

LIFE'S CURVE
PILOT

Written by:

Carl D. Lord
and
Chera DeHoff-Federle

Carl D. Lord
14403 Signature Point Dr
Louisville, KY 40299
502-777-1453
mail@carllord.com

Chera DeHoff-Federle
530 Marino Ln
Castleberry, AL 36432
251-369-2256
cheradehoff417@gmail.com

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. FINNEGAN'S PUB, LIMERICK CITY, IRELAND - DAY

A fire crackles in the hearth. Indistinct chatter and boisterous laughter from SEVERAL PATRONS fills the cozy atmosphere.

MAURA DOUGALL, (32), extremely pale and weak, sits across from ALICIA MOSS, (35), business glamorous, blonde - their heads less than an inch from grazing the dark wood rafters.

Maura retrieves a photo from her purse, and with a shaky hand, extends it across the table to Alicia.

MAURA

Here's a picture of us, thirteen years ago.

Before Alicia can take hold of the photo, it falls from Maura's hand. Alicia snatches it up.

MAURA (CONT'D)

Sorry, I'm not having such a good day.

Alicia studies the photo of a healthier, more vibrant Maura with a very handsome young man.

ALICIA

You were happy.

MAURA

Yes, we were, very happy. Then.

ALICIA

What happened?

MAURA

This...

Maura clasps her trembling hands together.

MAURA (CONT'D)

I didn't want to burden him with this...disease.

ALICIA

Why burden him now?

(off Maura's look)

Sorry, I don't mean to sound cruel. I have to make sure you are doing this for the right reason.

MAURA

I understand. I...I just loved him so much...and...and there are things he needs to know, things that only I can explain, before, I...

Tears build in her eyes. Alicia takes her hand.

ALICIA

Don't worry. I know exactly where to find him.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. THE BROWN HOTEL, CRYSTAL BALLROOM, LOUISVILLE, KY - NIGHT

Crystal chandeliers adorn the Georgian Revival space that plays host to a black-tie affair. A SWING BAND plays from the North end - an elegant silk "Give for Good" charity banner hangs above them. COUPLES - Young and old dance about the center of the hall.

ETHAN DAVID, (32), runs his fingers under his shirt collar as he steps away from an ELDERLY COUPLE with a smile.

As he makes his way to the bar, RENNA ALBERTSON, (28), voluptuous in all the right places, steps into his path.

RENNA

Ethan David. Fancy you here. Out for a good cause?

ETHAN

Renna. How's the parents?

RENNA

Funny. How's the knee?

They share a laugh. Renna is devilish. Ethan is bitter.

ETHAN

It's better.

RENNA

Well, if it is, I'm ready for round two whenever you are. And this time, I will make sure my Mother doesn't barge in.

(Beat)

It sure did put a damper on our night.

ETHAN

Things do happen for a reason.

Ethan spies PETE CARRILLO, (35), obviously under-dressed, five-o'clock shadow, at the bar. Pete holds up a bottle of beer. The BARTENDER fixes drinks.

Ethan gives him a nod.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
I have your number...when I'm ready.

Ethan tries to break away, but she grabs his arm.

RENNA
Come on, give me a whirl.

AT THE BAR
Pete downs the beer. The bartender grabs up the empty.

PETE
Two more.

BARTENDER
We do have a one at a time limit.

PETE
One for me, one for my friend.

Pete points to the dance floor.

HIS POV: RENNA DRAGS ETHAN INTO THE SEA OF COUPLES DANCING cheek to cheek. Ethan looks to Pete.

ETHAN
(mouths)
Help me!

Pete shrugs, gives a laugh.

Alicia Moss settles against the bar next to Pete. Gives him a smile.

PETE
And one more for the pretty lady.

ALICIA
Just a tonic, thank you.

She looks Pete over. He straightens his jacket.

ALICIA (CONT'D)
You're Pete Carrillo.

PETE

And you're definitely my sunshine on a cloudy day.

ALICIA

You didn't just say that.

PETE

I did, cause darlin' when you walked up. All the clouds went away.

ALICIA

Please tell me that never works.

PETE

On occasion.

ALICIA

Poor girls.

PETE

Poor girls? Poor me. Just so happens that I'm just another notch on their bedpost. Sad, I know, but true.

The bartender places two beers and a glass of tonic in front of them. He rolls his eyes at Pete.

PETE (CONT'D)

So, so true.

Pete stuffs a ten dollar bill into the tip jar, removes a five - gives the bartender a smirk.

PETE (CONT'D)

So, what brings you out to this shin dig?

ALICIA

Killing two birds with one stone, you could say. I do support this charity event.

(beat)

I'm looking for someone.

PETE

Well, look no further.

Alicia takes her drink and starts to move.

PETE (CONT'D)

Oh, come on. Give a guy a break.

She turns back to him.

ALICIA

Okay, fine. But only because I know you can help me.

PETE

Lady, if I can't then --

ALICIA

Careful. I may be wearing heels, but I can beat the ball to first.

PETE

Now you're talking my language. Who you looking for?

ALICIA

Ethan David.

PETE

Seriously?

(points the Ethan)

What's he got that I don't?

ALICIA

A three twenty-five batting average, two gold gloves, three hundred and seven home runs, and a four-time MVP.

Pete drinks.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

And a mutual friend. Maura Dougall.

He chokes.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

I take it you know her?

PETE

Know her? I was set to be his best man at their wedding. A shame what she did to him. He's never been the same.

ALICIA

Bitter, is he?

PETE

Bitter! Ha! More like underdeveloped. You know. In the romance department.

(off her look)

Okay, so underdeveloped is a bit harsh. How's deteriorated, dormant?

(MORE)

PETE (CONT'D)
(another look)
Come on, she broke him good. Broke
him bad.

ALICIA
Interesting.

Ethan pulls on his bow tie as he makes his way through the crowd. He approaches Pete and Alicia.

ETHAN
I have to get out of here, and out
of this monkey suit.

Pete hands him a beer.

ALICIA
Hi, Ethan David...Alicia Moss. You
have a moment?

Alicia digs into her purse.

ETHAN
I don't do autographs.

She produces an envelope.

ALICIA
Cute. I am a baseball fan, Mr. David,
but far from being one of your
groupies.

Alicia indicates the group of 40-SOMETHINGS ogling over him from across the room.

Pete leans in, whispers.

PETE
She knows Maura.
(off Ethan's look)
Your little love loss in --

ETHAN
I know who Maura is. Miss Moss, you
have my attention.

ALICIA
Good. She wanted me to give you this.

Alicia hands him the envelope.

Perplexed, Ethan stares at the envelope.

ALICIA (CONT'D)
My card's inside if you have any
questions.

ETHAN
That's it?

ALICIA
For now.

Alicia pushes the envelope into Ethan's chest. He takes it as she lets go. With a smile, Alicia takes a sip of her tonic, places the glass on the bar and walks away.

Pete watches her hips sway back and forth, gives a whistle.

Renna approaches. Ethan places his half-empty beer on the bar.

ETHAN
You owe me one, Pete.

RENNA
There you are.

Pete cuts her off.

PETE
Miss Albertson.

RENNA
Not now, Pete.

PETE
Come on. Let me buy you a drink.

ETHAN
Thanks, buddy.

Ethan makes a break for the Mezzanine.

INT. ETHAN DAVID'S HOME - NIGHT

1920's Craftsman, well maintained with all its original period charms.

