

INT. THE PARAMOUNT NIGHTCLUB - GREENWICH VILLAGE - 1939

The space is close and intimate. The air holds a thick mixture of syncopated jazz and smokey haze. On a small riser, a trio backs the chanteuse. It's Billie Holiday.

EMMA BAXTER(25) is at the bar. 38-26-36. Drop dead gorgeous. A Vargas pin-up and casting couch regular.

DETECTIVE SMITH(55) and SPECIAL AGENT CLARK(30) approach.

DETECTIVE SMITH
Are you Emma Baxter?

EMMA
Who's askin'?

She draws a Lucky Strike from a solid-silver cigarette case and positions it gently between her dark ruby lips.

DETECTIVE SMITH
I'm Detective Smith. Special Agent Clark.

CLARK leans in with a light. She gives him a glance.

EMMA
Yeah? You don't look so special.

Her well directed puff scores a hit.

DETECTIVE SMITH
Miss Baxter, do you know Jimmy Hill?

EMMA
Doesn't ring a bell.

SPECIAL AGENT CLARK
He was murdered last night. On Forty-ninth. Brain splattered like a jellyfish. Wife's hysterical.

He offers a wrinkled and torn scrap of paper scrolled with dark ruby lipstick: *'Emm 255-6554'*

DETECTIVE SMITH
That was in his pocket.

EMMA
Yeah, so? It ain't against the law to have a phone is it?

DETECTIVE SMITH
I'm afraid you'll have to come with us.

EMMA
Yeah, well I was leavin' anyway. There's stench comin' from Midtown.