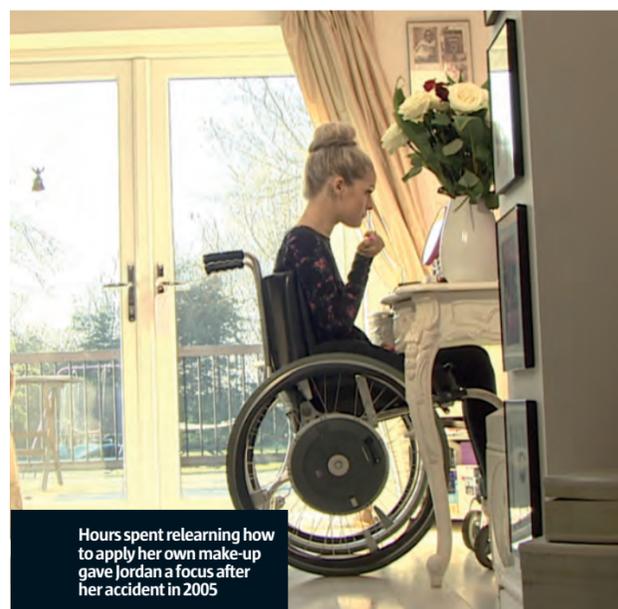


LOOK  
Feature'Beauty  
Blogging  
Saved  
My Life'

Paralysed from the chest down in a car crash, Jordan Bone, 23, thought her life was over – then she became an online sensation



Hours spent relearning how to apply her own make-up gave Jordan a focus after her accident in 2005

**W**eak with exhaustion, I tried for the 20th time to grip the make-up brush in my hands. And for the 20th time it slipped back onto my lap. But eventually I held it long enough to wedge it between two fingers. My arms felt like lead as, cheering inside, I shakily swept blusher across my cheeks. Putting on make-up is something most women do just about every day of their lives, but for me – paralysed a month earlier in a car accident – it felt like a miracle.

I've always been beauty mad. For my 14th birthday my mum, Jane, treated me to a makeover at Selfridges in London. As the woman applied my mascara, I started dreaming of a career in the fashion and beauty industry. But everything changed one Saturday in

May 2005, when I was 15 years old. My friend, Danielle\*, and I were walking to the shops together in the town where we lived in Norfolk when two boys we knew pulled up and offered us a lift. We climbed into the back and put on our seatbelts, but almost immediately I began to feel nervous. The driver sped off with the radio blaring, then all of a sudden the car skidded in a puddle. It felt like everything was happening in slow motion – the car flipping over, the screech of brakes, the panic coursing through me – I was certain I was going to die. Then everything went black.

When I came to, the other three had climbed out of the car, but I couldn't move. The seat belt was wrapped around my neck and my limbs felt weirdly numb as I drifted in and out of consciousness. I was rushed to hospital

where I spent five days in intensive care, before being airlifted to a spinal unit in Sheffield. My neck was broken. When they told me I was paralysed from the chest down, with limited mobility in my arms and none in my hands, I just nodded dumbly, not really understanding the truth – that I'd never walk again.

I was in hospital for six months and as weird as it might sound, make-up became part of my rehabilitation. I spent hours sitting with my mum at the nurses' station, painstakingly teaching myself how to apply it again. I can't describe the frustration. This was something that had once been second nature to me. I took it for granted as something easy and fun that made me feel good. Now it was something that made me cry as I poked myself in the eye with the mascara and dropped my lipstick.

“People all over the world started sending messages saying I'd inspired them”

But I didn't give up. With everything else in my life turned upside down, doing this and finally conquering it made me feel like me again.

Later, discharged from hospital, reality hit and I fell into depression. The other three people in the accident had walked away from the crash without a scratch, while the driver got an 18-month driving ban – it seemed so unfair. I spent days crying and raging at the injustice and hopelessness of my situation. What kind of a life would I have now? Other girls my age were going out clubbing, while I couldn't even get dressed by myself. Normal things like getting married and having a career seemed completely impossible now.

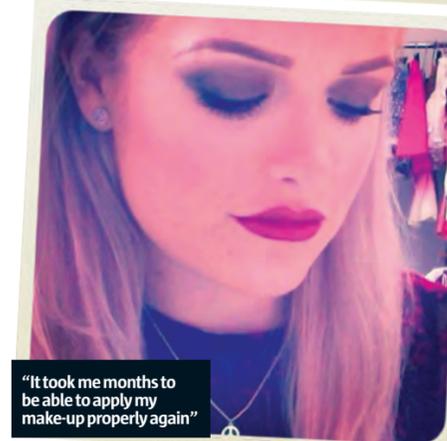
I dragged myself back to college, where I was studying journalism and media, and wore my make-up like a suit of armour every day, protecting me from stares. But at home, I was still struggling. At a friend's suggestion, I started meditating and it helped me focus on what I wanted from life. And once again, I turned to my make-up bag. In my bedroom I started recording videos of myself giving beauty tutorials. It was fun and gave me something to do, but it also reminded me how much I'd always loved beauty and fashion. My

family and friends seemed to really like the videos, so I started posting them on YouTube. I realised I wanted to help other girls like me, to make them understand that having a disability doesn't mean your life is over. I set up my own channel, JordanBone89, and started putting up regular videos where I shared tips and advice, reviewed new products and talked about everything in my life – from what I'd been through to the lack of disabled models in the fashion world. I also used what I'd learned from my meditation to make videos giving advice on positivity. It obviously struck a chord with people, because suddenly strangers from all over the world were sending me messages. Girls with and without disabilities were writing to me and leaving comments saying how much I'd inspired them. It was amazing.

Gradually, bit by bit, my depression



“This was taken just before my accident when I was 15”



“It took me months to be able to apply my make-up properly again”



“I review my favourite products and post the videos on YouTube”



“My boyfriend Mike and I got together three years ago, after my accident. He's my rock”

began to lift. I even started going out with friends again, which is when I met my boyfriend Mike, 25, on a night out three years ago. An aircraft engineer, he wasn't remotely bothered that I was in a wheelchair. Since the beginning of the year my channel has had hundreds of thousands of hits and I've recently started a beauty blog called Jordan's Beautiful Life ([jordansbeautifulife.wordpress.com](http://jordansbeautifulife.wordpress.com)), as well as selling vintage clothes online. I've also become involved with a charity called Fixers. They help young people with different campaigns on any issue that matters to them, so I chose to help raise awareness of road safety with them. I travel around schools to show kids they're not invincible and I've even spoken on a panel at Westminster!

I still have bad days when it all seems too much to deal with and of course I get scared, but I think everyone does sometimes. It's normal. When I think back to the girl I used to be, crying over a dropped lipstick, I want to give her a hug and tell her everything will be OK, because my life is amazing. And if my blog can help other women, then everything I've been through will have been worthwhile.”

■ For more info, visit [Fixers.org.uk](http://Fixers.org.uk).