

TUNE INTO ENGLISH

# Katy Perry's Roar

La cantante californiana con questo gioiello pop abbina la rinascita personale con l'emancipazione femminile. Un grande inno contemporaneo che compie dieci anni.

When, on New Year's Eve<sup>1</sup> in 2011, American recording artist Katy Perry's marriage to English comedian Russell Brand ended by text message after just fourteen months, fans wondered<sup>2</sup> how she would respond musically. The answer came in August 2013 when *Roar*, the first single from "Prism", Perry's fourth album, was released<sup>3</sup>. Co-writer Bonnie McKee described it as a song about self-empowerment<sup>4</sup>, telling MTV it is a "pick yourself up<sup>5</sup> and dust yourself off<sup>6</sup> and keep going<sup>7</sup>" song. Perry also revealed that after therapy she was "sick<sup>8</sup> of

keeping all these feelings inside and not speaking up for myself<sup>9</sup>." The song opens with the 'used to' form and four idioms<sup>10</sup>, describing what the singer was like in the past, but no longer<sup>11</sup> is. The first two verses continue largely in the past simple, before the chorus<sup>12</sup> triumphantly reveals how strong and independent she now feels. It refers to the movie *Rocky III*'s motivational theme tune<sup>13</sup> *Eye of the Tiger* as well as Helen Reddy's 1971 feminist anthem<sup>14</sup> *I Am a Woman*, with the line "hear me roar<sup>15</sup>". The song goes on to refer to iconic boxer Mohammed Ali's catchphrase<sup>16</sup> "Float like a butterfly, sting<sup>17</sup> like a bee." ☺



SCAN, READ & LISTEN 18

LOWER INTERMEDIATE B1

GLOSSARY

- 1 **New Year's Eve:** Capodanno
- 2 **to wonder:** chiedersi
- 3 **to release:** pubblicare
- 4 **empowerment:** emancipazione femminile
- 5 **to pick oneself up:** tirarsi su
- 6 **to dust oneself off:** darsi una spolverata
- 7 **to keep going:** andare avanti
- 8 **to be sick of:** essere stufo di
- 9 **to speak up for oneself:** parlare per se stessi
- 10 **idioms:** espressioni idiomatiche
- 11 **no longer:** non più
- 12 **chorus:** inno
- 13 **theme tune:** colonna sonora
- 14 **anthem:** inno
- 15 **to roar:** ruggire
- 16 **catchphrase:** tormentone
- 17 **to sting:** pungere
- 18 **to bite:** mordere
- 19 **to rock:** ondeggiare
- 20 **stripes:** galloni (decorazione militare)

**bite**<sup>18</sup> **my tongue:** this idiom means to stop yourself from saying what you mean.

**I stood for nothing:** the phrasal verb 'to stand for' means to take a position in favour of something. To 'not stand for something' means to find it unacceptable.

'cause: abbreviation of 'because.

I used to **bite my tongue** and hold my breath Scared to **rock the boat** and make a mess So I sat quietly, agreed politely I guess that I forgot I had a choice I let you push me past the breaking point I **stood for nothing**, so I **fell for everything**

You held me down, but I got up (hey) Already brushing off the dust You hear my voice, you hear that sound Like thunder, gonna shake the ground You held me down, but I got up (hey) Get ready 'cause I've had enough I see it all, I see it now

I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter Dancing through the fire 'Cause I am a champion, and you're gonna hear me roar Louder, louder than a lion 'Cause I am a champion, and you're gonna hear me roar

**Chorus**  
Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh  
Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh  
Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh  
You're gonna hear me roar

Now I'm floatin' like a butterfly Stinging like a bee, **learned my stripes** I went from zero, to my own hero You held me down, but I got up (hey) Already brushing off the dust You hear my voice, you hear that sound Like thunder, gonna shake the ground You held me down, but I got up (hey) Get ready 'cause I've had enough I see it all, I see it now I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter Dancing through the fire 'Cause I am a champion, and you're gonna hear me roar Louder, louder than a lion 'Cause I am a champion, and you're gonna hear me roar

Chorus 2

**rock**<sup>19</sup> **the boat:** this idiom means to cause problems.

**I fell for everything:** the phrasal verb 'to fall for' means to naively accept something. To fall for someone means to fall in love.

**I earned my stripes**<sup>20</sup>: the idiom 'to earn your stripes' means to have worked to deserve something. It derives from the military.



Katy Perry performs during halftime of the NFL Super Bowl on 1 February, 2015.



Scan this QR code with your smartphone or tablet and listen to the official song on YouTube while reading the lyrics.

Fergal Kavanagh runs the website [www.tuneintoenglish.com](http://www.tuneintoenglish.com), the web's largest free resource for learning English through pop music.

