

Inside David Cassidy today

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HOLLYWOOD — Women grasping for his tanned tender body. That's what finally got to David Cassidy, the teenybopper's superpuppy, the kid who grew up with his image outselling wallpaper on girls' rooms.

Like, there was the time in Chicago when he checked into a room at 1 a.m., sat on the edge of his bed, pulled off his boots ... and flopped back into the arms of something soft and smelling of wild roses.

"Hellooo, David," she whispered. "I knew you were coming."

She was the hotel's day staff manager. Very pretty too, as David recalls.

In Atlantic City, he was dressing in his trailer for an opening concert when two girls popped out from under a cupboard.

"They were green and sweating and looked like they should have been in a hospital," recalls David.

And for good reason. They had been under there two days, nibbling on raisins and sipping water from canteens.

In Sydney, Australia, he woke shortly before dawn to find two girls leaning over him, one whispering in his ear. They had climbed over iron gates leading out onto the hotel's pool.

"What," David asked, springing to an upright position, "are you doing here!"

"We just wanted to touch you," said the one who had been warming his ear.

Recalls David: "Suddenly, I lost control. I'd had enough. I sprang out of bed, smashed my fist into the wall and screamed, 'This is my room! Get out — Go! Go!'"

The packs of girls were the worst, however. Several times they tore off his shirt in broad daylight, descending on him like a flock of starved chickens.

"Many of them followed us from city to city," he says. "A lot were very unattractive."

Cassidy smiles and adds: "Only the good looking ones got past the bodyguards."

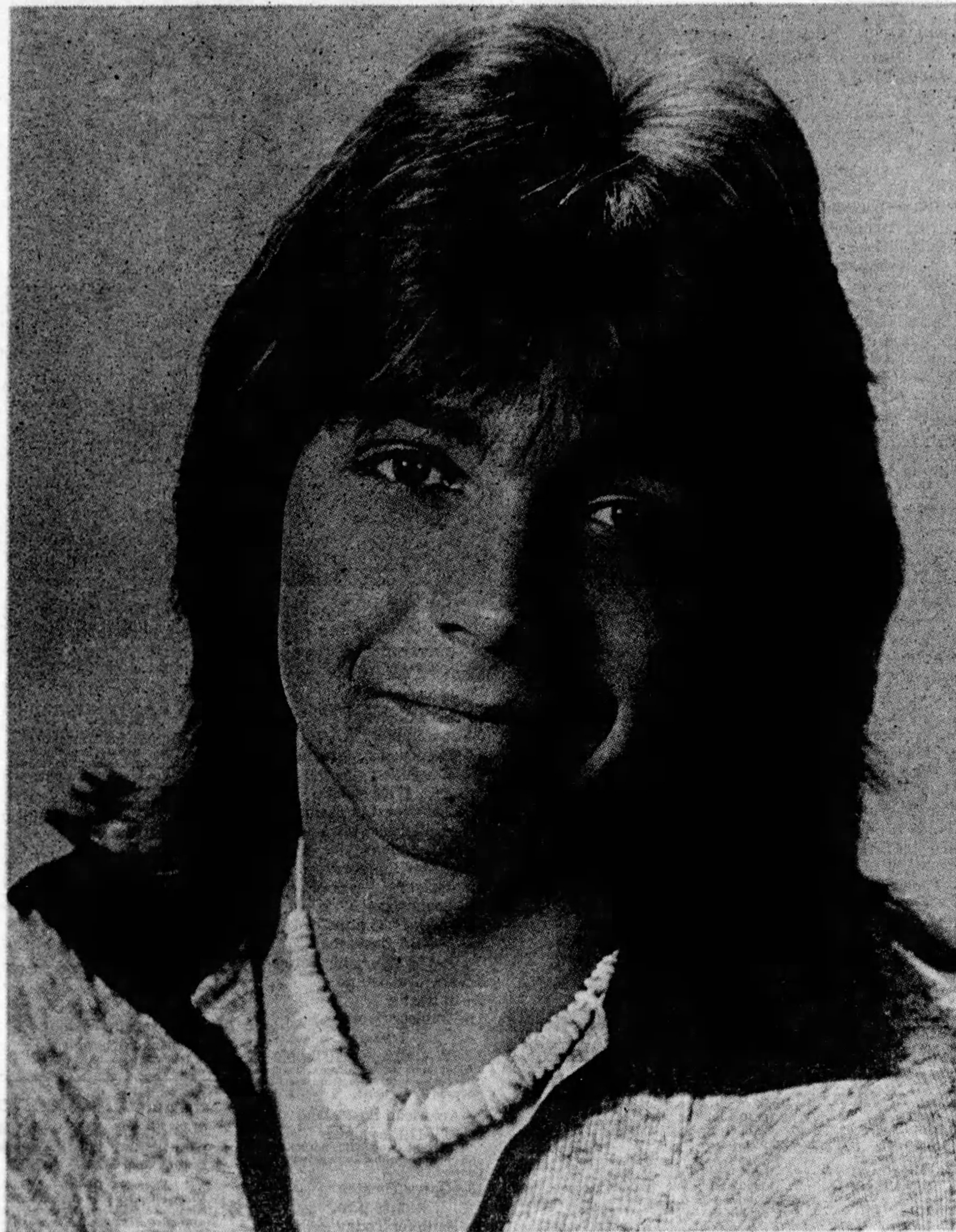
He thinks a moment, 25 years old now, but still looking 12, and then admits: "There was always this one room, where we'd corral a hand-picked dozen of the most beautiful. After the show, I'd go there, point to the one I wanted, and let the band divvy up the rest."

