

A wise and ancient bond between the Crown  
 And population of this pleasant Isle.  
 It's only in the last five hundred years  
 That politicians and democracy  
 Have led the way in policy and meant  
 The people vote for who they want to lead.  
 And this is right, but unlike countries which  
 Did build existence through the parliament  
 This is to us, an option added on,  
 Like satnav on a car, it does not come  
 As standard, and the car will function well  
 Without, it drives, protects, it normally goes.  
 And though it's wise to pay for extra help,  
 And usually the voice of the machine  
 Assists us well to get from A to B,  
 When lost, and crisis strikes, we soon mistrust  
 These modern ways, and reach for what we know:  
 We seek the map, from years before, and there  
 Do stabilise and resecure our way.

CAMILLA enters.

CAMILLA.  
 I stupidly had thought that once you're King  
 Perhaps it would reduce the angst you feel.  
 Instead your face has lines I never saw before  
 And in this light your hair looks far more pale  
 Than I remember. Is it worth the pain?

CHARLES.  
 I don't know if you're right. I do avoid  
 The mirror in the last few weeks it's true,  
 But in myself I feel much greater strength.

CAMILLA.  
 You sit there at your desk and work and read  
 Which means we cancel trips that should be made  
 And let down crowds who have looked forward to  
 Your presence there.

CHARLES.  
 It is these days, when I  
 Define my monarch's voice. I need the time.

CAMILLA.  
 But that's not what the people want.  
 Remember that the fulsome praise the Queen  
 Did most receive was that she always filled  
 Her duties even in the latest years.  
 And similar for you, remember when  
 In Somerset the Levels sank beneath  
 The waters of the flood, you were the first  
 To wade into the problem and were met  
 With clapping, admiration, and despite  
 The upset there, so many smiles! For you  
 Their future King had given hope where hope  
 Had disappeared. And now they need the same.

*Pause.*

Dear Charles, I wasn't sure to tell you, but  
 Someone waits to see you here tonight.  
 I know it's late, and when I heard he had  
 Arrived so unannounced I said to hold  
 And let you finish dinner, then we'd see  
 Your mood, before we grant him audience.

CHARLES.

Not Mr Evans? No, I'm tired, tell him—

CAMILLA.

It's

Mr Stevens waits.

*A moment.*

CHARLES.  
 Send him in, and leave us here to speak.

CAMILLA.

Be careful Charles, I do not trust him well.

*She goes.*

Enter MR STEVENS.

MR STEVENS.

Your Majesty, please forgive how late it is  
 I was not keen to draw attention to  
 The fact we have a conference tonight.