

# WHERE'S EMILY?

by Carolyn Wells

CHAPTER XLIII.  
The next morning Fleming Stone started out by himself for a short walk, he said, before he took the train to New York.

Aunt Judy offered him the cars in the Knollwood garage, but he said he preferred the train this time.

His short walk took him to one place only, a small house on the edge of the town. An unpretentious place, clearly not the abode of society folk or even well-to-do citizens.

But Stone was satisfied with what he learned there, and took the train at the little railroad station with hope high in his breast.

He put in the day in New York on some quest that seemed to him a hazy trip from one great business building to another. And from each of these Fleming Stone emerged, more and more perturbed, more and more crestfallen, more and more with the ashy grayness of hopeless despair settling down upon his fine, strong face.

"Done!" he told himself, with bitter anguish. "Done! Yet how could I know? How could I guess? Have I really met my Waterloo at last? It can't be possible. I'm so near the truth, so near a solution, and yet—where's Emily?"

He went back to Knollwood broken and heartick. Not entirely despairing, for that was not his nature, but so near it as to leave but small leeway for hope.

And he saw the car that was at the station to meet him, and realized there was no one in it but the chauffeur, he was glad, for he did not feel like talking to the young people just then.

By the time he reached the house he was his own man again and had concluded that to keep up the morale of the whole case he must put on a more cheerful attitude, which he proceeded to do.

The result was that he presented rather an unreadable countenance to the group awaiting him at the tea table.

"Good hunting?" Gibby asked lightly, for he knew better than to be definitely curious.

"I know," said the astute Betty. "Mr. Stone got part of what he wanted in New York, and part he didn't get."

Again Stone was amazed at her perspicacity, though he sadly realized that though she spoke truly the part he didn't get was what is known as the lion's share.

But he only said: "Right you are, Betty, as usual," and then he changed the subject to other topics and they all took the hint.

The next day Fleming Stone kept to his rooms much of the time. It was Wednesday. One day more and Emily would be missing a whole week, and already the consensus of Hillside opinion was that she would never be seen again.

Whatever had happened to her, or where she was, they felt, sure she would never be found alive, if at all.

Some few belived, with the police, that she had inadvertently killed Pauline Pennington, that her sudden temper had caused her to push Pauline over the railing of the bridge, and that, horrified at the position in which this put her, she had run away and would never come back.

Others pooh-poohed this theory as being not at all like Emily Duane to refuse to face the music in any emergency, and these stuck to the belief that she had been seized for the diamonds she wore, and, having put up a fight, had been killed or mortally injured and had been carried off.

Stone rejoined the family at tea time, and he looked pale and anxious.

"Where does the doctor live?" he asked. "Doctor Eaton?"

They told him and he asked for a car to take him to call on the medical man.

Betty offered to go along, but Stone gently declined her company and went off alone.

"That man's awfully worried," Betty said, and Pete responded: "I'm glad of it. And I don't mean that the way it sounds. I mean, I'm glad he's got something to worry over—something to chew

on. It's more hopeful than when he's serene and calm because there's nothing to look into."

Stone had a short interview with Doctor Eaton, but it was a satisfactory one. He learned from the medical man some facts that he could have found out in no other way, and they went far to confirm what he had called the glimmer of a glow of light on the dark subject.

He went back, and going at once to his rooms, he dressed carefully for dinner. For some aesthetic reason, it always helped Fleming Stone to be well dressed. Especially when he felt dissatisfied with himself or his work. And in this case he did feel so. Never before had nearly a week elapsed after a crime, without his having found some strong clues or evidence, if not, indeed, having solved the whole question.

"But you have some clues—some evidence," he remarked to his reflection in the mirror. "Now the thing is to hang on to them and work them up; don't let go of a single loose end."

"I shan't," the reflection in the mirror promised him.

He went downstairs, to receive very genuine compliments from Betty on his dressy effects. A few guests were expected, as Aunt Judy persisted in keeping up the family traditions of hospitality.

But the guests were a little ill at ease and they left early.

The five left sat around the lounge. Rodney in his usual place on the sofa. Betty and Pete near by, Aunt Judy in a big easy chair, and Fleming Stone standing by the fireplace, his elbow on the mantel.

The outside door was open, as the evening was warm, and a footstep on the porch was heard. A stumbling, irresolute footstep, and all looked toward the door.

There, framed in the door-casing stood Emily Duane.

But what an Emily! Wide-eyed, staring vacantly, trying to lift one foot to the doorstep.

Sayre was paralyzed, not believing his senses; the others, too, sat for a moment spellbound, and it was Stone who dashed across the room and gathered the fainting figure into his arms.

"Here—lay her here," cried Rodney, springing to life at last, and helping Stone lay the girl down among the pillows.

"Send for Doctor Eaton," Sayre ordered, and Betty flew to the telephone.

Black Pearl, overhearing something indicative, hovered in the hall.

"Come in, Pearl," Aunt Judy cried out almost hysterically. "Miss Emily is here!"

"Bress de Lawd," murmured the young negress fervently, and then fell back unobtrusively, yet at hand if needed.

"What's she been, Miss Bell?" Pearl whispered.

"Hush, we don't know. Don't make any noise!"

"No, ma'am."

Yet noise did not disturb Emily Duane. She lay in a dead faint, and beyond holding sal volatile to her nose and fanning her lightly, they dared not go. Almost no word was spoken as they awaited

the coming of the doctor.

Betty quietly scanned her appearance.

She was attired just as she was when she had left the tea, when she had told Rodney she was going to the hospital and had gone—where?

Her frock, though somewhat tumbled, was not torn or soiled.

Her shoes showed no sign of hard wear or unusual dust or dirt.

She had on no wrap and no hat, and one hand clutched tightly the diamond necklace that hung round her throat.

Sayre, on his knees at her side looked at her as if he could never look his fill; as if he feared it was

all a dream and he must soon awaken.

Aunt Judy went to her chair and sat there, wondering yet grateful that Emily was back with them, whatever her lot might be.

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