

A.S.A.T.



ANTI-SUPERNATURAL ASSAULT TEAM

## A.S.A.T

### Anti-Supernatural Assault Team

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#### Episode 0- Fresh Blood

#### SUMMARY

A.S.A.T. (Anti-Supernatural Assault Team) is a special group created by a billionaire Arthur West. They consist of 6 best people, Arthur could find. Their main aim is to find 5 pieces of the Seal of Solomon, so they can stop the demon that is responsible for the end of the world in 2012.

Episode 0 tells the history of each member and how they become members of A.S.A.T.

#### Episode 0- Part 1- Arthur West

*It all started with him.*

##### 1.

London, December 1995. It was a cold evening, the sky was full of thick, black clouds and it looked like it would rain. Arthur West was working on his computer in the office, which was situated in the south part of the city. He was of medium height, slim and in his early 40's. His brown hair had only just started to turn grey.

Arthur looked at the clock sitting next to the computer screen. It was 9:58.

“Just two more minutes and you’re free,” he murmured to himself staring at the tiny clock at the bottom-right corner of his screen.

The day wasn’t an easy one, as always. Being over 40, and still having to work for 10 hours on a computer, made his job mundane and tiresome. Yet, the money was good, and it was the only thing that kept him coming there over and over again.

The time changed to 9:59.

“I’m done.” he mumbled enthusiastically, shutting down the program he was working on and stood up.

There was only one woman inside the building, working a few boxes farther. The woman looked at him and asked, “Why so early Arthur?” He looked at her with indifference.

“I am done for the day,” came the bored answer.

“I have to stay until 11. I have way too much work to do!” the woman complained and went back to her work.

Arthur walked to a hanger beside the door, grabbed his jacket, put it on and turned his head towards his colleague, saying, “Bye Jane.”

“See you tomorrow Arthur,” the woman called as Arthur was reaching to turn the door knob. He simply opened the door and left. However, at that time, they both didn’t know that Arthur was here for the last time.

## 2

The office was situated inside of a tall skyscraper, with a gigantic underground parking area. Arthur was walking along a lane in the parking lot heading towards his car; an old white mustang- his dream car. He put his hand in his pocket to take out his keys. They weren't there. He nervously felt himself in all the places and pockets where the keys might be, yet he found nothing.

"Not again," he said with disappointment.

Arthur had no choice but to return to his office and check there.

Of course they were there. Where else could they be? It happened a few times that month, but he still didn't learn his lesson. Not thinking much, he immediately turned around and rushed back to the lift. When he got back to the office, Jane was still working on her computer.

"Did you forget your keys again?" the woman asked raising her head from the keyboard.

"Yeah, as always."

The man went up to his desk, and scanned it carefully. The keys were next to an old printer. He picked them up and hid into his inside pocket of the jacket.

"Bye again," he said to Jane.

"Bye," the woman answered with a silent laugh.

## 3.

3 minutes later Arthur got downstairs to his car. He opened it briskly and threw his suitcase onto the back seat, then he got in shutting the door behind him. Although it was London, the white mustang had the wheel on the left side. He had bought it while he was in the USA in late 70's to do some menial jobs. It was a clean, renovated car, with no scratches on it. The owner must have taken good care of it, and he did. Twice, or three times a week, Arthur would polish and wax it. He loved this machine.

Arthur fastened the seatbelts and turned the key causing the engine to start with a loud, typical roar. Afterwards, he pulled back, switched the radio on, and headed for the exit.

"And here is the weather forecast for the British Isles," a nice soft woman's voice on the radio announced. "The wind is getting heavier that may result in a heavy storm with thunders," the gentle voice continued.

"Storms in December, that's weird," the man murmured as his car emerged from the underground parking lot. "Better listen to some music," he yawned pressing a small button on his car radio and changed the station.

Some sad song was being played.

"No, not this one," he grumbled while pressing the button again. A new station was plying some old rock song.

"Yeah, that's what I wanted," he said joyfully.

