



## Revenge by plastic surgery: Thousands of divorcees are attempting to show their ex-husbands what they're missing....but can a scalpel really mend a broken heart?

Even though she was swathed in bandages, Lisa Hanson couldn't stop smiling as she regained consciousness. Naturally, after two hours on the operating table having a tummy tuck as well as liposuction on her thighs and hips, the 40-year-old accountant was in some pain. And her bank balance was £2,500 lighter, too.

But so desperate was Lisa to reinvent herself after her husband's adulterous affair and her subsequent divorce, she didn't even need to see the results to know that the surgery was worth every penny.

'Under the bandages, I knew there was a new me waiting to emerge,' says Lisa, who lives in Altrincham, Cheshire.

'The surgery was very much a reaction to my divorce — I wanted to re-invent myself and get my revenge after the way my ex made me feel about myself.'

And Lisa didn't stop at one operation. She's now the proud owner of perky new breasts, thanks to an enlargement and uplift. She's blitzed her wrinkles and plumped up her cheeks with Botox and injectable fillers. Then there's the glamorous nail extensions, the radical haircut and the wardrobe full of fashionable new clothes to showcase her youthful figure.

'I'm virtually unrecognisable from the woman who went through such a bitter divorce four years ago,' she admits. 'With each procedure, I felt my confidence increasing. I have never felt so unattractive and hurt as I did the morning my husband sat me down and told me that he'd met someone else.'

'But having this work done was as if I were putting a metaphorical two fingers up to the man who had all but destroyed my life.'

'Now, I have this fantasy that I will meet him walking down the street and he won't recognise me — then, when he does, he will be astounded. The thought of that happening puts such a smile on my face.'



Numerous operations: Lisa had a breast enlargement and uplift, blitzed her wrinkles and plumped up her cheeks



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Undergoing such a dramatic transformation certainly gives new meaning to the old platitude 'making a fresh start'. But Lisa is not the only divorcee making a date, on the rebound, with a plastic surgeon.

In a phenomenon that is being dubbed 'vengeance surgery', divorcees now make up more than a quarter of business, according to figures released last month, with many admitting they are having surgery to make their ex-partners jealous.

This is clearly a lucrative, niche market. Stateside, some clinics are already offering divorce packages to men and women seeking surgery after a break-up.

But while there is no doubt that cosmetic work can boost self-esteem, how wise is it for women to undergo surgery — with all the health risks this entails — when they are clearly in an emotionally distraught state? Are clinics not guilt of taking advantage of this unhappiness?



**Drastic measures:** Lisa Hanson was desperate to reinvent herself after her husband's adulterous affair and her subsequent divorce

While Lisa, who doesn't have children and is now happily settled with a new partner, insists that she has no regrets, she admits she felt vulnerable and emotionally crushed when her husband confessed to an affair after eight years of marriage.

'We were childhood sweethearts,' she says. 'I met him when I was 15 and I thought that we would be together for ever.'

'But when he had an affair with a woman he met on a training course, it pulled the rug completely from under my feet. I admit I had let myself go a bit — but then, we both had. As we both loved our food, there were plenty of cosy nights in and shared bottles of wine. I just never imagined he would ever go off with someone else.'

Once Lisa knew the truth, however, there was no going back. 'I filed for divorce the following week,' she says.

But her self-confidence was shattered. 'I thought that no man would ever look at me again,' she admits. 'For months, I buried myself in my work, and wouldn't even go out with friends. Then, one evening, I took a long hard look at myself in the mirror. I saw a dowdy woman who had let herself go and was looking older than her years. 'Was this the real me? Was I ever going to feel good about myself? It was at that moment I thought: "Right, I am really going to do something about this." So I did.'

Due to the stress of the break-up, Lisa had already lost a considerable amount of weight but she says that, naked, her body 'was a disaster'. 'I had so much loose skin, my stomach was sagging and my breasts seemed to have disappeared.'



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'I had started going to the gym and felt as if I had more energy, but I loathed the way my body was sagging,' she says. 'I am not the sort of person who would normally think about cosmetic surgery — my mother was horrified — but I couldn't think of any other route to take.'

