

Liars & Leeches

Episode 8- "Waiting for the Worst"

Created by Hemlock Creek Productions

Story by Marisa Ewing

Written by KJ Scott

THEME MUSIC BEGINS

NARRATOR

Liars & Leeches: Episode 8-
"Waiting for the Worst"

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. Most specific details about each episode are listed in the show notes. Listener discretion is advised.

THEME MUSIC ENDS

S1- INT. Tonya's House

SFX: Ominous drone, dog barking

NARRATOR

Tonya paced the length of the living room for what must have been the tenth time in as many minutes. She'd gotten a call from Natalie telling her to stay inside and not open the door for anyone except for her. Natalie had sounded frightened in a way that Tonya has never heard before; if Natalie was scared, there must be something seriously wrong.

TONYA

(to herself)

Just breathe. It's okay. No one can get in.

SFX: Wind, branch hitting glass

TONYA (CONT'D)

Jesus!

NARRATOR

Tonya spun around, half expecting to see the Man with his face pressed against the glass of the window.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Instead, she saw a branch tapping against the glass. Tonya relaxed, but only slightly. Her eyes wandered to the kitchen knife sitting on the coffee table. She wanted to be ready, in case The Man attacked before Natalie made it home. Still, looking at it, she felt it was a hopeless attempt at protecting herself.

(beat)

Tonya checked her phone. No text from Natalie yet. The flight from Detroit would probably last another hour or so, based on takeoff. Then Natalie would be back, and they could figure out what their next move was together.

TONYA

(to her phone)

C'mon, Nat, hurry. Please.

NARRATOR

Tonya thought back to Natalie's frantic phone call. How panicked she'd been, and how it was so different than Natalie's usual calm demeanor.

NATALIE

(over the phone, frantic)

I'm not kidding. This guy, he's not human. You need to stay the fuck inside until I get back. Sean and Vix are coming with me. This is more than we can handle on our own.

TONYA

Um, if this is your idea of a joke -

NATALIE

It's not. These things, these Leeches, they're real. I promise you. And I'm going to be back soon but you need to stay inside and stay safe, okay?

TONYA

This isn't happening, monsters aren't real. You always say you like horror movies 'cause they aren't realistic!

NATALIE

I saw proof. And if I can't trust my own eyes then what the hell can I trust? Just... fuck, just listen to me. Please. Everything I'm saying is true.

TONYA

(sighing)

...I guess I don't really have a choice not to believe you. (beat) we'll talk more when we get here, ok? Don't miss your flight.

SFX: Phone hanging up

NARRATOR

Tonya wasn't prone to believing in ghost stories or the supernatural, but she did believe in Natalie. If Natalie was this scared and saying it was true, then it had to be. However, now Natalie was in the air, and Tonya was alone. Waiting for her friend, or for The Man. Whoever arrived first.

S2- INT. Airplane

SFX: Plane engine

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

On the plane, Natalie checked her phone yet again. She'd bought the in-flight WiFi in case Tonya had to get ahold of her, but so far there hadn't been any texts.

(beat)

The flight was mostly empty. There were very few people in the rows around Sean, Vix, and Natalie. Sean was reading a book- a romance novel, going by the cover- and Vix was smiling to herself, watching an older woman a few rows up.

NATALIE

So...how'd you two meet?

SEAN

(distracted)

Hmm?

VIX

She wants to know how we found each other.

SEAN

Oh! It's... well, it's a strange story. A lot of me stumbling into things I should've ignored.

VIX

Sean's being modest. He figured us out all on his own.

NATALIE

Is that so?

SEAN

I guess. I used to be really into the paranormal. Bigfoot, Mothman, you name it. I wanted to find proof they were real.

NATALIE

Why?

SEAN

I don't know. It seemed like life would be so boring if there was nothing supernatural about it.

NATALIE

(to Vix)

What about you? Where'd you come from?

