'True Story' Fan Fables

By Erma Bombeck

DAVID CASSIDY

On one of my infrequent trips to the beauty shop the other day, I emerged knowing more about David Cassidy than any woman has a right to know.

There were no less than nine magazine covers flashing his picture and luring me inside with such provocative questions as, "David Reveals What He Said to His Real Mother When They Met." ("Hello, Mom.") And "David Tells of His Heartbreak." (Psoriasis, what else?)

A young teen-ager has literally pushed off the front page the perennial Lennon Sisters whom I found near the back of one magazine under a headline, "The Night I Told My Sisters Goodby" by Kathy Lennon. (They were all going bowling.)

I had to turn inside to read what Liz Burton thought about being a grandmother. ("It's more fun than throwing a Tupperware party.").

Even the much-publicized Jackie Onassis was on an inside page in a story called, "Why I Cried on My Wedding Night." (It seems she got Greece for a wedding present and it was the wrong color.)

I kept trying to figure out in my wildest imagination how magazines can keep filling up a book month after month using the same personality. As I sat there I could visualize a "story conference" on an upcoming issue.

"Okay, gang, we've got David Cassidy on our cover again this month. (Ooohs and aaahs from the gang.) We sent a photographer in through his plumbing and got a fantastic camera angle through the lint and hair trap of David brushing his teeth."

"What are we doing for an inside picture story?" asked one of the writers, doodling on a scratch pad.

"I'm open for suggestions on that one."

"What about David in a see-through blouse telling us how he will feel when he's a grandfather?"

"We had that last month."

"How about David having a dialogue on sex with Donny Osmond?"

"Have we ruled out the possibility that he could be the fifth Lennon Sister?"

"Has he ever had his tonsils out? We could do five pages on, 'I Made Friends with a Man Who Pulled a Knife on Me.' "

"I got it," said the head writer, "How about, 'The Day My Stepmother Tried to Poison Me'?"

"You mean . . . " they all said.

"A picture story of David being fed artichokes by his stepmother, Shirley Jones."

Off The Record

"I live so near the office that when I'm late I can't make up time on the way."