

Tomás Méndez  
Cucurrucú Paloma  
Sung here in Caetano Veloso's art-song style

From Wikipedia

"Cucurrucú paloma" (Spanish for Coo-coo dove) is a Mexican huapango-style song written by Tomás Méndez in 1954. The title is an onomatopoeic reference to the characteristic call of the mourning dove, which is evoked in the refrain. The lyrics allude to love sickness.

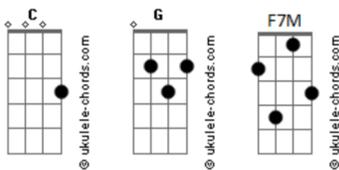
Over the years the song has been used in the soundtrack of several films and has gained international popularity. It initially appeared in the classic Mexican comedy *Escuela de vagabundos* screened in 1955, where it was sung by the star of the film, Pedro Infante. The song also gave its name to the 1965 Mexican film *Cucurrucú Paloma*, directed by Miguel Delgado, in which it was performed by Lola Beltrán, who starred as "Paloma Méndez".

In Pedro Almodovar's film *Talk to Her* (2002) the piece is rendered by the Brazilian singer Caetano Veloso in an art-song style quite different from the mariachi folk-kitsch of its original cinema presentation.

Other films in which the song is used include *Le Magnifique*, *The Last Sunset*, *Happy Together*, *My Son, My Son*, *What Have Ye Done*, *The Five-Year Engagement*, and *Moonlight*.

Since its first release on record in 1956 in a version sung by Harry Belafonte, the song has been recorded by various other popular singers, including Luis Miguel, Rocío Dúrcal, Perry Como, Miguel Aceves Mejía, Hibari Misora, Gaby Moreno, Nana Mouskouri, Julio Iglesias, Shirley Kwan, Lila Downs, Joan Baez (on her album *Gracias a la Vida*), Rosemary Clooney, and The Del Rubio Triplets; the refrain was also taken up by Franco Battiato in his own song "Cuccurucucù" (on *La voce del padrone*).

In 2019, operatic tenor Juan Diego Florez sang the song, accompanying himself on guitar at La Scala in Milan, in a version appearing in a YouTube video that has been viewed close to 10 million times.



C

Dicen que por las noches

They say that at night

Nomás se le iba en puro <sup>J</sup>llorar

All he would do is cry;

F7M

Dicen que no comía,

They say he didn't eat,

Nomás se le iba en puro tomar

All he would do is drink [alcohol].

G

<sup>H</sup>Juran que el mismo cielo

They swear that heaven itself

Se estremecía al oír su llanto

Shook upon hearing his weeping,

F7M

Cómo sufrió por ella,

How he suffered for her,

G

C

Que hasta en su muerte la fue llamando

And even in death he called her:

Ay, ay, ay, ay, ay, ... cantaba,  
 Ay, ay, ay, ay, ay, ... gemía,  
 Ay, ay, ay, ay, ay, ... cantaba,  
 De pasión mortal... moría

Que una paloma triste

Muy de mañana le va a cantar,

A la casita sola,

Con sus puertitas de par en par

Juran que esa paloma

No es otra cosa mas que su alma,

Que todavía la espera

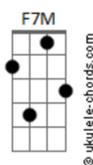
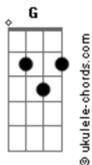
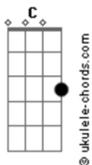
A que regrese la desdichada

Cucurrucucu... paloma,

Cucurrucucu... no llores

Las piedras jamás, paloma

¡Que van a saber de amores!



Ay ay ay ay ay, he sang,

Ay ay ay ay ay, he moaned,

Ay ay ay ay ay, he sang,

He died of incurable passion.

When a sad dove

Will sing to him very early in the morning

Alone in the house

With its little doors, two by two,

They swear that dove

Is none other than his soul,

Which is still waiting

For the wretched one to return.

Coo coo, dove,

coo coo, don't cry.

Dove, will those stones

Ever know anything of love?

Coo coo, coo coo,

Coo coo, coo coo,

Coo coo, dove, don't cry anymore.