

# Curled up

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I live in England. I am a musician and ex-music lecturer who also spent 8 years as a residential social worker. I have an MA in Social and Political Science from Cambridge University, and was invited to become a member of Worcester University's service user and carer group (IMPACT) in 2013 to share my experience of DV and post-separation abuse. I have experienced years of false allegations and institutionalised prejudice, and of being routinely belittled and dismissed by professionals, all of which have affected my own mental and emotional health (I am currently receiving EMDR therapy for PTSD).

This was the first song I wrote after two years of not being able to pick up a guitar because it made me too emotional. It describes my abusive relationship better in three minutes than I could in an hour of talking. My wife used to attack me randomly and I would just curl up in a ball on the floor and wait for her to burn herself out.

Lyrics:

## **Curled Up**

I love you—you know that I'd do anything for you  
Hopelessly devoted, that's me  
How perfect you said it would be  
But I didn't know about the darkness in your head  
How it would make you so vicious in bed

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I never know when your demons will come  
When you cut yourself I helped you to hang on..

Now I'm curled up in a ball—curled up tight  
I know I can't stop you and I know it's not right  
So I'll just lie here and I'll take what you give me  
In ten minutes time you'll be saying that you love me...

The first time you hit me I just sort of froze  
The blood fell in slow motion from my head and my nose  
I didn't feel pain—it was more like silence  
Everything stilled by your rage and your violence

But it was you who wanted me so so much  
You who loved me so so much  
You sucked me right in no one could have been surer  
Together forever for richer for poorer

Now I'm curled up in a ball—curled up tight  
I know I can't stop you and I know it's not right  
So I'll just lie here and I'll and take it like a man  
You know that I'll help you as much as I can...

Sometimes you cry and say that you'll change  
I jump through your hoops but it's always the same  
There's always another one just a bit higher  
and I'm clinging on like a bird on a wire

And I'm curled up in a ball—curled up tight  
I know I can't stop you and I know it's not right  
So I'll just lie here and I'll take what you give me  
In ten minutes time you'll be saying that you love me...