

Liars & Leeches

Episode 7- "The Lair"

Created by Hemlock Creek Productions

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THEME MUSIC BEGINS

NARRATOR

Liars & Leeches: Episode 7- "The  
Lair"

THEME MUSIC CONTINUES

NARRATOR

"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. Tonya's House

TONYA

Hello?

SFX: (through the phone) muffled crowd noise

NATALIE

(over the phone)

*Hey, you okay?*

TONYA

Yeah I'm fine. Where are you? It  
sounds so noisy, I can barely hear  
you.

NATALIE

*Newark. At the airport.*

TONYA

Newark?! Why?

NATALIE

*Because JFK and LaGuardia suck.*

TONYA

No, I know that. I mean, why are  
you at the airport? I thought you'd  
be coming back here after you  
talked to Victoria.

NATALIE

*Change of plans. When I talked to her, she gave me the name of some guy, Sean, that had talked to her before. He was asking a lot of weird questions about The Man who killed her husband. I thought he might know more about the guy than whatever you found in those dusty old archive files.*

TONYA

I guess that makes sense, but why the urgency? What else did she say?

NATALIE

*(hesitant)*

*Let's talk about that when I get back.*

TONYA

*(firm)*

Nat. What did she say?

NATALIE

*...she thinks the guy that killed her husband is some sort of supernatural creature or something. She doesn't understand it, and it's not like she's saying he's some sort of vampire or werewolf, but she's convinced that whatever he is, he's not... human.*

TONYA

*(After a long pause)*

And you believe her? You've never been the one to go on a wild goose chase.

NATALIE

*I don't... look, I didn't until she mentioned the guy that killed her husband had a similar mark on his hand as the guy following you. So maybe it's a cult, or something. That's why I'm going to talk to Sean.*

TONYA

Why didn't you tell me? I could've come with you. I know more about this guy than you do, and he's stalking me. I should be there.

NATALIE

*There wasn't time to come get you.*

TONYA

(upset)

Bullshit. I'm not a damsel in distress, okay? Whatever you're doing, I should be there.

NATALIE

*Do you feel more comfortable leaving the house now than you did when I left to see Victoria?*

TONYA

...fuck you.

NATALIE

*You'll feel better where you're safe. I'm looking after you, and I'll be back by like 9 pm tomorrow. We'll regroup then.*

ANNOUNCER

Attention all passengers. We are now boarding for flight 214 to Detroit.

NATALIE

*Shit, I gotta go. They just started boarding.*

TONYA

(still upset)

Fine, I guess. Fly safe. But you better tell me more when you land. None if this makes any sense.

NATALIE

*I will... you stay safe too.*

SFX: hanging up, plane taking off.

SFX: ominous drone

SFX: birds chirping

NARRATOR

Sean lived in Ferndale, Michigan. The ride from the airport was around a half an hour, and Natalie wasn't sure what to expect when she arrived, but a quaint photography studio wasn't it.

(MORE)

## NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The window was full of photos of happy families and emotional couples, all with giant smiles that seemed to radiate joy. Natalie checked the address again, and then opened the door.

S2- Int. Happy Memories photography studio

SFX: door opening, small chime

NATALIE

Hello?

SEAN

Hello! Welcome to Happy Memories, where we'll help capture those unforgettable moments for the rest of your life!

NATALIE

(skeptical)

Happy Memories?

SEAN

Yeah, I know, it's kind of cheesy. But I thought that hey, it sums up what we do. If you look through any of our albums, you'll see countless happy customers who are thrilled to have us take their picture. So let me guess, you're here for... either a wedding or an engagement shoot, right?

NATALIE

(laughing)

Hell no.

SEAN

Oh... Well then, what can I help you with?

NATALIE

Are you Sean Walker?

SEAN

The one and only! Well, probably not the only one in the world, but the one you're hopefully looking for! Did someone recommend you?

NATALIE

In a way. My name's Natalie Hale. I was sent here on a tip from Victoria Parks.

SEAN

(suddenly serious)  
Oh. *Victoria* sent you?

NATALIE

She did. See, a friend of mine's in trouble. I need to figure out what's going on.

SEAN

(nervous)  
I see...Let's talk in the back.

SFX: door opening and closing

S3- Int. Back Room

NARRATOR

The back room was cozy enough. Photography equipment was pushed to the side to make room for a couple of chairs and two desks with computers. The lighting was slightly darker than the brightly lit main room, but not in an ominous way. It was welcoming and soft. A woman in her thirties sat at one of the desks, editing some wedding photos. Not too far off to the side, there was a door, which Natalie assumed led to a darkroom.

