

ALI E T O L O S S

elisabeth waltregny michel delville

trolltrumma

Images © Elisabeth Waltregny, 2017
Text © Michel Delville, 2017
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FOREWORD

To turn steadily through the pages of this book of photography and words is to wander through a land of strangeness and secrecy, where we are enjoined to follow a figure who occupies and activates a place inside her world and outside ours. Delville and Waltregny introduce us to a *fabulous* thought, where the interplay of the the textual and textural is quite *amazing*. Here, they have spun together text and image into a borderless world, of bliss and contagion, of intrigue and loss, of childlike fun and the gravity of time. This is a book of endless wonder, a Victorian curio, an intimate treasure to be pored over. In wider terms, this publication is a seamless continuation of the great, albethey broad spectrum, Belgian Surrealist traditions. Here we have a discursive relation between mediums, umbrellaed by the concept of a nineteenth-century fantastical reality. It is a chimera, sent to us by travellers who have made their way to a new land, an exceptional and thrilling *form*, a elegantly forged multivalent at which to ponder and delight.

—Marc Atkins, London, January 5, 2017

pretty
head with ideas
jumping up
stairs
it wasn't exactly
stairs
she floated on
hold
on
in the air



you think you'd be safer
listening at doors
down chimneys
or
in a book
I can't
remember
how old
you were



she
could think of nothing better
than
silence
with eyes shut
inventing a new way of getting over
a gate



the garden
floated gently
on through the hall
in the natural way



do you hear
the window-panes
kissing
the trees
oh
very pretty
and
true



what fun
they
like my walk
oh
well enough
here
only it was
down the other way





she must be labelled
with care
everytime the train stops
I wish I could get
the
joke



on
top
of
a slow
country
of
civil
measurements



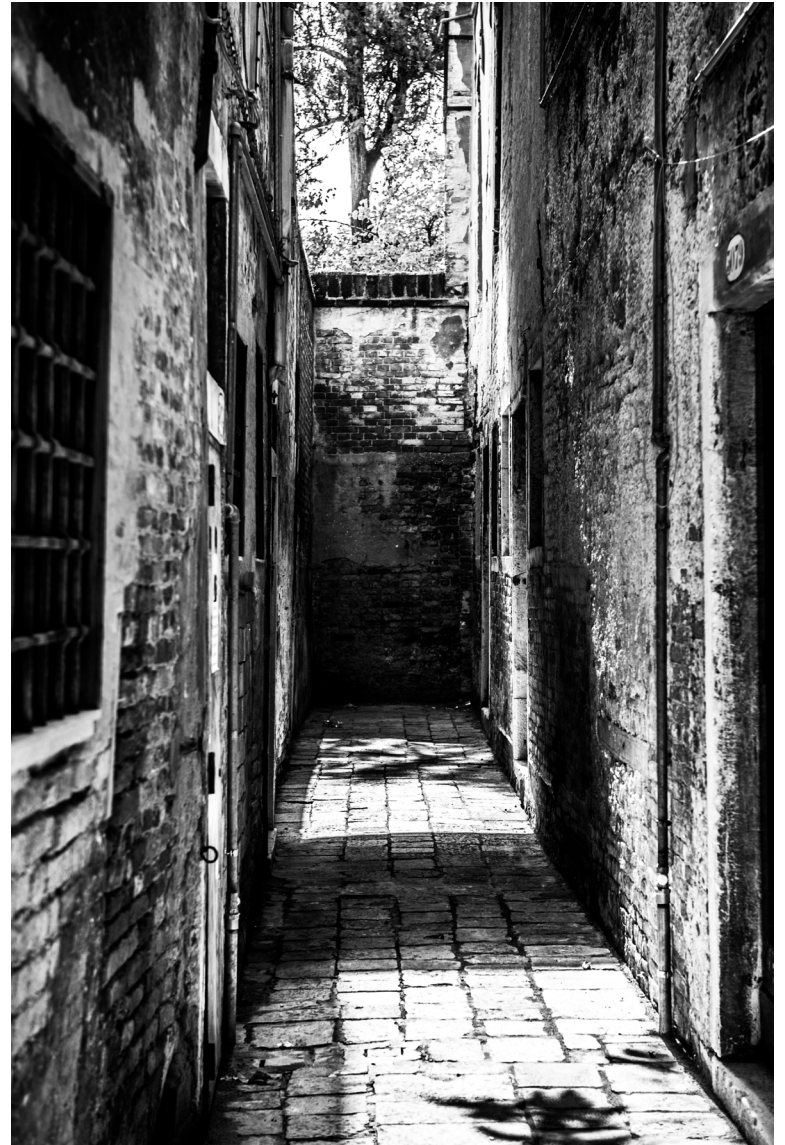
a perfect scream
opening and shutting
as dark as it can
a
thick black cloud
wings
out of sight
under a large
shawl



