

Z Machine

by Shawn Misener

I said to the guy

I'm afraid to find out what my spirit animal is
it could be a blobfish or a sloth or a slug

as much as I want it to be a fucking *eagle*
or a fucking *black bear*
or a fucking *shark*

he exhaled and slid his glossy hand into my cerebellum
and showed me anyway, the asshole

I got a good look at his eyes as he raped my mind
he was undeniably insane, not a mystic
or even some world-wizened guru set to push me
towards a flimsy enlightenment

oh jesus it had to be it had to be it had to be
a *1987 Z-model Xerox machine*

is this even an animal? I bellowed

his measly eyes glazed over as he sloshed his hand
violently out of my skull
and quickly fished a rotten banana from his overcoat pocket

all glued to me he asked:
would you rather be a banana?

