

# Source Code (2011)

Rated PG-13. Our Ratings: V-4 ;L -1; S/N -1. Running time: 1 hour 33 min.

*If you faint in the day of adversity,  
your strength being small;  
if you hold back from rescuing those taken away to death,  
those who go staggering to the slaughter;  
if you say, "Look, we did not know this" –  
does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?  
Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it?  
And will he not repay all according to their deeds?  
My child, eat honey, for it is good,  
and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to  
your taste.  
Know that wisdom is such to your soul;  
if you find it, you will find a future,  
and your hope will not be cut off.  
Proverbs 24:11-14*

Imagine Groundhog Day as an adventure thriller with a touch of science fiction elements, and you have some idea of director and writer Duncan Jones and Ben Ripley's exciting film. Colter Stevens (Jake Gyllenhaal) wakes up on a train sitting opposite Christina (Michelle Monaghan), a beautiful woman who knows him by another name. He does not recognize her, nor himself when he looks in a mirror. The last he can remember is when he was a decorated U.S. soldier serving in Afghanistan. In the next eight minutes a series of disturbing events end with the train being blown up, killing all aboard.

Colter awakens in a pod where military technician Carol Goodwin (Vera Farmiga) and her scientist boss Dr. Walter Rutledge (Jeffrey Wright) explain that he is part of a scientific project named "Beleaguered Castle" in which he must go back to the train and within eight minutes discover who is

the bomber. This is not to change the outcome, but to learn the identity of the terrorist so as to prevent future tragedies.

The science is mumbo jumbo, but the ideas are intriguing, especially as each of Colter's repeated returns to the train add a piece of information as to who the terrorist is—plus, this being a Hollywood movie, he is drawn to Christina and wants to save her life, even though he has been told he cannot alter the course of events.

## **For Reflection/Discussion**

Possible spoilers below.

1. How is this similar and different from other action thriller films?
2. Have you ever wanted to revisit your past? Want to change any of it?
3. Colter asks Christina, "What would you do if you knew you only had one minute to live?" What do you think of her reply, "I'd make those seconds count" ? How might you make "those seconds count" if you were the person?
4. Compare Carol Goodwin to Dr. Rutledge in the way they relate to Colter. How does his scientific detachment from the subject of his experiment lead him to treat Colter?
5. What do you make of the email at the end that Colter sends to Goodwin?