

## **Desmond Finds the Right Plant**

Valentine's Day was coming up, and Desmond wanted to get a house plant for his wife, Trish.

Trish loved the look of house plants, but she did not have the best track record of keeping plants alive, and nor did Desmond. So, when Desmond went to American Plant, he made up his mind to find a good looking plant, but, more importantly, a hardy one.

A friendly woman with gray hair and glasses spotted Desmond looking at the plants. "Would you like some help choosing a plant?"

Desmond told the woman that he and his wife had the opposite of green thumbs. "We remember to water our plants, but that is about the most we can do."

The woman's name was Greta. Greta steered him to a green plant with large leaves. It reminded Desmond of a

vine. “This is a Philodendron,” she said. “If you have cats or dogs, you might want to put the plant in a spot where they won’t try to eat it. Philodendrons can be mildly toxic to cats and dogs. But aside from that, you will not find an easier plant to take care of.”

Desmond had never considered that a house plant could be toxic, and he told Greta that he and Trish had no pets.

“Some house plants are so toxic that I cannot recommend them to families who have pets or toddlers, but Philodendrons are just mildly toxic. And, they are so easy to care for. Give them indirect light and water them only when they become dry, and this plant will be happy for years. It can even be moved outside in the spring.”

The Philodendron had a bright green color, but frankly looked rather plain next to some of the more exotic plants.

Greta could see Desmond hesitate and gaze at some beautiful, colorful plants that were more tricky to care for.

She said, "I think a pot like this one brings out the vibrant color of the Philodendron's leaves." She put the plant in a clay pot with a blue-green glaze. Some of the leaves draped over the pot.

Desmond thought the plant looked a lot less humble now. He thought he now had the perfect Valentine's Day gift.