

Закр́тый клуб

# Читаем вместе по-английски

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



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# **Lesson 13**

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**The Longest Ride**

*Chapter 5, Part 2*

# The Longest Ride

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## Chapter 5, Part 2



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- When I wake, the world comes back slowly. I **squint** in the darkness, but Ruth is no longer in the passenger seat beside me. I **am desperate to have her back**. I concentrate, trying to **conjure** her image, but nothing comes and my throat **seems to** close in on itself.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- Looking back, Ruth had been right about the changes in me. That summer, the world had changed and I understood that any time I spent with Ruth should **be regarded as precious**. War, **after all**, was everywhere. Japan and China **had been at war** for four years, and throughout the spring of 1941, more countries **had fallen to** the Wehrmacht, **including** Yugoslavia and Greece.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- The English **had retreated in the face of** Rommel's Afrika Korps **all the way to** Egypt. The Suez Canal **was threatened,** and though I didn't know it then, German **panzers** and **infantry were in position to lead the imminent invasion** of Russia. I wondered how long America's isolation would last.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- I **had never dreamed of being** a soldier; I **had never fired a gun**. I was not, nor ever had been, a **fighter** of any sort, **but even so**, I loved my country, and I spent much of that year trying to imagine a future **distorted by** war. And I wasn't alone in trying to **come to grips with** this new world.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- Over the summer, my father read two or three newspapers a day and listened to the radio continuously; my mother **volunteered** for the Red Cross. Ruth's parents were especially frightened, and I often found them huddled at the table, **speaking in low voices**. They had not heard from anyone in their family for months.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- It was **because of** the war, others would whisper. But even in North Carolina, **rumors** had begun to **circulate** about what was happening to the Jews in Poland.
- **Despite** the fears and whispers of war, or maybe **because of** them, I always regarded the summer of 1941 as my last summer of **innocence**.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- It was the summer in which Ruth and I spent nearly all our free time together, **falling ever more deeply in love**. She would visit me in the shop or I would visit her at the factory—she answered phones for her uncle that summer—and in the evenings, we would **stroll** beneath the stars.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- Every Sunday, we picnicked in the park near our home, nothing **extravagant**, just enough to **hold us over** until we had dinner together later. In the evenings, she would sometimes come to my parents' home or I would visit hers, where we would listen to classical music on the phonograph.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- When the summer **drew to a close** and Ruth **boarded the train** for Massachusetts, I **retreated** to a corner of the station, my face in my hands, because I knew that nothing would **ever be the same**. I knew the time was coming when I would eventually **be called up to fight**.
- And a few months later, on December 7, 1941, I was proven right.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- Throughout the night, I continue to **fade in** and **out**. The wind and snow **remain constant**. In those moments when I am awake, I wonder if it will ever be light; I wonder if I will ever see a sunrise again. But mostly I continue to concentrate on the past, hoping that Ruth will **reappear**. Without her, I think to myself, I am already dead.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- When I graduated in May 1942, I returned home, but I did not recognize the shop. Where once there were suits hanging from the **racks out front**, there were thirty sewing machines and thirty women, making uniforms for the military. **Bolts** of heavy **cloth** were arriving **twice a day**, filling the back room **entirely**.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- The space **next door**, which had been vacant for years, had been taken over by my father, and that space was large enough to house sixty sewing machines. My mother **oversaw** production while my father worked the phones, **kept the books**, and **ensured** delivery to the army and marine bases that **were springing up** throughout the South.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- I knew I **was about to be drafted**. My **order number** was low enough to make selection **inevitable**, and that meant either the army or the **marines, battles** in the **trenches**. The brave were drawn to do such things, but as I mentioned, I was not brave. **On the train ride home**, I'd already decided to **enlist** in the U.S. **Army Air Corps**. **Somehow**, the idea of fighting in the air seemed less frightening than fighting on the ground.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- In time, however, I would be proven wrong about this.
- On the evening I arrived home, I told my parents as we stood in the kitchen. My mother immediately began to **wring her hands**. My father said nothing, but later, as he **jotted entries** into his **bookkeeping ledger**, I thought I saw the **gleam** of **moisture** in his eyes.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- I **had** also **come to another decision**. Before Ruth returned to Greensboro, I met with her father, and I told him how much his daughter meant to me. Two days later, I drove her parents to the station just as I had the **previous year**. Again, I let them greet her first, and again, I took Ruth out to dinner.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- It was there, while eating in a **largely** empty restaurant, that I told her my plans. **Unlike** my parents, she **didn't shed a tear**. Not then.
- I didn't bring her home right away. Instead, after dinner we went to the park, near the spot where we'd shared so many picnics. It was a **moonless** night, and the lights in the park **had been shut off**. As I slipped my hand into hers, I could barely **make out her features**.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- I touched the ring in my pocket, the one I had told her father I wanted to offer his daughter. I had debated long about this, not because I wasn't sure about my own **intentions**, but because I wasn't sure about hers. But I **was in love with** her, and **heading off to** war, and I wanted to know she would be here when I returned.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- **Dropping to one knee,** I told her how much she meant to me. I told her that I couldn't imagine life without her, and I **asked her to be my wife.** As I **spoke the words,** I offered Ruth the ring. She didn't say anything **right away,** and I'd be lying if I said I wasn't scared in that moment. But then, reading my thoughts, she took the ring and **slipped it on** before reaching for my hand. I **rose,** standing before her under a **star-filled** sky. She slipped her arms around me.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “Yes,” she whispered. We stood together, just the two of us, holding each other for what seemed like hours. Even now, almost seventy years later, I can feel her warmth despite the **chill** in the car. I **can smell** her perfume, something floral and **delicate**. I **draw a long breath**, trying to **hold on to** it, just as I held on to her that night.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- Later, our arms **entwined**, we **strolled** through the park, talking about our future together. Her voice **brimmed** with love and excitement, yet it is this part of the evening that has always filled me with regret. I am reminded of the man I was never able to be; of the dreams that never **came true**.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- As I feel the familiar wave of shame **wash over** me, I catch the scent of her perfume **once more**. It is stronger now, and **it occurs to me** that it's not a memory, that I can **smell** it in the car. I am afraid to open my eyes, but I do so anyway. **At first**, everything is blurry and dark and I wonder if I will be able to see anything at all.



