

Kirby Wright

The English Market, Cork

THE ENGLISH MARKET stinks of blood and slaughter. Men behind counters busy themselves sharpening. They avoid tourist eyes in favor of locals. Man with yamaka fights price per pound for a gutted turkey. Fowl butcher explains November's shortage.

A giant tuna on ice bleeds from its anus. Butchers with razor-sharp blades slice flesh from fin and bone. Aprons stained pink. Shoppers push stroller carts down aisles framed with murder: oozing lamb shanks, rib-eyes stacked, chicken claws and innards in plastic tubs, a hill of hammered liver. Carved flesh glistens, especially orange salmon. Sand dabs with cloudy eyes. The stench sickens. No cooked meals downstairs except subs with paper-thin chicken and skinny sausages served in tough buns.

This creature harvest's open every day except Sundays. The souls of millions slaughtered have passed through a paradise of meat. Bon appétit.