

Red 49

written by

John Stone

**Theme tune.** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjxNnqTcHhg>

FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN STATION CAR PARK - NIGHT

The monotonous sound of Popcorn (*Jean-Michel-Jarre*) rings out as a row of local CABS sit on rank and wait for the next train to pull in.

TAXI RADIO CIRCUIT V.O

(strong male voice)

*Red 49, go to 44 Habgood Street  
and pick up miserable old  
Charlie. Take him to the working  
men's club and arrange a return  
for later on.*

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Fed up RED 49 (30) sits at the front of the rank and picks up the message.

RED 49

(tuts his annoyance)

Red 49. Roger that.

He shakes his head and pulls off the rank. The sound of Popcorn fades out.

EXT. HABGOOD STREET - NIGHT

Bespectacled, wiry haired and unshaven miserable old CHARLIE (80) exits a run down, mid-terrace house, then enters the waiting taxi.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Heavily built Charlie belts up as Red 49 sets the fare meter.

CHARLIE

(gruffly)

I ain't seen you before. You new?

RED 49

(casually)

Yeah.

CHARLIE

When did you start working, then?

RED 49

Tonight. I started tonight.

CHARLIE

They always give the new driver's  
this job.

Red 49 ignores the remark.

RED 49

The working men's club, is it?

CHARLIE

That's right, son. My only  
salvation.

Red 49 pulls off.

CHARLIE /

You seem nicer than the other  
driver's I've had.

RED 49

Thanks.

CHARLIE

I can just tell. The others are a  
load of miserable sods.

RED 49

Are they?

CHARLIE

Yeah, they are. I know the reason  
why, as well.

RED 49

Why's that, then?

CHARLIE

Cos it's only a small fare.

RED 49

(acknowledges remark)

Oh. Right.

CHARLIE

But you don't seem to mind, do ya, son?

RED 49

Not really.

CHARLIE

I used to be a cab driver... not a mini-cab like you. I was a proper cabbie.

RED 49

Black taxi?

CHARLIE

Yeah. Taxi driver.

(irritable pause)

Forty-fives years, and not even a golden handshake when I retired.

(reflects)

Miserable lot they are at the carriage office.

RED 49

(aback)

That's not nice.

CHARLIE

No, it isn't.

RED 49

I'm training to be a black cabbie m'self.

CHARLIE

On The Knowledge then, are we?

RED 49

Yeah.

CHARLIE

Good for you, son. I know it's not easy these days. It was a lot easier back then. You could do it in one year.

RED 49

It takes three years to learn London nowadays.

Red 49 pulls up outside the working men's club then stops the meter.

CU: FARE: 4.40

Charlie sifts through his coat pocket for some loose change then pays him.

CHARLIE

What's your name, son?

RED 49

George.

CHARLIE

George what?

RED 49

George Brown.

CHARLIE

That's funny. We've got something in common, you and me. We share the same surname - Brown.

RED 49

(indifferently)

Do we?

CHARLIE

Yeah.

(interested pause)

Where are you from, son?

RED 49

Shoreditch.

CHARLIE

Shoreditch?

RED 49

Yeah.

CHARLIE

That's where I was born. All my family come from Shoreditch.

RED 49

Do they?

CHARLIE

Yeah.

(pauses)

What's your father's name?

RED 49

Reggie.

CHARLIE

(knowingly)

Reginald Brown?

RED 49

Yeah. Why?

CHARLIE

I'm your father's uncle. As he ever told you about me - Charlie Brown?

RED 49

(shakes head)

He's never mentioned you.

CHARLIE

Cor blimey! I'm your grandfather's brother.

RED 49

Really?

CHARLIE

I haven't spoken to William, your grandfather in thirty years.

RED 49

Why not?

CHARLIE

We fell out over something. I can't remember what it was now.

RED 49

So you're my great uncle Charlie, then?

Charlie becomes tearful, then begins to sob.

CHARLIE

Yeah, I am.

RED 49

I'm sorry, I never meant to upset you. Are you okay?

CHARLIE

Oh that's alright, son. I'm just chuffed I met you.

Red 49 hands him a tissue. He blows his nose.

CHARLIE /

It's just that I never knew I was a great uncle to somebody. You've made my day, you really have, son.

RED 49

(smiles warmly)

You've made mine too, great uncle Charlie.

CHARLIE

Wait till I tell the chaps inside the club. They'll be thrilled to bits for me. I've been so cut off from everyone.

RED 49

I'm pleased to hear it.

CHARLIE

Will you pick me up at eleven?

RED 49

Of course I will.

Charlie slips off his solid GOLD WATCH and hands it to Red 49.

CHARLIE

Here. Take this, so you won't forget. I usually have to walk home after they forget to pick me up.

RED 49

I can take that. I'll be here, I promise.

CHARLIE

No, you don't understand, son. I want you to have it, so you won't forget.

RED 49

I won't. I'm coming back for you at eleven.

CHARLIE

Look after it, until then.

RED 49

OK. I will.

CHARLIE

Good boy.

Charlie exits the vehicle and closes the door behind him.

Red 49 POV: Charlie staggers up the steps to the working men's club, but then falters and collapses.

EXT. WORKING MEN'S CLUB - NIGHT

Red 49 quickly exits the taxi and rushes up the steps to his aid. He frantically pumps Charlie's chest, before he is joined by others from inside the club.

RED 49

C'mon great uncle, Charlie, you can do it. Stay alive for me. Don't die! Not now. I haven't gotten to know you yet! Please, c'mon, Charlie!

Charlie lies slumped across the steps with his eyes wide open and lifeless. Red 49 looks up at the sky in despair.

CU: Charlie's gold watch glistens under the lights as it rests upon Red 49's wrist.

Beat.

Dejectedly, he walks back to the taxi and climbs in.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Red 49 tearfully cuddles the steering wheel.



RADIO CIRCUIT V.O

*Red 49, where are you now?*

*(pause)*

*Red 49? Red 49 where are you?*

Red 49 switches off his radio and pulls off.

FADE OUT.

THE END

**Dedicated to my great uncle Charlie.**