

A sigh of Freedom: Julie Howard

As I drag my backpack from the train, my world disappears in a gush of steam. I pause amid a clatter of voices I don't understand. People push, yell, scream and pull at my clothes, but I stand, take a deep breath and shiver in delight. My footfalls have never pressed into this land, my voice never disturbed the air, my thoughts never formed here.

I walk slowly through the chaos to emerge into hot sun. Brightly clothed families sit precariously atop piles of produce on overloaded carts. I watch them sway and bumble along the potholed street avoiding chickens, cows and swarms of people. Cow dung, smoking fires and a ridiculous sense of freedom overwhelm me. I have no idea where I will sleep tonight, what I will eat for dinner, or who will befriend me.

Finally, I have left myself behind. Who knows what I will become.