

*65,000 words – Contemporary Romance / Women's Fiction*

## **FINAL REQUEST**

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### Synopsis

Years earlier, while in college visiting Ireland to reconnect with his ancestry, Ethan David met Maura Dougall, a gifted Irish folk singer who performed at Bunratty Castle. Despite her guarded nature, they quickly fell deeply in love, and Maura eventually followed Ethan to America as he pursued his dream of becoming a professional baseball player. But just days before their wedding, Maura abruptly ended their relationship and returned to Ireland without explanation, leaving Ethan devastated and searching for answers that never came.

Ten years later, Ethan is a retired Cincinnati Reds pitching star whose career has been cut short by a devastating injury. Now a full-time single father raising his eight-year-old son, Christopher, from a brief, failed marriage, he is offered his dream job as the Reds' pitching coach. Although the opportunity would allow him to remain involved in the game he loves, Ethan struggles with whether he can balance the demands of coaching with his responsibilities as a parent.

When Ethan travels to Dublin to represent the Reds at an international baseball conference, he receives an unexpected message from Maura asking to see him. Still bitter, he refuses until she appears in person and reveals the truth she has hidden for a decade: Maura is terminally ill.

Maura explains that before their wedding, she discovered she was pregnant and learned she had an incurable disease. Believing she would derail his baseball dreams, she ended their relationship and secretly returned to Ireland. Now, with little time remaining, Maura has one final request: she wants Ethan to raise their ten-year-old daughter, Nora.

Overwhelmed by the revelation, Ethan extends his stay in Ireland to build a relationship with the daughter he never knew existed. As Christopher and Nora quickly develop a close sibling bond, Ethan and Maura slowly rediscover the deep love they once shared. During her years away, Maura has developed a strong Christian faith that now gives her peace as she prepares for the end of her life. Through her example, she encourages Ethan to release his long-standing bitterness and trust that God can redeem even their greatest mistakes.

Ethan also grows close to Kiara MacKenna, Maura's closest friend and neighbor, who has been an anchor of encouragement during Maura's declining health. As Ethan watches Maura face death with grace and Kiara serve others with quiet devotion, he begins a gradual journey toward rediscovering faith.

Meanwhile, the Cincinnati Reds await Ethan's decision regarding the coveted pitching coach position. Faced with choosing between a lifelong dream and the responsibility of raising two children, Ethan ultimately declines the coaching opportunity and welcomes Nora into his and Christopher's lives.

At peace knowing that Nora will be loved and cared for, Maura encourages Ethan and Kiara to embrace the feelings developing between them and gives them her blessing to build a future together.

Determined to make Maura's remaining days meaningful, Ethan creates a series of unforgettable moments that celebrate the life they once shared and allow her to leave this world knowing her final wish has been fulfilled.

After Maura's death, Ethan and Kiara's relationship blossoms into love, and during their wedding, Maura's presence is felt in a surprising and deeply moving way that confirms her approval of their union.

Having honored Maura's final request, Ethan, Kiara, Christopher, and Nora return to Kentucky to begin a new chapter together, discovering that God's greatest blessings often arrive through life's most painful losses and that love, faith, and forgiveness can transform heartbreak into hope.