

Liars & Leeches

Episode 6- "Victoria"

Created by Hemlock Creek Productions

Story by Marisa Ewing

Written by KJ Scott

THEME MUSIC BEGINS

NARRATOR

Liars & Leeches: Episode 6-
"Victoria"

THEME MUSIC CONTINUES

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

"Liars & Leeches" is a horror audio drama intended for mature audiences only. It contains sensitive topics, including discussions of gun violence, as well as depictions of domestic violence, stalking, and murder. More specific details about each episode are listed in the show notes. Listener discretion is advised.

THEME MUSIC ENDS

S1- INT. PRISON

SFX: buzzer, prison door opening, footsteps. Prison ambiance.

GUARD

Ms. Natalie Hale?

NATALIE

Yes, that's me.

GUARD

Come with me. Mrs. Parks will be glad to see you.

NATALIE

Really?

GUARD

She hasn't gotten a visitor in several years.

(beat)

She's not that bad, you know, all things considered. She always asks how I am, if my family's good. Not that she knows if I even have a family - we don't tell inmates anything about our personal lives - but she just wants to make sure everyone's doing okay.

(MORE)

GUARD (CONT'D)

She's the kind who'd bake cookies for visitors and *the guards* if she could.

NATALIE

What do you mean by that?

GUARD

Oh I don't know, she just seems different compared to our other prisoners.

NATALIE

But she's told you why she's locked up here? For butchering her husband?

GUARD

Oh, yeah. She'll tell anyone who asks. She's never admitted to anything though, always the same story about some stranger doing it instead. It's so weird, you don't really think of her as being a killer, or a liar. She kinda reminds me of my grandma. But then you take a look at her file and the pictures in there, and you realize anyone is capable of doing something bad.

SFX: buzzer, door opening

GUARD (CONT'D)

Wait here. I'll get Mrs. Parks.

SFX: door closing

NARRATOR

Natalie pulled out a small tape recorder, making sure it was charged and ready to go. Once that was set up, she pulled a notebook from her bag. Inside were a few basic questions to get Mrs. Parks talking; once she had more details, she could come up with more specific questions based on what she was told. After that, there was nothing left to do but wait. Natalie drummed her pen against the notebook, wondering how Tonya was faring at the moment.

NATALIE
(sighing)
I can't believe I'm doing this.

SFX: buzzer, door opening

NATALIE (CONT'D)
Mrs. Parks?

VICTORIA
(happy and bubbly, like
greeting an old friend)
Please, dear, call me Victoria. No
need to be so formal.

NATALIE
Then you should call me Natalie.

VICTORIA
Ah, Natalie, what a lovely name!
(to the guard)
No need to worry about me, Eddie.
I'm sure Natalie and I will get
along just fine.

GUARD
(to Natalie)
I'll be right outside if you need
anything, Ms. Hale. And when you're
done, just knock and I'll escort
you out.

NATALIE
Thanks.

SFX: door closing

VICTORIA
So, now it's just us girls. I'm so
happy to talk to you, dear. It's
been so long, and I thought for
sure no one would want to hear my
story any more. (laughs) Old news,
and all that.

NATALIE
Well, I'm working on a story and
when I read about your case, I
thought you'd be the perfect person
to talk to.

VICTORIA

(chuckling)

Really? Why? I can't imagine there are too many stories out there like mine, so it must be something rather unique.

NATALIE

(thinking on her feet)

Some similarities. Between your stories. They're in the same town, actually.

VICTORIA

(suddenly very serious)

Oh. That's... that's rather unfortunate.

NATALIE

Why do you say that?

VICTORIA

Well, if your story is at all like my story, I certainly don't want that poor person to end up like me, locked up for something they didn't do in a place like this.

NATALIE

That's exactly why I wanted to talk to you. Do you mind if I record our conversation?

VICTORIA

No, not at all dear.