SEAN

(nervous)  
Vix? Can I borrow you for a second?

SFX: calm drone

NARRATOR

Vix looked up from her work. She studied Natalie with her head cocked slightly to the side, her big eyes taking in every detail. Natalie felt as though Vix was reading her mind in some way, which made her feel incredibly uncomfortable.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Vix wore a pair of ripped jeans and a sleeveless tank top, which fit with the summer sun. However, she wore a pair of gloves, as if her hands were the only thing chilly. It was a strange outfit, and Natalie couldn't help but stare at the gloves for a moment before looking back at Vix's face.

SEAN

This is Natalie. She's here because *Victoria Parks* gave her my info.

VIX

Nice to meet you Natalie.

NATALIE

Same. Nice gloves, by the way.

VIX

Yeah, sometimes I get a bit chilly back here, you know?

NARRATOR

Natalie found the room to be incredibly warm and comfortable, but didn't say anything. She just let Sean steer her into a chair, and watched as he and Vix sat opposite her. Sean was fidgeting with his sleeves, clearly uncomfortable. His eyes darted between Natalie and Vix, and he was starting to sweat. Vix, on the other hand, sat perfectly still, gloved hands folded in her lap. She stared intently at Natalie, like she was a bug under a magnifying glass. It didn't take much intuition to know they knew something, something they were probably hesitant to share.

VIX

So, why did Victoria send you our way?

NATALIE

My friend Tonya has been going through a rough time. She recently lost both her sister and her brother-in-law. A shooting, a couple months back.

SEAN

Oh God, I'm so sorry.

NATALIE

Yeah. Yeah, it sucked. After they passed, my friend moved into their old house. That's when the trouble started. She said she saw this... this Man, who'd follow her around. First it was at the supermarket. Then she saw him at the train station.

VIX

(strained)

I see.

NATALIE

Dead flowers got left on her doorstep. She started to feel like... like he was everywhere. Always watching her. So she did some research and found Victoria's name, and the similarities between the man who killed Victoria's husband and her own stalker. I went to talk to Victoria, because I wanted to prove that there was no connection, but turns out there is. Or at least, it feels like there is. These guys both have the same tattoo on their hand, for one.

NARRATOR

Natalie found her eyes wandering to Vix's gloved hands, but forced herself to continue.

NATALIE

Victoria wasn't like "aliens killed my husband" or anything like that, but she did say The Man didn't seem human. I don't believe in that, but I do believe in patterns, and if this guy is still out there... if he's planning on hurting my best friend, I've got to do something. So when she told me about you, I decided to fly out and see what I could find out from you.

NARRATOR

The awkward silence that followed settled over them like a fog.

(MORE)



NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Natalie took stock of how weird she sounded, and how unbelievable her story was. But Sean was sweating even more now, and Vix had barely moved a muscle since she'd begun to speak. Maybe they believed her, or maybe they thought she'd lost her mind. But they definitely knew something.

SEAN

(chuckling)

You know that's... that's some story. Really.

NATALIE

(defensive)

I know. Doesn't mean it's not true.

VIX

You said there were similarities between Victoria and what was happening with your friend?

NATALIE

Yeah I mean I didn't think there were many, but they both described their stalkers as wearing a similar outfit, they both saw him for the first time at the same grocery store, and both men had the same hand marking

VIX

What did it look like?

NATALIE

I have a drawing...

SFX: Ominous drone

NARRATOR

As Natalie pulled out her phone, she felt uneasy. She wasn't used to being interviewed like this, and Vix's burning stare was making her uncomfortable. Natalie couldn't meet Vix's eyes as she showed her a photo Tonya had drawn of The Man's mark.

VIX

How long after Tonya moved did he appear?

NATALIE

She started talking about it a month afterwards, so probably then?

VIX

Probably?

NATALIE

I think! We tell each other everything but maybe he appeared before then, I don't know. It was a month after she moved though that the grocery store incident happened.

VIX

(sighing)

Okay.

NARRATOR

Vix looked at Sean, who nodded slightly. Natalie swallowed her fear down and sat up a little straighter as Vix turned that piercing gaze back to her.

VIX

Do you know what a Leech is?

NATALIE

The creepy little worms that suck blood that doctors thought could cure people? Yeah. But what does that have to do with --

VIX

(interrupting her)

No, not those leeches. A Leech. The other kind.

NATALIE

("what the fuck?")

No?

