

# *The Last Flight of the Electra*

## SYNOPSIS

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It's December, 1968 and the self-contented (and reclusive) former magazine executive Aileen Craigmore is about to flee her New York mansion for the sunny skies of Arizona, mourned by an obsessive secretary (Sandra Houser), whose entire life seems to be wrapped up in the comings and goings of her employer. What Sandra doesn't know is that Craigmore is leaving for Arizona earlier than expected, hounded by a mysterious journalist who keeps calling her home, allegedly wanting to chat about famous aviatrix, Amelia Earhart, who disappeared in 1937 during an around-the-world flight. Craigmore, however, a former female pilot who befriended Earhart in the 1920's, believes this journalist is only calling to dredge up a scandal from her days leading a famous national magazine and so is making the decision to flee early – but, not wanting a scene, she has not yet told Sandra about the early departure.

When Craigmore is finally alone with Sandra, she tells her secretary that this is their final night together. Devastated, Sandra breaks down and, confronted by the fact that this is the last time she will see Craigmore, is pushed to reveal the great truth she has been hiding for four years – namely, that she believes Craigmore is the living and breathing Amelia Earhart. Earhart didn't die by crashing into the Pacific Ocean, claims Sandra, but rather pretended to disappear, as part of a ruse by the United States government to send out rescue ships that could determine if Imperial Japan was militarizing the Marshall Islands before World War II. The plan failed, resulting in Earhart's capture by the Japanese, until she was repatriated after the war, at which point she wanted only to live away from the public spotlight.

Astonished by this claim, the intensely private Craigmore denied everything – protests which increasingly to shrill anger and disbelief, as Sandra produces evidence of her claims... newspaper clippings that Craigmore actually died in a car accident in the 1920's... a mysterious map in Craigmore's possession... an alleged confession by Craigmore's confessor to having participated in Earhart's repatriation to the United States... even the presence in the house of a mysterious handy man with a connection to the “real” Craigmore's past. When Craigmore discovers not only that Sandra suspects her of being Amelia Earhart, but has also betrayed her, the very sinews of their relationship snap... with devastating consequences.

Who, we wonder, is Aileen Craigmore really – and who, in fact, are any of us?