

The 21-year-old tank commander was questioned in Ukrainian through a Russian interpreter

In the very first days of this invasion a 62-year-old unarmed civilian was shot dead on a village street outside his Ukrainian home. His name was Oleksandr Shelipov.

Three months later and the captured Russian soldier accused of killing him is in Kyiv being tried for a war crime.

Standing up in court to confront the 21-year-old defendant on Thursday was Kateryna Shelipova, the widow of the man killed.

Did he repent his crime, she asked?

The Russian tank commander, Vadim Shishimarin, replied that he admitted his guilt and asked for her forgiveness. "But I understand you won't be able to forgive me," he added.

Kateryna Shelipova hadn't finished. "Tell me please, why did you [Russians] come here? To protect us?" she asked, citing Vladimir Putin's justification for the invasion of Ukraine.