

Boston Hero Looked Guy With Bag Straight in the Eyes

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Before the videotapes, before the lucky mobile phone, before the shootouts, there was an extraordinarily courageous 27-year-old named Jeff Bauman who helped lead the FBI on the trail of the suspects in the bombing of the Boston Marathon -- and there was the anti-war activist who probably saved Bauman's life.

The events leading up to the death of suspected bomber Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26, and capture of his brother, Dzhokhar, 19, remain muddled, and they become more so with each clarification. Dzhokhar was accused today of using and conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction resulting in death and with malicious destruction of property by means of an explosive device resulting in death.

Did the brothers intentionally wait until four hours into the race -- long after the elite runners had finished, with maximum exposure -- to place and detonate the explosives? Why did they ultimately drive west into the suburbs when a better getaway awaited them just east of Cambridge? Why did they kill a Massachusetts Institute of Technology police officer, as authorities allege? Did they really just happen to be inside a 7-Eleven that was robbed?

Most fundamentally, although the brothers were Muslims of Chechen origin -- and Tamerlan had been interviewed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 2011 at the request of Russia, which has fought Chechen separatists for years -- did the terrorism have anything to do with their Islamic faith? Or was it essentially a non-political act of two young sociopaths, in the model of Columbine and other mass murders?

The flood of misinformation became so bad on Friday that the ambassador of the Czech Republic to the U.S. said he felt the need to release a statement explaining that his country is different from Chechnya.

Confronting Evil

This much is clear: Three people died in the bombings, including an 8-year-old boy, and more than 170 were injured, some horribly. A transit patrolman from the same police academy class as the murdered Massachusetts Institute of Technology officer was seriously wounded. And one of the first leads in the case came from Jeff Bauman of Chelmsford, Massachusetts.

Bauman's girlfriend, Erin Hurley, was about a mile from the finish line,

where Jeff was waiting for her along with Remy Lawler, 25, and her friend Michele Mahoney. Hurley, Lawler and Mahoney are roommates in Brighton, Massachusetts. A man wearing a cap, sunglasses and a black jacket over a hooded sweatshirt looked at Jeff and dropped a bag at his feet, said his brother, Chris Bauman, in an interview.

Jeff had just had what Secretary of State John Kerry later termed, in reference to the bombing, “a direct confrontation with evil.”

Tufts University photographer Kelvin Ma was standing about 40 feet past the finish line, taking photos of the university’s charity team completing the race when the first bomb exploded.

Cannon of Noise

“I thought it was a cannon,” Ma said. “No one really knew what it was.”

The smoke from the blast obscured the carnage on the ground. Twelve seconds later, as the bloodied victims emerged from the cloud, the second bomb detonated.

“That 12 seconds was just confusion,” said Ma, also a photographer for Bloomberg Photo Service. “I didn’t see a lot of panic. Then the second one went off and people started crashing the gates and running past me. All the cops and paramedics just started running into the smoke.”

As Ma and his colleagues began running away from the blast and toward the library, he spotted another photojournalist he knew sprinting into the smoke.

“The switch flipped for me seeing him run back in, and seeing all the first responders running in there,” Ma said. “This is important. This is something big.”

Ma ran back toward the finish line, taking pictures of people emerging from the smoke. “Everybody looked kind of dazed. Some were bleeding.”

‘Stay With Me’

Jeff Bauman was still on the ground at the site of the blast. Carlos Arredondo, who had been handing out American flags at the finish line in memory of his son, who died in Iraq, was standing across the street when the explosion occurred. Video at the scene shows him, easy to spot in his cowboy hat, fighting his way through the barricades to reach the wounded.

Arredondo saw two young women he thought may have been dead, he said in an interview videotaped later that day and posted on YouTube. Bauman, horribly injured, lay on the ground. A woman lying next to Jeff begged Arredondo for help.

“But I only could help one at a time, so I just helped that young man,” Arredondo said. Arredondo tried to stop the bleeding, tying tourniquets around what remained of Jeff’s legs. He told him the ambulance was coming. A woman with her long ponytail held back by a red cap pushed a wheelchair through the crowd, and Jeff was lifted into the chair.

“Stay with me, stay with me,” Arredondo told him, still holding the tourniquet.

