



THE WORST COMMUTES of 2018

*Submitted by subway riders to the Riders Alliance
“Worst Commute of the Week” contest*





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RIDERS ALLIANCE

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– DEDICATION –

*To New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the leaders and
members of the Assembly and Senate*

— ABOUT THE RIDERS ALLIANCE —

The Riders Alliance is New York's grassroots organization of transit riders. We build power across neighborhood, racial, ethnic, and economic lines to win better subway and bus service. We engage our fellow riders, take direct action, and hold our elected officials accountable to invest in the infrastructure we rely on to get around our crowded city.

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– EDITOR’S NOTE –

Last year brought us the Summer of Hell on rails. This January, New York’s subway on-time performance dropped to an abysmal 58%. There were 76,000 train delays, nearly quadruple the delays of a month five years prior. Last fall, the New York City Independent Budget Office found that subway riders lost an average of 34,900 hours to train delays each and every weekday morning. In this climate of transit crisis, the Riders Alliance asked everyday commuters to enter their stories into a competition for the Worst Commute of the Week, and we received hundreds of entries in just a few weeks. Riders write of missed job interviews, hours spent underground, physical discomfort and crippling fear. Collected here are their stories: the Worst Commutes of 2018.

We are sharing their stories not to reflect on the past but to change the future. The worst commutes detailed here can get much better, and soon. New York City Transit President Andy Byford has put forth a proposal he calls Fast Forward, which would modernize the signal system and expand the subway car fleet, with most of the work completed over the next decade. If his plan is implemented, the faulty signals and subway cars, overcrowded trains and platforms, and overall sense of anxiety and frustration that marked contest entries will become a thing of the past.

Now, it’s up to Governor Andrew Cuomo and the state legislature to fund the Fast Forward plan. The governor’s Fix NYC panel has already proposed congestion pricing as a way to raise the billions of dollars required to fix the subway. Now the governor must send a bill to the legislature and use his vaunted leadership skills to make it law. If he does, the governor can be the subway hero who transformed worst commutes into best results. If not, we won’t just see more editions of this book in the coming years—we’ll all be living these horrendous tales every day. Leadership will make the difference; will Governor Cuomo deliver?

The Worst Commutes of 2018

I SET AN EXAMPLE FOR MY STUDENTS

Laila W.

I teach middle school and had to sprint to my first period class today. The C train at Clinton-Washington was nowhere to be seen for over 20 minutes—despite four A trains and an empty C train going right by. Then two or three C trains come one right after another. This is during prime rush hour at 7:30am so the platforms are packed. People have to cram into the trains. The same scenario happens once every week or two. I can't set a bad example for students by being tardy. The unpredictability is ridiculous. A few thousand people are moving into the area (within 4 blocks of Clinton-Washington) once all the major developments are done. Then what?

I STOOD THE WHOLE TIME AND HAD NOTHING TO EAT

Elizabeth G.

I was unable to attend class today due to train traffic. It took me two hours to get to school as a train ahead was having some technical difficulties. Due to that train's difficulties, my F train went local and all other trains were routed to go on the Q line. Everything was just a mess. Even after the train, my bus ran late too. I was unable to hand in my paper. I stood the whole time and had nothing to eat.

IT TOOK ME ALMOST TWO AND A HALF HOURS

Kay H.

I left my office at 9 pm and entered the 47-50th Street-Rockefeller Center station. Trying to evade the F train, I tried an alternate route home. Just one packed B train arrived circa 9:05 and another never showed up. No announcement was made to say B trains ended at a certain time. In addition two D trains arrived (both packed), so that train was out of the question too. I finally boarded an F train (two prior F trains arrived and they too were packed) around 9:25. The F train I was on moved very slowly through Manhattan. Once we

reached Jay Street in Brooklyn, the train was stalled for 30 minutes! We were told “there was an incident” at Bergen Street. Once the train proceeded, it again moved at a snail’s pace. I finally reached my destination at 18th Avenue at 11:10 and walked home. By the time I opened my apartment door, it was 11:25p.m. It took me almost two and half hours to get from Rockefeller Center to 18th Avenue in Kensington. This is so unacceptable of our transit system!

