

Who, When, Wow, Season 2, Episode 25

Amelia Earhart

Carly. Psst! You're listening to your favorite secret podcast, which makes me a secret host. Today's mystery features a famous historical aviator, who just happens to be a HUGE personal hero of mine. Plus, a certain coworker tags along on my adventure for the first time ever. It's a jam-packed day! So stick around, I'm Carly Q, and this is Who, When, Wow, Mystery Edition!

(THEME SONG)

(Soundbite of office.)

Carly. When I got into work this morning everyone was talking about some big drama with my coworker slash time-travel companion Lewis.

Carol. Wait, *that's* what the smell is?

Linda. Two weeks it's been in there!

Carol. Oh Lewis!

Carly. Carol and Linda filled me in, turns out Lewis is notorious for always leaving smelly stuff in the fridge and he only just got permission to start using it again. But then he left something smelly in there AGAIN!

Carol. A cheesy sardine salad! Absolutely disgusting!

Carly. So THAT'S why he was always using my fridge downstairs! Hmm, maybe I can come up with a solution to this. Okay, we got a stinky fridge upstairs. We got an empty fridge downstairs. I am good at solutions. I do like solutions. I also like problems.

(Soundbite of Carly closing the basement door, the office sounds fade away.)

Carly. Down in the basement, I told my rat friend Nibbles about it right away.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. I bet I can help Lewis with this!

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. What do you mean it's a bad idea? If I can get this resolved, then maybe Lewis will stop using MY fridge.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. Okay yes, I understand the fridge is technically BUTTHED property. But you know what I mean!

(Soundbite of footsteps coming down the stairs.)

Lewis. (singing) Oh Carly Quuuu.

Carly. Lewis! Just the fella I wanted to see. I hear there's some drama about you and the fridge upstairs.

Lewis. Oh that? Don't worry about that.

Carly. No, YOU don't worry about that.

Lewis. What?

Carly. I am on the case! I'm gonna get it all straightened out for you.

Lewis. No! No. Please don't do that.

Carly. Why not? If I can fix your fridge situation up there, then maybe I can get you to stop using my fridge down here.

Lewis. Carly Q, please, do not get involved. If I had wanted your help, I would have asked you for it. You know me. I spend my life trying to avoid drama.

Carly. Hmm. You do?

Lewis. Yes. Which is why I need a DISTRACTION. Something like -

(Soundbite of a thumb drive drops down a vacuum tube.)

Carly and Lewis. A new time-sealed file!

Audio File. Event: Summer, 1937 (BLEEP) Howland Island (BLEEP) Electra 10E (BLEEP) the ocean.

Carly. Hm. This sounds familiar, I think I know this one.

Lewis. Well I don't. Come here H-dad.

Carly. Hey! Lewis very unceremoniously grabbed my digital assistant device H-dad right out of my hands and plugged in the keywords from the file. I will let it slide this one time.

(Soundbite of Lewis typing.)

Carly. And at the very same moment, I remembered what I knew.

Carly and H-dad. This refers to the final flight of Amelia Earhart!

H-dad. Airplane emoji!

Carly. Yes!

Lewis. Did you plan that?

Carly. Amelia Earhart is my hero! She was a famous female aviator.

H-dad. And she was the first woman to fly alone, nonstop across the Atlantic Ocean.

Lewis. Well what's the mystery?

H-dad. On a later flight, Amelia and her navigator were attempting to circumnavigate the globe on a plane called the Electra. They were supposed to land at Howland Island in the Pacific Ocean, but they disappeared at sea.

Lewis. Disappeared?

Carly. Lewis, this is huge. I read about Amelia Earhart when I was a kid and have basically been thinking about this mystery ever since then. I'm a HUGE Amelia fan.

Lewis. Why? Did she have like, a really cool pilot's outfit or something?

Carly. Well DUH, but it's more than just that. Amelia is the original curious and brave world traveler, I am STOKED to be investigating the mystery of what happened to her!

Lewis. Wow! I haven't seen you this excited about anything since that double-crusted fruit pie.

Carly. I always wondered if Amelia crashed into some sort of secret underwater mermaid kingdom. Or if she was so overwhelmed by fame that she secretly flew to Australia to live out her life as a sheep farmer. OR if she was abducted by aliens!

Lewis. Offff course.

Carly. I cannot BELIEVE this! This is so exciting! Did you know that Amelia was instrumental in the formation of the 99s, an organization for female pilots?

Lewis. No, but I need to go back upstairs. See you later Carly Quuu.