SFX: recorder beeping

NATALIE

Let's start from the beginning. For the record, can you say your name and your age, and then just walk me through what happened. From your perspective.

VICTORIA

Certainly.

(clears throat)

My name is Victoria Ann Parks, and I'm 65 years old. 30 years ago this past summer, a man broke into my home and killed my husband.

NATALIE

(pause)

Can you go more in depth than that?

VICTORIA

I was going to, dear, just getting settled in. No need to rush.

(she sighs)

Robert and I got married young, you see. He was a couple years older than me, and he was handsome. Charming. They all are, I suppose. Men like *him*. I used to wonder how anyone could fall for men like that, but now I know better. He was an angry man too. Of course, he didn't let me know that until after our wedding. I still wonder if I missed signs. They say that it isn't a woman's fault, but when you've been in a relationship like this, it's hard to not ask yourself if you were just oblivious. But he hid his true nature well. He was a beacon in our community. My God, a friendly man with a good job and a beautiful house. Showed up to church every Sunday with a smile on his face. No one had any idea what he was really like, except for me of course. He was so quick to anger. It was mostly the little things that set him off: a late dinner, food he didn't like, the wrong vintage of wine. But nothing, and I mean nothing, made him more angry than what he thought was an insult to his reputation.

ROBERT

(chuckling maliciously)

I can't fucking believe this. Look at it. Are you kidding me with this crap? Fucking idiot! I asked you to make dinner, not whatever this slop is.

YOUNG VICTORIA

I'm sorry!

ROBERT

No you're not, you're not sorry! You wouldn't fuck up this much if you were!

YOUNG VICTORIA
I'm trying! I just... I don't know
what you want sometimes!

SFX: Slap. Victoria gasps.

ROBERT
You stupid bitch! You knew I wanted
to impress my boss, and then you
served THIS for my dinner with Mr.
Clark?!

YOUNG VICTORIA
It's nice, Robert. And Mr. Clark
said he liked it. I swear I was
trying to be helpful...

SFX: belt being taken off.

ROBERT
You're trying to sabotage my
fucking career is what you're
trying to do! Christ, why I married
such a stupid whore I'll never
know!

SFX: belt hitting Young Victoria. She cries out.

YOUNG VICTORIA
Robert, stop! I swear, I'm trying
to do things right! I promise!

ROBERT
Well let me make sure the message
sinks in then!

SFX: another slap Ominous drone.

VICTORIA
We lived in Cedar Grove back then.
It's a nice town, but it was small.
Back then, people in town thought
New York City was the hotbed of
crime, so everyone wanted to live
here and commute in to work. The
craze of the 90s hadn't quite hit
our home; it was still very
Mayberry, very Donna Reed. Everyone
knew everyone. And everyone thought
they knew Robert, thought he was a
perfect gentleman. I had no one to
go to. Nowhere to run. He
controlled my money, you see, and I
didn't have a job.

(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

It wasn't as though I could just up and run, not until I had the funds to survive on my own. So I started saving up, pennies when I could, just enough to get away when the time was right.

NATALIE

Jesus. I'm so sorry you went through that.

VICTORIA

It was... well, I was going to say it's fine, but the truth of the matter is it wasn't. Nothing about my life was fine then.

(beat)

Well, like I said, it was a small town, and that's why, when I started to see him around, he stood out. This... this Man.

SFX: Ominous drone

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

He was tall. That's what I noticed at first. I never saw his face until the end of it all. The rest of his outfit... well, it didn't make sense to wear in the heat of the summer. A long coat with a hood pulled over his face? No, no, no, no. It was boiling that July, I remember that clear as day, and yet he never changed. Never seemed to be as warm as the rest of us.

(beat)

I would see him outside our windows some times. Just watching the house. Once, when I was washing dishes, I looked up and saw him not twelve feet away. (she shudders) It scared me so badly I broke a plate. Robert beat me for that. And I would see him around the town too, when I was out during errands or out with a friend or two. Always watching. He never acknowledged me. He just watched.

