

# Love Song

## Eva Svanberg

I remember college, 2000.

Sitting on the floor of my room with my guitar, figuring out the chords to Britney Spears' song from memory (because I was far too cool to buy the CD).

I was so proud of my achievements in transcription, though it was hardly Mozart remembering the *Miserere*. Good old four chord pop music.

We would sing together, acoustic covers, your voice crooning, my voice tentative. You gave me courage. Back then, we sang Oops I did it again to be "ironic"

(we never covered that Alanis song, she was too popular to be cool and too alternative to make covering *Ironic* ironic)

now to cover Britney is an act of solidarity, feminist – she's clearly a victim of the patriarchy, not a manufactured pop princess, kissing Madonna to be edgy,

fake

we sneered from our 20 year old high ground

Not like us

hot mouths warm hands on our standard-issue single beds

this was something

this was real

but secret, in those days before AfterEllen, before the L word, when even Xena only gave us subtext

(how we grasped at that subtext, wearing out our taped-from-TV VHS copies)

We would eat together in the dining hall, and it was torture

not to reach out and hold your hand (what if someone saw?)

trying so hard to be subtle as we went in and out of each other's rooms

(and then in and out, fingers and tongues and oh yes just like that,

better turn up the music to hide our moans)

I would never dream of kissing you in public, then.

and now,

though I sometimes wonder what I've done with my life

(career-wise, you understand) and

though you no longer sing in public, and my fingers have lost their guitar string calluses, and

my middle-aged bones sometimes protest, still

I love to sit on the floor with you, singing

*Hit Me Baby One More Time*

and I know

we no longer have to hide