

Let me tell you of a story 'bout a man named Charlie,
 On a tragic and fateful day,
 He put ten cents in his pocket, kissed his wife and family,
 Went to ride on the M. T. A.

Did he ever return? No he never returned,
 And his fate is still unlearned.
 He may ride forever 'neath the streets of Boston,
 He's the man who never returned.

Charlie handed in his dime at the Kendall Square Station,
 And he changed for Jamaica Plain.
 When he got there the conductor told him, "One more nickel!"
 Charlie could not get off that train. **CHORUS**

Now all night long Charlie rides through the tunnels,
 Saying, "What will become of me?"
 How can I afford to see my sister in Chelsea,
 Or my brother 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 his sandwich
 As the train comes rumblin' through. **CHORUS**

Now you citizens of Boston, don't you think it's a scandal,
 How the people have to pay and pay?
 Vote for Walter A. O'Brien, and fight the fare increase,
 Get poor Charlie off the M. T. A.! **CHORUS**

The MTA



Although this song has words written in 1949 by Jacqueline Steiner & Bess Lomax Hawes, its melody was originally composed in 1865 for a song called "The Ship That Never Returned" by Henry Clay Work. The story is based on the fact that in the 1940s, Boston's M.T.A. (Metropolitan Transit Authority) fare schedule was very complicated—the booklet that explained it was 9 pages long! Worse still, MTA fare increases were never ending. Rather than modify all the turnstiles for the new rates, they just collected the extra money when passengers left the train—hence the reason that poor spare-changeless Charlie couldn't get off that train!