what
a
scene
the mild blue eyes
moving about
cropping the
picture



try
the other way
what
's
the middle
good for



wool and water

Queen

needles

dear me

a poor sort of

crime



so soon
everything was happening
she feared



can't think
of the
thunder
rolling round
knocking down
things
try to remember
the use of it



there
appeared
about fifty
some were
empty
and longing for
orders



the wall
was
screaming
at
invisible
faces



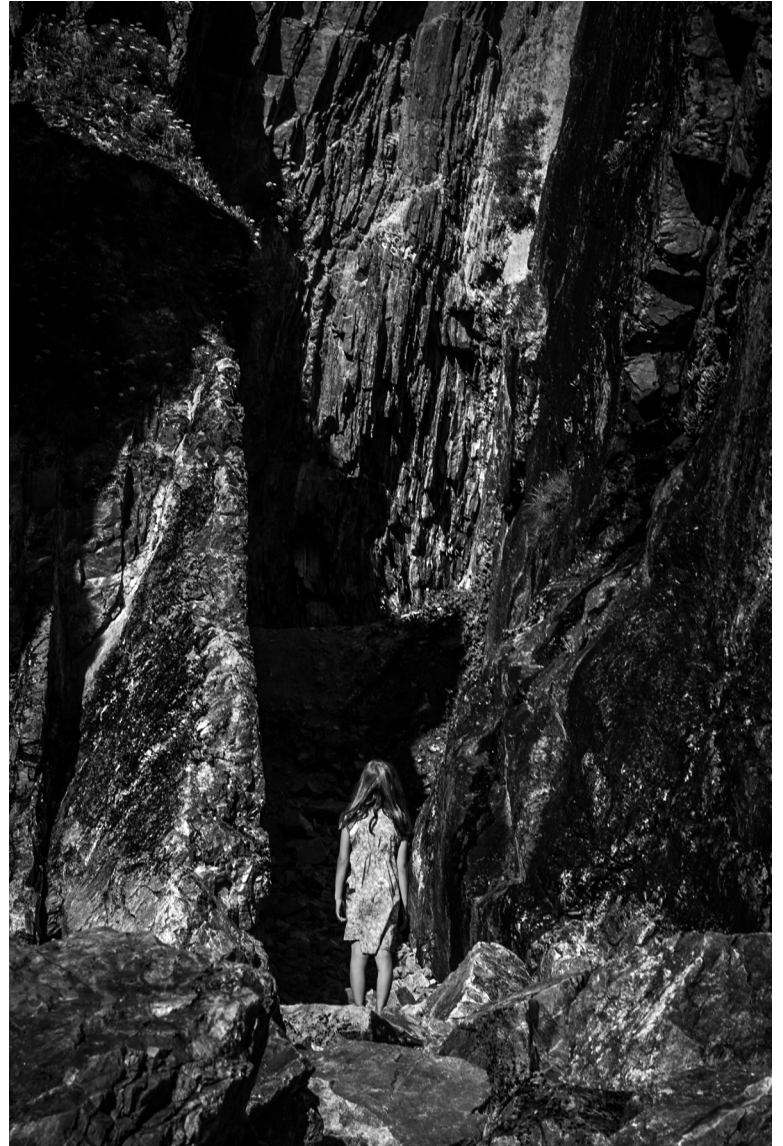
something
like
geography
something like
roofs taken off
stalks
them
shy so suddenly