Arthur drove through the city then headed west, outside London to get quickly to his village.

It was an addictive trend for new rich to move outside London to the villages nearby. They needed to run away from the city noise to the peace and quiet cottages and. Although they lived in their desired silence, they still spent way too much time to get to their jobs.

Arthur was one of them.

As he was turning into the motorway, he spotted some dark clouds coming from the west. The tree branches started to wave faster and faster rustling with the remains of the leaves that hadn't been taken by Autumn. A few minutes later, he was driving along a narrow country lane listening to some old rock hits. The darkness of the upcoming clouds covered the light of the raising moon. Suddenly, it started to pour. Big, heavy and thick raindrops attacked the windscreen.

“Fuck!” He screamed angrily frowning his high forehead. Heavy drops of rain were banging against the car body and the strong wind was rocking the speeding Mustang. The bright flashes of lightning struck the trees of the forest around. The man focused his eyes upon the road ahead and slowed down. He could barely see anything through the wet windshield of his car. The windscreen wipers were flickering from right to left making the road visible only for a while, before the raindrops dripped it over. Suddenly, a massive tall tree that had been struck by lightning, fell on the ground. Arthur pulled the wheel to the left as hard as he could, trying to avoid the limb. Two tyres felt the rough gravel, and the car skidded, passed the tree skimming its branch and got back on the road.

“That was a close one,” he sighed wiping the sweat from his forehead as his heart thumped. Having finished the sentence, he saw a shining sphere falling from the sky on the empty road ahead.

“What is that bloody thing?” he wondered pressing the brakes hard, as the loud screeching sound of the tyres started to get out from under the chassis. The back of the car started to turn, but Arthur was still in control of the vehicle.

The unknown, mysterious thing looked like a ball made of light, shooting white bolts in all directions. The sphere was no bigger than a basketball and it moved quickly towards the car.

“You won’t make it,” his mind raced, as he was trying to stop his speeding Mustang. Moreover, he was moving too fast, and as a result the car and the ball bumped into each other with huge speed. The windscreen broke immediately and the ball darted inside, making a horrible sound of electrical discharge. The tiny flashes of lightning spattered around penetrating Arthur’s body. He didn’t even have time to scream, or to do anything, as he had lost consciousness out of fear and shock. At the same time, the vehicle made two spins filling the air with loud screech, and stopped on the gravel next to road. The bolts were visible for a few seconds before the ball diminished and vanished leaving no trace after itself. Only the half-destroyed car.

#### 4.

A few hours passed. Arthur slowly opened his eyes.

“What the hell happened?” he asked himself looking around his burnt car. The seats were soaked. The windscreen was gone and everything was covered with burnt stains.

First, Arthur gently checked himself looking for any wounds. His hands touched every part of his body, but to his surprise there were hardly any bruises. No burns, no wounds, nothing serious.

“What the heck happened to me?” he tried to remember. Then it hit to him. He remembered the storm, the tree, the lightning and the mysterious sphere. But he also had some sandy dunes and desert in his head.

Arthur slowly opened the door of his car and stepped out.

“Not, my Mustang!” he whined contemplating his seriously burnt car. The left headlight was smashed, and the front was covered with leaves and smoke stains.

His precious car, his dream was destroyed. He had been saving for this particular vehicle since it came out. And now? He would have to spend even more money on it than he spent in 77.

“My wife will kill me,” he despaired resting his arms over the roof. But then, he wiped his eyes and got back into the car. He took a glance at his watch and couldn’t believe it was after midnight. “No way, I must get back home.” He gently placed his palm onto the key and slowly turned it, the engine started with a roar.

“Phew, she still works,” he sighed with relief, pressing the gas. Arthur left the gravel and headed back on the road. It was covered with leaves and broken branches, but the sky was clear, and no cloud was in sight. He still had a few miles to his

home, but now, he drove slower, having his head filled with the memories and thoughts from the past few hours.

“What was that thing, and why, for God’s sake, I’m not hurt?”

