

The background features a complex network of white lines connecting various sized white dots, creating a web-like or constellation-like pattern. The background color transitions from a deep purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The text is centered horizontally.

# A Nearly Normal Family

Written by M.T. Edvardsson

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# Table of Contents

A Nearly Normal Family .....	1
A Nearly Normal Family Book .....	2
A Nearly Normal Family Goodreads .....	3
A Nearly Normal Family Review .....	4
A Nearly Normal Life .....	5
A Nearly Normal Life Summary .....	6
A Nearly Normal Family Mt Edvardsson .....	7

# A Nearly Normal Family

By M.T. Edvardsson

## A Nearly Normal Family

New York Times Book Review recommends M.T. Edvardsson's A Nearly Normal Family and lauds it as a "page-turner" that forces the reader to confront "the compromises we make with ourselves to be the people we believe our beloveds expect." (NYTimes Book Review Summer Reading Issue)

## A Nearly Normal Family Book

M.T. Edvardsson's *A Nearly Normal Family* is a gripping legal thriller that forces the reader to consider: How far would you go to protect the ones you love? In this twisted narrative of love and murder, a horrific crime makes a seemingly normal family question everything they thought they knew about their life—and one another.

## A Nearly Normal Family Goodreads

Eighteen-year-old Stella Sandell stands accused of the brutal murder of a man almost fifteen years her senior. She is an ordinary teenager from an upstanding local family. What reason could she have to know a shady businessman, let alone to kill him?

## A Nearly Normal Family Review

Stella's father, a pastor, and mother, a criminal defense attorney, find their moral compasses tested as they defend their daughter, while struggling to understand why she is a suspect. Told in an unusual three-part structure, *A Nearly Normal Family* asks the questions: How well do you know your own children? How far would you go to protect them?

*Celadon* should be to commercial fiction what Kleenex is to tissue. In other words, this imprint should be a brand name. I haven't read everything they've published but what I have read has been outstanding. These folks know what they're doing.

*A Nearly Normal Family* is not your average legal thriller. There is a murder, a trial and we don't know who-dun-it but the family dynamics play an even greater role. The story is told in three parts from each member of a small nuclear family: the controlling father who is a pastor, the rebellious teen, and the emotionally and frequently physically absent mother who is a successful attorney. The story moves back and forth through time but the plot is sequential. Would you shatter your moral and ethical codes of conduct to protect your child? ...more

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## A Nearly Normal Life

This book just didn't work-out for me the way I'd hoped.

I read some fantastic reviews and was anxious to dig into this one, but for some reason it just never "clicked" with me.

Stella is seventeen and enjoying as much time as possible with her best friend Amina. Their carefree days are growing short as they both begin the journey into adulthood. Stella is off to Asia for her trip of a lifetime, while Amina plans to start medical school.

Everything goes sideways when Stella sneaks back into her home late one night, her clothing covered in blood.

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Everything goes sideways when Stella sneaks back into her parents' home late one night, her clothing covered in blood.

How far would you go to protect the ones you love? Your children? Your spouse? Your own reputation?

Told from multiple POV I found this book to be repetitive, to the point I felt I was reading the exact same paragraph word for word, over and over.

This book is translated to English and perhaps as they say, something got "lost in translation".

As the story-line plays out there is definitely a build-up in tension as truths are weighed against lies. And thankfully, I did have my wow moment at the end!

I may be in the minority here. There are some fantastic reviews, so I hope it works out better for you!

A buddy read with Susanne!

Thank you to NetGalley, Celadon Books and M.T. Edvardsson for an ARC to read and review. ...more

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"What is a lie? Just as there are different sorts of truths, there must be different sorts of lies. White lies, for example - I've never shied away from those. Better a kind lie than a hurtful truth, I've always thought.

But of course, this was different."

This is a complex multi-layered domestic drama that kept me chewing my cuticles until the very end.

Every character in this book is lying.

A pastor and father

A lawyer and mother

Their teen daughter and murder suspect

And a best friend

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Each lying to law enforcement, lying to each other and to themselves in an effort to protect someone they love, to preserve a family portrait that had begun to crack well before the current dilemma and to ultimately protect themselves.

This story is rife with ethical quandaries that gave me pause on more than one occasion to consider what I might do if presented with the same circumstances.

To loosely quote Shakespeare...

"I would tell lies like truth."

I'd love to find out what happened when all of the lies were finally exposed. There is a whole other story within this book and I could totally get into a sequel.



A Nearly Normal Family

No lie.

4.5 Stars rounded up â•

Thank you to Celedon for sending me a copy of this book and for the digital ARC as well. All opinions are my own. I swear.

