

## Gentry Bobbie

### "Ode To Billy Joe"

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Words and Music by Bobbie Gentry

It was the third of June, another sleepy, dusty Delta day

I was out choppin' cotton and my brother was balin' hay

And at dinner time we stopped and walked back to the house to eat

And Mama hollered out the back door "y'all remember to wipe your feet"

And then she said "I got some news this mornin' from Choctaw Ridge"

"Today Billy Joe MacAllister jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge"

'n' Papa said to Mama as he passed around the blackeyed peas

"Well Billy Joe never had a lick of sense, pass the biscuits, please"

"There's five more acres in the lower forty I've got to plow"

'n' Mama said it was shame about Billy Joe, anyhow

Seems like nothin' ever comes to no good up on Choctaw Ridge

And now Billy Joe MacAllister's jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge

'n' Brother said he recollected when he and Tom and Billie Joe

Put a frog down my back at the Carroll County picture show

And wasn't I talkin' to him after church last Sunday  
night?

"I'll have another piece-a apple pie, you know it don't  
seem right"

"I saw him at the sawmill yesterday on Choctaw Ridge"

"And now ya tell me Billie Joe's jumped off the  
Tallahatchie Bridge"

'n' Mama said to me "Child, what's happened to your  
appetite?"

"I've been cookin' all morning and you haven't touched  
a single bite"

"That nice young preacher, Brother Taylor, dropped by  
today"

"Said he'd be pleased to have dinner on Sunday, oh, by  
the way"

"He said he saw a girl that looked a lot like you up on  
Choctaw Ridge"

"And she and Billy Joe was throwing somethin' off the  
Tallahatchie Bridge"

A year has come 'n' gone since we heard the news  
'bout Billy Joe

'n' Brother married Becky Thompson, they bought a  
store in Tupelo

There was a virus going 'round, Papa caught it and he  
died last Spring

And now Mama doesn't seem to wanna do much of  
anything

And me, I spend a lot of time pickin' flowers up on  
Choctaw Ridge

And drop them into the muddy water off the  
Tallahatchie Bridge

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