

Once at a Hotel in Berlin (you know which one, don't you)?

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Find your way across the pavement, through a cemented lobby, into a small elevator and get off at 3rd floor where you arrive at a dimly lit reception area. Seeing the receptionists - as ever so often now at hotels - you have an inclination to call the authorities to intervene against child labor or at least to call and ask their parents, if they really have allowed them to stay up that late at night. But then again, youth is no crime, only a misdemeanor. They are very friendly at the reception, harmless, and simple things can amuse them endlessly like a funny sounding foreign family name.

Making your way into your room needs some willpower and body weight, the doors are heavy and need some investment of both to keep them open so that you can hoist in your suitcase, should you boldly have decided to bring one.

Once you are inside you realize immediately - provided there is daylight outside - DESIGN has had its way with the room and without mercy so.

If it is dark outside you will first, of course, have to find a light switch. Having the light finally turned on you realize that even light can be a euphemism. This is once again one of those places that indulge in "mood lighting" the emphasis being on mood. You should know that you are not supposed to read in your room, you are here for the mood. And they trust your sense of orientation - and if not - there should be an emergency torch somewhere (of course, I could not find one). And who minds the occasional bumping into walls, no, not into furniture, there is no such an out modish thing, but I come to that in a minute ...

OK since in Berlin you are supposed to stay outside your hotel room when it is dark this should not bother you too much. - Ah, yes furniture: There are no chairs (you do remember "chairs", those four legged things where you could lean your back on while sitting. But wait there is a something grey thing on which you might crouch on in front of a suspended board that serves as - well- apparently a working table - or rather it might serve as such once you have lifted away an old typewriter that is taking its full space. What a nice reminder of the ancestors of your computer (and yes have they have been heavy those typewriters). But where to put the typewriter to make way for its grandchild computer? There are so many pots with flower (?) plants. Yes, there are another two boards against a wall, one up, with a hideously looking pet monkey sitting on it (didn't it just move?) (you are near the Zoo, remember) and a lot of debris the hotel has stored there for lack of alternatives - they had the same problem as you, it seems. You, still with the typewriter in your hands, look hopefully at the board below, but apparently this one is intended for your t-shirt that you might - should you be so inclined - stack there, may be even together with a pair of socks should you want to make full use of the space available. Oh, yes there is

an open rack (not for the typewriter, stupid, just put it on the floor!) The rack generously may well take a pair of trousers. No I did not mean just trousers, I meant *one* pair of trousers, and whatever else you may have brought, leave it in the suitcase where it belongs anyway. (I like this open rack concept, by the way, you are less likely to leave things behind. But then again, you can remember one pair of trousers, can't you?).

And, of course, DESIGN has had its way with the rack as well and made sure that the hanger (the hanger, not the hangers) faces you and that you can admire your pair of trousers with their beautiful broadside.

But go back to your "working table" and you will realize that the hotel has provided "choice" ! There is one socket: You can either connect your computer or keep that greenish something going that seems to emit light (?) waves. I assume they call this "table lamp" here. But since computers run on batteries and have their own screen light why would you need a table lamp or a socket anyway? No need to choose!

And it is bedtime now, and don't you forget to brush your teeth! Just be careful not to spill tooth paste on your bed, DESIGN has made sure that you hardly realize the difference. - And yes DESIGN has thought of a toilet in your room. And very thoughtfully indeed: You can even close the door and you will not see anything of the room anymore. Very inviting ...

The next morning, in the breakfast space (no, you heard it right: I said "space" not "room") - Scandinavian youth hostel, or its bicycle stall, my first impression, but do not act on first impressions ... You immediately realize there is a nice working atmosphere here provided by the employer: The children, sorry the employees, do have fun with each other, a lot of laughter and fooling around, "hide and seek" seems to be a favorite, and they are very kind to the big brown dog sniffing up the tempting scents from the breakfast buffet (yes, my dear Americans, dogs are allowed, you are in Germany, so get adjusted, brutes), and the cheerful ones might even occasionally give you, that strange creature called "guest", an encouraging look and gesture you to a coffee machine where you can have a try at being barista. Of course, they even have music in that space. Not that ugly f-music kind, (functional that is, not that other word), they have in elevators ... No, as a very thoughtful service for the Berlin night dweller; they make you feel to be still in your favorite disco. No "Trennungsschmerz" here. Yes, man, get your things from the buffet, do the hip-hop. The sound of music will also save you from these horrible breakfast conversations, you won't hear your opposite anyway ...

Oh yes, thank you for asking, I did try their famed restaurant. The restaurant thing takes place in that breakfast space. But that's another story ...

