

**BIOGRAPHY:****STELLA KON**

Stella Kon was born in 1944 in Edinburgh, grew up and was educated in Singapore. Stella Kon is descended from two established Peranakan Families. Her father is Lim Kok Ann, who was born at No.2 Emerald Hill Road, in the house of his grandfather Dr. Lim Boon Keng. Her mother is Kheng Lim, who was born at 117 Emerald Hill Road, in the house of her father, Seow Poh Leng. The love of theatre ran in the family. Stella's mother have been stage-struck from youth and acted several plays, while her father had been the president of an arts group called Center 65.

After the war Stella Kon and her parents came to Singapore. Back then she was still a child. In Singapore, Stella was entering school. She started writing for her school publication whilst at primary level. Her 'infant' works mimicked British/English writing, as Enid Blyton and The Famous Five was her staple. After that she started to write Asian Versions of 'Cinderella' type of fairy tales merely substituting pumpkins with melon. As soon as she grew up and taking philosophy class, her writing themes become like meritocracy. Finally, her Catholic affiliation enabled her to indulge in psycho-social themes.

Stella has written several other plays, and has won the Singapore National Playwriting Competition three times. First with "The Bridge" in 1977, second with "Trial" in 1982, and third with "Emily of Emerald Hill" in 1983. Since then she becomes the most produced play in Singapore. More recently

she has turned to fiction. Her novel "Eston," published in 1995 and won Merit Prize in the Singapore Literature Prize Competition. Stella Kon's other works are "A Breeding Pair," 1971; "Dragon Teeth Gate," 1986; "Dracula and Other Stories," 2000; "Silent Song and Other plays," 2000; "Butterflies Don't Cry and Other Plays," 2000; "The Scholar and The Dragon," 2000; "The Immigrant and Other Plays," 2000; and "Emporium and Other Plays," 2000.

She is divorced and has two sons, Mark and Luke, both married and living in London. With one granddaughter, Madeleine, and another one on the way, Stella herself is on the way of becoming the matriarch of an extended family.

**SYNOPSIS:****EMILY OF EMERALD HILL**

Emily is a poor Chinese girl whose mother threw her away when she was a kid. Her mother was a bit crazy because of her husband married again with a sing-song girl. When Emily's father died, her mother did not take care of her and then she lived with her aunt. After a while her aunt arranged her to get married with Kheong, who was twenty-eight years old. Kheong is the first son of Mr. Gan Eng Swee. They lived at Emerald Hill, an old mansion in a big compound. They lived there with Kheong's parents, two of his brothers and two sisters in law, Mabel and Moly. At first, when Emily entered Emerald Hill, she has a lot of problems, for instance she does not have a personal maid like the other sisters in law, her sisters in law try to bully her, and her mother in law seemed to be dislike her.

After a while living in Emerald Hill, Emily gets pregnant and gets three sons and a daughter. Her father gave the name of her three sons in law, whose are: Richard, Charlie, and Edward. Her daughter name is Doris that was given by Kheong. Richard is the son that Emily loves the most. Emily tries hard to give the best education for Richard. Emily puts him in Anglo-Chinese-School, which is the best school in Singapore. And after Richard graduated from that school Emily forces him to continue his schools and taking business major in England. Actually, Emily thinks that business is important so that Richard can replace Kheong later.

Emily starts to control everyone and everything in Emerald Hill after her mother in law died, for she is a wife of the first son. She is the ones who chooses clothes for her niece, she likes to tell her in laws what to do...shortly, Emily is become

a controller. She forces Kheong to be a member of Legislative Council because s he thinks that it will increase her prestige.

Actually, perhaps Emily never loves Kheong. What she really wants to have is only a better life where she can really enjoys her life. When Kheong has an affair with a young woman, Diana, Emily acts like she does not know anything. When Kheong stays at Diana's house, Emily keeps sending him clothes and food, showing to other people that she is a good wife. Emily has to pay much for her dominate attitudes, because Richard, her loving son chooses to suicide when he felt stuck with his business school in England. She has to realise that everything can not work like she wanted to be. Emily lost her husband's affection and she has to lose her lovely Richard.

Beyond all the sadness, eventually she becomes the owner of Emerald Hill for she is the wife of the first son, that had already past away, and a mother of Richard, the first son of Kheong that had already past away too.