



## Prologue

**T**he archives. Not exactly the glamorous, high-profile case you'd been coveting – but just the sort of punishment that seems to amuse the Commander.

“All right, Detective,” he says as he shows you in the door. “You’ll have plenty of time to daydream in here. Maybe enough to keep you awake during briefings.”

The room is in complete shambles. Crinkled cardboard boxes are stacked to the low ceiling, papers pouring from their half-open jaws. A lone, dim fluorescent light casts an eerie flickering pall over the room.

The Commander chuckles, and pauses in the doorway as he leaves. “Of course, if you want to daydream, you’d better be good at working in your sleep. I’m still expecting everything back to 2000 to be sorted by the end of the week.”

The door clicks shut, leaving no sound but the bulb’s dull hum.

Well, nothing wrong with a positive attitude, you think to yourself. You whistle as you open the first few boxes. Some of these files are ancient, dated as early as 1900.

Hours pass, or maybe merely seconds – impossible to tell in this time capsule of a room. All you’ve managed to do is convert disorderly columns of boxes into disorderly rows.

That’s when you see it.

The shape of a lone box, buried in the corner of the room, covered in a finger’s width of dust. You shovel the dust onto the floor with your hands, revealing an ornate brown wooden chest with a broken lock. This certainly hasn’t been touched since long before 2000, but you can’t resist opening it.

Inside is a neat stack of pages, each filled with handwritten notes. There are no dates, but the page on top is titled in magnificent cursive:

*The Envoy's Journey to Yorovash*

You begin to read.