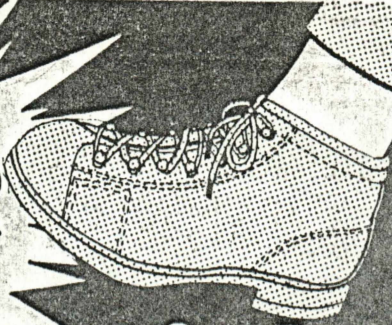


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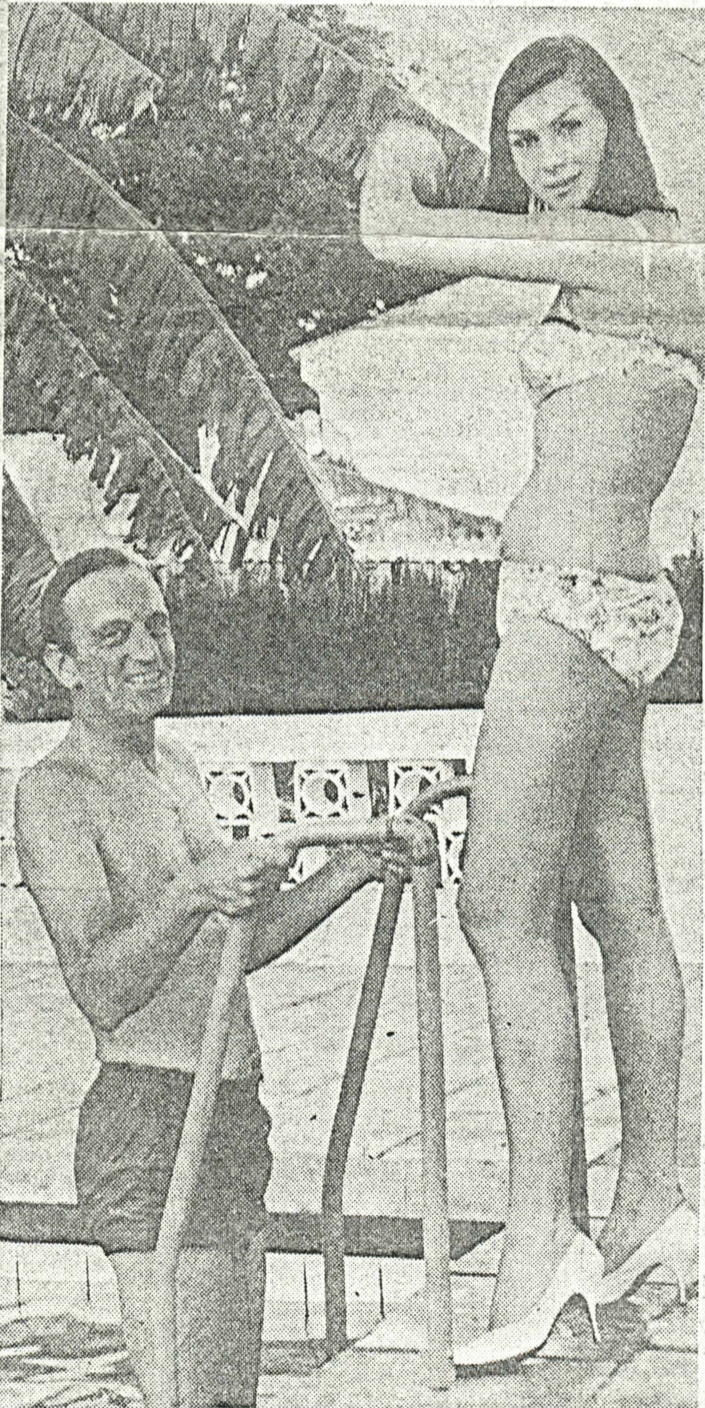
CASEBOOK ON A VIOLENT CULT

See Pages 11, 12 and 13

No. 20,560

M. H. W. C.

APRIL ASHLEY: HUSBAND IN A COMA



Mystery injury as marriage is ended

ARTHUR Corbett, husband of sex-change model April Ashley, was found in a coma last night a few hours after a court had officially ended their marriage.

