

**“Indian Matchmaking”: Why We Have a  
Love/Hate Relationship With The Show | TIS  
Ep. 32**



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Speaker 1: Hi, I'm Sharon and Lisa, and together we're the introvert sisters and welcome to this Valentine's day episode, where we talk about finding love. And what we're going to start with is a show that Lisa loves, Indian matchmaking. So we're going to start out by giving our take on a couple of episodes of this and, you know, maybe it's something you'd want to do too.

Speaker 2: Okay. So I had been determined not to watch the show. Why is that Well, I just, it just sounded to me like, you know, just, just why, you know, and then I thought, I, I thought, Lisa, well, that's not really fair. You know, you have to be culturally open and open to learning about new cultures. And it really wasn't, it was partly a cultural thing, but also it sounded to me like, it's, you know, is this an Indian version of the bachelor Because I absolutely loath the bachelor. Okay. So that's partly what made me initially not be into it. And then somehow one day I decided, okay, be open, give it a chance. And I gave it a chance and got into it. And I feel like if I learned some things, I learned some things about love. I learned some things about making, making decisions, when it comes to love because, you know, love does not conquer all, no all, but, you know, but you can give love a chance at conquering all. Okay.

Speaker 1: So I want to ask you about this. Is this an outsider's view of Indian mountain making or is it made by Indian prisoners

Speaker 2: No, no, no, no. It's, it's that most decidedly an insider view. Oh, that's great. Right. So we don't have any of that horrible national geographic, you know, outsider approach, you know, looking at the natives. Right. So it is, it is an insider's perspective and it shows to me, it shows a side of India that is typically, you know, not seeing basically, right. So apart from, you know, the, the love topic aside, it shows, you know, customs and, cultural mores. And so on that ordinarily, you don't see, Oh, that would lifestyles.

Speaker 1: That sounds wonderful. Now I have never seen this show before, so you will be getting my unvarnished reaction. Yes. Along with Lisa's as the expert in this program. And we're starting with episode one, season one, slim trim and educated. Right. So I want to ask a question about this is this the guy's mother, this is the case mother looking for. Yes. And so the guy's mother is talking to the match.

Speaker 2: The guy's mother is talking to the matchmaker laying down her criteria, but did you, but did you notice okay. Age, but height height

Speaker 1: Yes. Yes. Apparently the, you know, the, the, the prospect of braid can't be too short

Speaker 2: Or too tall

Speaker 1: And has to be educated. It has to be educated,

Speaker 2: So okay. To get into all kinds of things. Okay.

Speaker 1: Apparently the height restriction is not that bad cause they only want someone above five, three. Now, bear in mind that I have over five 10. So this seems impossibly short to me, but you know,

Speaker 2: As a five, four person in this sisterhood.

Speaker 1: Yeah. I feel attacked, but you know, we don't know how tall the sun is either

Speaker 2: Yet, yet. Okay. And by we, we mean you, they distinguish between arranged marriages and love marriages.

Speaker 1: Interesting. the bridegroom in this, the perspective, great room, and this seems rather quiet and subdued, it looks like his mother has taken over the whole process. he left, it looks to me that he's visiting their home, hoping to goodness that he ends up with somebody he can stand. Right. That's what it looks like to me from a linguistic point of view. It's very interesting to me how much English is mixed in with the Hindi. Yes. Right. I wish I, you know, I always find fascinating, you know, because they said arranged marriage and they said so that was it. It was interesting. Okay. So following up on that, the matchmaker says that there, there are two kinds of marriages. There are marriages, and then there are love marriages. They don't actually call them arranged marriages in India,

Speaker 2: Which means that the calling them arranged marriages is the Western perspective perspective that is looking at it through a different lens. Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yes. Yeah. You know, for, for that says to me that for Indian culture, this is entirely normal. Yeah. Just to get married this way and to get involved and to have your mother pick out to your brain.

Speaker 2: Yes. And have your brain have to be five, three, but, yes. So

Speaker 1: That's why I, that I find very interesting

Speaker 2: Because in love marriage, it's actually like the re the inverse to Portugal Western society. Yes. Yeah.

