

# Deadly

An Hour Drama by  
Mary Boldish James



## The Pitch

*Deadly* is a serialized drama about Sadie, a young sex worker who becomes ensnarled in a contract with the Devil. Set in the fringes of Youngstown, Ohio, *Deadly* sees Sadie living on the outskirts of a struggling Rust Belt city. Orphaned and caring for her pregnant, underage sister, Lulu, Sadie has few options. Her will to thrive brings her face to face with Luc, Lulu's dealer, when she threatens him. He's impressed and offers to drop Lulu if Sadie agrees to work for him. She thinks she's finally caught a break until she realizes she'll be delivering his punishments to unsuspecting people in the form of their deadliest sin.

The tone of the show is *Sin City* meets *Supernatural*.

## The World of *Deadly*

*Deadly* thrives in the run down Rust Belt city of Youngstown, Ohio. Once a bustling steel town, now the city is haunted by the ghosts of the industrial giants that called it a home a century ago.

Crime and corruption have always ruled the streets, but the mob families of the past have been replaced with the dealers and crooks that have risen through the ranks. Old mills and factories loom like dying giants across the landscape. The bustling university and sparkling tech start-ups that glitter in the daytime streets fall silent after sundown.

After dark is when the sex workers of Hillman Way begin peddling their wares to those who know what they're looking for. Lately, however, there's been a strange new feeling in the air. It's almost supernatural, if Sadie believed in that sort of thing. The other workers are scared. A dark threat is stalking them at night.

Her nightly work ends when the day breaks and Sadie rushes home to hurry her sister, Lulu, working on a GED with their friend Zeera as tutor. Lulu recently learned she's pregnant, and Sadie is desperate to get her a high school degree while also evading the authorities that threaten to take her away.

### **Theme**

Yin and Yang. There's darkness in the light and light in the darkness. There's no such thing as purely good or purely evil. When we meet someone who tips the scales in either direction, we quickly see their other side.

### **Characters**



**SADIE. 20.** Sadie's life has never been easy. When her single mother died of an overdose, sixteen year old Sadie took her little sister and hid. The authorities have been chasing them since, but Sadie's too smart to

get caught. She found herself working nights on Hillman Way. Many of the local "managers" have tried to muscle her into their employ, but Sadie can't be forced. She lives on her terms, and it's her brilliant mind that keeps her that way. She's a force that shouldn't be messed with.

Sadie's watched her sister go down the same path as their mother. When a sixteen year old Lulu comes to Sadie telling her she's pregnant, Sadie decides to step in. She threatens Luc, Lulu's dealer. She's on fire, but it seems like Luc is expecting her. He's impressed with her, and offers her more money than she can believe to work for him. Sadie isn't interested in dealing, but Luc tells her she would just be a messenger.

Sadie's toughness and refusal to back down lands her a job that she takes on a "trial basis." Sadie's determined that, no matter what, she will always be in control of her own life.

Sadie's Season One Arc: Sadie starts off tough and in control. She refuses to let outside forces make her do anything she doesn't want to do. After making the choice to work for Luc, she starts to soften. Where she only saw challenges, Sadie now sees the humanity of those around her.

Sadie has to soften enough to realize her own humanity before she loses it all together.



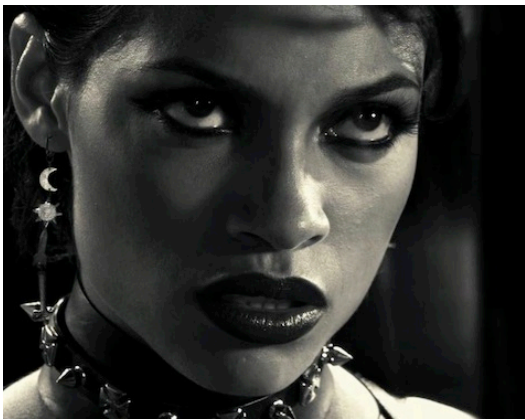
**LULU. 16.** Lulu got a raw deal. She considered Sadie an adult already when their mother died, but Lulu was just a kid. She grew up hiding from social services and watching her sister hook to keep her fed. She wanted to ease her sister's burden, so she started dancing in an illegal basement club at the age of 14. She didn't think messing with the manager, Dex, would get her pregnant.

Between the little bit of coke she likes to hit from time to time and the drinking every night at the club, Lulu is terrified that her baby is going to be a mess. She finally admits her situation to Sadie.

