*Welcome to the auditory culmination of experiences lived out by Dead Lakes.*

*From the jump… this record runs parallel with the ride of life. The gut-wrenching moments, self-doubt, relationships, vices, and the feeling of euphoria. Buckle up Daydreamer, this isn’t exactly a joyride. - Sumner Peterson*

Laden with fissures and debris, oil and ice, uneven asphalt and the ever-present influence of other reckless travelers, Dead Lakes admit that negotiating the open road is not always a task completely compatible with the faint of heart. Yet, when the only alternative to such a venture is revealed as an inevitable stasis, it becomes clear that in the journey of life, there’s no place more dangerous than the passenger’s seat.

Lulling one into a false sense of fulfillment, we often face a strong temptation to use the past as a crutch, clinging to the people and habits which once brought us joy. However, as the Seattle quartet have come to demonstrate, one must sometimes be willing to switch lanes in order to secure a better future.

Indeed, taking the wheel and refusing to live their life in the rear-view mirror, it’s this expansive, complicated, and sometimes painful process which vocalist Sumner Peterson, drummer Chon Adam, bassist Cody Hurd, and guitarist Coby Rossi channel into their debut album.

A record designed to be consumed front to back on a solo nighttime drive, *Daydreamer* challenges listeners to take a chance on themselves in the name of personal-discovery. And, baring their souls across the span of twelve vulnerable and hook-driven tracks, the album sees the group follow their own advice, leaving their former selves silhouetted by the glow of the sinking sun and emerging reborn in the neon twilight. For although Dead Lakes never promise everything will be easy, they do provide the soundtrack for all of life's twists and turns.

Serving as a single story flowing together from start to finish, titular track “daydreamer” begins by setting the scene and introducing the record’s main character of the same name. As an instrumental track, it was the band’s goal to form the ambiance of a movie through the use of sound bites, field recordings, and programmed synths to replicate the sonic movements of exiting an elevator, walking across a parking garage and entering a vehicle before driving into the city to begin the album in full.

“I consider the person who gets into that car to be Daydreamer,” Peterson fleshes out the visual. “The whole record is their drive while experiencing the album and living it out.”

Like a travel diary in which each entry is represented by its own song, we follow Daydreamer as they blur lines and dip in and out of reality and reverie. With small musical touches such as the ocean waves in “tongue planet,” one is transported into the dreamy adventure, cruising down the coast, passing through futuristic metropolitan streets, and even standing alongside a car broken down on the side of the road. Emulating the feeling of stepping into a big-screen actor’s shoes, there’s a burst of whimsy throughout the record. But, it’s truly in the candid lyricism where the real-life struggles and emotions of vocalist Sumner Peterson sincerely strike a tender chord.

Embodying the non-fiction counterpart to Daydreamer’s character, lyrics across the record were drawn directly from the frontman’s personal experience. Separating from his partner over the pandemic, Peterson has always made a point to be upfront and authentic with his writing, and this album was no different.

“If you read the lyrics, you’ll see everything fully on display,” the singer explains. “The heartache definitely affected this record. But I still love my Ex very much as a human being and I think she’s a phenomenal person. That really gave me an understanding that you just have to ride the waves of life. In a weird way, I hope it was a good thing for everybody and gave us all the ability to find peace.”

One can hear the genuine honesty in Peterson’s vocal delivery, and if anything, it’s this sense of connection which helps make *Daydreamer* so relatable. Following up this thought, the singer admits, “It’s hard. But a part of the reason why I think people connect to our music that deeply is because of these things. There’s a little insight to it that they can relate to. That’s really important to me, so I’m happy to try and be as open as possible.”

Indeed, themes such as needing change to grow (strange juice), the effect society can have one’s mental health (wrong way), the pain of moving on (stamina), and coming out of heartache with a new sense of ownership over one’s life (quicksand), are all packed with both personal meaning and universal appeal.

“I’m definitely in the best mental state of my life now,” Peterson adds. “And it’s because I garnered an understanding that life is a rollercoaster and that there are going to be ups and downs.” Coupling this message with the lush synths and upbeat alternative-rock-meets-pop instrumentation, listeners are meant to understand that there is always a light at the end of the tunnel.

A clear common denominator, all-around growth echoes throughout the album as a whole, and it was this same spirit that fueled Dead Lakes’ creative process when in the studio and beyond.

Traveling outside the country to record, the band flew to Canada last fall to collaborate with Producer Sam Guaiana (Silverstein, The Devil Wears Prada) at his studio, Room 21 Sound. Describing the environment as “attributing nothing but good vibes,” the quartet came in with a plethora of ideas and production layers to sift through, before refining and carving out what they call “THE Dead Lakes sound.”

Pushing even further into the self-described “heavy boy band” universe created in their 2020 EP *New Language*, the quartet have made a point to continually learn and evolve. And as a result, *Daydreamer* sees brand-new sparks of inspiration fly. For whether it be drummer Chon Adam’s brief vocal debut on “onxy dr” or the creative EQed field recording of sea kelp swung to make a whip-like sound, the band are bound to pack a punch. Finding their sweet spot between pop and rock, dreams and reality, and the technically sound and unconventionally brilliant, Dead Lakes stand out from the crowd, wearing both their heart on their sleeve and a wry smile on their lips as they contemplate what’s next.