

ZIMZALLA 39.1

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OBJECTS

Day without cloud. Pale blue sky, behind which, the stars. I hope I see them later on. A kind of watered-down desire is populated by acceptance, inert and solitary, like a stone, that I may not see them after all, even in negligible number, if cloud comes. Were I now to attribute personal properties to the unseen stars what would they be? An unseeing state? Reciprocal disappointment? Would it be a collective object that I favoured or would I consider them singly in repeated acts of attention? But I am already called to speak of cloud again. See it push its way closer to the half-hearted moon, a moon that doesn't yet exist let alone experience the fear of being alive. And now I see I have arrived at chaingrass,

and I feel relieved. It is moving in the way that chaingrass moves (to me), in a breeze of various intensity, like stars might vary in the light they emit, behind or before cloud. Might I change what I said about the moon (why do I fear waiting until it next appears to do so)? I've made a number of errors: asserting half-heartedness on behalf of an object, for example (and I need to pull back that cloud). A desire to speak 'with accuracy' is tirelessly enacted in a repeated pattern of mistakes or mistake of patterns (that lone stone to which I referred makes no corrections). Here the moon, but first I must admit it was not a stone at all, but the state of acceptance to which I referred (that stone's properties

imagined in an attempt at comparison with the properties of a state of mind I occasionally experience). Chaingrass, to which I now return, it having returned to me in a state identical to that in which it generally appears (as a number of fluid-blades in diverse motion) is an individual object, or perhaps a collective object, moving under absent stars (at least none visible to me). I've never wondered if desire might be alive in some way in its activity, or if any stone may be known to it (intimately or intrinsically). The moon seems very agitated this evening, even the quickest cloud fails to find it. I now realise (having corrected myself, fear on my lips as I did so) that I in fact neglected, or repeated

to neglect (repetition being an additional error, repeated matters at risk of redundancy, the burdensome properties of redundancy risked in turn) to represent the moon-object in a manner consistent (at the very least) with its true state (no fear of being 'alive' in its future or past). The number of times I have made these errors! I turn to the chaingrass, but it seems not to have heard me (neither does the moon seem to hear). I am very anxious (my co-existing desire surely both imperceptible and manifest). A familiar stone of dread effervesces minimally, its delicate sweat of fear finding my face. But it seems there is no reprimand. Stars (can I really say they are on fire?) wait behind this cloud

(which was never, of course, seeking a moon, that cloud), though naturally they aren't waiting at all. I've repeated myself in the negative, and I acknowledge this like a state of mind which I've resolved to endeavour to bear. Moon-viewing is one of my favourite habits, the moon and stars in any combination tenderly inseparable from that desire I earlier mentioned (in the absence of a subject, an object now intervenes, changing the thought-course). A number of options is being presented (it seems), each one a stone which offers in turn its small weight of focus. Chaingrass, however, is an exception. None of its apparent properties seems to be influenced by gravity, but saying that I fear

I have misstated the matter (perhaps the more specific fear is that I have misrepresented what I see). Outside, a cloud, lengthily fragmented and apparently in a deliberate state of expedition (though obviously not) can't imagine moonlight currently held in the future's possession, any number of interferences possible between now and when a desire to see it aligns with possibility. Might I describe an object (in the meantime) as asleep? I will not be asking these stars (even though I thought to do so) and I won't ask chaingrass either (it never occurred to me to ask). Patterns of repeated self-doubt attend both upon conclusions and the properties of potential questions, agitating like currents around a stone

(the particulars of which stone I don't know, but it is a stone indeed in general), their rituals performed without any fear (it being impossible for a pattern to experience fear, objectively or otherwise). Fear, though, if it could live in repeated thoughts and behaviours that result in patterns (the chaingrass patterns excepted) would do so. There are precisely no stars outside the window tonight, only house-lights which I desire now to imagine as earth-dwelling stars. No sign of the moon either (quite possibly it exists outside the frame, its properties on full display to other observers). It is hard for me to state the reasons why it matters whether an impenetrable cloud has obscured (or even removed) the moon, or why a number

of unseen stars incites such exquisite difficulty (that number fated to remain unenumerated by me). Does a minor stone somewhere chuckle at this unwieldiness, this 'word-cloud' yearning for a relationship with its content, its current state of fragmented-coalescence wanting the wholeness (properties of word-clouds perhaps inclusive of 'wants') of a full moon (and its light) to be deep inside it, collaborating with the stars on their own terms (including an absence of terms, an object in no way inclined to want, let alone set terms). Chaingrass began a new sentence (just now), in part because I felt fear at the thought of commingling it with that cloud (repeated fears like these seem to push me forward somehow). Desire

