



**How the model who shared her men with Diana and Fergie went from the cover of Tatler to be plain Prisoner No.5970649 in this LA jail; pounds 10,000-A-DAY DENICE WENT TO HOLLYWOOD TO BECOME A STAR...SHE ENDED UP SCRUBBING FLOORS IN PRISON.(News)**

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SHE was once the most sought-after model in London. She was engaged to Fergie's former lover Steve Wyatt, and romanced by men from Dodi Fayed to Jason Donovan and Green Shield stamps heir Tim Jefferies.

Now Denice Lewis is known only by a number - Prisoner 5970649.

She wears blue prison overalls instead of designer clothes and her high society friends have been replaced by killers and thieves.

"Everyone is being pretty sweet really - the prisoners and the warders," she says from behind the bullet-proof glass screen in the jail's visiting area.

The former pounds 10,000-a-day model and Tatler cover girl went from the penthouse suite at the Savoy to Cell Block 242 at the Los Angeles County Jail after being convicted of drink driving and drug charges.

Denice, 39, shares a dormitory with 11 other women. Their day begins at 5.30am and ends at 9.30pm.

"There is not much to do," she says. "And the loudspeaker is going all through the day and night. It drives you crazy."

Denice now mops floors and cooks meals as part of her prison duties.

"It's been an experience - but not one I am planning to go through again," she says.

Her dramatic fall from grace came just as she won the big break she had been waiting for in Hollywood - a part alongside Arnold Schwarzenegger and Kate Winslet in the millennium blockbuster End Of Days, which is due out next Christmas.

Looking pale and drawn, Denice insists she had been wrongly jailed.

She was arrested after being found unconscious at the wheel of her car - but that, she claimed, was because a man drugged her drink in a bar.

In February, she pleaded no contest to two drink-driving charges, one charge of driving with a suspended licence with drugs and alcohol and one of inflicting injury on a spouse or co-habitant.

"It is so unfair because I really didn't do it," she says. "The reason I blacked out and crashed my car was because someone slipped a Mickey Finn into my drink.

"I don't remember anything from about half-way through the evening until I woke up in hospital.

"The police said I crashed into another car and there was a massive amount of a sedative drug in my system. But I never take prescription drugs."

Denice was sentenced to a total of 170 days in jail and is expected to be let out early, at the end of June, because of good behaviour.

Her best friend, Pam Warren, who shares a house with her in Los Angeles and was with her on the night of the arrest, says: "She is holding up as well as anyone can.

"I know how famous Denice was in England and that she was under scrutiny. She just knows how to deal with life better than other people.

"Her personality endears the other prisoners to her and they protect her. They see that she doesn't belong there and that she is such a good- hearted person. If they don't have a hairbrush, she gives them one.

"She isn't the type of person to get mad with the world."

Pam supports Denice's story of the drugged drink.

"I was with her and I was a witness, but there was no way that you can prove to a judge that you were drugged," she says. "I took a sip from Denice's drink and I could hardly walk afterwards."

As Denice serves out her time she can look back on her life in London as the 80s equivalent of today's It Girls like Tara Palmer Tomkinson or Caprice. She was seldom out of the gossip columns. There were private jets, yachts, nightclubs...and wealthy men.

After Steve Wyatt dumped her for Fergie, Denice drifted into the arms of Koo Stark's ex-husband Tim Jefferies. She was also seen with Jason Donovan.

But the bubble burst in 1993 when Denice went bankrupt. Steve Wyatt sued her for \$51,000 he claimed she ran up on his credit card and Tim Jefferies accused her of owing him pounds 12,000.

Undeterred, Denice became determined to be a Hollywood star, and moved to Los Angeles. She began dating actor George Hamilton but the romance didn't last - even after he paid for her to have breast implants.

At the height of Princess Diana's romance with Dodi Fayed, Denice told a British newspaper of her own affair with the Harrods heir, revealing how he used to make love with the lights out.

With lights-out at 9.30pm in jail, she has had time to think of her future. She plans a trip to India to "spiritually renew myself".

Then she's thinking about returning to the movie business - but this time as a writer, rather than an actress. The subject? Her experiences behind bars.