ALI E T O LO SS
elisabeth waltregny  michel delville

trolltrumma
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 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
distinctive
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
gap
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
dreaming
the end
waking was all
rushed
with bright eager
ostinacy
rushed
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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