LAINEY BANKS' SIXTEENTH YEAR

Coming-of-Age Drama Treatment by

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Logline:

After a teenage singing phenom becomes unexpectedly pregnant, she must push through betrayal, grief, and first love while chasing a shot at stardom.

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CENTRAL CHARACTERS

LAINEY BANKS (15): A shy wallflower with a world-class voice she's too modest to claim. She balances school and a job while acting as the primary caregiver for her terminally ill mother until an unexpected pregnancy forces her to fight for her own future.

GRACE WILSON (17): Pretty and popular but possessing a fierce moral compass. As Tyler's sister, she chooses empathy over social preservation, becoming Lainey's primary advocate, romantic interest, and "found family."

TYLER WILSON (16): A confident football star who masks his deep-seated cowardice with popularity. He uses Lainey for sex then retreats when faced with the reality of Lainey's pregnancy.

BETH BANKS (40s): Lainey's mother, who battles terminal lung cancer. Her love for Lainey is expressed through hard truths intended to prepare her for a world where she will soon be alone.

MARGOT (mid 20s): A laid-back rocker and Walgreens coworker who serves as a non-judgmental mentor. She provides the "big-sister" support and grounded, real-world advice Lainey needs.

DEAN BANKS (40s): Lainey's absentee father who returns under the guise of reconciliation. He is a predatory opportunist who ultimately betrays Lainey by stealing her only financial safety net.

JASON (40s): A professional music producer who recognizes Lainey's talent early on. He serves as the bridge to her professional future, tracking her talent from a chance meeting at Walgreens to the maternity ward where he validates her resilience.

SYNOPSIS

Fifteen-year-old Lainey Banks lives a life far more complicated than most teens. She balances high school, a part-time job, and caring for her terminally ill mother after her father's disappearance. Though socially awkward, Lainey possesses an extraordinary singing voice and dreams of a career in music. But when her crush, Tyler Wilson, invites her to a school mixer, Lainey ends up used, abandoned, and unexpectedly pregnant.

As Lainey struggles to face her new reality, she forms an unlikely bond with Tyler's older sister, Grace. Their friendship blossoms into first love, giving Lainey the support she desperately needs. But as her mother's health declines, Lainey's relationship with Grace falls apart, and the pressures of pregnancy mount. After her mother's death and a brief, devastating reunion with her father, she has no one left to lean on. Then, just as an opportunity to pursue her dream finally presents itself, she goes into labor, costing her the chance to audition for a renowned record producer.

Lainey now faces childbirth without the support she once had. But upon learning Lainey is in labor, Grace rushes to her side, helping her through childbirth and marking the beginning of forgiveness and a new kind of family. Now a mother, Lainey gets a second chance to be heard when the record producer she once missed hears her sing. This time, she's ready.

OVER BLACK.

A teenage boy and girl ask each other if they're sure about doing this.

FADE IN:

INT. NEIGHBOR'S BEDROOM - DAY

LAINEY BANKS (15), independent, nerdy, cute, is naked under the covers with her NEIGHBOR (15). They are both virgins and both curious. Instead of the typical teen romance, Lainey's first sexual experience is a clinical transaction. While her neighbor "gets into it," Lainey stares over his shoulder as if solving a math equation -- a poignant look at her emotional detachment from a world that usually ignores her. When they are finished, Lainey gives him a casual hug among a bunch of moving boxes.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

First day of school energy. Lainey enters school alone. She spots a poster for a singing competition with a recording contract prize. She's tempted but hesitates.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MATH CLASS - MORNING

Lainey waits for class to start. She's shy, no friends. The class has to get into groups for an icebreaker, but no one invites Lainey. So GRACE WILSON (17), on the other side of the room, invites her to join her group. Lainey awkwardly overshares that she lost her virginity over the summer.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Lainey admires TYLER WILSON (16), a popular jock. She passes by him, too shy to maintain eye contact.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CHOIR HALL - DAY

In choir club, the wallflower finally blooms. Lainey's voice doesn't just "cut through" others. It commands the room, proving that while she may be a spectator on the football sidelines, she is the star of her own internal symphony.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - SIDEWALK - DAY

As Lainey leaves school, she watches Tyler shine in football practice. She's a spectator in his world.

INT. WALGREENS - DAY

Lainey stocks shelves with MARGOT (20s). Margot cleans Lainey's glasses -- a metaphor for helping her see clearly. They stock condoms, and Margot offers to buy Lainey booze. But Lainey doesn't do that kind of thing. Then, while stocking condoms, Lainey blushes when Margot asks if she's ever used one, making Margot proud. Margot reminds her to be safe. Tyler and friends enter. They've heard about Lainey's sex comment during the icebreaker. Tyler studies her.

