

But seriously, I only love them for their music

By Tiffani Hill-Patterson

I have a rock star fantasy.

Actually, I have three rock star fantasies.

First, let me say that I'm happily married and mom to a four-year-old daughter. And my husband doesn't mind my "obsession." In fact, he gets a kick out of it. What can I say? These guys rock my world.

The objects of my obsession are all married with children. The fact that they're "family men" just makes them even more irresistible.

My journey into infatuation started in the mid-1980s. I was about 14 and just getting into MTV. Long hair, tight leather pants and ripped shirts were all the rage. And I'm not talking about the ladies.

One band surpassed all others in every way...music, looks, number of cans of Aqua Net...Bon Jovi was the baddest, the coolest and the hottest. To use the slang of the day, lead singer Jon was fine. And I was hooked.

As a teenager, I didn't have the means to buy the albums or go to the concerts. I started my collection by obsessively listening to the Top 40 countdown shows on the radio, tape recorder at the ready. "Casey, would you stop talking over the intro!" I wore those cassettes out, playing "Livin' on a Prayer" and "Bad Medicine" over and over and over.

I taped their videos, their appearances, anything I saw. I have no idea where those tapes are now, but I wish I could find them.

Yes, I changed the words to "I was born to your baby, you were born to be my man." Yes, I imagined getting backstage and meeting Jon. (Get your minds out of the gutter – he was always a perfect gentleman. And back then I wasn't as well educated as the kids are now.) Yes, I begged my mom to let me go to their concert in Huntsville just before I turned 16...no dice.

Fifteen years later, just as I was about to turn 30, part of my fantasy was fulfilled. I was in the same building as Jon. Oh, my gosh...finally I got to see my Jersey boys in all their glory! And I was not disappointed.

It was like going back to high school...I felt like a schoolgirl, screaming and dancing and singing every song. Even my husband enjoyed the show. Or maybe he just enjoyed seeing me so happy!

It was an unforgettable night.

Reigniting the passion

Fast forward to 2005, this little show called “American Idol” was starting its fourth season. I’d caught a couple of episodes of the three previous seasons, but something made me stop and actually care about season 4. When I saw him sing the Allman Brothers’ “Whipping Post” I was floored. This guy had “it.” I watched every episode.

He is Bo Diddley...and he’s No. 2 on my list of rock star fantasies.

I loved watching him perform on “Idol,” and that minute and a half just wasn’t enough. I downloaded the audio to my iPod and watched the videos on my laptop.

From his version of “Time in a Bottle” to “Vehicle” to my favorite “In a Dream,” Bo had my heart pumping. He sang with passion and style, and he rocked. That voice, that hair, that sense of humor...it was just what the music world needed. He reignited my passion for music. It was refreshing to get away from all the “pop tarts.”

Yes, I voted for Bo. Yes, I saved all the posters from *The Times*. (Well, I shared the goods with mom friends in Louisiana and Texas.) I Googled for news of Bo, and I even flew to Dallas and met up with the aforementioned friends to see the Idols concert in Grand Prairie, Texas.

Imagine three grown women screaming like teenagers and you’ll have a good idea what we were like that night. It was a blast.

One of my favorite songs on Bo’s solo album is “Nothing Without You,” which has a connection to rock star fantasy No. 1. Jon Bon Jovi co-wrote the song with Bon Jovi guitarist Richie Sambora and Grammy-winning producer John Shanks.

Hmm...coincidence?

Light my fire--again

After Carrie Underwood topped Bo in last year’s voting, I swore I wouldn’t watch season five. After all, no one could be better than Bo.

I stuck to my word throughout the bad auditions, but into about the second week of performances I started hearing buzz about a new rocker.

Could it be? Could there be someone like Bo to light up season 5’s competition?

Oh, yes indeed. Chris Daughtry is rock star fantasy No. 3.

Despite talk that he could sing nothing but alt rock, Chris proved he could do more. "Making Memories of Us" was sweet but a little rough around the edges. "Suspicious Minds" was a nice take on Elvis. "I Walk the Line" was my favorite...it had power and conviction. It didn't hurt that he's got the rock god look either.

I was completely shocked when he was voted off. And I vowed not to watch the rest of the season. I managed to stick to my word...until the finale, when I knew I'd hear Chris sing again. Like Bo singing with Lynyrd Skynyrd last season, it was pure joy seeing Chris sing with his favorite band, Live.

Yes, I voted for Chris. Yes, I downloaded his songs to use as cell phone ringtones. And, yes, I bought tickets to the Idols concert in Nashville, just to see him. My friend wanted to see Taylor Hicks. However her 15-year-old daughter found Chris, and his music, more appealing.

And he was worth the trip and the soaking we got while running through a rainstorm to the arena. Chris has awesome stage presence, his powerful, raspy voice gives me chills, and he is so comfortable in front of a screaming crowd. He belongs up there.

His rousing cover of Led Zeppelin's "Whole Lotta Love" was unexpected and sexy. A duet with Elliot Yamin on Nickeback's "Savin' Me" was inspiring. It's too bad he sang only four songs.

Between "Idol" shows Chris is writing songs for his debut album; his group will be called Daughtry. Rumor has it he'll start recording at the end of August, with a single coming out in September. He has said in interviews the album is scheduled for a November 21 release. I can't wait.

By the way, want to guess what he was singing the first time I saw him on "Idol"? A Bon Jovi song of course—"Wanted Dead or Alive."

I think it may be more than coincidence.

Rock 'n' roll forever

There you have it...I confess to being a bit obsessed.

There have been others who have made occasional appearances on my infatuation radar, like Richard Marx and (gasp!) New Kids on the Block, but Jon Bon Jovi has been the one constant.

No one will take his place...(unless he cheats on his wife or does something equally as dumb)...the Jersey boy will always be my first love.

But Bo and Chris are carrying the torch. This “older woman” finds such joy in hearing these Southern boys’ souls in their music. It’s so much fun share their passion.

And now Bo is coming to this year’s Big Spring Jam. What an awesome Saturday that will be. Save me a spot up front, will you?

And, hey, Donn Jennings, book Daughtry for next year’s Big Spring Jam. I’ll be first in line for tickets.

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