(beat)

And then, the night Robert died, it escalated after Robert found the money I'd been saving.

ROBERT

(chuckling)

You think I wouldn't notice the household allowances weren't adding up? Huh?! You think I'm stupid?

YOUNG VICTORIA

No, just listen to me, please, I just wanted a little money of my own.

ROBERT

What I give you isn't good enough? You greedy fucking bitch.

VICTORIA

I finally broke down and told him I wanted to leave. That I wanted a divorce. That caused him to snap. I'd never seen him that angry. And to this day, I didn't know he had a gun. He got it out of the closet and cornered me in the kitchen.

SFX: Robert knocking over a table

ROBERT

I'LL KILL YOU! I'LL FUCKING KILL YOU!

YOUNG VICTORIA

(sobbing)

Oh Jesus, STOP! Please, please stop!

ROBERT

You wanna make a fool out of me! You wanna make me look weak!

YOUNG VICTORIA

No, Robbie please, it's me, it's me, don't do this!!

VICTORIA

He pressed the gun to my head and turned the safety off.

ROBERT

Beg me! Beg me to spare your pathetic fucking life!

YOUNG VICTORIA

(still crying)

Oh God...

ROBERT

BEG!

VICTORIA

And that's when Robert saw him. The Man. Just peering in through the window, like he was watching a TV show or something. I saw his face for the first time. He was smiling. I remember that.

ROBERT

Who the fuck is that? Your fucking boyfriend?

YOUNG VICTORIA

No, no, I swear! He's been following me but I've never been unfaithful!!

VICTORIA

The Man smiled more at that. Robert launched into this whole speech about how unfaithful I was, how *I* was trying to rob *him*, and make *him* look like a fool. He was... well, even with everything I saw that night, I'd still call him monstrous.

ROBERT

(chuckling)

I can't believe I married you! Some stupid fucking bitch who never knows when to shut up, and you think you're gonna fucking run off into the sunset with that bastard out there?? Neither of you are gonna make it that far, sweetheart. So don't even bother to beg, cause first I'm gonna kill your stupid smirking lover, and then you can join him.

VICTORIA

Robert practically ran to the door, pointing his gun at The Man and forcing him inside. He made The Man and I kneel down on the floor, and pointed his gun at The Man's head.

YOUNG VICTORIA

Robert please, you don't have to do this. We can just talk-

ROBERT

I don't want to hear another
FUCKING WORD. (To The Man) And you
lover boy. Any last words?

Music: Ominous music

VICTORIA

But when he said that, The Man
launched himself at Robert, so fast
that I could barely see it. Faster
than I've ever seen anyone move
before. In the blink of an eye, he
grabbed the knife I'd been using
earlier off the counter, and he
pulled Robert just close enough to
stab him in the chest.

ROBERT

Hey what the fuck?! (screams)

SFX: The Man stabs Robert

VICTORIA

The first time, Robert screamed and
dropped the gun. Then he stabbed
Robert a second time. Robert fell
and the Man followed him down,
stabbing over and over. I just... I
should have run, but I was in
shock. I just backed away into
another corner and sank down to the
floor, watching as Robert died. I
probably should've been scared, but
all I could think was "thank God,
he's dead."

(she sighs)

After that, The Man just walked
over to me and crouched down.
That's when I really got scared,
because he didn't look like a
normal man.

NATALIE

What did he look like?

VICTORIA

His eyes were black. Pitch black,
like a night sky with no stars. And
his teeth... they were sharp and
pointed. Like, like some sort of
predator!

(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

And he smiled at me, showing all these horrible teeth, and I was certain he was going to kill me next. But he didn't, obviously or I wouldn't be here talking to you. Instead, he said the strangest thing. He smiled at me and said-

THE MAN

"Thank you, for the best meal I've had in years."