## 5.

The car arrived to the village about 10 miles from London. There were only a few houses, and the light was off in almost every one of them.

“Everyone is sleeping, or the storm damaged the power cable.”

The car stopped in front of an old wooden cottage, surrounded by trees. The neighbours’ houses were far from this one. Arthur got out of the car and glanced over it shaking his head with sadness. Suddenly, he saw a light turning on inside, and remembered that his wife was definitely worrying sick about him. He locked the car door and rushed inside the cottage. As he was entering and taking off his coat, he saw a woman standing in the middle of the hall.

“Where, the heck, have you been? I was so worried!”

Alice, his wife was a medium-height woman. She was a few years younger than him, but her face had begun to cover with wrinkles. Her hair was nicely dyed blond, pinned for a night and her slim body was hidden underneath a green nightgown.

Arthur was still in shock and didn’t know what to begin with.

“I-I-I was...” he tried to say something while hanging his wet jacket, covering the burnt hole.

“Are you OK? Did anything happen?”

“Honey...”

“You always call me when you’re late...” the woman interrupted “... always! I called your work, but Jane told you’ve already left. Then the downpour came and you didn’t come home. I thought the worse...”

Arthur spotted a few tears pouring out of her blue eyes. His shock faded. He knew he must tell her something, but what to begin with.

*Alice, calm down. I thought I would be here by eleven, but the storm... the rain was so heavy... there was something on the road, some kind of a ball of light, or something, it hit me and I lost control of the car and... and... No, this version was too hard for her to bare. He couldn’t say it.*

“The downpour... that’s why I’m late, Alice.” Arthur said calmly. “I couldn’t see anything through this thick, heavy rain, so I simply waited at the parking lot until it was gone.”

“Thank goodness you didn’t drive in such awful weather,” Alice smiled wiping the tears off her cheeks and turned around. “Come to the kitchen, I’ll make you something to eat.”

“Good, I’m starving,” he replied with a relief.

He was surprised that Alice believed in his lie. She must have been in a small shock too, because she couldn’t notice his torn jacket, or maybe because it was soaked. Arthur took the shoes off, and then followed her, turning the light off in the corridor.

## 6.

One hour later, Arthur was finishing cleaning his teeth in the bathroom. He couldn’t stop thinking about his lovely car and the mysterious sphere.

“What if she sees the car? She would definitely know I lied to her. Hmm... well, Arthur, You will just go to bed, as usual, lay down and fall asleep. No talking. Especially, no talking. You’ll explain everything tomorrow.”

Suddenly, he heard the clock strike. It was coming from the living room that was situated downstairs. A few seconds later the second strike came filling his ears.

“Just great, 2 o’clock, and only four hours of sleep to go.”

He quickly left the bathroom and headed for his bedroom where his wife was already lying waiting for him. The bedroom wasn’t so big. There was enough space for a double bed, a wardrobe and a table. The bed was placed against the wall, between the door and the wooden window with old-fashioned curtains.

“Please turn off the light,” the woman asked yawning.

Arthur reached to the switcher and pressed the button. The room became dark. He felt for the bed and laid down.

“I’m really tired after all of this,” he said covering himself with the quilt, “so please, just let me sleep.”

“I’m tired, too. Good night then.”

“Good night.”

Arthur turned over to the other side and closed his eyes. The thoughts from that night hit him again.

*What was this sphere? Some kind of UFO? Some governmental experiment? Why the hell am I seeing some sands?*

“You know what Arthur?” the soft female’s voice whispered.

“Why do you always wanna talk when I want to sleep?” he replied angrily to avoid the lie to come out.

“I just wanted to tell you something what happened to me today,” she said calmly.

“Can’t it wait till tomorrow? I told you I was tired.”

“I know, but this was really strange. Just listen, will you?”

“OK...” his attitude changed immediately on hearing *strange*. Maybe it had some connection with what happened to him.

