

My introduction to karaoke was also my introduction to my boyfriend's friends. It was early in our relationship, and I was petrified. Not just because I'd be singing in front of total strangers (who had been merrymaking for some hours before I got off work), but also because I thought I'd have to get up on a bar and strut up and down, wiggling my bum while I sang.

I think I'd seen Coyote Ugly and had got confused as to what karaoke actually was.

But it was far worse than I could have imagined.

It turned out my boyfriend is a Karaoke Nazi. He's a great singer, so he enjoyed bass-baritoning his way cheerfully through his Doris Day/Johnny Cash/Britney Spears repertoire. But his friends were less enthusiastic, particularly as he assigned each song to each friend, and he bullied them onto the little stage area. There, they'd wobble miserably through an Abba song to a disinterested and slightly hostile pub audience, then sprint back to our table to stare at their knees and weep.

It was, in a word, grim.

So I wasn't over the moon when my best friend booked a karaoke night for my birthday.

But this was booth karaoke, not pub karaoke. My friends and I oohed and aahed over the comfortable sofas, the big screen, the little intercom you could use to order drinks. By the end of the session we'd gone through about 24 of our guiltiest pop pleasures, employed the maracas and tambourines left out for us, and even – yes! – strutted about wiggling our bums, Coyote Ugly-style.

In the last ten minutes I noticed one demure friend hadn't sung yet so, leaving off my cries of "it's my birthday, I get to sing the most songs" I rifled through the song book, keyed in the song number and thrust the microphone at my shy friend, batting away his refusals with mad-eyed insistence.

It was at that moment that my boyfriend gave me a knowing look, and I realised I'd gone from reluctant Karaoke Virgin to full-blown Karaoke Nazi. But I never looked back. I now have a full repertoire of karaoke songs, including Spanish-language Shakira numbers, most of Dolly Parton's work, and "posh rapping" over Ice Ice Baby.

And my "shy" friend? Well, he booked a karaoke booth for his last birthday, and ended the evening wrestling the microphone from me, shouting "it's my birthday, I get to sing the most songs".

And thus the circle is complete.

Lest you have forgotten, this was a guest post by Robyn Wilder of [Dollymix](#), [Domestic Sluttery](#) and [orbyn.elsewhere](#)