

Alicia Jo Straka
DOIN' JUST FINE



Lyric Booklet

Doin' Just Fine

Music and English lyrics by Alicia Jo Straka.

*French lyrics by H el ene Simon and
Alicia Jo Straka.*

French Verse

Quand je me sens triste
quand j'ai un coup de blues,
Je pense   tout ce que
je pourrais faire si je le voulais.

Je prends une inspiration
et expire lentement
Je regarde vers l'avant
Et jette mon d evolu sur ce
que je peux contr ler

La vie est difficile et tellement injuste
c'est facile de se sentir triste
Quand je me force   penser
Sous un jour positif,
je sais que tout ira bien!

Alors, fais un grand sourire
Et chante un peu
et avec le temps, tu verras bien
Que tout va pour le mieux.

English Verse

When I'm feeling low
When I'm feeling blue
I just think of all of the things
that I could do if I wanted to

I take a deep breath
And let it out slow
And I set my sights ahead
On the things I can control

Life is tough and so unfair
It's easy to feel let down
When we use our minds to think
In a positive light, I know we'll be alright.

So put on a smile
And sing for a while
And with time, we may realize
That we've been doing just fine.

L'automne

Music by Alicia Jo Straka

English lyrics by Sam Straka

French lyrics by H  l  ne Simon and

Alicia Jo Straka

English Verse

After all the summer days
Fade into fall
I'm still the one
in love

I feel the way, I did that day
Looking to you
But now you don't
Look the same

You said goodbye
Like the moon setting down
I watched the tide go out.

My heart followed you, drifting away
But summer must fade, and fall comes
again

Think of me, if you may,
as autumn nights chase away
our warm, floating, summer days.

French Verse

Un    un, les jours d'  t  
s'estompent en automne
Je suis encore amoureuse.

Je me sens comme la premi  re fois
que je t'ai vu, mais aujourd'hui tu as
chang  .

Tu m'as dit au revoir
comme la lune qui se couche,
et j'ai vu la mer se retirer.

Tu t'es   loign   et mon c  ur t'a suivi,
mais l'  t   doit s'effacer et l'hiver revenir.

Quand l'automne gentiment
chasse la magie de l'  t  ,
Pense    moi s'il te pla  t.

Bring it Home

Music by Alicia Jo Straka

Lyrics by Sam Straka

Verse 1

Go out at night
Go find the light
Up all the flights
And touch the sky
And After all
bring it home.

In old Paris
If you're free
You must try the Brie
Chez virginie
After all
bring it home.

There are plenty of people,
lots of world to see!
If you ever feel lonely,
Take a beat, and think of me

Then hit the streets,
Try 38 Riv
And tap your feet
In Le Marais
But after all,
bring it home.

Verse 2

Go out at night
Go find the light
Up all the flights
And touch the sky
And After all.
bring it home.

In old Paris,
Look and see
the lights on the Seine
à Pont Marie
Then after all,
bring it home.

There are plenty of people,
lots of world to see!
If you ever feel lonely,
Take a beat, and think of me.

And in the end
I'll be your friend
And home is here
Right next to me
So after all
Bring it home

Printemps

Music by Alicia Jo Straka

Lyrics: *Printemps* by Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

Voici donc les longs jours, lumière, amour, délire!

Voici le printemps! mars, avril au doux sourire,

Mai fleuri, juin brûlant, tous les beaux mois amis!

Les peupliers, au bord des fleuves endormis,

Se courbent mollement comme de grandes palmes;

L'oiseau palpite au fond des bois tièdes et calmes;

Il semble que tout rit, et que les arbres verts

Sont joyeux d'être ensemble et se disent des vers.

Le jour naît couronné d'une aube fraîche et tendre;

Le soir est plein d'amour; la nuit, on croit entendre,

A travers l'ombre immense et sous le ciel béni,

Quelque chose d'heureux chanter dans l'infini.

Printemps

English Translation
by Hélène Simon

Here come the long days, light, love, delirium!
Here comes Spring! March, April with its sweet smile,
Blooming May, Burning June, all these beautiful friendly months!
The poplars, by the sleepy rivers, bend softly like large palms;
The bird flutters deep in the warm and calm forests;
It seems that everything laughs, and that the green trees
Are happy to be together and tell each other lines of poetry.
The day is born crowned by a fresh and tender dawn;
The evening is filled with love; at night, we think we hear,
Across the vast shadow, and under the blessed sky,
Something happy singing to infinity.

