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Kip Moore Had No Concerns Over a Sophomore Slump on 'Wild Ones'

Kip Moore is very grateful for his success story, make no mistake about it. However, the MCA Nashville recording artist says he not only dreamed of success -- but planned on it.

"I told myself that all along. I know that some people might take that wrong," he told Billboard. "I'm so thankful every day for everything that has happened so far. But, I put myself in this spot years ago. I knew that I was going to get where I was trying to get. I just always believed in myself and that I could get there."

The Georgia native went on to say that if you have true confidence in yourself and your talents, there's no other way to think.

"If you don't feel that way, what's the point?" he said. "I've had to fight like a wild animal to get to where I'm at. I've had to scrape and claw and it damn sure hasn't been easy. I saw myself and the band on the road headlining shows and hearing my songs on the radio. But, that doesn't take away from me being grateful about it. I put it out there in the universe years ago that we were going to get there."

Moore's second album, *Wild Ones*, will be released Friday and, unlike other artists, he says the idea of a sophomore slump never crossed his mind.

"I wasn't scared of that, because I never stopped writing," he said. "I've got a thousand songs. I've already written four more bodies of work that are ready to go now."

One of those songs, "I'm To Blame," has already made its presence known on the Country Airplay Chart, currently sitting at No. 20. Moore said he

was moved to write the track from being generally "pissed off" one day.

"I was frustrated with some things in my career and my personal life," he said. "I had just got done watching people having this political debate on TV and they were pointing the finger at each other. I thought 'Where did our backbone go in this society?' I came into it with that mindset."

The honest lyrics about taking responsibility and blame for one's decisions are ones that he's lived first-hand.

"I'm not searching for the wrong road or looking to put my hand on that button, but I've never been scared to take chances," he said. "I've always been fearless in my approach of trying things. When you're like that, there's a chance that you're going to go down the wrong road first before you get to that right one. I never have been scared to do that, or to own up to something and say, 'Yeah, I did it. Let's move on. I apologize.' I'll take a chance all day long."

Wild Ones is full of material that will likely find favor with his growing fan base. Of "Comeback Kid," he says, "I've never been one of those guys who have had things handed to me. I come from a blue-collar family." This applies to a situation that happened to him when his "Dirt Road" single peaked at No. 35 on the Country Songs chart, he said: "I heard the chatter when people said 'You might be done now. That record was a one-and-done.' I just always know that every time the chips are stacked against me, I will figure out a way to get it done. That's what that song embodies. You can count me out for a little while, but not for long."

Being backed up against the wall isn't something Moore necessarily likes, but he says he does relish the challenge.

"I never want to get there," he said, "but when I do, that's when I feel like I do my best stuff. I'm a little bit of a tormented soul, in a sense. I feel like I have to be there to get the best stuff out of it a lot of times."

A career song from the album could very well be "Running For You," a song he says he's held onto for a while.

"I almost gave it away to a few different artists that wanted it," he said. "I've kept it in my back pocket for a few years. They wanted me to put it on the first record, but I felt like I needed to wait for it. I knew it was a big song. I'm glad I did."

He will no doubt be performing new material on the Wild Ones Tour, which kicks off Oct. 8 in Bethlehem, Penn. He's excited about being in the headlining slot.

"We love the opening slot and we're very grateful and thankful for them, but the timing of this could not be any more perfect with a new record coming out," he said. "We get to stretch our legs as far as the length of our set and also playing the whole record. It's definitely something we're looking forward to."

But, first, he has to finish his duties opening for Dierks Bentley on the Riser Tour, which wraps in September. Does Moore have any initiations for his opening acts like Bentley did in January, when he invited Moore, Maddie & Tae and Canaan Smith to take a dip in a frigid Nashville lake in January?

"I don't have anything. I'm trying to play nice," he said, before admitting "There might be something that comes once we get out there. But, right now, my plate is so full that I can't think about a prank."

As for Bentley, Moore says he's keeping an eye out for one last practical joke before the final date of tour -- Sept. 19 in Alpharetta, Ga.

"I'm sure he's got something up his sleeve," Moore said, always ready for the challenge.