A Spanish maid found Mr. Corbett, 50-year-old son of former Chief Scout Lord Rowallan, lying unconscious in his villa at Marbella, in Spain.

He had a head injury. It is thought that he had been lying face down on the living room floor for 16 hours.

From MIRROR CORRESPONDENT in Madrid

Plane

He was taken to hospital in Malaga, where he was still unconscious early today.

A friend, Mr. Guy Sitwell, said: "This is a complete mystery. Arthur had been due to catch a plane from Malaga to London on Sunday night for the Divorce Court hearing.

"The doctor tells me that he may have suffered a fall. But we shall not know for sure until he comes round."

The last person to see Mr. Corbett was a Dutch girl friend, Miss Carla Harvey, who works in a boutique in Marbella.

She said: "I saw him on Sunday afternoon and he told me he was going home to get ready for his flight to London three hours later."

"He seemed quite cheerful, and showed me his plane ticket."

Mr. Corbett married April Ashley—a former seaman who became a model after a sex change operation—seven years ago.

In London yesterday a judge in the Divorce Court ruled that

Miss Ashley was a man and granted Mr. Corbett a decree of nullity.

The judge's summing up included intimate details about Mr. Corbett's own sexual deviations.

He had been attracted to April in the first place because he was himself a transvestite who liked to dress up in women's clothes, the judge said.

Disaster

But the marriage was a disaster and, although they were officially man and wife for seven years, they actually lived together for only fourteen days.

In London, Miss Ashley said after hearing that Mr. Corbett was in hospital: "I am very sorry to hear of this development. But until I hear more details I do not want to comment further."

Miss Ashley was planning to appeal against the judge's verdict that she was a man.

"I cannot function as a man," Miss Ashley said.

The April-Ashley Story.—See Page 3.

APRIL AND THE MAN SHE WED

A bikini-clad April with Arthur Corbett at his villa in Spain a few months before they were married seven years ago.

Malind

THE APRIL ASHLEY STORY

APRIL ASHLEY, the former seaman who became a fashion model, must learn to live in the tragic halfway world between man and woman.

A judge ruled yesterday that she was, is and always will be, a man.

The verdict was a shattering blow to the tall, girlish, graceful Miss Ashley, who seemed to the outside world to have really become the woman she longed to be.

She now knows that not all the beautiful clothes she wears, nor the drugs she took to make her breasts grow, nor the sex-change operation she had ten years ago, can make her dream of complete femininity come true in the eyes of the law.

Miss Ashley, wearing a colourful Russian peasant-style outfit, said after hearing the decision: "I'm absolutely shattered. I feel in a state of limbo."

"I hoped one day to adopt children. Now, until the law is changed, I won't be able to."

"You can only be what you function as — and I can't function as a man."

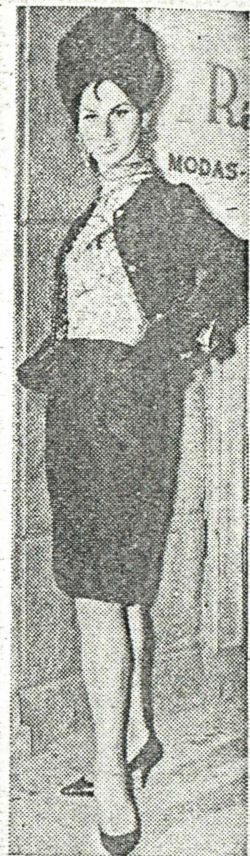
The verdict on 34-year-old Miss Ashley came in the judge's summing-up after a 16-day hearing in the Divorce Court in London.

Mr. Arthur Corbett, son of former Chief Scout Lord Rowallan, had claimed that his seven-year-old marriage to Miss Ashley was void on the grounds that she was a man at the time of the ceremony.

