

I Know Exactly When My Life Changed

April 15, 2013. When I looked into the face of bombing suspect Tamerlan Tsarnaev.

It was 2:48 pm, one minute before the most high-profile terrorist event on American soil since Sept. 11, and he was standing right beside me. We were half a block from the finish line of the Boston Marathon, two in a crowd of half a million. I was there with my friends, Remy and Michele, to support my girlfriend, Erin Hurley, who was running for charity. We were just like everybody else that day: cheering and clapping, laughing. Then suddenly, I noticed Tsarnaev. He had on a hooded jacket that was too much, even on a cool day. The thing that struck me, though, was his demeanor. Everyone was enjoying themselves. Except this guy. He was all business. We stared at each other for 8, maybe 10 seconds, then Michele said something, and I looked away. When I looked back, he was gone. But I noticed his backpack sitting on the ground near my feet.

And then I heard the explosion. I remember seeing smoke. I remember blood. The smell of burning. I remember being thrown into a wheelchair and being rushed to an ambulance. The equipment in that ambulance. The EMT. the orderlies waiting for me at the hospital. I remember being pushed down a hallway, a policeman running beside me. "I know who did it," I tried to tell him. I wanted someone else to know, too, just in case. But I couldn't get anyone to listen.

Then a surgeon came. "Don't worry," he said. "We'll take care of you." And they did. Everyone that day took care of me. They are the heroes, because they gave me the chance to prove that we are better than cowards with bombs. That we're not broken. And we're not afraid. We're stronger.



"Will you... An Israeli soldier who lost his arm in a Hamas terror attack proposed to his girlfriend from the stage of a Friends of the IDF event in Florida.

Cpl. Ziv Shilon proposed in front of about 1,000 people at the Friends of the Israel Defense Forces' Greater Miami Chapter Solidarity Gala.

His girlfriend, Adi Sitbon, said yes. The theme of the evening, which raised more than \$3.3 million, was "Saluting the Women of the the IDF."

"We, the combat soldiers, are not the only ones who are doing a great job, but so are our wives, sisters, mothers and girlfriends who support us and give us the opportunity to serve Israel," Shilon said.

"FIDF says that our job is to protect Israel; their job is to give us the reason.

"I wanted to take this opportunity to ask my girlfriend, Adi, just one question. You are my hope, my rock and my everything. Will you marry me?"

She said, "YES!" Shilon put a diamond ring on her finger using his prosthesis. the audience cheered.

