## Mp3 Alice Lee - Lovers And Losers



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From Boston to Brooklyn - Alice Lee's new CD, Lovers and Losers, is a compendium of four years of work and features a songbook of discovery and heartbreak. It demonstrates her rank containing elements of folk, sway soul, and jazz 12 MP3 Songs POP: California Pop, Sway Folk Rock Lovers and Losers Songs Details: Her breakout album, a rich rich collection of pop gems. Oxymoron? No way. This is my best-loved cd of the year so far. On her tertiary release, the Brooklyn multi-instrumentalist whips up a pitcher of intoxicatingly catchy, radio-ready hits without sacrificing any of her underground cred. It's been interesting watching her evolve: her first cd, the Quicksand ep was a fiery, fearless multi-stylistic effort that established her as a force to be reckoned with. Her second cd, The Art of Forgetting was a surprisingly lush affair, all sultry downtempo beats and swirling atmospherics. Lovers Losers combines the bite and snarl of the first album with the polish of the second. It reveals its treasures like an artichoke, slowly, as the layers peel back. But this one's marinated, and there are spines everywhere. Be careful. This cd could make you bleed. It's unabashedly pop and musically upbeat, but a darkess pervades, grounding the songs in reality. While virtually every recording session has its own horror stories, this cd sounds like it was a blast to make. Lee's vocals may often be stark, wounded and battlescarred, but the music is playful, witty, sometimes even joyful. You can almost see the grins on the faces of the musicians as they nudge each other into raising the art of the surprise to new levels. The cd opens with New Bruise, Lee's sensuous, soul-inflected voice floating over a recurrent hook which she plays on the harmonium. This is the album's paradigmatic what-the-fuck moment (there are many). Take the big hit with the big hook and stick a harmonium in there. That's Alice Lee for you. Predictability factor: zero. The next song, How Will I Be Now bounces along on a tasty acoustic guitar hook over hip-hop beats, masking the song's sad undercurrent. The following track, Perfect Girl is the cd's most overtly pop moment, an irresistibly

catchy song appropriate for both urban and CHR radio formats. Of course, its blissful sunniness eventually gives way to clouds, and with them redemption. It wouldn't be real otherwise. Friendly Fire, driven by ex Pere Ubu bassist Tony Maimone's swooping bass and Lee's tinkling piano, is perhaps the album's artiest moment: "I can't see your scars but I can feel them," she muses ruefully. Other standout tracks include I Breathe, featuring tastefully layered harmonies over funky, fluid bass and a memorable chorus: The live concert staple Retrograde Heart (from the Quicksand ep) is reprised here as a downtempo piano-driven hit. The guietly deadpan Last Night perfectly captures the weariness of the wee hours, the endorphins kicking in as the clock runs down on the apocalypse. Lest all the catchiness start to get to you, guitar maestro Joel Hamilton's completely over-the-top, faux-Hendrix noise on the pseudo-metal Heroin will wake you up. The cd concludes with an above-average musical joke, one that works surprisingly well for what it is, probably a studio accident that Lee or one of her accomplices stumbled on and decided to keep. . This is a shockingly accessible album. Virtually without exception, every song on this cd could be a radio hit. The album is as likely to be a repeat selection on the cheerleading squad's boombox as it undoubtedly will be over the sound system at funky-chic Bedford Avenue bars and clubs. After it's out, Alice Lee should be opening for Avril Levine at Madison Square Garden. She should tour with Norah Jones. But it's too bad that Nina Simone left us before she could cover an Alice Lee song or two, because that's where Lee's heart is really at. More than anything else, she's a soul sister, the closest thing to Nina Simone we have these days. With a well-honed sense of outrage, a knack for the lyrical bon mot, a powerful set of pipes that swoop effortlessly from her usual alto to the upper ranges of the vocal stratosphere and fingers that light up the fretboard, the keys of the piano and accordion with equal ferocity and finesse, she defies description. She's just very, very good. - Alan Young, Trifecta Music alicelee.com

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