VIX

(sighing)

A Leech is a creature that has existed for millennia. It looks human, but it isn't. Essentially, it feeds off of human emotions.

NATALIE

(startled)

...what?

VIX

The stronger the emotions, the better. For some, that means that they feed off of joy. Those Leeches are harmless - they're just drawn to happiness, or humans experiencing a great deal of joyful emotions. Weddings, birthdays, reunions... those little happy moments in human life, that's where you'll find them. For others though, they feed off negativity. Grief, fear, hatred.

NATALIE

(trying to crack a joke)  
Don't tell me they're in Congress.

VIX

(unamused)

Most Leeches are harmless. They don't actively attack humans, or get involved in their lives. They just exist to feed and rest. But others...they feed on the fear their actions cause. They know humans fear the unknown, the frightening, and the monstrous. So they'll harass their targets. Some stalk them. They can even go as far as a physical attack.

SEAN

But not all of them do that!

VIX

Exactly. Most of them are content to live their lives peacefully, and in fact look down on those that actually engage with humanity. To these Leeches, humans are basically cattle. You get a burger, you don't think about where it comes from. But to these more... violent Leeches, they like the thrill of the hunt. It gives them a rush. They want to know where their food is coming from.

NATALIE

(slowly, disbelievingly)  
...Okay.

NARRATOR

Natalie blinked. She couldn't believe what she was hearing. But Vix said it with such honesty that it didn't feel like a practical joke or a lie. It felt like she was telling the truth.

NATALIE

Strong emotions... like grief and fear.

VIX

You said your friend lost family members suddenly?

NATALIE

Yeah. It, uh, it was a mass shooting at a mall.

SEAN

Oh God.

VIX

And she moved into their house?

NATALIE

Yeah.

VIX

So she's grieving a loss and probably scared as hell, living in a house belonging to people she cared about. She'd be like a beacon to a Leech. Probably the same one that went after Victoria.

NATALIE

...yes?

NARRATOR

It didn't make sense, and yet it did at the same time. The Man's arrival was at the same grocery, and the reason he was drawn to Tonya and Victoria. He was fast, and frightening, and exactly like how Victoria described. But the rational part of Natalie's mind still rebelled at the idea of a monster from myth being the source of all their problems.

NATALIE

So how do you two know so much about these things? Have you met them before?

SEAN

(giggling nervously)  
Um, you could say that.

VIX

(sighing)  
The reason we know so much about them is because I am one.

SFX: heartbeats

NARRATOR

She began pulling off her gloves. Natalie stared at her with confusion, and the rational part of her mind leapt at that.

NATALIE

(mad)  
Okay, now you're just fucking with me. I don't believe in monsters under the bed and I certainly...

NARRATOR

She trailed off as she saw Vix's right hand. There was a diamond shaped mark on it, the same one that both Tonya and Victoria had drawn.

VIX

We all have these.

NATALIE

(yelling)  
Or you're all in, I don't know, the same weird cult that harasses people! Maybe that's what it is, maybe there's no supernatural shit happening, just some creeps who think they're monsters and --

VIX

No. That's not it.

SFX: cracking and stretching

NARRATOR

Vix stood up. She stretched her arms and then she began to shift. To change. Her limbs elongated. She faded into what seemed like shadows, with only a pair of yellow eyes visible. Wisps of black shadow melted off her silhouette as she began to stretch towards the ceiling. Natalie stared in horror at the nightmarish creature in front of her, who's eyes were still fixed on her.

VIX

(deeper, monstrous voice)  
*Do you see now, Natalie?*

NATALIE

AHHHHH!

NARRATOR

Natalie toppled backwards out of her chair, scrambling backwards as the creature tilted its head to the side to look at her. A primal terror gripped her, and she managed to stagger to her feet, backing towards the door. Finally, she turned to run, only for Sean to be standing between her and the exit.

SEAN

Hey, hey, hey! It's all good, she's not gonna hurt you!

NATALIE

(panicked, breathless)  
Do you see that?!

SEAN

I do. I do. Listen, I'm not gonna try to stop you from leaving. If you wanna go, go. Just... don't tell anyone about us if you do. But I'd like it if you stayed, 'cause of your friend. Tonya, right?

NATALIE

Yeah.

SEAN

Tonya's in trouble. I want to help her. We both do. So just breathe. It's okay.

NARRATOR

Trembling, Natalie turned back around to see Vix return to her human form. Vix gave her an awkward smile, as if she hadn't been, moments ago, a creature of void and shadow.

