was, he could not handle the role of father. Four years after inspiring his son to go into show business, he divorced David's mother, Evelyn Ward, a successful actress and dancer in her own right, so he could marry Shirley Jones in 1956. It was Jones, the future star of *Oklahoma*, *The Music Man*, and an Oscar winner for *Elmer Gantry* in 1961, who, ironically, would later be cast as the matriarch of the Partridge Family.

Although the divorce hurt Cassidy deeply and permanently soured his relationship with his father, nothing could persuade him to abandon his acting ambitions. In 1960, he made his stage debut in the chorus of a summer stock production of *The Pajama Game* with his mom. During his senior year at Rexford High School in Los Angeles, Cassidy started to seriously study his craft. He worked with the Los Angeles Theater Company in 1967, starring in the group's production of *And So to Bed*. At the same time, he was playing, singing, and writing "some seriously bad rock and roll" with his friends around town. The Beatles, Cream, Clapton, Hendrix — they were all big influences.

But acting, not rock and roll, was still Cassidy's passion. Two weeks after he graduated, while the rest of his friends were preparing for college, he made the decision to move to New York. He took an \$80-a-week job in the mailroom of a textile firm, went out on auditions during his lunch hour, and took acting classes at night.

About eight months later, in early 1968, Cassidy won the part of Dorothy Loudon's son in the Allen Sherman musical *The Fig Leaves Are Falling*, directed by George Abbott. Those *Fig Leaves*, however, fell quickly and the show closed out its run at Broadway's Broadhurst Theater after just

