

Charlie & The M.T.A.

Words & Music:
Traditional American

Interesting note: In 2004, the M.B.T.A. (successor to the M.T.A.) needed a name for its new electronic fare cards. Many names were floated and all crashed & burned when shown to customers until they found the winner: "The Charlie Card" in honor of the hero of this song. And, so, Charlie lives on. When you ride the T, Scollay Square is now Government Center (thanks to the 1960s "urban renewal" of the colorful neighborhood). And only buses go to Chelsea, Roxbury & Jamaica Plain. Alas...

D G D A7
Let me tell you all a story 'bout a man named Charlie on that tragic and fateful day.
D G D A7 D
He put ten cents in his pocket, kissed his wife and family, went to ride on the M.T.A.

CHORUS:

D G D A7
Well, did he ever return? No, he never returned and his fate is still unlearned.
D G D A7 D
He may ride forever 'neath the streets of Boston. He's the man who never returned.

Charlie handed in his dime at the Scollay Square Station
And he changed for Jamaica Plain.
When he got there the conductor told him "One more nickel."
Charlie couldn't get off of that train.

CHORUS

All night long, Charlie rides through the stations,
Crying, "What will become of me?
How can I afford to see my sister in Chelsea
Or my cousin in Roxbury?"

CHORUS

Charlie's wife goes down to the Scollay Square station
Every day at a quarter past two.
And through the open window she hands Charlie a sandwich
As the train goes rumbling through.

CHORUS

Now you citizens of Boston, don't you think it's a scandal
How the people have to pay and pay?
Fight the fare increase, vote for George O'Reilly!
Get poor Charlie off the M.T.A.

CHORUS