

Закр́тый клуб

# Читаем вместе по-английски

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**'The Longest Ride'** by Nickolas Sparks



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# **Lesson 12**

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**The Longest Ride**

*Chapter 5, Part 1*



# The Longest Ride

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## Chapter 5, Part 1





# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- It's **growing** even **darker** now, and the late winter weather **has continued to worsen**. The winds **have risen to a shriek**, and the windows of the car are thick with snow. I **am** slowly **being buried alive**, and I think again about the car. It is cream colored, a 1988 Chrysler, and I wonder **whether** it **will be spotted** once the sun **has come up**. Or whether it will simply **blend into the surroundings**.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “You must not think these things,” I **hear Ruth say.**
- “Someone will come. **It won’t be long now.**”
- She’s sitting where she’d been before, but she **looks different** now. Slightly older and wearing a different dress... but the dress seems **vaguely familiar.** I **am struggling to** recall a memory of her **like this** when I hear her voice again.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “It was the summer of 1940. July.”
- It takes a moment before it **comes back**. Yes, I think to myself. That’s right. The summer after I’d finished my first year of college. “I remember,” I say.
- “Now you remember,” she **teases**. “But you needed my help. You **used to remember** everything.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “I **used to be** younger.”
- “I was younger once, too.”
- “You still are.”
- “Not anymore,” she says, not hiding the echo of sadness. “I was young **back then.**”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- I **blink**, trying and **failing to bring her into focus**. She was seventeen years old. "This is the dress you wore when I finally asked you to walk with me."
- "No," she says to me. "This is the dress I wore when I asked you."
- I smile. This is a story we often told at **dinner parties**, the story of **our first date**.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- **Over the years,** Ruth and I **have learned to tell** it well. Here in the car, she begins the story **in the same way** she'd always done for our guests. She **settles her hands in her lap** and **sighs,** her expression **alternating between feigned** disappointment and confusion.
- "By then, I knew you were never going to say a word to me."



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- You had been home from university for a month, and still you never approached me, so after Shabbat services had ended, I **walked up to** you. I looked you right in the eyes and I said, 'I am no longer seeing David Epstein.' "
- "I remember," I say.
- "Do you remember what you said to me? You said, 'Oh,' and then you **blushed** and looked at your feet."



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “I think you’re mistaken.”
- “You know this happened. Then I told you that I **would like you to walk me home.**”
- “I remember that your father wasn’t happy about it.”
- “He thought David would become a fine young man. He did not know you.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “Nor did he like me,” I **interject**. “I could feel him staring at the back of my head while we walked. **That’s why** I kept my hands in my pockets.”
- She **tilts** her head, evaluating me. “Is that why, even when we were walking, you said nothing to me?”
- “I wanted him to know my intentions were **honorable.**”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “When I got home, he asked if you were **mute**. I had to remind him again that you were an excellent student in college, that your marks were very high, and that you would graduate in only three years. Whenever I spoke with your mother, she made sure I knew that.”
- My mother. The **matchmaker**.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “It would have been different had your parents not been following us,” I say. “If they hadn’t been acting as **chaperones, I would have swept you off your feet.** I would have taken your hand and serenaded you. I would have picked you a bouquet of flowers. You **would have swooned.**”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “Yes, I know. The young Frank Sinatra again. You have said this already.”
- “I’m just trying to **keep the story accurate**. There was a girl at school who **had her eye on me**, you know. Her name was Sarah.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- Ruth **nods**, looking **unconcerned**. “Your mother told me about her, too. She also said that you had not called or written to her since you had returned. I knew it was not serious.”
- “How often did you talk to my mother?”
- “In the beginning, not too much, and my mother was always there.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- But a few months before you came home, I asked your mother if she would help me with my English and we began to meet **once or twice a week**. There were still many words I did not know, and she could explain their meaning in a way that I could understand.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- I **used to say** that I became a teacher because of my father, and that was true, but I also became a teacher because of your mother. She was very patient with me. She would tell me stories, and that is another way she helped me with the language.
- She said I must learn to do this myself, because everyone in the South tells stories."



