



Charles Argersinger



Text

Please Come Quick to the Lady Love

*Love Song of Ancient Egypt
(hieratic papyrus No. 1, Chester Beatty Library)*

Please come quick to the lady love
like a king's agent whose master is impatient
for his letters
and desires to hear them

all the stables are made ready for him
horses are harnessed at the stopping places
chariots are fitted out at their stations
there's no relaxation on the road for him
and when he reaches the house of the lady
his heart is overwhelmed with joy.

Please come quick <to the lady love>
like the king's steed, the pick of a thousand from all the herds,
the foremost of the stables.

It is set apart from the others in its feed
and its master knows its gaits.
As soon as it hears the crack of a whip
it knows no holding back.

There's not a captain in the chariotry
who can pull ahead of it,
but well the lady love knows
he cannot go far from her.

Please come quick to the lady love
like a gazelle
running in the desert
its feet are wounded
its limbs are exhausted
fear penetrates its body
the hunters are after it
the hounds are with them
they cannot see
because of the dust

it sees its rest place like a mirage
it takes a canal as its road.

Before you have kissed your hand four times,
you shall have reached her hideaway
as you chase the lady love.

For it is the Golden Goddess
who has set her aside for you, friend.