

ODE TO BILLIE JOE

Played fingerstyle, the thumb picking the bass note of the chords before an upstroke with the other fingers, keeping the rhythm clipped, and syncopated.

In live performances Bobbie always plays the change to Am7, but on the original record she sometimes skips it, and just stays on the D9 to D9/A riff. I've put those Am7 chords in brackets, so you can choose to play them or not.

D9 = x54550 **G7** = 3x343x or 3x34xx (without the 5th)
D9/A = x54530 **C7** = x32310
Am7 = 505550 **D7** = x5453x

[Intro]

	D9	D9/A	D9	D9/A	
e	-----0---0-----0---0---	-----0---0-----0---0---	[Repeat]		
B	-----3---3-----3---3---	-----3---3-----3---3---			
G	-----5---5-----5---5---	-----5---5-----5---5---			
D	-----4-----	-----4-----			
A	---5-----	---5-----			
E	-----5---5-----	-----5---5-----			

[Verse 1]

D9	D9/A	(Am7)	D9	D9/A	D9	D9/A
It was the third of June,	another sleepy, dusty, Delta day,					

D9	D9/A	Am7	D9	D9/A	D9	D9/A
I was out chopping cotton, and my brother was bailing hay,						

G7
And at dinner time we stopped, and walked back to the house to eat,

D9	D9/A
And Momma hollered out the back door,	

(Am7)	D9	D9/A	D9	D9/A
"Y'all re - member ...to wipe your feet!"				

G7
And then she said, "I got some news this mornin' ...from Choctaw Ridge,

D9	C7	D9	D9/A	D9	D9/A
Today, Billie Joe MacAllister jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge!"					

[Verse 2]

D9 D9/A Am7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
And Poppa said to Momma, as he passed around the blackeyed peas,

D9 D9/A Am7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
"Well, Billie Joe never had a lick of sense! Pass the biscuits, please!

G7
There's five more acres in the lower forty ...I got to plow!"

D9 D9/A (Am7) D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
And Momma said it was shame ...a - bout Billie Joe any – how,

G7
Seems like nothing ever comes to no good up on Choctaw Ridge,

D9 C7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
And now Billie Joe MacAllister's jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge!

[Verse 3]

D9 D9/A (Am7) D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
Brother said he recollected ...when he, and Tom, and Billie Joe,

D9 D9/A (Am7) D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
Put a frog down my back at the Carroll County Picture Show,

G7
And, "Wasn't I talkin' to him after church, last Sunday night?

D9 D9/A (Am7) D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
I'll have a - nother piece of apple pie! You know, it don't seem right,

G7
I saw him at the sawmill yesterday, up on Choctaw Ridge,

D9 C7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
And now you tell me Billie Joe's jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge!"

[Verse 4]

D9 D9/A Am7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
Momma said to me, "Child, what's happened to your appe – tite?"

D9 D9/A Am7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
Why, I've been cookin' all morning, and you haven't touched a single bite,

G7
That nice young preacher, Brother Taylor, dropped by today,

D9 D9/A (Am7) D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
Said he'd be pleased to have dinner on Sunday! Oh, by the way,

G7
He said he saw a girl that looked a lot like you, up on Choctaw Ridge,

D9 C7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
And she, and Billie Joe, was throwing somethin' off the Tallahatchie Bridge!"

[Verse 5]

D9 D9/A Am7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
A year has come and gone since we heard the news 'bout Billie Joe,

D9 D9/A Am7 D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
Brother married Becky Thompson, they bought a store in Tupe – lo,

G7
There was a virus going 'round, Poppa caught it, and he died last Spring,

D9 D9/A (Am7) D9 D9/A D9 D9/A
And now Momma doesn't seem to wanna do much ...of any - thing,

G7
And me, I spend a lot of time pickin' flowers up on Choctaw Ridge,
D9 C7 D9 D9/A
And drop them into the muddy water off the Tallahatchie Bridge!

[Coda]

D9 D9/A D9 D9/A D7
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