“Something weird happened to me today. “

Even though, Arthur had a difficult and a weird night as well, he wanted to hear what his wife had to say. After a moment of listening to Alice's breath, waiting patiently for the next sentence he said impatiently, “Well, what happened to you?”

Alice took a deep breath and said, “I killed a cat.”

“If you killed it with a spade or something, then it would be strange” Arthur laughed silently.

“No!” the woman denied, “I accidentally ran over it when I was coming back home.”

Arthur overturned, so now he was facing his wife. He knew he had to end the conversation somehow.

“Everyone hits animals in their lifetime, there is nothing weird in it,” he explained casually.

“B-But, when I stopped the car, and came up to the cat... to check if it’s alive, I saw that its eyes were different.”

“What do you mean?” the man wondered, as his interest rose.

“T-They were not like any normal cat's eyes. I mean, they were not grey or brown, but red as blood.”

Arthur's breath stopped for a while.

“Red?” he asked in disbelief. “Maybe they were soaked with blood?”

“But the worst was... I was getting back to my car and I remembered these two superstitions my grandma used to say.”

*Not again, her grandmother’s superstitions. In the beginning of their marriage she was addicted to the superstitions. Don’t go under the ladder. If you break a mirror, you will*

*have 7 years of misery, or don't open your umbrella indoors. But after her grandmother's death, Alice learnt her way to live without them... well with the help of a psychiatrist.*

"She used to say that if you kill a black cat, Devil will come for you, or you will see Devil before you see another black cat"

Arthur could sense fear in her voice, but he was sick and tired of her grandmother's superstitions.

"You know what I think of it, right?" he said calmly. "Superstitions do not apply to your life."

"Hmm, B-But..."

"No but, Alice! I don't want to go through it again!"

"Me neither, b-but those eyes... I don't know."

"Alice, please. Can we go to sleep now?" Arthur asked.

"OK!" the woman said irritated turning over to the other side.

"Good night."

"Good night."

## 7.

The clock stroke four times downstairs. Alice and Arthur were fast asleep. The light from Venus was falling into the room through the window, creating a hardly visible tree shadow on the floor which was gently moving as the wind blew. Suddenly, a sound of footsteps spread around. Alice woke up, turned over and looked at Arthur with her half-closed eyes. He was sleeping like a baby snoring from time to time. Her eyes closed again and she fell back on a pillow landing back in her dream. Then, she heard the silent footsteps again. She opened her eyes rapidly and turned over to the right side of the bed, towards the sound of the footsteps. What she saw worked on her as if she had drunk 2 coffees. Her eyes wide opened, and her heart started to beat twice as fast. There wasn't any light at the bed, but she could see a clear blueprint of some humanlike shape. It was sitting on her side of the bed and slowly scanning the room. When it turned its head at Alice, the top part of it met the weak light revealing a bony skull and a pale horn. Alice immediately started screaming, as her eyes grew wide with terror. The ugly creature stood up and stepped to the shadows near the door. The scream woke up Arthur.

"What's going on?" he asked, then noticed the dark blueprint of the monster in the shadows. Arthur tried to get up and do something about it, but he couldn't move.

"I can't move!"

Alice didn't stop screaming. She caught breath every few seconds and kept on shrieking.

"Oh come on!" the very low voice spoke. "Maybe the more familiar nature of mine will not scare you," he added emerging from the shadows.

To everyone's surprise the shape that came out from the shadow, straight away changed into a human one. Arthur couldn't believe his eyes, neither could Alice. She stopped screaming, but she still couldn't say anything.

"Who-Who are you?" Arthur asked in a trembling voice. "Do you want money? It's downstairs!"

The creature sat back on the bed looking at bed-ridden couple. He had short dark hair, long face, and reddish eyes. He was wearing a black suit with a black shirt underneath.

"Money? Ha ha. I don't want your money."

"A-Are y-you d-death?" Alice whispered in a quivering voice.

"Death?" the creature laughed. "I'm far worse than him."

