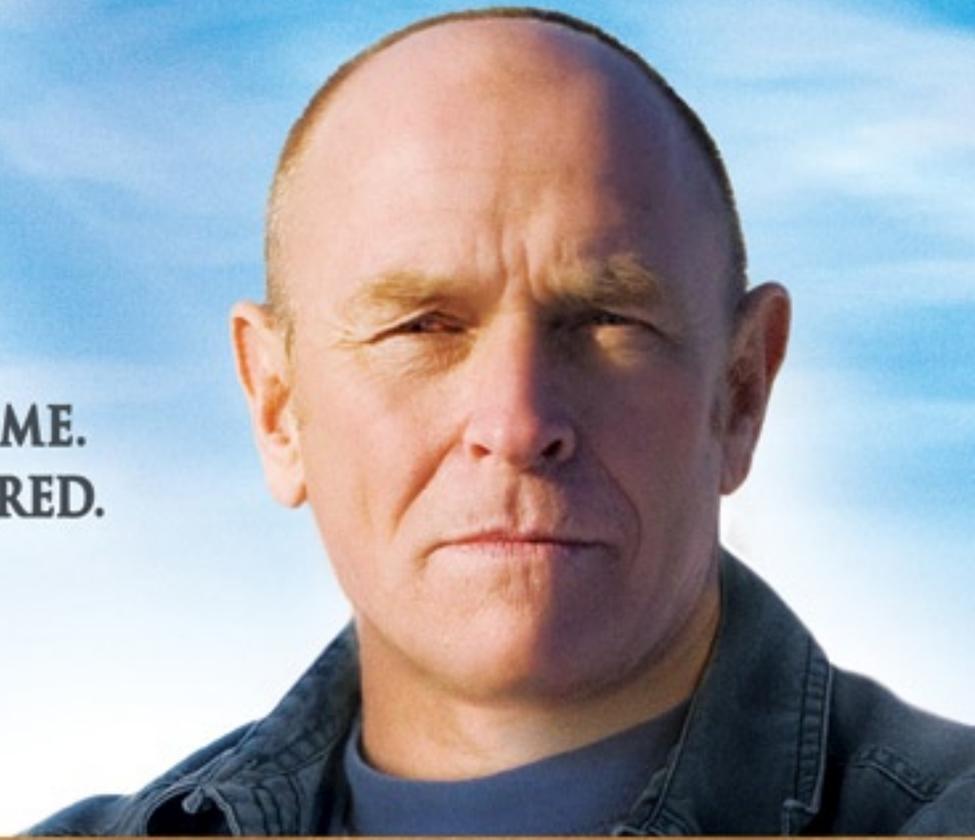


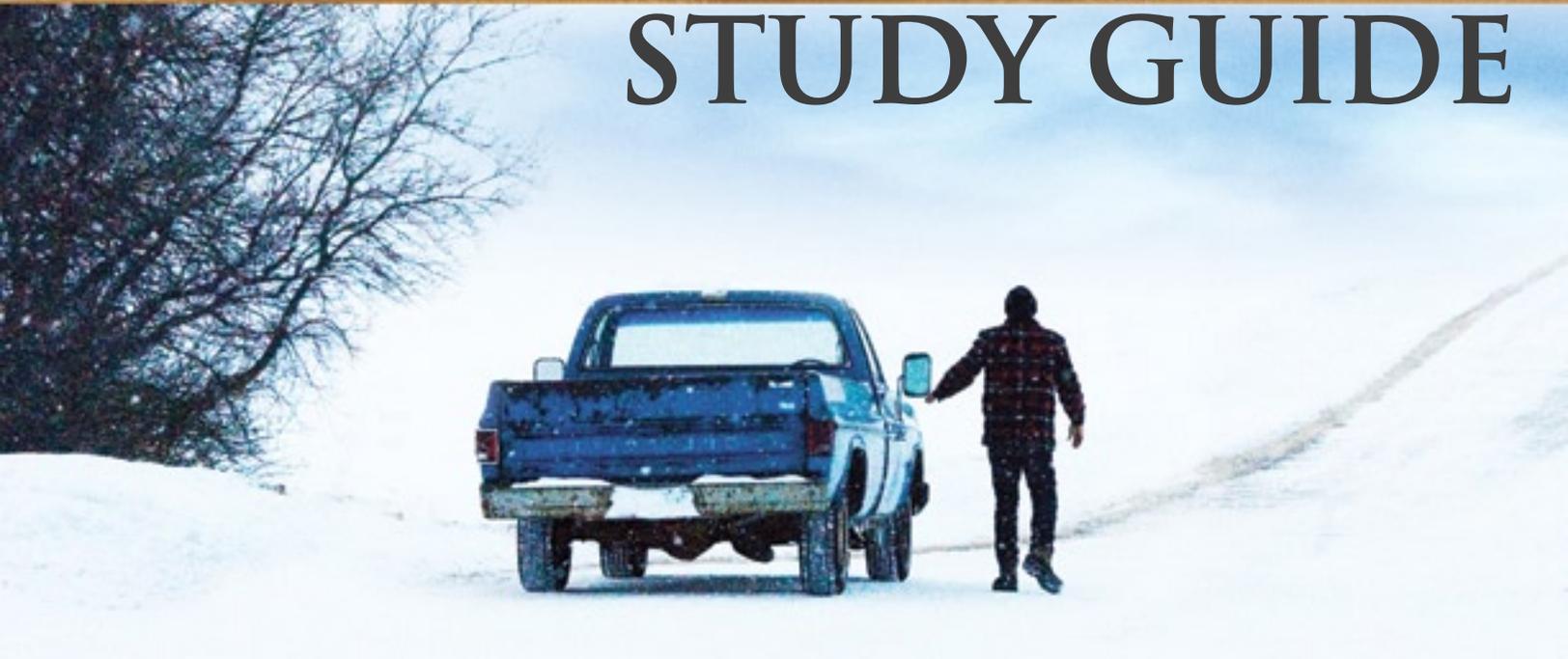
C O R B I N B E R N S E N

A JOURNEY HOME.  
A FAITH RESTORED.



R U S T

STUDY GUIDE





# RUST

## A Journey Home. A Faith Restored.

Thanks to his starring role in the television show “L.A. Law,” Corbin Bernsen is a well-known and popular actor. In addition to his work in front of the camera, he also has found a creative outlet as a writer, director, and producer of independent films.

**RUST**, a new mystery of faith, may be Corbin’s most personal project to date. Set in the real-life Canadian town of Kipling, Saskatchewan (and featuring local citizens in prominent roles), **RUST** was inspired by the spiritual journey that Corbin has been traveling since his father passed away. The film is even dedicated to his dad.

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## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Challenging themes abound within the story of **RUST**, providing small groups and individuals with the opportunity to dig deeper into what the Bible says about these topics. Use clips from the film as a key ingredient in this five-part study.

To use this study:

- Download this eight-page study booklet. You have the choice of the full-color version or the black-and-white version. (Remember: if you’re using this with a group, be sure to print enough copies for every member)
- Use the DVD time code highlighted on each study to play that particular scene from the movie.
- Read the key passage.
- Read and answer the study questions. Feel free to journal the answers in a notebook as you prepare to answer the questions with your group.

**NOTE:** This study was created for people that have seen **RUST**. If you have not yet seen the film, some key elements of the story are revealed in the study.

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**Scene:** James announces he can no longer keep going on. (1:07-2:30)

**Key Passage:** “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)

The movie opens with James Moore “resigning” his job. We hear him sharing how he doesn’t feel he can do this any more because there’s not a mutually strong relationship. But it’s not a typical boss to whom he is speaking. Instead, it is an iconic image of Jesus. We quickly grasp why this is such a difficult decision; until now, James Moore has been a pastor.

He’s having a midlife crisis and it’s affecting his faith ... call it a midlife crisis of faith! A man called to lead others to a strong and growing faith has hit a roadblock so challenging that he feels he can no longer continue his journey. The love he once knew to be reciprocal has faded away. Before leaving, James apologizes for his lack of faith.

