



Night Train

David Quantick

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In David Quantick's horror comedy *Night Train*, a woman wakes on a train with no idea how she got there—or, worse: who she is.

As she explores her surroundings, the woman encounters a room full of dead bodies; the only other living person on the train seems to be Banks, a strange man who refers to her as Garland. Garland's memory returns in fits and starts as she and Banks explore the train's cars, each one more bizarre than the last.

Banks and Garland are joined by Poppy, a girl who seems to be indestructible and who saves them from being killed by a monster as terrifying as it is alien. The threesome make a pact to get off of the bizarre, dangerous train.

Startling and with relentless thrills, the book's atmosphere becomes more threatening in time with Garland's slow discovery of who she is and where she came from. Short chapters and punchy dialogue ensure that each revelation is tense. Details about the world outside of the train come at ideal intervals, each revealing just enough of the puzzle to keep the story barreling forward.

Though it is ominous and frightening, there is also lightness to the book. Its characters have dark senses of humor. Though they are limited by the confines of their environment, their true natures are revealed through their entertaining inner monologues and comprehensive flashbacks. Garland's biting wit sustains her and her companions even when the circumstances are dire, as when she facetiously calls for the check following an unappreciated comment. Comic relief helps to temper the book's scares.

At times horrifying, at other times laugh-out-loud funny, and always entertaining, *Night Train* is a ride unlike any other.

ANGELA MCQUAY (May / June 2020)

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