

## Episode Two: Awkward Sweet Peaches

DJ Vidiam

(In Quick Disclaimer Voice) The following program is brought to you in part by a grant from General Electric, donations from the Public Broadcasting Corporation, and donations from Viewers Like You. (In Smarmy Radio DJ Voice) Hello, salve, ni hao, salut! And welcome to the third installment of “Awkward Sweet Peaches,” the show that laughs at a joke it just remembered from last week, right when someone says their mother died. I’m DJ Vidiam, and I’d like to call today’s installment “Commercial Radio!” That’s right, all the songs featured on today’s show have been played on commercials before. Now I don’t mean commercial jingles like “Mr. Clean,” or the like, though that may be an idea for later on. I’m talkin’ ‘bout songs that have already been written by relatively well-known bands, and then shamelessly used to promote the sorts of products you see all the time on TV! In between I’ll tell all y’all about the commercials these were on, and whether or not they were egregious sell-outs. Now, ladies and listeners, without further ado, let’s start this show up!

[Plays “Start Me Up”]

That was The Rolling Stones rather suggestive “Start Me Up,” used by Microsoft in a commercial for their first computer in 1985. In the commercial itself were happy, smiling people clicking the “Start” button on their brand new computers. The song lyrics have more to do with comparing lovers to cars than computers, so using a song for that purpose is a huge stretch. Incidentally, I can recall an article on The Washington Post that measured how much of a sell out using a certain song for a certain commercial, depending on how relevant the song and the product are to each other, and depending on whether the band or singer in question encouraged conformity, such as most modern country bands, or rebellion, such as most early punk and rock bands. The formula uses something called a Moby Quotient, represented by the Greek letter “mu.” This song/commercial combination was, according to this website, was a huge, huge, sellout.

[Plays “Walkin’ on the Sun”]

Comin’ in at number two is Smash Mouth’s “Walkin’ On the Sun.” This number was used for a car commercial several years ago. I don’t remember what car was advertised, but I do remember that they used only the phrases “So don’t delay, act now. Supplies are running out” and “The offer’s shun, you might as well be walkin’ on the sun” from that song. Also a pretty big sell-out considering “Walkin’ On the Sun,” is against consumerist-culture. Incidentally, a lot of the songs are found from car commercials, so that says something about the automotive industry.

[Plays “Galang”]

That was “Galang” by M.I.A., and I believe that song was used for a Toyota commercial. Something about a solid red, animated car, with no outlines, leaving a trail of red-paint tire tracks. Like an iPod commercial on acid. M.I.A. is known for her lewd lyrics, so I guess it’s a good thing they only used the last few lyrics of the song, the “Ya Ya Ehhhhh!” part for the commercial. Also, we do accept callers who have requests, at either

717-291-4096, or on [awkwardsweetpeaches@yahoo.com](mailto:awkwardsweetpeaches@yahoo.com), but keep in mind that you may not hear any requests until a later show, or until this current show goes haywire and I need to improvise. It's happened before.

[Plays "Boum"]

Do not adjust your radio sets. I control the AM and the FM, and the language track. The French song you have just heard was "Boum" by Charles Trenet, performed in the 30s, and reused for an Absolut Vodka commercial. I didn't even know about this song, or even this artist, until I was working in a group project with a very courteous fellow student, whose name I cannot recall this moment, last semester, and after we finished most of the project she asked me "Do you know who sings that one song in that Absolut Vodka commercial? I think it's called 'Boom'." So we looked it up on YouTube, and the internet in general, until we finally found the answer, ironically, on YahooAnswers.

[Plays "Goody Two Shoes"]

That was "Goody Two Shoes" by Adam Ant, which was featured in a Coke commercial where a woman got a hip, boyish-looking haircut, and pulled it off as being spunky. Speaking of "When I saw you kneeling" and Coke, a cousin of mine recalls hanging out with some of her boyfriend's guy-friends and they pretended to interview her, using a Coke bottle as a microphone. The guy-friend slowly lowered the Coke bottle, while my cousin was still taking into it, until it was right over his pelvis. She soon found out what they were trying to pull, and she left the house in righteous indignation.

[Plays "1234"]

You just heard Feist's "1234," which was used in a commercial for new iPod nanos, and their ability to show Podcasts. She seems to be a bit of a representative for Apple now, I've seen ads for her in a MacStore recently when I had my clunker of a computer repaired. The song's actually pretty appropriate for the commercial, since it's about a man who can't keep his emotions in check, and is slowly turning into an A-hole, and the commercial has a bunch of iPod nanos piled on top of each other, all different colors yet playing the same Feist video, being removed one at a time so you can see all their colors.