I WAKE UP TIRED OF ALWAYS WORRYING

Rachel I.

I’m always late to school and clinical rotations—and always late coming home from school or clinicals. I have to wake up—really early—every day and then, no matter how early I leave, I am late most of the time. I’m always stuck in tunnels. Every time I have final exams, for some reason the trains always have emergencies. By time I come home it is time for me to go to bed only to wake up at 6 am to start the day. I wake tired of always worrying about how my commute is going to go in the morning and how late I will get home.

IT USED TO TAKE 20 MINUTES

Scott S.

I work at a Broadway show, the Lion King. This is not an individual commute. We all work nights and weekends mostly. The delays have been horrific. I finish work at 10:30, walk to the 44th street entrance of the Times Square E stop. I get home to Forest Hills often after midnight and, occasionally, when all four Queens Boulevard trains are running local, as late as 1AM. I’ve been a subway rider since the ‘70s and a regular rider of this itinerary since the late ‘80s. It used to take 20 minutes. Worst part of my day is my commute.

THANK GOD I DIDN’T HAVE TO GO TO THE BATHROOM

Tara S.

I got stuck on a G for nearly two and a half hours because of signal problems in the *entire area* surrounding Bergen Street. Thank god I didn’t have to go to the bathroom and thank god I have a phone fully

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charged *and* a book. I thought, “Ok, this is it, these are the people I will spend the rest of my life with. I’ll never see my cat again or my partner and we will starve to death in the G train.” I was going into some pretty dark places of my mind. I was thinking, “What is happening in the world outside? Is this going to be on NBC4? I bet people are tweeting right now about how shitty the G train is. I have lost two hours of my life I’ll never regain.” I thought, “This is it. I need to make peace with this, become friends with all my fellow inmates, and just accept it.” People began sharing stories about where they were supposed to be, and what they were missing. Upon release, I immediately contacted a Lyft. No way in Dante’s G train hell was I going to get inside another public transit vehicle.

I MISSED MY JOB INTERVIEW

Dave W.

I was nearly an hour late to an important third round job interview at Burberry. I live in Jamaica and take the E to 34th Street, which normally takes me 45 minutes (at the most). The morning of my interview, scheduled for 11 am on 57th Street, I left at 10am. I anticipated arriving at the location at least 15 minutes early, including the walk. But the E stalled for at least 10 minutes before reaching Kew Gardens, the next stop. I tried to call the interviewer but I kept losing service. Then the train proceeded to stall and crawl in and between each stop going all the way throughout Queens. At 11:50, I finally arrived and the interviewer was very perturbed. She told me, “I saw online there was a power outage at 42nd street, so I understand.” Had the booth attendant told us the train would be delayed, I would have called in at 10 am or taken the LIRR, but that didn’t happen. I haven’t heard from them since. Thanks, MTA.

THERE WENT MY BREAKFAST MONEY

Rudy M.

There were signal problems on the A. We ran local, taking 10 minutes per local stop. I’m usually in Manhattan by 8 am but was barely into Brooklyn from Queens. I had two business meetings scheduled back

to back starting at 9. Would I make them? A trains passed us on the express track. One train, fine. Second train, no way. Third train, I've had it. The announcer keeps apologizing. I missed my first meeting still underground at 9. At the next stop I got off and took an Uber to Manhattan. I got to work past 10, missing both my meetings. Plus I was late for work. And I spent almost two and a half hours underground in the dark without cell service. And paid for that really expensive Uber. There went my breakfast money, my morning, probably my lunch money, my dinner money as well—and my patience.

IT TOOK ME ABOUT TWO HOURS TO GET HOME

Angus C.

