

TIME BOMB STORIES

2: The Birthday Girl

By ChronoEclipse

Gerard Plumtree was one of the wealthiest investment bankers in the country. Not only was his company, The Plumtree Group, incredibly financially successful (though also under no less than 6 federal investigations) but his mother was also Lana Charleston, the heiress to the Charleston family fortune.

So it was understood that the upcoming sweet 16 party for his only daughter, Keira, would be an extravagant affair.

Keira wanted her party to be intimate, exclusive and incredibly cool. She didn't want it to be like her usual birthday parties on some yacht or at some fancy estate where middle-aged actors, corporate hacks and other stuffy old people would show up in the hopes of bending her dad's ear for a few minutes and getting him to open his wallet for whatever lame agenda they are peddling.

She wanted her sweet 16 to consist of her, her father and twelve of her very best friends (Plus of course a full catering staff and her favorite female rap/hip-hop artists to provide music and entertainment). Her father would rent out Sade Syed, the hottest most exclusive nightclub in West Palm Beach, a club that sometimes even denied celebrities from entering some nights if they had been too quiet on social media that week.

Keira was looking over her guest list one more time to send it over to the boarding crew of her dad's private jet. There was her BFF Ava, of course and Trevor, her crush; Rachelle and her boyfriend Cameron; Gigi and her girlfriend Anya; The twins Aidan and Nadia; Bindi her Australian BFF; Astrid her BFF that only spoke Swedish; And her friends from the Miss Teen USA competitions Courtney (Miss Teen Connecticut) and Kourtney (Miss Teen California). And then she saw a name on the list that she hadn't put on there and immediately video called her father.

“Why is Grandma Lana on the guest list for my birthday party!?” The teenager demanded into her phone.

The sweaty balding middle-aged man in the expensive suit on the other end, sighed.

“We have to invite your grandmother honey. It’s your birthday. It’s a big day, she wants to be there to celebrate.” He explained in a calm, measured voice.

“Well what If *I* don’t want her there? It’s *my* sweet 16 so I should have the final say right? This party is supposed to be about the New Hotness not Old Grossness. Literally nobody in the entire building is going to be over the age of 30 except for you and that’s only because you’re paying for everything. I even called the catering company to make sure they only provided the youngest best looking members of their staff.” Keira insisted.

Gerard sighed again.

“Honey, we need to invite your grandmother to these events. She’s not going to be around for much longer-” He began to say.

“I know, I know, she’s old so she’s not going to be around for much longer and we need to spend quality time together and make every moment count yadda yadda....” The teenager cut him off, rolling her eyes and sounding bored at the notion.

Gerard furrowed his brow.

“Make every moment count? Oh god no. She’s senile and miserable to spend time with. But she’s not going to be around for much longer and she still has her own power of attorney. She can write you in or out of her will at a moment's notice and if you don’t invite her to things or make her think that you’re ungrateful then there goes your inheritance princess.” The man explained bluntly.

“But *Daddy!* I don’t want some smelly wrinkled old lady making my party lame! Can’t I just inherit *your* money?” The spoiled girl whined.

Gerard snorted and glanced around nervously.

“... A lot of my funds are tied up right now and if your grandmother doesn’t bequeath her fortune to you it’ll end up going to some charity or land trust or some other nonsense. Trust me, it’s better to just let her come, kiss the ring, suck it up and pretend to be a sweet loving granddaughter for the afternoon and by the evening she’ll want to be flown home to go take a nap. All right?” He asked impatiently.

“Oh my god, this is going to be so embarrassing... fine!” Keira groaned and hung up the phone.

The day of the party got off to a good start. The guest had all been picked up and the bakers—dozen of good looking teens were drinking sparkling wine and partying in the main cabin of the private jet while Keira’s 83-year-old grandmother sat in a seat in the corner looking miserable.

Gerard stood nervously next to his mother’s chair sipping a high ball and watching his daughter and her friends jump around the plane giggling and flirting with one another.

“Are you warm enough mother?” He asked the old woman.

Lana scowled at him and shook her head, pulling her shawl around her bony shoulders.

“No! It’s too cold in here! I told you! It’s always too cold on planes. Why did we have to fly? Why couldn’t you hold the party back at the estate?” She snapped in an old cranky voice.

Gerard wiped some sweat from his lined brow with a handkerchief.

“Keira didn’t want to have it there this year. She only turns 16 once, she wanted it to be special.” He explained with the same vexed patience he had given his daughter on the call a few days ago.

“What?” Lana asked loudly cupping her hand to her ear.

“It’s what Keira wanted.” Gerard replied in a louder tone.

The old woman shook her jowly, white-haired head.

“Your daughter is a spoiled brat.” Lana hissed.

The middle-aged man shrugged and finished his drink.

“Well... there are worse things to be I suppose.” He replied simply and then turned to go fix himself another drink.

