

You took the words right out of my mouth

Gaynor Lawson covers her ears and calls for the cheque this Valentine's Day.

I'LL PROBABLY BE driven out of town by a baying mob armed with flaming torches and sharpened pitchforks, but during this month of love, please spare me the romance. I don't do fluffy toys, schmaltzy cards, or even chocolates. Consider me the Scrooge of Valentine's Day – bah humbug and all that. Look, I'll turn up for a V-date if seafood and champers are included, but spare me sloppy love songs warbling in the background if you want me to keep my crayfish down.

When it comes to love songs, you've got to have standards. A doe-eyed John Mayer on one knee twanging away on his guitar is fine, but stuff by star-crooners like Michael Bolton and Celine Dion? Oh please, my heart will go on ... and on and on. It's enough to make you want to go down with the Titanic. And as for hairless castrato-type singers and boy bands – could you be bothered? Being serenaded by a teenager is just plain creepy.

Serenading should be done by real men – like the gravel-voiced, slightly shop-soiled legend Eric Clapton. I mean, how did Patti Boyd manage to resist 'Layla' – seven minutes of haunted regret that he'd fallen for the wife of his friend George Harrison? I'd even bend an ear to aged John Lee Hooker (how did the poor kid ever get through school with a surname like that?), or some of the other old bluesmen who make you feel

as if you're truly breaking their already shattered hearts.

But nonsense like Savage Garden's 'Truly Madly Deeply'? I mean, really: 'I want to lay like this forever, until the sky falls down on me'? Pass the barf bag, babe, and just scrap the crayfish thermidor altogether. Keep the sweet stuff in the dessert bowl, not in the air – like the ghastly, but all too frequently played, 'Sometimes When We Touch' by Dan Hill, which is enough to leave

you wanting to touch some Panado, and that's about all.

Most gals would rather have a giggle, perhaps with bloated old rocker Meatloaf, a master of corny double entendres. Who can forget classics like 'You Took the Words Right out of My Mouth' or 'Paradise by the Dashboard Light'?

So, for the month of love, please keep the lyrics sharp, or at least a bit light-hearted. No girl likes to be smothered, no matter what the occasion might be.



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