VIX

Oh I've been here for centuries. Just living on the fringes, feeding where I could. Weddings, birthdays, family reunions... there's a lot of little joys in the world if you know where to look. But I'd rarely talked to humans until I saw Sean's blog.

SEAN

I'd heard about Victoria Parks and I went to interview her. I asked everything I could about this mysterious person that she'd claimed had killed her husband. The way she'd described him on the news and in court just made him sound inhuman.

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

And then I sat down and I wrote a blog post about it. I think deep down I hoped something would come of it? That maybe she'd be exonerated, or there'd be enough attention that some new evidence would come to light. Instead, it brought me to Vix.

VIX

I read it and got worried, because it felt like he was on the verge of discovering what Leeches were. If word got out about us, we'd all be put in zoos or experimented on. So I went to visit him and I told him the truth.

NATALIE

How'd that go?

SEAN

I fainted.

NATALIE

No shit.

SEAN

I learned something about myself that day. If there's some mystery left in the world, I don't want to know about it. Guess I'm kind of a chicken like that.

VIX

I felt so horrible about scaring him. But, after a while, we came to an arrangement. He doesn't tell anyone about us, and I get to work at his studio! It's like the perfect all you can eat buffet of happiness.

NATALIE

How does that even work? You feed on...what? The emotions people are giving off?

(beat; lowering her voice)

You don't actually eat people, do you?

VIX
(laughing)
Nope!

NATALIE
Okay, so how does it work then?

SLIGHTLY OMINOUS MUSIC

VIX
You humans radiate emotion. You give off energy based on that - for example, right now you're all nerves. I can sense the tension, the worry, and all that love you have for your friend. None of that is what I consume though.
(pausing)
See that woman a couple rows up? Kinda older, reading a book.

NATALIE
Yeah.

VIX
Can you tell what she's feeling?

NATALIE
Not from here.

VIX
I can. She's so happy. Like, incandescently happy. I'm gonna guess her first grandchild's been born, or maybe there's a wedding she's on her way too. All that emotion, it's just coming off her in waves.

NARRATOR
Natalie looked back at the woman. She could see the relaxed set of her shoulders now. As the flight attendant stopped near her to ask if she wanted a drink, the woman turned her face to the side slightly and Natalie could see the woman's smile stretching from ear to ear.

VIX
(slightly hungry/focused)
I just absorb all that energy coming off her.

(MORE)

VIX (CONT'D)

She'll never notice, but it's like a good filet mignon for you. Just the best meal I could hope for.

(pause, chuckle)

That's why I work with Sean - besides the fact he's a pretty sweet guy. He gives me access to all these incredible moments of happiness you humans have, and I get to feed. In return, I give him protection. He took his blog post down after I showed up at his door, but you never know how many other Leeches may have seen it and might come looking for him some day.

NARRATOR

Natalie longed to ask more, but she stopped as the flight attendant approached their row, a smile on their face.

SFX: Cart being pushed

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Hi, can I get you anything? Something to drink, maybe? Or a snack?

SEAN

I'll have a pop and maybe a snack box, if you have one!

NATALIE

Vodka soda, neat. Thanks.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Anything for you?

VIX

Oh, no thank you. I just ate.

NARRATOR

Vix flashed a smile at Natalie and Sean. Natalie still didn't know what to make of her, or her stories, but she tried to smile back all the same.

S3- INT. Tonya's House

SFX: drone of TV

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Back at the house, Tonya picked at her takeout dinner. She knew she had to eat, but her stomach was in knots. Every movement, every noise seemed to signal that the Man was trying to break into her home. She had the distinct feeling of being watched. It made the hair on the back of her neck stand up.

SFX: phone notification

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Tonya set her plate down and grabbed her phone. It was a text from Natalie.

TONYA

(reading)

"Just landed. We'll be there in about an hour and a half. You okay?"

