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Description automatically generated with medium confidence“When I was thinking about this project, I really wanted to say something beyond break-up songs and love songs,” says Kameron Marlowe. “I wanted to throw life songs in there as well. These are all real things that I've gone through, and there's a lot of loss, there's a lot of pain, there's a lot of love. It really tells the story of these past two years.”

One of Nashville’s most exciting up-and-coming voices, Marlowe has indeed been through some changes recently, from adapting to a new life on the road to breaking through with the Platinum-certified single “Giving You Up” and touring alongside some of country music’s biggest stars. That journey is reflected in the sixteen songs of his sophomore album, *Keepin’ the Lights On*, from the introspection of “On My Way Out” to the romantic turmoil of “Strangers.”

“I grew a lot mentally,” says Marlowe of the album’s emotional range. “I had a lot of hard stuff on my plate and I had to learn to be a little stronger and not take things so personally all the time. I learned how to fall back in love—getting engaged and fixin’ to get married—after going through a situation I wrote about on the last record. I've lived a lot of life in the past few years that really opened my mind to some new ideas.”

The scope and maturity of the album establish Marlowe as a true force in today’s country music—a triple-threat singer, songwriter, and performer blazing his own path, marked by his distinctively soulful and resonant vocals. And it hasn’t taken him long to find a following, having already racked up almost 900 million career global streams.

Born in Kannapolis, North Carolina, Marlowe grew up singing in church and formed a band in high school. After leaving college to help support his family, he began uploading performances online and started gaining traction. He subsequently moved to Nashville and released "Giving You Up" independently; when the song—written by himself after his girlfriend broke up with him, right before he was planning on proposing—went viral, Marlowe landed management and songwriting deals and eventually signed with Sony Music Nashville.

He released several more singles and, in 2022, put out his acclaimed debut album *We Were Cowboys*, which included the Gold-certified tracks “Burn ‘Em All” and “Girl On Fire.” Named to CMT’s 2023 Listen Up class and Opry’s NextStage program, Marlowe was also highlighted as “One to Watch” by Amazon Music, Pandora and Spotify.

His powerful vocals made an immediate impression, but Marlowe wasn’t satisfied with his songwriting. “I felt like some of my songs in the past were surface level as I was still growing in my comfort and confidence around songwriting and sharing my story,” he says. “But on this, it was time to dig deeper. I can write a break-up song 573 different ways, but if it's saying the same thing, to me it's the same song.”

He points to the song “Never Really Know” as a turning point in the direction of the new album. “That song fired me up so much, because it was so personal and so special, and something that I hadn't written before,” he says. “That really started shaping this album to be what it was. It’s almost a folky kind of production, which really made the lyric shine and made you want to keep listening to the story—that was a challenging thing to do, but probably the most rewarding once we finally got it right.”

*Keepin’ the Lights On* was produced by Dann Huff, who has worked with the likes of Taylor Swift, Keith Urban and Bon Jovi, among countless others. “Dann is a mastermind,” says Marlowe. “Sometimes we only worked on one song a day—we wanted to make sure that they all got the attention that they deserved, and we really took our time with the sounds and the overdubs and the things that bring the songs to life.”

Huff was so taken with Marlowe’s commanding voice that he had the singer cut most of his parts live. “Even if I went back and tried to re-track it,” says Marlowe, “he was always like, ‘Nah, when you're in the moment of the song being created, there's a different emotion level there.’ With his encouragement, I really went all out and made sure that I went for those high notes to show my range. It’s something I'm really proud of on this album.”

Marlowe learned from the success of “Giving You Up,” but maybe not the lessons you expect. “That song launched my whole career,” he says. “I don't know where I would be without it, even though I had to go through some of the darkest times in my life to get that song. But having so many people reach out and be like, ‘Man, you don't know what that song did, how it got me through a hard time’—for me, that means more than the plaque on the wall. I feel like I really connected with people and hit a chord with them, to the point where they felt like that song was also a part of their story.”

With the song “Quit You,” he makes an explicit connection between his first hit and his current state of mind. “The hook is ‘I'm giving you up, just like I did them Marlboro Lights/And I’m giving you up the same way I did the whiskey on ice,’” he recites. “I wanted to start ‘Quit You’ by rehashing that, because ‘Quit You’ is the ending chapter of that book for me. I finally found the love that I was looking for. People get hopeless about relationships and stuff like that, and I was that way, too—I thought I was hopeless, but then my fiancée came along, so I wanted to make sure that I included that piece by using those same lines.”

Elsewhere on *Keepin’ the Lights On*, “I Can Run” is a celebration of rebuilding your sense of self; “I had some low spots. and I had to find myself again, and it felt like I lived every word to that song,” Marlowe says. “911,” meanwhile, is a ‘90s country-style honky-tonk banger. “I don’t go to bars that much anymore,” he says, “but it takes me back to when I was younger and first moved to town and I loved going downtown and having a ball.”

As his profile has grown, Marlowe has shared stages with the likes of Morgan Wallen, Zach Bryan, Luke Combs, Riley Green and Lainey Wilson. “Everyone I've toured with is an incredible artist,” he says, “and I try to take a piece from each person that we go out with.”

Clearly, he has studied well—he played over 100 shows in 2023 and graduated to more than 30 headlining dates, which extended into 2024 owing to demand. Sharing the stage with the same band he’s had since he was 14, he’s known for delivering high impact performances, with all the energy of a real rock show.

To Kameron Marlowe, if his second album is a statement of purpose, the culmination comes with the title track. “My family was never rich, we've always just made it by,” he says. “And for the first time ever, I saw my dad kind of be humbled when he lost his job of almost 20 years working in a magnet factory. He came to me and was like, ‘Man, I really don't know how I'm gonna keep the lights on.’ This music industry is so hard, and it can mentally drain you and screw you up, but when I started my career, I made a promise to myself that as hard as it would get, I would always try and tell the truth and do this the right way versus just chasing whatever’s working at the time. This song represents that for me and that's why it had to be the album title.”

“If I can continue to be this personal in my writing, I feel like it will connect to people in a deeper way,” he adds. “That's all I want to do. And when you go deeper with yourself, you can connect deeper with other people.”

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