

Egyptian love poetry

[Literature](#), [Poetry](#)



The timeline of history is not a static one. As time progresses, most all aspects of life constantly advance. That being said, some things remain practically unchanged for several millennia. The ways of human nature are still as basic and at the same time incredibly complex today as they were thousands of years ago. A betrayal of a good friend hurts as much today as it did no matter what time period you look at. It is the reason good deeds have always been praised and bad deeds punished. The same may be applied to any facet of life. The pain felt when left in the absence of a loved one, the subject of the lyrical poetry found in the Papyrus Chester Beatty I. Expressed in these lyrics are emotions that readers today can relate with although being written in 1500 B. C. Egypt. The poem consists of seven stanzas, alternating between a man and women, expressing their feelings for the person they love. Stanza seven uses quite powerful analogies to convey how the speaker longs to be with his loved one. The speaker's mental and physical state are beginning to diminish as he waits for the return of his woman. The significance of this lies in both the content of the words and in the time that this was written. It is amazing that love has held an unexplainable power over humans for some thousands of years, and that it is still one of the most sought after ideas in the world. Stanza seven is dealing with the likes of a very distraught lover. The man compares his feeling of sadness to an incurable ailment. This idea of a pain-stricken lover longing for the return of their soul-mate can be found in numerous places, be it a Civil War drama or a 1980's rock ballad. The man describes his attempts to improve his condition with a somber tone, not one alleviating his sadness. The non-advanced nature of life allows little to distract you from your

sadness. It seems that human nature is much more prominent and more easily observed in such an environment. It is difficult though at times to determine what lyrics are to be taken literally. The writer explains feeling heavy on all of his limbs, that his heart rejects the medicines of the people who come to treat him. Now was this man actually checked out by a physician of sorts, probably not. He is describing the feeling of being love-sick, a metaphor that most believe wouldn't have existed so long ago. Not only is it interesting that these feelings were felt so long ago, but also the fact that they were written down. While it is difficult to determine exactly how poetic the non-translated texts are, it is fascinating that people felt the need to express themselves in a written language rather than simply speaking it. How could we tell that these feelings existed without having them written down? When reading all seven stanzas, it is obvious that the emotions become increasingly more intense as you progress; beginning with praise of their loved one, finishing with a physical manifestation of loneliness. This holds the interest of the reader. The culmination of emotion reaches its peak in the seventh and final stanza. The writer claims that his woman is his amulet, his one prize. The sight of her would be the only thing to revive him. Not only did love poetry exist in this time, but it is as sappy as it ever was. Surely some readers of the time thought such emotion was nice and enjoyed reading such texts, while others rendered nauseous from its romantic nature. Is the feeling of the writer taken seriously by the listener, or is it received in a similar fashion as a love song is today? Possibly the writer felt such anguish after only seven days of absence from his lover, but one can't rule out the possibility that the intense description is added merely for

entertainment. One would have to consider the writer a possibly unstable person if they are speaking as if their life was ending because of such circumstances. The speaker appears powerless over these emotions. It becomes almost annoying to think of someone in this state only having been in seven days of separation. What would a person like this do if the person he was waiting for was never to return. Such a person could not live a life of normalcy with such sadness hanging over their head. It is difficult to determine if this is a true account of someone in love, or if it is only a conceived notion of love by the author. Since the speaker of the poem switches between stanzas, it appears that this is a story of fiction. But that is not to say that this author has not felt such emotions before. Possibly it is an account of the authors take on feeling love in the past, now having known love writes a love story. Some details of the story appear all too true and would be difficult to write unless having lived some of them. The idea of wishing for a parent's approval is probably a familiar concept to anyone who has ever been in a relationship. How could someone believe that love would feel such a way unless having felt it themselves. The powers of love have been an unexplainable force since the beginning of time. Texts like give people today a clue of what life would have been like so long ago. What other human emotions and traits existed in this time period, and what new has come since then? The significance of these findings from the ancient world is fascinating. It can be said that people read love poems in Ancient Egypt. Surely, just as many people disliked such romantic sap as got enjoyment from it. This idea links the people of today even closer with the people of the past.