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its way, but ice on the bushes in the Borders tell a different story. Forecast, page 56

Lonely heart jihadist pair guilty of bomb terror plot

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An asylum seeker taking orders from Isis in Syria plotted to build a bomb with a woman he met on a Muslim dating site using instructions from YouTube.

The couple, named "the lonely hearts jihadists" after meeting on SingleMuslim.com, face jail after being convicted at the Old Bailey of plotting an attack.

Munir Mohammed, 37, was in possession of a video bombmaking guide which had been posted on Facebook, YouTube, which is owned by Google, and other sites, and is understood to have been used by Salman Abedi, the suicide bomber in the Manchester Arena attack in May last year.

Mohammed, who was living in Derby, also used Facebook to get in touch with an Isis commander, asking him for a recipe for making bombs.

Mohammed was arrested in December 2016 when counterterrorism police raiding his home found the video that Abedi is believed to have watched before killing 22 concertgoers. Mohammed had also researched the poison ricin while working illegally in a factory making sauces for supermarket chains.

Rowaida el-Hassan, 33, a former Boots pharmacist and divorced mother of two, from Willstedt, northwest London, met Mohammed on SingleMuslim.com and they "rapidly formed an emotional attachment", prosecutors



Munir Mohammed and Rowaida el-Hassan met on SingleMuslim.com

said. Mohammed sent her gory videos of Isis executions, including some carried out by children, while she asked him to "send more" and helped guide him to the right chemicals for his bomb. He bought two of the three ingredients required to make tracetone triperoxide (TATP), known as Mother of Satan, and thought he had a third.

Investigators believe that it was only his lack of English that meant he bought the wrong last ingredient. The bomb-making video offered a step-by-step guide to producing Mother of Satan, and he downloaded it the day after it was released by Isis in November.

Mohammed had followed a migrant route through Turkey and Greece to Britain, abandoning his pregnant wife along the way after she had a miscarriage. He was smuggled into Britain in the back of a lorry and arrested as he walked along the M1 in Northamptonshire, claiming asylum on the basis that

he was from Eritrea when he had actually been living in Sudan. Once given a room in a shared house for asylum seekers, he used a friend's Dutch identity card to work illegally. He worked in a car wash, washing dishes in a restaurant, and at a food-processing factory producing sauces for Tesco and Morrisons.

He also worked at a Toyota factory in Derby and was buying secondhand luxury cars and re-selling them. When police arrested him, they found a BMW 1 series, an Audi A3 and a Seat Ibiza.

His asylum application from February 2014 was unresolved nearly three years later, despite seeking help from his local MP, Margaret Beckett.

Anne Whyte, QC, for the prosecution, told the jury: "Rowaida Hassan was the educated assistant with a rallying cry when he needed it and the pharmaceutical knowledge to help. Munir Mohammed was the active heavy lifter. They were both assets to Isis in their different ways."

DCL Paul Greenwood, of the North-East counterterrorism unit, said: "We consider that Mohammed was in the later stages of a plot. He had the chemicals and there was a high risk he could have launched an attack by Christmas." Mohammed, of Leopold Street, Derby, and El-Hassan, of Willstedt Lane, were convicted of preparing terrorist acts between November 2015 and December 2016.