**THE LOVE COMMANDOS – AUDIO** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02rzwxn>

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**TRANSCRIPT:**

Rajveer Singh is a handsome young man of 23. He has large, earnest eyes and hair that falls over his forehead. He is well-built and thoughtful.

When Rajveer was 12, a new family moved into the house across the narrow alley. The first time he saw Madhuri, she was then 14, he says he fell in love. "I thought to myself 'this is the girl I want to marry'. She was mischievous, she had a beautiful smile, and I knew that she would look after me."

Madhuri, a petite, bright-eyed woman with a winning smile, says she felt the same. Over the years, as Rajveer and Madhuri went to school together and shared their best hopes and worst fears, they fell utterly in love.

You know what happens next. This is India, where parents vet a potential marriage partner like Nasa scientists checking a space shuttle before lift-off:

* caste
* complexion
* horoscope
* height
* character
* qualifications
* family
* eating habits

Love just does not get a look in.

So when Rajveer and Madhuri told their families they wanted to marry, the answer was a resounding "no". Rajveer's family are Thakurs, landowners. Madhuri's are Banias, traders. Apparently incompatible.

But they were undeterred. As Madhuri's family took her back to the village to forcibly betroth her to a more suitable boy, Rajveer hatched a plan. He called the Love Commandos.