

## **Roch Voisine**

### **"Ode To Billie Joe"**

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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 at the back door "Y'all remember  
to wipe your feet".

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

Today Billie Joe McAllister jumped off the Tallahatchie  
Bridge".

Papa said to mama as he passed around the blackeyed  
peas

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

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

And mama said it was a shame about Billie Joe anyhow.

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

And now Billie Joe McAllister's jumped off the  
Tallahatchie Bridge".

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 of apple pie, you know it don't  
seem right.

I saw him at the sawmill yesterday on Choctaw Ridge

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

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

I've been cooking 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 Billie Joe were throwin'  
Somethin' off the Tallahatchie Bridge".

A year has come and gone since we heard the news  
'bout Billie Joe.  
Brother married Becky Thompson, they bought a store  
in Tupelo.  
There was a virus goin' round, papa caught it and he  
died last spring  
And now, mama doesn't seem to wanna do much of  
anything.  
And me, I spent a lot of time pickin' flowers up on  
Choctaw Ridge  
And drop them into the muddy water of the  
Tallahatchie Bridge.

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