I was on my way home near the Hoyt-Schemerhorn A/C and discovered that the entire line was shut down. MTA buses were supposed to be carrying A/C passengers, but they were clearly not up to the task. After waiting roughly half an hour, the first Queens-bound bus showed up with its ticker display reading “A Train.” The bus was so full that the driver allowed a couple people in, screamed at the standing passengers to cram themselves behind the yellow line, and drove off. The second bus was so full it did not bother stopping. The third bus driver did not have the motivation to tell passengers to stay behind the yellow line and let people fill every available space in the bus. I was one of these people. Every time the bus would open its doors, the automatic doors would hit me and push me into the people standing next to me. It took me about 2 hours to get home - for a trip that would otherwise be 15 minutes or less.

**I WENT INTO PRE-LABOR AND
THEN WENT STRAIGHT TO THE HOSPITAL**

Deborah D.

My train was stuck in the tunnel between 116th Street and 110th Street. I was pregnant. It turns out that there was a fire on the tracks. I had to sit on train until the FDNY came. I went into pre-labor and then went to straight to hospital once I got off that train.

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I HEADED HOME, HAVING MISSED MY CLASS

Ferass A.

I had a bad cold and missed two weeks at my gym. I was looking forward to going to my class in FiDi. Usually, I take the J to Fulton and walk five 5 minutes. But there were no Js between my stop and Broadway Junction on weekends until next month. So I drove to Broadway Junction at 8:30 for a 10 am class. I take the J but Essex Street is apparently now the last stop, despite no signs being posted anywhere nor announcements during my journey from Broadway Junction to Essex. It's 9:25 and I'm an optimist: I'll take the F from Delancey to Broadway-Lafayette, then the 6, which will bring me near FiDi. Except that I get to Broadway-Lafayette only to find red tape and a sign saying "no downtown 6 train from this station." What am I supposed to do? Go to the MTA website and check the weekender schedule for every train station and every combination possible? At 10:15, I headed home, having missed my class. Worst part is, I had to repeat the above to get back.

AN ANGRY CROWD

Angela T.

My R train from Manhattan stopped running at 36th Street. Everyone was told to wait for the N to 59th and then transfer to a shuttle bus. The N took more than 30 minutes to arrive. Everyone on the crowded platform piled in. At 59th Street, we waited about 20 minutes outside for the shuttle bus. Then someone said, "there's no shuttle bus service." An angry crowd just trying to get home got the run-around from MTA staff who didn't know what was going on. An R train came for us after another 15 minutes. Great, but I still had a bus ride over the bridge to Staten Island ahead of me. It took me more than two hours to get home.

I AM ON THIN ICE AT WORK DUE TO TIMELINESS

Nicollina A.

I, along with many coworkers, am on thin ice due to timeliness. My once 25-minute commute now has me leaving more than an hour

early for work “just to be safe.” Only I still find myself arriving late. For the last two weeks, the EMFR trains have stopped running at 9:30 pm. But that’s when I get out of work. Even when I leave early, I still somehow miss the last train home because they close inexplicably early! Last week, miraculously catching my train, I stayed on board until 36th Street in Queens. Like most trips in and out of Queens, there were delays. After 45 minutes, I had to just get out and take a cab home— only to have to do the same thing over again the next night. I’m looking for new work within walking distance so I can avoid taking the train on nights like this. I also miss being able to explore the city reliably. It’s sad.

I SHOWED UP 30 MINUTES LATE TO A JOB INTERVIEW

Mikaela K.

I had a job interview in midtown at 10 am so I left my apartment in Astoria at 8:30. It normally takes 30 minutes to get there. I figured I would have plenty of time to get a there with an hour and a half. Nope. It actually took two hours. I showed up 30 minutes late. Luckily I had been able to get a signal long enough to email my contact and explain— and even luckier that they understood. Thanks MTA for the year of life I probably lost from all the stress I felt on that N train not knowing if the interviewer would understand how unreliable the subway is.

I BARELY MADE IT

Shaleen S.

