



Clarksdale, Mississippi

probably best known claim to fame is likely the crossroads where Robert Johnson, allegedly, sold his soul to the devil in exchange for musical fame around 1931. As the story goes, down on his luck, Robert Johnson was walking

along when he came to the Clarksdale crossroads. It was here that he met a stranger who offered to tune his guitar, which Johnson accepted. Little did he know that this mysterious stranger was the devil himself? Whether or not he knew that his bargain was of the Faustian variety has been debated for years, but according to the legend the results were the same. Robert Johnson would go on to become the greatest blues player of his day. Whether the story is to be believed depends on one's belief in the devil or his odd obsession with creating blues musicians.

Since the story has always been vague and becomes even more colourful with every retelling we believe as we choose, the location of the actual crossroads it is based on is really unknown, however Clarksdale, claims to be the place, now we ponder if the devil was still hanging around in September 1937 as Bessie Smith came driving by.....

On September 26, 1937, Bessie was critically injured in a car crash on U.S. Route 61 between Memphis, and Clarksdale at a crossroads. Her partner, Richard Morgan, was driving, and misjudged the speed of a slow-moving truck ahead of him. Skid marks at the scene suggested that



Morgan tried to avoid the truck by driving around its left side, but he hit the rear of the truck side-on at high speed. The tailgate of the truck sheared off the wooden roof off car. Bessie, who was in the passenger seat, probably with her right arm or elbow out the window, took the full brunt of the impact – So there's the story, but is it true? – Spin a coin and take your pick.