VICTORIA

Then he took my hand, put the knife in it, and gave it a squeeze. Then he just got up and walked out, like he didn't have a care in the world. It was just me and the body then. Oh, I started to scream and I called 911. The rest is history, I suppose. The police found no sign of forced entry, and no fingerprints besides mine and Robert's. There was the gun of course, but the police said Robert had drawn it in self defense against me. I told my story over and over but no one, and I mean no one, believed me. I mean, after all, how foolish is it - some random man I didn't know shows up in the nick of time to save me and kill my husband? My husband, a seemingly perfect member of the community?

NATALIE

(after a beat)

And now you're here.

VICTORIA

And now I'm here. And I won't be getting out any time soon. But it's not all bad. I get three square meals a day, I don't have to cook, and Robert can't hurt me anymore. I've even made some good friends here. And to be honest, it's probably safer in here. That Man is still out there, I'm sure of it.

NATALIE
(clearing her throat)
So, I just want to ask a few
clarifying questions...

VICTORIA
Of course.

NATALIE
You said you saw The Man watching
you. How did you know it was him?

VICTORIA
Like I said, it was a small town. I
knew everyone there, so a newcomer
was easy to spot, beyond his
strange behavior.

NATALIE
Behavior?

VICTORIA
Well, he would always stand
perfectly still. Like some kind of
statue.

SFX: Ominous drone

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
I remember one night, I had to run
to the grocery store to pick up
something I'd forgotten for dinner.
The store was almost entirely empty
but I saw him there. He just stood
in an aisle, watching me. Scared me
so badly I almost forgot why I came
in.

NATALIE
The grocery store... Was it the one
called the Hometown Farmstand?

VICTORIA
Yes, that's the one, dear. I used
to go shopping there every Sunday.
(pause)
Have I answered all your questions?
I do want to help.

NATALIE
Just one last one. Were there any
identifying marks on The Man?

VICTORIA

Oh yes. There was. He had some sort of mark on his left hand.

NATALIE

A tattoo?

VICTORIA

Yes, dear. I saw it quite clearly when he gave me the knife. Come to think of it, I saw it a few times when he was watching me.

NATALIE

Can you draw it for me? Please?

VICTORIA

Of course. Uh, may I borrow your notebook and pen?

NATALIE

Oh right, of course.

SFX: Drawing

VICTORIA

(as she's drawing)

It was sort of a diamond symbol near his thumb. Sorry dear, I'm not much of an artist, but it looked like this.

SFX: Paper being handed to Natalie. Heartbeats.

NATALIE

You're sure?

VICTORIA

Of course. This isn't the sort of story you forget details from.

NATALIE

Did you tell the police about it?

VICTORIA

I did, but they didn't seem very interested. I remember they did a basic police sketch, but I think they did that more for my benefit than theirs. The whole story sounded just so surreal that they assumed I was lying.

(beat)

(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Are you alright Natalie? You look a bit pale.

NATALIE

Oh no, I'm alright. Just a lot to process.

VICTORIA

...You've seen it before, haven't you? This mark?

NATALIE

No. But my... my source has. She said she saw the same mark on someone's hand.

VICTORIA

(voice grave)

Tell her to take care. This Man, he's...he's dangerous. I wouldn't want her to get hurt, or for someone she knows to get hurt.

NATALIE

(frustrated)

I don't understand. This all happened 30 years ago.

VICTORIA

It did.

NATALIE

So how can he have the same tattoo?

VICTORIA

I don't know dear.

NATALIE

(trying to change the subject)

Has anyone else tried to talk to you about your story?

VICTORIA

Yes, a few people throughout the years. Mostly right after the case happened. A few reporters trying to do profiles of a wife who snapped you know, that was their angle. But you're the first person in a few years.

NATALIE

Who was the last person you spoke to about this?

VICTORIA

His name was Sean Walker.

NATALIE

What was his angle?