After being late to work twice last week, I decided this Monday to leave home even earlier. The 7 express has not been running past 74th Street–Broadway, which I found out last week with no prior notice. I also learned that the N and Q were suspended from Queensboro Plaza. So I had to take the R from 74th Street. I was making good time until the R detoured onto the F line four stops in. I got off at 63rd Street/Lexington Avenue and raced up around 200 stairs and then down four blocks to the 6 train station at 59th Street. I just

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made it to the 6 out of breath and sweating and caught the train to 77th Street. I ran across the street to work and just got an elevator to the 8th floor where I clocked in at 9 am on the dot. I almost cried.

THE SUBWAY PUT ME ON PROBATION AT WORK

June T.

I was late for my new job again due to subway delays. As a result, my probationary period was extended for another month. Here's hoping!

I HAVE NO IDEA WHY, BUT IT TOOK MORE THAN TWO HOURS

Eugene L.

At 8:35 am, I left my house in Astoria. At 8:45, I approached my station to find the surrounding streets filled with confused people. They seemed listless, meandering in all directions, on their phones, asking each other questions with no answers, crowding all the bus stops. No CitiBikes were available. At 8:48, though, I boarded an N train but then the announcement came: "We are having significant delays. I have no idea when we will start moving." At 9 we started moving. At 9:02 we stopped, having only traveled 1 stop. At 9:10, I got off the train in response to the following announcement: "What the crap is that? Why didn't we tell the customers? Why didn't they tell us at the terminal? ... Ladies and gentlemen, we are not moving. I have no idea when we will ever start moving. We recommend you take the M60 at street-level." By 9:12 I was at the bus stop but didn't get on the bus for another 33 minutes. Another hour later, more than two hours after leaving home and still bewildered by our subway, I arrived at work in Chelsea.

I WAS LATE TO BED

Alex B.

I was in a rush to get home from work and needed to go to sleep ASAP because I was needed back to work a few hours later. I quickly ran onto the 7 train at Times Square to go two stops to Grand Central. The doors closed and the train went backwards! Instead I ended

up at Hudson Yards! No warning, nothing from the MTA that for some strange reason the Queensbound tracks were going towards Hudson yards instead. When I asked the MTA info officer at Hudson Yards why that happened he said he had no idea. He said the MTA “will do that to ya” and agreed with me that their service is awful, but he can’t do anything about it. Instead I took a taxi home and it cost me an extra \$12 on top of the \$2.75 I wasted on a nonexistent subway ride.

I COULD HAVE WALKED HOME—AND BACK—IN LESS TIME

John R.

After a long day at work, I went to the City Hall station where I hoped to catch the southbound R train to Brooklyn. After a 45-minute wait, my foolish hopes were dashed when we were told to take the R train to Canal Street and from there board a southbound train to Brooklyn. After an additional 15 minute wait, I took the northbound train to Canal Street, where I waited another 35 minutes for a train to Brooklyn. While I was waiting, it occurred to me that I left my office more than 90 minutes earlier and I was further away from home than when I started. It took an additional torturous hour to get home. I calculated that my 7-mile commute had an average rate of speed of 1.2 miles an hour. I could have walked home and back to work in less time. What other subway system can boast that type of service?

UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS, AGAIN AND AGAIN

Jason M.

I got on an N train at 14th Street headed for Astoria. In between 42nd Street and 49th Street, the conductor announced that there were no N trains going to Queens. I headed back downtown to 42nd Street to catch the 7 to Queens for an N to Astoria Blvd. At Queensboro Plaza, I climbed to the upstairs platform, where an MTA worker said all trains were arriving downstairs. Back downstairs, the conductor in an idle train told me that all Queens-bound trains were upstairs. So I went back upstairs and then an announcement came over the loudspeaker

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that said all trains would be downstairs. So I went back downstairs and the train finally showed up upstairs. As for me, I finally made it to Astoria Blvd two hours after leaving Union Square.

I COULD HAVE TRAVELED TO BOSTON IN LESS TIME

Lisette U.

