



**FOREST**  
*Bride*  
PR | PROMO

## Chicago's CITY MOUTH dropping new *Tell Me I'm Alright* EP



**STREAM: [Tell Me I'm Alright EP](#) (2015)**

City Mouth explodes out of Chicago's south suburbs with their spin on the well-worn combination of aggressive pop hooks and classic emo honesty. The quintet's youthful energy is endearing, but it's their confidence and commitment to their craft that sets them apart.

"I want to believe I'm doing better than before," belts vocalist Matt Allpow on the opening track to the band's forthcoming *Tell Me I'm Alright* EP, and his conviction carries his voice over the maelstrom of guitars and drums churning and chugging beneath it. The song begins with an eerie organ fading in before bursting into a classic pop-punk technicolor wall of sound. "Don't ask me what I'm doing with my life."

Formed in the central Illinois college towns of Bloomington/Normal in 2013, the quintet built a strong following, culminating in headlining the community's Rawr Rawr Rawr Fest. After relocating to Chicago in 2014, they became the only Illinois band to win the Exeter Recording and Azimuth Mastering contest, winning a professional mixing and mastering package for the song "Every Single Word" from their self-titled debut EP. While the band's knack for hooks was already apparent, the debut offering was a loose collective of songs showing potential, a far cry from the assured band on display on *Tell Me I'm Alright*.

Taking obvious influence from genre staples like Jimmy Eat World and Brand New, and showing a musical kinship with up and comers like Modern Baseball and The Hotelier, the music is sharp, focused and immediate. Guitarists Reece Krider and Erik Burklund know how to build both dense textures and airy harmonized melodies, while bassist Troy Sennett and drummer Dan Bretz propel the songs at an occasionally-breakneck pace while deftly navigating abrupt time changes.

According to Allpow, his lyrics deal with the challenges over the past two years, including dropping out of college, dealing with depression and learning to move on with his life despite not having all the pieces in order. Allpow himself is a charismatic frontman, using his stories as a way to connect with the audience, encouraging participation at live shows, and singing with a powerful voice that aims for the rafters. The result is winkingly self-deprecating, ambitiously inspiring and undeniably compelling.

"Only The Strong Survive" kicks things off in grand form, and "Sleep Debt" follows form with chugging pop punk guitars and soaring vocals. But while pop-punk is where City Mouth's roots are, it's not the only trick up their collective sleeve. "Dropout" marks the first departure, with emotive vocal harmonies over a mid-tempo guitar arpeggio, punctuated with a mournful trumpet in the background. "I'm going to need you to tell me I'm alright," Pow sings, supported by choral-inspired backing vocals as the song builds to its crescendo.

"The Best Of Me," first seen in a raw, acoustic form on the group's debut, is brought to screaming life by Chuck Macak's sterling production. The song's start-stop pre-chorus riff is positively massive, leading into a surprisingly tender chorus in which Sennett's melodious bassline is the star.

But it's "Shovel," the album's poignant ode to the pain of personal growth, that shows the band at the height of their powers. "This is the last song you'll get to say I wrote about you / I'm moving on / God, I hope that's true," Allpow sings. "The songs that I've written are mixed with the wreckage / Just another grim reminder of the boy I used to be." Over a soundscape consisting of only a gentle guitar, a bass drone and a crowd of backup singers, the first part of the song is characterized by mournful acceptance; as the rest of the band crashes in at the song's midpoint, the mood shifts abruptly to defiant sentimentality, the tone going from lighters-in-the-sky to fists-in-the-air without ever seeming disloyal to the song's first half.

The band will release *Tell Me I'm Alright* December 4th with an EP release show scheduled in Alsip, IL for the next evening. Details are below:

**SAT 12/5 @ Bedolla SkateR BoyZ, 11525 S. Pulaski Rd. (Alsip, IL)**

City Mouth \*EP Release Show\*

with Aiming For Average, Mighty Ships, Commonweather and Anzio

**6pm // All-Ages // \$5**

To interview the band, share their music with your readers/listeners, etc. please reach [jim.hanke@gmail.com](mailto:jim.hanke@gmail.com)

**CITY MOUTH ONLINE**

[facebook](#) // [bandcamp](#)

---