

The background features a complex network of white circular nodes connected by thin purple lines. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming distinct geometric shapes like triangles and polygons. The overall aesthetic is modern and digital, set against a gradient background that transitions from a deep purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom.

# The Farm

Written by Tom Rob Smith

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# Table of Contents

The Farmers Union .....	1
The Farmer's Dog .....	2
The Farm Riverdale .....	3
The Farmhouse Inn .....	4
The Farm Movie .....	5
The Farm Napa .....	6
The Farmer In The Dell .....	7
The Farmhouse .....	8
The Farmstead Napa .....	9

# The Farm

By Tom Rob Smith

## The Farmers Union

Until the moment he received a frantic call from his father, Daniel believed his parents were headed into a peaceful, well-deserved retirement. They had sold their home and business in London, and said "farewell to England" with a cheerful party where all their friends had gathered to wish them well on their great adventure: setting off to begin life anew on a remote, bucolic farm in rural Sweden.

## The Farmer's Dog

But with that phone call, everything changes. Your mother's not well, his father tells him. She's been imagining things--terrible, terrible things. She's had a psychotic breakdown, and has been committed to a mental hospital.

## The Farm Riverdale

Daniel prepares to rush to Sweden, on the first available flight the next day. Before he can board the plane, his father contacts him again with even more frightening news: his mother has been released from the hospital, and he doesn't know where she is.

The Farm

## The Farmhouse Inn

Then, he hears from his mother:

The Farm

## The Farm Movie

I'm sure your father has spoken to you. Everything that man has told you is a lie. I'm not mad. I don't need a doctor. I need the police. I'm about to board a flight to London. Meet me at Heathrow.

## The Farm Napa

Caught between his parents, and unsure of who to believe or trust, Daniel becomes his mother's unwilling judge and jury as she tells him an urgent tale of secrets, of lies, of a horrible crime and a conspiracy that implicates his own father.

and that is why we don't keep secrets.

this is one of those psychological thrillers with a possibly-unreliable narrator, a maybe/maybe not crime, and a boatload of both family and smalltown secrets.

daniel is 29, living in london with his boyfriend mark, and working a job that is not making the most of his expensive educational background. his parents have retired after selling their business and properties, and moved to a small town in sweden, near the place his mother tilde grew up, and then ran away from at the age of fifteen.

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daniel hasn't told them he's gay.

his parents haven't disclosed the true state of their finances.

these secrets are the result of a family habit of unconditional love and a veneer of "everything is perfect and all problems are suppressed so only good things are experienced by all." daniel worries that his parents will be disappointed in him, and his parents don't want to worry him with their own difficulties. as a result, they have not been in close contact and the unruffled false surface covers up the true state of their lives.

until the day daniel receives a call from his father chris, telling him: "Your mother... She's not well... She's been imagining things - terrible, terrible things." tilde has been institutionalized - has had a psychotic episode after making wild accusations against chris and several other members of their town, specifically a powerful local man named hank greggson. she was brought in for evaluation, but escaped the facility, and just as daniel is about to hop on a plane to go to sweden, he gets a call from tilde herself, telling him she is coming to london and not to believe a word his father says. "Daniel, listen to me carefully... I'm sure your father has spoken to you. Everything that man has told you is a lie.

The Farm

I'm not mad. I don't need a doctor. I need the police.

she arrives, wild-eyed and clutching a leather satchel, making daniel promise to hear her out and let her tell this story in her own way; to listen to her and then decide whether she is crazy or whether there really is a conspiracy invested in covering up a series of terrible crimes, including murder.

this puts daniel in the difficult position of having to choose a side - to believe his mother's bag full of "evidence," or to trust in his estimation of his father as a good man, unwilling to believe chris could have gotten caught up in so much evil. it is an aggressive situation that puts daniel in the middle of a conflict between two people who have only ever shown him love.

but tilde is not above twisting the guilt-knife: If you refuse to believe me, I will no longer consider you my son

so he listens, not sure if he is simply trying to placate her by hearing out her paranoid delusions or if there really is some truth in her accusations, and either way unsure what his next steps should be.

this book is completely engrossing, and the pages fly by. the first 2/3 of the story is mostly tilde reading to daniel from her extensive notes, and it is written in a breathless, manic pace that completely sucked me in and sounded convincingly like someone in the middle of a psychotic break. tilde is intense, hyperanimated, unyielding in her chronology, anticipating daniel's potential objections and addressing them before he manages to ask, insisting on the conspiracy, citing numerous examples pointing to hã¥kan's immediate and unfair dislike of her and the petty ways in which he showed it and how he eventually turned chris against her. and she does, indeed, sound a little nuts, especially when she keeps slipping in imagery from fairy tales, particularly involving trolls. but she also sounds a little plausible.