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- But then, finally, I see her. She is **translucent, ghostlike** again, but it is Ruth. She is here—she came back to me, I think—and my heart **surges** inside my chest. I want to **reach for** her, to take her in my arms, but I know this is impossible, so I concentrate instead. I try to bring her into better focus, and as my eyes adjust, I notice that her dress is the color of cream, with **ruffles** down the front.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- It is the dress she wore the night I proposed.
- But Ruth is not happy with me. “No, Ira,” she suddenly says. There is no mistaking the warning in her tone. “We must not talk about this. The dinner, yes. The proposal, yes. But not this.”
- Even now, I can’t believe she’s come back. “I know it **makes you sad–,**” I begin.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “It does not make me sad,” she **objects**. “You are the one who **is sad over** this. You have carried this sadness with you ever since that night. I should never have said the things I did.”
- “But you did.”
- At this, she **bows** her head. Her hair, unlike mine, is brown and thick, rich with the possibilities of life.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “That was the first night I told you that I loved you,” she says. “I told you that I wanted to marry you. I promised that I would **wait for** you and that we would marry as soon as you returned.”
- “But that’s not all you said...”
- “It is the only thing that matters,” she says, lifting her chin.
- “We were happy, yes? For all the years we were together?”
- “Yes.”

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “And you loved me?”
- “Always.”
- “Then I want you to hear what I am saying to you, Ira,” she says, her **impatience** barely **in check**. She **leans forward**. “I never once regretted that we married. You made me happy and you made me laugh, and if I could do it all over again, I would not **hesitate**.”

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- Look at our life, at the trips we took, the adventures we had. As your father **used to say**, we shared the longest ride together, this thing called life, and mine has been filled with joy because of you.
- Unlike other couples, we did not even argue." "We argued," I **protest.**

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “Not real arguments,” she **insists**. “Not the kind that mean anything. Yes, I would **become upset** when you forgot to **take out the garbage**, but that is not a real argument. That is nothing. It **passes like a leaf blown by** the window. It is over and done and it is forgotten quickly.”
- “You forget—”

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “I remember,” she says, **cutting me off**, knowing what I was about to say. “But we found a way to heal. Together. Just as we always did.”
- Despite her words, I still feel the regret, a **deep-seated ache** I’ve carried with me forever.
- “I’m sorry,” I finally say. “I want you to know that I’ve always been sorry.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “Do not say these things,” she says, her voice **beginning to crack.**
- **“I can’t help it.** We talked for hours that night.”
- “Yes,” she admits. “We talked about the summers we spent together. We talked about school, we talked about the fact that you would one day **take over your father’s shop.**”

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- And later that night, when I was at home, I **lay awake** in bed looking at the ring for hours. The next morning, I showed it to my mother and she was happy for me. Even my father **was pleased.**"
- I know she's trying to **distract** me, but **it does no good.** I continue to **stare at** her. "We also talked about you that night. About your dreams."

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- When I say this, Ruth **turns away**. “Yes,” she says. “We talked about my dreams.”
- “You told me that you planned to become a teacher and that we’d buy a house that **was close to** both of our parents.”
- “Yes.”
- “And you said that we would travel. We would visit New York and Boston, maybe even Vienna.”

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “Yes,” she says again.
- I close my eyes, feeling the weight of an ancient sorrow. “And you told me you wanted children. That more than anything, you wanted to be a mother. You wanted two girls and two boys, because you always wanted a home like that of your cousins, which was busy and noisy all the time.”

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- You **used to love to visit** them because you were always happy there. You wanted this more than anything.”
- At this, her shoulders **seem to sag** and she turns toward me.
- “Yes,” she whispers, “I admit I wanted these things.”

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- The words nearly **break my heart**, and I feel something crumble inside me. The truth is often a terrible thing, and I wish again that I were someone else. But it is too late now, too late to change anything. I am old and alone and I'm dying a little more with each passing hour. I'm tired, more tired than I've ever been.

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “You should have married another man,” I whisper.
- She shakes her head, and in an act of kindness that reminds me of our life together, she **inches** closer to me. **Gently**, she traces a finger along my jaw and then **kisses the top of my head**. “I could never have another,” she says. “And we are done talking about this. You need to rest now. You need to sleep again.”

# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “No,” I **mumble**. I try to shake my head but can’t, the agony making it impossible. “I want to **stay awake**. I want to be with you.”
- “Do not worry. I will be here when you wake.”
- “But you were gone before.”



# The Longest Ride

## Chapter 5 – Ira – Part 2

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- “I was not gone. I was here and I will always be here.”
- “How can you be so sure?”
- She kisses me again before answering. “Because,” she says, her voice tender, “I am always with you, Ira.”

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