When active and alive, faith can be a driving force in how we live and how we impact the lives of others. When we struggle with the “why?” questions of this world, it’s not uncommon for our faith to waver.

Yet as the key passage reminds us, God promises to keep working in our lives even when we choose to wrestle with him. That’s a promise we can hold on to, no matter what questions arise along the journey.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

We all go through times when we’re ready to give up on work, school, or a key relationship. Have you ever given up on someone or something important? Why? What was the result?

Part of this passage reminds us that God began a good work in you. What does that mean in general? How does that play out in your life?

Despite the promises of this verse, there are times when we are ready to toss in the towel on our faith. Describe a time you did that (or almost did). What were the results of your decision?

Do you have a friend struggling with their faith? Can this verse encourage them to stay strong? Does this verse encourage you even when your faith is solid?



**Scene:** Pastor Barrow shares a story with Jimmy. (35:01-37:30)

**Key Passage:** “Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith. Grace be with you.” 1 Timothy 6:20-21

In this passage and in countless similar ones, we see the apostle Paul encouraging his younger friend to stay true to his faith. Throughout Paul’s letters to Timothy, we see a strong mentoring bond between them.

After leaving the pastorate, Jimmy Moore returns to his boyhood hometown. Despite changing locations, he hasn’t come close to leaving his worries behind. Not only is he still wrestling with his decision to leave his ministry, he now must deal with his boyhood friend Travis admitting to starting a fatal fire.

In Jimmy’s darkest hour, an old friend reaches out to him: the pastor who helped inspire him toward a life in ministry. As any good mentor will do, Pastor Barrow sits down with Jimmy and listens intently as his protégé pours out his heartfelt concerns.

Seeing a teachable moment, the older pastor shares a story from his youth, a cat-and-dog parable if you will. In case Jimmy isn’t following, he sums up his teaching succinctly: “Have patience ... have faith ... God has not forsaken you.”

It’s a message that begins to sink in. Even as he is still struggling with his faith, Jimmy reaches out to the hurting teens in his town, offering to be there for them. After all, as Paul illustrated, the role of a mentor is an important one.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Have you ever felt like God has forsaken you? Why is it so hard to have patience and faith during those times?

Did you ever have a mentor (either formal or informal)? If so, how has that relationship impacted you? If not, is it something you sought? Why or why not?

One of the key things Pastor Barrow does is just listen. He doesn’t belittle Jimmy’s concerns or try to change his friend’s mind. Why is it so important to have someone that will listen to us? Who is the best listener in your world? Are you a good listener?

Just as important as having a good mentor is being a mentor for the next generation. Have you taken time to build into someone younger than you? If so, how has that experience been? If not, what is stopping you?

**Scene:** After Jimmy visits the rubble he and Travis argue. (42:01-43:30)

**Key Passage:** “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28

The Pierce family emigrates from England to begin a new life working the land. The joy they find in their new home helps revitalize a community that has seen its better days. One fateful night, however, sends the community to the brink as they are forced to bury the Pierces ... and the hope they had brought with them.

Now, the town’s most misunderstood character has taken the blame for the fatal fire. While there is a sense of good riddance, the town’s pain and sorrow only continues to intensify as a troubled teen takes his own life.

God working for good? What about the family that loved God, but died in their home? What about the people in the town?

In the midst of life’s most challenging struggles, it’s commonplace to ask questions: Where is God in all of this? Can good come from tragedy? Can God really work all things for the good of those who love him?

These are the types of questions with which former pastor Jimmy Moore is wrestling. As he argues with his friend Travis to get to the bottom of the mysterious fire, Travis shares a simple truth onto which he is holding as he sits in a holding cell:

“God has His plan. You should know that better than anyone.”

