A NIGHTMARE FROM SISTERS

Margarethe Von Trotta

This dream was included in the script, but not in the final film version of Sisters, or the Balance of Happiness (1979).

I actually had this dream once and changed it only a little bit to fit the film character Anna. Following the scene where the younger sister Anna waits in the lounge of the office for her sister Maria, who is a secretary, the script shows them driving through the center of Hamburg, which is full of lights; Anna tells Maria a dream she had the previous night.

ANNA'S DREAM

We don't know New York, but I knew it in my dream. I was going to show it to you. It was late evening and we were driving in a car just like now. Only it was in a taxi and we were sitting in the back, holding hands. We were very excited and I promised you: Soon, in a short while, we'll see the skyscrapers full of lights. Only this last hill and night will be over.

Instead of the glitter of the many houses, a dark gray building appears in front of us and we go along an endless wall of black stones, blocking our view. Suddenly there are small stores without anybody inside. In front of one store on a line are hanging, like clothes to dry, cut-off pieces of human bodies: legs, arms, but also heads. One head is not hanging, but stands up on top of the line. I can look directly into his face. I have the feeling his eyes are still moving. I stop and look at him carefully. He winks at me. I think: it is impossible, a dead head can't wink at me. At this very moment the head looks toward the sky and his eyes turn blind.
MARIA'S DREAM

These stills are from the first dream that Maria (Jutta Lampe) has after her sister Anna (Gudrun Gabriel) commits suicide.

In the nightmare, Anna is standing precisely where Maria stood when she discovered her sister's dead body.

In the dream, Maria lies dead on the table where Anna actually killed herself.