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Kick Start My Heart Motley Crue

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The Anthem of Resilience: Understanding "Kickstart My Heart" by Mötley Crüe

Few songs in rock history carry the raw, unapologetic energy and the profound backstory of "Kickstart My Heart" by Mötley Crüe. Released in 1989 as the lead single from their iconic album *Dr. Feelgood*, the track is far more than just a high-octane celebration of a hedonistic lifestyle. It is a sonic boom of survival, a testament to the human will to live, and a cornerstone of the glam metal era. For fans and newcomers alike, the song represents a perfect storm of blistering guitar riffs, pounding drums, and a narrative so extreme it could only be true. To truly appreciate "Kickstart My Heart," one must delve into the darkness that inspired its creation and the legacy it has carved into the bedrock of rock and roll.

The Story That Birthed a Legend

The most compelling aspect of "Kickstart My Heart" is the near-death experience that directly inspired it. On December 23, 1987, Mötley Crüe bassist and primary songwriter Nikki Sixx overdosed on heroin. He was clinically dead for several minutes before being revived by paramedics with two adrenaline shots directly to the heart. This traumatic event was a turning point, not just for Sixx personally, but for the entire band. The phrase "Kickstart My Heart" was born from this literal restart of his life. The song is not simply a fantasy about a wild lifestyle; it is a biographical account of a man staring into the abyss and being pulled back. This authentic, gritty origin story gives the track a weight that many other party anthems lack, transforming it from mere entertainment into a powerful narrative of redemption and defiance against death.

Musical Composition: A Masterclass in High-Energy Rock

From a purely musical standpoint, "Kickstart My Heart" is a meticulously crafted powerhouse. The song opens with the roar of a race car engine and Mick Mars's now-iconic, squealing guitar riff. This intro immediately sets a tone of velocity and urgency that never lets up. The rhythm section, driven by Tommy Lee's thunderous drumming and Nikki Sixx's driving bassline, creates a relentless momentum that mimics the feeling of a heart pounding back to life. Vince Neil's vocals are raw and powerful, perfectly capturing the song's themes of survival and exhilaration. The structure is deceptively simple yet incredibly effective, building tension in the verses before exploding into a chorus that is impossible not to sing along to. The guitar solo, while technically impressive, serves the song's energy rather than overshadowing it, a hallmark of the era's best hard rock.

The "Kickstart My Heart" Music Video: A Visual Spectacle

No discussion of the song is complete without mentioning its legendary music video. Directed by Marty Callner, the video is a visual feast of everything Mötley Crüe represented in their prime. It intercuts footage of the band performing with high-octane scenes of illegal street racing, fast cars, and the band's signature debauchery. The video perfectly encapsulates the song's themes of speed, danger, and living on the edge. It became a staple on MTV and played a massive role in propelling the song and the *Dr. Feelgood* album to multi-platinum status. The

imagery of the band, clad in leather and makeup, screaming the lyrics while surrounded by roaring engines and tire smoke, became the definitive visual representation of Mötley Crüe for a generation. The video is not just a companion piece; it is an integral part of the "Kickstart My Heart" experience, reinforcing the song's message with every frame.

Lyrical Depth: Beyond the Party Anthem

While often categorized as a party song, the lyrics of "Kickstart My Heart" are rich with metaphor and personal confession. Lines like "When I get high, I get high on speed" and "If I stop, I'm gonna drop" speak directly to Sixx's addiction and the frantic, unsustainable pace of his life. The repeated phrase "Kickstart my heart, give it a start" is a literal plea for resuscitation, a prayer for a second chance. The song cleverly uses the language of cars and speed to describe the rush of drugs and the adrenaline of performance, creating a double entendre that works on multiple levels. For listeners, it can be a song about pure, unadulterated fun. For those who know the backstory, it is a harrowing account of a brush with mortality. This duality is what gives the track its lasting power and allows it to resonate with audiences decades later.

Cultural Impact and Legacy

"Kickstart My Heart" has transcended its origins to become a cultural touchstone. It is a defining anthem of the late 1980s glam metal scene, representing the excess, the drama, and the undeniable musical talent of the genre. The song has been featured in countless films, television shows, and video games, most notably as a centerpiece in the band's biopic *The Dirt*(2019), where its creation is dramatized with intense emotion. Its use in sports arenas, particularly in hockey and football, has cemented its status as a universal hype song. The track regularly appears on lists of the greatest hard rock songs of all time and continues to introduce new generations to the band's music. The legacy of "Kickstart My Heart" is that it is both a period piece and a timeless rock anthem, a song that perfectly captures a moment in time while remaining perpetually relevant.

Why It Remains a Fan Favorite

The enduring popularity of "Kickstart My Heart" can be attributed to its authenticity and its sheer, unrelenting energy. In an era where much of rock music can feel overproduced or sterile, this song retains a raw, live-wire quality. It is a track that demands to be played loud. For fans, it is a connection to a band that lived their lyrics, a group of misfits from Los Angeles who captured lightning in a bottle. The song's message of survival and resilience, wrapped in a package of sex, drugs, and rock and roll, is universally appealing. It is a reminder that even in the darkest moments, there is a possibility of revival. Whether you are hearing it for the first time or the thousandth time, the opening riff of "Kickstart My Heart" still has the power to make your pulse quicken and your foot tap, a testament to its masterful construction and the raw passion behind it.

The Song in the Context of "Dr. Feelgood"

As the lead single from *Dr. Feelgood*, "Kickstart My Heart" set the stage for what is widely considered Mötley Crüe's magnum opus. The album marked a commercial and artistic peak for the band, selling over six million copies in the United States alone. The song's success, alongside other hits like "Dr. Feelgood" and "Without You," showcased a band that had matured musically while retaining their edge. After the tumultuous period surrounding Nikki Sixx's overdose, the band entered a period of relative sobriety and focused creativity. This newfound clarity is evident in the tight, polished production of the album, overseen by legendary producer Bob Rock. "Kickstart My Heart" is the catalyst for this new chapter, a declaration that Mötley Crüe was not only back but stronger, more focused, and more powerful than ever. The song serves as the perfect introduction to an album that would define the twilight of the glam metal era.

Enduring Relevance in Modern Culture

In the decades since its release, "Kickstart My Heart" has found new life in the digital age. It is a staple on streaming playlists, a popular choice for workout anthems, and a consistent presence on classic rock radio. The song has been covered by numerous artists across different genres, further testament to its universal appeal.

The 2019 introduced the story behind the song to a new audience, sparking a renewed interest in the band and their music. The track's inclusion in video games like *Guitar Hero* and *Rock Band* has made it a rite of passage for aspiring air guitarists and drummers worldwide. "Kickstart My Heart" has evolved from a song about a specific, harrowing moment in one man's life into a global symbol of resilience, energy, and the raw power of rock and roll. It is a song that refuses to fade away, much like the heart that inspired it.

Conclusion: The Heartbeat of a Generation

"Kickstart My Heart" by Mötley Crüe is far more than a song; it is an event, a story, and an emotion captured in under five minutes of recorded sound. From its biographical inspiration to its thunderous musical composition, from its iconic music video to its lasting cultural influence, the track stands as one of rock music's greatest achievements. It is a testament to the fact that the most powerful art often comes from the most painful experiences. Nikki Sixx's metaphorical and literal heart was restarted, and from that restart came an anthem that continues to thrill audiences worldwide. For anyone seeking to understand the essence of Mötley Crüe, or the spirit of 1980s hard rock, there is no better starting point. "Kickstart My Heart" is not just a song you listen to; it is a song you feel in your chest, a reminder that even when everything seems lost, it is always possible to start again.

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