While Lulu is thankful for the help her sister provides with kicking the coke and booze habits and getting that way too intense dealer off her back, she's also annoyed at having to stay inside most of the time. Lulu's used to having free reign over herself, and she resents that Sadie is still able to come and go as she pleases while Lulu is stuck with their weird friend, Zeera, in the apartment.

Lulu's Season One Arc: When we meet Lulu, she's spoiled. While her life hasn't been easy, she's the one being taken care of while her sister is the one doing the work. Lulu is a brat.

As Lulu sees the world around her changing, she realizes the real dangers that are out there. She grows to be an equal partner to Sadie rather than a dependent.



**ZEERA. 28.** Zeera doesn't care what anyone thinks, especially the petulant Lulu. Zeera manages a late night dive restaurant where the working girls of Hillman way frequent when they need a break. She makes sure they're safe and have a hot meal. Her frequent clientele means the small restaurant often resembles the parlor of a brothel. This is what led Sadie to wander in when she first started working the streets.

Zeera's watched out for Sadie since she began, and spends her days keeping Lulu in line. She helps Sadie get Lulu clean and acts as a makeshift tutor. Her dedication to the sisters is more than just human decency. There's something about them that she can feel.

Zeera has a secret that she's been keeping to herself her whole life. She gets feelings and flashes that always end up coming true. She can see the future, but she's always been afraid people would think she was crazy if she revealed herself.

Zeera's Season One Arc: Zeera starts off tough and motherly, but as the season progresses she learns to trust her friends with her secrets. By the end of the season, Zeera has opened up and

let Sadie and Lulu into her life so much that they've become her found family. She becomes their most powerful ally.



**LUC. 37.** Luc is the devil. Literally. He's charming, charismatic, interesting, sexy, and commands any room he's in. His benevolence lasts as long as his patience does.

Luc has a business to run, and he's not interested in anyone else's problems or needs. He tolerates behavior as long as it continues to benefit him, but anyone who crosses him will always lose.

He's fascinated with Sadie. Anyone else would have broken by now, but she keeps fighting. He's not sure if he wants her or just wants to break her.

Luc's Season One Arc: Luc goes from charming and charismatic, flirtatious even, to outright dangerous. He becomes increasingly menacing as the season progresses. At first, he seems charming, almost trustworthy, but by the end the other characters are completely aware of how dangerous he is to them.



**GEAR. 26.** Gear is mysterious and brooding. He does his job for Luc well, but it's evident that he despises it. If it weren't for the fact that Gear is afraid to cross Luc again, he'd try running.

Gear has spent so long working with The Henchmen and Luc that he's forgotten what good people are like. When he meets Sadie, he can see the good in her. It frustrates him. He knows she'll break, but the more he sees her, the more hopeful he becomes. Gear spends time teaching her about the job she's accepted in hopes of saving her from it. His goal is to work out his sentence and then walk free, and it would be nice if he'd be able to walk free with Sadie.

Gear is a mysterious guide. He knows the ins and outs of Luc and his operation, but he doesn't want to interfere.

Gear's Season One Arc: Gear starts the season as a guide for Sadie in her new job. He's the one who manages the list from which she works. He decides when it's time to deliver punishment, and he guides Sadie in how to deliver. Gear hates his job, but he continues to do it well to avoid Luc's wrath. He knows if he flies under the radar and puts in his time, he'll eventually walk free.

Gear ends up caring for Sadie, Lulu, and Zeera so much that he takes a stand against Luc. He goes from a passive employee to an active fighter for the sake of those he loves.

### **Season One**

Sadie's life is rhythmic. She works. She takes care of Lulu. She occasionally has a moment of fun with Zeera. Sadie has a plan, and she's going to get them all out of the gutter where they've been for so long. When Lulu comes to Sadie to tell her she's pregnant, Sadie sees the entire plan shatter in front of her.

Lulu begs Sadie for help getting clean. She wants a healthy baby. The problem is Luc, her persistent dealer. He's charismatic, but in a frightening way. Lulu is simultaneously attracted to and terrified of him.

Sadie says she'll take care of it. She immediately finds Luc, but it seems like he's been expecting her. Too quickly, he offers her a deal. He'll stop dealing to Lulu if Sadie works for him. She's put off; she's not a dealer. He tells her he needs a messenger, and he'll pay her more than she could make hooking. She's suspicious, but she offers to work for him on a trial basis. He laughs and pays her.