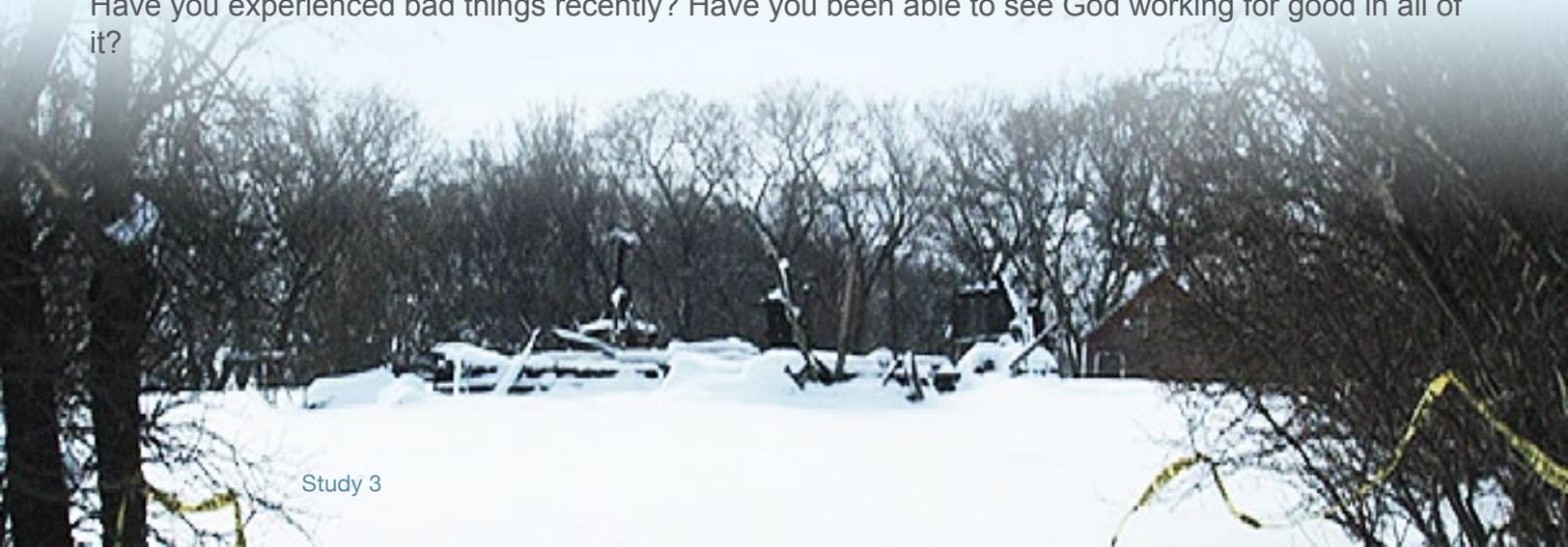
## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

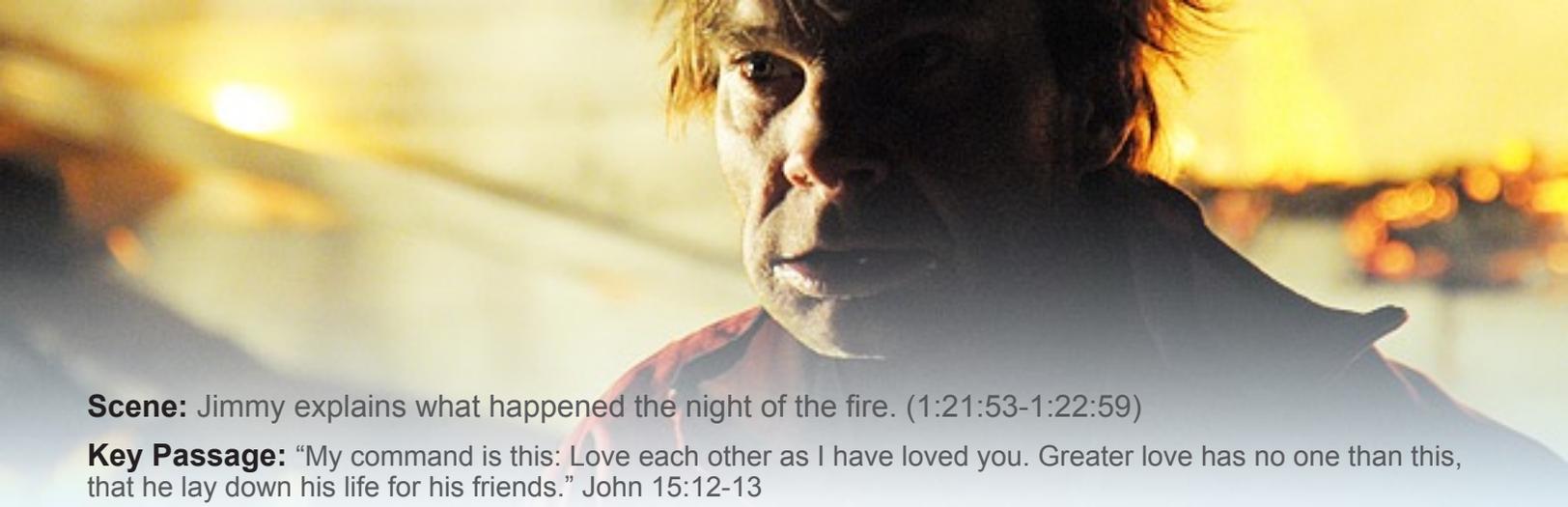
Picture yourself living in this town, and reading this passage from Romans. In the aftermath of so many tragedies, could you believe it to be true? Why or why not?

