

BEN MURRAY

Smelling Lilacs

over thirty years to learn to smell
the lilacs ...

what was smelled in baby, in boydays?
in pre-man and early-man days?

shit, milk, *Downy*
chlorinated pee, clove-fed Xmas
blood of skateboard-skinned knees
piny mountain air, old-comic must
nougat, licorice, *Breck*
math-challenged sweat, sawdusty guinea-pigs
womaning girls in their clean teen-skins
toast, socks, *Testor's*
spitty sax reeds, unSuite basements
vaginized fingers, the stiff rigid air
of first funerals, of weddings

this nose no slacker; so why now, only
now with the lilacs?

this intoxicant the resurrection
of smelled-it-all, in-your-face
olfactories, nostrils performing grateful
flaredances for the rest of you

reborn every Spring now with the lilacs
middle age will spread its sweatering arms
in hugs of full body, nose a bit off
to the side, smelling, what sweetly demands
to be smelled