First Picture

Ma had returned to the scene and climbed up the photo bridge -- scaffolding set up over the finish line where accredited press photographers shoot pictures of the runners.

“I went up so I could see over the smoke,” Ma said. “When I got up there, you could see that it was bad. You could see right away that it was bad.”

Arredondo, along with the woman in the red cap and an EMT in a yellow vest, pushed Jeff through the crowd in a wheelchair. Ma recognized Arredondo as a well-known Boston anti-war activist. He pointed his camera at the man in the cowboy hat and pressed the button.

That first picture shows only the top half of Jeff’s face, smeared with blood and soot. A volunteer running to assist blocked the view of his injuries. Then a photographer next to Ma said, “Oh God, Oh God,” and turned his face away. Ma kept shooting.

“And then I saw it, and it was terrible,” Ma said. His next photographs show Bauman’s mangled lower half.

Hours Waiting

It was hours before the Bauman family knew Jeff was injured. His sister, Erika Schneider, saw a photo when her boyfriend saw it on his iPhone.

As the news spread, Bauman’s family reposted pictures of Jeff on Facebook. Jeff’s father, Jeff Bauman Sr., wrote, “Can everyone pray for my son Jeff Jr. who was at the finish line today in Boston. He is in surgery right now with injuries to his legs.”

It took more than an hour for the family to get from their home in Concord, New Hampshire, to Boston Medical Center, Chris Bauman said. Then something remarkable happened that helped move the investigation ahead.

“He woke up under so much drugs, asked for a paper and pen and wrote, ‘bag, saw the guy, looked right at me,’” Chris Bauman said April 18 in an interview.

Intensive Care

While still in intensive care on the day of the bombings, Bauman gave the FBI a description of the man he saw, his brother said. Jeff, who works at Costco, described a man in a hooded sweatshirt under a black jacket, wearing a cap and sunglasses. He estimated the man was about his age, Chris Bauman said. Bauman's information helped investigators narrow down whom to search for among the hours of video of the attack, Chris Bauman said.

With Bauman's description and a flood of videos and still pictures arriving to investigators, the Tsarnaevs made no apparent effort to escape. The day after the bombings, Dzhokhar picked up a car he'd left for repairs. Dzhokhar returned to campus at University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, where he was a sophomore, on both Tuesday and Wednesday after the bombings, a school official told Bloomberg News. The official said his presence was verified in part by card swipes.

Zach Bettencourt, a 20-year-old sophomore at the college who is majoring in political science, said he knew Dzhokhar and saw him Tuesday, the day after the bombing, at the school's gym. They spoke about the incident.

"I talked to him about it like he was a regular kid," he said. "He said, 'Tragedies happen.'"

Acting Normal

Dzhokhar was acting "normal" though he wasn't really working out, just sitting around the machines and listening to his iPod, Bettencourt said.

Shortly after 5 p.m. on April 18, three days after the bombing, FBI agent Richard DesLauriers stood at a press conference next to poster boards featuring grainy images of two men in baseball hats carrying backpacks, identifying them as the suspects.

"Somebody out there knows these individuals as friends, neighbors, co-workers or family members," DesLauriers told reporters in Boston, referring to the images taken from a surveillance video on Boylston Street near the finish line. "Though it may be difficult, the nation is counting on those with information to come forward and provide it to us."

Familiar Area

In the hours after the press conference, as their images were flashed around the world, the Tsarnaevs made their way to Kendall Square in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a bustling neighborhood full of bars and restaurants and home to MIT. It was a familiar area to them, less than two miles south of where they lived after arriving in the U.S. about a decade ago.

The Tsarnaev family, native Chechens who fled the violence in the Russian region, had settled in a caramel-colored wood-framed triple-decker near Cambridge's Inman Square, where college students and immigrants largely

from Brazil have remade the neighborhood. A five-minute drive south toward the Charles River, Sean Collier, a 26-year-old MIT police officer, sat on patrol in his vehicle.

At about 10:30 p.m., police got a call that shots were heard in the vicinity of Main and Vassar streets, near the signature Ray and Maria Stata Center, the so-called crumpled building designed by Frank Gehry that houses MIT's artificial intelligence lab. A surveillance video shows the two bombing suspects approached Collier and shot him, according to a person familiar with the case who is not permitted to comment because the investigation is continuing.