EXT. SIDEWALK - EARLY EVENING

Lainey walks to her middle-class home -- she seems to walk everywhere.

INT. BANKS HOME - EARLY EVENING

Lainey puts down her stuff and heads upstairs. JANICE (30s), a home health aide, greets her. There is no presence of a father. Lainey enters her mother's bedroom. BETH BANKS (40s), her bed-ridden mother, is dying of cancer. Beth isn't nice to her, but Lainey plays the good daughter and helps get her mother settled for the evening. As Lainey pays their bills on her laptop, her mother asks her to sing something for her. Lainey sings an '80s rock ballad. She sounds amazing.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Lainey revisits the auditions poster and starts to apply when Tyler interrupts her and asks her to his Sophomore Mixer. She's shocked he's asking her, but she says yes.

INT. BANKS HOME - BETH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lainey nervously tells Beth about her date. Beth is cynical, warning Lainey that boys only want one thing. She warns her not to get "knocked up."

INT. WALGREENS - DAY

Lainey asks Margot for advice about her date. Margot gives Lainey the talk, telling her to bring condoms to the Mixer.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - NIGHT

Clearly her first time at a football game, Lainey watches Tyler score a touchdown. She’s falling for the fantasy.

INT. WALGREENS - DAY

Lainey steals a box of condoms from the overstock bin.

INT. BANKS HOME - EVENING

Lainey twirls in a cheap dress for Beth. Tyler arrives in a suit with flowers. He takes a selfie with her -- the only digital evidence of their romance.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - GYM - NIGHT

Tyler introduces Lainey to his friends at the Mixer. He pressures Lainey to join him in taking a swig from a flask. They dance to a slow song and kiss. Uncomfortable with so many people around, Lainey leads Tyler to the hallway.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - COACHES’ OFFICE - NIGHT

Lainey and Tyler sneak in for privacy. As they sit on the sofa, Tyler softens to build intimacy. Lainey opens up about her sick mother. After several attempts from Tyler, Lainey pulls out a condom. But Tyler manipulates her, saying a condom makes it less intimate. She gives in. It’s over in twenty seconds, and Tyler immediately checks his phone to rejoin his friends.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MATH CLASS - DAY

Tyler’s friends stare at Lainey and whisper. Grace doesn’t know who they are mocking, but she tells them to grow up.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Tyler ignores Lainey. As if that’s not bad enough, his friend then stops and asks Lainey out. She realizes what’s going on.

INT. WALGREENS - DAY

Lainey and Margot stock shelves. Lainey sings while she works. A businessman named JASON (40s) comes in with his wife, ANNA (30s), to look at pregnancy tests.

When Jason hears Lainey singing, he is floored and encourages her to enter the singing competition at school.

INT. BANKS HOME - BETH'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Beth tries to prepare Lainey for her death, but Lainey wants nothing to do with it. As Beth discusses finances with her, Lainey grabs one of her basins and pukes in it.

INT. WALGREENS - DAY

Lainey steals a pregnancy test.

INT. LAINEY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lainey pees on a stick while following instructions. She watches the stick as a second line appears.

INT. WILSON HOME - DAY

Lainey goes to Tyler's upper-class house and is surprised to find Grace there -- she's Tyler's sister. In the den, Tyler is cruel, suggesting the baby isn't his and telling her to "get rid of it." Grace eavesdrops, horrified. She smacks Tyler up and down after Lainey leaves. He selfishly asks Grace not to tell their parents.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Businessman Jason meets with the PRINCIPAL MARTINEZ. Turns out, Jason is a music producer who is providing the recording contract prize for the singing competition. They both head to the choir hall to check out the venue for the competition.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CHOIR HALL - DAY

Lainey sings a classic ballad with the choir club. Grace hears from the hallway and steps in to listen from the back. When Jason arrives, he recognizes the student belting out a solo is the same girl from Walgreens. Lainey's solo moves Grace to tears and entrances Jason.

INT. OB-GYN'S OFFICE - DAY

Lainey sits alone among happy couples. CAROLINE (30s), a medical assistant, brings her out back for her appointment.

DR. CHARI (40s), her OB-GYN, confirms she is pregnant and performs an ultrasound. She discusses Lainey's options, including an abortion.

EXT. BANKS HOME - DAY

Grace is sitting on Lainey's front step when she gets home. They talk, start to bond. They talk about Lainey's mother, Grace tells her she should tell her that she's going to be a grandmother. Lainey isn't so sure. She also asks Grace not to tell her and Tyler's parents. Grace tells Lainey to call her anytime she needs help -- or just to talk.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CHOIR HALL - DAY

Lainey attends blind auditions for the singing competition. Jason is one of the judges. His assistant, ERIKA (30s), organizes the contestants and explains that this is the first of three auditions, for those who make it that far. Lainey is nervous but delivers a rocking rendition of "Long Train Runnin'." Despite not seeing Lainey, Jason recognizes the voice and gives her a perfect 10.

