

Princess's husband 'drugged for sex with stripper'

From Charles Bremner
in Nice

THE ex-husband of Princess Stephanie of Monaco said yesterday that he suspected he had "been drugged" by the Belgian striptease artist who seduced him because their lovemaking had lasted unusually long.

Daniel Ducruet, 34, whose adultery ended his royal marriage, gave the details of his poolside exploits as Fill Houteman and a photographer stood trial in a Nice court for breaching his private life in 1996.

The pair, along with an absent friend, Yves Hoogewys, face possible maximum sentences of a year in jail and £3,000 in fines. M Ducruet is seeking £270,000 in damages. The prosecutor called for at least six months jail and £18,000 fine for the photographer's action in taking 360 pictures and a ten-minute video, while Ms Houteman, who is now unemployed, should receive a suspended sentence for her "complicity" in the alleged entrapment.

Clad in body-hugging black, Ms Houteman, 28, a former Miss Topless Belgium, fever looked at M Ducruet, 10ft away across the courtroom, as he explained that he had been trapped into making love to her in a villa garden so that Stephane Lisiecki could take photographs and video film.

The Belgian photographer and Ms Houteman, who exuded a "coquettish" and modest air throughout her afternoon in the dock, were subjected to a ferocious attack by Guillaume Carre, M Ducruet's lawyer. He said: "Mr Lisiecki, you are not a photographer, not even a paparazzi! You are a pornographer in the garb of a pimp who engaged the services of a professional and that is you, Ms Houteman."

Lisiecki said that four years of investigation had failed to produce any evidence of a plot to entrap M Ducruet.

"This all sounds like something from a trans-Atlantic soap opera," he told the court. Ms Houteman had not received a penny for her part in the affair, he added.

The worst that could be said of the photographer was that he had to make money from pictures of global celebrities who profited from their media notoriety.

The scandal of the publication of the pictures across Europe in September 1996 caused Prince Rainier to banish M Ducruet from the Principality and push through his daughter's divorce in three weeks.

In court M Ducruet depicted himself as victim of a trap laid by Ms Houteman and her friends on August 5, 1996. The former *stripteaseuse*, who stood nervously wringing her hands before the three judges, also depicted herself as a victim, saying she knew nothing of the plan by M Lisiecki.

M Ducruet said that he had dropped in on the villa at Villefrance because Ms Houteman had telephoned him as he was driving into Nice with a friend. He had visited her that afternoon because, after meeting briefly at a Belgian motor race, "she had made me her confidant and wanted to talk about the problems she was having with her boyfriend... I thought I could give her some advice and information about Nice," he said.

"She gave me two glasses of *vin rose* and it was from that point that everything went weird," he told the court.

"I don't want to push the drugs' thesis too hard. But I know what I am capable of physically," he said with a grin and a Latin gesture.

"Sexually... it lasted long". He suspected that the drug

PASCAL QUOT / EPA



Daniel Ducruet, right, with his lawyer in the Nice courtroom yesterday. His marriage to Princess Stephanie ended after a poolside liaison

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