to get back to chaingrass is already present, as is the desire to rectify those recent slippages into a non-trivial number of personifications (several, at least). Ascribing properties in the heat of externalisation, unthinking even of the stars or moon, fusions (animate/inanimate) made in 'text-stone'; these are amongst the deepest of my tendencies, repeated hitherto automatically in self-sustaining patterns of object-related rumination. Why speak for the moon when the moon can be made to speak for itself (for me)? The slender cloud, low and producing minimal (if any) rain, reignites old fear of drought, but I won't seek reassurance from it. Chaingrass is moving from left to right in a moderate breeze. My state

of mind: might it be affecting the breeze's character? State of mind is a thing (or set of things) which I have no desire to introduce in this context, or to think about at all. Cloud-cover has thinned and apparently hardened, not into stone-likeness, more a sort of creamy seal made out of repeated refusals of cloud to self-separate (I'm doing it again). Stars seem even harder now to see than they were when an object was available in the usual way; when attributing properties to objects was a central element of my poem-making (moonlight unlikely to be left to its own devices, the sheer number of ways to describe its adventurousness, its refusal of fear of morning). Did moonlight pour itself onto the chaingrass

before the 'pouring' act wasn't to be presumed? Chaingrass is almost motionless today, its many fluid-blades in a state un-suggestive of anything except itself. Its recent repeated appearances have revealed a small but significant number of motion-variations (within the wholistic display). Stone under a breeze's sway wouldn't externalise the properties of that breeze, at least not overtly, or immediately. Cloud, at the other extreme, seems almost to *become* breeze. Moon. When did I last see it, at least, when did I notice it? Desire, both irritation and ache, persists even if the moon and stars are taken out of the picture (I acknowledge this without fear, as both crush and weird exhilaration). Where is the object

now (the one I need to speak through, the particular object pertinent to my present state of mind?) Again, chaingrass shows itself, thus deferring my acknowledgment of a state of affairs in which I've asked myself that question. Stone wouldn't do, even if it were at my disposal, and the cloud has made itself clear. But I let myself go again. Why fear an absence of animated objects, when relevant properties would perhaps be more usefully self-applied for repeated iteration within a 'personal' frame of reference. 'Number'. I find this word on the cusp of the poem's middle, desire to remove it sharpening against its end-word status ('moon', on the other hand, I am glad to have included; also 'stars')

being inseparable from the 'moon'). Will there be no stars tonight? The cloud is very bright in its grey attire. My desire to see those stars has been heightened this afternoon (stone incessantly warmed by sun can only feel warmer). Numbering wants assists in their enumeration; the wants' properties may be counted too, if a larger number is desired (two statements thus painstakingly made, equally dubious, the object of my effort palpably unclear). An expansive sky is repeated with heaviness (carrying much-wanted rain) which the cloud begins to release now in an understated downpour, my moon-thoughts totally drowned out (for now), dissolution of fear (of that old endless drought) overwhelming me. Chaingrass,

encountered (again) via recurrence of the word 'chaingrass', is moving as usual, but what if it stilled, blades turned 'stars' in sudden constellation, inert and crystalline, with no cloud impeding their capacity to be seen in perfect totality. Fear (of some clambering sort) enters the equation on a number of levels. A further thought: what if chaingrass (an object stable so long in its activity) experienced unexpected desire to transform itself (totally, without notice, and in repeated fashion). I imagine, by comparison, seeing a familiar stone returned as water, confetti, abstract animal, newish moon, other manifestations (quantum finally uncountable). A state of quietness seems to have discovered my fear, its properties

subduing me now from inside out. I guess these properties were most likely re-activated by that preceding chaingrass-related suggestion of infinity. The contemplation of a state of limitlessness is a release. But to imagine some number, massive yet perhaps within my reach to quantify (an object, just possible on the high shelf) captivates me. Loved stars, loved moon, neither of which I am destined to see. Desire gravitates like a chorus around a song. In a creek, a stone protrudes through the surface, accepting its deluge. Moon-behaviour becomes routine after a while (says the cloud). Please pardon these intrusions (it's the dam walls). A fear that I am losing control of this poem is somehow repeated

in a fear that the poem is losing control of me. A repeated sensation of vertigo afflicts. I don't want to list properties with which this poem must comply, or 'identify' its object in advance even of a first draft. Anxiety encourages a statement of such matters, though it knows that a set of numbered phenomena would offer no real consolation. Chaingrass this morning presents with almost cheeky vitality. The moon (I can hardly bear to say it) was so bright last night. Desire unmet deserves at least some kind of consistency! A stone long-lodged in a familiar location wonders where the fear is coming from (and what is wrong with saying that)? Stars by definition are on fire, the influence (or not) of any cloud

merely cosmetic. Evidently I can't carry on like this. Cloud demands no 'decision' on my view about objects (repeated failure to refrain from animating them the established state, concentrically restated, in which I now find myself). Moon, neither (and do I need explicitly to include the hidden stars in what is turning out to be a kind of list after all)? It's desire itself that wants externalisation, perhaps not by these object-enlivenments, or by processes of quantification or numbering, or by resort to some tormented study of a factual stone with exclusive focus on its 'authentic' properties. Chaingrass, its overcast palette apparently invulnerable to heat-properties, nonetheless seems to be 'wilting' (but even saying that I fear