Hour Left

It's still not known why Collier, who was shot multiple times and later pronounced dead at the Massachusetts General Hospital, was targeted. Growing up north of Boston, Collier graduated with a criminal justice degree in 2009, longing to be a cop. On the MIT force for just more than a year, his shift was set to end in less than an hour before the encounter.

Police then linked the brothers to a report at 10:28 p.m. of an attempted robbery at a 7-Eleven store in the vicinity of the shooting, even releasing a surveillance video image of the younger brother from the store. A spokeswoman from 7-Eleven said that while the store had been robbed, the brothers weren't there. She asked news organizations who had printed the information for a correction, according to USA Today.

The image was actually from a gas station taken that night, and the two are not suspects in the attempted robbery, Stephanie Guyotte, a spokeswoman for the Middlesex District Attorney's office in Cambridge, said later.

Mayhem Begins

The mayhem that shut down the city soon followed. At 12:19 a.m., Cambridge police got a call from a gas station on Memorial Drive next to the Charles River not far from MIT from a man reporting a carjacking. The victim told them he was in his black Mercedes-Benz sport utility vehicle across the river in Boston on Brighton Avenue when he was approached by the two bombing suspects, according to Dan Riviello, a Cambridge police spokesman.

The brothers then had been driving around looking for an automated teller machine, withdrawing money from the man's bank account, authorities said. Back in Cambridge, they stopped to buy food at a Mobil gas station, where the victim was either let go or fled from the vehicle, running across River Street to a Shell station, where he called police, according to Riviello.

After getting a report of the stolen SUV, authorities were able to pinpoint its location using a mobile phone the victim left behind in the vehicle, Edward Deveau, the police chief in Watertown, a community bordering Cambridge

to the west, told CNN and CBS News yesterday.

Watertown Chaos

Watertown is a sleepy community of about 30,000 people that is better known for what surrounds it: Cambridge, the bustling home of Harvard University, to the east; leafy Belmont, where Mitt Romney raised his family, to the north; and other wealthier suburbs such as Waltham and Newton across the Charles River. While the Tsarnaev brothers' home in Cambridge was within minutes of Interstate 93, which would have let them quickly flee the city, they instead drove west on Memorial Drive along the Charles River into the tangled streets of the suburbs.

It remains a mystery why they would venture into a quiet neighborhood of three- and four-story homes. After traveling west for about five miles along the Charles River, they ended up after midnight in an area that soon became the scene of a firefight.

200 Rounds

At around 12:30 a.m., a Watertown police officer spotted the stolen SUV and another vehicle in the vicinity of Laurel Street and Dexter Avenue, Deveau told reporters. While the officer waited for backup, the two suspects began firing on the police car, according to the Watertown chief. The firefight escalated as backups arrived, with more than 200 rounds of ammunition unloaded over five to 10 minutes, the chief said.

The brothers were also armed with pipe bombs, which they threw at the growing force of officers, Deveau said. Richard Donohue, a 33-year-old officer from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority who joined in the search, was shot in the groin, leaving him in serious condition, according to David Procopio, a state police spokesman.

Andrew Kitzenberg, a Watertown resident, said he witnessed from his bedroom window a confrontation between two men in a black SUV and police.

Watertown resident Larry Victor described the scene: "Tons and tons and tons of gunfire. Explosions."

Subdued

After the fusillade, the older brother engaged in a direct gun battle with one of the officers who had moved closer to the suspects. Tamerlan ran out of ammunition, threw his gun and began walking toward the officers, who tackled him, according to Raymond Dupuis, a captain on the Watertown police. When he was subdued on the ground, his brother got in the SUV and floored it in the direction of the police, who jumped out of the way.

While the two brothers may have already sustained injuries, Dzhokhar

killed his older brother, running over him and dragging his body down Laurel Street, Dupuis said. The younger brother sped off, driving back up the residential streets before abandoning the vehicle and running into the darkness.

At 1:20 a.m., police brought a man with multiple gunshot wounds and an injury consistent with an explosion to Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Dr. Richard Wolfe, chief of emergency medicine, told reporters at a news conference. Tamerlan Tsarnaev, the patient whose name wasn't initially released, was pronounced dead at 1:35 a.m. after efforts to resuscitate him failed.

