

CASE STUDY

Parisian Pascale Lutz had to learn to live all over again after a motorbike accident at 18, says **Joy Orpen**, but a move to Cork brought her on a spiritual journey

Growing up in Paris was a mostly idyllic experience for Pascale Lutz. She loved skateboarding past the Eiffel Tower, enjoying hot chocolate at little cafes near the Champs-Elysees, and exploring different art galleries.

Pascale, the eldest of three girls, says theirs was a very happy and loving home. However, she does admit to being slightly rebellious but her wily parents — both in education — were well able for her. “When I was 14, I came home reeking of cigarette smoke,” she says. “My parents said nothing, but they bought me a packet of cigarettes. When I realised it wasn’t forbidden, smoking lost its appeal.”

When she was a teenager she met her soulmate, guitar-playing Xavier Lutz, at a rehearsal of his band. It was love at first sight and the couple have now been together for 34 years.

In late 1978, Pascale, a bit of a tomboy, badgered her parents into buying her a motorbike for her 18th birthday. Reluctantly, they agreed. Just one week later, a car rammed into the pretty motorbike rider. A witness was horrified to see Pascale’s body convulsing so violently it seemed to be bouncing high off the ground. The paramedics, who rushed her to hospital, said her helmet had saved her life.

She had suffered a severe brain injury and other more minor problems. When her parents first arrived at her bedside, Pascale recognised them, but she was obviously disorientated and volunteered that it wasn’t her turn to feed Ulysses, the family dog. Later, as she drifted in and out of a coma, her parents were dismayed to discover that she appeared to have lost all memory of her life before the accident.

For three days, Pascale hovered between life and death and then began the slow process of recovery. Xav visited her every day during her month-long stay in hospital. He taught her how to walk again, step by painful step. She had to learn how to eat with a knife and fork and, scariest of all, how to think safely. “I’d lost all common sense,” she recalls. “I’d walk straight on to the road, not looking right or left, not even noticing the cars whizzing by.”

One of the hardest things she had to face was the realisation that while she had played classical piano previously, now she couldn’t play a note. Her loss of memory was affecting everything and



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everyone. Her heartbroken sisters, Sylvie and Virginie, would bring once-familiar toys, photographs and special treasures, in the hope of rekindling their big sister’s memory.

An attempt was made to get her back to school. And even though her mother was with her in the classroom, Pascale was unmanageable. “I didn’t recognise my friends and I was very restless, taking no notice of the teacher. I simply couldn’t remember how to behave in normal situations,” she says.

Given her behavioural and perceptual problems, her parents were advised to put her in a private psychiatric clinic. During her time there, though she was well treated and physically comfortable, she hated it. “Some of the other young people were deeply disturbed,” she says. Five months later, she was discharged.

Following the accident, Pascale made the weird discovery that she could only write from right to left; so her writing could only be read by being reflected in a mirror. She is still able to write like this but she can also write normally, too.

When she was 18, Pascale married Xav. “I wore a long, white, *broderie anglaise* dress, a nice hat and gloves and I didn’t recognise half the people at my own wedding,” she says.

Unbelievably, she jumped back on to a motorbike as soon as she could. So, when she received compensation for the accident, she promptly paid tuition fees to put herself through beauty school, and bought two 400cc motorbikes — one

for her and one for Xav. By now he had taught Pascale to play bass guitar and they were both trying to find work in the music business. It wasn’t easy. Then, in 1985, Xav suggested they move to Ireland. “I wasn’t even sure where it was — I’d forgotten most of what I had learned at school,” Pascale notes.

So they landed up living in west Cork. It was a culture shock for this plucky Parisian. “I could not find even the most basic ingredients such as courgettes, aubergines, good cheese,” she laments. “Not even a baguette. My family could not believe it.”

Still, Pascale quickly made friends and, once she had learned English, she settled into a routine of working in a beauty salon during the day and playing in bands at night. She has also become a healer, a maker of unique but inexpensive jewellery and, most recently, an author. *Always There For You*, published by Hallelujah Press, is an account of her inspiring journey from an accident scene on a Paris street to her enchanted life in Ireland.

She says her spiritual journey began when she heard about an intuitive healer called Bill Parfrey who “worked” on a friend of theirs who was about to have his leg amputated following a motorbike accident. According to Pascale, Bill performed some healing on their friend and, the day he was supposed to have his operation, he was sent home because his gangrene had disappeared. “So Xav and I went to Bill — he had a bad back, I had a

sore shoulder,” Pascale recalls. According to her, they both left pain-free.

As time went on, Pascale claims that she discovered she too had “healing hands”. Although she was amazed, Bill warned her to stay grounded. “You do not heal people,” he told her. “You are just the channel through which people heal themselves.” And he also told her about angels.

“I had grown up without any religion so I knew nothing about God or angels,” she says. However, over time, Pascale has come to love angels; and though she doesn’t see them, she says she knows they are all around.

Her next big step was studying a relatively new technique called emotional freedom technique (EFT) which uses tapping movements to “get rid of an emotional charge attached to a problem. It’s similar to acupuncture without the needles,” she says.

Now Pascale says she brings all the things she has learned over the past 33 years since her accident into play when she is doing her healing and beauty therapy, and when she is performing her music. As a result of it all, she claims, “When you combine everything, asking your angels for help, using affirmations, visualisations, positive thinking — and you have an attitude of gratitude — there can be only one outcome: a very happy and fulfilled life.” ■

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