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- I smile. "What stories did she tell?"
- "She told stories about you."
- I know this, of course. There are few secrets left in any long marriage.
- "Which was your favorite?"
- She thinks for a moment. "The one from when you were a little boy," she finally says.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “Your mother told me that you found an **injured squirrel**, and despite the fact that your father refused to let you keep it in the store, you hid it in a box behind her sewing machine and **nursed it back to health**. Once it was better, you **released** it in the park, and even though it ran off, you returned every day to **look for** it, **in case** it needed your help again.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- She would tell me that it was a sign that your heart was **pure**, that you **formed deep attachments**, and that once you loved something—or someone—you would never stop.” Like I said, the matchmaker.
- It was only after we were married that my mother admitted to me that she’d been “teaching” Ruth by telling her stories about me.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- At the time, I felt **ambivalent** about this. I wanted to believe that I'd won Ruth's heart **on my own**, and I said **as much** to her. My mother laughed and told me she was only doing what mothers have always done for their sons. Then she told me that it was my job to **prove** that she hadn't been lying, because that's what sons **were supposed to do for** their mothers.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “And here I thought I was charming.”
- “You became charming, once you were no longer afraid of me. But that did not happen on that first walk. When we finally reached the factory where we lived, I said, ‘Thank you for walking with me, Ira,’ and all you said was, ‘You are welcome.’ Then you turned around, nodded at my parents, and left.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “But I was better the next week.”
- “Yes. You talked about the weather. You said, ‘It **sure** is cloudy,’ **three times**. Twice you added, ‘I wonder if it will rain later.’ Your conversational skills were **dazzling**. **By the way**, your mother taught me the meaning of that word.” “And yet, you still wanted to walk with me.” “Yes,” she says, looking right at me.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “And **in early August**, I asked if I could buy you a chocolate soda. Just like David Epstein **used to do.**”
- She **smooths** an **errant tendril of her hair**, her eyes **holding steady** on my own. “And I remember telling you that the chocolate soda was the most delicious that I had ever tasted.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- That was our beginning. It's not a thrilling tale **of adventure** or the kind of fairy-tale romance portrayed in movies, but it felt like **divine intervention**. That she saw something special in me **made no sense** at all, but I **was bright enough** to **seize the opportunity**. After that, we spent most of our free time together, although there wasn't much left of it.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- By then, the end of summer **was already approaching**. Across the Atlantic, France **had already surrendered** and the **Battle of Britain was under way, but even so**, the war in those last few weeks seemed **far away**. We went for walks and talked endlessly in the park; as David once did, I continued to buy her chocolate sodas.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- Twice, I brought Ruth to a movie, and once, I took both her and her mother to lunch. And always, I would walk her home from the synagogue, her parents **trailing ten paces behind**, allowing us a bit more privacy.
- “Your parents eventually **came to like** me.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “Yes.” She nods. “But that is because I liked you. You **made me laugh**, and you were the first to help me do that in this country. My father would always ask what you had said that I found so funny, and I would tell him that it was less about what you said than **the way** you would say things. Like the face you made when you described your mother’s cooking.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “My mother could **burn water** and yet never **learned how to boil an egg.**”
- “She was not **that bad.**”
- “I grew up learning how to eat and **hold my breath at the same time.** Why do you think my father and I were **as thin as straws?**”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- She shakes her head. "If your mother only knew you said such terrible things."
- "It **wouldn't have mattered**. She knew she wasn't a good cook."
- She **is quiet for a moment**. "**I wish we could have had** more time that summer. I was very sad when you left to go back to university."



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “Even if I’d stayed, we couldn’t have been together. You were leaving, too. You **were heading off to Wellesley.**”
- She nods, but her expression is **distant.** “I was very fortunate for the opportunity. My father knew a professor there, and he helped me **in many ways.** But the year was still very hard for me.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- Even though you had not written to Sarah, I knew you would see her again, and I worried that you might still **develop feelings for** her. And I was afraid that Sarah would see the same things in you that I did, and that she would use her charms to **take you away from me.**"
- "That would have never happened."