a hundred times, easily
on that enormous
high wall
such a narrow
stuffed figure after
a sort of
fall



she
kept repeating
something
backwards
the
voice
went higher with each
unfinished
laugh



the
ground was
covered
with
curious attitudes
in the shape of
a
tiny earthquake



heavy things
vanished
not
with a bang
but
with
a
deaf
kick



she
was
looking at
a large bright thing
and
vainly pursuing
the most provoking
thought



divided
she returned
to
the air
full of
nothing

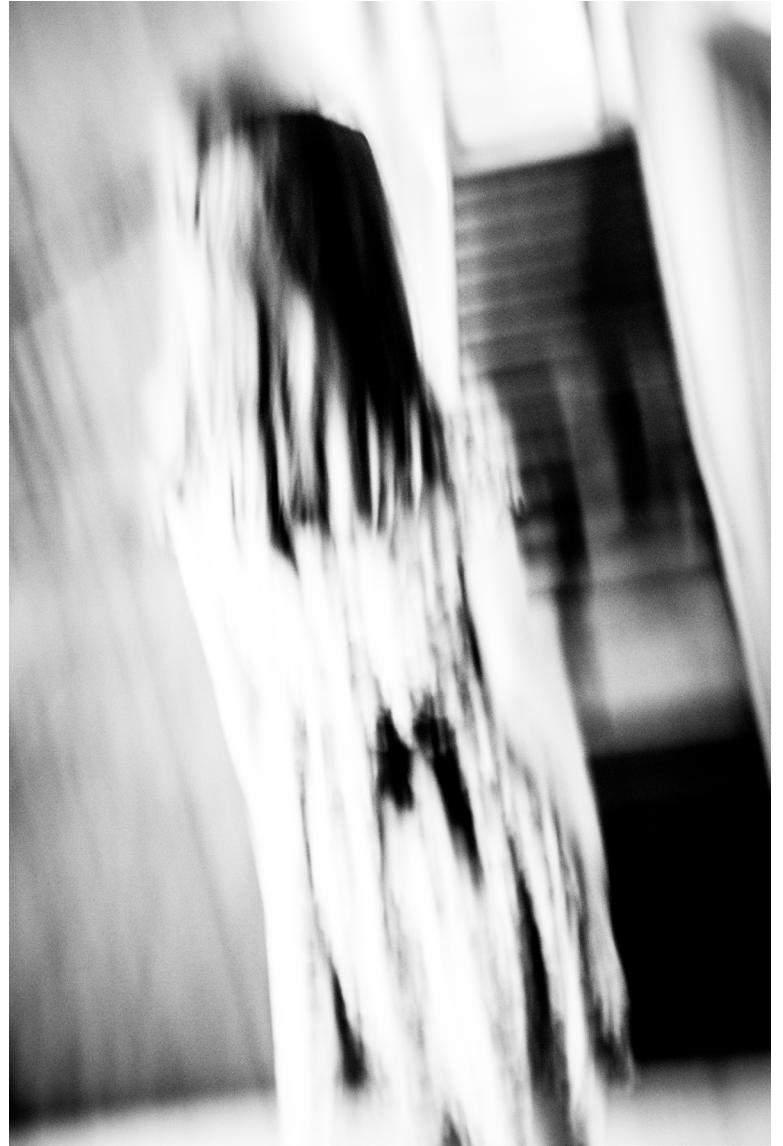


dream
along with me
she said
and
laugh
at
the question
a simple tale
haunts me
dreaming
the end