the final 1/3 of the book is daniel's story - the steps he eventually decides to take, and the truths that come out. it is both a satisfying ending and one that is a little too tidy. the scene in the shed, in particular, seemed a little too "well, there you go" to me. the ending dragged the rating down a bit, but otherwise, this was the kind of book that once you start, you really want to finish in one gulp. and it's possible to do it, if you don't have a pesky job that gets in the way like mine did with this one. hhmph.

imma call this a 3.5

come to my blog! ...more

## The Farmer In The Dell

Inspired by the real life psychotic episode experienced by his own mother, Tom Rob Smith has crafted a powerful and affecting study in the guise of a crime novel, as to the effect of a similar incident on the very fabric of a family. Daniel resides happily in London with his partner Mark, and with the hustle and bustle of everyday life, and the less frequent communication with family, believes his mother and father to be happy and secure in their retirement to Sweden from the UK. However, following a frantic phone call from his father Chris, and the appearance of his mother, Tilde, in London having seemingly escaped from a secure hospital in Sweden, Daniel's life is turned upside down by the strange tale of abduction, conspiracy and murder his mother begins to recount.

Aside from the fact that every nuance, character and indeed word of this book is practically perfect, I will divulge nothing more of the plot at this juncture. Suffice to say as Daniel's mother begins to present evidence in the form of journals and objects of the strange goings-on in her sleepy Swedish rural community, the reader experiences the same level of confusion as to the veracity of her claims. Through these journals and the use of dual narrative, Smith perfectly evokes the atmosphere and setting of rural Sweden so familiar to regular readers of Scandinavian crime fiction. The suffocating atmosphere of this locale that so affects the mind and actions of Daniel's mother is beautifully wrought, and those who dwell within it are amplified and layered with sinister attributes as Tilde constructs her version of events, that have supposedly led to the disappearance of a local teenage girl. Sensing the threatening behaviour of her former friends and neighbours, and her husband Chris, Tilde sets out to accrue as much physical evidence as possible to prove her claims, and to avoid her incarceration in a hospital as others make claims as to the state of her mental health.

What is most intriguing about the book, and accomplished by the exquisite pace of the narrative, is how a family structure can be so quickly thrown into turmoil. Daniel has withheld his homosexuality from his parents, his parents have not been entirely truthful about the happiness of their retirement, and Daniel is cast into the unenviable position of questioning which parent to believe in the light of Tilde's claims. Cleverly, we as readers are able to participate in Daniel's confusion, bearing witness to the unfolding of Tilde's claims, as we are hearing the story along with Daniel at the same pace, and constructing our own theories and conclusions on Tilde's story as the contents and evidence of her journals is divulged. The use of the journal form works extremely effectively for this very reason. Daniel is also guilty, as many are, of having taken the stability of his family relationship somewhat for granted, so this in turn makes the confusion and divided loyalty he experiences all the more palpable within the novel.

## The Farm

Having read this book some time ago, I believe it to be a testament to the strength of Smith's writing that I am so easily transported back to the events and characters of the novel, This is a book that has stayed so vividly in my mind, that I can instantly recall the characters and their traits, and have not just pressed the mental delete button that follows the ending of a book- it has stayed with me. Consequently, I cannot recommend this book highly enough as an incredibly rewarding and thought-provoking read, and a book that I will certainly revisit in years to come.

...more

## 2.5 Stars

Having read and absolutely loved Child 44 I was very excited and had pre ordered my hard copy of The Farm by Tom Rob Smith.

The praise on the blurb of this novel really leaves you to believe you are about to embark on a " Chilling, hypnotic, and thoroughly compelling novel. You will not read a better thriller this year"

The Novel is set in Sweden and tells the story of Chris and Tilde who retire there to a farm in a remote area to recapture what could only be considered the good life 2.5 Stars

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The Novel is set in Sweden and tells the story of Chris and Tilde who retire there to a farm in a remote area to recapture what could only be considered the good life while their son Daniel remains in London. Daniel receives a call from his mother who sounds stressed and she tells him she has uncovered a terrible conspiracy, He later receives a second call from his father to say his mother is delusional and has just discharged herself from psychiatric hospital and so the mystery begins.

I was very disappointed with this novel and my disappointment began with pace of this story as the author slowly builds the story (very slowly) and while Tilde reveals the details of the conspiracy to her son throughout the first 3/4 of the novel I became bored and found myself wishing she would just get on with it as the slow reveal just took the suspense and good out of the novel and it became repetitive and had none of the zest and imagination of Child 44. I didn't find enough drama in the story to make it a compelling read.

I found the characters very bland and their actions within the story not believable.

The only part of the novel I enjoyed was the descriptions of rural Sweden and the customs of the people and while interesting not enough to keep me engrossed or satisfied.



## The Farmhouse

An unsettling phone call from a distraught father to his grown son, quickly followed by an equally disturbing call from the son's panicked mother. Father claims mother has completely lost touch with reality, while the mother boldly states that anything his dad has told him about her is a lie. Who to believe? Mum or Dad?

