

Anti-Supernatural
Assault Team
Book 1
The Seal Of Solomon

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JUST A FEW WORDS FROM THE AUTHOR

What you are about to read is a combination of facts, theories and a lot of my own ideas to link everything in one piece. I decided to write a series of novels about special team to deal with paranormalia based on what I lacked in many movies and TV series. A.S.A.T. is a trilogy (or a longer series if my ideas keep coming.) Before reading this book, it is advised to read Book 0, which is simply a story of each member. Book 1 takes place a few days after Book 0 ends and covers time between October 1 and December 19, 2012.

“Take, O Solomon, king, son of David, the gift which the Lord God has sent thee, the highest Sabaoth. With it thou shalt lock up all demons of the earth...”

Testament of Solomon

1 THE BEGINNING OF THE END

October 1, 2012.

81 days remaining

1.

Another plane landed in San Francisco’s airport on this gorgeous, sunny morning. Like every day, there were lots of people everywhere rushing to their gates or trying to get accustomed to the new time zone. Some of them had just come to the city while the others were waiting to either pick someone up or to fly somewhere.

“What’s the purpose of your visit, sir?” asked a young man at the passport control.

“Excuse-me?” replied an Asian guy reading a colourful brochure he had found on the plane.

“Why are you here, sir?” asked the man again while the Asian was giving him a strange look.

“Ah, sorry, I didn’t understand you in the beginning,” said the man. “I am here to visit your beautiful cities,” he added putting his modern sunglasses into the pocket of his colourful shirt. Not willing to continue the conversation, the airport staff member answered.

“OK sir, please move on.”

The Asian picked up his bag, and walked farther to pick up his suitcase. He quickly spotted his possession among the others moving on a winding conveyor belt. He walked towards it, picked it up, and moved towards the exit. There were hundreds of people moving around. He saw lots of them waiting with names written on cardboards. He also saw families uniting and

businessmen meeting. He heard the airport announcement coming from the speakers. Like every other airport you need to be really focused to be able to decode the message. Even though the Asian spoke good English, he could hear only the words *Sidney*. As he was heading towards the exit, three security guards came up to him.

“Sir, please come with us.”

He understood exactly what was going on, but Arthur assured him that there wouldn't be any problem at the airport. He had no choice, but to let them escort him somewhere.

2.

The Asian was sitting on a modern office chair, in front of a wooden desk in a room with one wide window and a thick door. Two security guards were standing at the door. Someone entered. It was a man with short brown hair, a moustache and glasses. He was wearing a white, striped shirt and he looked angry. Having entered, he peeked at the Asian and asked.

“Is this the guy?”

The security guard nodded and the man walked to the other side of the desk, and then sat down.

“Carrying a weapon, huh?”

The Asian said nothing. He was only sitting patiently and hoping that everything would be OK. The men turned to his colleague.

“Does he even speak English?”

“I do understand you, sir; I just hoped that everything would go smoothly.”

“All right then,” the man was impressed by his level of English.

“Could you please explain to me, how on Earth have you managed to pass the Tokyo airport security with the sword? And Toku...tei is what? Your name or surname?”

“It's my name, and there was no problem with my luggage. They simply let me through.”

“How dumb are they, huh?” he exclaimed hitting his fist against the desk.

The door suddenly opened, and a man wearing a black uniform came in. He came up to the one sitting on the chair, leaned and whispered something to his ear.

“What? Who?” the second one replied as his eyes grew. He stood up discouraged and disappointed and unwillingly said. “Let him out.”

“What?” one of the security guys asked.

“You heard me, let him out.”

3.

The Asian was walking towards the exit with little satisfaction. Everything went exactly as he was told. As he left the main door, he placed his suitcase on the pavement and raised his hand.

“Taxi! Taxi!” he shouted.

Almost immediately a yellow cab arrived. He quickly grabbed his suitcase and rushed towards the car. As he was running, he saw a young adult carrying a large bag approaching him. It was a tall man with short blond hair. He was no older than 22. He waved at the Asian.

“Oh, you don’t have to help me,” he said to the boy, “I’m alright.” But the blond-hair lad ignored him, opened the door from the cab and got in closing it behind.

“You must be kidding me!” the Asian man yelled angrily as the taxi took off.

“Taxi! Taxi!” he shouted again, now irritated.

Another yellow car arrived. The man quickly looked around, then opened the taxi door, threw his bags in, and got in.

“Sir, you should put your bags into the trunk,” the white, curly haired cab driver suggested peeking at the rear-view mirror.

“I am really sorry sir but I’m in a hurry.”

The driver gritted his teeth, rolled his eyes, and looked back.

“Where do you want to go, sir?” he asked through his teeth.

