

TRANSCRIPTS FOR AUGUST 2019



GAMES FROM FOLKTALES

An experiment in podcasting for the
Ars Magica roleplaying game

RENASANCE
THE OUTLANDISH KNIGHT
THE FAERIE LOVER
THE WITCH MAID
SUMMER WHITETHORN
CURIOUS LORE OF PRECIOUS STONES
ROBIN GOODFELLOW
MAN: THE WIZARD'S PALACE

PATREONS

BEN MCFARLAND
DAN CASAR
DANIEL JENSEN
JARKMAN DEVRIES
JASON ITALIANO
JASON NEWQUIST
JASON TONDRO
THOMAS STEWART
THE RAVING SAVANT
AND
ANONYMOUS

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

The way my podcast plan works I get a 50 MB or data per month for a \$5 payment, which is covered by the blog's Patreon donors (thanks to the donors!) To get an upcoming episode in I needed more than the usual 50 megabytes, so I bought the next plan up for one month. I spent three times as much and got enough for five months' worth of episode space, but I needed to fill it in a single month.

Instead of writing blog posts or scripting episodes for the podcast, I've been grabbing the low-hanging fruit: all of the LibriVox recordings which I can transfer across into podcast episodes. Now that process is over. I have 15 episodes in the can, which is a very comfortable place to be.

It does mean that the mix of topics in the episodes isn't quite what I'd like. I want more monsters and more material that's directly pulled from Ars Magica history. I'll integrate these new episodes by interspersing them with the episodes that I've already uploaded. This means that the patterns you see in the episodes (one per subject per month) will be disrupted. The episode numbers will get a little bit strange again.

RENASCENCE

Another bonus episode to celebrate the release of the Kickstarter for Magonomia.

EDNA ST MILLAY

This poem is called *Renaissance* by Edna St Millay. I originally was going to use it for *Ars Magica*, as a hint to where the Crialmon magi who disappeared from the Isles of Scilly went. You could instead use it as a description of the initiation of a type of magical human that appeared in *Realms of Power: Magic*: the loamwalker.

The recording in this episode was released into the public domain through LibriVox: thanks again to all the LibriVoxians.

All I could see from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood;
I turned and looked another way,
And saw three islands in a bay.
So with my eyes I traced the line
Of the horizon, thin and fine,
Straight around till I was come
Back to where I'd started from;
And all I saw from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood:
Over these things I could not see;
These were the things that bounded me;
And I could touch them with my hand,
Almost, I thought, from where I stand.
And all at once things seemed so small
My breath came short, and scarce at all.
But, sure, the sky is big, I said;
Miles and miles above my head;
So here upon my back I'll lie
And look my fill into the sky.
And so I looked; and, after all,
The sky was not so very tall.
The sky, I said, must somewhere stop,
And—sure enough!—I see the top!
The sky, I thought, is not so grand;
I 'most could touch it with my hand!
And reaching up my hand to try,
I screamed to feel it touch the sky.

I screamed, and—lo!—Infinity
Came down and settled over me;
Forced back my scream into my chest,
Bent back my arm upon my breast,
And, pressing of the Undefined
The definition on my mind,
Held up before my eyes a glass
Through which my shrinking sight did pass
Until it seemed I must behold
Immensity made manifold;
Whispered to me a word whose sound
Deafened the air for worlds around,
And brought unmuffled to my ears
The gossiping of friendly spheres,
The creaking of the tented sky,
The ticking of Eternity.
saw and heard, and knew at last
The How and Why of all things, past,
And present, and forevermore

I. The Universe, cleft to the core,
Lay open to my probing sense
That, sick'ning, I would fain pluck
But could not,—nay!
But needs must suck
At the great wound, and could not pluck
My lips away till I had drawn
All venom out.—Ah, fearful pawn
!For my omniscience paid I toll
In infinite remorse of soul.
All sin was of my sinning, all
Atoning mine, and mine the gall
Of all regret.
Mine was the weight
Of every brooded wrong, the hate
That stood behind each envious thrust,
Mine every greed, mine every lust.
And all the while for every grief,
Each suffering, I craved relief
With individual desire,—
Craved all in vain!
And felt fierce fire
About a thousand people crawl;
Perished with each,
—then mourned for all!
A man was starving in Capri;
He moved his eyes and looked at me;
I felt his gaze,
I heard his moan,
And knew his hunger as my own.

