

Papyrus Chester Beatty I, verso, column 1 to column 5, line 2

Chester Beatty Library and Gallery, Dublin

Following Mathieu. La poesie amoureuse de l'Egypte ancienne. Recherches sur un genre litteraire au Nouvel Empire. Cairo, 1996.

First Stanza – spoken by a man	
snt nn snw.s nfr Hr-nb ptri.s mi spdt xay m HAt rnpt nfrt Sspt iqrt wbxt inw ant irty gmH bnri spt.s mdwt bn n.s xnw m HAw qAt nHb wbxt qby xsbd mAa Snw.s gAb.s Hr iT nwb Dbaw.s mi sSnw bdS pHT.s mrw.t(i) Hr-ib DA mnty.s nfrw.s tw iwt xnd.s Hr tA iT.s ib.i m Hpt.s di.s st wn nHb TAY nb msHn n mAA st rSwt Hpty st nbt sw mi tpy n mryw ptr.ti pr.st r HA mi tfyt wat	Sister without rival, most beautiful of all, she looks like the star-goddess, rising at the start of the good New Year. Perfect and bright, shining skin, seductive in her eyes when she glances, sweet in her lips when she speaks, and never a word too many. Slender neck, shining body, her hair is true lapis, her arm gathers gold, her fingers are like lotus flowers, ample behind, tight waist, her thighs extend her beauty, shapely in stride when she steps on the earth. She has stolen my heart with her embrace, She has made the neck of every man turn round at the sight of her. Whoever embraces her is happy, he is like the head of lovers, and she is seen going outside like That Goddess, the One Goddess.
Second Stanza – spoken by a woman	
sn.i Hr stAH ib.i m xrw.f di.f TAY n.i xAyt sw m sAH-tA n pr n tAy.i mwt nn rx.i Smt.n.f nfrt mwt m Hn.i m nfy i.xAa mAA st mk ib.i HDn sxA.tw.f iT wi mrwt.f mk sw m iwty ib.f iw swt iw.i mi qd.f bw rx.f nAy.i Aby Hpt.f mtw.f hAb n tAy.i mwt sn hAy tw.i wD.kwi xr.k in nwb Hmwt mi n.i mAA nfrw.k	My brother overwhelms my heart with his words, he has made sickness seize hold of me. Now he is near the house of my mother, and I cannot even tell that he has been. It is good of my mother to order me like this, 'Give it up out of your sights'; see how my heart is torn by the memory of him, love of him has stolen me. Look what a senseless man he is - but I am just like him. He does not realise how I wish to embrace him, or he would write to my mother. Brother, yes! I am destined to be yours, by the Gold Goddess of women. Come to me, let your beauty be seen,

rSwt it mwt nhm n.k rmT.i nbt m bw wa nhm.sn n.k sn	let father and mother be glad. Call all my people together in one place, let them shout out for you, brother.
Third Stanza	
xmt ib.i r mAA nfrw.s iw.i Hms.kwi m-Xnw.s gm.i mHy Hr Htr Hr wAt Hna nAy.f mryw bw rx.i iT.i m-bAH.f snny.i Hr.f m wstn ptr itrw mi wAt nn rx st rdwy.i xm.t ib.i r iqr wstn.k mHy Hr ix mk ir snny.i m-bAH.f iw.i Dd n.f pXrw.i mk iw.i n.k kA.n.f iw.f swH A m rn.i iw.f Hr dni.i r tA kpy tpy nty imyw-xt.f	My heart thirsts to see her beauty, as I am seated at home with her, but I found Mehy on horseback on the road with his men the seducers. I do not know if I should hold myself in front of him; or if I could pass him freely. River and road looked alike: I couldn't decide where to put my feet, You my girl are blissfully unaware of my passion. Why did you stroll in, Mehy? Look, if I pass Mehy, I'll tell him my circuits, 'So, I am yours', I would tell him, and he would clamour at my name, appointing me to that head inner palace, the one with his followers.
Forth Stanza	
ifd sw ib.i As Dr sxA mrwt.k bw dd.f Sm.i mi rmT sw tfy mk.tw.f bw dd.f TAY.i mssy bw wnx.i pAy.i bhn bw dd sDmw r irt.i bw wrH wi m kfA m ir aHa pH.t Xn xr.f n.i r tnw sxA sw m ir n.i pAy.i HAty wxAy i.ir.k xAniw Hr ix Hms qbH iw n.k snt irt.i qnw m mitt m rdit Dd nA rmT r.i st tw hA tw m mry smn.ti r tnw sxA.k sw ib.i im.k ifdy	My heart bares itself instantly, at the memory of your love. It does not let me walk like a person, it has strayed from its shelter. It does not let me put on a dress, I cannot even wrap my scarf, No kohl can be put no my eye, I am not anointed with oil. 'Don't stand there - go in to him' it tells me at each memory of him. Don't, my heart, be stupid at me: why are you acting the fool? Sit, be cool, the sister has come to you' but my eye is just as troubled. Don't make people say of me 'she is a woman fallen by love' Be firm each time you remember him, My heart, do not stray.
Fifth Stanza	
dwA.i nwb sSwA.i Hm.s sqAy.i nbt pt iry.i iAwT n HwtHr Hknw n Hnwt smi.i n.s sDm.s sprw.i	I worship the Gold Goddess, I sing of her Presence, I raise up the lady of heaven, I give adoration to Hathor, Praise to the Mistress. I reported to her, and she heard my pleas,