[Plays "Magic"]

Oh, oh, oh! It's "Magic," by Pilot! Used for an ad for AT&T. Actually, they just used someone besides Pilot covering the chorus of the song. But instead they sang, "00 it's magic," then they showed two zeros from a payphone being pressed, with accompanying noise, "Ya know," and never really went beyond that. I am going to say right now, I hate it when people cover other songs for their own commercial gain. The singers they use almost always suck. Last week I was in a Halloween Adventure when they put on a CD of children and adults singing spooky songs, in an effort to get parents to think the CD is "kid-friendly." I was cursing my luck in that store until the bad rendition of Rocky Horror Picture Show's "Time Warp," and I heard a chorus of children singing "But it's the pelvis thrust that really drives you insane." I couldn't help but giggle at that.

[Plays "Catch My Disease"]

That was Ben Lee's "Catch My Disease," performed on a Dell commercial, encouraging college students to buy their brand of computers. The commercial revolved around a man shoving purple gorillas into his computer, and choosing between an array of Einsteinian geniuses, also to shove into his computer, with a focus on the line "And that's the way I like it." The song is about quirky guy who likes quirky girl. I think this song was used mainly for its hipster appeal.

[Plays "Lust For Life"]

That was Iggy Pop's "Lust For Life," used in a commercial for a cruise liner, possibly Carnival, I don't remember which one. Come, sail across the seven seas in one of our luxury liners, with lots of activities, 24-hour restaurants and cafés, 5 ballrooms, and all the hard drugs and strippers you can abuse!

[Plays "You're My Best Friend"]

That was Queen's "You're My Best Friend," in conjunction with a commercial for Cingular, which bragged about how many bars it has in how many places. The lyrics seem to tell more about the relationship between two lovers than two best friends, but the two don't have to be mutually exclusive. It's not a bad song for that commercial, but I figure Freddy Mercury would be turning over in his grave to find out his songs are being used to advertise phones. That could just be me, though.

[Plays "Major Tom"]

That was Shiny Toy Guns' "Major Tom," an alternate take of David Bowie's "Ground Control to Major Tom," used in a Lincoln MKZ commercial. I'm no rocket scientist, but I'm pretty sure a car is not a space shuttle.

[Plays "If You Want to Sing Out, Sing Out"]

That was "If You Want to Sing Out, Sing Out," an anthem about doing what makes you happy, juxtaposed along a commercial asking people to subscribe to their telephone service. I haven't seen the commercial myself, but trying to think of an hour's worth of songs from commercials to use for a radio show is some pretty tough business. I had to ask around to get some more input for the show and I got this little nugget from Bernie, a worker at D-Hall. I haven't seen the commercial myself, but I trust her judgment, and she also mentioned that one of the programs' later songs was on a commercial, and she was right about that.

[Plays "Fly Like An Eagle"]

That was "Fly Like an Eagle," by the Steve Miller Band, used for advertisements for the Postal Service, because life's too short not to send letters and packages, especially with all the starving, destitute children in China with no home addresses. I heard this one a couple of years ago, and I remember that they re-spliced the song to sing "Fly like an eagle...into the future," making it sound more like a command to use the product than a guy who wants to be a free spirit.

[Plays “Like A Rock”]

That was “Like A Rock” by Bob Seger and the Silver Bullet Band, used in commercials for Ford pickups in 1997. A country song, an American car that is a pickup truck...actually a pretty sound combination. I mean, it’s the sort of thing you expect a country song to be used for! I think I’ve heard other country songs used for more current Ford commercials. Heck, if I do a little searching, I’ll probably find some Hannah Montana songs used for those Barbie cars.

[Plays “Worries”]

That was Langhorne Slim’s “Worries,” used in a Travelers Insurance commercial. At first it’s actually somewhat conceivable to think of several floating red umbrellas singing such phrases as “Don’t worry now, I won’t hurt you,” “The country’s calling and that’s where I’m goin’,” and “Don’t know if you’re in my way, but I’ll take you along.” Then they have a voiceover that says “When it comes to protecting the things you care about, leave nothing to chance.” If you wouldn’t think an invasion of friendly insurance-umbrellas settling on cars and houses was chance, then I don’t know what would be.

[After the last song]

Well, it’s 6 PM, and my favorite commercial for deodorant should be on FOX at any moment, so it’s lights out for Awkward Sweet Peaches. In the meantime, I leave you viewers with 100% commercial-free canned music, and 93% PSA free radio shows. But before I go, I leave you listeners with sound advice: If at first you don’t succeed, have a backup plan! Goodnight and good luck.