

1980s Berlin. 1990s IMF. 2001 911 & Madison Square Garden. 2020 U2X  
Radio.

## My Love Poem and Deepest Prayer to U2

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**Vienna, 1983.** I'm a twenty something American doing a study abroad in Vienna. Hitchiking back from my ski weekend with my Grateful Dead hippie friends, artsy, avant gardsy Eddie and Samy from Munich pick me up. Come visit us any time!

Visiting them that summer in Munich I was hit by a car. I had to stay. Those 6 weeks transformed my destiny.

A concert played on the little TV in our Munich apartment. I now know it was a replay of "The US Festival". I stopped. I listened. I didn't know how to explain the way I felt about that voice, that voice, the interplay of strings, drums and melody. It marched boldly but touched deeply. It pierced, softly. *Sunday Bloody Sunday*. I asked – who is that? U2.

During those 6 weeks in Munich I was the butterfly. Immersed in the intensely political culture of post-punk Germany, I shed my American skin, rid my clothes of all color except black, died my hair pink, pulled back the tab with a loud, angry hiss on an explosive internal spring of passion and fury, and returned to the States with wings.

**Wide Awake In America.** For 2 years I became the post punk new wave late to the party American whose purpose was punk, politics and social justice. Really, my purpose was to express rage at the world. *WAR. BAD*. Yes, I was now wide awake in America! I heard my newfound fervor to change the world in every drumbeat, strum and melody.

**August 1985, Berlin.** I flew to Berlin with a one way ticket and no plans to return. I had my degree in political science, a passion for the international debt crisis, and Berlin called.

I spent 3 glorious years in Berlin. I spoke no English, studied Marx and immersed myself in the dark, edgy, wildy artistic energy of the walled city. Blixa and Einsturzende Neubauten, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds and the dark, aggressive bands of Berlin nights spoke my new language of anger and angst. I rebelled against Reagan in the streets, boogied with Bowie at the Reichstag, surrounded myself with art and activism, and flourished.

Immersed in the impossible coolness of the Berlin scene, we shared edge and anger. Not love. Perfect.

**1988 - 1990. Repatriation. Washington DC.** I landed in an alien culture called Washington DC. I was the fish on a bicycle.

While trying to reconnect to an American culture I did not like or understand, I longed for Berlin. I ached. It was the grief that brought me back to U2.

**I'm Still Looking.** One night alone, pausing from the raw emotion of Fugazi, The Gun Club, The Cramps, The Damned, I re played *The Joshua Tree*. I listened, really listened, as if for the first time. *'I still haven't found what I'm looking for'* painted my story in a spiritual blend of soul and sound. I stood up from my grief. I'm not lost. I am looking. I bought every U2 CD and listened, again. And again. *Desire. Love Rescue Me. All I Want Is You.* Each song expressed a different nuance of the searing, exquisite pain of being human, but, and this is the but I was only then able to make out in my own shadows, rose above with emotions I had never dared touch – until now. Hope and Love.

I never stopped listening to. U2 inspired and expressed me as I shifted from a woman filled with anger and despair to a woman who started, timidly, then passionately and fully, to believe in the power of love.

**1990s NEW YORK CITY.** I live in NYC. I am a grad student, passionate activist and artist, shouting in the streets with ACT UP, rioting with the Riotgrrrls, chasing my dream to become a director of photography.

**Achtung Baby.** There is no way to describe my range of emotions when I heard Achtung Baby. Recorded in Hansa Studios Kreuzberg, just seconds from where I lived, it both completely unraveled me and uplifted me in a way I could not believe possible.

The music was not only a new dimension of sound and emotion for U2, it was my Berlin, the swirl of energy, sounds and smells that created me. MY Berlin. As I write this I get goose bumps. U2, the band that expressed my anger, hope and love, created this crazy beautiful living sonic testament to my place, almost a dream by now, that nobody knew or understood in my daily life.

But U2 knew. I was not alone.

*ONE* became my anthem, my defining sound and feeling, and 30 years later, still is. Achtung Baby- my background. Every word. My own.

