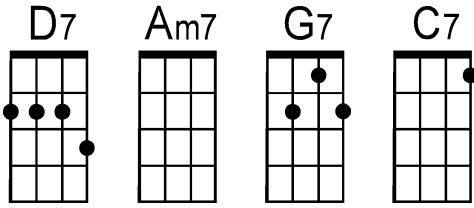


Ode to Billy Joe

by Bobbie Gentry (1967)



Strum:

& | 1 2 & 3 & -- & | 1 2 & 3 & & |
U | D D U D U -- U | D D U D U -- U

pick: 4 | 3 1 1 3 1 -- 4 | 3 1 1 3 1 -- 4 |
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Intro: D7 . . . | . . .

. | D7 . . . | Am7 . . . | D7 . . . | . . .
It was the third of June, a-nother sleepy, dusty, del-ta day-ay-ay-ay---

. | D7 . . . | Am7 . . . | D7 . . . | . . .
I was out choppin' cotton and my brother was bal--in' hay-ay-ay-ay---

. | G7 . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
And at dinner-time we stopped and walked back to the house to e-e-eat.

. | D7 . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
And momma hollered at the back door, "Y'all re-member to wipe your fe-e-eet."

. | G7 . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
And then she said, "I got some news this mornin' from Choc-taw Ri-i-i-idge---

. | D7\ . . . | C7\ . . . | D7 . . . | . . . | . . .
To-day, Billy Joe Mc-Allis-ter jumped off the Talla-hach-ee Bri--idge."

D7 . . . | Am7 . . . | D7 . . . | . . .
Papa said to Mama as he passed a-round the blackeyed pea-e-eas---

. | D7 . . . | Am7 . . . | D7 . . . | . . .
"Well, Billy Joe never had a lick of sense. Pass the biscuits plea-e-ease---

. | G7 . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
There's five more acres in the lower forty I've got to plo-o-ow---ow."

. | D7 . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
And Mama said it was a shame a-bout Billy Joe any--how-o-ow---

. | G7 . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
Seems like nothing' ever comes to no good up on Choc-taw Ri-i-i-idge---

. | D7\ . . . | C7\ . . . | D7 . . . | . . . | . . .
And now Billy Joe Mc-Allis-ter's jumped off the Talla-hach-ee Bri--idge.

D7 . . . | Am7 . . . | D7 . . . | . . .
Brother said he recol-lected when he and Tom and Billy Joe-o-o--oe---

. | D7 . . . | Am7 . . . | D7 . . . | . . .
Put a frog down my back at the Carroll County picture show-o-o--ow---

. | G7 . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
And wasn't I talkin' to him after church last Sun-day night-i-i-ight?

“I’ll have a-nother piece of apple pie. You know, it don’t seem right-i-i-ight
I saw him at the sawmill yester-day on Choc-taw Ri-i-i-idge—
And now you tell me Billy Joe’s jumped off the Talla-hach-ee Bri-idge.”

Momma said to me, “Child, what’s happened to your ap-pe-ti-i-ite?
I’ve been cookin’ all morning’ and you haven’t touched a single bite.
That nice young preacher Brother Taylor dropped by to-day-ay-ay.
Said he’d be pleased to have dinner on Sunday, oh, by the way-ay-ay-ay—
He said he saw a girl that looked a lot like you up on Choctaw Ri-i-i-idge—
And she and Billy Joe was throwin’ somethin’ off the Talla-hach-ee Bri-idge.

A year has come and gone since we heard the news a-bout Billy Joe-o-o-oe—.
Brother married Becky Thompson, they bought a store in Tup-el-o.
There was a virus goin’ ‘round, Papa caught it and he died last spri-i-ing—ing
And now Momma doesn’t seem to want to do much of any-thing-i-ing—ing
And me, I spend a lot of time pickin’ flowers up on Choc-taw Ri-i-i-idge—
And drop them in— to the muddy water off the Talla-hach-ee Bri-idge.