

Ars Magica

Thrice-Told Tales



by Andersen,
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Thrice-Told Tales

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Christian Rosenkjaer Andersen is an engineer living in Denmark. This is his fifth contribution to the *Ars Magica* line, but he is unlikely to quit his day job. His part in this book is dedicated to his continually supportive wife, and his rapidly growing son and daughter. There is still time to mold them into being gamers.

David MacGregor gratefully dedicates this writing to his ever-patient wife and daughter. Two ladies who have been the cornerstones in the development of the Criamon / Jerbiton Dyskolos Covenant... of Wisconsin. He would also like to thank David Chart for his guidance and patience!

Christian Jensen Romer lives in Cheltenham, England with three cats, Marmalade, Hansine & Cuddles. Each year he hosts an *Ars Magica* convention, Grand Tribunal, to which you are cordially invited. Find out more at www.grandtribunal.org.

Matt Ryan lives in the Finger Lakes region of New York State, several thousand miles and 800 years from the swampy bogs of 13th century Ireland. "The Mound" combines his fondness for ancient Irish mythology with old school role-playing games. He'd like to thank the many playtesters who helped mold "The Mound" from its initial presentation into its final form, and the encouragement of his fellow authors, his son August, and his sweetheart KC.

Mark Shirley is a biological modeller who lives in the north of England. Mark first ran the stories (or variants thereof) which are his contribution to this book in 2004. It didn't end as well for those characters as he hopes it ends for yours, still the events therein resulted in repercussions in the saga that still reverberate today (yes, they are still going: 57 game years and fifteen real years at the time of writing!). Mark would like to thank Andrew, Camo, and Roddy for their part in that story.

Ars Magica players participate in a thriving fan community by subscribing to email discussion lists (like the Berkeley list), compiling archives of game material (such as Project Redcap), maintaining fan-created web sites, and running demos through Atlas Games' Special Ops program. To learn more, visit www.atlas-games.com/ArM5. You can also participate in discussions of *Ars Magica* at the official Atlas Games forums located at forum.atlas-games.com.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Each chapter of *Thrice-Told Tales* is a sequence of three stories, all connected, but separated by a number of years. Each chapter is, if you like, a thread in the tapestry of a saga. Each chapter could be run by a different member of the troupe, the players taking turns as storyguide as the events unfold over time. This chapter contains short summaries that avoid giving away too many secrets; only the person who intends to storyguide a chapter should read the main text.

Earth and Sky

Almost a century has past since the covenant of Ombres L'assumption disappeared, quite possibly into a regio. Now, a last survivor has come to the covenant, with word of an ancient evil. Demons threaten the whole area, and the characters must find what was hidden, and thwart their plans.

The Mound

Situated in the peat bog between two baronies lies a mound, a place long forgotten by the local lords and neighboring peasants. It has recently been discovered by a Bonisagus Seeker, who has not returned from his initial explorations. The Seeker's parents approach the magi and asks them to find the lost magus. Upon arrival, the magi find that both baronies have been attacked by savage revenants, corporeal ghosts who kill those they meet. The baronies blame

each other, but is there another culprit? Can the magi find the lost Seeker and keep the baronies from war?

The mound is a persistent problem, and the revelations the magi find refuse to stay buried. Twice more evil surfaces, sowing strife and discord throughout both baronies, forcing them ever closer to open conflict. The final threat disgorges a nightmare so harrowing that it threatens the very kingdom, and unless stopped will return society to a dark age of blood, murder, and lost hope.

Servants of God

The story starts with a Quaesitor's routine investigation of possible mundane meddling by magi from a neighboring covenant. A nearby town has suffered a major fire, and the characters are asked to help determine whether any magi were involved. A high official in the Church has complained to the Order, and as the investigations proceed, links between clergymen and magi, and with supernatural power, become apparent. The characters find themselves facing a serious threat to the Order, from an unusual source.

Summer Is Icumen In

Nominally set in the Provençal Tribunal, this story can be told anywhere

that magi have to peacefully co-exist with feudal society. When a noble lady in distress comes to the covenant to tell a most unusual story, the magi investigate her plight and unmask a terrible plot. They must make hard choices about truth, morality and love; magic grants great power, not necessarily great wisdom.

After five years the noblewoman again calls upon the magi to assist. This time it is their own secrets they must guard, and a race against time develops to resolve the problem before hostile forces uncover what should best be forgotten. Finally, some fifteen to twenty years later the story comes to fruition, as the full ramifications of the events of the previous stories threaten to shatter the political security of a nation and two Tribunals. Have the magi made the right choices, and can they live with the consequences?

The Traitor's Game

A redcap has gone missing, and it seems like a straightforward search and rescue mission. However, a web of deceit and betrayal leads to a darker story of envy and hatred, with its roots in the ancient history of the Order. Acts of spite threaten to destroy the covenant, and the magi find an innocent caught up in plots that go back far beyond his birth.