waking
was
all



rushes

with bright eager

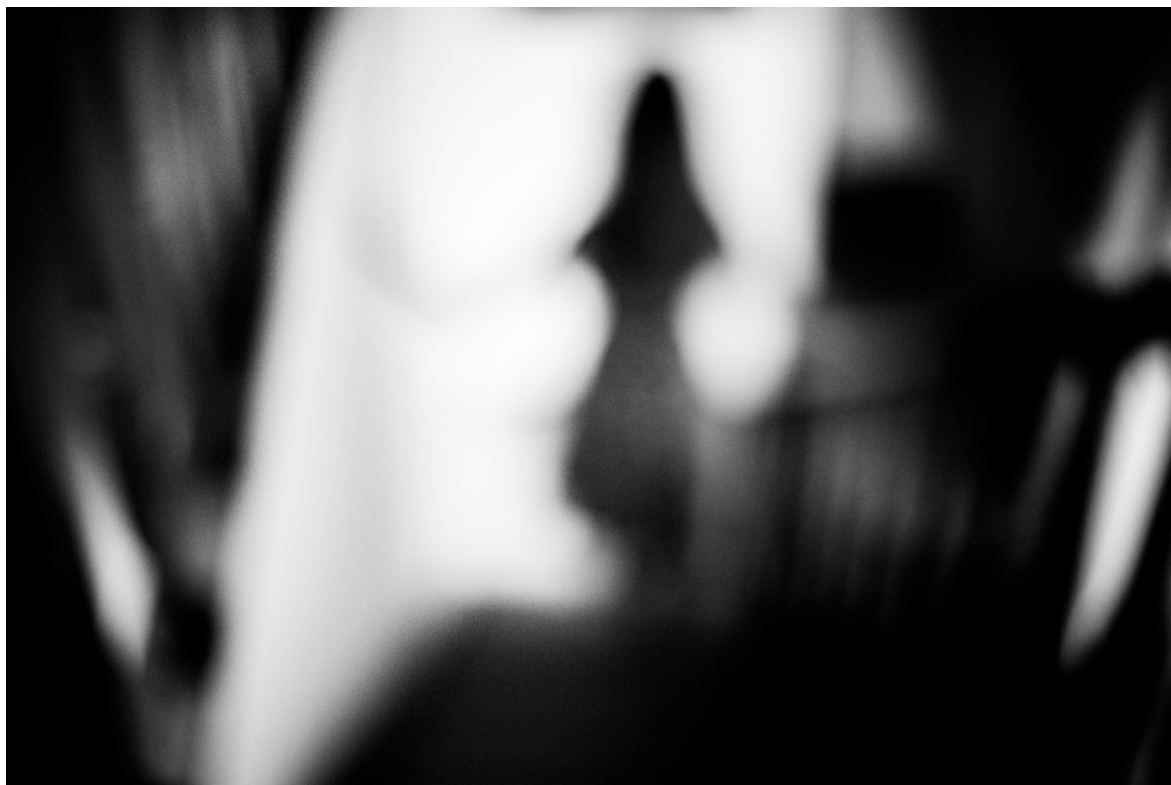
obstinacy

rushes

melted away almost like snow



a
respectable
and
most fearful
moment
peeping into
a cup
the air
too
full of
dust to see anything



put your hand down
feel the ground
till you know no more
if this is the world at all



A NOTE ON ALI E T O LO SS

Erasurist art is essentially a kind of rewriting. It is rooted as much in contemporary philosophy's deconstructionist turn as in Duchampian found objects and Situationist détournements. One of the earliest examples of textual erasurism in contemporary poetry is Ronald Johnson's 1977 *RADI OS*, a partial obliteration of the first four books of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* preserving only a few words from each page of the source-text.

Ali e t o lo ss subjects Lewis Carroll's *Ali(c)e T(hr) o(ugh the) Lo(oking Gla)ss* to a similar treatment, revealing the lyrical backbone of the source-text, isolating some of its vital semantic «organs» while simultaneously responding to the deep and complex forms of Elisabeth Waltregny's photographs, which were themselves inspired by Lewis Carroll's specular worlds. Each poem is composed of words taken from one of the twelve chapters of *Alice* in the order in which they appear, the line breaks indicating the «gaps» in the source-text.

— Michel Delville

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