BELINDA MICHAELS, (16), mousy with glasses and an armload of books meets Ethan at the door.

BELINDA
Five and one quarter hours, that's
forty dollars and sixty-nine cents.

Belinda holds out her hand as Ethan produces a fifty dollar bill.

ETHAN

Keep the change.

BELINDA

We're under our average, you know? I may need to raise your rate. Four hours at Hennessy's brings eighty, easily.

ETHAN

Sorry, I only have one kid. How was he?

BELINDA

Perfect as always. I saw his report card. Straight A's. Very nice. We should be very proud.

ETHAN

I know I am.

BELINDA

Good night, Mr. David.

ETHAN

Good night, Belinda.

INT. ETHAN DAVID'S HOME, CHRISTOPHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CHRISTOPHER DAVID, (8), Ethan's red-headed mini-me sleeps soundly in his bed. Ethan pulls the covers up over his little shoulders, kisses his forehead.

INT. ETHAN DAVID'S HOME, OFFICE - NIGHT

Ethan leans back in a leather chair seated at the large executive desk. He holds the envelope in his hands. He starts to open it, hesitates.

ETHAN

Maura Dougall. After all these years.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CONROY CASTLE - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Harp and lute play over an establishing shot of the castle entry, standing tall in all its medieval glory.

INT. CONROY CASTLE, CHAMBER HALL - CONTINUOUS

Ethan, (20), sits at one of five wooden tables filled with TOURISTS, all look toward the stage.

A BUTLER enters center stage.

BUTLER

(dramatic)

Welcome to Conroy Castle. You are the chosen guests of my Lord, The Earl of Thomond. Tonight you will be expected to enjoy your drink, delectable food, and specially chosen entertainment. Should you have any complaints, do not beckon me, ask for the cook. He is the largest man in Ireland.

The Butler exits theatrically. Gets some laughs. Music commences.

Maura, (20), approaches in costume; a period dress and flowing black tresses. Ethan is instantly in awe of her.

MAURA

Sir, may I tempt you to indulge in either chicken or ribs?

Ethan just stares, speechless.

MAURA (CONT'D)

Chicken or ribs? Sir?

ETHAN

Umm.

MAURA

Why don't I give you a bit to think about it then. I'll be back around.

Maura moves on to the next tourist.

MAURA (CONT'D)

May I tempt you...

She gives Ethan a glance and smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LIMERICK CITY, IRELAND - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Ethan pedals a bicycle across Thomond Bridge, Maura rides on the handlebars. She laughs with great delight.

They turn right. Ethan pedals hard, then coasts around corner, stops in a grassy area along side the River Shannon.

Maura hops off the handlebars, turns to him, her eyes gleaming. On impulse, she kisses him.

ETHAN

I thought you weren't too fond of American men.

MAURA

You are very good at changing a girl's mind.

Maura kisses him again.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MAURA'S FLAT APARTMENT - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

Maura and Ethan lay side by side in bed. Maura rolls toward him, runs her fingers along his chest.

MAURA

I want to spend every hour of every day with you, Ethan David...for the rest of my life.

ETHAN

That could be a very long time.

MAURA

I hope it is.

Maura snuggles into him. He smiles, kisses the top of her head.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ETHAN DAVID'S HOME, OFFICE - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Ethan opens the envelope, pulls out a letter and reads to himself.

MAURA (V.O.)

I am sure this is quite a shock for you, especially after all the time that has passed between us. I realize that the way I treated you was very selfish of me and very unfair to you. I could never give you a perfect explanation and expect you to understand, but I would like to try. Even if it means you will never forgive me. I won't blame you if you don't. Please know that not a single day goes by without regret. I have asked my friend Alicia Moss to locate you in hopes that you would agree to meet with me here in Ireland.

(MORE)

MAURA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 It is important, Ethan. She will be able to give you some details and arrange for your travel. I can only hope and pray that you will come. With love, Maura.

Ethan crumples the paper in his hand.

CUT TO:

INT. MAURA'S FLAT APARTMENT - MORNING

High ceilings cascade above the kitchen and living area.

Sunlight warms the space through the large floor to ceiling windows.

GLEENA DOUGALL, (36), pierced belly-button, tattoos, rubs lotion on Maura's legs.

GLEENA
 You're drier than a nun's --

MAURA
 (breathy)
 Don't say it.

GLEENA
 What?

MAURA
 You're horrid. Besides, it's the medication.

GLEENA
 I don't know why you still take it if it's of no benefit to you anymore.

MAURA
 Doctor's orders. Besides, I have to hold onto every minute possible.

GLEENA
 Have you heard anything? Has she found him?

MAURA
 Yes.

GLEENA
 Is he coming then?

MAURA
 Would you?

GLENNA

In a heartbeat. He loved you, Maura.
He loved you more than anything and
you --

MAURA

I know.

GLENNA

If I were you, I would race across
the sea and land myself right into
his arms.

MAURA

Don't think I haven't given it a
thought or two. But I am not doing
this for love. It's too late for
that. I am doing it for peace of
mind.

GLENNA

I'm just saying, if he doesn't pop
in, going to him could be your plan
B.

MAURA

If he doesn't, then I know that I
made the right decision years ago.

GLENNA

And you're okay with that?

MAURA

Yes.

GLENNA

No you're not, I can see it in your
eyes.

MAURA

Glenna...I am okay with it. Plan B?
What do you know of it?

Glenna shrugs with a smile.

MAURA (CONT'D)

Dear, Sister. You are my plan B.

INT. ALICIA MOSS'S OFFICE - DAY

The modest little brick-walled haven looks out onto the Ohio
River.

Ethan enters the room and tosses the crumpled letter across
her desk, she catches it without a glitch.

ETHAN

Tell her no.

ALICIA

You don't have any questions?

ETHAN

All my questions were answered years ago.

ALICIA

What if they weren't? Do you know why she called things off.

ETHAN

Yeah. She had better things to do.

ALICIA

Wow. Pete was right. She did break you bad.

ETHAN

And I have been fine ever since.

ALICIA

But she hasn't.

(off his look)

I've seen your kind of reaction a thousand times and I know you don't want to hear the excuses, but the truth is, she still loves you.

ETHAN

What are you some kind of love mediator?

ALICIA

I'm a *Final Request Broker*. People hire me to help them fulfill their --

ETHAN

Last wishes...tell her no!

ALICIA

Maura has ALS. She didn't want to burden you.

ETHAN

Burden me? Well...

Ethan takes a deep breath.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

There is a cure, right?

ALICIA
(shakes her head)
There are drugs that help subside
the progression, but they've stopped
working for her. The disease has
quickenened.

Alicia pulls a plane ticket out of a file.

ALICIA (CONT'D)
You can be there tomorrow.

ETHAN
I can't just leave.

ALICIA
What else does a million dollar
injured baseball player have to do?

ETHAN
I have a son.

ALICIA
A son? Apparently you aren't as
deteriorated as Carrillo suggested.
Go, stay a couple days. I am sure
your son's mother can --

ETHAN
Christopher's mother is out of the
equation.

ALICIA
Ooh, so you are broken.

ETHAN
For someone who devotes their time
to helping people, you sure do make
light of their situations.

ALICIA
I'm not making light of Maura's
demise. I am making light of yours.
(beat)
What have you got? A lifetime with
a bum elbow? Maura only has days
with a disease she's been battling
for years, and her only desire is to
see you one last time.

Ethan paces.

Alicia presses a button on her phone.

