The Orb of Guardianship



THE CEREMONIAL SUMMONS OF THE KING

The history

Within the Orb of Guardianship lie the Pearls of Vigil, a multitude of small orange fire opals said to have passed between rival treasuries before their final restoration to the King's keeping. They represent the vigilance of Guardianship: a watch that does not cease merely because it is unseen.

The Crown maintains that their acquisition was entirely legitimate. Despite repeated summons, no earlier custodian has come forward. Whether this silence reflects discretion, allegiance or a sensible regard for the King's displeasure remains unrecorded.

At the time of publication, only the King and two other living people know the true nature of these treasures. The identities of those two remain undisclosed. The fire opals enclosed within the Orb form part of a greater treasure known as the Pearls of Vigil, the remainder of which is held separately within the Royal Collection. Its full extent has never been disclosed. So closely guarded are the coveted Pearls that no authenticated imitation or replica has ever come to light.

Alongside the portion of the Pearls of Vigil enclosed within the Orb rests a portion of the Sovereign's Private Botanical Reserve, placed within the Orb by the King himself, with only one living witness to the act at the time of publication. Its inclusion ensures that the vessel holds both the solemn responsibilities of his office and the private comforts of the King who bears them.

Together, these enclosed treasures give the Orb its distinctive voice. When shaken, they announce that the King requires the attention of those who support him. Thus, treasures ordinarily condemned to silence within a royal vault have been entrusted with securing silence from everyone else.

Within his closest circle, the summons is occasionally accompanied by the words, "Silence, my peasants." His Majesty otherwise rejects the designation: he reigns over subjects, not peasants. The expression survives solely by the royal privilege of being inconsistent in private.

DESIGN & SYMBOLISM

FORM & DETAIL

A sphere framed by curling vines, leaf forms and a hooked finial; an eye-shaped motif marks its base.

GUARDIAN COLOURS

The shifting green and purple finish links the Orb with the Crown of Guardianship.

VOICE OF OFFICE

A shake calls for attention. Its enclosed treasures give audible form to the King's summons.

Catalogue illustration based on photographs of the completed Orb.