

Mik Scarlet turned down the chance to get back on his feet

A paraplegic man has refused the chance to walk again – because he says he is 'liberated' by his wheelchair.

5 Mik Scarlet, who is 44, was told by doctors that he could get back on his feet, more than 20 years after a collapsed spine appeared to have consigned him to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. But amazingly, despite impassioned pleas from his parents and doctors, the TV presenter has rejected an operation that would allow him to walk.

10 'Becoming a wheelchair-user set me free,' he explained. 'Free from the expectations of my parents and the pressure to succeed and allowed me to go and do what I love. My entire identity was as a wheelchair-user.'

15 Mik was born in 1966 in Luton, Bedfordshire, with a rare form of terminal cancer. Doctors gave him an untested new trial drug, which he claims, resulted in him becoming the first person in the world to be cured of the disease. However, when he was 17, an unknown side-effect of the treatment resulted in his spine collapsing, and two emergency operations were required to save his life. The surgery left him wheelchair-bound.

20 However, in 1999, Mik suffered serious injuries when a lorry smashed into the back of his car. His back was broken in the accident but, having vowed* never to go under the surgeon's knife again, he resisted treatment. But he returned to hospital.

25 He then underwent major spinal surgery lasting 17 hours, but when he came round, he immediately knew that something was different.

'I had to lie in a body cast for six months, but all the while I had this strange feeling in my legs,' he recalled. 'I didn't know what it was until my feet touched the floor and I could actually feel them. It was an incredible moment – the first time I had felt anything in my legs for more than two decades. That was when I realised that the strange sensation had been the feel of the bed sheets and the breeze against my skin.'

It turned out that when the surgeon dismantled the vertebrae in Mik's back, he untrapped the nerves that had been crushed when his spine collapsed in 1983. Overjoyed doctors told Mik there was a chance he could walk again, if he had an operation of his hip.

30 'The doctors could not believe it when I told them I wouldn't. But my fiancée, Diane Wallace, a computer games artist, did understand. It's at times like that you know you've met the right person. We married just a few weeks later.'

Mik is now aiming to get back into children's television and is writing his autobiography. He says he rarely regrets the decision he made.

Adapted from "Mail on Line, 10th October 2010"

* to vow : jurer, promettre

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Épreuve E3 : ANGLAIS		
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TRAVAIL A FAIRE PAR LE CANDIDAT

COMPREHENSION : 12 POINTS

I – Répondez en français aux questions suivantes en faisant des phrases complètes. (9 pts)

- 1) Qui est Mik Scarlet (âge, profession, handicap) (1,5 pts)
- 2) Qu'a t-on découvert à sa naissance ? (1 pt)
- 3) Quel effet secondaire est apparu à l'âge de 17 ans ? (1 pt)
- 4) Quel a été le résultat des opérations chirurgicales ? (1 pt)
- 5) Que lui est-il arrivé en 1999? (3 éléments) (1,5 pts)
- 6) Quelles sensations lui ont-elles fait comprendre que quelque chose avait changé après l'opération ? (3 éléments) (1,5pts)
- 7) Que lui ont proposé les médecins et comment Mick et sa fiancée ont-ils réagi ? (3 éléments) (1,5 pts)

II – Traduisez (3pts)

“Becoming a wheelchair-user set me free,” he explained. “Free from the expectations of my parents and the pressure to succeed and allowed me to go and do what I love. My entire identity was as a wheelchair-user. “

COMPETENCES LINGUISTIQUES : 4 POINTS

I – Mettez les phrases suivantes à la voix passive (1pt)

- a) His wheelchair liberates Mik Scarlet.
- b) A lorry broke his back.

II – Choisissez le(s) modal(aux) qui convient (1pt)

COULD – WOULD – SHOULD – WILL –

- a) When I am old, I be a surgeon in orthopaedic.
- b) Doctors told me, I.....walk again

III – Recopiez les phrases suivantes en les complétant à l'aide d'un mot figurant dans la liste ci-dessous. (2 pts)

TO / WHEN / THANKS TO / IN SPITE OF / HOWEVER

- a) his spine collapsed, Mik became wheelchair bound.
- b) an operation after a car accident, he could feel his legs again.
- c) the pleas of his parents and doctors, he decided to refuse the operation.
- d) he rarely regrets his decision.

EXPRESSION ECRITE : 4 POINTS

Vous êtes un ami de Mik Scarlet. Vous discutez avec lui de la décision qu'il a prise de ne pas se faire opérer.

Write a dialogue about his decision. (minimum 5 questions and answers)

You can use (for exemple)

“ If (prétérit)....., you (would/could)..... it (would/could)...

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