

Sinead O'Connor, Ode To Billy Joe

It was the third of June, another sleepy, dusty Delta day
I was out choppin' cotton and my brother was baling 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 morning from Chocktow Ridge
Today Billy Joe MacAllister jumped off the Tallahatchee Bridge";

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 got to plow"
And Mama said it was shame about Billy Joe, anyhow
Seems like nothing ever comes to no good up on Chocktow Ridge
And now Billy Joe MacAllister's jumped off the Tallahatchee Bridge

Brother said he recollected when he and Tom and Billy Joe,
Put a frog down my back at the Carrol 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 Choctow Ridge
And now you tell me Billy Joe's jumped off the Tallahatchee 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 Chocktow Ridge
And she and Billy Joe was throwing something off the Tallahatchee Bridge";

A year has come and gone since we heard the news 'bout Billy Joe
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 picking flowers up on Chocktow Ridge
And drop them into the muddy water off the Tallahatchee Bridge