Massive Manhunt

Watertown became the scene of a massive manhunt. Teams of heavily armed officers scoured the neighborhood around where the fire had taken place. Residents were told to lock their doors and stay inside. The mass transit system was shut down in the Boston region. Amtrak trains were searched. Helicopters filled the skies.

As evening approached, Governor Deval Patrick lifted some restrictions on movement and travel. David Henneberry, a retired phone company worker, stepped outside his home on Franklin Street in Watertown, not far from the fire the night before, to get some fresh air. He noticed the tarp on his boat was torn.

His sister, Claire Bransfield, 69, said he loves that boat and, every year, takes out the disabled for rides as well as people from the Perkins School for the Blind.

Henneberry went over to the boat and saw blood. He called police at 6:42 p.m.

As authorities converged on the house, helicopters overhead showed infrared pictures of Dzhokhar, who appeared to be injured, beneath the tarp.

Kathy Alpert, 61, could see the scene from her third-story window. "I was terrified," she said. "It was like a movie, and not the kind of movie I like to go and see."

Not Simple

At 8:42 p.m., Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was taken into custody.

At 8:58 p.m. Boston police released a statement on the department's Twitter account saying, "The terror is over."

It's not that simple, of course. On April 20, Steven Mey, 50, a computer repairman who lives in Watertown, went to the police department to request an application to apply for a firearms license.

Mey said he was huddled in his home with his two children, ages 15 and 16, his wife and his mother-in-law.

“I felt totally inadequate,” he said at the police station. “All I had was a baseball bat.”

He added: “My wife thinks I’m crazy for doing this.”

Jeff Bauman, who lost both legs, remains at Boston Medical Center. His friend Remy Lawler had moved closer to the finish line to take better photographs when the bomb went off -- a move that may have saved her life, though she suffered a baseball-sized shrapnel wound. FBI agents visited her twice in her hospital room and assigned her an agent to help her obtain physical therapy and trauma counseling.

Guilt

“She’s just very angry and traumatized and fragile emotionally,” said her father, Arthur Lawler, of Amesbury, Massachusetts. “It’s so unfair what happened.

“The biggest challenge for her is dealing with the emotional trauma,” he said. “She’s not sleeping well. She’s just reliving everything.

“She feels guilty about a lot of this -- that she wasn’t with her friends. She just wanted to get a better picture.

“It’s been very difficult and of course we’re trying to be as supportive as we can. It’s been really difficult for a lot of us. Words can’t describe it.”

Michele Mahoney, who was standing next to Jeff Bauman, was seriously injured, suffering two broken legs and requiring skin grafts. Friends have set up Websites for donations for Bauman and Mahoney at <http://www.gofundme.com/Support-Jeff-Bauman> <http://www.gofundme.com/BucksforBauman> and <http://www.gofundme.com/theMRMfund>.

“He’s all I have and I look to him,” Chris Bauman said of his big brother. “He didn’t deserve this. He’s far too sweet.”

Not Physical

For many of the thousands near the finish line on April 15, a number of them young in college-heavy Boston, the wounds are deep yet not physical.

Stephanie Choi, 22, a Harvard senior in economics from Iowa City, Iowa, was having a small celebration with two friends on marathon afternoon near Boston’s Copley Square. The three of them -- unofficial, or “bandit,” runners in the local parlance -- had just finished the marathon in about three hours and 45 minutes.

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“We were drinking some water,” Choi said, when they heard a loud explosion and then a second. In the chaos, they limped on their tired legs back to Harvard Square. Later, Choi regretted her choice.

Shock, Sadness

“We were just so confused and trying to get out of harm’s way,” she said. “I don’t know whether we would have been able to help, in our condition. But we were so close and didn’t choose to go back.”

Choi hasn’t been able to escape the feelings of shock and sadness. She said she avoided going to classes, tried not to see anyone, and just stayed with the two friends who ran the race with her.

“They were the only ones who could understand how I was feeling,” she said, crying.

Over the weekend, Choi had found new focus. After going back and forth this year about whether to attend medical school, she spent yesterday filling out applications.

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“I want to work hard to serve other people,” she said. “I don’t like feeling hopeless like I do now.”

(Updates with charges in second paragraph.)

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