saw at sea a great fog bank
Between two ships that struck and sank;
A thousand screams the heavens smote
;And every scream tore through my throat.
No hurt I did not feel, no death
That was not mine; mine each last breath
That, crying, met an answering cry
From the compassion that was I
;All suffering mine, and mine its rod
;Mine, pity like the pity of God.
Ah, awful weight! Infinity
Pressed down upon the finite Me!
My anguished spirit, like a bird,
Beating against my lips I heard;
Yet lay the weight so close about
There was no room for it without
;And so beneath the weight lay I
And suffered death, but could not die.

Long had I lain thus, craving death,
When quietly the earth beneath
Gave way, and inch by inch, so great
At last had grown the crushing weight,
Into the earth I sank till I
Full six feet under ground did lie,
And sank no more,—there is no weight
Can follow here, however great.
From off my breast I felt it roll
;And as it went my tortured soul
Burst forth and fled in such a gust
That all about me swirled the dust.

Deep in the earth I rested now;
Cool is its hand upon the brow
And soft its breast beneath the head
Of one who is so gladly dead.
And all at once, and over all
The pitying rain began to fall;
I lay and heard each pattering hoof
Upon my lowly, thatched roof,
And seemed to love the sound far more
Than ever I had done before.
For rain it hath a friendly sound
To one who's six feet underground;
And scarce the friendly voice or face:
A grave is such a quiet place.

The rain, I said, is kind to come
And speak to me in my new home.
I would I were alive again
To kiss the fingers of the rain,
To drink into my eyes the shine
Of every slanting silver line,
To catch the freshened, fragrant breeze
From drenched and dripping apple-trees.
For soon the shower will be done,
And then the broad face of the sun
Will laugh above the rain-soaked earth
Until the world with answering mirth
Shakes joyously, and each round drop
Rolls, twinkling, from its grass-blade top.
How can I bear it; buried here,
While overhead the sky grows clear
And blue again after the storm?
O, multi-colored, multiform,
Beloved beauty over me,
That I shall never, never see
Again! Spring-silver, autumn-gold,

That I shall never more behold!
Sleeping your myriad magics through,
Close-sepulchred away from you!
O God, I cried, give me new birth,
And put me back upon the earth!
Upset each cloud's gigantic gourd
And let the heavy rain, down-poured
In one big torrent, set me free,
Washing my grave away from me!

I ceased; and through the breathless hush
That answered me, the far-off rush
Of herald wings came whispering
Like music down the vibrant string
Of my ascending prayer, and—crash!
Before the wild wind's whistling lash
The startled storm-clouds reared on high
And plunged in terror down the sky,
And the big rain in one black wave
Fell from the sky and struck my grave.
I know not how such things can be;
I only know there came to me
A fragrance such as never clings
To aught save happy living things;
A sound as of some joyous elf
Singing sweet songs to please
himself, And, through and over
everything, A sense of glad awakening.
The grass, a-tiptoe at my ear,
Whispering to me I could hear;
I felt the rain's cool finger-tips
Brushed tenderly across my lips,
Laid gently on my sealed sight,
And all at once the heavy night
Fell from my eyes and I could see,—
A drenched and dripping apple-tree,
A last long line of silver rain,
A sky grown clear and blue again.
And as I looked a quickening gust
Of wind blew up to me and thrust
Into my face a miracle
Of orchard-breath, and with the smell,—
I know not how such things can be!—
I breathed my soul back into me.

