

The drawbridge spans the moat, its water unruffled and unflustered, but he feels confidence in the unseen heavy gates below. They are, and always have been, a steadfast sentry, strong and sturdy, barred and bolted to withstand all invaders. Whilst the gates stand firm, no man will occupy the castle.

His mind drifts to battles past and he recalls the rebel armies, a seething mass of disorganised humanity, ready to sacrifice themselves in the name of their cause. In those peaceful fields beyond the castle lie the remains of human bodies, the soil streaked and layered with the blood of courageous Welshmen. Annihilation and butchery adorn the landscape yet, within those fortified walls, exists evidence of slaughter and torture, unspeakable deeds perpetrated in the name of his people.

His mouth is dry. His palms are sweating. When the time comes, will he remember all he has learned over the years? He is just an ordinary man but soon he will be called upon to do his duty.

His reverie is broken by an echoing footfall on the stone steps leading to the upper ramparts. His heart beats faster to the rhythm of the footsteps. Is this the call? Is this his time?

“Dai! Dai! Dai!” A young woman in a white blouse and dark blue skirt approaches him. “We’ve been looking for you everywhere. The castle opens in thirty minutes. You’re down for the first tour.”

The man sighs. It’s the start of the school holidays. It’s going to be a busy summer.