Arthur tried to release himself from the mysterious magical boundary that paralysed his every muscle apart from his face. Alice was sitting right next to him, not even being able to turn her head. She was soaked with fear, and deep down she knew what was going on.

“I sent something on Earth today, something important to me...”

The dimmed light covered his eyes with shadow, so neither Alice nor Arthur knew who he was talking to.

“... and you with your fancy car just ran into it.”

“T-The ball of light?” Arthur stuttered still trying to free his body from the invisible force.

“The ball of light? What? No!” came a surprise answer.

“I didn't come here for you,” the creature told Arthur, “I came here for her,” he added pointing at Alice.

“You know, Alice,” he moved closer to the scared woman. “Your grandmother was right

Her jaw dropped, but nothing more could she do.

“Surprised Alice? Huh?”

The girl only nodded and her breath sped up.

“Don't you know Alice,” the man asked, “that devil will come for you if you kill a cat?”

Alice was trebling with shock, Arthur couldn't believe his eyes and ears. “Isn't that what she used to say?”

“A-Are y-you D-Devil?” Alice asked with a stuttering voice.

“Not THE devil, but A devil yes. Well, actually a demon, but many a person calls me devil, so I got used to it” he answered casually. “But, you know Alice, the cat you killed was one of my special ones.”

“What are sayin'?” Arthur asked.

“Let me explain this simply: There're many kinds of demons,” he started to talk fast as if he was saying it for a hundred time, “some of them are stronger than the others, blah blah blah, but those who're weak, can't posses a human so they have to use animals, in that case a cat, blah blah blah. Anyway, when you hit me, you made me leave the cat's body, and I had to start over again. I don't know maybe I'm unlucky or something, that it happened to me for the third time this week.”

“I-I'm sorry,” Alice wept.

“Leave her alone!” Arthur yelled with anger.

“Who asked you for your opinion?” the creature said irritably.

He pointed his dirty finger at Arthur, while his red eyes became even redder for a split a second, causing Arthur to be pushed away with a magical force. Arthur landed on the floor between the window and the bed, knocking over the table. He could feel that the magical force got stronger and paralysed his every muscle fixing his eyes on his wife and the demon. He tried to focus his thoughts, but the same images popped into his head; the sphere, the unknown desert and his Mustang. Alice started to scream again.

“No way!” the creature complained rolling his reddish eyes. “You want to be silenced, too?”

Alice shook her head, and stopped screaming as her tears were running down her smooth, shaky cheeks.

“So please, shut up already!”

Arthur wanted to do something, but his whole body was paralysed. He couldn't move, and his eyes were frozen on Alice and the creature.

“P-Please l-leave us a-alone,” Alice stuttered.



“Hmm, I don't think I can,” the creature replied indifferently. “You see, every time I possess something, someone must kill it, and not let me complete my mission. So what can I simply do in return?”

Alice was shaking her head crying silent “no, n-no.” Arthur could do nothing, not even move a muscle. “I-I sorry, I’m so sorry.”

The man rolled his eyes again, “typical behaviour.” He sounded as if he was having fun doing what he was doing.

Alice was staring in disbelief and stuttered her last sentence. “B-But it was an-an accident.”

“B-B-B-But,” the demon mocked her, and pointed his finger towards Alice, then moved it quickly towards the wall. The mysterious force raised and pushed the woman’s body, and smashed it against the wall with the power so huge, that it could be compared with the rushing train. The whole body spluttered and blood trickled everywhere covering the whole room in stains..

“Oh, that was also an accident,” the monster said amusingly.

Arthur was forced to watch it without a blink. The mysterious creature looked at him and said.

“If anyone asked, I wasn't here.” Then he pulled back into shadows, immediately enlarging its blueprint. Suddenly a hole of fire appeared in the floor and the creature jumped into it. Simultaneously, the mysterious force that was restraining Arthur from making any move vanished. He burst out with tears. He cried and howled releasing the sorrow accompanied by grief dwelling inside of him. He immediately stood up from the bed and rushed outside. As soon as he ran through the front door, he fell down on his knees leaning his hands against the ground. The tears were running on his cheeks like a stream.