Ah! Up then from the ground sprang I
And hailed the earth with such a cry
As is not heard save from a man
Who has been dead, and lives again.
About the trees my arms I wound;
Like one gone mad I hugged the ground;
I raised my quivering arms on high;
I laughed and laughed into the sky,
Till at my throat a strangling sob
Caught fiercely, and a great heart-throb
Sent instant tears into my eyes;
O God, I cried, no dark disguise
Can e'er hereafter hide from me
Thy radiant identity!

Thou canst not move across the grass
But my quick eyes will see Thee pass,
Nor speak, however silently,
But my hushed voice will answer
Thee. I know the path that tells Thy way
Through the cool eve of every day; God,
I can push the grass apart
And lay my finger on Thy heart!

The world stands out on either side
No wider than the heart is wide;
Above the world is stretched the sky,—
No higher than the soul is high.
The heart can push the sea and land Farther
away on either hand;
The soul can split the sky in two,
And let the face of God shine through.
But East and West will pinch the heart
That can not keep them pushed apart;
And he whose soul is flat—the sky
Will cave in on him by and by.

THE OUTLANDISH KNIGHT A FAERIE SERIAL KILLER

There's a song recorded in "Ancient Poems, Ballads, and Songs of the Peasantry of England" which details a serial killer. I think he may be a murderous lover, a sort of faerie we've described before in "Realms of Power: Faerie".

The recording which follows was released into the public domain by Ritalousie. Thanks to her, and the people in her production team.

An Outlandish knight came from the North lands,
And he came a wooing to me;
He told me he'd take me unto the North lands,
And there he would marry me.

'Come, fetch me some of your father's gold,
And some of your mother's fee;
And two of the best nags out of the stable,
Where they stand thirty and three.'

She fetched him some of her father's gold,
And some of the mother's fee;
And two of the best nags out of the stable,
Where they stood thirty and three.

She mounted her on her milk-white steed,
He on the dapple grey;
They rode till they came unto the sea side,
Three hours before it was day.

Light off, light off thy milk-white steed,
And deliver it unto me;
Six pretty maids have I drownèd here,
And thou the seventh shall be.

'Pull off, pull off thy silken gown,
And deliver it unto me,
Methinks it looks too rich and too gay
To rot in the salt sea.

'Pull off, pull of thy silken stays,
And deliver them unto me;
Methinks they are too fine and gay
To rot in the salt sea.

pull off, pull off thy Holland smock,
And deliver it unto me;
Methinks it looks too rich and gay,
To rot in the salt sea.

"If I must pull off my Holland smock,
Pray turn thy back unto me,
For it is not fitting that such a ruffian
A naked woman should see.

'He turned his back towards her,
And viewed the leaves so green;
She caught him round the middle so small,
And tumbled him into the stream.

He droppèd high, and he droppèd low,
Until he came to the side,—
'Catch hold of my hand, my pretty maiden,
And I will make you my bride.'

Lie there, lie there, you false-hearted man,
Lie there instead of me;
Six pretty maids have you drownèd here,
And the seventh has drownèd thee.'

She mounted on her milk-white steed,
And led the dapple grey,
She rode till she came to her own father's hall,
Three hours before it was day.

The parrot being in the window so high,
Hearing the lady, did say,
'I'm afraid that some ruffian has led you astray,
That you have tarried so long away.

"Don't prittle nor prattle, my pretty parrot,
Nor tell no tales of me;
Thy cage shall be made of the glittering gold,
Although it is made of a tree.

'The king being in the chamber so high,
And hearing the parrot, did say,
'What ails you, what ails you, my pretty parrot
, That you prattle so long before day?

"It's no laughing matter,' the parrot did say,
'But so loudly I call unto thee
;For the cats have got into the window so high,
And I'm afraid they will have me

.'Well turned, well turned, my pretty parrot,
Well turned, well turned for me;
Thy cage shall be made of the glittering gold,
And the door of the best ivory.'

PLOT NOTES

Is the parrot the same faerie as the knight, or a rival? Alternatively, the parrot could be a magical animal. It's clearly not a normal parrot, and it seems to value gold and ivory.

Has the knight actually killed six women, and over what time period? It could just claim six, to have the number seven to conjure with in it a story.