Moving to a small isolated farm in Sweden should have been a little slice of heaven for Daniel's retired parents. Instead, before the year is out, it has all gone terribly wrong. An unsettling phone call from a distraught father to his grown son, quickly followed by an equally disturbing call from the son's panicked mother. Father claims mother has completely lost touch with reality, while the mother boldly states that anything his dad has told him about her is a lie. Who to believe? Mum or Dad?

Moving to a small isolated farm in Sweden should have been a little slice of heaven for Daniel's retired parents. Instead, before the year is out, it has all gone terribly wrong. Paranoia blooms, lies abound, and all play into this slow burner of a mystery/suspense tale. Not a lot of action here, but I was hanging on every word. ...more

What an anticlimax. I'm confused by the great ratings this book has received. The entire story was transparent, at best. The characters, who ended up being important, were under developed, and Daniels motives and reasons were flakey. And the ending...what was that about? I was really waiting for so etching MORE or BIGGER than how it ended. I feel short changed, and felt this could've been SUCH a better story, written in someone else's hands.

## The Farmstead Napa

This for me is a 3.5 star book, but for once I will round it up instead of down.

So a short synopsis: this book is about a man who gets a call from his father one day telling him that his mother is unwell and they've entered her into a mental asylum. The man then gets another call after from his mother and she says to him that everything the father said is a lie and that she's fine. So this novel follows the story that the mother is telling the son and why her husband had her committed.

Someone on    This for me is a 3.5 star book, but for once I will round it up instead of down.

So a short synopsis: this book is about a man who gets a call from his father one day telling him that his mother is unwell and they've entered her into a mental asylum. The man then gets another call after from his mother and she says to him that everything the father said is a lie and that she's fine. So this novel follows the story that the mother is telling the son and why her husband had her committed.

Someone on my Goodreads friends list reviewed this book saying it's a "5 star book with a 3 star ending." This accurately portrays the novel for me. It was intriguing! From page 1 I was hooked, I needed to know what was going on and what this woman was talking about. I wanted to see this conspiracy out and I kept flipping pages because it was addicting and mysterious!

But that ending. I enjoyed the actual conclusion to the story. It was a little convenient for me, but it was NOT predictable. I actually never would have guessed it on my own. But the last 2 pages is where the problem stems. I won't say what the problem I had with the ending is really, but there was one and I just felt like the author could have ended the novel a little differently.

But overall a pretty good novel. Interesting characters. There was no one likeable in this story, but I didn't dislike anyone. It kept me on my toes, wondering who to believe and who to trust. And the mystery wasn't predictable to me! But definitely a disappointing ending.    ...more

The Farm is the first novel I've read by Tom Rob Smith. There's been a lot of praise for his other crime novel Child 44 so I figured why not give him a chance. Plus the premise of a woman gone mad who needs to defend her delusions is always a good story.

The Farm begins with Daniel receiving a call from his father warning him that his mum is not well and has been committed. Not too long after that call, Mum arrives to London hoping to have an ally in her beloved son. This is the first time Daniel    The Farm is the first novel I've read by Tom Rob Smith. There's been a lot of praise for his other crime novel Child 44 so I figured why not give him a chance. Plus the premise of a woman gone mad who needs to defend her delusions is always a good story.

The Farm begins with Daniel receiving a call from his father warning him that his mum is not well and has been committed. Not too long after that call, Mum arrives to London hoping to have an ally in her

## The Farm

beloved son. This is the first time Daniel has witnessed any sort of turmoil between his parents and is not sure who to believe. The novel progresses as Tilde tells her story of their family's demise because of a "villain" who has Chris, her husband, eating out of the palm of his hand.

Although *The Farm* is written as a first person narrative being told from Daniel's point of view, it shifts to Tilde reading from her journal and notes she's taken over the few months they've been living in the remote Swedish farm they bought after falling on hard times. For all intents and purposes, she seems of sound mind... seems. Her rantings become paranoid, delusional, and inconsistent. It becomes hard to decipher what is real or not.

Daniel listens to his mother's story and is constantly pulled from one side to the other. Does he believe his mother and assume his father is up to something sinister? Or could his father's warning of his mum not being well really be the whole truth, and nothing but. While trying to make his way through the muck that his mum places at his doorstep, he also must come to terms with the fact that there are secrets, scandals, and lies by omission that could possibly threaten to tear this family apart.

Tom Rob Smith writes a gripping, Psychological crime thriller that will have readers unable to stop reading. The chapters are short and seem to always end on a cliff-hanger which is a good formula when you want the audience to continue on the journey with your characters. Even though this novel is fast-paced, I still felt it was descriptive and engaging. The characters never felt one-dimensional but rather true relatives that could possibly be living down the street.

I definitely recommend *The Farm* to lovers of psychological thrillers set in the Swedish countryside. Tom Rob Smith has me on his team now and I look forward to reading his other crime thrillers. He has proven that family secrets is always a worthwhile read. It's no better pleasure than knowing there is a family out there that is more screwed up than your own.

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