

## Kiss My Aster

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### An IGC Hallmark Movie

*Amanda Thomsen*



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"How are we going to get through this Christmas, Dad?" December Givens asks her father, Nick. They're the owners of The Holly & The Ivy Garden Center in Winterton, U.S.A. Nick replies to his beautiful, independent and single daughter, "I don't know what we're going to do, December. I wish your mother were here and hadn't died in that tragic eggnog incident. She'd know exactly how to get this family-owned, independent garden center through the winter."

The door jingles, Phillip enters. "Hello December." He doesn't even acknowledge Nick. "Are you ready for our date tonight? Let me check to make sure there's no dirt under those nails. You can hardly be my arm candy looking like that," Phillip hisses.

December and Phillip worked together at the top PR agency in the big city.

She left her high-powered position once her mom died and she returned to Winterton to help her dad out. Nick just shakes his head and walks away to stock a flat of poinsettias as Phillip escorts December out the door and into his very shiny, luxury automobile. He complains, "Ugh, just driving near this 'garden center' of yours makes my car dirty. It's going to need to be detailed, AGAIN!" And off they go for a night on the town.

While December is out, in rolls the Tannenbaum family. "Good to see you, old friend!" Nick welcomes Frasier, the patriarch of the family. Frasier quips, "Where else would I be? We have manned the Christmas tree sales out of The Holly & The Ivy's lot for the last 25 years! Freshest firs, spruces and pines this side of the North Pole!"

He parks a shiny Airstream trailer in the lot, as the large truck carrying the trees pulls in. "Nick, I want you to meet my son, Birch. He'll be taking over sales in your lot this year," Frasier beams. Nick panics, but recovers quickly, "But Frasier, you're like family to us! You've spent every season with us and now that Joy is gone ... Whelp, I look forward to getting to know Birch. Any Tannenbaum, with years of growing your own trees in your DNA ... he'll be like family in no time!"

The next morning in the shop. "Excuse me young lady," a customer peeps from behind a display to ask December, "How do I get my amaryllis to rebloom?" December starts to stammer, with her PR background she's been able to promote the garden center like never before, but her actual knowledge of plants is a bit lacking. "Just let the foliage die back and don't water them for a spell," a mysterious voice reaches December and the customer from around the corner. It's a tall, dark and handsome man wearing many layers of vintage, plaid Pendletons. "And who might you be?" asks December with her chin defiantly in the air.

"I'm Birch Tannenbaum, your tree lot guy," announces the stranger.

"Tannenbaum?" December struggles to put the pieces together. "You must be Frasier's son!"

"That I am," says the handsome stranger, the customer watching this interaction transpire with her jaw on the ground, grappling with how good-looking these young people are.

"How did you get so good with plants, Birch?" December asks, with a glimmer in her eye.

"Truth be told, I have a degree in horticulture, as well as being an accredited arborist," Birch admits.

Nick watches from behind a stand of Norfolk pines as the young people fall in love.

The next morning, Birch proposes to December using Joy's engagement ring (it still smells faintly of eggnog) and they decide to run the garden center together in a perfect marriage of marketing and horticultural knowledge.

And it turns out that Nick was Santa all along! **GP**

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*Amanda Thomsen is a funky, punky garden writer and author. Her blog is planted at [KissMyAster.com](http://KissMyAster.com) and you can follow her on Facebook, Twitter AND Instagram @KissMyAster.*