If the women really did die, does this give the maiden the Final Girl Virtue, found in Tales of Mythic Europe? Can their ghosts be summoned?

Why this river? Is the knight a mortal giving sacrifices to something? Could that something still have designs on the maiden, such that she seeks the magi for aid?

THE FAIRY LOVER

BY MOIREEN FOX

A brief poem this week. It is the statement of a woman englamoured by a faerie. Note that she is deliberately avoiding the traditional wards which would defend her from his influence. This poem was released into the public domain through LibriVox by Newgate Novelist.

It was by yonder thorn I saw the fairy host
(O low nightwind, O wind of the west!)
My love rode by, there was gold upon his brow,
And since that day I can neither eat nor rest.

I dare not pray lest I should forget his face
(O black north wind blowing cold beneath the sky!)
His face and his eyes shine between me and the sun:
If I may not be with him I would rather die.

They tell me I am cursed and I will lose my soul,
(O red wind shrieking o'er the thorn-grown dún!)
But he is my love and I go to him to-night,
Who rides when the thorn glistens white beneath the moon.

He will call my name and lift me to his breast,
(Blow soft O wind 'neath the stars of the south!)
I care not for heaven and I fear not hell
If I have but the kisses of his proud red mouth

THE WITCH MAID

BY DOROTHEA MACKELLAR

Dorothea Mackellar is one of my favourite poets, and the reason why makes her useful for Ars Magica players. She was a young, rebellious Australian poetess, who wanted to smash through the tradition of idealising Europe. Her best-known poem, *My Country*, was written when she was nineteen, and was a glove to the face of the literary establishment in Australia. Her habit of deconstructing European forms works beautifully for us, and here's an example.

The following recording was released into the public domain by Tomas Peter through Librivox. Thanks to all the gang there.

Notice the change in the middle of the poem: the elf maid is an innocent, who does not understand death. Then, you discover she's a cat-like predator, playing with her victim? It's this sort of twist I love in Mackellar's work.

I wandered in the woodland a morning in the spring,
I found a glade I had not known, and saw an evil thing.

I heard a wood-dove calling, as one that loves and grieves,
The sun was shining silver on the small bright leaves,
O it was very beautiful, the glade that I had found!
I peeped between the slender stems, and there upon the ground
A man was lying dead, and from the spear-wound in his side
The sluggish blood had ceased to flow, and yet had hardly dried.

O the shining of the leaves,
The morning of the year!
O how could any die to-day, with life so young and dear?

My feet were tied with horror, I could not turn to run;
A light breeze tossed the branches, the shadow and the sun
Across the dead face shifted—it seemed to change and twitch—
When from the trees beyond me stepped a white young witch.

I prayed that I was hidden, she never turned her head,
But picked her footsteps daintily and stooped beside the dead;
She touched him with her hanging hair and stroked him with her hand,
Still gazing like a little child that does not understand,
For she had strayed from Elfland where death has never come,
She knew not why his side was torn nor why his mouth was dumb.[1]

She sat her down beside him and joined her finger-tips
And smiled a strange and secret smile that curved her thin red lips;
She wore a veil of purple about her body sweet
And little silver sandals on her smooth pale feet;
Her black hair hung as straight as rain and touched the dead man's eyes,
He smiled at her in answer, a scornful smile and wise.

She played with him awhile as might a panther-kitten play,
Most horrible it was, and yet I could not look away—
I needs must watch her motions, her cruel, supple grace,
The delicate swift changes of her sharp-cut face;
Till suddenly she wearied, and rising from her knees
All in one lovely movement like a sapling in the breeze,
She gazed on him who would not play, with gathering surprise—
The man she did not understand, though she was very wise—
She drew her veil around her, her whiteness showing through,
And gazed; and still unceasingly there came the wood-dove's coo.

O the stirring of the spring,
The calling of the dove!
Why does he lie so cold, so cold, when I am here to love?

Her long strange eyes were narrowed to threads of shining green,
She touched the broken spear-point the wound's red lips between,
She touched it with her careless foot, and yet he did not stir,
Dull fool that lay with open eyes and would not look at her!

