

# Demon Hunt

I soared in wide circles high above her.

A few graceful flaps of my wings occasionally interrupted riding the air currents. My movements resembled those of a bird of prey. Tracking its prey high above the earth. Waiting for that fatal error in judgement that left it open for death. I preferred the favorable analogy to that of a carrion bird, though I supposed had I lacked the ability to cloak my body while in the full grace of my natural form, I would resemble the latter over the former to people below. Most humans have yet to see a dragon beyond CGI imaging, or from an artist's rendering. Only a minority of them know of our existence.

In the summer of 2014 groups of preternatural creatures revealed their presence to mankind. History dubbed the event the Unmasking. Historians omitted many of the uglier facts surrounding the events. One such fact being humans unrelenting hunt of non-human creatures. Elders of various preternatural races agreed to reveal their existence.

Harder to hunt in the dark what exists in the light.

I found considerable irony in the course my thoughts took. Contemplating humans that hunted preternatural creatures while I hunted one from above. Dragons were not alone in remaining out of the spotlight of the Unmasking. Many other preternatural creatures joined us, including demons.

The one I hunted jogged below me. With minimal foot traffic I could have dove down. Tucked copper scaled my wings close to my body and attacked before she knew, quite literally, what hit her. Uncertainty kept me in the air. The sulfuric stench that accompanied demons was so degraded on her I missed it the first time around. In addition to her diminished demonic scent, her deeds during the period I watched her were not the actions of an innate evildoer. Observing her at the last crime scene

her reaction appeared genuine and real. The skinned state of the bodies disturbed her. Not the response I had expect from a demon ridden human.

A demon possessing a homicide detective? Possible, but something was off. I learned many lessons in my youth. None so painfully as the consequences that accompany a rash decision. I followed my instincts and watched her for a week. Five days later I found myself no closer to figuring her out, and if the demon kept to schedule, the sands just about drained from the top of the hourglass.

I disengaged my surveillance when she returned to her home. Banking to the left, I flew out over Lake Michigan and headed to my boat docked a short distance away in Burnham harbor.

Flying. I loved it. The stretch of my muscles when I beat my wings harder and drove my body faster. The wind pressing my scales flat as it rushed over and under my body in answer to the increased speed. The kaleidoscope of scents pushed into my nostrils. More than anything I loved the dive. That rush in the pit of my stomach when I tucked my wings close to my flanks and hurdled my body towards the earth.

I did not pull up. I sucked in a deep breath, sealed off my nostrils and took a header straight into the lake. I remained underwater and pushed my body through the transformation back to my human guise. Docking in the last berth allowed me to surface unseen by anyone who might have been asleep on their boats and awaken when I broke the surface of the water with a thunderous clap from a cloudless sky.