Synopsis

The Borough areas of London, near the bridge. George is with Soula, Elektra, Melody, Fleur, Susan and Michael at a pavement cafe. A truck starts driving into pedestrians. George, Soula and Elektra stop it and capture the terrorists.

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Car crash sounds and screams. Too distant for ordinary humans to hear. One table at an outdoor cafe, every ear pricked up. The first was currently known as George Kominos, Greek looking, early thirties, black hair that fell nearly to his shoulders, three day stubble, dressed all in black, including a black broad brimmed leather hat, and mirror sunshades. Three hundred year old master vampire and day walker. Next to him was Soula, currently Soula Kominos, flame red hair caught in a braid that descended past her shoulders, pale skin, blue eyes, clad in green slacks and matching top. Looked about twenty five, except she was George’s number one human servant, possessed of similar powers to George himself, and older than him. On George’s other side was Elektra, currently Elektra Kominos, a blue eyed blonde who looked about twenty. Her long hair fell in waves past her shoulders, held in place with jewelled combs, and she wore medium blue slacks and matching top. She was George’s number two human servant, perhaps fifteen years younger than George. Next to Soula sat Melody Waters, milk pale skin, raven black hair, leaf green eyes. She wore brown slacks and a leaf green top, there was silver wire bound into her locks, dividing her tresses into nine braids of shoulder length. Her ears were pointy, denoting her pure Fae blood, though the braids hid most of this. She appeared to be in her mid twenties, though this was quite deceiving. Next to Elektra sat Fleur Kominos, seemingly seventeen, with shoulder length auburn hair, milk pale skin and sky blue eyes. She seemed mature for her age, but quite human, though that was deceiving. No one at the table was sure what she was really, except that George had found her thirty years ago as a homeless young child who was producing flames from her finger tips, and invited her home. His women had adopted her, and subsequently they’d all met Melody when they sent Fleur to school. Fleur was wearing a white top and dark blue slacks. Next to Fleur was Michael, and next to him was Susan, his partner. Michael was slim with brown hair and eyes, dressed in a faded denim shirt, faded jeans and sneakers. Susan was blonde, hair cut in a bob, with blue eyes, pale skin with heavy makeup, a blue top that was the same design as Fleur’s and the same colour as Elektra’s, designer dark blue jeans and sneakers. All the others were wearing comfortable walking shoes.

“Sounds like trouble.” George remarked. “I’ll take a look.” He was gone, flying through the air with all the speed and stealth a master vampire could manage. Soula and Elektra were after him almost as fast.

“They might need my help.” Melody remarked. “Fleur, mind the table, please.”

Susan looked at Michael, who nodded. “Fleur, we should go as well. After all, we are trained nurses.” Susan said.

“So are George, Soula and Elektra. Don’t be long.” Fleur replied.

George reached the disturbance first. A massive truck had smashed through the concrete bollards and was now driving through the pedestrians, mowing them down. Many would be dead, others critically injured. He felt for the minds of those in the truck. Three, four, five. Number five was dangerous. George clamped down on all of them.

*We have to lift the truck!* Soula’s voice dinned into his mind.

*Ready* Elektra replied.

*Now!* The truck rose three meters into the air, still travelling at around fifty miles per hour.

*It’s a bomb!* George though to the others. *There’s a guy in the back ready to trigger it with a mobile phone. I have them all.*

*I’m on it!* Came Melody’s thoughts. *I’m creating* ... the truck smashed full tilt into an invisible barrier that crumpled the cabin. *... a wall! It should contain any explosion.*

Two heads flew through the truck windscreen. Not dead, but dying, their brains pulped. George felt the steering wheel crush the driver’s chest. *I won’t let you die yet.* George held the man’s chest and heart in his mind, healing them. *You’re going to sing to the authorities.*

Soula and Elektra chased people out from underneath the truck, then settled it on the ground. George turned his attention to man number five, the one holding the mobile phone. He was battered, his arm broken, the phone dropped. *Where is the bomb detonator?*

*There. The other mobile phone. Mohammed can set it off remotely.* Laughter.

George stepped up his control, feeling the man shriek in terror. *I am the predator, I control your mind, and your body.* Some third force was fighting back, but George crushed it, sending it whimpering into the darkness. *Remove the battery.*

The man’s fingers obeyed George’s will, and pried the battery loose. The bomb was still live, but the mobile phones would not detonate it. There was a button somewhere near the phone that could be pressed to detonate the bomb, but George’s clamp of the surviving three meant that none of them could move.