\_\_\_\_\_ ...more

## A Nearly Normal Life Summary

MT Edvardsson writes a compelling psychological thriller in the dark and disturbing Scandi-Noir tradition which gives the reader insights into Swedish law. Set in the small Swedish city of Lund, a highly respectable and upstanding local family, Adam, a Church of Sweden pastor, his wife, Ulrika, an ambitious go getting criminal defense lawyer, are horrified and shocked when their strong willed, volatile teenage daughter, Stella, is arrested on suspicion of the brutal murder of a wealthy shady old

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In a complex and multilayered story, we find out more about Adam, Ulrika and Stella, how Adam's expectations of Stella and Ulrika's intense focus on her career has resulted in a poor relationship with their daughter. We learn of Stella's rape by church camp counselor when she was 15, and Adam's dark obsession in Stella's personal life. The narrative goes back and forth in time to give us a picture of the family through time. In the present, convinced of Stella's innocence, Adam decides to look more deeply into the murder, as his life begins to increasingly spin off the rails. The trial is a riveting affair, in this suspenseful tale with some surprising twists.

This is a psychological thriller of morality and ethics, family, that asks how far will parents go to protect their daughter? There are the requisite unreliable and unlikeable narrators, secrets, and a web of lies and deceit that surround a normal Swedish family. Edvardsson highlights how people are defined by life's trials and tribulations, and questions the concept of a 'normal' family. This is an absorbing read, my favourite part was the trial. This novel is for fans of Scandi-Noir and crime fiction. Many thanks to Pan Macmillan for an ARC. ...more

Book of the Month choice for June 2019

3-3.5 STARS

I can see why this slow burning legal thriller is garnering loads of hype; it's the perfect example of a steady building of suspense that explodes into a tantalizing climax that, for my part anyway, I didn't quite see coming. Based on this alone, I would whole-heartedly recommend this book to readers searching for a substantial thriller full of meaty characterization and deep introspection into family dynamics and secrets. My issues mainly stemmed

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\*Many thanks to the publisher for providing my review copy. ...more

## A Nearly Normal Family Mt Edvardsson

Whose truth is nothing but the truth?

M.T. Edvardsson presents a heavy domestic drama wrapped around the Sandell family. From all indications this is a small, compact little family of Adam, Ulrika, and Stella. As the layers are peeled back, there's quite a bit beneath the surface.

Edvardsson sets his story down within the town of Lund in Sweden. There's a definite pendulum that swings back and forth in regard to their ever changing identities. Adam, a pastor in the Church of Sweden, was once an avowed atheist until his pulled up collar was replaced with the collar of a minister. Ulrika, a dedicated defense attorney, regrets the time spent pursuing her career at the expense of her home life. Stella, intensely complicated, has just turned eighteen and wishes to flee to Asia in a long planned caravan of a trip. All the while, the secrets begin to brew.

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Stella and her best friend, Amina, are inseparable. They meet up with what they believe is the typical young man in a typical bar. But Chris Olsen is far from typical. We find out that he's thirty-two years old and has a stalker of a girlfriend. Stella carries on with a summer fling with Chris. But Chris' flinging days will be over soon when he's found dead of stab wounds. Stella is immediately arrested and accused of murder. But did Stella do it?

A Nearly Normal Family has some good moments. Edvardsson takes us in the midst of courtroom scenes with tense questioning. The story is split into three perspectives of the Sandell family with short rapid chapters. But here's where I had issues. Since this was a translation, I'm not sure if some of the momentum was lost within the word transfer. There seemed to be quite a bit of repetition because of it and constant replaying of incidents. I also didn't feel overly invested in any of these characters. But what drew me in was the strong need to know who was actually responsible. Edvardsson keeps you guessing with the gameboard arrow pointing in all directions.

I received a copy of A Nearly Normal Family through NetGalley for an honest review. My thanks to M.T. Edvardsson and to Celadon Books for the opportunity. ...more

3.5 Stars\* (rounded down)

When you live with Dysfunction, you become Dysfunction. Just ask the Sandells. They have it down pat.

When Stella a teenager, is arrested for the murder of a successful businessman, parents Ulrika and Adam are beside themselves. Adam is a Pastor whose whole life has been based on honesty. His daughter's arrest shakes his belief system to the core. Ulrika is an Attorney. The law is everything to her and success has always come before all else, even her family.

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When Stella a teenager, is arrested for the murder of a successful businessman, parents Ulrika and Adam are beside themselves. Adam is a Pastor whose whole life has been based on honesty. His daughter's arrest shakes his belief system to the core. Ulrika is an Attorney. The law is everything to her and success has always come before all else, even her family.

As far as the Sandells are concerned, ethics and morals go out the window when freedom is on the line.

What price would you pay to hold your family together?

Stella is just "Stella" or so her best friend Amina describes her. Sounds intriguing, right?

For me, "A Nearly Normal Family" was a highly intriguing read, which fell just a tiny bit short of all of the hype. The believability police were on high alert throughout which had my eyes rolling quite a bit. Furthermore, I found the writing to be a bit choppy in the way the story was told. That said, I absolutely loved the ending and loved the characters of Stella and Amina! I wish Amina had been more heavily featured as I think she kinda sorta stole the whole show. Though I didn't love every aspect of this novel, I enjoyed the storyline and look forward to seeing what Celadon Books comes out with next!

This was another fabulous buddy read with Kacey!

Thank you to Celadon Books, NetGalley and M.T. Edvardsson for the complimentary copy of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

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Excerpt to be published on Instagram. ...more