VIX

To be honest, running wouldn't help. If I wanted to kill you, you'd be dead already. I don't want to hurt you. I promise.

NATALIE

That's... that's not helpful, actually.

VIX

Let me show you something else.

NATALIE

What, do you lay eggs too?!

NARRATOR

Vix chuckled as she led Natalie towards the closed door at the back of the room. Natalie hesitated, glancing back at the exit, but her fear wasn't enough to overcome her curiosity. As the three of them walked through the door, Sean turned on the dim red light, showing that Natalie's assumption had been correct. This door did lead to a dark room. However, all of the photography equipment had been pushed to the side, making room for a giant hole that had been dug into the floor in the middle of the room. Vix cheerfully walked right up to the edge, knelt down, and turned on what looked like Christmas lights lining the edge of the hole.

VIX

Welcome to the lair!

NATALIE

...You have a lair?

VIX

All Leeches do. It's where we go to rest and restore ourselves. Though mine's probably the cutest one you'll see.

SFX: pleasant drone

NARRATOR

Natalie crept closer and peeked over the edge to see what she meant. The hole was less Gollum and more Hobbit hole - decorated with lights and trinkets that Vix must have collected throughout her life. Natalie saw posters of kittens, stuffed animals, and mugs decorated with punny statements, all leading down to a colorful array of pillows and blankets.

NATALIE

Jesus. You're like a teenager.

VIX

I like cute things. What can I say, you humans are adorable. With your obsession with baby animals and soft, squishy toys! I can't resist.

SEAN

Vix is...different from a lot of Leeches.

VIX

Sometimes Sean says I'm like Ariel!

SEAN

The Little Mermaid was my favorite Disney movie.

NATALIE

Oh. I mean... that's fair.

NARRATOR

As Natalie looked at the lair, her mind began to settle. And as it did, a horrifying conclusion began to dawn on her.



NATALIE

The Man following Tonya, he's like you. He's a monster!

VIX

(slightly hurt)

I wouldn't call myself a monster. But I guess, to you, yes. Leeches are monsters. And it certainly sounds like one is following your friend.

NATALIE

(panicking)

Jesus, Tonya!

SFX: phone unlocking, ringing

SFX: ominous drone

NATALIE

Pick up, pick up!

TONYA

(voicemail)

*Hey, you've reached Tonya! I'm not able to come to the phone right now, but if you leave a message, I'll get back to you as soon as I can. Thanks!*

SFX: beep

NATALIE

Hey, it's me. I need you to stay inside okay? And don't open the door to anyone who isn't me. I'll be home as soon as I can but I need you to stay the fuck inside. Promise me! And text me or call me to let me know you got this. Bye.

SFX: beep.

NATALIE

I gotta go. I have to get back to her.

VIX

I know. And...I'm coming with you.

NATALIE

What?!

SEAN

You are?

VIX

Yes. First off, your friend is in trouble and I want to help. And besides, every time a Leech does something like this, it puts all of us at risk. If humans found out about us, none of us could live in peace. So I want to help. For your friend, and for me.

SEAN

Right. Then I'm coming too.

VIX

Are you sure?

SEAN

Yeah. You need backup. Someone to drive the getaway car if need be.

VIX

(affectionate)

YAw, you're the best!

NARRATOR

As Vix leaned in to kiss Sean on the cheek, Natalie tried to weigh her options. She wasn't keen on traveling across the country with a creature that looked like it crawled straight out of the latest horror movie, but she didn't have many other choices. Besides, she didn't have monster fighting experience, and neither did Tonya. Without Vix, they'd be left trying to be Buffy the Leech Slayer all on their own, and who knows how that would turn out.

NATALIE

Fine. You can come with me. But if you fuck this up, I will make it my personal life's *mission* to ruin your lives. Okay?

VIX

That's aggressive.

NATALIE

When my best friend is involved, I get aggressive.

VIX

That's so sweet. I love how loyal you humans are to each other!

NATALIE

Whatever. Let's go.

OUTRO MUSIC PLAYS

NARRATOR

Liars & Leeches: Episode 7- "The Lair" starring Ryan Reid as The Narrator, Kendell Byrd as Tonya, Newton "Newt" Schottelkotte as Natalie, Lindsay Wells as Vix, Jason Lasky as Sean, and Marisa Ewing as the Announcer.

"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](http://www.hemlockcreekprod.com). That's Hemlock Creek P-R-O-D .com.

Thank you for listening. We will return next week.

OUTRO MUSIC ENDS