Suddenly flush with more cash than she's ever seen, Sadie buys groceries and hurries home. Lulu is in withdrawal, and Zeera is doing everything she can to help her through it. Sadie gets her first delivery and goes to work. She doesn't want to leave Lulu, but Zeera tells her she needs to go. The warning seems ominous, so Sadie leaves her sister with her friend.

The messages for Luc start off small. She drops off notes and small packages. One night, after delivering a package to a

bookie, Sadie sees him later in the street. He drops a coin, and can't seem to pick it back up. She watches as the man struggles with the coin as a car approaches. He can clearly see the car, but refuses to leave without the coin.

Sadie is screaming at the car to swerve or the man to move and runs back to pull him from the street. She isn't in time to stop it, and watches as the man's body flies through the air from the impact of the car, which speeds off. Horrified, she ducks in an ally. She's a known hooker, and doesn't want to have to answer questions to cops.

She watches as two of Luc's men examine the body. One of the burly guys easily picks up the coin, and the other smears a mark on the man's forehead. The two henchmen seem to almost disappear, and afterwards people start to flood into the street to see the accident.

Sadie rushes home after the strange scene. She's terrified and begins packing her and Lulu's things. Zeera, who's been with Lulu most nights, tries to calm Sadie and urges her not to wake her sleeping sister. Lulu wakes up from the commotion, and Sadie tries to hurry the two women into packing "whatever they can."

Luc shows up at their door and reminds Sadie they had a deal. She argues that she wasn't sure to begin with, and that she's done working for him. The money is a courtesy, he tells her, and the real deal is him giving up Lulu. Sadie tries to push past him, and he touches her forehead.

Images flash before her eyes, but her mind settles on the scene she just witnessed. This time she can see the bookie glowing red in the street, the driver of the car is mesmerized and sees nothing in front of him. Even the collision is unknown, and the driver continues without realizing he struck the bookie.

The two henchmen literally materialize from the shadows. One collects the cursed coin, the contents of the package Sadie delivered, and the other collects the bookie's soul.

Sadie realizes that Luc is Lucifer, and that she's agreed to work for the devil. For the first time, Sadie is genuinely terrified. Luc assures her that if she continues to work for him, he won't come for her, Lulu, or Zeera. Technically, she never traded her soul. But if she decides to run, he'll catch up with them eventually.

Sadie decides it's better to work for the devil than against him. Luc is happy to hear it and leaves. Lulu and Zeera are completely unaware of anything that happened.

Zeera, while not able to recall the frantic state of things before Luc's arrival, is unnerved. She tells Sadie she can feel something wrong. Sadie half-heartedly comforts her and thanks her for watching Lulu. Zeera hugs her friend as she goes to leave, and gets a flash of the bookie on the street. She leaves without letting Sadie know she saw something.

Gear brings her next delivery. He also works for Luc keeping tally of all the people whose times are up. Sadie feels a sense of ease with him immediately. She doesn't want to trust him, but something about him feels safe. He accompanies Sadie on her next delivery to show her what it is she's doing.

Sadie is reluctant to deliver the package. She knows the woman; a social worker who helps people on the street. The social worker lives a lonely existence. Her husband and son were killed by a drunk driver, and she's spent the past decade without them in constant mourning. She can't imagine the woman struck a deal with Luc. Gear tells her she needs to do her job and not play judge and jury.

After Sadie delivers the package, she and Gear hide and watch as the woman opens and sees a picture of her dead family. The woman starts to sob and locks herself in her room. They watch as a gaping hole appears from inside the woman until it's eaten her up from the inside. Gear leads Sadie away before The Henchmen arrive, explaining that Tristitia, or despair, is one of the cruelest Sins because it feeds on a person's loss.

Gear explains to Sadie that people who owe Luc are forced to pay up in the form of their greatest sin. Despair, being an extension of Sloth, slowly eats a person from the inside out, rotting their body.

Sadie's shaken. Gear takes her home. She tells him he can stay with them if he wants to avoid going back to Luc. Lulu is there, still not showing, and is visibly attracted to Gear. Lulu's attraction to him makes him uncomfortable and he leaves. Sadie admires him more.