*George, the police and ambulances are arriving.* Soula thought to him. *Get the survivors out, and move back.*

*The driver’s pinned, but I healed him, he’ll live, and talk. There’s two in the back that are injured. I’ll push them out. Did either of you feel that dark force fighting back?*

George levitated the two and had them fall hard on the pavement. *Sleep for fifteen minutes.*

He moved back, spun to look at the swathe of dead and dying the truck had left. *Help me heal them.* He wouldn’t cure them, they would still have injuries, but the living would no longer die. His mind spread out across the crowd, touching all the injured, all the dying. There was a limit to his power, even when all his human servants bolstered him. Seventy, eighty people. Could he do this? *Live, all of you. You will not die because of this.*

The surge of power left him weak. He would have fallen if Melody hadn’t caught him. Soula and Elektra came up arm in arm, staggering as if they were drunk. “The others are weak too. You need to feed, we can get you hidden and do that.” Soula said.

“Your power will come back, and ours will too.” Elektra added. “Let’s get the others and get away from here.”

“They’ll evacuate everyone as soon as they realise the truck is booby trapped.” Melody said as they walked away. “There was some demon interfering with us, but you ladies chased it away.”

“That is the demon that has stalked George the whole time he’s been a vampire.” Soula replied. “We human servants keep it at bay. The more we are, the better job we can do.”

“We keep his soul safe.” Elektra added. “One day he will be free. We promised you that.” She managed a grin.

They returned to the table where Fleur was waiting. “Your coffees have gone cold. You should order more.” Fleur told them.

“Not much point.” Melody relied. “There’s a huge truck bomb, George deactivated it, but they’ll evacuate the entire area in a few minutes. Susan and Michael are on their way.” The women sat.

“That’s not good. Many hurt? How many dead?”

“About fifteen dead, not including the attackers.” George sat heavily, slurped what was left of his coffee. “Maybe eighty injured, but they are no longer critical. We did a healing on all of them.”

“Wow. I didn’t realise you could heal so many at once. No wonder you are tired.”

Soula, Elektra and Melody were wolfing down cake and coffee or tea. “George needs to feed.” Soula said. “We’ll go home as soon as Susan and Michael get here.”

Susan and Michael arrived. Michael sat and sculled his tea, Susan stood and did the same. “The police are evacuating the area, we have to go. Melody, did you do something to heal the victims? I had a young girl bleeding to death, and the bleeding stopped suddenly and she regained consciousness. Something similar happened to Michael. Any of you need wipes? I still have some left.”

“George did the healing.” Melody explained. “We didn’t touch anyone, so we’re clean. Drink up, we have to get George home.”

“Will he be all right? How did he do a healing?”

“I’m a physician.” George replied. “I’ve used my powers to heal people ever since I became a vampire. If I pass out, cover me from the sun. It might destroy me in my weakened state.”

“Will you recover?” Susan asked, talking over a nearby bullhorn.

George slumped as if he were drunk. Elektra wrapped him in a thin dark blanket she took from her handbag, and lifted him into her arms. Soula made sure he was completely covered, then bared her arm, thrusting it into George’s face. “I’ll feed him now. George, can you bite?”

“He’s stopped moving.” Elektra said. “Try a knife.”

By now everyone was standing, and the bullhorn was screaming at them to run away.

“See us not.” Soula said. She pulled a small knife from her handbag and made an incision in the crook of her elbow. Blood trickled onto George’s lips, and he licked hungrily.

“Are we invisible?” Michael asked. The police officer with the bullhorn walked past them, two others darted into the cafe, but everyone ignored them.

“Soula and I are cloaking all of us.” Elektra replied. “Soula, are you all right to walk?”

“Just wait a minute. I need to widen this.” She plied the knife again, and the trickle became a small river. George’s mouth clamped over the wound, sucking greedily.

“Does that hurt?” Susan asked.

“It does, because he can’t dull the pain in this state. But I know what to do. I would prefer if we stand here, but we might need to rescue our cars soon. Let’s walk slowly. In step Elektra.”

“I’ll feed him when we reach the car. Fleur, you may have to drive us. None of us are in a fit state to drive.” The two of them set off in a slow march, in step.

When they reached the car, George was bundled into the back seat, his head on Elektra’s lap, his legs on Soula’s lap. Soula pressed a finger over her wound while Elektra used a similar knife to open her vein. Fleur got in the driver’s seat, while Melody went with Susan and Michael to her car.

Melody was worried about George, but she told herself he was in expert hands. These two women had kept him alive and sane for over three hundred years, and they were confident he would recover under their ministrations to day. She started the engine, and set off home.

By the time they reached home, George was as right as rain, and Soula and Elektra’s wounds had healed completely.

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“They still haven’t caught the bomb maker.” George was watching the evening news two days later. “I think I should go hunting.”

“I’m sure they’ll find him.” Susan remarked.

“George, do you know who he is?” Soula asked.

“One of the guys in the truck knows who he is. I can make him tell me where he lives.”

“He will have moved.” Elektra suggested. “Better to send an anonymous tip off to the police and leave it. You’ll likely attract police attention if you go looking for him.”