ALICIA (CONT'D)
 Sonya...book Mr. David and his son,
 Christopher on a flight to Limerick
 City.

Ethan starts to speak. She holds up a finger.

ALICIA (CONT'D)
 Coach class will be fine.

INT. COMMERCIAL AIRLINE JET - DAY

In flight. Ethan and Christopher sit side by side in the snug narrow cabin. Christopher watches out the window.

CHRISTOPHER
 Is that the ocean?

ETHAN
 Yep. Get used to it. For the next
 six hours you'll see nothing but.

CHRISTOPHER
 Six hours? I didn't know Ireland
 was so far away. Have you ever been
 there before?

ETHAN
 Many years ago.

CHRISTOPHER
 I'm glad I don't have to go this far
 to see my friends. Is Mary pretty?

ETHAN
 Maura. She used to be very pretty.

CHRISTOPHER
 She's not now?

ETHAN
 (chuckles)
 I don't know. I haven't seen her in
 a long time, remember?

CHRISTOPHER
 I bet she's still pretty.

CUT TO:

INT. FLOWER SHOP, LIMERICK CITY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Rain pours down outside.

Ethan watches Maura as she smells a beautiful pure white rose.

She moves on and touches the delicate petals of a purple iris. She's sad and distant.

ETHAN
I like those.

MAURA
They are my favorite.

ETHAN
That's why I like them. Are they
what you want?

Maura doesn't respond.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Maura?

She looks up at him.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
The irises, are they what you want?
For the wedding?

MAURA
There's not going to be a wedding.

Ethan is stunned. Maura moves on.

ETHAN
Oh, ha ha ha, very funny.

She turns to him.

MAURA
I'm not joking, Ethan. I can't marry
you.

ETHAN
Maura, stop kidding around...this
isn't funny.

MAURA
I know it's not funny, and I'm sorry.
I've been doing a lot of thinking,
and...

She looks into his hurt eyes.

MAURA (CONT'D)
...please don't make me explain. Not
here.

Maura makes her way to the door. She steps out into the rain.

Ethan follows.

EXT. FLOWER SHOP, LIMERICK CITY - CONTINUOUS

Ethan grabs her arm, spins her around. He's hurt, angry.

ETHAN

You can't just tell me that you can't marry me and not give an explanation.

MAURA

There's so many reasons.

ETHAN

Do you know how much I have given up to be here with you? There's nothing, Maura, nothing I wouldn't do to be here with you - for the rest of my life.

MAURA

I do know, I do, and that's a big part of it, Ethan. You shouldn't have to sacrifice your dreams for me.

Ethan and Maura are getting soaked.

ETHAN

Maura.

MAURA

Go home, Ethan. Be the great big baseball star you deserve to be.

ETHAN

We have a plan, a two-year plan. Baseball will come in time.

MAURA

What if it doesn't?

Maura looks away.

ETHAN

Maura ...do you love me?

She pulls away from his grip and races across the street and around the corner. He doesn't follow.

ON MAURA: She stops, leans against the wall, cries.

MAURA

I do love you, Ethan David. That's why I can't marry you.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. IRELAND COUNTRYSIDE - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

A compact car maneuvers through the rolling green fields, past century old houses and castle ruins.

INT. COMPACT CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ethan drives. Christopher sits in the back seat.

SIGN READS: CAHERCONLISH

CHRISTOPHER

Dad, that sign says Copper Cornish.

Ethan laughs.

ETHAN

It says Caher-con-lish. Which means we are getting closer.

CHRISTOPHER

Are you excited?

ETHAN

More scared than anything.

CHRISTOPHER

Why?

ETHAN

It's a long story.

CHRISTOPHER

Everything is always a long story.

EXT. DOUGALL FARM ENTRANCE - DAY

Ethan's rental car turns down a long winding drive bordered with thick hedges. Sheep graze in the green carpet-like fields. A whitewashed house looms in the distance.

EXT. DOUGALL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Chickens scatter as the car approaches and parks.

Ethan gets out of the car as Maura limps out of the door.

They embrace. Christopher by their side.

MAURA

(breathy)

It's wonderful to see you. You look amazing.

ETHAN

You look...thin, but still very beautiful.

MAURA

You're just saying that.

She looks down on Christopher.

MAURA (CONT'D)

And who is this?

CHRISTOPHER

I'm Christopher.

ETHAN

My Son. I thought Alicia told you.

She places her hand on Christopher face.

MAURA

He looks exactly like you.

ETHAN

Christopher, this is Maura.

CHRISTOPHER

Nice to meet you.

Maura nods and smiles.

MAURA

Come inside. Mum has biscuits on the fire and a pot of tea going.

CHRISTOPHER

Biscuits on the fire? Won't they get burnt?

ETHAN

(laughs)

No, no. They're in the oven.

INT. DOUGALL HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MRS. MARIE DOUGALL, (60's), pulls biscuits out of the oven.

MAURA

Mother?

She turns to Ethan and lights up.

MRS. DOUGALL

Ethan!

She places the baking tin on the counter and gives Ethan a big hug. She spies Christopher smiling.

MRS. DOUGALL (CONT'D)

My goodness, Ethan, he's a brilliant version of yourself. Certainly a sight to see.

(choked up)

It's good to see you.

Mrs. Dougall turns away, as she brings her hand to her eye.

MAURA

Mum?

MRS. DOUGALL

I'm fine. Just a bit more overwhelmed than I thought I'd be.

Mrs. Dougall dries her eyes.

MRS. DOUGALL (CONT'D)

Now Christopher, I hope you like tea and biscuits.

CHRISTOPHER

I never had tea and biscuits.

MAURA

Ethan David, I am surprised you've not shared your favorite snack with your son.

CHRISTOPHER

Peanut butter and celery is Dad's favorite snack.

Ethan shrugs.

ETHAN

Sometimes things change.

MAURA

I deserved that.

ETHAN

I didn't mean --

MAURA

It's okay. I beat myself up every day.

ETHAN

You'll really like Mrs. Dougall's biscuits. They're more like cookies.

MRS. DOUGALL

All right, then. Let's be quick. Don't want to be late for church.

CHRISTOPHER

(disappointed)

We're going to church?

MAURA

Not for a sermon if that's what you think. They're putting on a special summer concert. I think you'll quite enjoy it.

MRS. DOUGALL

Yes, we should all enjoy it.

Maura gives her mother a glare. Mrs. Dougall places the biscuits in the center of the table.

Ethan helps Maura sit.

MAURA

I'm fine. Today has been a good day.

MRS. DOUGALL

Which are getting few and far between the bad.

Mrs. Dougall pours the tea. She places a cup next to Christopher.

MAURA

Here, Christopher, grab yourself a biscuit.

MRS. DOUGALL

Because you've not had tea before, Master Chris, I am going to suggest you have one lump of sugar and a whole lot of cream.

Mrs. Dougall fixes it for him. He watches her every move.

MRS. DOUGALL (CONT'D)
 Now, if you want it sweeter, soak
 your biscuit, like your dad.

Ethan dips his biscuit in his tea and takes a bite.

ETHAN
 Delicious, as always.

MAURA
 So, Christopher what do you like to
 do?

CHRISTOPHER
 Play baseball.

Christopher soaks a biscuit in his cup of tea.

MAURA
 I should have known. Are you any
 good at it?

ETHAN
 He has a future.

CHRISTOPHER
 Except I'm never going to get hurt
 like you did, Dad.

Maura touches Ethan's arm.