“Alice!” the man's scream combined with weep and howl spread around filling the area. Yet, there was no one who could hear him. His voice echoed among the nearby trees. He couldn’t do anything at that point. Witnessing his wife brutal death was unbearable experience. But not only this, he was also a witness to supernatural activities and he learnt that demons were real.

## 8.

Another few hours passed and the sun began to rise. Arthur was lying cringed in front of his house. It was very cold, but he didn’t feel it. His eyes were closed and he was asleep. His face was pale from cold and sadness. He slowly opened his eyes and looked around. Suddenly the memories of the previous night tragedy stroke his mind. He sprang up, went to his house, grabbed some money from jar in the living room, took out the car keys from his jacket, and put another jacket on. Then he rushed outside and looked back at the window of his bedroom, only to see that it was covered with blood stains. He closed his eyes for the moment to see the images again: Alice greeting him previous night, making him supper, then being brutally turned into leaking pieces of meat and blood. He also saw the sandy desert again. Arthur opened his eyes and got into his car, started the engine and took off. He left the house opened. He didn’t call the police, or anyone. He simply left.

## 9.

It was February of 1996. Arthur found himself in Botswana, Africa. The sun was in the zenith and the heat was unbearable. He was driving an old jeep across Kalahari Desert. There was an old lane, or rather a path that connected two towns. Next to him, there was sitting a black man- a typical one for the region.

“Why exactly are we here?” the black man shouted in order to break his voice through the noisy sound of an old engine.

Arthur took a glance at a small picture attached next to the wheel. There was a young blonde woman in it- Alice. He glanced back at the back man.

“Something tells me that here I would find what I am looking for,” he replied.

“Which is what?” The man asked again doubtfully.

Arthur looked ahead.

“I don't know yet, Kubey. But I do know it's near.”

Suddenly Arthur spotted something in a distance.

“Look! Can you see it Kubey?”

The tall black man with short curly hair and a wide mouth screwed up his eyes trying to see what his colleague was seeing.

“You mean the trees?”

Arthur pressed the gas harder and the white jeep accelerated. They both felt a stronger wind on their sweaty faces.

“No, below the trees, those huge rocks,” he said eagerly.

“What rocks? I see only sand, no rocks,”

They were getting closer to the trees where a sandy desert transformed into a semi-desert.

“You must be having a mirage,” Kubey shouted.

“No, I'm not,” he said casually, “I know what I see.”

They stopped the car near the trees. Arthur jumped out of it.

“Give me the shovel,” he shouted.

“What?” Kubey didn't believe what Arthur was saying.

“The shovel, fast!”

Kubey got out and went to the boot. He opened it and took out a spade.

“Don't tell me that you're gonna dig here.”

“Of course I am, and you'll help me,” Arthur replied with a smile.

He grabbed the spade and started to dig in the sand. Kubey grabbed the second one and unwillingly started to do the same.

## 10.

A few hours later, when the sun was approaching the west horizon, the men were still digging. They had their shirts taken off, and there was a half-empty bottle in the shadow of the jeep. They had made quite a huge hole in the sand.

“Are you ready to stop and go back to the village?” Kubey asked wiping out the sweat off his forehead.

“No, it's here,” came the answer. “It must be here!”

“But can't you see, Arthur, that it's no use. There is nothing there. “

“Stop grumbling, we're almost there,” Arthur said patiently.

“I tell you, you will find nothing here apart from the sand. Let's go back,” Kubey insisted.

“No, I have to stay and keep digging,” Arthur said.

Suddenly the spade hit something hard. Both men looked at it in wonder. Arthur kneeled and started digging with his hands, getting rid of the sand from the hard object.

“Strange,” Kubey said looking at his colleague, as he was maniacally brushing off the dirt.

Finally, the sand was removed, revealing a shiny object.

“It can't be,” Kubey said looking in disbelief at the crystal piece of rock.