Carly. I guess *I* should get some work done too, huh Nibbles? Unless you want to hear more about Amelia. Let me just tell you a few more things.

(Soundbite of rat squeaking.)

Carly. A few hours and countless more facts about Amelia later, I finally got down to work. And before I knew it,

P.A Voice. Attention, Butthead employees: it's pancake salad taco hot dog burger day! Grab all your favorite foods, and eat them all at once!

Carly. Yes! Time to go find Amelia! Lewis!

(Soundbite of Lewis running down the stairs.)

Lewis. Let's go, let's go, let's goooo!

Carly. So I grabbed Nibbles and H-dad, and we took off for the elevator.

(Soundbite of elevator ding and doors open.)

Carly. Hi Odie!

Odie. Basement companion! So nice to see you. Lewis.

Lewis. Odie.

Carly. You're never gonna guess the mystery we got today.

Odie. Because I hate guessing?

Carly. Amelia Earhart!

Odie. OOOH! I love Amelia Earhart, she's one of my heroes!

Carly. No way! ME TOO! Can we high five?

Odie. Just this once.

Lewis. Okay, wow.

Carly. So when did you get into Melie Odie?

Odie. I was visiting my family back home in Manila during the summer of Amelia's flight around the globe. I was crushed when I learned her flight path wasn't taking her through the Philippines. But I have always been a Melie Stan, as the kids say.

Carly. You must have been heartbroken when she went missing.

Odie. Oh devastated! Honestly, I wish I could come with you to investigate. But that would be against protocol. Anyway, let's review the time travel rules.

Lewis. No changing anything in the past! And no staying past the end of lunch time.

Odie. Very good, Lewis. What else?

Carly. Uh, we can always fast-forward to other dates on the file?

Odie. Excellent! You two have learned the rules well, I think you're ready. But just remember: even though you can't always do what you *wish* to d-(groans) Ugh, you know what? Who cares about the protocol. We're breaking it anyway. I'm coming with you!

Carly. WHAT?!

Odie. YES!

Lewis. Wait, but then-- who's gonna run the elevator?

Odie. Lewis you are staying here.

Lewis. Noooooo. Nononono. No way.

Odie. You're right, it would be a bad idea to have you run the elevator, Lewis. You probably wouldn't be able to handle it, and you'd have a terrible time.

Lewis. Okay I see what you're doing.

Odie. What I'm doing? All I mean is that if you don't think you're *capable* enough to run the elevator, then you won't have a very fun time doing it.

Lewis. Of course I'm capable enough, and I would have a fabulous time. You know what? I don't even wanna investigate this missing airplane lady.

Carly. You don't?

Lewis. Why would I when I could have WAY more fun showing the both of YOU how good I'm gonna be at running this elevator?

Odie. Mmm. I'm not sure about this. I just don't think you're ready for the responsibility.

Lewis. (laughs) What? Me? Responsibility is my middle name! Well, it's actually Howard, but I'm doing this. This is happening. I am running this elevator. Now GO.

Odie. Then flip the switch, Responsible Howard. Let's do this!

Lewis. (laughter) Hahahahaha THE POWER! Have you have some peptop bismol Odie.

Carly. I'm so excited!

Odie. I really hope I don't regret thiiissss!

(Soundbite of travel noises then loud thud. Doors open to noise of reporters)

Carly. We made it Odie! To-- Wait a minute, this doesn't look like the naval base on Howland Island!

Odie. Because is not. We're in Miami!

Nibbles. Ahhh, Miami! The city of beaches and... more beaches, I guess.

Carly. Hey Nibbles!

Odie. Nibbles! I've never heard your voice before. What a charming young lady you are.

Nibbles. I'm actually 47 in rat years, but thank you! It's nice to finally meet you for real too.

Carly. Okay, but why are we in Miami?

Odie. We're here before the time-seal starts, near the *beginning* of Amelia's trip around the world. She just landed after the first leg of the journey.

Reporters. Amelia! Ms. Earhart! Amelia, Over here!

Carly. Oh my gosh. THAT'S HER! She's talking! This is incredible. I can't believe we're hearing this from her actual mouth.

Amelia. Hello, hello, greetings all. You all have just seen me complete the first leg of my flight around the world. Earlier today I left Oakland, California, the starting place for my journey. Just another 29,000 miles now and I'll be done. I'll take a question down front.

Reporter. Ms. Earhart, what inspired your flight? Why are you doing this?

Amelia. The easy answer is that this journey is going to be the longest flight around the globe in world history.

Carly in background. You don't even know what you're saying. yes , the longest flight around the world because you're never going to come back from it.

