

Sinead Oconnor

"Ode To Billy 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 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 Mac Allister
Jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge"

And Papa said to Mama as he passed
Around the black eyed 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"
And 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 Mac Allister's
Jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge

And Brother said he recollected
When he and Tom and Billie Joe
Put a frog down my back a
A 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"

And 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
And Brother married Becky Thompson
Tthey 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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