“Please take me to the Dewey Monument” answered the Asian guy.

“You know, people usually go to hotels or their homes, but you, with such luggage to the monument?”

“Just take me there, please.”

The taxi driver pressed the accelerator, and the taxi took off. Seconds later, a tall black man with a big bag on his shoulder came out through the doors of the airport. He looked around the buildings, raised his eyebrows, and said indifferently.

“Phew. Sydney is much better.”

Then he went farther, and called a taxi.

4.

The Asian guy was in a cab admiring the city through the window. Everything looked beautiful to him. The tall buildings, the cable cars, hilly roads, the weather.

“Beautiful city, isn’t it?” he said to the driver.

“Yeah, whatever,” came the cold answer.

At first, the Asian man thought that the driver was rude to him because he hadn’t put his luggage to the trunk, but now he was sure, the driver was a racist. He ignored his being rude and kept on eyeing the towering sky-scrapers. The cab suddenly stopped.

“We’re here, it would be 80 dollars,” the driver said. The man drew out his wallet and took out a 100-dollar bill then gave it to the driver.

“Keep the change”.

The man looked at him and immediately changed his attitude.

“Do you need a helping hand with that bag sir?”

The Asian guy looked at him.

“No thanks, I’ll be alright,” he answered pulling out the baggage off the cab.

“Have a nice day, sir.”

The Asian closed the door, turned around, and saw the Dewey Monument up ahead in a vast square park. It was a large column with some greenish person on the top. This person was a full-length female, wearing a green gown. She was holding a trident in one hand and a wreath in the second one. It was a victory monument raised to commemorate Commander Dewey’s victory over the Spanish fleet in Philippines. As the man was approaching the benches nearby, he noticed the same youngster who had stolen his cab earlier. Not thinking much, he briskly went up to him.

“You!” he said irritably putting his luggage on the pavement.

The man peeked at him.

“You’re talkin’ to me?”

“You stole my cab at the airport,” the Asian guy shouted and took off his sunglasses.

The boy remembered him very well but he decided to lie.

“I didn’t see ya’, man,” came the answer.

“I was right next to the cab when you turned up and simply

jumped into the car,” the angry Asian guy yelled.

“So what? You came all this way here to tell me that?” The boy rolled his eyes. “And by the way, I see you didn’t have problems with finding another one, did ya?”

“Guys, guys, this is not how gentlemen behave,” some voice came from the left.

They both looked into the direction of the voice and saw a man in his sixties with a short beard and moustache.

“Arthur!” they both said simultaneously. Then they immediately looked back at each other with a surprise. “Do you know him?” they both asked.

“Of course I do,” the boy replied standing up, “That’s why I’m here.”

Arthur sighed, then said,

“Boys, please, if you are to work together, you can’t behave like this, and you certainly can’t hate each other.”

The men looked at each other.

“Work with this dishonourable man? No way!” the Asian guy exclaimed. “You told me something different Arthur when we met.”

“Whatever,” The blond man added.

The old man couldn’t let the argument continue. This is not what he was hoping for.

“Tokutei, Dan” he said firmly looking at them convincingly.

“Alright, I’m sorry,” the Asian said changing his attitude.

“If he says we need to make up, then we need to make up,” Dan replied rolling his eyes again.

“My name is Tokutei,” he reached out with his hand as a sign of a greeting.

“And I’m Dan,” the second man replied shaking his hand.

“Good, now we have to wait for two more,” Arthur said quietly.

“Two more?” Dan asked astonished. “You said you were looking for five people?”

Arthur looked into his eyes.

“That is correct. However, one person will join as later today.” he replied in a joyful voice.

Tokutei spotted another taxi stopping nearby. He turned his head and watched a black man get out of it. He grabbed his bag from the boot,

looked around, stopping his eyes for a while on the monument, then on them, and started to walk towards them.

“I guess we don’t have to wait for a long time though,” Tokutei said turning back towards the men.

Dan caught a glance of the man approaching.

“I guess this is number three.”

“I hope this is it,” The black man said glimpsing at the three men. He put down his bag, peeked at the monument in front of him, and smiled.

“That is correct Jason,” Arthur replied. “Please, meet Tokutei and Dan,” he added pointing at the men.

“Hi guys, I’m Jason, I guess, err, I’ll be your new teammate,” he said casually.

Tokutei made a fast step forward, bowed, and shook his hand.

“Nice to meet to you.”

Jason bowed adding a gentle smile.

“Oh, and we have the fourth person coming,” the old man announced looking at the corner of the street.

Everyone looked at that direction. They saw a tall Asian woman wearing black clothes walking towards them. She had long, straight hair, very beautiful complexion and a perfect figure. She was carrying a huge black bag on her shoulder.