INT. BANKS HOME - BETH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lainey learns she made it to the second round. Beth is proud.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Lainey walks by all her familiar landmarks. She keeps walking until she arrives at an abortion clinic.

INT. ABORTION CLINIC - DAY

Lainey sits in stirrups. DR. NEWFORD talks to her about the procedure. Lainey fights back tears, confirms she can have babies in the future. She's nervous. Dr. Newford tells her they can take all the time she needs.

EXT. BANKS HOME - DAY

Lainey gathers herself, looks upstairs reluctantly. She makes her way to her mother's room.

BETH'S BEDROOM

Beth isn't there. Lainey gets a call from Janice.

INT. HOSPITAL - ONCOLOGY PATIENT ROOM - EVENING

Beth is hospitalized after coughing up blood. They put her on morphine to keep her comfortable. Lainey tells her sleeping mother, “You're gonna be a grandma.”

INT. BANKS HOME - NIGHT

Lainey doesn’t know what to do with herself. She feels very alone and texts Grace.

LATER

Grace arrives with pizza. The two watch Christmas shows, decorate the Christmas tree, and sing and dance to “Christmas (Baby Please Come Home).” There is a brewing chemistry. Lainey tells Grace she’s keeping the baby.

INT. HOSPITAL - ONCOLOGY PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Lainey is visiting her sleeping mother when her phone chimes to remind her about her second audition in two hours. But her mother is also being moved to a full-time hospice center at the same time. Lainey decides to stay with her mother instead of go to the audition.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CHOIR HALL - DAY

Jason waits to hear #26 (Lainey’s blind audition number), but she never shows. He’s disappointed.

INT. WALGREENS - DAY

Margot spies Lainey taking a moment from straightening shelves to read from a couple children’s books.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Four months pregnant, Lainey is now showing. A bully, AMBER, calls Lainey a “fat whore.” Grace defends Lainey and fights Amber.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL’S OFFICE - DAY

Principal Martinez talks with Amber, Grace, and Lainey. He gives Amber and Grace five detentions and releases them.

But he keeps Lainey and tells her maybe she should go to a special school for pregnant teens. She takes exception to this suggestion.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Lainey runs into Tyler as she exits the principal's office. They see each other but don't speak.

INT. WALGREENS - DAY

Jason tries to find Lainey but learns she has stopped working there.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - OFFICE - DAY

Jason tells Erika he wants to hear #26 again, even though she missed the audition.

INT. HOSPICE - NIGHT

Sitting by her sleeping mother, Lainey is confused by an email on her phone telling her she made the final audition.

INT. BANKS HOME - DAY

Margot shows up, hurt that Lainey never told her she was leaving Walgreens. She also brings her a gift box filled with baby books. They talk, and Margot assures Lainey that it's okay to attend the final audition despite not "earning" it -- she deserves to be there.

INT. TARGET DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Lainey and Grace shop for clothes. Lainey isn't sure if she can afford it. Grace says she will pay since her family should be helping. Lainey tells Grace she took an absence from school. Before they finish shopping, they grab a crib Lainey was eyeing.

INT. BANKS HOME - LAINEY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Grace helps Lainey sort through the new clothes. Grace shows Lainey the belly cream she grabbed at the store. She rubs it onto Lainey's belly, which then turns passionate.

INT. WILSON HOME - DINING ROOM - EVENING

During dinner, BARBARA (40s), Grace and Tyler's mother, asks about the $800 charge. Grace outs Tyler as Lainey's baby-father, and they fight. Barbara orders Tyler to go call his father to tell him. She then asks Grace to invite Lainey over so they can meet.

INT. BANKS HOME - DAY

Grace tells Lainey about the conversation with Barbara. Lainey gets upset, saying she feels betrayed and humiliated, and breaks up with her. Grace leaves in tears.

MONTAGE - LAINEY GOES IT ALONE

Several scenes show Lainey leaving school, missing her choir club, and sitting with her comatose mother at hospice. Reminders cause feelings for Grace to resurface. But before she can call Grace, she gets a phone call with sad news.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Lainey watches them lower the casket into the ground. Grace and Barbara try to express condolences, but Grace is distracted by a guy. She excuses herself and goes to him. Lainey confirms that the man is her father, DEAN (40s). She's skeptical but agrees to have dinner with him.

INT. BANKS HOME - DAY

Dean brings takeout and ice cream. He apologizes for everything and tries to explain. Lainey is still skeptical, but she leaves the door open for him to re-enter her life.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Dean plays the part of the caring grandfather-to-be. Margot runs into Lainey at the store and warns her to be careful. But Lainey has become welcoming of Dean.