Lisa booked a consultation at a clinic and says the consultant took her fears seriously. 'I thought I might just have my breasts made firmer, but in the end I had a tummy tuck, liposuction on my thighs and breast implants.'

'I spent about £5,000 — but, to me, this was money well spent. It was my perfect revenge: to reinvent myself as a beautiful and sexy woman.'



**Boost:** Air stewardess Charlotte Marshall feels more confident after her breast enlargement



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'In years gone by, changing your hair, dieting and re-vamping your wardrobe was the quick fix, but now plastic surgery is more affordable and so very available, it's the next choice on the list,' she explains.

'However, the real change needs to be an inside job. Once you learn more about who you are and how you operate in a relationship, you begin to realise that what's on the outside does not need changing much at all.'

'In today's culture, many people equate looks with happiness but it's important to solve the issues you have with yourself first, rather than going straight for a cosmetic procedure you may regret later,'

But not all surgeons are so scrupulous. Charlotte Marshall, 29, a former air hostess who lives in Lincolnshire, admits she may have rushed into surgery too quickly.

To save money, she flew to Brazil for her post-divorce boob job and has been left with some scarring as a result. Even so, such was the depth of her self-loathing, the experience didn't put her off having further work done to her face on her return to London.

For here is the sad truth: Charlotte was attractive before she opted for surgery, she just didn't know it. The years she spent in an unhappy relationship left her convinced she was ugly and worthless.

'My ex basically eroded my self-confidence,' she says.

'I never knew where he was or who he was with. He loved to go out partying and dancing, whereas I was always tired from my long shifts as a member of Virgin Atlantic cabin crew.

'I became so anxious about our relationship that I stopped eating, and became thinner and thinner.

'I desperately wanted to keep my marriage together, but I was working long hours and, with his career, we hardly saw each other.'

Charlotte discovered two years ago that her husband was seeing someone else. 'To this day, I don't know who it was, but I presume it was someone he met while he was out partying,' she says. 'Our split was acrimonious and left me feeling very scarred and hurt. For a long time, I felt so weak and destroyed by what happened.

'But I wanted to salvage something from the wreckage of this relationship. I didn't want that time in my life to have been pointless, so I decided that the "vengeance" I would take would be to re-invent myself.

'I hated my face? Fix it. I hated my breasts? Fix them.



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'Today, I think we are lucky to be able to have cosmetic surgery. It isn't cheap — I spent well over £5,000 — but it has made the world of difference to me.

'My ex-husband thought he'd destroyed me as a woman, but he hasn't. If he saw me now, he wouldn't recognise me.

'I am bursting with confidence and feel the sexiest and healthiest I have ever been.

'I am dating again, have bought a new wardrobe of clothes and feel as if I have my life back.

'I suppose, in a way, I have created a new person from the shadow of the woman I had become.'

Many of the divorced women opting for vengeance surgery are hoping to buy back the body they had before childbirth.

This is certainly the case for Miri Jackson, who discovered not long after giving birth to their daughter that her husband was having an affair with a woman ten years younger.

'Having just had a baby, my sense of self-worth was very low. I was a dress size 16, my boobs were sagging and I did not feel at my most attractive,' says the 33-year-old, the manager of a freight company, who lives in Burbage, Leicestershire.

'I thought long and hard about what I could do to get even,' she says.

'I knew I didn't want him back — but I wanted to feel as if I was worth something again. I wanted to feel good about myself.

'I wanted to wear beautiful clothes, look in the mirror and feel like an attractive woman.

'I certainly did not want him to feel that I was sitting at home pining for him.

'So I decided to have cosmetic surgery. I decided to have my breasts enlarged, as they were the thing I hated most about my figure.

'Now I don't feel old, or neglected, or cast off — I am my own woman again.

'I see my ex-husband quite often, obviously, because of our daughter. He is still with the woman he had an affair with, but when I drop off our daughter, I often seeing something in his eyes which looks suspiciously like regret.

'Revenge is definitely the best medicine after you have been so very badly hurt.'



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