She turned away in anger and raised her arms on high,
Her straight white arms that questioned the pure pale sky,
The thousand slender tree-stems soon hid the way she went
As they who hold a secret and therewith are content.
The dead man smiled in silence; a strange thought in me said,
If I had heard her speak at all then I too should be dead:
Her voice—what would her voice be?—and then I fled, afraid,
The spell was loosed that bound me to the evil glade.

O the flowers in the grass,
The wood-dove in the tree;
From magic and from sudden death, Good Lord deliver me!

SUMMER

BY JOHN CLARE

This week, another episode in which we discuss fairy lovers that destroy their beloved.

You will notice the lover sits plotting her hair beneath a whitethorn bush. In Irish mythology particularly white thorn bushes are gathering places for the fairies. It's considered bad luck to damage or move, particularly solitary, whitethorn bushes, especially if they're in raths. These are ringforts which were believed, similarly, to be where fairies lived. The white thornbush may be a vis source.

In some Irish legends it's recorded that if you go at particular special times around the whitethorn bush you'll find a strange white or green ichor. This is the blood of fairies that has been shed in a battle that has occurred at the mustering point of the whitethorn bush. Statistics for the lady of the whitethorn will eventually be added to the blog.

Thanks to Librivox and WinstonThorpe.

Come we to the summer, to the summer we will come,
For the woods are full of bluebells and the hedges full of bloom,
And the crow is on the oak a-building of her nest,
And love is burning diamonds in my true lover's breast;
She sits beneath the whitethorn a-plaiting of her hair,
And I will to my true lover with a fond request repair;
I will look upon her face, I will in her beauty rest,
And lay my aching weariness upon her lovely breast.

The clock-a-clay is creeping on the open bloom of May,
The merry bee is trampling the pinky threads all day,
And the chaffinch it is brooding on its grey mossy nest
In the whitethorn bush where I will lean upon my lover's breast;
I'll lean upon her breast and I'll whisper in her ear
That I cannot get a wink o'sleep for thinking of my dear;
I hunger at my meat and I daily fade away
Like the hedge rose that is broken in the heat of the day.

THE CURIOUS LORE OF PRECIOUS STONES I

I've been considering for some time the best way of rendering down the information found in "The Curious Lore of Precious Stones" by George Frederick Kunz for *Ars Magica*. A pair of plot hooks were shaken loose in an earlier article about gemstones that are possessed by tiny False Gods. For simplicity, I've carved his book up into chapters, and then thrown out anything which is outside of Mythic Europe, or postdates the game period for *Ars Magica*, save where I can shoe-horn it in. This episode covers general material: a follow-up will describe each stone.

Kunz gives many magical effects for each stone, but it's not necessary that every myth he relates be true, or that all stones of a type share the exactly the same properties. Each power might be a Virtue of the stone, granted to the carrier, but they might also be Divine or Infernal powers, caused by aligned spirits that dwell in the stones.

THE SOURCE OF ENGRAVED STONES

Kunz noted that talismanic stones were produced, in greatest quantity, in Alexandria, but that they have been shipped everywhere, and that they were no longer made in the game period. In part this is because Alexandria fell to Islamic forces, and the new rulers were not in favour of the depiction of material things in art.

After the third or fourth century of our era the art of gem-engraving seems to have been lost, or at least to have been very seldom practised, and it is noteworthy in the matter that after this period writers who treat of the virtues of engraved gems as talismans rarely, if ever, use the words "if you engrave" such or such a figure on a stone, but write "if you find" such a figure...As the art of gem engraving was not practised in the Middle Ages, some medieval writers suppose that the engraved talismanic gems current in their time were not works of art, but of nature, and Konrad von Megenberg accepting this view, gave it as his opinion that "God granted these stones their beauty and virtue for the help and comfort of the human race," adding that when he hoped to receive help from them he in no wise denied the grace of God.

