

(Hamill)

Stub towers in the distance, riders cross the blasted moor
against the horizon
Fickle promises of treaty, fatal harbingers of war,
futile orisons
swirl as one in this flight, this mad chase,
this surge across the marshy mud landscape
until the meaning is forgotten.
Hood masks the eager face, skin stretched and sallow,
headlong into the chilling night, as swift as any arrow.

Feet against the flagstones, fingers scrabbling at the lock,
craving protection.
'Sanctuary!' croaks a voice, half-strangled by the shock
of its rejection.
Shot the bolt in the wall, rusted the key;
now the echoes of all frightful memory
intrude in the silence.
What a crawl against the slope - dark loom the gallows
One touch to the chapel door, how swiftly comes the arrow.

"Compassion" you plead, as though they kept it in a box -
that's long since been empty.
I'd like to help you somehow, but I'm in the self-same spot:
my condition exempts me.
We are all on the run on our knees;
the sundial draws a line upon eternity
across every number.
How long the time seems, how dark the shadow,
how straight the eagle flies, how straight towards his arrow.
How long the night is - why is this passage so narrow?
How strange my body feels, impaled upon the arrow.