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “I know this now, but I did not know it then.”
- I shift my head slightly, and **all at once** there are flashes of white **in the corners of my eyes**, a **railroad spike** near my **hairline**. I close my eyes, waiting for it to pass, but it seems to take forever. I concentrate, trying to **breathe** slowly, and eventually it begins to **recede**. The world comes back in **bits and pieces**, and I think again about the accident.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- My face is **sticky** and the **deflated** air bag **is coated with** dust and blood. The blood scares me, but despite this, there is magic in the car, a magic that has brought Ruth back to me. I **swallow**, trying to wet the back of my **throat**, but I can **make no moisture** and it feels like **sandpaper**.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- I know Ruth is worried about me. In the **lengthening shadows**, I see her watching me, this woman I **have always adored**. I think back again to 1940, trying to **distract her from her fears**.
- “And yet despite your **concerns** about Sarah,” I say, “you didn’t come home in December to see me.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- **In my mind's eye**, I see Ruth **roll her eyes**—her standard response to my complaint. “I did not come home because I could not **afford** the train ticket,” she says. “You know this. I was working at a hotel, and leaving would have been impossible. The **scholarship** only covered **tuition**, so I had to **pay for** everything else.”
- **“Excuses,”** I tease.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- She ignores me, as always. “Sometimes, I would work at the desk all night and still have to go to class in the morning. It was all I could do not to **fall asleep** with my book open on the desk. It was not easy. By the time I finished my first year, I was very much **looking forward to coming** home for the summer, if only to go straight to bed.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “But then I **ruined your plans** by **showing up** at the train station.”
- “Yes.” She smiles. “My plan was ruined.”
- “I hadn’t seen you in nine months,” I **point out**. “I wanted to surprise you.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “And you did. On the train, I wondered whether you would be there, but I did not want to **be disappointed**. And then, when the train **pulled into** the station and I saw you from the window, my heart gave a little jump. You were very **handsome.**”
- “My mother had made me a new suit.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- She **emits** a **wistful** laugh, still lost in the memory. “And you had brought my parents with you.”
- I would **shrug**, but I am afraid to move. “I knew they’d want to see you, too, so I **borrowed** my father’s car.”
- “That was **gallant**.”
- “Or selfish. **Otherwise**, you might have gone straight home.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “Yes, maybe,” she teases. “But of course, you had thought of that, too. You had asked my father if you could take me to dinner. He said that you had come to the factory while he was working to **ask his permission.**”
- “I didn’t want to **give you a reason to say no.**”
- “I would not have said no, even if you had not asked my father.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “I know this now, but I didn’t know it then,” I say, **echoing** her earlier words. We are, and always have been, the same in so many ways. “When you **stepped off the train** that night, I remember thinking that the station should have been filled with photographers, waiting to **snap** your picture. You looked like a movie star.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “I had been in the train for twelve hours. I looked terrible.”
- This is a lie and we both know it. Ruth was beautiful, and even well into her fifties, men’s eyes would follow her when she walked into a room.
- “It was all I could do not to kiss you.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “That is not true,” she **counters**. “You would never have done **such a thing** in front of my parents.”
- She’s right, of course. Instead, I **stood back**, allowing her parents to greet and **visit** with her first; only then, after a few minutes, **did I approach** her. Ruth **reads my thoughts**.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “That night was the first time my father really understood what I saw in you. Later, he told me that he had observed that you were not only **hardworking** and kind, but a gentleman as well.”
- “He still didn’t think I was good enough for you.”
- “No father thinks any man is good enough for his daughter.”
- “Except David Epstein.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “Yes,” she teases. “Except for him.”
- I smile, **even though** it sends up another electric **flare** inside me. “At dinner, I **couldn’t stop staring at** you. You were so much more beautiful than I remembered.”
- “But we were **strangers** again,” she says. “It took some time for the conversation to be easy, like it was the summer before. Until the walk home, I think.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “I **was playing hard to get.**”
- “No, you were being you,” she says. “And yet, you were not you. You had become a man in the year we **had been apart.** You even took my hand as you walked me to the door, something you had never done before. I remember because it made my arm **tingle**, and then you stopped and looked at me and I knew then exactly what was going to happen.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- “I **kissed you good night,**” I say.
- “No,” Ruth says to me, her voice **dipping** to a **seductive** register. “You kissed me, yes, but it was not just good night. **Even then,** I could feel the promise in it, the promise that you would kiss me just like that, forever.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- In the car, I can still recall that moment—the touch of her lips against my own, the sense of excitement and pure wonder as I hold her in my arms. But suddenly the world begins to **spin**. Hard spins, as if I'm on a **runaway roller coaster**, and all at once, Ruth **vanishes** from my arms.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 1

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- Instead, my head presses hard against the **steering wheel** and I blink rapidly, willing the world to stop spinning. I need water, sure that a **single sip** will be enough to stop it. But there is no water and I **succumb** to the **dizziness** before everything **goes black**.



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