My husband took a flight from Boston and landed at JFK, all while I was on the subway commuting to work from Queens to Manhattan. Skipping the bus to the train, I opted for a cab instead to get to work early. I arrived at the 179th Street station on the F line only to hear the announcement overhead: “Due to signal problems at Grand Avenue, all Manhattan-bound E and F trains have extensive delays.” My trip consisted of signal problems, express trains running local, a sick passenger, a train “directly in front of us,” and “FDNY activity.” Plus vomit on the platform at West 4th Street while I waited for the E train. After two hours’ traveling I finally arrived at the World Trade Center shaking my head.

I’M EXHAUSTED FROM THE PAIN

Alisa R.

It was only a 25-minute delay, “due to an earlier incident.” One minute for every pound my son weighs. I don’t use a stroller, because there’s no elevator, so he is strapped to my waist. My shoulder blades ache. I have to bounce him to keep him distracted. My elbow throbs. When the train finally comes, blessedly, someone gives me a seat. But a tourist couple can’t unembrace and hit my son in the head with his bag. A woman rolls her laundry cart over my toes. Only 25 minutes. There has been so much worse. But those seemingly normal delays literally groove their lines in my muscles and I’m exhausted with the pain.

MY LEGS HURT FOR DAYS

Alan G.

I usually take the M or R. If I take the M, I change at 5th Avenue to the E. Earlier this week, all of my trains were delayed. I have had cancer twice and the hardest thing for me to do is stand in one place.

When I arrived at my station, I saw a lot of people waiting for a local, but an E train was there too so I hopped on. After a few minutes, we pulled out and went far enough to allow another train into the station. Then we waited there for approximately 30 minutes. It was a packed train. I couldn't move. My usual 50 minute commute door to door took double that — one hour and 40 minutes. Where I usually sit I had to stand. That was Tuesday, my legs still hurt Thursday and probably will for the whole weekend.

I WAS TRAPPED FOR AN HOUR

Maozhong X.

I was taking the 7 train from 42nd Street to Flushing at midnight. The train was approaching Main Street around 1:00 am. "Not too bad," I comforted myself. But when all of the passengers were getting ready to get off, the train stopped with the door shut for another hour. No announcement. No apology. Our final destination a fingertip away! When I got out of the train at 2:00am, I was so depressed and exhausted. Since then I have a dream, a dream without commuting by MTA.

I GOT STUCK REPEATEDLY

Marie S.

One recent Friday morning at 9 am, I waited for the A train at 190th Street for 20 minutes. I was on my way to 42nd Street for a 10:30 am gym appointment. Sitting in a dirty old train, we slowly made our way downtown. During the express route from 125th Street to 59th Street, we were stuck in the tunnel for another 20 minutes with the conductor saying "trains ahead." Of what? I had waited for 20 minutes! I arrived at 42nd Street past 10 am, a trip which in the good old days would have taken less than 30 minutes total. My return trip in the early afternoon was similar: I got stuck in the tunnel on account of "fire conditions" at 7th Avenue, rerouting the B and D trains. I was supposed to go out that same evening, but I could not face the lousy A train again!

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I GOT STUCK FOR TWO HOURS...AND I HAD TO PEE

Jennifer T

I was in hurry to get home and didn't use the bathroom before leaving work. I figured my 30 minute commute from Manhattan to Queens wasn't going to be so bad. I was one stop away from home when the R train came to a complete halt. The conductor said "signal problems" at 71st-Continental Avenues-Forest Hills were to blame. My final, five-minute ride became *two hours*, as the train was stuck in the tunnel between the 63rd Drive and 67th Avenue stations. By the time the train pulled into the 67th Avenue station, I had to run to a nearby Starbucks in order to pee. It was unbelievable. I still have post-traumatic stress syndrome from this incident. Now, before boarding the subway, even if it's for one stop, I use the bathroom before I get on the torture chamber that is the MTA subway.

