

Remembering Mom: Plot Summary

In book one of the five-book series, *Purple Trees and a Will to Believe*, Sybille and her younger twin brothers Sander and Solomon have just lost their mother to cancer. They are raised by a physically, mentally, and emotionally abusive alcoholic father who frequently beats them with a belt, a small wrench from his garage, and an ironing cord.

Randall Smith is now imprisoned for child abuse and domestic violence at Temecula Valley Correctional Facility. His 11-year-old daughter Sybille Smith returns from visiting him for the first time since he was taken away in handcuffs. The middle grade novelette takes readers on a coming-of-age journey. Find out what Sybille thinks of her father Randall Smith after working up the courage to confront him at the close of book two, *Prisoner*, and after hearing him apologize for the pain he has caused his family at the close of book three, *Resembling Jesus*.

Follow along in book four, *Remembering Mom* as Sybille works through feelings of grief and sadness over the loss of her mother and processes whether her father can change his destructive ways, becoming the father figure her family needs to move on after such a tragic loss. *Remembering Mom* takes readers on a journey through Sybille's seventh-grade school year, documenting her troubles concentrating in math class. She continues to struggle with forgiving her father, ultimately learning that instead of putting her abusive past to rest, she can use her past to help shape her future.

As the story progresses, Sybille learns that sometimes who you WANT someone to be and who they actually are, are totally different things. A turning point in the story comes when Sybille's father calls to wish her a happy birthday, the day she turns 12 years old. The phone call presents a glimmer of hope for Sybille that her father CAN change for the better, however she must keep things in perspective. She learns a new strategy: invest, then test. Sybille invests energy into a relationship with her imprisoned father, but tests to see if her father reciprocates the energy she has invested.