Amelia. Setting records, making history, that's only part of it. What really gets me, Amelia going? It's all the youngsters out there, all the little girls and boys dreaming of being pilots themselves. I hope that by seeing me up there in the sky, they realize they can do it too— that you can do anything in the world that you set your mind to.

(Soundbite of reporters shouting.)

Carly. Yes Amelia. I also believe that. I also believe that because you helped me learn how to believe that. Oh Mumblecrust, SHE. IS. SO INSPIRING. Can't you just feel it in your BONES?! I can feel it in all two hundred and six of mine. (gasps) I gotta go talk to her, I have to warn her about what's gonna happen!

Odie. What? No no basement companion, no.

Carly. No come on, we've got to!

Nibbles. Carly it's rule number one. You can't change the past!

Odie. I know it's painful, but what happened to Amelia happened. It is not a problem you can fix. We are only here to *investigate*.

Carly. (sighs) Okay, I get it. Can't have a repeat of what happened at Roswell, huh?

Odie. Exactly. I only wanted you to get the chance to see Amelia in person. But now that you have.

Nibbles. Back to the elevator!

Carly. We raced back in, and moments later.

Carly in the background. She was amazing right? Goodbye Melie!

Odie. Very much so.

(Soundbite of ding and elevator travel noises. Loud thud and doors open to a loud naval base.)

Carly. Whoa! We stepped out onto a military battleship. It was chaos all around, sailors and other military personnel running to and fro.

Nibbles. Busy day on the battlecruiser, huh?

Carly. What is going on?

(Soundbite of two passing sailors.)

Sailor #1. But it's been TWO WEEKS since she went missing. Is it really still worth it to keep looking?

Sailor #2. Hey, tell it to the admiral, right?

Carly. Ohhh I think I know. This must be the HQ for the search and rescue operation! When Amelia didn't land here like she was supposed to, all these ships must have come to start looking for her.

Odie. Exactly, correct. If I remember right, this is the USS Colorado, lead ship of the rescue mission.

Carly. Wow!

Sailor #2. Excuse me, can I help you?

Odie. Yes sailor, we're here with the National Weather Service. Your commander just told us to get on the next seaplane running a patrol. Where do we board?

Sailor #2. You can get on that plane right over there ma'am.

Odie. Thank you, sailor. Dismissed!

Carly. Uh excuse me, Odie? You never told me you had the SKILLS to pay the BILLS! That was INCREDIBLE! How'd you know how to do that?

Odie. This is not my first time-travel rodeo, basement companion. Quick into the sea plane. Get ready to fly!

Carly. She squeezed my hand as the pilot started the engine, and we took off into the sky.

(Soundbite of plane engine.)

Carly in the background. Whoa. I have never been in a plane this small before.

Carly. Below us, we could see Howland Island, like a little lima bean floating in the middle of the ocean. Once we leveled off I called up to the pilot. Uh, excuse me, mister pilot sir, could you tell us about the search so far? What happened when Amelia tried to land here?

Pilot. Sure thing, here's the sit-rep: a US coast guard ship was supposed to be in radio contact with Ms. Earhart on her way in. But something went wrong with the radio, and she wasn't able to receive the coordinates for the island.

Carly. That's no good!

Odie. Not good at all.

Pilot. She sent out a message at 7:42 AM saying she wasn't receiving the radio instructions and was running low on gas. She said too that she thought she was at the right position, but she couldn't see the island or the coast guard ship.

Carly. I mean it's definitely hard it can be to see what's on the ground when you're up in the air. Like right now all the shadows of the clouds, they almost look like little islands on the surface of the water.

Pilot. You a pilot yourself miss? That is very a keen observation. Might very well have been part what got Earhart into trouble.

Carly. Okay then here's a question, if she thought she was close to the island but couldn't see it, was there any way the coast guard ship could have visually alerted her? A big blinking light or something?

Pilot. No blinking light, but the ship did attempt to signal her by generating excess smoke from its engines. But Earhart must not have seen it.

Odie. So what is the current status of the search?

Pilot. Unfortunately the most likely theory is that she was unable to locate the island due to the radio problem, and then ran out of fuel and crashed into the ocean. And I'm not seeing anything up here today to contradict that. In fact, it's probably time we back head in.

Carly. Alright let's do it! The pilot brought the plane down and we landed next to the battleship. Odie and I climbed back on to the deck of the ship.

Carly. Well it was a great view up there. I just wish we'd been able to find a new clue or something!

Odie. I feel you basement companion.

Nibbles. Maybe your computer dad has some more information?