Lulu is getting restless in the apartment all day. She knows social services is trying to locate her, and she needs to lay



low. It doesn't stop her from itching with cabin fever, especially when Sadie's gone all night. Sadie sleeps until the afternoon, and Zeera doesn't arrive until then. With the little window of freedom she has, Lulu slips out.

She hits up all her old haunts, including a vintage porn shop where she used to dance illegally in the secret rooms in the basement. The owner isn't too happy to see her, seeing as he's lost business since she up and left. She sweet talks her way into the basement where she finds Dex, the attractive but slimy manager.

Dex is more than happy to see Lulu, until he realizes she's pregnant. He freaks. He's almost 30, and anyone who puts two and two together could easily send him to jail for being the father of Lulu's baby.

She tries to get her job back, but Dex refuses. The fight escalates when he hits her. Lulu's afraid that he's going to beat her up when Gear busts through the door. He knocks Dex out and drags Lulu home.

Lulu's confused as to how Gear knew where she was. Instead of answering her, he delivers her to a furious Sadie, who forbids Lulu from leaving until she's cleaned up the Dex mess.

Sadie tries to talk to Dex and reassure him that no one's going to rat him out, but he's unconvinced. He plays nice with Sadie until she leaves, but decides the only way he'll be safe is if Lulu's dead.

Zeera warns Sadie that something's going to happen to Lulu. Sadie, unaware of Zeera's secret that she's psychic, is unconvinced and leaves for work. Gear recognizes what Zeera is and tries to convince Sadie to listen to her.

Sadie returns home before dawn to her apartment trashed and no sign of Lulu or Zeera. She's frantic. She can't get ahold of Gear. Without anyone else to turn to, she heads to Luc.

Zeera and Lulu are safe with Luc, who got to them before Dex could. Grateful, Sadie is also leery of what this rescue is going to cost her. Luc is offended by Sadie's assumption and says he's just happy to have helped one of his most trusted employees.

Sadie takes her friend and sister home. Zeera is terrified after realizing who Luc is. She and Sadie have an argument about Sadie's continued employment, but it finishes abruptly when Zeera sees Dex coming for them. She finally reveals her secret to Sadie, who believes her.

They get Lulu out of the apartment, but Sadie realizes that Dex will always come for them. She also realizes that Luc knows this. She heads back to Luc and asks him what she can do to get rid of Dex.

Luc offers her a, in his words, promotion. She can continue to work for him. She can even keep her soul, but now she'll be selecting souls for Luc to collect. She'll be making the deals in addition to collecting on them. Realizing this is the only way she can stop Dex, she agrees.

Sadie meets with Dex and offers him a deal. No one will ever know about Lulu's baby in trade for his soul, but he has to promise to leave them alone. Dex thinks she's kidding and agrees. He even signs the contract she offers him.

Gear shows up that night furious with Sadie when he realizes what she's agreed to. She argues that she didn't have a choice. She finds Dex way down on Gear's collection list and bumps him to the top. Gear argues with her that people who make deals get more time, but Sadie doesn't trust him to keep his word not to come after Lulu.

She finds him in the basement of the shop getting ready for the night. He has a full house and the dancers are all getting ready. Once all the clients are seated, Dex sneaks into an empty dance room to relax.

Sadie's there. He's ready to kick her out, but she starts dancing. He's transfixed. The more she dances, the more he finds he wants her. He starts to sweat. His lust begins to burn him up. She continues until he's burned completely.

Gear tells her she's changed. She's beginning to enjoy her work, and that's when Luc's employees lose their humanity. She argues with him, but he takes her to see The Henchmen.

The Henchmen used to be human, but they began enjoying working for Luc and slowly lost their humanity. They're now immortal

demons whose souls have burned away. Gear warns her that's the road she's taken.

Again, Sadie is scared of what she's agreed to, but is now locked into her new role. She decides to try to go after people who deserve it instead of just anyone. She reasons that if she does some good, it will help keep her soul intact.

Sadie begins seducing pedophiles, rapists, murders, and the dregs of society into trading their souls. She plays by Gear's rules and only delivers punishment when it's that person's time. She's getting along with her new arrangement pretty well when someone pops up on her delivery list she doesn't expect.

Sadie has to deliver punishment to a deacon of the church where she and Lulu used to go for free meals. She's horrified. Sadie learns that he just made a deal a few weeks prior to save his wife from cancer.

She refuses to deliver the punishment and instead barges in on Luc demanding to know why the deacon's collection time has been moved up.

