Brandon Lancaster is well aware there’s an element of fantasy in country music. You can’t turn on country radio without hearing a stream of songs depicting field parties, endless summer nights, and tricked-out trucks. The irony of course is that those things all come with a price—if they’re even attainable at all.

“No one can afford those jacked-up trucks,” Brandon Lancaster says with a laugh.

As the front man, singer, and chief songwriter for the multi-platinum-selling band LANCO, Lancaster is focused on something different: reality.

The group’s upcoming EP—arriving later this year via Riser House Records—gives a hearty bear hug to the flesh, blood, victories, and disappointments of everyday life. Produced by GRAMMY Award-Winning Producer, Jay Joyce (Eric Church, Cage The Elephant, Brothers Osborne), the material is about soldiering on against the headwinds of uncertain futures, fluctuating bank accounts, and occasional heartbreak.

Lancaster—along with keyboardist Jared Hampton, bassist Chandler Baldwin, and drummer Tripp Howell—are no strangers to paying lyrical homage to lived experiences and the daily struggle. Lancaster wrote about an authentic relationship—from its birth to its breakup and rekindling—in 2017’s “Greatest Love Story,” a song that gave LANCO a multi-week Number One country radio hit and resonated with fans across all genres. When they released their debut album *Hallelujah Nights* the following year, they found themselves atop the Billboard Country Albums Chart, making them the first country band in a decade to have their first album debut at No. 1. The platinum single “Born to Love You” came next and Lancaster & Company—the long form of the group’s name—were on an undeniable roll.

Everyone’s most despised buzzword halted the momentum in 2020, however, when LANCO were forced off the road by the pandemic. The hiatus was eye-opening to Lancaster, who looked even further inward to take stock of what's important.

“What we've seen in the past three years is that when status is taken away, what do you have?” he asks.

LANCO doesn’t shy away from the hardships of life on their new EP, but they don’t deny their fans a relief valve either. “Sound of a Saturday Night,” a collab between Lancaster, Spillman, the band’s Tripp Howell and his brother Tate, blows off the steam of the workweek with a slicing guitar riff, a relentless drumbeat, and a “whoa-whoa” finale made for singing at the top of your lungs. Yet again, Lancaster nods to a heartland hero: “Seger on the speakers, teaching us night moves” he sings, setting a scene and mood with just one simple lyric. “There’s some heaviness on this project,” Lancaster admits. “So I wanted a song that was like, hey, even when life's getting you down, there’s still time to crank up the speakers and immerse yourself in those Saturday night sounds, whether it’s music, the voices of your friends, or even the marching band rehearsing at the school near my house.

Their upcoming EP arrives as a follow up to their self-produced 2021 EP “Honky-Tonk Hippies,” recorded at Fame Studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama. Like that EP and 2018’s *Hallelujah Nights* before that, their new music captures the band at a specific moment in time: seasoned but no less ambitious, musically evolved but still LANCO.

“*Hallelujah Nights* was representative of who we were in our early twenties. It represented a long time of our life. But this is who we are now. This is what we've been going through. This is what we're still going through. This is how we processed it. And this is who we are sonically. Yeah, we have five-minute songs now and we’re not afraid to,” Lancaster says. “There’s a fearlessness and an honesty in this body of work that we’re all proud of. If you haven't heard from us four guys in a few years, this'll catch you up on everything you need to know. ”Put another way, it’s the sound of a band—creating, recording, and existing—in real life.”