

The Interview: 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. The middle grade quintet takes readers on a coming-of-age journey. In books one through four, find out what Sybille thinks of her father Randall Smith. She works up the courage to confront him at the close of book two, *Prisoner*, and witnesses him apologize for the pain he has caused his family at the close of book three, *Resembling Jesus*. In book four, *Remembering Mom*, Sybille works through feelings of grief and sadness over the loss of her mother and begins to process 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* took readers on a journey through Sybille's seventh-grade school year, documenting her troubles concentrating in math class. She continued 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 quintet 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 quintet 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.

Finally, *The Interview* is a gripping read which takes children ages 10-12 through RANDALL SMITH'S eyes, allowing them to hear HIS side of the story

as he chats one-on-one with journalist M.F. Clements of the Temecula Valley Voice for a televised interview. Has he really changed? Does he have regrets about his painful past? What is his relationship with his children like now? Does he see a future with his family? Why or why not? The Interview dives head-first into some meaty topics, among them The Seven Deadly Sins — pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth — and whether violence is the answer to solving problems in life. Tune in to find out!