As Long as I'm with You

Music and Lyrics by Alicia Jo Straka

Dedicated to Alicia's husband Sam

I like the Spring, I love the fall, I dig the summer
And in the winter, fresh blankets of snow.
But in the end, no matter the season,
I love my life as long as I'm with You

Gazing out the window, I think about the future.
Good times, bad times, challenge and delight.
The joy that I feel, with whatever may come,
Is from the love we share.

It's easy to worry about the unknown,
not knowing what life may throw at us next.
One day at a time, you always remind me.
Just breathe deep, and take that next step.

You have my heart, and carry it with you.
I know I'm safe, when I'm beside you.
Your sweet melodies that color everyday.
I love my life as long as I'm with You.

Track Info

1. Doin' Just Fine (2:26)

Music: Alicia Jo Straka
English lyrics: Alicia Jo Straka
French lyrics: H  l  ne Simon
Accordion - Alicia Jo Straka
Vocals - Alicia Jo Straka
Drums - Steve Scully
Bass - Jim Haggerty
Clarinet - Jeri Sykes

2. Swing for Schmitt (3:20)

Music: Alicia Jo Straka
Accordion - Alicia Jo Straka
Drums - Jacob Thompson
Bass - Joseph McMahon
Guitar - Pritesh Walia
Clarinet - Jeri Sykes

3. L'automne (3:14)

Music: Alicia Jo Straka
English lyrics: Sam Straka
French lyrics: H  l  ne Simon
Accordion - Alicia Jo Straka
Vocals - Alicia Jo Straka
Drums - Jacob Thompson
Bass - Joseph McMahon
Guitar - Pritesh Walia

4. Bring It Home (2:45)

Music: Alicia Jo Straka
English lyrics: Sam Straka
Accordion - Alicia Jo Straka
Vocals - Alicia Jo Straka
Drums - Jacob Thompson
Bass - Joseph McMahon
Guitar - Pritesh Walia

5. Printemps (3:35)

Music: Alicia Jo Straka
French poem: Victor Hugo
Accordion - Alicia Jo Straka
Vocals - Alicia Jo Straka
Violin 1 + 2 - Corinna Smith
Viola - Eva Walsh
Cello - Yi-Mei Templeman

6. Musette au Paris (2:08)

Music: Alicia Jo Straka
Accordion - Alicia Jo Straka
Drums - Jacob Thompson
Bass - Joseph McMahon
Guitar - Pritesh Walia

7. As Long as I'm with You (4:11)

Music and Lyrics: Alicia Jo Straka
Accordion - Alicia Jo Straka
Vocals - Alicia Jo Straka
Drums - Jacob Thompson
Bass - Joseph McMahon
Guitar - Pritesh Walia

About the Album

I've wanted to write and record an original album for many years. In the summer of 2021, Plaid Dog Recording Studio reached out to ask if they could help me make an album. Plaid Dog not only records the music, they also help artists raise money through crowd funding to finance the studio time. They'd seen me online and liked my music, and invited me to participate in their program. We raised enough money after 10 days, and I set out to record my first original album!

I've loved French music since I was a little girl, thanks to an early introduction to French musettes during my accordion lessons, and decided that was sound I wanted for this album. I composed all of the music, though I do owe some credit to my husband for bouncing ideas with me. I had lots of help with the lyrics, which came from my husband Sam, and H el ene Simone who translated my English lyrics into poetic French verses. Once I had composed all of the songs, I headed to Boston to record the music. I had a blast at the Plaid Dog Recording Studio, and was honored to work with some seriously talented musicians and producers. I'm so proud of this album, and I hope you like it too!

Behind the Tracks

1. *Doin' Just Fine*

- I wrote this song in July of 2019, two years before my album project. The lyrics came to me during a difficult time when I had a sudden onset of intense anxiety, and was constantly feeling unlike my normal self. It was musically inspired by the theme song from the movie "Monster's Inc". I've always loved how cheerful that tune is, and wanted to create my own version to help lift my spirits when I'm feeling overwhelmed or down. This song served as the launchpad for the rest of the album, and was rounded out with a French verse in 2021.

