Why aren’t you speaking to each other? Someone asked at the fish factory near the bench outside where few individuals sucked in the last smoke before going back inside to work.

The answer was short: Many of us don’t speak the same language.

In order to speak a vocal language one had to take a step out of the world of the headphones usually worn during a shift. The headphones served two roles, excluding you from the monotonic soundscape of machineries and bringing you to the two radio stations reached by the antenna that would turn your presence to half, there and here. The most spoken language was that of the routine of the work, a rhythm controlled by the job needed to be done and the conveyer belt keeping the efficiency at relentless. In the salt fish department, the language was tied to one performed for many decades, women salting and packing salt fish.

The bell that rang in for breaks spoke the language for all of us, when sung, it broke off the usage of bodies into a very sudden movement of walking as fast you could with out running, with out slipping on the fish organs on the floor, without showing to much that the bell had set the terms of how you moved your body on your own free will.

Other language would be the occasional prank, or a small gesture, that would give the long wanting reason, to laugh. The laugh came with the same spontaneity as the fast walk ordered by the bell, it was contagious and free willing and one laugh always brought the whole group of women to laugh together, even if you had your headphones on, even if you did not hear what was being spoken of.

Once a man in a machine lifter, with a controlled and efficient movement in the space, waved his hands in the air frantically as to simulate a frightened little
girl. The girl he was imitating had seen an uninvited animal buried in the animal being packed in salt. It was a cockroach stuck deep in the tail of the fish. The two animals met in the factory be coincidence,, the fish coming from the north atlantic ocean, and the cockroach coming from north-africa. You see, i was told when I first noticed a cockroach in the salt, the salt doesn't come from us, it comes from Tunis, as to stop me from estimating or escalating the situation. Us, presumably meaning the company Us. I partially investigated the creature as a visual memory is the only means of visually recording when stepping a step further than the dressing room in the factory. Close to the sign that spoke of when the shift would be finished each day, either the 17:30 or 15:00, were two signs with a camera and a cross over it. Who was protecting what from which the signs did not say. The black ranger rover outside on the parking lot told me whisphers along with my first pay check that somethings were better kept by reasonable means and kept to ones own according to few somebodies. Nothing that a cream cake for a coworkers 40th birthday would not fix and lift a spirit.

The spirit was somehow somewhat high, the mix of people gave a picture of Iceland that was partly agreeable, at least compared to the secluded picture of the Island that has too long dominated. That someone from Iceland would take on the job free willingly perplexed a man from Croatia who invited me to eat fish with him and his son in the workers common kitchen. It was hard to believe the words on the radio spoke from the leader of the nationalist movement in Iceland that his strength in the party is his experience of the fishing industry. There are few Icelanders working in the factory, which the head of the salt fish department finds unfortunate, as he tells his children, Iceland has no military but instead there is a duty to work in the fish factory.

*The Many Headed Hydra* is a project by Emma Haugh and Suza Husse at District, Berlin. www.district-berlin.com