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Jennifer's Corner

by Jennifer Bowman

Homecoming



The first thing I drank when I got back to the United States was sweet tea. They don't have anything like that anywhere else in the world. Seeing my fiancé was like an elaborate movie scene. My uncle Terry surprised me by coming to see me, and my cat acted like I had never left. All the memories had been left behind me, but at least I was home. U.S. Customs was the most hellish experience of my life, but that was over. I had so much to look forward to.

I flipped on the radio station the next morning, driving in my car, to 96.5 The Mountain. World Class Rock! In Europe, they play American rap and poppy, techno-ish music with nonsensical lyrics. It would be good to get back to nice music, and my personal favorites, Jason and Brad in the morning. They were much more interesting than NPR, which I had been listening to in order to seem more scholarly to all the cool, hip college kids.

I was shocked and horrified to discover that it was not Jason and Brad, but some syndicated show that was way repulsive... and NOT Jason and Brad. Surely, it was a mistake! No, it was not. And on top of that, they were playing horrible, crappy tween music. You know, I don't mind pop music every now and then, so when I felt like listening to that, I'd turn to the pros at Alive 105. But The Mountain? They used to ridicule other radio stations for selling out. They had a great, local base and hilarious DJs.

So why would radio executives decide to make this decision? The Mountain was in the top 5 of all Chattanooga/Cleveland radio stations. Because their "numbers had plateaued." I don't know if anyone's been paying attention, but in today's world of the Internet and satellite radio and iPods, you're darn lucky if your numbers aren't declining. A mere "plateau" is not a cause for concern and a complete makeover for your radio station.

In addition, they claim they did thorough research and they decided that this is what the public wanted. I have no idea who they've been talking to, but I haven't met a single person who actually enjoys the new format. I hope they lose money and are forced to revert back. Or maybe they'll just listen to the public for once.

Other than the loss of my favorite radio station, it is really good to be back in the States. Driving was really awkward at first, and I forgot my cell phone on a near daily basis. I almost kind of wish that we could go a day without cars or cell phones, still, but cities in England are much more walkable than cities in America.

Now that I've been back for a while, I do miss England. It's really a little depressing. I always felt a little incomplete in England without my family and friends and little American conveniences, and now I feel empty in America without my Cambridge group, daily walks, and other random quirks of jolly ol' England. I definitely miss it, and will have to be going back ... sometime. In the meantime, I have a wedding to plan!

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