I have misstated the matter, perhaps the more specific fear is that I have misrepresented what I see). The puzzled cloud (pieces stretched just out of each other's reach) doesn't state its location with anything resembling commitment. The moon approaches fullness in the fullness of time. But which number corresponds with the colour-scheme of this particular desire? I ask the question at a distance from it greater than an object could fill (conceding that distance is an abstract object). Stars occupy allotted spaces without complaint. Even the chaingrass doesn't proliferate (the volume of its fluid-blades is repeated with discernible consistency between viewings). Properties enact themselves (my skin is hot, my bone apparent). Stone

contains 'tone' (it is always singing, that inner-most stone) 'one' (there is only one), and 'to' (whom it sings). My fear of incompleteness obliges me also to mention 'o' ('o'bject or 'o'mission would have done so in my absence). Repeated compulsions externalise their obsessive roots. The chaingrass stirs and recedes. This breeze is unceasing. There are no stars, no cloud, and now (I check the time) it's afternoon. Desire recognises this time of day, this place, potential of the moon later to show itself surely close to whole, glaring properties of that probability increased by forecast. How else to state the likelihood? I'd like to speak but an opaqueness of cloud now occupies almost half my vision (no use trying to number

the alternative ways but perhaps there will be some number of future chances). I love the propensity of submerged stone to shine (and the shine itself). Moon inside a shifting cloud disperses its light through different water. How else to state the likelihood? He walks the path in front of her. Properties within her ability to see disclose the humidity. A day moon might or might not be in view. Lots of lush water. No stars. Proximity luxuriates, consuming the space between objectivity and subjectivity with imperturbable ease. Chaingrass inserts itself from somewhere in the future. A return of fear that my words have failed to effect what I mean is repeated with attention to that aforementioned 'luxuriates'. A desire

to get back to the chaingrass swells and contracts like desire itself, never completely disappearing. I counted the number of stanzas (just now) that stand between me and properties which would evidence completion of this sestina. The stars. The moon. The cloud. Their heart-felt scrutinies by a stone referred to a couple of stanzas ago. My inadequacy, repeated to the extreme, seems destined to inhabit this desperate object. My urge to apologise seems as absurd as talking to the moon through impassable impediments of thick (gorgeous) cloud. The increasing width of this stanza troubles me, as does fear of losing the opportunity to correct or clarify. The chaingrass has so far shown no remarkable departure from its usual state

(apart from the brief 'wilting', after which the preceding state of familiar motion resumed in its fluid-blades, almost desire-like in its inexhaustible response to the breeze). Heavy cloud this evening gave rise to an extraordinary moon, a giant stone grown inexorably to totality. It was lightning-slow. I repeated introductions (as it upwardly emerged) to the moon and stars of which I have been speaking here, and examined the object, (I faced it from an apartment balcony), committing properties to memory, my disbelief countered flagrantly (in full), moonlight turned to fire by its orange glow. I attempted a number of times to match what I saw with what was inside me, fear not far behind my inability (but no fear now). The chaingrass

persists (that moon has disappeared completely). Chaingrass, resplendent in greyscale (most tethered at its base). The state of moon unfathomed (most dispersed at its top). Repeated exertions to 'clarify' made redundant on sight of it (numbering irrelevant to the permutations of its fluid-blades). Stone-song is aware of chaingrass and its characteristic properties (breeze-blown and in this way not so different from cloud). It also knows all about last evening's extraterrestrial moon (like me, it isn't sure how to sing of it). My recurrent desire to do 'something' no doubt will propel me to search for stars again tonight (my temperature already increasing with fear of futility) regardless of attendant risk. The chaingrass-object,

collective or singular, accepts my return without any objection, reducing the intensity of the aforesaid fear (chaingrass conducive to coolness) having repeatedly disclosed a state-of-being both neutral and marvellous (and not unlike stone in its constancy) throughout all these stanzas (outside cloud shares some of its greyscale). At this late stage I'm not fearful I've failed to use this quadruple sestina or its properties to best potential, nor do I feel compelled to repair repeated errors. It's another warm evening with slim cloud. A number of days has passed since that much-wanted downpour (desire for more rain is already known to me). I wonder if the moon, (or part of it) will appear tonight, with or without the stars?

Chaingrass, independently of any outcome concerning the moon, continues to show itself to me (regardless also of repeated cloud). An object (or collective object), its fluid-blades display a number of possible permutations under this subtle breeze (the stone-state exhibits curious empathy), displacing (now) my desire for stars. Newly stunned (no words, no fear) I bear witness to its properties.