

SCENE STUDIO

The Night Train

No signal out here.

Two strangers, one sleeper compartment, and eight hours until the border.

SOMEWHERE ELSE, WITHOUT GOING ANYWHERE

The Idea

Tonight, your couch becomes a sleeper compartment on an overnight train.

You board separately. Two strangers, new names, one shared compartment.

The wheels clack. The dark goes by. There's no signal out here.

You trade snacks from paper bags, play cards by lamplight, and ask the questions people only ask strangers on night trains.

Around midnight, the train stops at the border. Everything goes quiet.

And one of you will have to get off before morning...

The Compartment

- **The sound, first:** before anyone boards, start a "night train ambience" track (free on YouTube or any sleep-sounds app): the steady clack of the wheels, the low hum of the carriage. Keep it playing, quietly, all night. Close your eyes and you're on a train.
- **The berths:** the couch or bed, with two blankets and two pillows. A small table or tray in between.
- **The window:** a laptop or TV playing a "night train window" video with the sound off, every light off except one small lamp.
- **The door:** shut it. The one who boards second knocks.
- Phones in a drawer. This train doesn't stop for notifications.

Props

- **Two tickets and the question card** (copy the cards below onto paper)
- **A pen** for the tickets
- **A paper bag each**, packed in secret: one snack, one drink, one small surprise for the stranger
- **A deck of cards**
- **A small lamp or flashlight**
- **A travel look:** a coat or scarf to board in, and a bag over the shoulder
- **A thermos of tea or a bottle of wine** with two cups, not glasses. Trains are like that.

The Ticket

Fill in your own before boarding. Don't show the other passenger. Everything on it is true for tonight only.

Stuck? A musician on the way to an audition. Someone delivering a letter by hand. A person who quit their job this morning.

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NIGHT SERVICE · Car 7 · Berth A / B

Name tonight: _____

Travelling to: _____

Reason for the trip: _____

One thing in my bag I won't explain: _____

Questions for Strangers

Leave it on the tray between the berths. Any question may be answered with "Ask me at the next station."

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Before the border

Where are you really going?

What are you leaving behind?

What did you want to be when you were ten?

What's the thing in your bag you won't explain?

After the border

Who's waiting for you at the other end?

What's something you've never said out loud?

If this train never stopped, where should it go?

What would you do if you missed your stop?

The Script

A script to get you started. Improv once you're in.

How to play. Read the lines as they're written; nobody has to be a good actor on a night train. Answer in character, but let the truth leak in. The other passenger's lines are optional: they can board knowing nothing but the ticket.

BOARDING

One of you is settled in, reading by the lamp. The other knocks, bag on shoulder, ticket in hand.

"Sorry, I think this is my berth. Car 7?"

"It is. Looks like we're neighbors for the night."

Introduce yourselves with tonight's names. Shake hands. Strangers do that.

"I should warn you, I talk in my sleep." / "Then I'll finally learn something about you."

MORE LINES "Do you mind the window side? I like to watch the dark go by."

THE PAPER BAGS

An hour out of the station, someone gets hungry.

"I packed too much. Do you want half?"

Hand over the surprise: *"I think this was meant for you."*

"So, where are you going?" Answer from your ticket.

QUESTIONS AND CARDS

The lamp is low and the train rocks a little. Take turns with the *Before the border* questions, then play any card game you know. The loser answers the winner's question.

"The real reason I'm on this train is..."

"You're cheating." / "I'm a stranger. You can't prove anything."

MORE LINES "Strangers always tell me..." · "Double or nothing: the loser tells a story they've never told anyone."

THE BORDER

Around midnight, pause the train sound and the video. The silence says it: the train has stopped at the border.

| *"We'll be stuck here a while."* (Whisper it.)

| *"Then we have time."*

Share one blanket. Sit closer than strangers do. Turn to the *After the border* questions.

| *"If you weren't a stranger, I'd tell you..."*

Start the sound again. The wheels pick up their rhythm; the train moves on.

THE LAST STOP

One of you checks the window.

| *"This is my station."*

Write something on the back of your ticket and hand it over.

| *"Will I see you again?" / "Same train. Same car. Next month."*

A kiss at the door, or a long look before it closes.

Next journey: swap tickets, or meet again as the same two strangers.

Your Own Questions

Write the questions only you would ask this stranger. Mix them in with ours, or replace them all.

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Questions for Strangers · Your edition

Question 1: _____

Question 2: _____

Question 3: _____

Question 4: _____

Question 5: _____

Question 6: _____

Question 7: _____

Question 8: _____



SCENE STUDIO

Somewhere else,
without going anywhere.

A new identity, a room transformed, a few simple props.
New scenes every month.

myscenestudio.com

This scene was made for the two of you. Please keep it that way.