At first he had no trouble picking one out, but then, he recalls: "I became choosy. Soon I stopped participating altogether."

"Instead, I played games. I'd get them to the point where I knew it could happen, then I'd pass, leaving them unfulfilled, and me more fulfilled than I otherwise would have been."

"Finally I realized I was losing touch with my own sexuality, that I was sick of living up to an image. I just wasn't me. The David Cassidy the world knew was totally manufactured."

Thus Cassidy, whose 20 million records make him one of the most successful teen stars ever, quit singing. His various managers were stunned to find he had retreated to a mountaintop hide-



'The David Cassidy the world knew was totally manufactured'

away somewhere in Hawaii to, as he put it, "let the tension ooze out of me."

Today, two years later, he's back, putting into song what he says is the real David Cassidy. And it's selling. His single, "Get It Up for Love," drew strong attention — it was banned by the BBC in Britain three days after its release. The album, "The Higher They Climb" reached the charts. The single "Tomorrow," written by Paul and Linda McCartney, was No. 1 in Europe. "Breaking Down Again," just released, looks hot, and the album "Home Is Where the Heart Is" has a couple of strong songs, including the single release, "Bedtime."

Unattached and wealthy, the boy who made bubble gum melt in mouths around the world, is getting it back together for a round of work, this time with the grownups.

He looks back with humor on a career that saw every album turn to gold, every concert transform into a riot, and every relationship into a memory.

"It's ironic," he says, "but when I had girls climbing up the fire escape, and others hiding in the shower, I was actually very lonely."

"Once, just once, I became seriously involved. But I was working 18 hours a day, and I didn't have the time this lady wanted."

"Because I was unable to pursue girls in the

normal manner, and because I had so little time, I became emotionally retarded. One part of my life was growing all the time, along with my bank account, while the other remained stunted."

"Now ... all that has changed. I have found myself responding to living the way other people do. I'm normal and I like it!"

Normal for David Cassidy is something others his age might find hard to take. He was sipping orange juice and reading the morning paper last year when he discovered he had lost \$300,000 in a bad investment.

He turned the page and buttered his toast.

But today he admits: "I haven't got it back. And to get that much in the bank I'd have to make \$3 million, which is a lot of bread."

Cassidy's whole life has been a drama of fortunes ebbing and flowing.

He was born in New York in 1950, the son of actor Jack Cassidy and actress Evelyn Ward, who confirms: "He has seen hard times and lean years. This teen-age idol thing hasn't changed him. David has great insight."

After his parents were divorced, David moved

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