NARRATOR

Tonya typed out a quick "yes" before setting her phone down and trying to eat more. The TV was on, playing something that Tonya wasn't paying attention to.

(beat)

Eventually, Tonya realized that she wasn't going to eat anything. She carried her plate into the kitchen and scraped the remains of her half eaten dinner into the trash, putting her plate in the sink before going back to the living room.

CALM MUSIC

NARRATOR

For a moment she stood there, taking in the sight of what was once Tami and Jim's home. Night had fallen, and it was dark outside in that way that a hot summer's night always was. Tonya wondered what her sister would say about what was happening to her if she were here. She would've believed Tonya from the first day.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

She would've protected her baby sister from danger. Tonya knew that.

SFX: beeping

ALARM

Fault detected- bedroom window

SFX: Ominous drone

TONYA

(quietly)

Fuck!

NARRATOR

The beep had startled her, and Tonya knew if she'd been holding anything she would've dropped it. The house was still and quiet. No footsteps could be heard overhead. Instead, it was as if the world around her was holding its breath as Tonya slowly crept forward and grabbed the knife from the coffee table. The blade shone silver in the light from the lamps as she made her way towards the stairs, trying to control her breathing.

SFX: floor creaking, heartbeats

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The stairs creaked slightly under Tonya's weight as she stepped onto the first step. She knew the fourth step of the stairs would creak the loudest, and she made sure to step over it gingerly as she continued to climb. Tonya's hands were sweating, and she held the knife even more tightly as she finally made it to the landing. Her heart was pounding loudly. For a moment, she considered just running and seeing if she could make it to her car. But there was no way she'd be able to make it if The Man was as fast as Victoria claimed. So Tonya told herself to be brave. If The Man really was here, she was going to go out fighting. Tonya continued her slow walk forward, finally stopping outside the bedroom door.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Tonya exhaled and listened for the
sound of an intruder.

TONYA
(as quietly as possible)
Now.

SFX: Door being slammed open

TONYA (CONT'D)
Get the FUCK out of my house!

NARRATOR
But there was no one there. The
window was closed and locked. One
of the motion sensors, however, had
fallen to the floor. It beeped
plaintively at her as Tonya walked
over to pick it up.

SFX: beeping noise

TONYA
Yeah, yeah, I hear you. You scared
the shit out of me.

NARRATOR
Tonya set the device on her dresser
and made a mental note to call the
handyman back the next day. For a
moment, Tonya stood there and
caught her breath, trying to get
her heart to stop racing. It was
just a noise. Nothing more.
(beat)
Tonya checked her watch as she
headed for the stairs.

TONYA
Only twenty minutes till Nat gets
back. I can keep my shit together
for twenty more minutes. Just
breathe.

NARRATOR
Tonya headed down the stairs, knife
hanging loosely at her side. Twenty
minutes. Twenty minutes.

SFX: Stairs creaking, clocks ticking, ominous stinger

NARRATOR
And then she stopped as she reached
the living room.

TONYA

You...

THE MAN

Ah, Tonya. It's good to see you.

NARRATOR

The Man was just sitting there, right on Tonya's couch, like he'd materialized out of thin air. He was sitting comfortably, relaxed, as if he was here to visit an old friend. The hood of his coat was down and for the first time, Tonya finally saw his full face. He was normal looking, almost handsome even. He looked like your average man, save for his eyes. They were pitch black and glistening, like polished stones. The Man cocked his head to the side as those cold eyes swept over Tonya. When he smiled, his lips pulled back to reveal pointed, sharp teeth. His smile was too big as well, stretching far too wide across his face. He reminded Tonya of a shark. His arm was stretched across the back of her couch, and a diamond shaped mark was prominently displayed on his left hand.

TONYA

Get the fuck out of my house.

THE MAN

Now, now, is that any way to treat a guest?

NARRATOR

Twenty minutes. Tonya knew Natalie would be back in twenty minutes. She just had to survive for that long.

