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The shark demon clicked in his throat a few times, almost like dolphin clicks, but much deeper. Most demons had human-ish faces, even brutes, even Zel, but this one very much did not. The dragon-y snout and shark-like flat head looked strangely awesome, and scary.

"Correct," Zel said. "Unmarked. And you may notice she has this persistent, quiet aura."

The shark clicked a few more times in his throat before gesturing toward Mia.
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"Kasimiro, you know she doesn't speak Hellian."

Rumbling, Kasimiro licked his many, big sharp teeth, and shook his head.

"I hate Estian." Grumbling, the shark, or wingless dragon, walked toward Mia, and prowled around her. He leaned forward with every step just like a tiger lady would, or a dinosaur would, and he rumbled like a purring cat with a semi's engine in their chest as he looked her up and down. If he'd stood up straighter, he would have been just as tall as a brute.

"One of the sarkarin," Zel said. "The eyeless never do enjoy Estian." Shrugging, Zel gestured to Mia again. "You will be guarding her with your life, Kasimiro."

More rumbles from the shark dragon dinosaur
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"Fine." With a heavy sigh, he stood beside Mia, and... did absolutely nothing.

Maybe she'd gotten too used to Adron and his playfulness, and had expected to run into more demons with that fun side to them. Zel did seem to have something of a playful side, probably mixed with large amounts of ruthlessness and brutality. But Mia's new guardian seemed to have the same disposition as Diogo. Maybe even more of an asshole, considering the word choices.

Mia loved analyzing how people talked, to try and figure out what made them tick and what things she could say to make them happy or more sociable, but it was a dangerous game if she misread a demon. They weren't humans, and if she made a bad call, they might take it out on her. Time to tread carefully.
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"Uh, hi," she said as she looked up at the big demon. "I'm Mia."

He clicked once in his throat, and managed the smallest shrug. Okay, her earlier assessment was probably right, he was stoic like Diogo but also a lot more indifferent. He didn't give a shit. Good to know.

"Kas frequently monitors the duels," Zel said. "It is not uncommon for demons to recruit friends and try and kill each other, violating the rules. Duels must be a one-on-one battle."

"Sounds kind of unfair for the little guys."

Zel shrugged, and walked back toward the exit. Mia and her new shark dragon dinosaur bodyguard followed. The tall demon queen walked with a sway in her step, almost like she was walking on high heels, not hooves. Kas, on the other hand, walked like a monster, hunched over with his flat shark head out in front of him, and big thick arms hanging underneath his forward shoulders. Sometimes he lowered himself enough to walk on all fours, but he seemed to prefer walking on his slightly short hind legs, with his huge tail counter-balancing his weight. Just like a dinosaur.

"Duels on such an unfair basis are discouraged," Zel said, "but not banned. The strong rule the weak. Such the is the eternal way of all things."

Yeap. Mia should have seen that coming.

Zel approached the balcony, and jumped. It was such a fluid, seamless motion, Mia was left standing on the balcony edge, staring up at Zel as she hopped up to the balcony above. With the white silk and her long black hair tendrils flowing, it actually looked beautiful, and
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"Come," she said, looking back over her shoulder down at Mia.

"Uh--aah!" The world turned into a blur as something grabbed her waist, and jumped. Gravity lost its hold on her, and she flew up into the air complete with whiplash, head snapping back and hitting something firm and warm. Kas's shoulder. She was in his arms.

He landed next to Zel, somehow managing to land even more quietly than she did, before he set Mia down.

"Thanks," she said, and she squirmed as she looked his body up and down. Okay, yes, the shark dragon dinosaur had an amazing body, and he'd just scooped her up like she weighed nothing and held her in the nook of his arm like--Sighing, she looked down and away, and clenched her eyes shut.

"I can feel the aura," Kas said, voice a quiet grumble, before he clicked a couple more times deep in his throat.

"As can I," Zel said. "This strange soul will be of great use to me, I think."

Kas grunted, but after looking down at Mia with his eyeless face for a little while, he nodded, convinced. Good. If Mia was going to rely on this guy to keep her alive in this volatile place, it was probably a good thing he actually believed the reason his boss wanted him to protect her.

They went up a dozen more balconies. It took a whole thirty seconds. Mia forced down the urge to squeal with each jump as her stomach plummeted into her guts, before they landed gracefully on the next balcony, only to do it again and again. Kas didn't set her down between each jump either, instead keeping her snug into where his shoulder met his huge chest, and she fit into the inside of his long arm.

Okay, yeah, much as she'd always fantasized about a big handsome monster scooping her up and carrying her off exactly like this, this wasn't exactly what she'd had in mind. The groaning and dying remnants in their cages, the squawking, chirping, roaring, and moaning demons, the walls of flesh and bone, metal and stone, it spoiled things pretty badly. The tingly vibration in her guts settled to almost nothing again as she watched the horrorfests pass underneath her.

They were so high up. If they went out onto one of the more uncommon outdoor balconies, she'd probably be so close to the sky she'd have to deal with the burning heat of it. Not that the spire was air conditioned, but it didn't seem to get any hotter on the way up. So high up, if she jumped off the spire at this height, her body would have made a crater in the ground, maybe right down into the lava below. So high up, if a demon felt like murdering her without anyone knowing, that'd be exactly how they'd do it.