The Scents of Youth

What lingers? The scents of youth. Thistled fields of wild onion and mint, on the wind always a hint of next season, leafmold, ragweed, wildflower, pine, children pushed by dark toward supper. And older, in a rusted Chevy or Ford, its rag top mildewed, fins glowing with moon near water, motor silent but for ticking, windows steamed, love's perfume sharper than citrus or summer cedar, the bouquet of a lover's whisper between bruised lips, the promise never to fade just before she faded. And above all else, from playing fields, closets and drawers, attic heights and cellar depths, beneath every bed for as long as memory, as unsettling as an old sin just recalled, dust.

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