My Son

Kevin

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My two-year-old son was sitting on my shoulders, the flags blowing, everyone cheering as the runners approached the finish line. We'd been there two days before to watch the mile. And we were back for the marathon.

The marathon is the best thing about Boston for me. We'd been every year since we came to study at MIT. We rented an apartment on the route and could see the runners streaming by from the window. Ten days after my son was born, we wrapped him in a blanket and walked out into the sun to cheer the runners going by our apartment, welcoming a new life, the new spring, celebrating the best thing about Boston.

When we brought him again last year, he could run and cheer. After a few minutes at the finish line, we moved on and walked to the Common, where we heard the first explosion. We thought it was some Minutemen reenacting the battles for Patriots day, except it was louder. Then another explosion. And then the sirens. And the fire trucks driving at a reckless speed--so much faster than they usually do. That's when we knew something was really wrong.

I felt guilt later, even though I knew I shouldn't. Guilt for bringing my son to a place of danger.

We're back now. At Copley again for the Mile. And the sun is out again. And the throngs of people are cheering me up, making me feel the joy of the marathon again. My son is with me.