VICTORIA

To be honest, I'm not entirely sure. He was rather strange. For one, he believed me. Right off the bat, he believed my story completely. But he was so concerned about The Man. He wanted to know every single detail I could remember about him, from his appearance to the mark on his hand to... well, really anything I could think of.

NATALIE

Did he say why?

VICTORIA

(chuckling)

When he first said why, I laughed.

NATALIE

Why?

SFX: Ominous drone

VICTORIA

Because he said The Man wasn't human. And that he wanted to know everything he could about a creature like him.

NATALIE

(beat)

Oh. That's...odd.

VICTORIA

Well that's what I said at first. I laughed in his face. I said I don't believe in any of that stuff: angels or demons or what have you. But then, I thought about that Man's face. I think about the way his eyes looked and those teeth and there's just no explanation.

(MORE)

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Maybe there is something more.
"There are more things in Heaven
and earth, Horatio..."

NATALIE

"...than are dreamt of in your
philosophy."

VICTORIA

That's what really keeps me up at
night. Not what happened, no. Not
that Robert's dead. I'm happy he's
gone. But what if that Man wasn't a
man at all? What if it was
something supernatural?

NATALIE

(pause)Do you have a way to contact
Sean? I might want to ask him a few
questions too.

VICTORIA

Absolutely, dear. He gave me his
number, in case I remembered
anything else, and I have an
excellent memory. Here you go.

NATALIE

Thank you. I think that's all I
have for now, but if I think of
something else -

VICTORIA

Please, call me. I'm not usually
busy, and I'd love to have another
visitor.

(pause)

Tell me about how your story goes.
If your subject is alright. Please.

NATALIE

I will.
(a bit awkwardly)
Thank you, for your time.

VICTORIA

Take care of yourself, dear.

NATALIE

You too.

SFX: prison door opening

GUARD

You sit tight Mrs. Parks. I'll be back to take you to your cell in a moment.

VICTORIA

Oh take your time Eddie, I'm not going anywhere.

SFX: Door closing. Footsteps.

GUARD

So...how did it go?

NATALIE

Well, you were right. She really did sound like someone's grandma.

GUARD

Yeah. I don't know. I really don't think she could have done it. Maybe you'll find out the truth while you work on your story.

NATALIE

Yeah. Maybe I will.

SFX: Door buzzing, opening

GUARD

Well, you take care of yourself Ms. Hale. Enjoy the rest of your day.

NATALIE

Thank you, you as well.

S2- Ext. Outside Prison

SFX: Birds chirping, Natalie getting into her car.

SFX: Phone Dialing

NATALIE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Sean Walker huh. Let's see what you have to say about all of this.

SEAN

(voicemail)

You've reached Happy Memories Photography, located in Ferndale, Michigan.

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

We're currently unavailable to take your call, but please leave a message and we'll get back to you soon.

SFX: voicemail beep, Natalie hangs up

NATALIE

Michigan, huh? Might be time for a bit of a trip.

OUTRO MUSIC PLAYS

NARRATOR

Liars & Leeches: Episode 6-
"Victoria" starring Ryan Reid as
The Narrator, Newton "Newt"
Schottelkotte as Natalie, Déarbhla
Klue as Victoria Parks, Jordan
Kalina as Robert Parks, Jason Lasky
as Sean, Jamie Richard-Stewart as
The Man, and Stephen Indrisano as
the Guard.

"Liars & Leeches" was produced by
Hemlock Creek Productions. The
story was created by Marisa Ewing
and the script written by KJ Scott,
with script editing provided by Meg
Williams. Dialogue editing, mixing
and mastering was done by Marisa
Ewing, sound design by Melissa
Pons, and music written by Nico
Vettese of We Talk of Dreams.
Additional recording assistance
provided by Jordan Alexander and
Trey Baker of Music City Studios.
To learn more about the show, cast,
and crew, visit
www.hemlockcreekprod.com. That's
Hemlock Creek P-R-O-D .com.

Thank you for listening. We will
return next week.