

## Blu-Ray Review: Odd 'Night Train' With Steve Zahn, Leelee Sobieski

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on July 20, 2009 - 4:37pm

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CHICAGO – M. Brian King's "Night Train," starring Danny Glover, Steve Zahn, and Leelee Sobieski and now available on Blu-Ray and DVD, is one of the most anthology-esque films I've ever seen. It feels like an extended, unaired episode of a syndicated anthology show like "The Outer Limits" (remake, not original) or "Friday the 13th". You'll notice I didn't compare it to "The Twilight Zone" or even "Amazing Stories". It's not that good.



Blu-Ray Rating: **2.0/5.0**

"Night Train" is a B-movie in every way, from the "what if" set-up right down to the awful CGI shots of the exterior of the train (a baffling decision that deflates any attempt at realism of the piece every few minutes). It's a 91-minute feature that could have crammed the same plot into a 44-minute TV episode (and probably ended up more effective from the editing).



Night Train was released on Blu-Ray on July 7th, 2009.

Photo credit: E1/NEM

The opening act of "Night Train" is a promising one. A conductor and two passengers on an overnight train find themselves in an unusual, life-changing predicament. A man has just died in the rear car that the two passengers (Steve Zahn & Leelee Sobieski) share. The conductor (Danny Glover) and his two passengers discover a mysterious box among his possessions and they see something remarkable in it that they want to keep for themselves.

What length would you go to for unimaginable wealth? And would you be willing to share it with two complete strangers? There's enough dramatic material there for an interesting thriller and I liked the set-up of "Night Train," but when King tries to get deep, his project goes off the track. It turns out that the box is supernatural. Why? Why not just make a thriller? Instead, King has to take it a step further, as if his film is trying to say something about the evil desires of all mankind. It doesn't work and the long second and third act feel padded out to meet a running time that the filmmaker can't quite justify.

The Blu-Ray release of "Night Train" looks good-not-great in 1080i with a widescreen presentation. It's hard to say if it's the cinematography or the transfer, but "Night Train" looks surprisingly "fake" and I wonder if less polish wouldn't have improved the film. The train doesn't feel lived in and the characters look too crisp and clean, always looking more like actors than actual people.

Special features on "Night Train" include an interesting behind-the-scenes featurette about the making of the film, interviews, a photo gallery, and the trailer.

I've always been a supporter of independent, unheralded thrillers. It's the reason I wanted to check out "Night Train" in the first place. No one's more disappointed that this train doesn't make it to the station on time.

*'Night Train' is released by National Entertainment Media and stars Danny Glover, Leelee Sobieski, and Steve Zahn. It was written and directed by M. Brian King. The Blu-Ray and DVD were released on July 7th, 2009. It is rated R.*



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