INT. BANKS HOME - DAY

Dean builds the crib for Lainey. When Lainey jumps in the shower, Dean cleans up the trash and then reminisces as he walks through different rooms in the house.

INT. OB-GYN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dean accompanies Lainey, and she allows him to go into the procedure room with her to "come meet your grandchild."

EXT. DEAN'S CAR - DAY

As Dean drops off Lainey, she invites him to move into the guest room. He wants to think it over.

INT. BANKS HOME - MORNING

Nearly nine months pregnant, Lainey rehearses a song while waiting for Dean to pick her up to drive her to the final audition -- a ride that never comes. The hammer drops when Lainey logs into her bank account to find a devastating balance of forty-two cents. Her father hasn't only abandoned her. He has also bankrupted her by taking the life's savings her mother has left her. As the weight of her destitution crushes her, the stress triggers a physical rebellion -- her first real contractions begin, turning her path to the audition into a desperate, agonizing crawl for survival.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - COMPUTER CLASSROOM - MORNING

During all this, Grace turns over her cell phone to take her SATs. So Lainey can't even reach the person who cares for her most.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CHOIR HALL - MORNING

At the auditions, a last-minute complication has Erika filling in for Jason as a judge. Despite being late, Lainey makes it and takes the stage not as a contestant, but as a warrior. Pale and slick with sweat, she belts out the first lines of her song only to be doubled over by a violent contraction. To the shock of the judges, she refuses to quit, demanding to start the music over. It is a visceral, heroic battle between her will to succeed and a body that is finally giving way to new life. The agony of the contractions finally overwhelms her world-class voice, forcing an abrupt and heartbreaking exit from the stage she was meant to own.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - MORNING

Erika searches for Lainey. She finds her in the hallway, crying and sitting in her water.

INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

PARAMEDICS wheel Lainey in.

INT. BARBARA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

After finishing the SATs, Grace finally listens to Lainey's message. She makes Barbara rush to the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - LAINEY'S BIRTHING SUITE - AFTERNOON

A NURSE settles Lainey into her room. Dr. Chari and Caroline arrive to deliver the baby. But Lainey is scared, alone.

INT. HOSPITAL - LABOR & DELIVERY - AFTERNOON

Grace interrupts everyone at the nurses' desk. Specifically, she interrupts Jason (the record producer) and his wife Anna, who is also in labor. Grace (who does not know Jason) asks for Lainey's room but is told only family is allowed in. Grace shocks Barbara when she tells the nurse she is Lainey's "partner." When the nurse still doesn't act, Grace runs through the floor looking for Lainey.

INT. HOSPITAL - LAINEY'S BIRTHING SUITE - AFTERNOON

Grace rushes in -- she goes to Lainey and the two immediately reconcile. Grace sits by Lainey as her birthing partner.

INT. HOSPITAL - JASON & ANNA'S BIRTHING SUITE - AFTERNOON

Meanwhile, Jason and Anna are also having their baby.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - EVENING

Barbara sits waiting. Tyler enters, telling Barbara his dad told him he should come. He sits with Barbara, who explains to him that he will have to step up as a man and be whatever Lainey wants him to be.

INT. HOSPITAL - LAINEY'S BIRTHING SUITE - EVENING

Lainey finally has her baby. She asks Grace to bring in Barbara and introduces her to her granddaughter, ELIZABETH, named after Lainey's mother.

INT. HOSPITAL - LAINEY'S BIRTHING SUITE - DAY

Margot visits Lainey, has the right words to assure Lainey that everything will work out for her just fine.

INT. HOSPITAL - LAINEY'S BIRTHING SUITE - NIGHT

In the quiet of the maternity ward, Jason hears a familiar voice. Lainey sings a lullaby to her new daughter, a sound that stops Jason in his tracks. Jason finally finds the girl who “kept going.” He isn't just a chance visitor. He is the record producer whose life-changing audition Lainey missed, and the man who first recognized her voice over a shelf of pregnancy tests at Walgreens. He validates her resilience as much as her talent, proving that while she lost the audition, she earned the career.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Lainey is in the recording studio, working with Jason. As Lainey sings --

MONTAGE - LAINEY BEGINS LIFE AS A MOM

Lainey is a great mother, with Grace by her side to help. She also attends summer school to get caught up. Barbara and Tyler are in the background helping. And Margot remains ever-present as a “big sister.”

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY (END OF MONTAGE)

Lainey finishes singing. Stares through the window, watching Grace hold Elizabeth. She smiles as she soaks in her inspiration. She’s found her stardom and her family.

FADE OUT.