

# My fiance fought crocodile to save me, says bride who lost arm

By Victoria Ward  
and Jamie Pyatt in Cape Town

THE bride who walked down the aisle five days after her arm was ripped off by a crocodile has described how her husband-to-be repeatedly punched the 8ft predator to save her.

Zanele Ndlovu, 25, and Jamie Fox, 27, her British husband, said it was a "miracle" she survived the mauling on April 30 near Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe.

After days of hunting the crocodile, national park rangers found it sunbathing and shot it dead, fearing it would kill tourists, having had a taste for human flesh.

With the bride-to-be's arm in the crocodile's mouth, Mr Fox, from Orpington, Kent, used his fists in an attempt to loosen the animal's grip.

His fiancée was only freed when the Nile crocodile performed a "death roll", tearing part of the former tennis star's arm from her body.

"Jamie swam over to where I was struggling with the crocodile that was trying to pull me to the bottom of the river and grabbed my waist and with the other hand, he rained blows down on the crocodile," she said.

"The pain was excruciating, but Jamie was by my side and I summoned the strength to fight through it."

The couple were on the river with a group of canoeists and tour guides when the crocodile burst the inflatable vessels by biting them, flinging them into the water.

While others were able to escape to the safety of the riverbank, Zanele, who became Mrs Ndlovu-Fox on Saturday, was attacked. But in spite of her injuries, the wedding went ahead,

albeit at a different venue, with the bride still requiring medical treatment.

Speaking from her hospital bed in Zimbabwe, she told *The Chronicle*, the country's main newspaper: "The vows say it all – in sickness and in health."

"The waters were very calm and there were about seven boats in the water when the crocodile just jumped out and bit a chunk of my right arm together with the side of the canoe, which started deflating. It all just happened so fast."

Mrs Ndlovu-Fox was airlifted to the Mater Dei Hospital in Bulawayo, where doctors had to amputate what was left of her arm.

The couple had their wedding planned for the Busters Sports Club in Bulawayo but decided to have the ceremony at the hospital's chapel with 60 of their closest family and friends.

The new bride said: "I spent a lot of time preparing for my wedding day. I didn't know that fate would have me being wed in a hospital chapel with one limb missing.

"But I am so happy we proceeded despite all the drama and I have a wonderful husband."

The couple met 18 months ago when Mr Fox, who works for the National Citizen Service, was on a work programme in Zimbabwe. He visited her a number of times and proposed on Valentine's Day this year.

He told *The Chronicle*: "It is a miracle she is here, there is no other way to explain it. I love her even more and this incident made me feel even more the deep feeling behind our vows.

"For better or worse, in sickness and in health, that's just how it's going to be."