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Ballad of the Cool Fountain

Edwin Honig

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Ballad of the Cool Fountain

(After the Spanish
Romance de fonte frida)

Fountain, coolest fountain,
Cool fountain of love,
Where all the sweet birds come
For comforting—but one,
A widow turtle dove,
Sadly sorrowing.
At once the nightingale,
That wicked bird, came by
And spoke these honeyed words:
“My lady, if you will,
I shall be your slave.”
“You are my enemy:
Begone, you are not true!
Green boughs no longer rest me,
Nor any budding grove.
Clear springs, when there are such,
Turn muddy at my touch.
I want no spouse to love
Nor any children either.
I forego that pleasure
And their comfort too.
No, leave me: you are false
And wicked—vile, untrue!
I’ll never be your mistress!
I’ll never marry you!”

—Edwin Honig