

ALICE

Man Ray oh Man Ray of light. Yankie mama's boy with pidgin French like a toddler learning his ABCs. Satie, Foujita, like them. I think of the possibilities for good meals. A good strong vin de table. Man gives me a hat to make me his lady and later his bedroom gutter slut. I sing when he plays me. He inks cello markings into my back, brands me, but the ink runs, stains his lily white tapis. His hands. I can feel them now, stroking. I am untameable. My chum, my petite amie, Mady, the panther. We slink along in the night and roar on rooftops. Hemingway should set us up in Africa, abandon the little woman and Bumby.

Man puts me in another box, a silent box. I am pale. I am black and white. I am absolute. I am a mechanical contraption, all dancer. A star.

In the theatre I am monstrous, giant, a monster's face and thin eyebrows. The artificial bow of my tongue tied mouth. I could devour this city.

I could swallow the lights and be brilliant. I travel by ship to New York City. All this brilliance needs a tower. An empire state.

I am small in the new world. I am Alice again down the hole.

I shrink. I cannot eat what says eat me. I can only drink until I am Kiki again. Until I am back through the shattered glass.

TALES OF
MONTPARNASSE

Crack goes the peel of innocence,
says Harriet Monroe.

Cats talk to buttered Picassos
in classic Brancusi hats.

Ziegfield is desolate
as a tumbler.

Titus edits paper angels
at the Café Select.

Gaudier-Brzeska's eggplants
shave cowboys at the
Closerie des Lilas.

Harpence's salon is festooned
with lines of caraway.