“You may be right. We don’t want them poking around here. I’ll leave it two more days.” *What am I saying? I should simply pass the information onto the Black Prince. He can pass it along, or act on it, as he sees fit.* George thought. The Black Prince was the Master of Masters, the Vampire Master of Britain and Ireland, the de facto ruler of all vampires within those countries.

George sat still feeling for the terrorist who knew the bomber. That didn’t take long, and he slipped into the man’s mind like donning a filthy coat. *Name. Address. Image. Contact details.*

“Who wants to come with me to visit the Prince?” George asked. They always tried to have two human servants with him, and generally they rotated through in order. George was expecting Sylvia and Artemis, but he hadn’t seen them.

“Half of them went to the movies.” Melantha was reading a magazine, curled on a sofa in jeans and t-shirt. Her raven tresses fell half way down her back, her skin was pale, he eyes green. She looked in her early twenties. “So it’s me, and Chloe or Zoe. Chloe, are you around?”

“Yes.” Her voice came from the next room. “We get to see the movie tomorrow, don’t forget George.” Chloe walked into the room. She was another twenty something with black hair, darker skin of the typical modern Greek, save her eyes were blue. “Do we need to dress up for him?”

“Both of you are fine as you are. Modern girl look. He makes allowances, and tries to be modern. Dressing up to see him went away forty years ago.”

“I should like to go with you.” Fleur said, “but you don’t want him to see me.”

“He has a rule that only vampires and their human servants are allowed. Fleur, you and Melody will stand out as powerful non human, and not my servant. Your blood smells different, dangerous. It’s the same with Susan and Michael; he’ll know immediately they are werewolves.”

Fleur smiled and shrugged. “We all know they’re werewolves. I used to think all your wives were normal humans, and that I was too, but the people at school were normal humans. I don’t want to upset the Black Prince, I’ll stay home.”

The Black Prince didn’t trust the phone lines for anything important. He preferred information to be passed face to face. George drove, Melantha sat in the front seat while Chloe sat in the back. Both women looked roughly the same age, but Chloe retained something of the air of a young girl, while Melantha, like Soula and Elektra, seemed far more mature. That had puzzled George for a long time, but none of them had any idea about why this was so.

After twenty minutes they arrived at dilapidated and seemingly disused warehouse. There was graffiti on the easily reached places, but the whole building exuded an air of menace. George recognised the use of vampire powers to make it uninviting. To vampires, it was like a neon sign saying ‘vampires here.’

They entered through a rusty iron gate that was artfully contrived to open easily and noiselessly. A graffitied roller shutter opened and the car drove into a cavernous loading dock. There was a gate house with more black suited guards, and the entrance to the underground living area that had been hollowed out beneath the warehouse.

One of them was Reggie, a solid looking bully boy with scars from many fights. Five hundred years earlier he had been an enforcer for a criminal gang. He’d made the mistake of trying to collect from a master vampire, and ever since he had been an enforcer for his new master.

“Evening Georgie boy. Boss says you wanna talk wif him.”

George and the women disembarked from the car. George handed the keys to the black clad man who held out a hand for them. “Evening Ronnie. Don’t go doing wheelies in it. Evening Cerdic,” George nodded to a beefy blond man beside Reggie. “And good evening to you, Reggie. You and Cerdic going to escort us?”

“Yep. Evening ladies. You two can stay wif us and enjoy the company of real hot blooded men for a change.”

Chloe looked taken aback. Melantha smiled “That depends on whether you real men can go all night, channel your master’s power to give us girls an orgasm that lasts all night, and can avoid spilling your seed for the whole night.”

“What’s the point of that? Jesus hairy balls! Spilling our seed is the whole point.”

“Sorry boys, you’ll just have to wait for someone with lower standards.”

“Don’t blaspheme, Reggie!” Cerdic complained. “I could spill my seed ten or twenty times in one night with a woman like you. Well, your loss.” His accent was faintly German, showing his Saxon heritage.

“We are George’s human servants.” Chloe explained. “We would never betray him like that. Surely your master has some female human servants?”

“That ’e does, but it’s ’ands off.” Reggie complained. “This way. No ’arm in asking is there? If you don’t ask, you won’t get.”

Melantha laughed “Of course there is no harm in asking. It’s nice to know real men notice us.”

Reggie and Cerdic conveyed them to a luxurious apartment. Reggie knocked, then he and Cerdic accompanied George and the women inside. The ballroom sized living area had dark wooden wainscotting and bright tapestries done with sixteenth century designs. The floor was polished marble, strewn with expensive, Persian rugs. The furnishings were expensive, mostly Victorian era things of dark wood and leather, with marble here and there. Art deco lamps stood here and there, along with electric, crystal chandeliers hanging from the ceiling, and electric imitation gas lights on the walls.

