

# VOLUME 2. THE DEATH OF RYAN LEE REID

## ARTIST STATEMENT

This album is not a concept. It's a burial.

*Volume 2: THE DEATH OF RYAN LEE REID* isn't just a title — it's a process. These songs were written during the hardest years of my life, in the middle of a storm that almost took me with it. I lost my mind. I lost my marriage. I lost control over my own name.

But it didn't stop there. My body of work — years of songs, videos, writing, recordings, and creative history — was deliberately erased. Not by accident. Not by time. By someone else's hand. I watched my digital existence vanish, piece by piece, like a funeral in reverse. When your past is deleted in real time, it doesn't just feel like a loss. It feels like death.

Every note on this record was played alone — no band, no overdubs, just a piano and a man in pieces. Some of the songs were written while I was institutionalized or in a jail cell. Others came afterward, in the wreckage. All of them are true.

Ryan Lee Reid didn't make it out of that fire. Forest Chump did.

## ABOUT THE ALBUM

This is a solo piano album, but it's not easy listening. These songs weren't written for comfort. They were written for survival.

*THE DEATH OF RYAN LEE REID* is an exorcism in twelve parts. Every track is an original — composed, performed, and recorded alone. There's no polish, no façade. The tempos drift. The keys blur. But the emotion never wavers. That's the point.

Where Volume 1 paid tribute to Southern tradition, Volume 2 is about shedding skin. These are not genre pieces. They are internal dispatches from a man caught between collapse and rebirth. Some were written in a jail cell. Others came during psychiatric hospitalization. And a few were sketched out in the silence that followed. Together, they tell the truth no one else could tell for me.

If Volume 1 is the voice of the ghost, this is the sound of the body burning.

## TRACK NOTES

These songs weren't composed at a piano bench with a notebook and a plan — they came out in fragments, like breath through broken ribs. Some were written behind locked doors, some after the fallout. What holds them together isn't form or genre — it's what they cost. Each one carries part of the man who didn't make it out.

### **“COUNTRYCORE”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This one's pure satire — but it's not just a joke. I wrote it to poke holes in the formula of modern country pop: the brand drops, the fake blue-collar cosplay, the algorithmic patriotism. But beneath the humor, there's frustration. I've lived the struggle these songs pretend to represent. And I've seen what a real country looks like — it doesn't come with a marketing budget.

### **“EGO”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This one came out like a fistfight — me versus the voices in my head. Living with schizoaffective disorder, those voices aren't just metaphors. They're constant, cruel, and convincing. I wrote this song in one sitting, like I was finally punching back. It's not poetic. It's not polished. It's just the truth, told loud and without apology.

### **“PILLBILLY BLUES”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This one's an elegy for anyone who's been broke, doped, and laughed at their own collapse. I wrote it after the psych ward, when pills and late bills were running my life. There's sarcasm in the lines, but every word is true. It's about streaming pennies, rock bottom's basement, and how hitting the floor for a dropped pill can feel like a holy mission. This is gallows humor — Southern fried and barely holding on.

### **“WATCH OUT FOR TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

I wrote this one when the spell broke. It's about the kind of person who makes you fall fast — and then drains you dry. I raised kids that weren't mine (but I love them and think of them as mine), lied to cover for her, and almost didn't survive it. The song isn't subtle because what happened to me wasn't subtle. It's a warning, plain and simple: some charm is weaponized.

### **“ALL I DO IS EAT AND WEAR MY MONEY”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This is what it looks like when grief puts on designer clothes. I wrote it at a time when I was blowing money just to feel something — caviar, Balmain, and the dumbest shit imaginable. There's humor in it, but it's not a joke. I wasn't living. I was spending to survive. And the more I bought, the emptier it felt.

### **“BUSY LIVIN’, BUSY DYIN’”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This song came from that gray space between hope and burnout — when every day feels the same, and you’re not sure which direction you’re headed anymore. I felt like a cowboy with nowhere left to ride, still singing songs while the clock kept ticking. It’s about motion without meaning. Life without traction. And wondering if you’re living at all, or just slowly fading out.

### **“DON’T SCOOTER BRAUN ME”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This one’s about being used — emotionally, creatively, and professionally. I wrote love songs on demand to hold a relationship together that was already falling apart. When someone takes your talent and turns it into leverage, it stops being collaboration — it becomes control. This is me taking the pen back.

### **“THE RHYTHM OF TEXAS”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This one’s about where I come from — musically and spiritually. Texas has a rhythm all its own: part swing, part soul, part swagger. From Lead Belly to DJ Screw, Bob Wills to Selena, the beat here is as wide as the sky. I wrote this as a reminder that no matter how far I fall, the rhythm of Texas still feels like home.

### **“DAY DRINKING”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This song came from that place where coping turns into a lifestyle. It’s funny on purpose — a little beer-cation with Dr. Shiner — but the punchline hides something real. I wasn’t just drinking for fun. I was drinking to forget. Sometimes the pain starts early in the day, and you meet it where it lives.

### **“SOMEDAY”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

I wrote this for someone who didn’t get their “someday”. It’s a song about potential — what could’ve been, what should’ve been — and the heartbreak of watching that light go out too soon. Some lives burn fast and bright. This is my way of making sure that fire doesn’t disappear.

### **“LIFE IS A RIDE BUILT FOR TWO”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

This song is about holding on — to someone, to hope, to the idea that you don’t have to go through life alone. I wrote it like a promise, even if the promise didn’t last. It’s gentle, but it still knows the drop is coming. The point isn’t to avoid the fall — it’s to have someone there when it hits.

### **“THOSE ROUND TOP DAYS”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

I wrote this looking back at the moment it all felt real — before everything unraveled. Round Top was where we fell in love, or thought we did. Time moved differently there. It was quiet, sacred, almost cinematic. Now all that’s left are the memories, and the question of what was real and what was just a beautifully timed illusion.

**“FEELIN’ RECKLESS”** *by FOREST CHUMP*

A moonshine-fueled mission statement. Part Houston hurricane, part rodeo clown in orbit, it’s built bad decisions. Loud lyrics, punchline-heavy beat, proudly unhinged energy. Not about getting it right — about turning it up, knocking it down, and waking up grinning with no regrets.

## RECORDING CONTEXT

This album wasn't made in a studio. It was made in a state of survival.

Most of these songs were recorded alone, in a bare space with a single microphone and a modeled Bosendorfer 280VC using Modartt's Pianoteq plugin. No fancy studio, no team, No click. Just my hands, my voice, **James Viega**, and whatever I had left that day.

I didn't record these tracks to impress anyone. I recorded them to stay alive — to get the thoughts out of my head before they swallowed me whole. There's noise. There's unevenness. There's breath where maybe there shouldn't be. I kept all of it.

Because sometimes, you don't need a perfect take. You need a true one.

## A PERSONAL NOTE

This album wasn't made in a moment of clarity. It came from the middle of a breakdown — after jail, after the hospital, after everything I thought I was had been stripped away or deleted.

Some of these songs came fast. Others dragged their feet through the dark. All of them were written by someone trying to figure out what was left when the old self died.

If you've ever felt like you were falling apart, I hope something in here makes you feel a little less alone. This isn't about closure. It's about survival.

Thank you for listening.

— Forest Chump