The jet landed at the Miami airport and a pair of limos brought the group to the venue. It was a big neon palace with flashing lights and art installations all around it. Inside was even more impressive with ice sculptures; shimmering technicolors walls and a LCD floor that lit up when you walked across it.

VaJayJay the young up-and-coming hip hop artist was already set up on stage along with her backup dancers.

“Welcome! Welcome birthday girl! We’re hoping to make this a very special sweet 16 for ya’ll. And you know what else is sweet – some Sweet T. Hit me with those beats Lil’ Roz!” VaJayJay said into the microphone before breaking into her hot new track ‘Sweet T’.

The teens all cheered and hurried to the center of the room to dance and enjoy their private concert. Gerard entered after them followed by his personal assistant wheeling in his mother. He looked around, approving of how the catering staff had set everything up.

“This music is too loud! What are they saying up there?” Lana rattled pointing to the stage.

“It’s fine mother. I don’t know but it’s what Keira wanted so I got it for her. This is all for your granddaughter’s big day and it’s going to be perfect and make her very happy.” Gerard said with a sigh.

What he was unaware of - what they were all unaware of - was that this birthday party had been on the radar of the anarchist group Typhon for months now and they had infiltrated every member of the party's catering company. They were looking to make an example of Gerard to his other ultra wealthy friends and colleagues. Temporally shielded camera had been set up to record the events of the party before and after the reality-alter bomb did what it was designed to do.

As the party rolled on, Keira happily made out with Trevor in the middle of the dance floor while they grinded together to the music; Rachelle was twerking on Cameron while Ava and Nadia were twerking on Nadia's twin brother Aidan. Gigi and her girlfriend Anya were off in a corner finger banging one another as discreetly as possible; Courtney and Kourtney were daring each other to go flirt with Keira's dad; Bindi was doing a backflip off the stage and Astrid was bopping to the music with Google translate held up to her ear.

After the first set was done VaJayJay took a break and the teenagers all gathered for some cake and refreshments.

Keira sat in a fancy designer chair as her birthday cake, baked by one of the former hosts of Master Chef, was wheeled out. It was a large 3 tiered cake with pink ombre icing and 16 sparkling candles around it with a tiara on the top.

Ava took the tiara, wiped it off thoroughly and placed it ceremonially onto the birthday girl's head as the group all sang 'Happy Birthday' to her.

Lana sat in her wheelchair with her bony arms folded mumbling along to the song and tossing glaring looks to her middle-aged son for indulging his bratty teenage daughter this much.

Gerard stood by clapping proudly as Keira's face lit up in a bright smile at the impressive cake in front of her. Little did they know that at the center of this cake was a Temporal Bomb.

'Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday to you

Happy Birthday dear Keira!
Happy Birthday to you!’

“That’s the signal – blue and red teams evacuate immediately. Move! Move! Move people!” The attendant that had wheeled out the cake whispered into the mic piece on his wrist as he watched from the corner of the room.

“Okay make a wish honey.” Gerard prompted as his assistant took photos.

“But what could I possibly wish for daddy? All of my wishes have already come true today...” Keira said in her sweetest voice, batting her long eyelashes over to her grandmother to win some points.

The old woman just raised a gray eyebrow at the girl skeptically.

“Well just blow out the candles and wish for world peace or something.” Gerard suggested trying to hurry things along.

He looked around briefly to see if the caterer was ready to cut the cake when his daughter was ready to blow out her candles but was surprised to see that there was no staff in sight. He hoped that they didn’t expect *him* or one of his guests to cut the cake – this was going to come out of their gratuity. But it wouldn’t matter in a moment because by now all of the staff were outside of the building and wouldn’t return until the next day to retrieve the footage from their surveillance cameras.

“One... Two... Three!” Ava counted as Keira inhaled deeply and mentally wished for a new Aston Martin in her favorite custom color.

But as Keira exhaled to blow out her candle the Temporal Bomb went off effecting everyone within it’s radius.

The entirety of Club Sade Syed became the Shady Side elder care facility. The colored walls turned a muted beige and brown, the LCD floor became wall to wall carpeting and the modern art transformed into comfortable chairs and nursing stations.

Ava, Trevor, Cameron, Anya and the twins all suddenly aged roughly 4 or 5 decades; all becoming men and women in their mid 50s and 60s. Ava was now a 56-year-old head nurse, her party clothes transforming into scrubs and her iphone becoming a clipboard. Her hair turned salt and pepper and her body expanded and sagged.

Trevor's muscular physique softened and rounded into a beer gut as his clothing turned into an orderly's uniform. Though he was one of the younger of the bunch at the age of 51, he was now rocking just a gray horseshoe of hair and a mustache.

