



## The Last Song

by Nicholas Sparks

### Reading Group Guide

1. Ronnie is a difficult teenager who is prone to acting out and is alienated from both her parents at the start of the novel. Were you rebellious as a teenager? How was this manifested? On the other side, have you ever had to deal with a rebellious teenager? Did Ronnie's behavior touch a nerve?
2. What do you think about the very different approaches to parenting taken by Ronnie's mother and father? Do you think Ronnie's mother is too intrusive or can you understand her relationship with Ronnie? Do you think Ronnie's father is too absent, or can you understand why the relationship is the way it is?
3. Early in the novel we learn that Ronnie was a piano prodigy who performed at Carnegie Hall when she was thirteen. However, when we meet Ronnie she hasn't played in many years and she's sworn to never play the piano again. Why does Ronnie feel this way? Who do you think Ronnie hurts more by not playing the piano, herself or her father?
4. Reflecting back on his life, Steve wonders: "Was it still possible for someone like him to experience the presence of God?" Why does Steve ask himself this? What role do religion and belief play in this novel? How would you characterize Steve's religious faith?
5. Why does Will fall for Ronnie? Can you understand the attraction from both Ronnie's and Will's point of view?
6. What do you make of Blaze? How would you characterize her relationship with Marcus? Have you ever been in a relationship that was not particularly healthy? Did you stay in the relationship? If so, why?
7. Ronnie and Will fall in love very quickly over the course of the summer. Have you ever had a summer romance that became something more than a fling?
8. This novel is, in large part, about loyalty and trust. Which characters exhibit the most trustworthiness and which exhibit the least? How does a betrayal of trust affect various relationships within the novel?
9. In the middle of the novel, Will asks Ronnie how far she would go to protect a friend. Why does Will ask Ronnie this? How far would you go to protect a friend?
10. How are Jonah and Ronnie affected by their parents' divorce? What effect does divorce have on children, in your experience?
11. Both Will and Ronnie come from families that have certain expectations of them. How do these familial expectations shape them and in what ways do they reject these expectations?
12. Why does Ronnie get angry at Will toward the end of the novel? Do you think her anger is justified?
13. What do you think of the choices Steve and Kim make as parents? Do you think they were right in keeping certain things secret from their children?
14. Ronnie makes an important choice at the end of the novel. Would you have made the same choice if you were in her position?

15. In what ways does Ronnie change over the course of the novel? In what ways does she stay the same?