SLOW TRAINS COST ME JOBS

Keith B.

Every day I travel from Halsey Street on the J train to 46th Street on the M and R lines. The M is supposed to take 46 minutes. But with all the congestion it takes me an hour or two to get to and from work. A shortcut was possible before the MTA cut the G train service to 71st-Continental Avenues. I want to move away from NYC because trains have cost me a few jobs. Because of travel, I am out of the house 12 to 14 hours a day for an 8 1/2 hour work shift. This is not worth the minimum wage they pay me. I am doing a part time *unpaid* shift just traveling to work. The MTA just makes me want to move away and never come back again. This is not worth the \$32 I give them every week. I hope for the best but one day I am packing my bags and never dealing with the MTA ever again! I'd rather walk to work in a small town in a blizzard than deal with their mess.

I HATE THE A TRAIN

Ellen M.

I am a stuck with the A train. I have to take my daughter to school from 175th Street to 59th Street, every day. The entire experience is atrocious. She gets squished, bumped, trampled, and pushed around in jam-packed trains that move as slow as molasses.

I'M THINKING ABOUT MOVING AWAY FROM THE CITY

Luke D.

I leave my house at the same time every day but never know whether I'll be early, on time, or late for work. With switch problems and infrequent morning L trains, even when a train stops there is often no room for passengers to board. When I do find a spot on the train, I have no personal space, as the whole train moves about like a tin of sardines. With what I pay for a monthly unlimited ride, I'm definitely not getting my money's worth. In short, every day is the worst commute of the week. I'm thinking about moving away from the city because of these type of issues.

I WAS SCARED I WOULD BE FIRED

Reginald A.

One week each in January and again in February, I was extremely late for work three out of five days, due to signal problems on the E. I was scared I would be fired or at least reprimanded. Besides those weeks, my commute is riddled with long-stalled trains, the occasional broken rails and seemingly standard sick passengers, who no one seems to know how to deal with to benefit them and the thousands of straphangers on my line that need to reach their destinations! It seems like I'm constantly subject to rerouting for "maintenance," which feels like it isn't being done, or there wouldn't be this many problems!

MY MARRIAGE PROPOSAL WENT AWRY

Matthew G.

I had planned to propose to my wife on the A train, which is where she first told me that she loved me 5 years ago. She was flying back to

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JFK from Jordan, where she was a humanitarian worker. I was riding out to meet her, when the conductor announced we all needed to get off at Rockaway Blvd. It was an extremely cold night in January. I waited for 45 minutes for another train, while two A trains came through without stopping. My wife was waiting for the AirTrain by that time. I kept asking her to be patient and keep waiting, but it was too cold. Eventually she got angry and tired of waiting and called a cab. I proposed in the cab instead, so it still worked out ok.

IT WAS LORD OF THE FLIES IN THERE

Patrick M.

One Tuesday night, I had to stay late at work. I left WTC around 9:15 pm, only to find the station closed. No E. “Planned work.’ Okay, maybe I missed the posters. It took two trains and 45 minutes to catch the F at 42nd Street-Bryant Park. Then, at 21st Street-Queensbridge, my F stopped. ‘For continuing service, take a free shuttle bus.’ Only the MTA couldn’t find the buses. It was Lord of the Flies in there—staff panicking, people pushing, shouting. Upstairs, crowds spilled into the street, disrupting traffic. I gave up. One cab and \$17 later, I was home—at midnight.

ALL THE TRAINS PASSED MINE BY

Pedro P.

It takes me longer to get to work these days than if I lived in New Jersey or Pennsylvania. I live in Queens. I have direct access to the first stop of the F line at 179 Street. Today, not unlike other days, after 80 minutes on the F train, I’m still in Queens. Is that insane? Four E trains were given clearance to proceed before our train. Why? Signal malfunctions. Yes, that’s what they said. Again?? How many times can this be the problem, and when are they going to fix it? It’s 2018 and they use flags, whistles and flashlights to get trains going?! The horrifying faces of the people sitting and standing is enough to make you mental.

