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I believe Diamond is among the very best pop songwriters of the last half-century and it saddens me that I only dare mention this in an embarrassed whisper. It's those frilly shirt/hairy chest/flare combos, I suppose. And his popularity with women of a certain age. And the fact that unlike, say, Johnny Cash, he never quite evinced enough hinterland, darkness or druggy torment to secure his rightful place outside the guilty pleasure ghetto.

So no, I don't think I will be trying to blag tickets for the Hit Factory reunion gig. Not even for a glimpse of Dead Or Alive so as to find out what Pete Burns' face has been up to recently. And that prediction I made about One Direction's hit becoming cool one day: I don't really think that's going to happen, not even in 2037. Neil Diamond on the other hand – he's a Journey in the making. One day, the whole world will learn to sing along to Sweet Caroline. And they'll do it without a trace of irony because by then, they'll know, as some of us have known for ages, that Neil Diamond is quite simply God.

A Fan's Response

You are so perfectly right! Neil Diamond is a god when it comes to writing and to singing from the soul. Listen to I Am ... I Said, And The Grass Won't Pay No Mind or Walk On Water and anyone with a lick of sense has to be awed at his ability to dig so deeply. And don't forget that even though many of his fans are older now like myself, my grandchildren like to listen also. He brings something that 'teeny bopper' music doesn't have - an essence that is beyond description, but to me is a river that flows right to the heart. If you listen to Hell Yeah or Remember Me you can hear the yearning that was there in that far away beginning. God bless the man who writes with a golden pen. God bless Neil Diamond.