MAURA
 You've been hurt? How so?

CHRISTOPHER
 Just his elbow, but he's done.

MAURA
 Done?

ETHAN
 No one wants a battered player, not
 with so many young guns out there.

MRS. DOUGALL
 How do you get along, then?

MAURA
 Mother, that's none of our business.

MRS. DOUGALL
 I'm just asking. I am sure he has
 bills to pay.

CHRISTOPHER

My Dad is rich. We'll never have to worry.

ETHAN

I had a back-up plan all along, a couple of ventures, a few more in the works.

Mrs. Dougall nods her head. She's impressed.

MAURA

Always quite the planner.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

White washed stone walls, ornate stained glass windows, detailed hand carved benches plays host to a packed house.

THE YOUTH CHOIR sings from the choir stands.

Ethan, Maura, Christopher, Mrs. Dougall sit together in the third row.

NOELLE DOUGALL, (12), bright blue eyes with auburn hair stitched in braids, steps forward, sings solo. Her voice is radiant and heavenly.

Maura smiles as Noelle makes eye contact with her. Ethan watches as Maura takes such delight in this child.

LATER: FAMILIES gather together.

Maura holds on to Mrs. Dougall as they make their way to the back of the church. Ethan and Christopher walk behind them.

Glenna comes up behind Ethan and places her hands over his eyes.

GLENNNA

Guess who?

ETHAN

Someone who will never act her age.

Glenna huffs as she removes her hands. He turns to her, gives her a big hug.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

You haven't changed.

GLENNNA

And you still look like a pompous --

MRS. DOUGALL
Not in God's house, Glenna.

Glenna and Ethan smirk at one another.

GLENNNA
So, what did you think?

MAURA
She was fantastic, wasn't she?

MRS. DOUGALL
My granddaughter sings like an angel.

ETHAN
Granddaughter? Glenna?

Noelle makes her way up the aisle.

MRS. DOUGALL
And there she is.

MAURA
Absolutely amazing.

MRS. DOUGALL
You were fantastic.

GLENNNA
Brilliant!

Hugs and kisses are shared all around. Christopher and Ethan observe.

MRS. DOUGALL
Alas, meet the one and only Noelle Dougall. Going to make herself quite a life in music.

ETHAN
(to Glenna)
So, you're not married?

Glenna glances at Maura with a smile.

GLENNNA
No, marriage is an institution I do not plan on attending. Got a problem with that, have you?

ETHAN
Not at all. I'm just --

GLENNNA
Not surprised.

MAURA

Enough. You two certainly picked up where you left off. Ethan, Christopher. Noelle is my daughter.

ETHAN

Noelle, that's --

MAURA

Yes, it is --

NOELLE

Nice to meet you both. Mother has told me so much about you. So glad you could make the visit.

CHRISTOPHER

You're a really good singer.

NOELLE

Thank you.

INT. DOUGALL HOUSE, PARLOR - NIGHT

A fire blazes in the hearth.

Noelle and Christopher play SLAP JACK on the floor.

Ethan and Maura watch from the couch.

ETHAN

(whispering)
We had a deal.

MAURA

About?

ETHAN

The name, Noelle.

MAURA

And Christopher for a boy, if I recall.

INT. DOUGALL HOUSE, SUMMER PORCH - NIGHT

Maura sits next to Ethan. Noelle and Christopher's laughter echoes.

MAURA

They're getting along fabulously. I was hoping they would. She always wanted a sibling.

ETHAN

One thing about my son, he's never met a stranger.

MAURA

That could be a good thing.

ETHAN

Yes, but it has often landed me in trouble here and there.

MAURA

What sort of trouble?

ETHAN

Let's just say it's not good for a pro baseball player when his son says hello to everyone in the grocery.

(beat)

One night I spent hours signing autographs. Needless to say, management wasn't too happy to stay past closing.

MAURA

Fame and fortune do come with a price.

ETHAN

Yes, they do.

Silence, then Ethan and Maura both start to speak at the same time.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry...

MAURA

You go.

ETHAN

No, you go ahead.

MAURA

It's nothing, really. Just wanted to say how nice it is to have you here. But enough small talk. I know you must be itching for details.

ETHAN

Itching...angry...afraid.

MAURA

I don't mean to make you angry. It's not my intent.

ETHAN

How do you want me to react? I really can't find a way to be happy about this.

Maura takes his hands, looks in his eyes.

MAURA

I didn't say you had to be happy. I didn't expect you to be. Believe me, I am far from being happy with my situation. But it is what it is, something that I have no control over. I can chose to make the best of what time I have left, and I am very happy to see you.

ETHAN

Your final request.

Maura nods.

Noelle and Christopher stand at the door.

NOELLE

Mother, is it okay if Christopher bunks with me? We want to tell ghost stories.

MAURA

I don't have any objection. Ethan?

ETHAN

Just be careful. Christopher tells some scary haunts.

CHRISTOPHER

Told you.

NOELLE

As long as they aren't crude like Glenna's. Good night.

INT. CHICKEN COOP - DAY

Chickens scatter and cluck as Noelle collects eggs from their nests. Christopher on her heels.

NOELLE

At least you have a father and a mother. I only have a mother.

CHRISTOPHER

My mother is never around. She's too busy with her work.

NOELLE

Won't be long and my mother will never be around.

CHRISTOPHER

What do you mean?

NOELLE

She's been sick for a long time. That's why you are here. She wanted to see your father before she, you know...dies.

Christopher turns and runs out of the coop.

NOELLE (CONT'D)

Christopher!

INT. DOUGALL HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Maura sits at the table her hands clasped around a warm cup of tea.

Mrs. Dougall stands over the stove, cooking breakfast.

Ethan pours a cup of coffee from an old peculator that has seen better days. He takes a sip and sighs.

MAURA

Mum only cooks like this when she has guests.

MRS. DOUGALL

Why cook so much for just myself?

Christopher races in, wraps his arms around Maura. He causes her to spill her tea.

ETHAN

Christopher!

MAURA

It's okay.
(to Christopher)
What's wrong, child?

Christopher raises his head. Tears in his eyes.

CHRISTOPHER

Miss Maura. I don't want you to die. I just met you.

Noelle comes in with the egg basket.

NOELLE
I thought he knew.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Noelle and Christopher race in and out of the tree line.

Maura and Ethan sit on a bench.

MAURA
It was a good idea to come back to
the city.

ETHAN
I do have some good ideas once in a
while.

Christopher grabs Noelle. She screams with delight.

MAURA
What she like, his mother?

ETHAN
Heather? Let's see. She's a model.

MAURA
A model. I bet she's gorgeous.

ETHAN
Yes. Which was our downfall. Her
career came first and still does.

MAURA
That's a shame.

ETHAN
The shame is that she lives in New
York and very rarely sees him or
calls.

MAURA
She doesn't know what she's missing.
Look at him. If I were his mother,
I wouldn't want to miss one minute
of his life. It's her loss.

ETHAN
I keep telling myself that.

MAURA
Did you love her?

ETHAN

That's a tough question...because I thought I did. I wanted to make it work, but I couldn't help but feel relieved when she left.

(beat)

Truth is, Maura. I haven't loved anyone since you.

Maura lowers her head.

Christopher and Noelle run up to them.

CHRISTOPHER

Hey, Dad. Noelle wants to see my fast ball.

Ethan looks to Maura with a wide smile.

ETHAN

Well, then. Let's break out the gear.