Does Romans 8:28 promise that only good things will come to God’s people? Why or why not? What examples have you seen that support your view?

What is a recent example of something bad happening to someone good? How do you respond when you’re asked, “Where is God when that happens?”

Have you experienced bad things recently? Have you been able to see God working for good in all of it?





**Scene:** Jimmy explains what happened the night of the fire. (1:21:53-1:22:59)

**Key Passage:** “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:12-13

As we witness the fire consuming the remains of the old farmhouse, we hear Jimmy describe what he believes happened upon Travis’ arrival on the scene that fateful night. From the beginning, Jimmy has been convinced of his friend’s innocence; now he has finally been able convince the people that matter most.

While Jimmy accurately recreates that night’s timeline, a key piece of the puzzle remains missing: why did Travis take the blame for something he didn’t do? It’s a variation of the question that has consumed Jimmy since he returned to town: Why? Why is God not answering? Why do bad things happen in the world? Why, God?

While Jimmy has some thoughts about Travis’ motivation, it takes the deep reflections of Amanda to make sense of the situation. The teenager is the one person perhaps most impacted by the fire’s aftermath. Already mourning the loss of her friend in the fire, she is left reeling when her boyfriend later takes his life.

What must she be going through? She is often silent and sullen. Finally, she speaks up: “He sacrificed himself for us. He was saving us.”

With that observation, the true mystery has been solved. Case closed. Travis took compassion on the town’s young people and kept their secret safe ... even at the expense of his name and his freedom.

“Greater love has no one ...”

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Has there been a time when you’ve wrestled with life’s biggest question: Why? What were the circumstances? Where did you find comfort in your anguish?

What did you think of Travis’ decision to “sacrifice” himself for the good of the town’s young people? Under what circumstances would you willingly take the blame for a friend? Would there ever be a time you’d do so for people that aren’t your friends?

After Jesus on the Cross, what is the next best example you’ve seen or heard of someone laying down their life for a friend?

Even if you never are in a situation where you would literally have to lay down your life for a friend, can John 15 still impact the way you live? How would your life look differently? How can you better serve your friends ... and other people God puts in your pathway?



**Scene:** Pastor James Moore returns to the pulpit (1:27:51-1:29:10)

**Key Passage:** “Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.” 1 Corinthians 13:12

The movie begins with Pastor James Moore pouring out his heart to Jesus, explaining why he is leaving his life’s calling. It comes full circle as Pastor James Moore is seen at the end passionately sharing what he has learned during his faith struggle in his hometown church packed with family and friends.

“All too often, we get ... so knotted up in the threads of our life that we forget to look at the bigger picture—the entire weaving of His fabric. ... That’s the way God works; not thread by thread, but by the entire weaving of His warmth and being.”