### **Mid 1990s to 2000. New York City**

New York City in the 90s was defined by the daily loss of beautiful beings to AIDS. This horror brought me a deeper understanding of the healing power of love as the only antidote to hate, often expressed in the most simple, mundane, human acts. Yes, *Some Days Were Better Than Others*. I listened to all of my favorite U2 songs in a different light and felt on a spiritual level that from the first moment you 4 stepped to your mics, you vibrated this healing power in every song.

**African Debt Relief.** As U2s music helped me feel, grow and yes, believe in love, I joined you, U2, on your political journey. Or, should I say, you joined me on mine.

I literally danced in the streets when you met with the pernicious Senator Helms about AIDS. I was mesmerized and ecstatic when you championed African Debt Forgiveness and worked with the World Bank and IMF.

You see, while everyone knew Apartheid in the 80s, nobody in America knew the IMF or the World Bank, it seemed. Nobody. I did. I understood their power over the bellies of millions. I was passionate about changing Austerity policies. So were you. I felt U2 embrace me and invite me to walk the globe hand in hand as you used your celebrity to expose some of the world's most profound crises, and shed light on the possibility that yes, there was a way out.

### **U2 was the beautiful voice of my soul's unfolding journey and the symbol of all things worth fighting for.**

When I experienced the most addictive relationship of my life, you sang my journey with *Desire*, *Wild Horses* and the most poignant expression of this pleasure and pain, *Cruel*.

**Leave It Behind.** In the almost insurmountable agony of my break up, you handed me Walk On, Beautiful Day and Kite. I was desperate. Crawling. You told me something I needed to hear. I was packing a suitcase for a place that had to be believed to be seen. I couldn't function, couldn't fathom, had never been, but you told me. I sang all the words at the top of my lungs with you: I'm a woman, not a child, I could leave this behind. Walk. Believe. I was going Home.

**September 11 2001.** I watched the towers fall from a small corner at the water's edge in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. I stood completely frozen as people around me endlessly redialed loved ones in the towers with no response.

*If God Could Send His Angels, We Can Use Them Here Right Now.*

This shared agreement we call reality was forever altered.

I had already bought tickets to my first U2 concert. My first!!! Only 6 weeks later, you dared. You played to New York. As we gathered, a mass of shocked, traumatized souls only beginning to process our loss, you wrapped us in safety, surrounded us with love, and truly elevated all of us at Madison Square Garden. From the firefighters in the pit then on stage, to each human crying and singing because we needed to, we needed to, we transcended our shared horror, danced through the pain, and I do believe that if we didn't understand love, had hope.

**2013 New Zealand.** I am honored with the "Worst Karaoke Ever" award for belting out ONE.

**2020 Flagstaff, Arizona.** I'm now in my mid 50s. U2 is still my soul. I have just experienced an agonizing 4 years. While I thought we as a nation were better than this, on November 6, 2016 I learned we are not. Like many of us feeling inexpressible disappointment and disillusionment, struggling to understand the impossible, trying to find our shared light, my daily journey is to focus on the positive, be the light, the love, and shine, shine shine.

**Oh, I have been waiting for you.**

July 1, 2020. At 3PM Arizona time, U2X is scheduled to debut. I am a real estate agent, meeting clients at exactly 3. I am tingling with excitement, beside myself with anticipation. **Oh, I have been waiting for you.** I pull up. My clients are on the sidewalk. They peer at me through their masks, are you coming? U2 X Radio arrives. I

sat quietly, filled with joy. **Love just came to town, bitches.** I snapped a photo of my radio screen and posted, no crowd, to my fb and ig: "The world is a better place".

**2020 Pandemic. Election. A nation divided.** My dial is stuck on Channel 32 and yes, yes, yes, my world is a much better place. You are where my heart is. I am Home.

It's impossible to choose 5 songs that have deep personal meaning, because all of them do.

If I don't get to play my songs to the world, I've spent my whole adult life, and I really mean this, my whole adult life hoping there would be a way for Bono, Edge, Adam and Larry to truly hear me, hear my sincerity, when I offer you my deepest and most poignant prayer.

Thank You.

SONGS - If you pick me to host, I would like the chance to change these except ONE!

Sunday Bloody Sunday - Live Version - My First U2 Song.

One - Mary J Blige Version

Walk On

Every Breaking Wave

Running to Stand Still