The twins were now both in their early 60s and looking fairly run down, like they had been working at Shady Side together for far too long. Cameron was a year or two older than that, white haired with a haggard face covered in white stubble. He was wearing a nursing technicians uni and feeling around for a pack of smokes.

Anya was the oldest of the nursing staff and the formerly curvy teenager was now a portly steel-haired older woman looking about ready to retire. Both she and Cameron looked comparatively young though compared to their significant others who had suddenly aged into not staff members but rather residents at Shady Side.

Gigi had aged into an 86-year-old woman hunched over and drooling in a wheelchair, shaking her head at Anya who was trying to spoon feed tapioca to the old lady who she had been finger banging in the corner just a few minutes ago.

Meanwhile Cameron was helping Rachelle keep steady as the now 78-year-old hobbled around with the aid of a walker. Bindi was also hobbling with the aid of a walker, the puffy old Australian woman looked too frail to pull off the back flip she had done earlier.

Astrid the Swedish teen model became Astrid the Swedish crazy old cat lady as she shuffled around in a dowdy sweater mumbling incoherently in her native language.

Kourtney and Courtney found themselves in their 90s sitting in chairs across from one another talking about their heyday back during the big war when they were USO girls, neither of the former teen USA contestants could hear very well now so the conversation was mostly two old ladies yelling “what!?” back and forth at one another.

But they all seemed young compared to the birthday girl who upon attempting to blow out her candles suddenly leapt forward in age 100 years and ended up accidentally spitting out her dentures onto her birthday cake. The false teeth landed right on top of the piped lettering that said “Sweet 116th!”

The former teen shriveled and shrank in her chair, an oxygen tank appeared in the back of it as tubes flowed up into her nostrils. Her hair turned white and thinned under her tiara and her bony liver spotted hands trembled uncontrollably.

The few members of the staff that were watching, clapped for her and helped the super-senior blow out the rest of the candles.

VaJayJay who was now Vanessa Jay, a retired blues singer from the 50s that the home had invited to come sing some of her old hits for the residents to honor Ms. Keira turning 116, picked up her microphone and along with her aging back-up dancers began to warble through a classic song.

“Wow Ms. Keira! 116 years! How does it feel?” Gerards former assistant who was now a reporter for a local newspaper asked, holding her phone up to the aged woman's incredibly wrinkled face.

“... It doesn't feel good... I'm very tired...” Keira croaked in a hoarse rattling voice.

“Well I think the main thing on everyones mind is - what's the secret to living so long?” The reporter asked.

Keira paused to think about it. As she sat there her wrinkly ass farted into her diaper and she peed herself a little.

“... I don’t know.... I’m only 16... I think...” She mumbled sounding senile.

The staff laughed.

“Ms. Keira is one of our longest tenured residents here at Shady Side... not surprising since she’s one of the oldest women in the world but when she first came here – I was just a nursing student believe it or not!” The 56-year-old Ava chuckled, gently patting her former BFF on the shoulder and brushing some of her graying hair out of her eyes.

“Yeah Ms. Keira is a true joy and an inspiration. It’s such an honor to celebrate another triple digit birthday of hers!” Trevor said with a smile that emphasized the lines on his aged face.

Keira patted his hand with her gnarled talon.

“This is my boyfriend.” The ancient woman mumbled toothlessly.

The people around all chuckled again. Nobody had any notion of what their lives had been like just moments ago before the bomb changed them irrevocably. The only person who had the vaguest memory of what had happened to them was Gerard... but he wasn’t telling anyone.

The infant boy sobbed as he found himself in a pair of young arms, high up off the ground dressed in just a diaper with no motor skills to speak of.

“Shhh, there there. It’s okay. Mommy just had to watch Great-Great-Grandma Keira blow out her candles and then we can go...” A now teenage Lana whispered as she rocked the baby in her arms.

She turned and walked out of the nursing home as her aged former granddaughter nodded off in her own wheelchair behind her. As Lana walked out onto the street a couple dressed in catering outfits approached her.

“Excuse me young lady... is that your son?” They asked her.

The teenager blushed and nodded. She was still embarrassed about having had a child so young, her family had all disowned her except for her great-great-grandmother but she was too old and senile to help a new teen mom.

“Uh yeah... yes.” She admitted sheepishly.

The baby eyed the caterers and began to wail loudly. But the couple seemed kind so Lana was willing to let her guard down to hear them out. She explained her situation as one of the caterers noted the distinct birthmark on her wrist.

“So Lana, you’re a 16-year-old single mom to a newborn baby with no home or resources... We know of a place that helps young folks like you. If you come with us we’ll get you set up with a roof over your head and people who will help you.” The female member of the couple told her.

“O-okay. That would be so great! I just came here to celebrate my grandma’s birthday – she turned 116 today!” Lana said excitedly.

“Wow I hope it was everything she wanted.” One of the caterers replied, winking at the other one.

THE END.