By embracing life’s changes, we grow. Rather than stagnate under the weight of circumstances or expectations, Curses defy inertia and consistently progress. The Princeton, West Virginia quintet—Brando Casto [vocals], Eli Fry [vocals], Davey Nicewander [guitar], Michael Olivares [bass, vocals],and Shane Cyrus [drums]—toss and turn between a proficient metallic onslaught, powerhouse grooves, and poignant melodies offset by guttural growls and bludgeoning screams. After generating 2 million-plus streams and stirring up a palpable buzz, the band forge ahead once again on their second full-length and SHARPTONE debut, *Chapter II: Bloom*.

“All in all, the album is about trying to go with extreme change and flourish,” explains Davey. “You can either roll with it or resist. We don’t want to tell anybody what to do, but we do hope to have a positive influence.”

“The reason we’re musicians and we’re not just fucking slaving away in coal mines is music had a positive impact on us,” agrees Eli. “It’s why we do this. We were really digging into ourselves and finding out who we are. You can’t just keep going through life without thinking about who you are, what you’re doing, and what you want. Change is consistent. You can’t avoid it.”

In 2017, Curses stormed out of West Virginia with *Chapter I: Introspect*. Among a handful of standouts, “The Abandoned” clocked over 612K Spotify streams. Meanwhile, “Fortune Collapse” featured a guest appearance by Periphery frontman Spencer Sotelo and garnered plugs from *BraveWords* and more. Throughout 2019 and early 2020, they recorded what would become *Bloom* alongside producer Justin Mitchell [I Am King] at King Studios in Pennsylvania. During the process, the musicians grew individually and as a collective.

“The style has matured,” adds Brandon. “*Chapter II* is more personal for all of us. We’re discussing a lot of things we’ve gone through. We’re putting our feelings, anger, and passion into each of those tracks.”

“I was new on *Chapter I*,” says Eli. “When we did this album, I had a few more years of experience under my belt and a grasp on what I wanted to add. We knew what we wanted to write about. We knew how to make the music more diverse and more technical while keeping the colorful and catchy choruses to add a balance. We preserve our roots, but expand them.”

The first single “The Door in the Wall” evinces this evolution. On the track, precise pummeling gives way to bone-breaking verses before a sweeping clean refrain. The riffs start and stop on a dime as the call-and-response between Eli and Brandon transfixes.

“It’s just about how bizarre existence is,” Eli states. “There’s so much absurdity that comes with being human. We’ve had some pretty rough times. It’s how we view each other as human beings and how fucking weird it is.”

Meanwhile, “无为 (Wu Wei)” subsides into a hypnotic bridge before another hard-hitting hook takes hold. Davey goes on, “It discusses the flow of life and events as things occur and unfold around us. *‘Wu Wei’* roughly means not forcing action.”

Then, there’s “Amethyst.” Dynamic drumming and deft riffing steamroll forward as cataclysmic vocals build towards raw catharsis.

“It’s about losing a loved one,” admits Davey. “My mother passed away in 2017, and Brandon’s mother died just a few months ago, so it’s paying homage to them specifically. It’s about losing your creator.”

In the end, change only strengthens Curses on *Bloom*.

“Everything is finite and does come to an end,” Brandon leaves off. “It’s better to appreciate things for what they are now as opposed to worrying about the future. Loss transforms us. We mature from it. Appreciate what you have now and treasure it.”

“We’ve been inspired by so many musicians, we just want to keep the channel going,” concludes Eli. “That’s the main goal.”