

Early morning in the Slaughterhouse.

The plastic door slaps against my face as I enter the huge hall. Pig corpses hang suspended on giant meat hooks from the middle of the ceiling. It does not smell bad, more like something old and moist, but not rotten, not as if something is wrong.

At the end of the room I see a known face, the butcher that I made contact with the week before. In this house of death this man is my safe island, and when he smiles at me, I feel a wave of relief, the joy of recognition.

He calls his assistant, a young, rough man with bulging eyes. He wears a white coat covered in bloodstains. I catch the words... "kidneys".... "hearts"... "help her...". We leave the hall and cross a big yard towards another large building. As we enter I am hit by the strong smell of fresh blood. We weave our way through freshly butchered pig bodies that again hang limply from meat hooks. This time I can feel their warmth as I walk past.

My guide tells me to wait and that one of the men will give me the hearts I need. He motions towards a muscular man standing with a cigarette.

I am shocked by the butcher's apparent ease in smoking a cigarette, his casual air as he waits to perform his task.

What does he think about?

What will he eat for dinner? - Beef, potatoes and Sauerkraut?

The only thing I can think of is the warm comfort of my own bed, but it is too late, I am here, I cannot escape, I must face this reality, their normality.

Suddenly I feel a plastic bag in my hands, heavy and warm – it is a bag of pig hearts. I dread to feel them, though my hands are also now bloodstained, for I stand here a part of it all. I make my way out, past the meat hooks, the blood, the death - walking quickly, the freshness of the early morning hits me, the sun is now rising.