

# A la claire fontaine

Canadian Folk Song  
arr. Larry Nickel

Wistfully  $\text{♩} = 64$  (in two)

all women

*mp*

*mf*

*p < mp*

*p < mp*

mp

pedal freely

Oo

Oo

Oo

*p* *mp* *p* *p* *mp*

Oo do do do do do do do do do do do do do

*mp* *mf*

*mp* *mf*

\*as in "how do you do" with a soft "d"

13 **A** *mf* By the clear fountain, I went walking I found the water so beautiful that I stopped to bathe.

*mf*

À la clai - re fon - tai - ne m'en al - lant pro - me - ner, j'ai trou - vé l'eau si bel - le

À la clai - re fon - tai - ne m'en al - lant pro - me - ner, j'ai trou - vé l'eau si bel - le

*mp*

19 *rit.* *p*

que je m'y suis bai-gné. Il y'a long-temps que je t'ai-me, ja - mais je ne t'ou-blie-rai.

que je m'y suis bai-gné. Il y'a long-temps que je t'ai-me, ja - mais je ne t'ou-blie-rai.

*rit.*

25 *a tempo* *pp*

*pp*

*molto rit.* *a tempo* *pp* *mp*

**B** *mf* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

Under the oak tree, I dried myself. On the highest bough, a nightingale was singing.

Sous les feuil - les d'un chô-ne, je me suis fair séch-er. Sur la plus hau-te bran-che un ros-sig-

Oo Sur la plus hau-te bran-che un ros-sig-

*mp* *mf* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

37

nol chan-tait. Il y'a long temps que je t'ai-me, ja-mais je ne t'ou-blie rai. —

nol chant-tait. Oo

*mp*



44

**C** *Sing, nightingale, sing - you with your carefree heart.*

Chan - te ros - sig - nol, chan - te, toi qui as le coeur gai.

doom dm\* dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm

doom dm\* dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm

Doom dm\* dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm

*pp* *p*

\*doom; close directly to the "m"

Your heart feels like laughing - mine feels like weeping..

50

Tu as le coeur à ri - re. Moi, je l'ai à pleur - er. Il y'a long-temps que je t'ai - me,

dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm

dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm

dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm dm

pp

Sample Only

56

ja - mais je ne t'ou - blie - rai.

dm dm dm dm dm

dm dm dm dm dm

dm dm dm dm dm

p

6 **D** *mp* I lost my beloved - without just cause - over a bouquet of roses that I refused to give her.

62 *mp* *mf* *mp*

Oo pour un bouquet de roses, Que je lui  
J'ai perdu ma maîtresse\* sans l'avoir mérité, pour un bouquet de roses, Que je lui

\*mistress:  
by this time it meant "beloved"

69

re - fu - sai. Il y'a long-temps que je t'ai-me, ja - mais je ne t'ou-blie-rai.  
re - fu - sai. Il y'a long-temps que je t'ai-me, ja - mais je ne t'ou-blie-rai.

*pp leggiero*  
pedal freely

75

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**E** *a cappella*  
**dolce - rubato**

*I wish that the rose was still on the bush and that my friend still loved me.*

79 *mf*

Je vou-drais que la ro - se fût en - core au ro - sier, et que ma dou - c'a - mi - e

Je vou-drais que la ro - se fût en - core au ro - sier, et que ma dou - c'a - mi - e

*tacet*

85 *molto rit.*  $\text{♩} = 62$  (*meno mosso*) *dolce*

fût en - core à m'aim - er. Il y'a long - temps que je t'ai - me, ja - mais je ne

fût en - core à m'aim - er. Il y'a long - temps que je t'ai - me, ja - mais je ne

91 *stagger breathing* *p* *rit.*

t'o - blei - rai. do.

t'o Oo Oo Oo do do do do

t'o Oo Oo Oo do do do do

t'o do do do do

"À la claire fontaine" ("By the clear fountain") is a traditional French song, which has also become very popular in Canada - especially the French-speaking areas such as Québec. The song may have appeared as early as 1604 when the first permanent French settlement was established. As with all traditional songs, numerous versions of both music and lyrics can be found, and versions known in France may be quite different from those known in Canada.

The melody is pentatonic, and uses only four notes of the scale. The verse employs an alternating 7- and 6-syllable metre, with the refrain adding an extra syllable to each line. Like another famous children's song, "Au clair de la lune", it has an adult theme - in this case, one of lost love. The song speaks of a lover stopping by a fountain, hearing a nightingale singing, and thinking about his beloved, whom he lost after failing to buy her a bouquet of roses. The refrain is repeated at the end of each verse.



Dr. Larry Nickel is an Associate Composer of the Canadian Music Centre. He sang professionally with the Vancouver Chamber Choir for six years and currently directs the Jubilate Vocal Ensemble. Larry is the owner and editor of Cypress Choral Music Publishing, which features the music of over 90 Canadian composers. The thesis for his Ph.D. in composition, Requiem for Peace, is an extensive work for chorus, soloists and symphony orchestra in 12 languages, which is gaining worldwide attention.

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