Jimmy Moore was ready to give up on his ministry. Pastor Barrow believed in him.

The teens were afraid their terrible truth would be discovered. Travis believed that they could still make an impact in the world.

Travis was ready to give up on his freedom. Jimmy believed that Travis was innocent.

All too often, in the midst of strife and turmoil, we cannot clearly see the road we are on. Instead, we find ourselves willing to give up. Yet Paul exhorts us to not give up, because God believes in us. One day, when we see Him face to face, we will understand.

That day, we will fully know.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

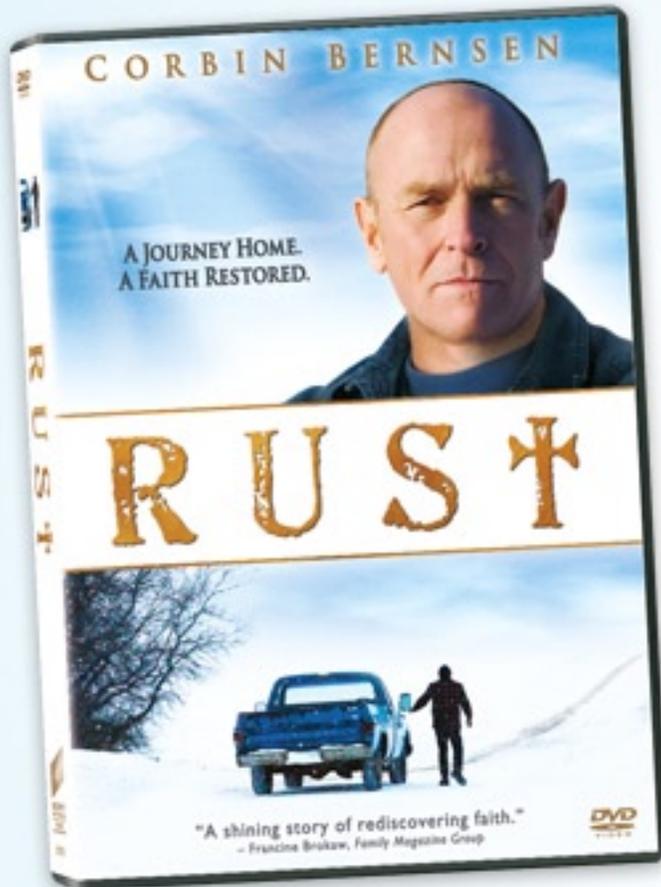
When you are traveling, do you look forward to reaching your destination, or do you enjoy the journey along the way? Is one more important than the other? Why?

We all want to know what the future holds, so why do you think God doesn’t provide us with that information ahead of time? If you could ask God only one question (okay, maybe two) about your life and what the future holds, what would you ask?

Jimmy sees clearly now what God was teaching him during his struggles. Share a time when you were able to see the full tapestry of the events only afterward. Could you see God’s hand in all of it?

What do you look forward to knowing about God in the future? What do you think it will be like when you see God face to face?

# RUST



## A Journey Home. A Faith Restored.

As a midlife crisis of faith rocks his life's calling, former minister James Moore returns to his small hometown to find it reeling from a recent tragedy. Can he get to the bottom of a mysterious fire and clear his boyhood friend Travis?

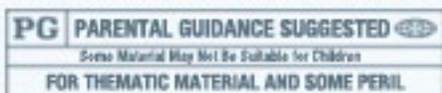
A unique story of friendship and calling, **RUST** is a mystery that will leave you seeking the power of grace, the beauty in sacrifice, and the hope of faith renewed.

**"CORBIN BERNSEN HAS CRAFTED AN ABSORBINGLY HUMAN MYSTERY ... BOTH IN THE STORY OF RUST, AND BY TRANSFORMING SMALL-TOWN CANADIANS INTO A HOLLYWOOD-CALIBER CAST."**

GREG WRIGHT, HOLLYWOODJESUS.COM

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R U S T M O V I E . C O M



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