

# Iva's Story

Here we go again. He came home and yelled at me that I couldn't eat it again. He says I'll never do anything properly, it's a mess and the trousers he wanted to wear to the pub tonight are hanging wet. "What the fuck have you been doing all day? You're just messing around with that little scamp!" And then it came, I tried to protect my face, curled up in a ball so it wouldn't hurt so much and prayed it would end soon ... He was like a madman, punching me and kicking me a few times. "It's no use, you're not getting any better." He slammed the door and was gone.

Meanwhile, in the next room, I heard Peter wake up. He's crying, but I'm lying there with no strength to get up. I imagine what will happen when Dan comes back from the pub. Will it be like always or will he let me sleep this time? I chase away the unpleasant images and run to Peter to calm him down.

It's morning, Dan has left for work and I'm glad we have some peace and quiet. But I can't concentrate on anything, thoughts of last night keep coming back. I feel humiliated, he treated me like I was a piece of rag. I've had a hard day, and I so needed a rest, some sleep. Peter is still small, he needs me several times a night and I don't get a chance to rest during the day. It's a constant hustle and bustle, fighting for time to get everything perfect before Dan gets home from work. It's futile, nothing is ever as he imagined anyway ... I told him several times that I didn't want to, but he didn't hear me at all, carried me to the bathroom, threw a razor at me and told me to get ready, I'm his wife and I have to fulfill my marital duties. But if I don't want to, he'll make other arrangements. I did as he told me, but I could stand it for a while and then I would have a few hours of sleep.

I think about what it was like before and wonder where I went wrong. At first it was fine, he was nice, he was attentive, he cared about me. All my friends were jealous of him. But that's long gone, I feel like he's lost interest in me since I got pregnant. Actually, he doesn't care about us. There are days when he won't even look at Peter and screams at me to do something about him so he won't scream anymore. But Peter needs his daddy. I've lost all my friends, I don't even know why. Maybe it's because Dan didn't want me to spend time away from home, and now I don't even get a phone call anymore. I'm not surprised, Dan always called me when I was with them. I'd love to go out for coffee and talk to someone about what it's like for us right now. I haven't really told anyone yet. I tried to hint to my mom once, but she said a woman has to be able to hold on to something. I guess she's right, but I don't know if I'm up to it. "Hang in there!" On the other hand, I guess no relationship is ideal, there's something everywhere, and where would I go? I'm on maternity leave, I don't have any money to spare, and I'm sure Dan wouldn't give me any money. I already have to beg him to at least give me something to eat, even then he's always shouting what am I doing with it, other women come out with much less and I still need something from him.

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Maybe it's really all my fault, if I was different Dan wouldn't have to yell all the time, he'd be fine at home ... if only I could talk to someone. Maybe they could give me some advice on how to talk to him or what to do next ... . Maybe I could try one of those toll free lines, they'd listen ... But it's hard just to call somewhere. I saw somewhere recently that an organisation offers counselling via chat, that might be easier ... Here it is, the proFem organization ... .

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