

## RUNNING TRAIN (FILM TREATMENT)



The movie takes place in an alienated world, much like our own. A post-covid America with crumbling infrastructure, its people regulated to their isolated apartment, cut off from each other both physically and politically. They subconsciously thirst for a communitarian catharsis, which manifests within people's psyches as strange new desires. A newly elected politician tries to tap into this latent collective desire through the promotion of a new high-speed rail, a bullet train that would connect the east coast to the west, a symbol of hope in an age of cynicism and distrust. Adverts detailing the train's bizarre, almost organic-like design are plastered across city billboards, the commercials playing on-loop via sponsored TikToks. The train begins to burrow itself into the public imagination.

Our protagonist is a lonely train conductor. From an early age he's had an inexplicable attraction toward trains and has aptly chosen a profession that allows him to ride the rail on

the daily. He lives alone and has very few social connections. He tries his hand at dating but finds it difficult to relate to others, wary of physical touch, sexual or otherwise. His world is turned upside down when a female train passenger seduces him, convincing him to make love to her in an empty passenger car. His love of trains and latent desire for human connection fuse together as one in this moment, experiencing something akin to a religious ecstasy.

This femme-fatale passenger happens to be a part of a train fetish group. She introduces our protagonist to the underground world of anthro-vehicle obsessives, those who anthropomorphize machinery such as planes, trains, and automobiles, lusting over their projected images. The group's latest object of desire is the proposed high-speed rail, unable to shake the train's bizarre, phallic-like design from their sexual fantasies. The group is led by a former Navy Seal who wants to break into the train and stowaway within the storage car. So that they can ride the rail in secret, during its upcoming test run, and feel its power.



At first our protagonist is heartened to have found his people, a community of like-minded train fanatics. He's also starting to fall in love with the female passenger. They conduct sexual experiments with one another involving trains. They have sex in between the cars on a subway, as it runs through the tunnel. They fuck on rusty tracks as an oncoming freight train races toward them. They roll out of harm's way at the last second. These heightened encounters only increase their feelings for one another. And they realize this menage-a-trois element is an essential ingredient of their charged eroticism. It must always be the two of them and a train. Their high-speed Holy Other.

The protagonist-conductor soon takes notice of the more sinister elements within the anthro-train group. A penchant for destruction is apparent in some of the members. A not-so-subtle death drive is palpable amongst them. There are talks of procuring explosives, expressed fantasies of trains colliding against each other, bursting into flames while at top-speeds. Our protagonist voices his concern to the female passenger. She breaks down immediately, unable to lie any longer, and admits to him that the group's true plan is to plant a bomb on the high-speed rail, an ultimate manifestation of sex with the inanimate vehicle. An act of terror as stand-in for sexual intercourse. The female passenger was initially on-board with the group's violent plan, that is until her relationship with the protagonist caused her to reevaluate her extremist ways. She's now come to see the train as a sanctuary, a place of true intimacy. Not a phallus to be destroyed, but a maternal womb to be protected. The conductor and the passenger set about finding a way to sabotage the anthro group's destruction plot.

A few nights later. The group breaks into the railway warehouse where the high-speed train is being stored, using security codes procured by the protagonist (there is an implication here, that the conductor was seduced by the female passenger and brought into the group specifically for the procurement of these access codes). They spend the night within the dormant train, awaiting the morning's test run. The protagonist and the woman have sex in the control deck of the train, pressed up against the array of knobs and levers. The

former Navy Seal spies on them through the train's CCTV feed. He watches them with a mix of titillation and suspicion.

The next day, The train sets off on its first run across the country, hitting record-breaking speeds within minutes. The politician and a live camera crew are on board to document this momentous occasion. The anthro-train militia, armed with assault rifles, burst out of hiding and commandeer the train. Amongst this chaos, the conductor covertly follows the former Navy Seal as heads toward the front car plant explosives. After a brief physical altercation, the former Navy Seal has our protagonist against the wall—and with a gun to his head! The former Navy Seal then reveals his true identity: an undercover employee of a private railway company. The terrorist plot was a mere ruse for his corporate espionage, with the secret goal of instilling public distrust in government-funded projects. By creating the anthro-train group, he was able to harness the erotic pull of the locomotive against itself. Just as the Navy Seal is about to pull the trigger, the female passenger dashes into the scene and disarms him, preventing the explosives from being activated. All is saved. Or so it seems. Previously unbeknownst to our key characters, another member of the anthro-train group confesses that he dismantled the train's brakes the night before. As fail-safe, he says, in order to ensure the train would be destroyed. In a fiery explosion or otherwise. This cutting of the brakes is the action of a True Believer. The train's destruction is the money shot of his desire. As a genuine acolyte, he had no knowledge of the former Navy Seal's allegiance to Big Business. These are the workings of a new kind of pervert. One who submits to the machine through sexual obliteration.

Those now riding the train are caught in a death trap, unable to bring the high speed rail to a halt. The politician and his cronies fall to their knees. They cry out for mercy. The anthro-train group gathers together in a small semi-circle. They hold on to each other's shoulders tightly. The conductor and the female passenger don't know what to do with themselves, and so attempt a final sexual experiment. They fuck hard against the train's throttle lever. Those still assembled in the front car watch the lovers with bated breath. A feeling of hope rises within them.

You can read it on their faces. The train responds to this desperate passion, their bodies quasi-melding into the vehicle's interior, becoming one with the operator controls. The train appears to be slowing down. But the last stop, LA station, is almost here. There might not be enough time. *And are these two freaks, are they really able to control the train with sex? Or is this all just an edger's fantasy, begging for completion?*

Cut to black.



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