“Wow, what a hotty,” Dan chuckled.

She came by, closely observing all the guys standing there. There was something strange about her. It wasn’t her extraordinary beauty or her bag that seemed much heavier than the bag of others. There was something wrong with her face. There was no smile on it, no emotions. Only her eyes were filled with sadness. Arthur noticed it on the spot. He knew exactly what was going on with her. He had been there a few days earlier. The woman quickly shook off her sadness, and put on her happy face.

“May I introduce to you Qiaolian,” Arthur announced beckoning at the woman.

The others smiled politely, and waited patiently to be introduced.

“Actually,” she said, “You may call me Lian,”

“And these are...” Arthur continued, “Tokutei, Dan and Jason”

Jason raised his index finger as a sign of interruption.

“Actually, you may call me O.D.”

Lian beamed.

“Nice to meet you guys.”

“I see, that the team would consist of all races, heh,” Dan said with a silent smile.

“You haven’t seen the best yet,” Arthur replied.

Tokutei didn’t say a word, he was only observing the situation. But he was more convinced that this country was filled with racists. O.D. cleared his throat, and picked up his bag.

“You said Arthur, there would be four of us, so what are we waiting for?”

Arthur glanced at his watch.

“You’re right. Time is money, so we’d better be going guys.”

Everyone grabbed their belongings, and followed Arthur. Dan caught up with him, cleared his throat to get his attention, and asked.

“Could you tell us something about the fifth man?”

“She will join us later in the castle,” the old man replied.

“She?” the boy asked simultaneously with Jason’s “Castle?” Arthur turned around and nodded.

“Yes, and Yes. Yet, now we must be going, so follow me.”

Only Tokutei didn’t say anything. He seemed to be disappointed with the team, but it wasn’t this. He moved back to his childhood.

He was five years old, sitting among fifteen other Asian boys like him. They were all outside in front of an old, Japanese, wooden house. No one was talking. Everyone was gazing at a figure sitting in front of them. It was a man in his early forties with scars all over his face.

“Your families have abandoned you, and left you to die. I have taken you. Not only have I become your new father, but your master as well. I do understand you are still children, and like every child, you have dreams. However, I regret to tell you, that most of your dreams would not be fulfilled. You shall spend your life here with the very people who are sitting next you. You should love each other, not hate. You should be glad to be chosen, to be able to change lives. You are being trained to become the best fighters, the best ninjas in the country, to save the world. It is the greatest honour of all. And I do hope we would treat one another as a family. What Otaki here has done was inexplicable.”

He pointed at a beaten boy sitting next to him. He had blood flowing from his nose, and bruises all over his face and arms.

“This behaviour will not be accepted in our family. Otaki,” he turned

towards another boy sitting on his right.

“You will be punished for what you have done. And let this be a lesson for the future for all of you.”

“And you?” Jason asked Tokutei snapping him out of his memories.

“Hmm?”

“Are you Chinese or Japanese?”

“Japanese. You?”

“Australian.”

“Ha! I knew it from your accent,” Dan added.

“At least they’re talking,” Arthur murmured.

5.

They left the square and headed towards the main street. Arthur pointed at the long Hummer limousine parked ahead.

“How do you like our transport over there?”

“I have only seen such cars in movies and magazines,” Tokutei said impressed.

“I like it,” Jason added casually.

“You don’t look surprised, don’t you love cars?” Dan asked amazed.

“Oh, I do love cars. You don’t understand how much. But I live, I mean I lived in a celebrity neighbourhood, and I saw something like this every day.”

Arthur fished a small rectangular piece of plastic out off his pocket, and placed it into his ear.

“Steve, we’re ready.”

It was an earpiece, through which he communicated with the driver. The back and the side doors opened.

“Alright guys, hop in.”

They went inside. Dan, Lian and Jason sat at the back while Tokutei and Arthur sat opposite to them.

“Alright Steve, take us home.”

As soon as the driver started the engine, all doors immediately locked, and the car took off.

6.

The Hummer was speeding along the city streets heading towards the

Pacifica State Beach in the south. The passengers were admiring the San Francisco's beautiful buildings and views through the window. Then the Daly City views which were no different from San Francisco.

"Were you serious about the castle, Arthur?" Lian asked.

"I see that you didn't read the materials I gave you," he smiled.

"Well, there was too much to read so I'm not even surprised."

"I-I wanted to read all of this on the plane, but um..."

"Just admit you have forgotten the materials, as I did," Tokutei interrupted.

"Still, not surprised," the old man smiled.

Tokutei went on to staring at everything they were passing by. He was really fascinated with the city, the people they passed, and the cars. It was all new to him.