MAURA

You didn't?

ETHAN

You know I never leave home without my ball and glove.

Ethan gives her a wink.

LATER

Ethan crouches down in a catcher's stance. Assuming a pitching stance, Christopher waits several feet away.

Ethan pounds his fist in his glove, gives Christopher the fast ball signal.

Christopher nods as he rolls the ball in his hand behind his back. He winds up, steps toward Ethan and releases hard.

The ball SMACKS into Ethan's glove.

ETHAN

Steeeee----rike.

Maura laughs. Noelle claps.

Ethan throws the ball back to Christopher.

Christopher checks his footing, digs his foot into the ground. He holds his glove to his face, just below his eyes He rolls the ball in his fingers, then holds for the knuckleball.

He winds up, steps toward Ethan and releases.

SMACK into Ethan's glove.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Steeeee-riike two! Let's go for three.

Noelle is amazed.

NOELLE
That's brilliant, Mum.

MAURA
Yes, it is.

Christopher catches Ethan's throw.

Ethan squats back down behind the imaginary plate. He signals curve ball.

Christopher shakes his head.

He signals for a changeup.

Christopher shakes his head.

ETHAN
Fast ball, again?

CHRISTOPHER
It's my best.

ETHAN
All right, then. Let me have it.

Christopher winds up, steps toward Ethan and releases.

SMACK!

Ethan stands.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Steeeeeeeeeeeeeeee-riike three!

CHRISTOPHER
And that's how I pitch a no-hitter.

Christopher runs to Ethan. They high-five. Noelle joins the celebration.

Maura delights in the sight of their joy.

NOELLE
Can I give it a go?

CHRISTOPHER
You mean pitch the ball?

NOELLE
Please?

CHRISTOPHER
Sure.

Noelle takes the ball.

Ethan takes his stance at the imaginary plate.

Noelle does a very good impression of Christopher on the imaginary pitcher's mound. She holds the glove just below her eyes. She rolls the ball behind her back. Holds for a fast ball.

She winds up, takes a step toward Ethan, and lets it fly.

SMACK right into Ethan's glove.

Ethan's eyes widen. He jumps up.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
No way!

ETHAN
That was a perfect strike!

Maura clasps her hands over her mouth.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Noelle, that was amazing. Are you sure you never pitched before?

NOELLE
Never in my life. Can I give it another go?

Ethan tosses the ball back to her.

ETHAN
Maura, are you watching this?

MAURA
I am.

NOELLE
And this time, Mr. Ethan, can you say steee-riike like you did for Christopher.

Ethan gives a thumbs up. Noelle winds up, steps toward Ethan and releases the ball.

SMACK, another perfect pitch.

ETHAN
Steeeeeeeeee-riike two!

He gets up, walks toward Maura.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Do you realize you have a major athlete on your hands?

MAURA
She's a singer.

ETHAN
She's a ball player. Back in Kentucky she'd have scouts watching her. As a matter of fact --

MAURA
Don't get too far ahead, Ethan. She's only twelve.

ETHAN
She has potential.

MAURA
She's only thrown two pitches.

ETHAN
Perfect pitches. Her father must be very athletic.

Maura doesn't say anything, just nods and moves on.

CHRISTOPHER
Throw us some pop ups, Dad.

Ethan watches Maura hobble away, and it dawns on him. He removes his glove and hands it to Noelle.

ETHAN
Here, you and Christopher toss a bit.

Ethan races after Maura, stops her. Her breaths are labored. Tears run down her cheeks.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
She's mine, isn't she?

Maura collapses.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Maura!

Noelle races toward them.

NOELLE

Mother!

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM - NIGHT

A small white sterile room with light blue curtains hanging on a small narrow window.

Maura sleeps - oxygen mask over her mouth and nose and hooked up to several monitors that signal stable pulses and beeps.

Mrs. Dougall and Glenna sit - one on each side of the bed.

Ethan turns away from the door.

EXT. HOSPITAL, WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Much brighter than Maura's patient room. Photographs of wildlife adorn the walls.

Christopher sleeps on a cozy love seat.

Noelle, with her legs flopped over the arm of a yellow chair, writes in a journal.

Ethan sits down beside her. She closes the journal.

NOELLE

Is she awake?

ETHAN

Not yet. Are you okay?

NOELLE

I've been better. Mother gave me quite a scare. I am very worried this time.

Ethan bows his head.

NOELLE (CONT'D)

Although I know she's going to die, I'm not ready for her to go.

Ethan watches Noelle thumb the pages of her journal.

ETHAN

You like to write?

NOELLE

Some. Mostly about mum's days and imaginary letters to people I've never met.

ETHAN

Who do you write to?

NOELLE

Grandfather Dougall and...my father.

Ethan takes a deep breath.

ETHAN

What...what kind of things do you write to your father about?

NOELLE

Questions mostly. Why he's never come to see me? Does he want to know what I look like?

(beat)

Then I tell him how much I miss him even though we've never met...but I can feel him and I hope he loves me as much as I love him.

Noelle tears up. Ethan brushes her hair from her face, gives her a consoling smile.

NOELLE (CONT'D)

That's what makes this so hard. I don't want to be left alone.

ETHAN

You won't be alone.

NOELLE

I love grandmother and Auntie Glenna, and I know that they will be there for me...but...

ETHAN

It's not the same kind of love.

Ethan hugs her and kisses the top of her head. She closes her eyes and cries.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ethan paces back and forth, cell phone in hand, the number already dialed. He stops, takes a deep breath and presses send.

INT. ALICIA MOSS'S OFFICE - DAY

Alicia sits across from a sickly looking BALD MAN.

ALICIA

I have developed two options for your case, depending on what you're doctor is agreeable to. The first option is --

A KNOCK, then SONYA ROMERO, (45), dark hair, thin opens the door.

SONYA

I'm sorry to interrupt, but Ethan David is on line one. He refuses to leave a message and insists that he talk with you now.

ALICIA

(to the Bald Man)

Excuse me.

She gets up and steps out of the office.

INT. ALICIA MOSS'S OFFICE, RECEPTION DESK - CONTINUOUS

Alicia sits on the edge of Sonya's desk.

Sonya lifts the receiver and presses the line.

ALICIA

Ethan David, what is so urgent that can't wait?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

ETHAN

How much did she pay you?

ALICIA

I beg your pardon.

ETHAN

What was Maura's fee for your services?

ALICIA

I can't tell you that, client confidentiality.

Ethan stops pacing.

ETHAN

I need to know.

ALICIA

If you need to know so bad then just ask her.

ETHAN

She's a bit indisposed at the moment. Unconscious as a matter of fact. I'm at the hospital.

ALICIA

What happened?

ETHAN

She collapsed right after I asked her if Noelle was my daughter.

ALICIA

Noelle?

ETHAN

Don't pretend that you don't know.
(beat)
Why didn't you tell me?

ALICIA

Because I don't know who Noelle is.

ETHAN

She's Maura's daughter, and if I am doing my math right, she could very well be mine.

ALICIA

Look, Maura called on me to find you. She told me she had things only she could tell you. I don't ask for certain information unless the client wants to disclose that information to me.

ETHAN

That's just great. There's a little girl who knows her mother is dying...waiting for her to die, Miss Moss, and she has no clue who her father is.

ALICIA

You're at the hospital, get a blood test.

ETHAN

That's your answer? You're a real pleasure, Miss Moss.

