

This play was written by Pat Story from an idea supplied by her students at Coleridge Community College, Cambridge.

The linguistic level is that of the end of Stage 12 with the addition of **volō**, **possum** and such expressions as **necesse est** + infinitive.

The Egyptian Ring

Two slaves, Grumio and Poppaea, find an Egyptian ring, which they mistakenly think will bring them good luck. Grumio gives the ring to Poppaea. Her old master, Lucrio, tells her that he intends to set her free and marry her. The unhappy Poppaea sends the ring back to Grumio. Grumio manages to keep the ring despite the attempts of a thug to steal it. The goddess Isis appears to Grumio and tells him that the ring was stolen from her and brings bad luck to anyone who has it. Grumio returns the ring to Isis. Poppaea enters and announces that Lucrio set her free but then died before he could marry her. The two lovers are thus re-united.

ānulus Aegyptius

Scene 1: in viā

Characters: Grumio, Poppaea.

Grumiō: dēliciae meae, ubi est dominus tuus?
Poppaea: Lucriō ad theātrum iit.
Grumiō: Caecilius et Metella et Quīntus quoque ad theātrum iērunt.
Poppaea: euge! sōlī sumus. quō ire vīs? ad montem? ad portum?
Grumiō: portus mē dēlectat. (*Sees something lying in the road*) babae! quid videō?
Poppaea: quid est, Grumiō?
Grumiō: ānulus est! ānulus Aegyptius est!
Poppaea: ānulus fēlīx est, quod omnēs ānulī Aegyptiī fēlīcēs sunt.
Grumiō: Poppaea, tibi hunc ānulum dō. volō tē semper fēlīcem esse.

Scene 2: in vīllā Lucriōnis

Characters: Scintilla (a slave-girl), Poppaea, Lucrio.

Scintilla: (*Enters*) Poppaea, Lucriō tē quaerit.
Poppaea: quid vult senex?
Scintilla: nesciō, sed laetissimus est.
Lucriō: (*Off-stage*) Poppaea! Poppaea! ubi es? (*Enters*) Poppaea!
Poppaea: ecce mē, domine. quid vīs?
Lucriō: Poppaea, tū es ancilla optima. ego tē līberāre volō.
Poppaea: ō Lucriō, quam līberālis es!
Lucriō: deinde, volō tē uxōrem meam esse.
Poppaea: o mē miseram!
Lucriō: quid dīxistī?
Poppaea: domine, ego sum ... (*Bursts into tears*)
Scintilla: fortasse Poppaea lacrimat quod laetissima est, domine.
Lucriō: ita vērō, fēminae semper lacrimant. nōs virī fortiōrēs sumus. nunc ego discēdō. necesse est mihi nūptiās parāre.
Poppaea: quam misera sum! Grumiōnem, nōn Lucriōnem amō.
Scintilla: sed Lucriō est dīves.
Poppaea: nihil cūrō. Grumiōnem amīsī. Scintilla, ad Grumiōnem contendē. hunc ānulum eī redde. tōtam rem nārrā. (*Kisses the ring*) valē, dēliciae meae!

Scene 3: in tabernā

Characters: innkeeper, Grumio, thief.

Grumiō: ō quam miser sum! dā mihi alium pōculum! Poppaeam amīsī! dēliciās meās amīsī.
caupōna: nōlī miser esse! sunt aliae puellae. tū mē valdē dēlectas, Grumiō. (*Sees his ring*) babae! ānulum splendidum habēs. eum īnspicere volō.
Grumiō: (*Shows her the ring*) Poppaea hunc ānulum ad mē mīsīt. ēheu!
fūr: (*Sees the ring*) hercle! servī ānulōs splendidōs nōn habent. dā mihi!
Grumiō: mihi nōn placet. meus est ānulus!
fūr: dā mihi statim!
Grumiō: minime! (*They fight; the innkeeper joins in.*)
Caupōna: nēmō in meā tabernā pugnat! ego fūstem habeō!
fūr: parce! parce! ecce ānulum tuum! (*Runs out throwing the ring on the floor*)
Grumiō: ō ānule, tē quoque paene amīsī. (*Seizes the ring and goes out followed by the innkeeper*)

Scene 4: in villā Caecilii

Characters: Grumio, Isis (the Egyptian goddess), Poppaea.

(Grumio is sleeping. Isis appears to him in a dream.)

Īsis: Grumiō, Grumiō

Grumiō: hercle! quis es?

Īsis: ego dea Īsis sum.

Grumiō: ō dea, dā mihi auxilium. ego miserrimus sum quod puellam meam
āmīsi.

Īsis: ego quoque miserrima sum quod tū ānulum meum habēs.

Grumiō: quid! ānulus tuus?

Īsis: ita vērō; fūr ānulum in Aegyptō cēpit; tum in Ītaliā nāvīgāvit. ānulus
ōlim fēlīx erat; nunc ĩnfēlīx est.