"The famous cable-cars, I always wanted to see them," he muttered Dan looked at him raising one of his eyebrows.

"I don't know why you Asians are always like spoilt tourists."

"Spoilt?" Lian asked with a cold look.

"You know what I mean, girl."

"No I don't, so could you please tell me?" she asked again lowering her voice.

"Ya' know, groups of Japanese looking at the American monuments and attractions, always taking zillion of photos. So whenever you see such an excursion, you can only hear the sound of reel moving. You're always like, *now look at this, look at that, blah, blah, blah*"

"Oh, I know what you mean now," she replied. "But you're no better when you, Americans, are away from home."

"But you're right, Dan," Tokutei interrupted. "And I can tell why it is like that."

"C'mon."

Tokutei sat comfortably, scratched his head.

"Well, our nation has always been fascinated by your achievements, your greatness, and your culture. We watch so many American movies, and always dream to see those places for real. But when an opportunity comes, taking pictures or making a film, are the only chances for us to memorise our being there. It's not that an opportunity like that would come again. Japanese people do not earn money and they cannot afford going on distant holiday every few years. We're very busy people, and we do not have much

free time. Do you understand now?”

“Yup, I think I do,” the boy answered, “But still, I always find it funny,” he added amusingly.

Tokutei slowly shook his head. Dan realised that what he had just said might sound to the others as an insult.

“I hope you’re not offended, Tokutei.”

“I’m fine.”

Jason was sitting quietly listening to the conversation.

“What’s your opinion, O.D.?” Dan asked.

“I totally agree with you, Tok. We also live with the American dream, and if I had my camera with me, I would go sightseeing.”

“What ‘bout the castle, where is it?” Lian asked.

Arthur looked out the window, and squinted his eyes.

“Over there,” he smiled pointing at a towering building on an island on the horizon.

Everyone looked closer.

“Oh my God,” Lian gasped, as she almost lied down on Dan. “I’ve seen this on postcards before. I didn’t know you were renting this, Arthur.”

“Cause’ I’m not renting it. It’s mine,” he smiled again proudly.

“No way!” Dan exclaimed pushing off Lian.

“This is not the only thing I will surprise you with,” the old man added.

“Living in San Francisco in a castle,” Dan daydreamed for a while.

Arthur took a deep breath and sighed.

“Actually, Daniel... well... technically it’s Pacifica, not San Francisco. But it’s San Francisco Bay, after all.”

7.

The limousine left the city. It was going along the Cabrillo Highway. The views immediately changed from bright houses, tall blocks of flats and colourful shops into green hills, tall trees and rocks. The magnificent castle disappeared for a while behind the hills, only to emerge once more as soon as the vehicle got higher. The ocean was spreading on the right side, and the weather was perfect for surfing. The car slowed down and turned left. It circled a large shop and headed for the area with two spacious villas. As soon as it passed it, the limousine slowed down, turned left, and headed towards a steep, three-metre side of a hill. Suddenly, the hill split into two,

and opened like a door, revealing a hidden tunnel. The Hummer accelerated and disappeared inside.

“That’s nice,” Jason said surprisingly.

“Where are we?” Lian asked giving furtive glances over the illuminated walls of the tunnel.

Arthur smiled again.

“This underwater tunnel leads to the Maldito Island; I had it built over ten years ago.”

The car was going inside a long tunnel with two way street, lit by thousands of spotlights. The wall ahead lowered, and the car reached the open air again. The group saw the thick forest surrounding the road. The vehicle continued moving along the road. The views were magnificent. The Pacifica shore was visible about three miles from the island, and the forest looked really amazing. After a while, the Hummer stopped in front of a huge castle. It had a wide, metal gate that lead to the spacious courtyard that was over 100 metres long. The courtyard ended with a five-storey building, from which erected a very tall tower. The south side of the castle had also five levels. The castle itself had about four towers on each side of the walls. The building was very clean, and looked as if it had been just restored.

“Wow, it’s enormous,” Lian commented admiring the large building.

“It looks better than in the postcards,” Tokutei added.

Arthur smiled, but said nothing. Out of a sudden, a strange sound came from the direction of the castle.

“What’s that sound?” Dan asked immediately throwing himself at the window.

“The gate is raising.”

“Now I know what will keep me up all night.”

“As long as you won’t leave the castle for nights, you won’t be bothered.”

As soon as the gate disappeared in the top part of the wall, the car rushed inside. Behind the front wall, was a courtyard very well-kept. There were two choppers parked near the southern wall, and several luxurious cars. The limousine stopped at the western wall.

“OK, we’re here. Take your luggage,” Arthur said pressing a button on his rectangular piece of plastic causing the door to open.

Everyone got out. Tokutei went first to the boot of the car in order to take

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