A People’s Farewell

Openly they shed their tears, while slowly shuffling by.

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What’s in the minds of those who queue so long?

A nation’s sorrow captured in this snaking line

Where history is made, to autumn’s song.

The chattering, like rooks, of friends both new and old

Falls silent, as the massive door is reached.

They enter, awed by the vaulted hall and what it holds

A file so sad, its quietness complete.

Eventually, from each the briefest nod or bow.

It’s all the time they have, their grief to mark.

Then onward, for there’s many thousands outside now,

All waiting patiently, from dawn to dark.

A transient moment, oft to be retold,

A memory that dims, but grows not old.

Jenny Watkins

September 2022

116 words