ALICIA

If it makes you feel any better,
Maura didn't pay a fee. She's an
alms case. Most chronically ill
clients are.

(beat)

Thank you for making me break my
code of conduct, Mr. David.

Alicia hands the receiver back to Sonya.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Dougall approaches Ethan.

MRS. DOUGALL

Noelle is your daughter.

Ethan turns to her.

MRS. DOUGALL (CONT'D)

I couldn't help but overhear. I wasn't
supposed to tell you, although I
wanted to all along.

ETHAN

Why didn't Maura tell me?

MRS. DOUGALL

It wasn't an easy choice for her.
Tis something she's struggled with.
She kept telling herself she could
do it on her own. Damn Pride. Just
like her father.

Ethan wipes his eyes.

MRS. DOUGALL (CONT'D)

(sniffles)

Never mind all this, she's awake and
asking for you.

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM - NIGHT

Ethan makes his way to Maura's bed. She removes the oxygen
mask and gives him a slight smile.

MAURA

Looks as though my heart has become
worse. Not a good bit of news.

ETHAN

Shushhh. You don't have to talk.

MAURA

But I need to...to tell you --

ETHAN

Noelle, is my daughter.

MAURA

Yes, but she doesn't know. I want us to tell her together.

(beat)

That is, if...if you want her.

Maura places the oxygen mask to her mouth.

ETHAN

Why wouldn't I want her? She's a part of you, a part of us.

Maura removes the mask.

MAURA

I wanted to tell you.

ETHAN

I think I understand why you didn't.

MAURA

No, Ethan. You don't. The day I called off the wedding, I'd been to see Dr. O'Hara.

Maura breathes more oxygen.

MAURA (CONT'D)

He told me I was sick, and I couldn't put you through the responsibility of taking care of me. Not when you had your whole life...ahead of you.

Maura holds the mask to her face, again, breathes.

MAURA (CONT'D)

A month later, I found out I was pregnant. I didn't want to...you were already gone.

ETHAN

I'm surprised you thought so little of me. I would have given you the world, regardless. Both of you.

MAURA

You say that now. But then --

ETHAN
You were my life.

MAURA
But look at how your life turned
out.

ETHAN
I am miserable without you.

MAURA
You wouldn't of had your career...or
Christopher.

Ethan fights back tears.

ETHAN
I wasn't going to come here. I was
so angry at you, Maura. You broke
our plan. You broke my heart. And
now...

MAURA
You have to remember, Ethan. God
usually has a bigger plan.

Ethan takes her hand, leans in and kisses her on the lips.

MAURA (CONT'D)
You haven't done that in years.

ETHAN
How could I?

Ethan laughs a bit. Maura smiles. He kisses her forehead.

INT. HOSPITAL, WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Dougall sits between Christopher and Noelle. Glenna chews
on her nails and stares out the window. Ethan enters the area.

CHRISTOPHER
How's Maura, Dad?

ETHAN
She's feeling better, but still very
weak.

Glenna walks up to him, whispers.

GLENNNA
So she told you, then?

ETHAN
About Noelle, yes.

GLENNA

Are you going to take her?

Ethan stares straight ahead.

ETHAN

We're going to tell her...and Christopher, together, tomorrow. We'll let her decide what she wants to do.

GLENNA

You can't let a child decide something as important as this.

ETHAN

I think she has a say in what she thinks is best for her.

GLENNA

You know she's mine if you don't want her. It's in the documents.

Ethan nods.

GLENNA (CONT'D)

I'm not very good with keeping children. I have a life. You know the whole sex, drugs and rock and roll thing.

(off his look)

I'm kidding. You know that I love her...I do and I would do anything for her, but I am not a mother. I only agreed because I didn't know if you would show. And --

Glenna looks towards Mrs. Dougall.

GLENNA (CONT'D)

Mum...she's getting up there a bit... she can't.

ETHAN

I want her, but I can't just take her away from everything and everyone she has known her whole life. I could move here, but I'd be doing the same to Christopher. This isn't easy - for any of us.

GLENNA

You're at least thinking about it, then.

ETHAN

Do me a favor, take Noelle, your mother and Christopher to the flat. Get a good night's sleep. We'll see what tomorrow brings.

EXT. IRELAND COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Ethan's compact car glides through the dark country side.

INT. COMPACT CAR - NIGHT

Ethan drives through dense fog.

EXT. CLIFFS OF MOHER - DAWN

Fog rises up from the sea, creeps over the edge of the cliffs.

Ethan looks out over the beauty and majesty.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLIFFS OF MOHER - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Ethan and Maura walk along the cliffs.

MAURA

I want to have twenty kids.

ETHAN

I don't think I can handle twenty kids.

MAURA

I'll be there to help you, obviously.

ETHAN

Let's compromise and take off the zero.

MAURA

Two kids it is. A boy...Christopher.
(beat)
And a girl --

ETHAN

Noelle for a girl.

MAURA

He'll look exactly like you and she'll look exactly like me. Deal?

ETHAN

Deal.

Ethan pulls her close.

MAURA

We'll have the perfect little family.

ETHAN

In the meantime, I am happy just to have you.

MAURA

You'll have a lifetime of me and so much more.

Maura laughs and leans up, kisses his nose. Ethan leans in and kisses her lips, deeply.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLIFFS OF MOHER - DAWN (PRESENT DAY)

Ethan wipes his eyes.

ETHAN

God, I know you have a bigger plan for me, just please, help me know what to do.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Ethan sits at a small table, sips from his cup.

He dials his cell phone, holds it to his ear.

INT. ALICIA MOSS'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A cell phone buzzes on the night stand. Alicia reaches for it, blindly answers.

ALICIA

It's three o'clock in the morning!

INTERCUT BETWEEN PHONE CONVERSATION

ETHAN

That's coffee time here in the land of shamrocks, leprechauns and rainbows.

Alicia pulls the covers over her head.

ALICIA

Dear God. What do you want?

ETHAN

There has to be a better drug,
something she hasn't tried.

ALICIA

You do realize that I am not her
doctor, right?

ETHAN

But you can find out, right?

ALICIA

Mr. David...Ethan, my job is done.
Good night, good morning, whatever!

Alicia pulls the phone away from her ear, ready to end the
call.

ETHAN

Wait..wait...wait...I'll pay you.

Alicia places the phone back to her ear.

ALICIA

I don't want your money.

ETHAN

But I want your time.

ALICIA

You're starting to sound as bromidic
as your friend, Pete. Someone I don't
want to be reminded of in the middle
of the night, by the way.

ETHAN

That I understand, Pete can be taxing,
but I do need your help. In your
line of work, you should know the
best doctors in the world.

ALICIA

From what I understand, Maura was
given the best and the latest and
the greatest treatment...treatments.
Really, Ethan, you need to talk to
her doctor.

ETHAN

She needs the best doctors.

ALICIA

I'm sorry. I wish there were more I
could do.

Ethan sighs, runs his fingers through his hair. He's defeated.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

Look, I know you want to turn back time, make it all go away, make up for lost time, but she would still be where she is now regardless of whether you were with her all along or not.

ETHAN

Thank you. I'll keep you posted.

ALICIA

Yeah. But please wait until my Rooster crows.

Ethan ends the call.

Alicia throws the covers from her head, raises her arms over her head and rises from bed.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - DAY

Ethan walks with DR. O'HARA (60's), robust, with silver and black strands of hair.

DR. O'HARA

John Hopkins was one of the first calls I made when we found out what was going on with Maura. I have also worked with several specialists around the world on her case.