The Black Prince was a dark haired, gaunt man of average height, with a neat black beard. He wore an expensive suit in an older style. George did not know if he really was the former Prince of Wales, Edward of Woodstock, eldest son of Edward III, who was said to have died of a wasting disease in the 1300s, or just claimed the title. He was, however, Master Vampire for almost all of Britain, with other masters blood oathed to him.

“Come in.” He sounded bored, not a good sign. “George, Lady Melantha, Lady Chloe. Please take a seat. You two may go. McAllister, get our guests a glass of wine.” McAllister was the Black Prince’s human servant, partaking of his master’s powers, but able to go places his master could not, such as churches. McAllister was a red head, seeming about thirty, and dressed in a modern suit.

While McAllister bustled about, the Black Prince remarked “I am not fond of modern day wines. I much prefer the sweeter fortified wines of Spain and Portugal, the wines I remember from when I was human.”

McAllister returned with a tray bearing three large brandy balloons and a bottle of port and a bottle of sherry. George and Melantha chose port, Chloe chose sherry. Popular misconception held that vampires only drank blood. The truth was the older ones could still eat human food, but that did not satisfy the Hunger that craved blood, and life force. Most of them preferred liquid, rather than solid, food.

“You said you had some information about that terrorist attack. I think you might have interfered, looking at what happened to the truck. Truly amazing the way it stopped dead. Not to mention the good luck with the bomb; that could have destroyed the entire block, with thousands of casualties.”

“You are right. Me, Soula and Elektra stopped the truck. One of the guys had a mobile to trigger the bomb, I made him disarm it. Then we healed as many of the victims as we could.”

“Yes, I thought that might be the case. There were many badly injured who are now well on the road to recovery. Such healing takes a lot out of us, you look remarkably recovered.”

“Soula and Elektra fed me on the way home. I would have brought them with me, but they wanted to rest up.”

“And so you brought these two lovely ladies. Melantha, Chloe, how are things with you?”

“We are well.” Melantha answered. “With the new papers you got for us fifteen years ago, we have completed our schooling, and are now studying medicine again.”

“We stir George because he’s only a nurse this time around.” Chloe added.

“Next time, Chloe.” George said. “I wanted something a little less study intensive this time.”

A number of vampires worked in the registry office in varying capacity. They all worked nearly full time creating birth certificates for aging vampires and their human servants, building the official records of school attendance in various parts of the country and so on. With their mind control powers, vampires and their human servants could put on a type of glamour, and appear to be a young teenager for example, in order to addend secondary school and help build the new persona. At that point a death certificate could be created for the old persona. It was something that had been evolving ever since the registry office had been created. The Black Prince had tentacles everywhere that would ensure that immortal vampires and their servants could continue to live within modern society undetected.

“So you ladies have killed off your former personas?”

“Yes, once we graduated, we could revert to our normal looks and start university completely in our new personas.” Chloe replied. “The old personas had wills leaving things to our next of kin, and property passes down the line.”

“You are one of the more successful vampire families I know.” The Black Prince observed. “None of you are related, yet you all behave like family, and you all cooperate with ensuring the survival and good fortune of your family.”

“Well, all of us are over three hundred years old.” Melantha pointed out. “We are the ones who stayed together over that time. We’ve lost a few along the journey, but there are still enough of us to keep George civilised.”

“We also change houses.” Chloe pointed out. “Melantha and I have moved in together, bought a house near George. To humans we appear to be a couple of committed lesbians. We’ll both become doctors, do our internship at the hospital where George, Soula and Elektra work as nurses. Helena, Sapphira and Athena will be due for new personas next.”

“We’ve all lost a few along the journey.” The Black Prince said. “It is good to find lasting love along the way. That should be what the families are about. Love and respect means you will each continue to look out for the other members of your family. Now George, you said you had some information for me.”

“Yes, the name and address of the bomb maker. Faisal Bin Jabir.” George gave the last know address. “He may have move, of course.”

“Thank you George, I appreciate your effort. The bomb maker has moved, but two of my family are following up. They interrogated each of the survivors in hospital earlier tonight. We’ll know where he is in a few hours. I would appreciate if you don’t take out any terrorists unless I ask you to. Once I have milked them of all their information, I will arrange for their deaths in an appropriate manner.”

“Oh. I should have known.” George sounded crestfallen. “I wasn’t planning on taking them out, that’s why I told you.”

“I know.” The Black Prince smiled. “I appreciate it. I expect it from people like yourself. You weren’t the first this time, that is all. I have people in the police, secret service, every government department you care to name, as well as private organisations. In this case, it is important to MI5 and the police to discover the bomb maker, so he will live for a time. I will make sure he cannot commit suicide until MI5 have milked him.”

“Then we should probably be going. We’ve wasted enough of your valuable time.”

“Please, finish your drinks. Stay another fifteen minutes. I am sure we will find things to talk about.”

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