Speaker 1: Where they are all about the Western society is all about love marriages and anything else, which is marriage and everything else is arranged. Yes. So an interesting perspective. Yeah. I think, so this is interesting to me. So, you know, this show features SEMA to Perrier. Mumbai is top matchmaker, and she's talking about the way that she works. And it's like, you know, it strikes me as a cross between a work, social worker sizing up a couple for a potential adoption and a realtor sizing up a house because she's looking at the home, she's looking at how they live. She's looking, she appears to be looking at every aspect of their life in order to better choose the right person.

Speaker 2: Yes. And you see, here's the thing, right I mean, I speak from personal experience and this, th this is, this is what became, what started to fascinate me about this show. I'm like, well, maybe people do need a bit of guidance. I don't know if they need as much guidance as you know, the matchmaker needs to go and look at the, the, the guy's room. Although sometimes that can be useful. I instructed instructive, but some kind of, some kind of input or guidance is necessary for me personally, if I had known certain things about my ex from marriage would never have happened. I'm just saying I'm a matchmaker could have helped with that. Yeah. Because certain, certain inconsistency didn't come back. Incompatibilities would have been identified at the outset.

Speaker 1: Exactly. Exactly.

Speaker 2: Why I thought, well, maybe there's something to this who

Speaker 1: Among us has not had that relationship.

Speaker 2: Yes. Let's keep working. Let's keep walking.

Speaker 1: What is, what is triggering you here

Speaker 2: So it's, it's the colorism. Oh, yes, yes, yes. But we know that is a huge thing in India. I mean, honestly, any post colonial society. Yeah.

Speaker 1: That's true. But it is very, it is very big in India. Yeah. And actually we can link to the humans of color, Instagram account, which deals a lot with colorism, but a lot of it is based in India from what I've observed

Speaker 2: And sorry, based on some of those, criteria, she just said, okay, this guy is tall. So he can't be with anybody that is under five, five. Yeah. No, that just puts paid to will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith marriage, right there, for example, or all grandparents or grandparents for that matter, bringing it closer to home because there was a one foot Gramps, Gramps was six, four and GRA underground. He was not five, four.

Speaker 1: Okay. Three, maybe at a pinch at a pinch.

Speaker 2: So generous of pinches.

Speaker 1: So I'm finding it, I'm finding this fascinating. And you know, the other thing that is occurring to me is that she has this big kind of super Rolodex

Speaker 2: Thing. It's an old school ledger. It's like a ledger, it's a ledger



Speaker 1: With all her criteria. And she seems to know what's in it because she's knowing exactly where to look, to find this information. So, you know, th the, the memory alone is quite impressive. Okay. So then there's also an astrology elements. I'm learning a lot here. So she's talking about how important it is for the horoscopes to match. And, you know, we're not just talking, I'm a Scorpio, you're a Pisces or whatever we're talking, where are the planets aligned at the time of your birth

Speaker 2: Right. They got into it pretty, pretty deep.

Speaker 1: Now, of course, India is not the only culture where that applies. I believe that that also applies in some Chinese cultures as well. Yes. But very important. So, but it's very interesting to me that, you know, when we think of arranged marriages from the outside, I don't think that we necessarily consider, you know, the, the Western view of an arranged marriage is probably pretty much, you know, two families get together and decide what they're doing and, you know, much as much as they used to do back in the Regency days. Yeah.

Speaker 2: For example, I mean, we all were kind of looking at it as, you know, this, this foreign quote unquote foreign thing, but it's not, but it, but it really is not it's been going on for centuries across cultures, even Western cultures. Exactly. Because because marriage, started out just as a contractual exercise

Speaker 1: In order to bring together, to bring together lands, to strengthen,

Speaker 2: Strengthen political

Speaker 1: Ties, it was like extreme networking.

Speaker 2: Right. And so

Speaker 1: This kind of reinforces for me that, that connection, the other concept that has just been shattered is that you often think of arranged marriages as, arrangements where the women, or even the men sometimes have no choice, but this matchmaker says that, in fact, it's actually the opposite that you know, that at that first introduction, there's still the opportunity to duck out if it's not looking good. Yeah. Right now, if you get to a second meeting, you may be,

Speaker 2: You may be me committed, might be logged in. Let's see.

Speaker 1: So this is an interesting, we're now looking at a partner who she has very strong ideas about what she wants in her life and comes across a little spoiled to me. I have to say, but by little,

Speaker 2: We mean extremely

Speaker 1: Lisa does not an entitled Lisa does not, has not taken upon it at all now. Yeah.