“I told you I saw something,” he replied happily.

“I have never seen such a huge diamond,” Kubey shouted, as he kneeled and started to help Arthur to unearth the diamond with his strong hands.

Finally, they managed to take out the object.

“Oh my God, it must weigh at least 10 kg,” Kubey said happily.  
Arthur looked at him and smiled. “There are more,” he said casually.  
“More? How do you know this?” Kubey said with a huge grin.  
“I can see it,” came the answer.  
“You must be a god or something. And from now on, you’re certainly my god.”  
Arthur pushed the diamond farther towards the car.  
“Kubey, go for the satellite phone and call the others. I think we’ll set up a mine here.”  
Kubey ran as fast as he could to the jeep and grabbed the satellite phone.

## 11.

Two years have passed. In the very place where Arthur had dug out the diamond, now there was an enormous mine, fully operating on the desert of Botswana. Many a building has been built around it, as well as the facilities for workers. Dozens of trucks took the mined diamonds to the nearby airport, then they were sold worldwide. The biggest diamonds were given to museums or sold to the private collectors. The success of founding up a mine made Arthur one of the richest men in the world.

It was boiling hot, but the workers were used to working in extreme conditions. Suddenly a helicopter appeared in the sky and slowly landed on a special H-shape concrete place. The door opened and Arthur stepped out of the machine. He was wearing a white suit and glasses. His hair was completely grey. A few people wearing suits were already waiting for him. Kubey was among them.

“Arthur, nice to see you here,” Kubey shouted, as the propeller was slowing down deadening regular speech.

“Kubey, so how is the work going?” Arthur asked.

They entered the 2-storey building.

“The deposit is 15 miles deep,” one of the men said while they were going along the corridor. On both sides there were workers grinding the mined diamonds.

“So how many years will the mine operate?” Arthur inquired.

“About 20 years,” came the answer from the second man. “The ore is bigger than we expected.”

“I told you. Any more news?”

“No sir. Everything is going according to plan.”

Arthur stopped. “Well then, if anyone is looking for me, I’ll be in my office,” he announced and turned right into a short corridor leading to the leather door.

“OK, and we are going for the meeting with some diamond collectors,” Kubey said. *Phew, finally left alone. I hate these business meetings. No wonder why I have people to do this.*

Arthur entered his office. It was a spacious room, with a window as big as the wall. The spotlights in the ceiling were illuminating the whole room. The sun never disturbed Arthur, as the window was facing north. There was a desk in the corner with a few monitors and numerous buttons. In one word, it was a very modern office as for the year 1998. Arthur went towards the desk and sat on a large leather seat. There was a framed article on the wall behind him. The headline said: *Man struck by lightning finds a diamond ore in the dessert.* There were also colourful pictures of the biggest diamonds that had been dug here. He took out a satellite phone from his white tuxedo, and dialled some number.

“Hello, this is Arthur West. I’m calling you to finalise the deal on Maldito Castle...

Yes... When can I move in?... Ok, so I’ll be there next week.”

Then he put back his phone into the pocket and turned on his computer. The screen showed an article with a headline “Ghosts and spirits.” The man looked at it closely and started to read the article with interest. Suddenly his phone rang. He took it out and answered.

“This is Arthur West.”

Then, after hearing something on the phone his eyes grew wide, and his jaw dropped

“Really? Mr. President wants to meet me?... I will be in San Francisco next week... All right then... No, the honour is mine.”

He put the phone back, rubbed his eyes and went on working on the computer.

*It must be really huge that the president himself wants to meet me. Does he know about my discovery?*

## 12.

Next week, Arthur went to San Francisco to his new castle. It was an enormous Spanish building, situated on an island near the coast. There was one big tower surrounded by a few small ones. The whole building was magnificent and spectacular. There were two black helicopters in the middle of the courtyard, and a few people wearing black suits around it. Every one of them was looking around and scanning the area. Two men were sitting at the table on the balcony above the courtyard. One of them was Arthur, the second one was a middle-height man, with black hair. From his face, one could deduce that he was in his late forties. There were also several people wearing black suits and black sunglasses behind a thick glass door of the balcony. On the table, there were two glasses of coffee, freshly made, and a few cookies.