TONYA

(trying to be brave)

What are you doing here. What do you want from me?

THE MAN

Honestly, you've given me everything I need.

(MORE)

THE MAN (CONT'D)

I haven't eaten this well since I visited the Parks family all those years ago, and even then nothing, and I mean *nothing*, compares to how rich your fear is.

TONYA

Good, you got everything you wanted. Now get out.

THE MAN

See, that's the thing. I just have to finish it off. Finish YOU off. Tonya, You're going to have to die, because I can't have someone running around knowing my secret. Too many loose ends. At least with Victoria, she's locked up and no one would ever believe a word she says, but you... I can't let you leave.

SFX: phone ringtone

THE MAN (CONT'D)

Ah, there it is. That flicker of hope. (chuckles) You humans always have it. Are you expecting company?

SFX: The Man picks up Tonya's phone

THE MAN (CONT'D)

Natalie Hale. And some little hearts. Cute. Your girlfriend?

TONYA

She's just a friend. A friend that will only come if I don't answer. If I pick up, she'll think I'm okay and you'll have plenty of time to get away.

THE MAN

(disappointed)

See, I know you're lying. All you humans do. And I don't like liars, Tonya. I really don't. I guess this means we'll have to be quick about everything, which completely ruins my plans. I was looking forward to taking my time, but c'est la vie.

SFX: Tonya's phone breaking

TONYA

What the fuck, that was my phone!

THE MAN

(brightly)

See? No interruptions now. It's just you, and me.

NARRATOR

Tonya watched in horror as The Man stood and removed his coat. The veins in his arms bulged against his skin; they were a curious black color, standing out stark against the pale white of his arms.

TONYA

(desperate)

Please... don't do this...

THE MAN

You know as well as I do that I have to do this. But, not only do I have to, I very much want to.

OMINOUS MUSIC

NARRATOR

He flexed his hands, and Tonya watched in horror as black claws began to extend from his fingers. They looked wickedly sharp, catching the light as Tonya stifled a sob.

TONYA

(near tears)

Why are you doing this?

THE MAN

(monstrous voice)

Because I'm hungry, and pain as deep as yours? That's the rare stuff. Like a fine wine. Now, shhhh. I want to enjoy this.

SFX: Stretching sounds

NARRATOR

The Man's teeth lengthened, long white incisors hanging from his grinning mouth.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

His limbs began to twist grotesquely and he crouched down, his thin arms and legs stretching out like some sort of fanged, humanoid spider. He cracked his neck, then smirked at Tonya.

THE MAN

I'll give you a ten second head start. That seems fair.

(pause)

Ten... nine...

NARRATOR

Tonya didn't need telling twice. She sprinted towards the back door, as if that would save her.

THE MAN

Eight

NARRATOR

She skidded to a halt as she grabbed the doorknob. She had no doubts that this creature was fast.

THE MAN

Seven

NARRATOR

She couldn't outrun it, and there was no one around to call for help.

THE MAN

Six

NARRATOR

She'd make it halfway across the backyard before he caught up to her. And then she'd die.

TONYA

(whispered)

Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck...

THE MAN

Five

SFX: Tonya breathing heavily

NARRATOR

Tonya's eyes fell on the back stairs, and a plan began to form.

THE MAN

Four

NARRATOR

She had to hold The Man off for probably fifteen minutes now, going by when she'd spoken to Natalie.

THE MAN

Three

NARRATOR

If she could hide, there'd be three people coming to her aid. Four against one were far better odds than just her and her knife.

TONYA

Fifteen minutes. I can do this. I can do this.

THE MAN

Two

SFX: Door opening

ALARM

Fault detected- back door

NARRATOR

Tonya opened the back door, as if she had run out, and then tiptoed as fast as she could to the back stairs. She took them two at a time, moving fast until she made it to the second floor.

THE MAN

(from downstairs)

One. Ready or not, here I come!