I MISSED MY AUDITION

Carl H.

One hot summer day, I was riding the 6 train to 42nd Street. We had just left Union Square when the train suddenly stopped and the doors opened up and we sat there over an hour. It got incredibly hot and smelly as we waited. Finally, the doors closed. When we got to 23rd Street, the doors opened but never closed. Already an hour late for an important audition, I decided to walk. When I got to the turnstiles, I saw four police officers trying to make a man leave the train. The smell of feces hung like a cloud in the air. I left the station and walked to the audition but, because I was so late, they wouldn't let me try for the role.

I HAD THE BEGINNING SYMPTOMS OF HYPOTHERMIA

Diane H.

On Thursday, December 28, I left work at 5 pm and was dropped off at Broadway Junction. I could see from outside a lot of people standing on the platform. My girlfriend told me there was no train service. The temperature outside was minus 2 degrees. I asked the clerk if the train was running. She said yes. I waited 25 minutes on an outside train platform with over 100 people for at least 25 minutes before the first J train arrived—at the height of rush hour. By the time I got home that night, I had the beginning symptoms of hypothermia. The J train is one of the worst lines.

THEY GOT VERY CLOSE TO FISTICUFFS

Maggie C.

Tonight was the most brutal trip I've had to endure in years. Did the usual 5-hour Meetles band gig at Herald Square station. Started home dragging 50 pounds of gear. But no D trains running. 17-minute wait if I wanted to take the F to W 4 and switch to the A. But the elevator to the platform was broken. So dragged everything up to street level at 35th and 6th. Decided I would walk to the 1 train and take it to Dyckman Street since I heard that the A train was going to terminate at 168th Street. Got all the way down to the platform and found out

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there was no 1 Train. Had to drag everything back to the surface and walk to 8th Avenue. Got on a train from hell. There's a drunk or crazy guy continually and loudly harassing another guy so I had to drag my stuff to the other end of the car. Then he started bothering other people. A woman started screaming at him to "shut up and get off the train" and kept it up for quite some time. I think they got very close to fisticuffs. We eventually got the conductor out of his cubicle but he refused to call the police. Thankfully the elevators at 168th Street were working and caught a shuttle. Took about 2 hours to get home from Herald Square. I was musing about where I could move. It is getting so hard to live here.

I MIGHT NEVER GO TO MY FRIEND'S PLACE AGAIN

Meghan A.

I was on my way home from a friend's place in Brooklyn at 10 pm on a Monday. I didn't get home to Harlem until past midnight because the A train was stalled between the 135th and 145th Street stations for over 30 minutes. The conductor kept saying, every five minutes on the dot, "There's a stalled C train up ahead. We will be moving momentarily." Someone started crying. Someone called their mom. Others started laughing. Some ate what might be their last meal. I might never go to my friend's place again.

MY DAUGHTER AND I MISSED HER DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT

Caroline B.

My daughter and I were on the train heading to a doctor's appointment we had waited 6 months to schedule. One of the doors on our train broke, and we had to get off the train. We missed the appointment and had to reschedule. The next available appointment was again 6 months later. We will have waited a year for this doctor's appointment. That is, if we don't get delayed again on the way to the rescheduled appointment.

I MISSED A JOB INTERVIEW

Jake B.

I missed a job interview because of the R and 6 train. I waited at Elmhurst Avenue as two trains passed before I could finally squeeze onto an R train. It then took an hour to get from Elmhurst Avenue to 59th Street in Manhattan because the train kept stopping between stations due to signal problems. I transferred to the 6 at 59th Street and then sat motionless between 51st and 42nd Street for 20 minutes. Then the 6 went express from 42nd to 14th Street so I had to walk to the interview on 32nd, 90 minutes after leaving Elmhurst.

I CAN HARDLY WALK TODAY

Susan G.

