

America Muro

Professor Wood

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English 1301

### All Summer Long

Scents are powerful to me. They can trigger memories with just one whiff. One scent in particular is my favorite of all, not only because the sweet smell of “sparkling wild raspberry and bright strawberry” combine so well that they smell like a freshly opened bag of gummy bears and can make anyone’s mouth watery, but most importantly because of the memory that comes attached to it.

A single spray of my Juiced Berry perfume immediately brings me back to the summer of 2008. This was the first summer after my parents’ divorce, which meant my brothers and I had to go to San Antonio to stay with our dad for a month. I remember feeling anxious and uneasy before getting into my dad’s black SUV. My palms were sweaty, and my stomach had an empty feeling, which made me nauseous. This was going to be the first month in my entire life that I was going to be separated from my mom.

My mom said, “Go ahead and get one, *mija*.” I smiled because I knew my mom saw how I was mesmerized by the wall of new fragrances at Victoria’s Secret, even though I had more than enough back home. My mom is sweet; she’ll try to get us what we want on special occasions, and I guess she took leaving to San Antonio with our dad in a week as one. Taking this new gift to San Antonio now comforted me because it made me feel as if I was taking a piece of my mom with me.

When we arrived at my dad's apartment complex, it was already dark outside. My eyes felt sore, and I could tell that they were puffy and swollen. I couldn't help but cry a little on the trip over there. Good thing I was sitting in the back and no one heard, or at least I hoped not.

When my dad had opened the door, I wasn't expecting much, maybe an old used couch here and a makeshift table there, but I was shocked at what I saw. The apartment was completely bare. It looked as if it belonged to someone who had just moved in, not to someone who had been living there for several months. I wasn't the only one taken back by this; my brothers were wearing the same expressions as I was.

As we brought our luggage up and tried to settle in, I was already dreading the month that was to come living here. I knew my dad was a simple man, but I wish he would've at least made an effort to make his place a more suitable one for teens. He didn't have a TV, a phone, a radio, and not even a computer; plus back then, neither of my brothers nor I had a cellphone.

As expected, the first few days were boring, and it felt as if time was passing by slowly. My brothers and I would just lay on top of covers hardly talk to each other. They would be busy playing their Gameboys while I was busy reading a book. My dad would be out for the majority of the day because he worked sixteen-hour shifts. I could hardly wait for the weekend to come because he had promised to take us out.

When the weekend came, I was excited to get out and finally put on my new perfume! My dad took us around the city and even out to a free jazz concert, which was pretty nice. We ended our day by going to the swimming pool at the apartment complex. I had a blast. Despite my worries, I was enjoying the time with my brothers and dad.

After that day, my brothers and I had started getting out of the apartment more. We would walk around the neighborhood, make up games, and just enjoy the warm summer days.

Swimming soon became our favorite pastime. Each time I would go out of the apartment, I would spray on my perfume, even if it was to just go swimming. The scent would wrap around my body like a hug from my mother, which made me feel confident and protected anywhere I went.

The days started becoming shorter, and soon it was time to pack up and leave. I was sad to say the least. I had really enjoyed my summer there since it had gotten me out of the old habit of just staying inside all summer long and watching TV. I actually enjoyed the thick humid air, the warmth from the sun, and all that nature had to offer with beauty of the summer flowers and the coolness of laying underneath a big green shady tree. The simple things in life, I soon realized, are truly the best. I was separated from technology for a month, and it had brought me closer to my brothers and dad. I appreciated the actual quality time I was spending with the important men in my life.

Now every time I spray my pink bottle of Juiced Berry it doesn't only bring me back to that summer, but it also brings my brothers back to that summer. I guess I used it so many times around them that now the scent has attached to a memory of their own experience. All in all, it's a good feeling to know that my brothers and I can share a good memory with a single spray of Juiced Berry perfume.