ETHAN

There's absolutely nothing different you can do? Alternative, unconventional therapies like herbs, acupuncture?

DR. O'HARA

Believe me, Maura and I have been down many roads over the years. Clinical trials, this medicine, that medicine. My job right now is to keep her as comfortable as possible until she goes.

Ethan and Dr. O'Hara reach Maura's room. She is sound asleep.

DR. O'HARA

I suggest you make that your job, too.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

THUNDER BOOMS, RAIN POURS. People with umbrella's enter the main door.

INT. HOSPITAL, MAURA'S PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Ethan sits by Maura's side, holds her hand. She tries to raise herself higher as Mrs. Dougall, Glenna, Christopher and Noelle enter the room.

MRS. DOUGALL

Maura, dear. Stay still.

Noelle makes a beeline to Maura's side.

NOELLE

You don't look better. Grandma said you were better.

MRS. DOUGALL

I didn't want you to worry.

MAURA

I am better, see. I have everything I need, right here. All my loves in one room.

ETHAN

Christopher, come here Son.

Christopher reluctantly goes to Ethan.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

I know that the past day hasn't been easy.

CHRISTOPHER

It's okay. I understand. Grandma Dougall told me the whole story. I am glad we could be here for Miss Maura.

MAURA

Oh, Christopher, thank you. That's very sweet of you.

Maura takes some oxygen.

MAURA (CONT'D)

Ethan, whenever you're ready.

GLENNA
Should we all leave.

ETHAN
No, I want everyone to stay.

NOELLE
What is it?

MAURA
Sweetheart, we have something to
tell you. Something I should have
told you...and Ethan a long time
ago.

ETHAN
But that doesn't matter now.

Maura takes Noelle's hand.

MAURA
Noelle, Ethan ...is your father.

Noelle looks from Maura to Ethan, back to Maura. Then races
out of the room.

Christopher follows her.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Noelle runs down the hallway. Christopher behind her.

CHRISTOPHER
Noelle!

She stops and turns. Christopher stops.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
You're my sister!

She keeps going, running as fast as she can and disappears
around the corner.

Christopher takes off. Ethan stops him.

ETHAN
You go back to Maura's room. I'll go
after her.

CHRISTOPHER
Dad? This is good news, right?

ETHAN
Yes, Christopher. It is.

Ethan takes off down the hall and around the corner.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Rain continues to pour. Ethan finds Noelle sitting on a bench. Both soaked to the bone. He slides next to her.

ETHAN

I didn't know or I would have been here from the beginning.

NOELLE

I don't blame you. How could she lie to me all this time. To us?

ETHAN

I don't know. I guess she thought it was the best thing to do until now.

(beat)

Don't be angry with her.

NOELLE

What am I supposed to do?

ETHAN

Whatever you want to do. You do have a choice. You can stay here or you can come to Kentucky and live with me and Christopher.

NOELLE

Oh.

ETHAN

I know it's not an easy decision to make, and we don't expect you to make it right away. Take time to think about what would be best for you.

NOELLE

What would be the best for you, Mr. Ethan?

ETHAN

Knowing that you are happy.

NOELLE

Christopher is right, you don't wish anything for yourself.

THUNDER CRACKS. Noelle clutches tight to Ethan. He wraps his arms around her.

NOELLE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
I'm really glad you're my Father.

ETHAN
Me too.

INT. MAURA'S FLAT APARTMENT - DAY

Mrs. Dougall makes sandwiches at the table.

Noelle, clothes changed and hair dry sits with Christopher in a window seat.

NOELLE
What is Kentucky like?

CHRISTOPHER
We live near the city, which is a lot like here, and there's lots to do. Horseback riding, boating, music festivals...but they play a lot of Bluegrass.

NOELLE
Bluegrass? What is that?

CHRISTOPHER
I don't know, but it's fun to dance to.

Christopher gets up and shakes his booty. She laughs.

NOELLE
Does your father have a girlfriend?

CHRISTOPHER
You mean our father.

NOELLE
Yes, our father, sorry. It's going to take some getting used to.

CHRISTOPHER
Dad's too busy for girls. He says they're silly and too much trouble. He'd rather spend time with me.

NOELLE
That's a shame, really. He deserves to be in love.

MRS. DOUGALL
And what do you know about love, child?

NOELLE

Mother told me that there's no greater feeling than being in love.

Mrs. Dougall chuckles.

INT. MAURA'S FLAT APARTMENT, BATHROOM - DAY

Ethan shampoos his hair.

MAURA (V.O.)

If you weren't here, where would you be?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MAURA'S FLAT APARTMENT, BATHROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The morning sun breaks through the window.

Maura and Ethan in the tub. Ethan leans back against Maura's chest, her feet wrapped around him.

ETHAN

I got a call today from the Reds' manager.

MAURA

Your dream team. Did they give you an offer?

ETHAN

They did.

MAURA

Are you going to take it?

ETHAN

No.

MAURA

Ethan David, why not? Oh, that's right, you and your two-year plan.

ETHAN

You know, we're almost halfway there.

MAURA

You shouldn't pass this by.

ETHAN

You're not giving up your education for me.

MAURA

But --

ETHAN

But nothing. The Reds' offer will be there next year.

Maura playfully splashes bubbles on Ethan.

MAURA

Ugh! You are impossible.

She kisses his face, his head, his neck.

ETHAN

So what do you have planned today? You have time for lunch before we go to the florist?

MAURA

No, I'm sorry, I don't. I have quite the busy morning.

ETHAN

Anything I can help you with?

MAURA

No. Just some things I must tend to on my own.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MAURA'S FLAT APARTMENT - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

Glenna opens the door as she folds her wet umbrella.

GLENNA

Where's Ethan?

MRS. DOUGALL

In the shower.
(off her look)
What is it? Is Maura okay?

GLENNA

I'm afraid it's getting close.

INT. HOSPITAL, PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Ethan, Christopher, Noelle, Glenna and Mrs. Dougall shuffle into the room.

Maura reaches out to Noelle. She is weaker, her face ashen and blue. Her breaths very laborious. Noelle takes her hand.

MAURA

Please, don't be mad at me.

NOELLE

It's okay, Mother.

Noelle buries her head on her Maura's chest.

NOELLE (CONT'D)

Please, I don't want to say goodbye.

MAURA

You don't have to because I will
always be with you.

NOELLE

Even all the way in Kentucky?

Ethan and Glenna share a look.

MAURA

Even all the way in Kentucky.

NOELLE

I love you.

Noelle leans in and gives her mother a kiss on the cheek.

MAURA

I love you. I love you more than
anything in the world. Don't you
ever forget that.

NOELLE

I promise.

Noelle wipes her eyes, but the tears won't stop. Mrs. Dougall places her hand on the girl's shoulder. Noelle turns and clings to her grandmother.

MAURA

Christopher?

Ethan coaxes Christopher to Maura's bedside.

MAURA (CONT'D)

You take good care of Noelle for me.

CHRISTOPHER

Absolutely. She is my sister, after
all.

MAURA

Yes.

Maura brings her trembling hand to Christopher's face and gives him a slight smile.

MAURA (CONT'D)
So much like your father...Ethan?

ETHAN
I'm right here.

Maura takes his hand.

Mrs. Dougall and Glenna guide Noelle and Christopher out of the room.

Ethan slides onto the edge of Maura's bed, kisses her hand.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Finally, we're alone.

