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Big Law Associate's Life Ensnared in Austin Bomber's Fate

In the midst of a trial, Pillsbury Winthrop's Liz Marcum got a terrifying call about her husband's involvement in the car chase to apprehend the suspect.

By **Angela Morris** | Originally published on [Texas Lawyer \(texaslawyer\)](#) | March 23, 2018

As a bomber terrorized Austin this month, Big Law senior associate Liz Marcum had a very specific reason to be worried.

While law enforcement moved in on the suspect, Liz Marcum's husband—Deputy U.S. Marshal Robert Marcum—was called in to track and apprehend the bomber.

To make matters worse, Liz Marcum, a senior associate in the Austin office of Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman, was



A tweet on March 22 referencing Liz Marcum's husband, Robert, a U.S. Marshal involved in the Austin bomber case.

working in San Antonio representing Academy of Allergy & Asthma in a three-week antitrust trial, a case she had been working on for four years.

In the early morning hours on Wednesday, Liz Marcum got a call from an unknown number. She feared the worst—was it the one call that the spouse of a law enforcement officer never wants to receive? Thankfully, Marcum said it was her husband, “Bobby,” with quite a story about how he rammed the back of the vehicle driven by perpetrator Mark Anthony Conditt during a car chase. Her husband witnessed the bomber commit suicide by detonating an explosive device inside his car.

We spoke with Liz Marcum, who practices antitrust and competition law, about her husband’s story and what it’s been like for her to be stuck in trial during the Austin bombing terror. Here are her answers, edited for brevity and clarity.

What does your husband do in his job on a normal, day-to-day basis?

He is on the warrant side on what’s called the Lone Star Fugitive Task Force. It’s composed of local, state and federal agencies. He works every day with the Travis County Sheriff’s Office and Austin Police. He hunts fugitives for a living. Whether it’s someone who has an active warrant that’s new—he’ll go find them. He’ll work on cases where someone left the country or area before sentencing or court. He hunts bad guys—I’m very proud of him.

What was his role in the investigation into the Austin bombing perpetrator?

He was involved from the beginning on an informational basis, where he was in contact with the APD; they would have various meetings to share information. It was an incredible effort on everyone’s part. Recently, when they figured out who it was, Bobby got involved—the Lone Star Fugitive Task Force—they got involved.



Liz Marcum, Robert Marcum, their son Patrick and their dog Henry.

I understand your husband was involved in the car chase that ended with the suspect exploding his vehicle. What's the story of your husband's role?

My husband was in his truck, a government vehicle. He started driving; so did the SWAT vehicles. They boxed him in. I think my husband hit his car and pretty soon after that, he ignited the bomb in his own car. It happened very close to my husband.

What was your reaction to hearing all of this?

It terrifies me now, knowing how close he was, but it's a testament to: he gives everything, every day, for his job, even when his life is at risk. He has been shot at. Everything happens to the guys on this task force.

Is your husband OK? Was he hurt at all?

He was still in his truck. There was one person who got hurt; I don't know how. But my husband, luckily, he was in the car—but he saw it go off. I said, 'Are your ears OK and everything?' He said, 'I am fine.' He did have to be photographed to make sure nothing on his body got hurt, and he was fine. I thank God. He was so close.

You mentioned your trial in San Antonio. What was going on in your trial at this time?

When [the car chase] happened, I was up preparing for arguments. I got a call from a number I didn't know. I was afraid it was the call that no companion of a law enforcement officer wants to get. It's always that call I worry about answering: I don't know who it is, and they say something about my husband. But it was my husband—he said, 'I'm OK. My phone is in my truck—it's a crime scene.

I can't imagine what it's been like for you. Can you tell me about the whole ordeal from your perspective?

Ever since we've been together, I've been nervous because, obviously, he's in harm's way every day. Every day he comes home, he has some crazy stories. I'm so proud of him, but of course, I worry. This is not the first time he had a sensitive, imminent and dangerous situation, but he goes out there—he still puts everything out there.

Angela Morris is a freelance journalist. Follow her on Twitter at @AMorrisReports

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