

## SCENE V

### THE EXTENDED HAND (CLOSED PHARMACY)

radio stuttering off-screen. a deserted commercial street. a couple of street lamps hang so high overhead that they barely shed any light at the street level. festive decorations run gloomily along a rail. behind them, towering buildings block the view on all sides. a row of shops whose only notable feature is the glow of their neon signs overlook the street with their shutters down. among them a pharmacy is the only establishment with its lights still on. its shutters are only partly down and its sign reads, open 24 hours a day. a dimly lit passage cuts through the building, right at the pharmacy's side, apparently leading nowhere. the car stops in front of it, the sustained stutter of its radio turns into muffled static. its headlights stay on.

out of the car, the woman evaluates the situation. the shop's interior is barricaded behind a wall of shelves and ads, making it impossible to determine with certainty if anybody is inside.

the woman approaches the entrance. she looks on, as if waiting for the main door to open. beside the door of the pharmacy, a small recess glows in the semi-obscurity of the passage, indicating the spot from where medication is dispensed at night. light emanating from it suggests the hole is in direct communication with the interior. noises travel through the aperture in the wall. it's like a band of raccoons is busy rummaging the place. as if on a whim, the woman slides her hand in the hole. quietly, the hand disappears inside.

#### FIRST VOICE

i told you they would take it by mistake.

#### SECOND VOICE

a. shhh.

b. don't be so silly.

c. don't worry, we're almost there.

after the brief exchange, the voices hush and are not heard anymore. at the same moment all noises cease. the lights of the interior go out, save for the dim spotlights illuminating the shop's windows and their still life displays. likewise, the pharmacy's sign goes blank. matter-of-factly, the woman pulls her hand out of the hole and looks at it.

a prolonged moment of complete stillness, then a voice comes from the other side of the street, which had not been shown yet. on that side, a wall covered in a row of posters for the local elections confronts the shops. a multitude of congealed smiling faces extends as far as the eye can see. a billboard with a picture identical to those on the posters looms large over wall and sidewalk. as unlikely as it may be, the voice is coming from it.

[the alternate version shows details as bottles on wall and sidewalk in slightly different positions.]

BILLBOARD VOICE

42.407673,

two crosses to the square,

12.849194,

aligned to the right.

[pause]

five years to flinch the pigeon.

[pause]

goodnight, goodnight, goodnight.

back in the car the woman does not seem in a hurry to move on. the camera pulls out slowly. the fog grows as the high tide, sweeping away the whole cityscape. the street lamps, the buildings, the rail with festive decorations, all disappear. the only discernible thing in the sea of grey is the distant car with its headlights and radio still on.