2. *Swing for Schmitt*

- This swing tune was inspired by one of my favorite gypsy jazz tunes, "Tchavolo Swing" composed by Dorado Schmitt. I wanted to embody the style and feel of a gypsy jazz swing tune, while keeping the melody fairly simple to allow space for ornamentation and improvisation.

3. *L'automne*

- The music for this tune came to me first, and then my husband Sam added the English lyrics, and H  l  ne helped me translate those into a poetic French verse. The melody and harmony had a melancholy sound, so we leaned into the somber theme of lost love and remembrance.

4. *Bring it Home*

- This song is very special to my husband and I, as the lyrics of this song were directly inspired by our honeymoon in Paris. All of the places we mention are real locations we visited to eat, hear music, and observe the sights. For example, the lyrics "go find the light, up all the flights, and touch the sky" refers to the Eiffel Tower, and "38 riv" is a jazz club, located in the Marais neighborhood, where we went to a show.

5. *Printemps*

- This song began as an improvisation on the piano. I loved the simple, yet rich, harmonies that provided a blank canvas for improvising melodically. As I played around, this song reminded me more and more of paintings from the Impressionism era, which led me to Hugo Wolf's poem "Printemps". His stanzas had a natural fit with the musical form, and the meaning of the poem encapsulated what I felt the music portrayed.

6. *Musette au Paris*

- I have loved playing French musettes on the accordion since I was a little girl. The unique harmonies, melodic intricacies, nuance, and fast tempos all contributed to my fascination with the genre. I've written a few pieces in the French musette style before to this one, but I wanted to write something fresh for the album. I leaned into my love of fast triplets, unexpected harmonies, and that "je ne sais quoi" element to French music that makes you feel like you need a coffee and croissant.

7. *As Long as I'm with You*

- This is the last song I wrote for the album, and it is extra special to me. I wrote both the music and lyrics for this piece on my own, and dedicated it as a love song to my husband Sam. I was sitting by a window in the Colorado mountains watching the snow fall, and wrote the song in one sitting. The music came to me first, which was inspired by the feel of "With a wink and a smile" by Harry Connick Jr. and the harmonies from "Out of Nowhere" by Johnny Green. My favorite line of the song is, "your sweet melodies that color everyday", as Sam actually sings silly made-up songs throughout the day. I've been making up weird songs and singing about what I'm doing since I was young, but I never thought I'd find someone who would join in with me!

Acknowledgements

I want to shout a huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped this album come to fruition. First, thank you to everyone of you who donated to this project - you are the real reason I was able to make this album happen! Thank you to my husband Sam for encouraging, supporting, and helping me with your humor, kindness, and beautiful way with words. Thank you to H  l  ne Simon for helping me with my French pronunciation, and the poetic French translations of my English verses. Thank you Lenay Nicole for your beautiful artwork that graces the cover of my physical CD - it captures the essence of this music perfectly! Thank you to Kelly Maxwell for taking amazing photos. Thank you to all of the folks at Plaid Dog Recording Studio for your motivation, encouragement, and help every step along the way. Thank you to Mike Davidson for producing my album and making my time in the Boston studio such a blast. A major thank you to every musician included on this album; Pritesh Walia, Joseph McMahon, Jacob Thompson, Jeri Sykes, Steve Scully, Jim Haggerty, Corinna Smith, Eva Walsh, and Yi-Mei Templeman. I am honored to have your musicality and expertise featured on my original tunes.

Alicia's Social Media and Music Platforms:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/aliciajostraka>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/aliciajostraka/>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/aliciajostraka>

Tiktok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@aliciajostraka>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/album/3F0KrT05wUUoOCUmBf9x7Z?si=db1LyyqXQrKwNiVnQGUp9g>

Apple Music: <https://music.apple.com/us/album/doin-just-fine/1661412171>

Pandora: <https://www.pandora.com/artist/alicia-jo-straka/ARjxzxVc4qmJ2k9>

Bandcamp: <https://aliciajostraka.bandcamp.com/album/doin-just-fine>

Copyright Notices

- © 2021 Strakandbake Publishing
- All rights reserved. Unauthorized duplication is a violation of applicable laws.
- Manufactured in USA
- Artwork by: Lenay Nicole
- Photographs by: Kelly Maxwell
- www.aliciajostraka.com/doinjustfine