Speaker 2: I it's okay to have standards, have standards. We all have standards. Yes. I, myself, I've been known to have a multiple list requiring your house, but there must be flexibility within that.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So, you know, I, I'm not getting the feeling, you know, at where we are, you know, 10 minutes into the episode that Aparna is the most flexible of people, but we shall see. So the, I, this is, this has been, this was very interesting. Uponor has a place where she goes, she makes a database 30. She knows we close at 10 so she can keep it short. No, I am at the same time while being all slightly appalled

Speaker 1: Because, you know, anyone who's ever been on one everlasting bad date knows that, you know, it pays to have a get out of an exit strategy. And so I, I think that this is good planning ahead on her part so that if it, you know, because you know, one can always choose to go somewhere else if it's going well. But if it's not, it provides a natural end, not necessarily a bad thing. I have to see. It's very amusing the way they do this. Right. So that they, as they're talking, they're making a note of her requirements. And it's interesting to me that, you know, she says, she's not picky. She is actually quite picky, but you know, it's not wrong to have standards. It's not wrong to know what different work for, you know, so although I think they will have to be some flexibility. I'm not mad at her having standards.

Speaker 2: You know,

Speaker 1: Some of those criteria may be a little extreme, ridiculous. Tell us how you really feel. Right.

Speaker 2: So do you still think he's a jewelry salesman this next guy Cause you were wondering, right. I remember you as your light. So he's is your jewelry salesman and I'm like, he's a step or two above on children's sales plan.

Speaker 1: Yes. I haven't quite figured out, but he seems very, very well off. Yes. Yeah. I'm I'm I'm, this is a very interesting process to me because the other thing I had not realized is that these most may cause trouble because in this particular situation, she is traveling to Houston to find, a husband for a woman of Indian origin. So that's quite fascinating. I mean, I'm learning a lot about the process. Okay.

Speaker 2: So she's gone from Houston now. She's back in Mumbai.

Speaker 1: Exactly. And so she's moving all around the world doing this, you know, this relationship business, you know, and I can't say that I'm mad at the process. I have to see

Speaker 2: No, I'm, I'm a big fan, you know, you know, we always say, Oh, there's so many fish out there and to see, and she's like, yeah, she's exploring the entire sea. Yes. She's not just, just focusing on one little area, her little area of the world. She's like, you know, there are people out in the world in the world where you are, or sometimes even where you aren't, but there's the right person for you. And we will find that yes, not a bad thing at all. I'm a fan.

Speaker 1: Okay. So it appears that we are looking at a second, a second person, a proud woman. And I have to say that I am jealous of his closet,

Speaker 2: Entire lifestyle, but not, not even really jealous. I'm just so pleased that this is being depicted. Yeah. Again, you, you know what, I always, I guess I should stop slandering national geographic.

Speaker 1: No, I, I guess what, you know, what they always have picked is, you know, some

Speaker 2: Starving potbellied kid kid with, you know,

Speaker 1: The industry and its treats. Right And so this is very much a programming. This is very much the, the, the wealth of the rich side of influence of Indian society. Because, you know, I imagined that it's not everyone that can afford the top. No, the top matchmaker. No. Right. So, you know, we're not seeing, we're not seeing that, you know, we're not seeing the monocyte growth with seven people on them. We're not seeing with people in the street. We are seeing people who are very well off, you know, live in lovely houses. This man has a fingerprint print lock on his closet. And his closet is, you know, people, you know, you could fit the family in there.

Speaker 2: Yes. At least if not, if not a couple, I'm just, I'm just happy for the counter programming. Yes, absolutely. So we're onto a new client now. whose name Of course, my brain being what it is I forgotten, but, point is she mentioned something interesting, which is that, you know, sort of going out to a bar or wherever and just meeting somebody, you don't know what their intentions are. You know, a lot of people end up in situation ships, which is what we call them because you know, you're having one conversation. They're having another conversation. Nobody started being honest. basically speaking, if you and your family and another family have hired a matchmaker, you already know that marriage is the, the end, the end game and the end goal.

Speaker 1: This is true. Yeah. This is true. And so that makes a difference to how you approach the whole thing. Yeah, no doubt. yes. It's a very, very interesting.