wD.s n.i Hnwt sw iAy.ti Hr Ds.s r mAA.i aAyt wsy xprw n.i Haw.kwi xntS.kwi wr.kwi Dr Dd yH mk sw mk iAy.s mry m ksy n aA mrwt.s iry.i smAaw n tAy.i nTrt di.s n.i snt m diy hrw xmt r sf Dr sDm spr.i Hr rnw.s pr.s m-a.i Hr hrw diw	she ordered a Mistress for me, and she is come herself to see me. What a great thing has happened to me! (I felt) overjoyed, ecstatic, great when told 'Hey, she is there, look, she has come, the amorous are bowed, so great is the love of her. I send my prayers to my goddess, she gave me the sister as a gift. Three days to yesterday since my pleas in her name; since she left me is day five.
Sixth Stanza	
swA.n.f m hAw n pr.f gm.i aA.f wn sn aHa r-gswy mwt.f snw.f nb r-Hna.f mrwt.f Hr iT ib n xnd nb Hr wAt sfy iqr nn mitt.f sn stp biAt gmH.f r.i m-Dr snny.n.i tw.i wa.kwi r nhmw xntS wy ib.i m TAHw sn Dr mAA.i hAn mwt rx.ti ib.i iw.s aq.ti n.s r nw nwb hAy imi sw m ib.s kA Hnw.i n sn snny sw m-bAH nAy.f iryw bw Tmw.i n rmT rSwT.i n pAy.sn aAmw r-Dd tw.k rx wi iry.i Hbw n tAy.i nTrt tf ib.i r pr r rdit gmH.i sn m pA grH nfr wsy m swA	I passed by the front of his house, and found his door was open. Brother was standing beside his mother, all his brothers were with him. Love of him steals the heart of any wayfarer, perfect youth, none like him, choicest brother, a miracle. He looked at me when I passed by, but I am too alone to cry out. How my heart races for joy, brother, when I can see. If only the mother knew my desire, if she would accept it at once. Gold Goddess, yes, put it in her heart so I may rush to the brother, I would kiss him in front of his staff, I would not cry tears for anyone, I would be happy that they realised that you are the one who knows me, I would make festivals for my goddess, my heart has escaped to go out to let brother see me in the beautiful night, fully, in passing by.
Seventh Stanza	
sfx r sf bw mAA.i snt aq aq n.i xAyt im.i xpr.kwi Haw.i wdn smx Dt.i Ds.i ir iw n.i nA wrw swnw bw hr ib.i pXrt.sn nA Xryw-Hb bn wAt im.sn bw wDa tAy.i xAyt pA Dd n.i mk sw pA nty sanx	Seven to yesterday that I haven't seen sister, and sickness has entered deep into me, I have grown heavy in my limbs, my body has lost sense of itself. When the chief physicians come to me, my heart finds no relief in their remedies, and the ritual-readers, there is no way through them, my sickness cannot be uncovered. Just telling me 'here she is' is my cure,

rn.s pA nty Ts.i pA aq pr n nAy.s wpwtyw pA nty sanx ib.i Ax n.i sn r pXrt nbt wr sw n.i r tA dmdyt pAy.i wDA pAy.s aq r-bnr ptr.s kA snb wn.s irt.s rnpy Haw.i mdt.s kA rwd.i iw.i Hpt.s sHr.s Dwt Hr.i pr.s m-a.i Hr hrw sfx	her name is what can raise me, the coming and going of her messengers is what can cure my heart. Being a brother is better for me than any medicine: it is more important to me than any prescription book, My health-cure is her visit, has she gazed, then I am well, has she opened her eyes, then my body is young, has she spoken, then I am strong. When I embrace her, she has banished harm from me. She left me now seven days.
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