Lighten our darkness …

The swirling waters of the great river leave behind the bustle of the noon-tide port, the scream of sirens, and the rattling of grain pouring into boxes on the Quay. The river, calm now, flows into the roseate West and the tired sun sinks lazily into a darkening sea.

In the Minster the evening candles have been lit, their shadows dancing like grasses in the wind spread across the stone altar in the old chapel where the red light hangs, a perpetual reminder that this is a place of sanctuary and of prayer.

Beside the estuary and across the vast expanse of mud and marsh and sand, pink footed geese fly home to their roost, while the curlew’s haunting cry faintly echoes the bell’s summons to Evensong, there to give thanks for the day, and pray for a quiet night.

“Lighten our darkness we beseech thee O Lord” The ancient chapel stirs, the old words reverberate and gather darkly in the rafters high above, as tiny candle flames leap suddenly upwards, haloes of light in darkness, an answer to prayer.

The sky above the estuary is filled with the dusky mist of evening. A lamb stranded on the Sea Bank calls for its mother, but only a Barn Owl hoots as he swoops low across the salt marsh to find his fishing ground, at the edge of the wide river.
Tomorrow the sun will rise again
into the eastern sky,
and the world will be remade
as it has been daily since
those first bright days of creation.
While tonight,
far away across the marsh,
a lone blackbird still sings,
and we shall rest
in the arms of a loving God.