She tries to laugh, it makes her cough.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Shushhh, I'm sorry.

MAURA
I should have never let you go.

ETHAN
I should have fought for you.

MAURA
Lay with me.

She shifts as much as she can. Ethan lays next to her, drapes his arm around her and kisses her forehead.

MAURA (CONT'D)
Remember, she's a singer.

ETHAN
And an athlete.

She moves her fingers across his chest, slowly.

MAURA
I want to spend every hour of every day with you, Ethan David...for the rest of my life.

Maura's hand drops, her eyes close.

Ethan realizes that she's gone just as the monitor sounds and shows flat-line.

ETHAN
 (whispers)
 I love you, Maura Dougall.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOUGALL FAMILY CEMETARY - DAY

A thick murk surrounds as a light drizzle beads up on the black hearse.

Purple irises everywhere.

Atop the ridge, a BAGPIPER moans a dirge.

FATHER O'REILLY stands before IMMEDIATE FRIENDS and FAMILY.

Mrs. Dougall, Glenna, Ethan, Noelle and Christopher standing in a row, hold hands.

FATHER O'REILLY
 Today we pay our last respects to Maura Dougall. For so long she fought off her illness with amazing dignity and courage that inspired all of us here today. Her legacy is one of integrity and deep devotion as a mother, a sister, and a daughter.

Noelle squeezes Ethan's hand tight and looks up to him. He gives her a soothings smile.

FATHER O'REILLY (CONT'D)
 We will always remember her laughter, kind words and abounding spirit.

INT. DOUGALL HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING (ONE WEEK LATER)

Mrs. Dougall sits at the table with a cup of coffee. Ethan enters from the parlor, sneaks up behind her and gives her a peck on the cheek.

MRS. DOUGALL
 I'm going to miss you, Ethan.

ETHAN
 We'll be back for Christmas.

Ethan goes to the door.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
 Noelle, Christopher, come tell your grandmother goodbye.

MRS. DOUGALL
It's going to be quite strange around
here for a while.

ETHAN
At least you'll have company.

MRS. DOUGALL
I don't know what you're talking
about.

ETHAN
Glenna tells me that Dr. O'Hara's
been calling on you.

MRS. DOUGALL
Tis nothing. We're just friends.

ETHAN
Then why are you blushing?

Noelle and Christopher come racing in. They hug Mrs. Dougall
at the same time.

NOELLE
I'm going to miss you so much.

CHRISTOPHER
Me too!

MRS. DOUGALL
You both send me letters...and give
a call when you can.

NOELLE/CHRISTOPHER
We will.

Mrs. Dougall kisses Noelle's cheek, rubs the kiss into her
skin. She then turns to Christopher, kisses his cheek. He
quickly wipes it away.

MRS. DOUGALL
Is that so, Master Chris?

She grabs a hold of his chin and plants another kiss on his
cheek.

MRS. DOUGALL (CONT'D)
You best leave this one on.

Mrs. Dougall rubs the kiss into his cheek, then whispers.

MRS. DOUGALL (CONT'D)
That's how we hold on, dear.

He gives her a smile.

EXT. DOUGALL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ethan opens the car door. Christopher climbs in.

A CAR HORN sounds in the distance.

A car barrels down the drive toward the house.

Chickens scatter. The car comes to a halt.

Glenna jumps out.

GLENNNA

You were going to leave without
telling me goodbye?

ETHAN

I can't help it if you're late.

GLENNNA

I tried to call, but my battery died.
(off Ethan's look)
I'm serious. You can check for
yourself.

Glenna pulls her cell phone out of her bra.

ETHAN

That's quite all right, I believe
you.

GLENNNA

(to Noelle)
Come, give your auntie a hug.

Noelle races around the car, wraps her arms around Glenna.

Glenna tears up.

GLENNNA (CONT'D)

I think I've changed my mind, you
can't have her.

Ethan kisses Glenna's forehead.

ETHAN

You wouldn't last a week.

GLENNNA

I wouldn't last a day. Take good
care of her...or else.

Christopher sticks his head out the window.

CHRISTOPHER

Come on. Let's go.

GLENNA

Hold you're britches on, young man.

Glenna kisses Noelle's cheeks, one at a time, rubs them both into her skin.

GLENNA (CONT'D)

You call me anytime.

NOELLE

I will.

Glenna races to Christopher, her lips puckered. She grabs his face in her hands and lands a loud smooch on his cheek.

He wipes it off.

CHRISTOPHER

Gross!

Glenna laughs.

GLENNA

Hey!

CHRISTOPHER

Hey, yourself. That was sloppy and wet.

GLENNA

It was supposed to be.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, I'm not holding on to it.

Glenna messes his hair as Noelle climbs into the front seat.

NOELLE

Let's go, Daddy. Don't want to miss our flight.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't know. It takes six hours and all you can see is the ocean and the clouds.

Ethan jumps into the driver's seat and they're off.

Mrs. Dougall stands next to Glenna. They both wave until the car is out of sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOUISVILLE KENTUCKY - DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT of the skyline from the Indiana side of the Ohio River.

INT. ETHAN'S SUV - DAY

Noelle and Christopher sit in the back seat as Ethan drives through downtown Louisville, Kentucky.

Noelle stares out the window, peering up at the buildings.

CHRISTOPHER

So, what do you think?

NOELLE

I think it's beautiful, just beautiful.

Ethan peers up into the rear view mirror. He smiles wide.

CHRISTOPHER

Take us by the stadium, Dad. And by the school.

ETHAN

Alright!

Ethan makes a turn, drives toward the river.

NOELLE

(gasps)

It is a lot like Limerick City. I think I'll get along just fine here.

Ethan makes another turn, rounds up along the stadium.

THEIR POV: A Louisville Bats baseball game in progress.

NOELLE (CONT'D)

Can we go?

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, can we, Dad? Can we?

ETHAN

I don't see why not.

Ethan pulls into the parking lot. Noelle and Christopher cheer.

Ethan yawns.

INT. ALICIA MOSS'S OFFICE - DAY

Ethan, dressed in a suit sits across from Alicia.

ALICIA
I'm glad things worked out, despite
the circumstances.

ETHAN
Me too, and I wanted to thank you
for everything.

Alicia leans back in her chair.

ALICIA
Why do I get the feeling there's a
lot more to your visit?

ETHAN
Because there is.

Ethan pulls an envelope out of his breast pocket, hands it to
her. She takes it, opens it. Her eyes widen in surprise.

ALICIA
What is this, a donation? A very
generous donation.

ETHAN
More of a business proposition.
(off her look)
I want to work with you.

ALICIA
Oh, no...no, no, no. I work alone.

ETHAN
Think of how many more lives you can
touch if you had someone else on
your team.

ALICIA
I don't think you understand exactly
what I do.

ETHAN
I understand that reuniting with
Maura and gaining a child has been
one of the most meaningful experiences
I have ever had in my life. All thanks
to you.

ALICIA
Not all my cases are so rewarding.
(beat)
I'm sorry, Ethan, but I don't need
or want a partner.

Alicia hands him the check. Ethan stands.

ETHAN

Sorry to hear that and sorry to waste
your time.

Ethan starts to take the check, but Alicia pulls it back,
looks at it and contemplates.

ALICIA

Are you sure this is what you want
to do with your money?

ETHAN

What else is a multi-million dollar
injured ex-baseball player going to
do?

Ethan raises a brow.

Alicia smiles.

FADE OUT:

THE END