SFX: Tonya breathing heavily, clacking noise

NARRATOR

Tonya could hear the sound of claws against the kitchen floor below as she continued to move. She made it to the master bedroom and locked the door behind her, pressing her ear against the door to listen. The sound of the creature's claws against the floor sent shivers down her spine. All she could hope for was that her gambit worked.

THE MAN

(sighing)

Running won't help you, Tonya. It will only prolong the inevitable.

NARRATOR

Tonya heard the clacking sound disappear as the Man left the house. She pressed her forehead against the door and breathed a sigh of relief.

TONYA

(quietly, to herself)

C'mon, Nat, c'mon.

NARRATOR

For a moment, there was silence. Tonya barely dared to breathe. She could only hope that the Man would be chasing her through the yard.

(beat)

Just as she almost relaxed, the clacking sound returned.

THE MAN

Clever girl! You're smarter than I gave you credit for, but here's the problem. Your fear, your sweet, sweet fear, it's a beacon to me. And it dimmed the moment I left the house. So you must still be here.

TONYA

(to herself)

Shit!

SFX: Ominous drone

NARRATOR

Tonya looked desperately around her. There were no exits here. Just the window, and Tonya knew he'd easily catch her if she tried to climb down. The front door was too far away, and even then, the Man was between her and her way out. She was trapped. She was doomed.

SFX: clacking sound, creaking.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Tonya squeezed her eyes shut as she heard the Man's claws clicking quietly against the stairs climb the stairs.

SFX: doors opening

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The Man opened each door as he passed, trying to find her. Tonya stepped back from the door as the sounds grew closer, trying to contain her panic. She didn't want to die, not like this. Not afraid and alone.

SFX: doorknob jiggling.

THE MAN

(laughing)

There you are.

NARRATOR

Tonya watched in horror as the Man twisted the locked doorknob, shaking it. At first he shook it gently, and then he grew more and more violent.

SFX: door shaking violently.

THE MAN

(giggling)

All that fear, it's so delicious. You've been calling to me since the day we met. Just waiting for me. Waiting for the worst to happen. Well it's happening now, Tonya. You're going to die.

SFX: body slamming against the door.

THE MAN (CONT'D)

*I'm going to drain all that fear out. And isn't it better that way? You won't be scared anymore. It'll just be nothingness. You won't have to keep fighting, because you'll be gone! And I'll have fed, I'll have sucked every bit of that fear out and left you a husk on the ground --
!*

SFX: knock from downstairs.

NATALIE
(faintly)
Tonya? Tonya, open up!!

TONYA
(breathlessly)
Nat!

THE MAN
(chuckling)
Three more to feed on. This must be my lucky...

NARRATOR
He trailed off, suddenly quiet. For a moment, Tonya wondered if he'd disappeared.

THE MAN
...A Leech?! Well, I suppose this changes things. You stay here, I've got to take care of something.

SFX: furniture dragging across the floor.

NARRATOR
Tonya could hear the sound of him dragging one of the pieces of furniture in the hallway towards the door. There was a bump, as he shoved it under the doorknob. She was trapped. There was nowhere for her to run.

THE MAN
Now you don't worry, I'll be right -

SFX: breaking glass

ALARM
Fault detected- living room window.

NARRATOR
Tonya couldn't help but grin despite her terror. That would be Natalie - always taking the direct route. She was coming to save her. There was a chance that things would be okay.

OUTRO MUSIC

NARRATOR

Liars & Leeches: Episode 8-
"Waiting for the Worst" starring
Ryan Reid as The Narrator, Kendell
Byrd as Tonya, Newton "Newt"
Schottelkotte as Natalie, Lindsay
Wells as Vix, Jason Lasky as Sean,
Jamie Richard-Stewart as The Man,
Max Herzfeld as the Flight
Attendant, and Olivia Steele as the
Alarm.

"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.

END OF EPISODE