

Dear Mary,

I haven't heard from you for ages! How is life treating you? How have you been dealing with the pandemic that we are going through?

I recently read an article in school. It was about a gendarme who exchanged himself for a hostage during a supermarket siege, in France. The article was referring to the attacker that evacuated the supermarket after killing four people and injuring a few others. His name was Radouane Lakdim and he was known to the police for other petty crimes and drug-dealing. In fact, he has been under surveillance, but had showed no signs he was going to carry out an attack.

After several attacks in a row he evacuated a supermarket while holding several hostages. Gendarmes found him and one of them volunteered to take the hostages place. Lakdim agreed so the gendarme stayed with him. He also had his mobile phone line open and when the security forces, that were outside of the store, heard a gunshot, they stormed the store and shot the attacker dead. Lt Col Arnaud Beltrame, the gendarme was found seriously injured and some days after he died from his injuries.

This article reminded me of the famous poem Thermopile from Kavafis. This poem is referring to the people who fought in Thermopile so to protect the place, and finally died bravely. They fought for the common good and for their ideals. They didn't care about their own lives. They were prepared to die. That's why they weren't afraid to go to battle. Unlike the mercenaries whose motives is money and wealth.

The same happened with the gendarme who didn't care for himself but for saving the hostages. So he sacrificed himself and died on duty.

I thought it was interesting and I wanted to share it with you! I would love to know what you think about the article I have just shared with you.

I am looking forward to hearing from you. Stay safe!

Cheers,
Katerina