Luc explains that Sadie's been making low real estate deals by collecting souls that were already dirty to begin with. Luc had to tip the scales back to compensate. Sadie refuses. She doesn't think it's fair to punish the deacon for wanting to save his wife. Luc tells her the wife is already cured and the deal can't be undone. Sadie tears up the deacon's deal and storms out.

Gear follows her. While he's impressed by her stance, he tells her that crossing Luc has consequences. Sadie and Gear arrive at Sadie's and find Luc in her apartment. Zeera is unconscious on the floor, and Luc is sitting with a frightened Lulu on his lap.

Sadie half pleads and half threatens Luc to get away from her sister. He tells Sadie that she robbed him of a high real estate soul and that he will be compensated. Sadie lunges for him, but he suspends her mid-air. Gear attempts to get at him from behind, but Luc deflects that advance as well.

Luc tells Sadie there are consequences for crossing him. He places his hand on Lulu's heart but at the last moment moves it to her barely protruding stomach. Lulu screams as her stomach glows a fire red and then falls to the floor.

Luc thanks Sadie for allowing him access to such a pure soul and tells her they're even. He says she can have a few personal days, but he'll see her back to work soon. Lulu is miscarrying on the floor and Sadie rushes her to the emergency room where she finds out she's lost the baby. They're both devastated.

While Lulu is recovering in the emergency room, social services stops in to see Sadie. They tell her that they're going to place Lulu in a foster home "for her own good," and that Sadie can bring her things to the hospital.

Sadie is afraid of what else Luc will make her do and how long she can evade social services to keep her sister with her. Feeling backed into a corner, Sadie convinces Zeera to go with her and Lulu. They take off.

## **Season Two**

Sadie, Zeera, and Lulu have been on the road for nearly a year. They stay just long enough in one place to make some money, then move to a new town. There's a sense of peace.

Luc shows up to let Sadie know that her personal days are over and it's time to start working again. She's shocked he found her, but he's amused she thought she could hide from him. He's brought Gear, and he instructs them both to get back to work. Luc loves the idea of Sadie traveling the country to collect souls.

Without telling Zeera or Lulu, Sadie begins working for Luc again while maintaining their nomadic lifestyle. She keeps Gear hidden. Zeera is suspicious at where the money is coming from, but Sadie assures her everything's fine.

Sadie finds a balance between high and low real estate souls to keep Luc happy without hating herself. Each new town they visit is a new hunting ground for Sadie.

Zeera catches on and offers Luc her soul in return for letting Sadie, Lulu, and Gear go. Luc counters that he gets to keep Gear and Zeera accepts. She signs herself away.

Sadie is suspicious when the jobs stop coming. She tries to find Gear, but he no longer answers her calls. She's frantic to find

him, having developed feelings for him that she's not yet able to admit.

Even though she's seemingly free of Luc, Sadie's eyes have been opened. She can see the supernatural now. Using her new ability, she hunts down Gear. He's furious. She was out, and she should stay out. He tells her she's ungrateful for everything he and Zeera have done for her. She doesn't understand until Gear explains that Zeera sold her soul. Sadie is devastated. She rushes back to Zeera.

They argue. Lulu hears the entire thing. She challenges Sadie's authority, telling her that no one asked for her to be their savior. Sadie is broken. She tried to protect her family, but instead put them all in danger.

Lulu resents Sadie for the loss of her baby. She's tired of Sadie "protecting" her, and she's tired of running. Lulu strikes a deal with Luc. She'll work for him as well if he releases Zeera's soul.

Luc doesn't agree to release Zeera, but he agrees to lessen his hold on her. Lulu starts working for him without Sadie knowing. Gear, however, does know. Lulu gets Luc to keep Gear from ratting her out.

Gear goes to Sadie. He can't tell her, but he can be present in her life. He figures if he's around long enough, she'll find out what's going on.

Sparks begin to fly between Sadie and Gear. He's reluctant because he can't tell Lulu's secret and knows Sadie will be furious when she finds out. Sadie isn't sure why he's so hot and cold with her.

Zeera, having regained control of herself, leaves her friends to find a way to increase her power. She's convinced that she can get them all out of this mess if she's more powerful.

Sadie finds out about Lulu. Then she finds out Gear knew about Lulu and didn't tell her. Sadie leaves, hurt by both betrayals.

Lulu and Gear continue to work for Luc.