Grumiō: vērum est. ego dē vītā meā dēsperō. ego tibi libenter ānulum reddō.

Īsis: nunc ego contenta sum! nunc volō tē laetum esse. valē, serve optime!
(She disappears; Poppaea enters.)

Grumiō: Poppaea! dēliciae meae! cūr hūc vēnistī? estne Lucriō nunc marītus
tuus?

Poppaea: minimē! Lucriō mortuus est!

Grumiō: quid? mortuus?

Poppaea: ita vērō. Lucriō mē līberāvit; tum subitō ad terram dēcidit mortuus.
līberta sum, sed uxor nōn sum! dā mihi manum tuām. (Sees the ring
is not on his finger) sed ubi est ānulus noster, Grumiō?

Grumiō: dea Īsis, tibi grātiās maximās dō.

Poppaea: Grumiō, esne ĩnsānus?

Grumiō: minimē. ego tibi tōtam rem nārrāre volō. rēs mīrābilis est. (They go off
arm in arm.)

The Egyptian Ring

Scene 1: In the street

Grumio: Darling, where is your master?
Poppaea: Lucrio has gone to the theatre.
Grumio: Caecilius, Metella and Quintus have also gone to the theatre.
Poppaea: Great! We are alone. Where do you want to go? to the mountain? to the harbour?
Grumio: I'd like the harbour. (*Sees something lying in the road*) Hey, what do I see?
Poppaea: What is it, Grumio?
Grumio: It's a ring. It's an Egyptian ring!
Poppaea: The ring is lucky, because all Egyptian rings are lucky.
Grumio: Poppaea, I give you this ring. I want you always to be lucky.

Scene 2: In Lucrio's house

Scintilla: (*Enters*) Poppaea, Lucrio is looking for you.
Poppaea: What does the old man want?
Scintilla: I don't know, but he's very happy.
Lucrio: (*Off-stage*) Poppaea, Poppaea, where are you? (*Enters*) Poppaea!
Poppaea: Here I am, master. What do you want?
Lucrio: Poppaea, you are a very good slave-girl. I want to set you free.
Poppaea: O Lucrio, how generous you are!
Lucrio: Then I want you to be my wife.
Poppaea: Oh, how unhappy I am!
Lucrio: What did you say?
Poppaea: Master, I am . . . (*Bursts into tears*)
Scintilla: Perhaps Poppaea is crying because she is very happy, master.
Lucrio: Yes, women are always crying. We men are stronger. Now I'm going. I must make preparations for the wedding.
Poppaea: How unhappy I am. I love Grumio, not Lucrio.
Scintilla: But Lucrio is rich.
Poppaea: I don't care. I've lost Grumio. Scintilla, hurry to Grumio. Give this ring back to him. Tell him the whole story. (*Kisses the ring*) Goodbye, my darling.

Scene 3: In the inn

Grumio: Oh, how unhappy I am! Give me another cup of wine. I've lost Poppaea! I've lost my darling!
Innkeeper: Don't be miserable! There are lots of other girls. I fancy you a lot, Grumio. (*Sees his ring*) Hey, you've got a splendid ring. I want to look at it.
Grumio: (*Shows her the ring*) Poppaea sent this ring to me. Oh dear!
Thief: By Hercules, slaves ought not to have splendid rings. Give it to me!
Grumio: No. It's my ring!
Thief: Give it to me at once!
Grumio: No! (*They fight; the innkeeper joins in.*)
Innkeeper: No one fights in my inn! I've got a club!
Thief: Mercy! Mercy! Here's your ring! (*Runs out throwing the ring on the floor*)
Grumio: O ring, I almost lost you as well. (*Seizes the ring and goes out followed by the innkeeper*)

Scene 4: In Caecilius' house

(Grumio is sleeping. Isis appears to him in a dream.)

Isis: Grumio, Grumio.

Grumio: Good heavens, who are you?

Isis: I am the goddess Isis.

Grumio: O goddess, give me your help. I am very unhappy because I've lost my girl friend.

Isis: I am very unhappy too because you have my ring.

Grumio: What? Your ring?

Isis: Yes. A thief stole the ring in Egypt; then he sailed to Italy. The ring was once lucky; now it's unlucky.

Grumio: It's true. I despair of my life. I willingly give the ring back to you.

Isis: Now I am content; now I want you to be happy. Goodbye, you excellent slave! *(She disappears; Poppaea enters.)*

Grumio: Poppaea! Darling! Why have you come here? Is Lucrio now your husband?

Poppaea: No, Lucrio's dead.

Grumio: What? Dead?

Poppaea: Yes, Lucrio set me free; then he suddenly fell to the ground dead. I am a freedwoman, but not a wife! Give me your hand. *(Sees the ring is not on his finger)* But where is our ring, Grumio?

Grumio: Goddess Isis, I give you the greatest thanks.

Poppaea: Grumio, are you mad?

Grumio: No. I want to tell you the whole story. It's a miracle.

(They go off arm in arm.)