“Mr. West, I wanted to talk to you about this matter for a long time,” the man said. His serious face didn't show any emotions.

“But Mr. President,” Arthur tried to explain himself, “I do not have any idea what you are referring to.” The man looked around the beautiful view of the sea.

“I think you do. I am talking about the project you have been working on.”

Arthur screwed up his eyes pretending to be thinking about something.

“Do you happen to mean the second mine, sir?” he said hoping it would be the answer.

“Mr. West. Of course not,” the president smiled. “Do not play games with me, please. I am talking about the project connected with paranormal entities you have been working on for the last 2 years. And I mean not only the supernatural beings, but something much more fearsome, that you must have found out by now.”

“21<sup>st</sup> December 2012,” Arthur whispered.

“That is correct.”

“H-How do you know that, sir?” Arthur said with a little shock although he knew the answer deep inside.

“We have got Echelon,” the man said proudly. “Thus, we have caught one of your calls with some hunter,” he added.

“All right, sir, I admit, I have been gathering numerous information regarding paranormal and supernatural beings as well as 21<sup>st</sup> December 2012. Do you want me to stop working on this, Sir?” Arthur asked with uncertainty.

The president looked around if neither of his Secret Service Agents was listening.

“No Mr. West, I want you to continue working on this, and make sure the project will be completed as soon as possible.”

Arthur felt both satisfaction and relief. His secret project, the one that had started with the death of his wife, is now officially approved by the president of the United States.

“Mr. West, have you found the solutions to stop the end of the world?”

“I came about some information about the Seal of Solomon, but I don't know anything more about it.”

“We have had people working on that for several years now. The seal is real. It has been broken into 5 pieces and spread around the world. However, we do not obtain the whereabouts of either of the pieces.”

“I can help.”

The president frowned. “Hence, I am here, Mr. West. I want you to form a team and find those pieces. The end of the world must be stopped.”

“B-But, sir, even if I form the team now, it may take years to find the pieces.”

“I know. You will be given full support from the government. We can also provide you with our best people.”

Arthur raised his hand a little bit, as if to show his disagreement.

“Please, sir, leave selecting people to me.”

“All right then.” the president said standing up, “All the necessary information, as well as the access to the latest technology, will be provided. So do not worry,” he added. “However, I will not be the president by 2012. I will make sure all my successors will put their heart into it.”

Arthur stood up and smiled.

“Thank you for your support Mr. President.”

The president looked at Arthur for a split of second and nodded smiling, then headed for the thick glass door. One of his Secret Service agents came closer and opened it. Arthur followed them to the courtyard. They stepped out from the main gate and walked towards the helicopter.

“Good bye Mr. West, we will be in touch,” the president said as he was approaching the machine.

“Once again, thank you for your approval and good bye, sir.”

The men boarded one of the helicopters and took off. Arthur went inside the castle.

### 13.

Arthur was walking along an obscure corridor. *So much work to do*. The corridor inside was in bad condition. The walls needed to be restored, the floor was covered with some old rug, and the ceiling was cracked. He went up the stairs that led to the tallest tower. His office was on the last floor, where an old observatory used to be. The large room was full of boxes and suitcases. In the middle there was a vast desk with several computer monitors on it, as well as a few schemes of various things. The wall was covered with posters. One of them showed some kind of ring. The other one showed some mysterious creatures. Arthur sat down, looked at his wife’s photo on the desk and said to himself.

“So let's get started.”

Episode 0- Part 2- Tokutei

Summary:

There is a special organisation in Japan, called Dragons. They consist of 12 highly-trained ninjas, and are used for impossible missions. They never fail. This night, they were sent to retrieve a legendary katana sword. Yet, they didn’t know it would be their last mission.

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