Carly. Oooh, good call Nibbles. H-dad, did you finish analyzing yet?

H-dad. H-dad status report: Analysis was complete two hours ago. Clock emoji!

Carly. WHAT! Since when do you analyze that fast? And why didn't you say anything?!

H-dad. Because nobody asked! Shoulder shrugging emoji.

Carly. Ugh okay fine. H-dad, any other theories for what happened here?

H-dad. Theory #1: Amelia crash landed on nearby Gardner Island. The navy sent planes to investigate, but were unable to find anything.

Carly. Okay, and?

H-dad. Theory #2: she was captured by the Japanese soldiers. This would have required her to have crashed on the Japanese-controlled Marshall Islands, hundreds of miles from here.

Carly. Hm, that seems pretty unlikely, right? Since with the radio messages, she was almost certainly somewhere near here when she crashed.

H-dad. Correct! Theory #3: that somehow Amelia survived, and then changed her identity to Irene Craigmile Bolam, a banker from New Jersey.

Carly. What?! Okay that seems..

Odie. Random?

Nibbles. After flying the whole world you really think she'd end up in *Jersey*?

Odie. No.

H-dad. The book that popularized this theory was pulled by the publisher after it was largely discredited.

Carly. Okay, so Amelia wasn't secretly living as Irene, and she most likely did not crash hundreds of miles away where the Japanese could have captured her, so?

Odie. The most likely explanation is probably what the pilot said.

Carly. That Amelia's plane crashed in the water, and sunk into the ocean.

Nibbles. Ugh, what a loss!

Carly. Huge loss. The worst!

Carly. Nibbles could see how sad I was and she gave me a little rat hug. If you've never been hugged by a rat, I don't really recommend it but it is something that I like. Thank you for that hug Nibbles, I needed that.

H-dad. Incoming message from Butthead-quarters.

P.A. Voice. Attention employees: today's "all your favorite foods for lunch time" lunch time is coming to a close. Visit the infirmary if you have an upset tummy, and get back to work!

Odie. Sounds like it's time to head home.

Carly. Yeah. And so with one last look at the ocean, we went back to the elevator.

Odie. It was really nice breaking protocol with you basement companion.

Calry. Do we need to let Lewis know that we're coming backkkkk?

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises then thud.)

Lewis. Hey! Welcome back you two!

Odie. Hello Lew-- Why are you covered in confetti?

Lewis. Oh! Uh.

Carly. You didn't go back in time to some roaring New Years Eve party did you?

Lewis. Who, me?

Odie. Lewis.

Lewis. I was only there for a minute. Truly! From 11:59 to 12:01am.

Carly. That's two minutes!

Lewis. Pssh, details. What happened with Amelia Airplane?

Carly and Odie. Amelia EARHART!

Lewis. That's what I said.

Carly. I think we lost her to the reality that it was actually really hard and dangerous to fly planes back then, especially that far over open water. But it just goes to show how brave and inspiring she was to try.

Odie. Well said basement companion, well said.

Lewis. Well, speaking of brave and inspiring, I'm gonna go see if I can work out this fridge drama upstairs.

Carly. Right, about that.

Lewis. No! Please Carly Q, I am begging you, do not get involved in this.

Carly. Yes, yes, yes. That was what I was basically going to say. I almost messed-up the time-line today, more than once, so I think I've learned my lesson.

Lewis. That if you interfere with my fridge drama you'll mess up the space time continuum and universal time-line?

Carly. Hmm, that sometimes we just have to learn from our own mistakes! I was worried you weren't gonna be able to handle this right, or that you'd somehow fail and mess it up worse. But I've gotta let you sort this out for yourself. I mean, hey, you ran the time elevator!

Lewis. I did indeed! And if I need help, I will ASK for it. I appreciate that you're worried about me Carly Q, but you can't fix everything all the time.

(Soundbite of Lewis going back up the stairs.)

Carly. Thanks for coming with me today Odie.

Odie. Thanks for inviting me along. Amelia Earhart would be proud of your adventures.

Carly. Back at my desk I knew it was time to get some work done, but I had to take a moment first to reflect on things. Not just on the adventure today, but on ALL the adventures I've gone on recently. What a joy to explore the world and all its histories and mysteries! And I sure hope you've enjoyed coming along for the ride. Because the truth is, the best way to honor Amelia, I think, is to try being a little bit like her: brave, curious, and always eager to explore. We'll be back soon with another season of Who, When Wow - Mystery Edition. But until then, yours forever in mystery-solving, this is Carly Q, signing off. And remember, you never heard this!