Speaker 2: Yeah. And I think, you know what, cause if that's, if that's what you both want, that's fine. Everybody might not want to be married. You know, the people that don't want it married are probably not going to hire a matchmaker that is perfectly familiar.

Speaker 1: Oh. And you know, we all have this experience where, you know, you're with somebody and, you know, it becomes obvious that you're on the same wavelength and heading in the same direction. But equally you have the experiences where at some point it becomes obvious that you are not. Yes. And I can see where the matchmaking process gets rid of the ones that aren't working. Yes.

Speaker 2: Right. Cuts out the foolishness.

Speaker 1: So it's very interesting to me that this woman who is of Guyanese ancestry, because her ancestors went over, taken to Guyana century and a half ago is now not considered for Indian. And it goes back to one of our other off topic episodes about not fitting in. And the, a chef also says that because she is of Guyanese, ancestry is going to be difficult to find a match for her. And I must admit from the outside, this had never occurred to me, but of course, people of Indian ancestry are not a monolith either. And that is a fact that has become abundantly clear through this episode.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Yeah. It's very, very interesting. It had never occurred to me because of course, you know, as a black person, you know, you look at somebody that clearly is Indian and do you know they're Indian or you never think, you know, how might they be, you know, rejected or not included in, you know, by their own culture. Exactly. Fascinating.



Speaker 1: Yeah. Okay. So I remember you telling me about this bio data thing. It's like a dating resume on life resume. It's very, very interesting. And this is how candidates are presented for inspection before you get to a meeting. So you can learn a lot about them. And I take it that the matchmaker has actually prepared these herself based on her visits. Right So she's, in some senses, a disinterested party, I mean, interested from the point of view that he gets paid to make matters, but disinterested for the point of view is that she has no preconceptions about what these people are going to be like. So for me, it's very interesting. And if you think back over your own dating history, what would it have been like to have had a bio data sheet before you went out with some people Right.

Speaker 2: It would probably still be, I would probably be happily married to somebody who had been vetted all I'm saying

Speaker 1: Years ago. So very, very interesting. I think. Yeah. Yes.

Speaker 2: And on the bio data that even includes stuff like, whether or not the person wants to have children. Now, how many couples have you heard about where, you know, quote unquote, they fall in love and decided that love conquers all. And then, you know, just discover, you know, they, they get it right quickly and then discover, Oh, by the way, you know, one of us doesn't want to have children, you know, just, just because, you know, and everybody has their choice, but that is a major, major, deal breaker. It is, or can be a deal breaker. You know, if you, if you have that information upfront, then you know, okay, just don't date somebody. If you want children date somebody that also wants children, you know, don't go and try and force somebody that does not want children into having children because that's what you want.

Speaker 1: Exactly. So

Speaker 2: What do you think so far, we're at the end of episode one and what do you think, was it what you were expecting or

Speaker 1: No, I didn't really know what to expect. And I have to be honest that I, this is not a show that I would, they wouldn't have been on my radar either. Right. But I find the insight into a different culture. Absolutely fascinating. So I would recommend it on that basis alone. And I think there's a lot of sense to having potential matches vetted properly. Yes. You know, it's not that, you know, people, people make great matters and sometimes it's luck and sometimes it's judgment, but you know, they're also people that have for judgment and bad luck. Right.

Speaker 2: You're not, no, no, no. It's don't feel attacked. No, no, no, I'm joking. But you know, we, we know, we know we know many people. Yes,

Speaker 1: No. And also, you know, even in our own lives, you know, even people who might now be in a, you know, happy, committed, stable relationship, you know, they've gone through the crazy. Okay.

Speaker 2: And often it takes going through the craziest to, sort of that, that is what hones your, your radar. Exactly. But if you, again, what I love about this process is it, to me, it seems as though it cuts out a lot, it's, it's still going to be a little bit of a crap shoot. Right. But it cuts out a lot of the variables that you ordinarily.

Speaker 1: Yeah, exactly. So from that alone, I, you know, I, I find it a fascinating process and I am very eager to see what happens with the other people and, you know, to see whether they find a match and so on. So yes. So that has been a slight departure for us call it the, you know, the introvert sisters react to Indian matchmaking, episode one, I hope you enjoyed the format. Please let us know what you thought. And you know, if you celebrate, Valentine's happy Valentine's day

Speaker 2: Valentine's day and, choose, well, got you. On the next episode. Bye.