I nominate the A as the worst train. Wednesday's wait was 30 minutes. Thursday's wait was 25 minutes, and the countdown clock for the train said "1 minute" the whole time. In each case, an out-of-service train passed us halfway through our wait. I had just had shingles and pneumonia shots on Tuesday, and I was not in good shape when Wednesday's train finally arrived. (I am seventy.) This is probably not the worst example, but I can hardly walk today.

**THE WORST PART OF GOING TO CHINA IS THE SUBWAY TO
JFK**

Nathan M.

I live in NYC and go to Shenzhen, China for work every month. It takes me 23 hours each way. I take a car to JFK, wait a few hours for my flight, a 16 hour flight to Hong Kong, an airport tram, a ferry and then a car ride. The worst part of the whole experience is getting to JFK. In NYC there is no ferry or express train to the airport. In Hong Kong there is both, they are clean and they even check your luggage from the ferry terminal or train station before you head to the airport. There is also no easy way to get from Hoboken or Jersey City to JFK, despite these areas operating like additional boroughs of the city these days.

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I PAID \$50 TO GET TO WORK TWO HOURS LATE

Richard A.

Following a power outage at Lexington/53rd, it took two hours to go from Briarwood to Roosevelt Island, a good hour of which my F train spent in the tunnel just outside the Roosevelt Island station. While waiting, the conductor asked if there were any medical staff on board, so clearly we had a sick passenger situation as well. As soon as I pulled into the station, I got up to the surface and called a cab to take me the rest of the way to work at Lincoln Center... paying a good \$50 for a 45-minute ride. I got to work at 11:30, two hours late.

THIS IS NOT GOOD SERVICE

Tomasz B.

I use the mta.info website to check the status of trains and buses when I step outside to go to work. Most mornings, the G and 7 trains I take to midtown from Greenpoint say "Good Service." But most days, I have to wait 15+ minutes on an overcrowded G platform as two trains pass before I can fit. I would not call that "good service." I shudder to think what it will be like when many displaced L train riders shift to the G/7 lines to get to Manhattan. We don't even have enough space on the current train. We need extra subway cars today.

L IS LITERALLY A CRAPSHOOT

Tina V.

It took me two hours to get from Bedford Avenue in Williamsburg to the Guggenheim, where I oversee museum communications. I missed the media preview for our new exhibition. Nutshell: Arrived at the L to find hundreds of people stacked up. Waited 30 minutes and six trains before giving up. Walked to NYC Ferry. Waited 20 minutes for ferry, got off at 34th Street. No cabs, so walked 15 minutes to 6 train. Transferred to 4, 5. All in: 125 minutes. I am normally a pretty put-together person, but I almost broke down crying at several points. The L is literally a crapshoot every day. We can't live this way.

I STARTED CRYING ON THE PLATFORM

Ellie A.

I landed at JFK airport after a week volunteering in the Virgin Islands doing disaster relief work. Every muscle in my body was sore. I was dragging a massive suitcase filled with camping supplies. Things began to unravel at Broadway Junction, where I decided to get off the A to switch to the C. After staring at the board for several minutes, it appeared that there were not, in fact, any C trains running. Cursing myself for getting off the A train, I eventually hopped on the next A train that came by. As soon as I did, I saw a C pull into the station, but the doors closed and I couldn't switch. We chugged along at a decent clip until we ground to a halt in the tunnel before Ralph Avenue. This is Cuomo's MTA; periodic stalls are frequent, and I didn't think much of it. Until it just. kept. stalling. People started to get restless. The conductor told us that we'd be moving momentarily. After 5 minutes, it became clear "momentarily" meant something unusual. The conductor and a technician began pacing the train, refusing to field questions from distressed passengers. Stress levels were high, and people were freaking out. Jetlagged and upset, I began to feel like we'd be down there forever. It was actually 45 minutes. I got off at Nostrand Avenue, hauled my suitcase through a monsoon to the S train stop a few blocks away and started crying on the platform.

RIDERS ALLIANCE

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