

# Dark Town Strutter's Ball

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*E<sup>7</sup> A*

I'll be down to getcha in a taxi honey,

*B<sup>7</sup>*

Better be ready 'bout half past eight,

*E<sup>7</sup>*

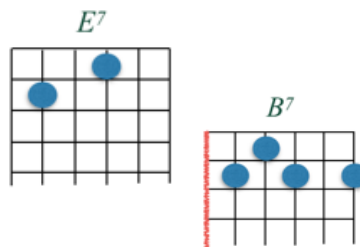
Now honey don't be late,

*A*

I wanna be there,

*E<sup>7</sup>*

When the band starts playing.



*A*

Remember when we get there honey,

*B<sup>7</sup>*

Two-step I'm gonna have them all,

*Bm<sup>7</sup>*

*G<sup>#7</sup>*

Gonna dance off both of my shoes,

*A*

*F<sup>#7</sup>*

When they play that Jelly Roll Blues,

*B<sup>7</sup>*

*E<sup>7</sup>*

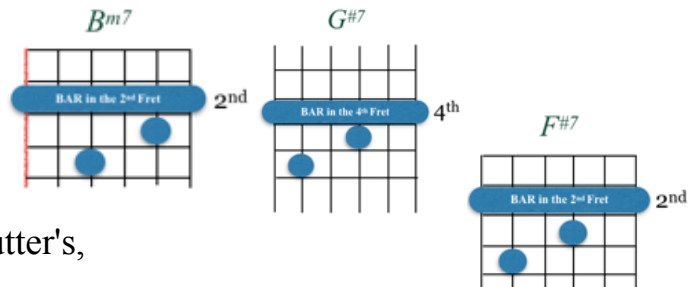
Tomorrow night at the Dark town Strutter's,

*A*

*E<sup>7</sup>*

*A*

B - A - double L, some Ball.



# History

Shelton Brooks wrote “**Dark Town Strutters Ball.**” He was a Canadian and had a keen eye for the supreme ironies of society, one of which was the annual formal ball thrown by the



Chicago elite in honor of the world’s oldest profession and their (often elite) associates. It was a kind of modern equivalent of the medieval carnivals of misrule, financed by wealthy society folk but with a guest list of pimps and prostitutes. The song reached the Number 2 position in Canada in 1917, including early 78 recordings and music sheet sales. The sheet music, as published by New York’s Leo Feist that year and was used for voice, piano and ukulele. Described by some as the first nominal jazz record, it sold more than three million sheet music units and became a staple of many pop and jazz artists. “Dark Town Strutter’s Ball” was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2006.

A partial list of artists who have covered the tune over the years since 1917 include: Chet Atkins, Count Basie, Dave Brubeck, Fats Domino, Jimmy Dorsey, Ella Fitzgerald, Benny Goodman, Al Jolson, Dean Martin, Fats Waller, Django Rheinhardt, Original Dixieland Jazz Band, the Six Brown Brothers, Savoy Quartet, Wilbur Sweatman’s Original Jazz Band, and Jazz Band of 369th Infantry.



Lieutenant James Reese (far left), director of the jazz band of the 369th Infantry Regiment in Europe, on the ship that is bringing them home.



In his “Torchbearers of Democracy” Chad Williams, chair of the African & Afro-American Studies Department, Brandeis University says, “the African-American experience in the Great War sowed the seeds of the civil rights movement that would flower decades later.”