Defended

Mr. Justice Ormrod said: "My conclusion is that the respondent is not a woman for the purposes of marriage, but is a biological male and has been so since birth."

He granted 50-year-old



1963—accepted as a woman, April became a fashion model.

Mr. Corbett a decree of nullity.

Miss Ashley of Clarendon-road, Notting Hill, has defended the case claiming that she was a girl.

She sought her own decree of nullity on the grounds that the marriage was never consummated due to inability or refusal on her husband's part. This was rejected by the judge.

Overdose

The judge said that Miss Ashley was born in Liverpool and registered as George Jamieson, a boy, and brought up as a boy.

In 1951, at the age of sixteen, she joined the Merchant Navy.

As George Jamieson, she made two voyages before being put ashore in San Francisco after taking a drug overdose.

Hospital records stated that she showed no abnormality other than "a womanish appearance with little bodily or facial hair."

In records of hospital interviews, Miss Ashley said she had wanted to be a girl ever since childhood.

One doctor had reported: "This boy is a constitutional homosexual who says he wants to become a woman."

Hormone

In 1956, in France, Miss Ashley joined up with a troupe of female impersonators.

By this time, she was taking the female sex hormone oestrogen to encourage the development of the breasts and a female type of physique. She became known as "Toni-April."

After four years with the troupe, she was introduced to a Dr. Burou,

I feel I am in limbo... I can't behave as a man

By JAMES WILSON

who practised at Casa-blanca.

The judge said: "On May 11, 1960, she underwent, at Dr. Burou's hands, a so-called sex-change operation, which consisted of the amputation of the testicles and most of the scrotum and the construction of a so-called artificial vagina."

"Parts of the scrotum were used to produce an approximation in appearance to female external genitalia."

After the operation, she returned to London, calling herself April Ashley and living as a woman.

She became a fashion model and had sexual relations with at least one man, using the artificial cavity successfully.

About six months later Mr. Corbett heard of her. He was already sexually unhappy and abnormal, said the judge.

Pathetic

"From a comparatively early age he had experienced a desire to dress up in female clothes," the judge went on.

At his invitation Miss Ashley met him for lunch.

The judge said: "His description of this first meeting contains the key to the rest of this essentially pathetic, but almost incredible story."

Mr. Corbett had said, "This was so much more than I could ever hope to be. The reality was far greater than my fantasy."

His original motive in seeking an introduction to her was essentially transvestite. But soon he developed for her the interest of a man for a woman.

"On the other hand it is common ground that before the ceremony of marriage, nearly three years later, there was no sexual activity in a phys-

ical sense between them, although there was the most ample opportunity," said the judge.

The marriage, in September, 1963, was never a success, said the judge, and Miss Ashley soon left Mr. Corbett.

There could be little doubt, he said, that Mr. Corbett was still in the grip of his fantasies at the time of the marriage, and that April Ashley had much more sense of reality.

There was a direct conflict of evidence as to what took place after the ceremony, said the judge.

She complained of abscesses and no intercourse took place between them. Miss Ashley maintained that they slept together on several occasions.

Their relationship ended in December, 1963, when April Ashley returned to London from the villa in Marbella, Spain, where they had been living.

The judge said: "Reality had broken in on her and she, quite understandably, could not face the intolerably false position into which they had got themselves."

The judge said: "Socially she is living as, and passing as a woman."

Gestures

"Her outward appearance, at first sight, was convincingly feminine, but on closer and longer examination in the witness box it was much less so."

"The voice, manner, gestures and attitudes became increasingly reminiscent of the accomplished female impersonator."

After the verdict Miss Ashley said: "I have had ten years' practical experience as a woman... then this judge shatters it all."

"Some people may now be a bit cruel. But I have a lot of friends and I am very well loved."

She is considering an appeal.



Smiling, glamorous... April Ashley yesterday. Picture by Bill Malindine.