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# ***Fargo* Star Allison Tolman Will Thaw Your Icy Heart**



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by [Oriana Schwindt](#)



Allison Tolman

Watching the premiere of FX's stunner of a limited series [Fargo](#) (Tuesdays, 10/9c), you might have noticed newcomer [Allison Tolman](#) among the more familiar visages of [Billy Bob Thornton](#) and [Martin Freeman](#) and wondered, "Who's that girl?" Tolman took a break from playing budding Bemidji detective Molly Solverson to answer just that question (and a few others).

### **TV Guide Magazine: Where on earth did you come from?**

**Allison Tolman:** *[Laughs]* I did a lot of commercial and theater work when I got out of school and was living in Dallas, and I moved to Chicago to go through the Second City Conservatory Program. But the transition to a larger market was really difficult, so I started doing more writing because that was something I had control over. I could write my own stuff and not have to wait for anyone to cast me. And I had always had office jobs, day jobs, but actually, right before this happened I had just quit my job and was temping for \$11 an hour. So this was really good timing.

### **TV Guide Magazine: Were you intimidated at all by being plopped down in the middle of this huge, very star-studded cast?**

**Tolman:** The first six weeks were definitely the most bizarre time of my life. It was a really steep learning curve in a lot of ways. But it's very cool; it still hasn't gotten old. Like, when Billy Bob Thornton says, "We're gonna go bowling!?" It's like, "All right! That makes perfect sense!"

Let's go ahead and do that!" I did have to have a conversation with myself though, that was like, "There is no way for you to prepare for this. You've never done a series. You've spent a total of, like, four hours on a television set. You don't know what you're doing. You have no idea what it's going to be like to meet these people and work with them. And you're just going to have to chill out and take it as it comes." And thankfully, everyone has been unbelievably kind and gracious and welcoming and patient and really generous with their knowledge and their time and their expertise.

**TV Guide Magazine:** [Colin Hanks](#) said he showed you the ropes a bit on set, though your characters, Molly and Gus, don't cross paths until the third episode.

**Tolman:** It's great, because their energies together are really nice. It's like, "I'm really glad Colin and I spent all that time drinking wine and eating tapas so we could lay the groundwork for this friendship that'll unfold onscreen." [*Laughs*]

**TV Guide Magazine:** Where does Molly go after the events of the first episode?

**Tolman:** You see the way things are headed at the end of the pilot there, and then you really get the pleasure of watching her become a detective. She's very, very smart, and you get to watch the gears turn in her head and see her start to solve this crime against all obstacles. She has to suffer a lot of fools in this show. A *lot* of fools, and a *lot* of obstacles — a lot of antagonists impeding her progress there. But it's been really delightful to watch her come into her own in that way. Additionally, her ambition actually impedes her ability to connect with people. She's so single-minded in getting the answers and solving the crime that she kind of forgets to take things in. So as the story progresses, you get to kind of watch her warm up and start interacting with people on a less professional and more human level, which is exciting to read and to play as well.

**TV Guide Magazine:** You grew up in Texas, but I don't hear an accent.

**Tolman:** Nope! Well, when I drink beer or boxes need to be moved, then I get *really* Texan, really fast.

**TV Guide Magazine:** *Fargo* shot in Calgary in the dead of winter — was that an adjustment?

**Tolman:** I feel like weather-wise I was a bit more prepared than the boys from Los Angeles, because I moved to Chicago about five years ago. I think my blood thickened up.

**TV Guide Magazine:** You only had to stop production once, according to [executive producer] Noah Hawley, who said the temperature was around -40 on that day.

**Tolman:** [*Laughs*] Oh yeah, that was our last day of the first shooting block! It was *so cold*. We got to the set and went all the way through hair and makeup, and we kept losing power at the trailers because people would try to pick up the cords to move them and they would just snap in half. I've never been that cold. It's an interesting sensation.