

These Old Bones

Dolly Parton

These old bones will tell your story
These old bones will never lie
These old bones will tell you surely
What you can't see with your eye
These old bones, I shake and rattle
These old bones, I toss and roll
And it's all in where they scatter
Tells you what the future holds

Oh, she lived up on the mountain
Eleven miles or so from town
With a one-eyed cat named Wink,
A billy goat and a blue tick hound
Her graying hair was braided
And wrapped around her head
And her dress was long and faded
And her home a rusty shed

In a little pouch of burlap
Tied with a piece of twine
There were bones all shapes and sizes
Gathered through the course of time
She'd throw them out before you
She swore that she could see
The present, past and future
She could ready your destiny

Everybody knew about her
Came to get their fortune read
Concerning health and wealth and power
Who to love and when to wed
Well, I just like helpin' people
I'm just glad that I could help
Why, I know everybody's secrets
But I keep it to myself

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Some called her witchy woman
Some said she was insane
Some said she was a prophet
Still everybody came
Just because a body's different
Well, that don't make 'em mad
Well, they've crucified a many
For the special gifts they've had

I had often heard about her,
Dreamed about her now and then
For I, too, was clairvoyant,

Came about when I was ten
I was fascinated with her
And the things I'd heard about
And I knew some day I'd meet her,
And one day it came about

Well, I know'd that you 'uz a'comin'
I could feel it in my bones
These old bones have also told me
That I won't be here for long
Did you know that you 'uz adopted?
Did you know you once't was mine?
But the county took you from me,
Said I wasn't right in mind

But I just know'd I had to see you
'Fore these bones was laid to rest
So I conjured up a message
It must'a worked, I guess
This gift runs in the family
I know you also know
And I passed this gift on to you
These old bones, they're just for show

These old bones will tell your story
These old bones will never lie
These old bones will tell you surely
How to live and when you'll die
These old bones, I shake and rattle
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I held her hand while she was dyin'
And with the funeral through
I headed on back up the mountain
For Billy, Wink and Blue
And that little pouch of burlap
With those bones so worn and old
She give me somethin' special
Now every time I throw

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Now I can't tell you what you want to hear
I just tell you what I see
It's these old bones a'talkin'
Blame it on them