PLOT HOOKS

Gem engraving is one of the arts which magic is particularly suited to, because it uses materials which are very expensive, unless you are temporarily creating them in the process of using Rego Magic. Many early talismans were carved with sharp, tiny sapphire tips. Later these were replaced with wheels that were dusted with a hard substance, diamond being best.

The idea that some stones are naturally disgorged from the Earth with images upon them moves them away from claims of idolatry, but what happens when the images on a gem are related to the Order of Hermes?

Can your covenant mine stones with odd characters on them, or make their stones more valuable by pretending to?

DESIGNS OF VIRTUE

The virtue believed to be inherent in precious stones was thought to gain an added potency when the stone was engraved with some symbol or figure possessing a special sacredness, or denoting and typifying a special quality. It is true that the earliest engraved stones, the Babylonian cylinders and the Egyptian scarabs, were both designed to serve an eminently practical purpose as well, namely, that of seals; but in a great number of instances these primitive seals were looked upon as endowed with talismanic power, and were worn on the person as talismans.

A list of these symbolic designs is said to have been given in the "Book of Wings," by Ragiel, one of the curious treatises composed about the thirteenth century under the influence of Hebrew and Greco-Roman tradition. Although it owes its origin to the Hebrew "Book of Raziel," it bears little if any likeness to that work.

PLOT HOOKS

The book's date suits the game period perfectly. I've cut up the list Kunz gives, slotting it into each stone. At the most basic, the appropriate character adds +1 to the Material bonus for a stone.

Note that some people thought the wax seals made by their signets had a minor power of their own, related to the image. The core rules don't handle that fantastically well, but you can simulate it by having a ring cast a small spell on the sealed object with, for example, the Faerie Magic duration Until.

House Guernicus is interested in magical seals. The lives of the Order's contract lawyers would be made far easier if binding magical contracts, a sort of conditional curse, were easier in Hermetic magic.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

In Roman times the image of Alexander the Great was looked upon as possessing magic virtues, and it is related that when Cornelius Macer gave a splendid banquet in the temple of Hercules, the chief ornament of the table was an amber cup, in the midst of which was a portrait of Alexander, and around this his whole history figured in small, finely engraved representations. From this cup Macer drank to the health of the pontifex and then ordered that it should be passed around among the guests, so that each one might gaze upon the image of the great man.

Pollio, relating this, states that it was a common belief that everything happened fortunately for those who bore with them Alexander's portrait executed in gold or silver. Indeed, even among Christians coins of Alexander were in great favor as amulets, and the stern John Chrysostom sharply rebukes those who wore bronze coins of this monarch attached to their heads and their feet. As illustrating the eclectic character of some of the amulets used in the early Christian centuries, we may note one in the Cabinet de Médailles, in Paris. This has upon the obverse the head of Alexander the Great; on the reverse is a she-ass with her foal, and below this a scorpion and the name Jesus Christ. Another amulet of this class, figured by Vettori, also has the head of Alexander on the obverse, while the reverse bears the Greek monogram of the name Christos.

I'd suggest these coins are powerfully aligned to the Art of Rego. Veneration of Alexander may tie to the ancestral bloodline magic practised by House Mercere. The pontifex of Rome, the chief bridge builder, is claimed as an ancestor by the Quesitores.

ASTROLOGY

Many engraved stones of the Roman imperial period bore the figures of Serapis and of Isis, the former signifying Time and the latter Earth. On other stones the symbols of the zodiacal signs appear, referring to the natal constellation of the wearer...These designs were usually engraved on onyxes, carnelians, and similar stones, in Greek and Roman times; but occasionally the emerald was used in this way, and more rarely the ruby or the sapphire. Here the costliness of the material was probably thought to enhance the value of the amulet. The figures engraved on precious stones were supposed to have a greater or lesser degree of efficacy in themselves independent of the virtues peculiar to the stone on which they were engraved, and this efficacy depended largely upon the hour, day, or month during which the work was executed. For the influence of the planet, star, or constellation which was in the ascendant was thought to infuse a subtle essence into the stone while the appropriate image was being engraved. However, to exert the maximum power, the virtue of the image must be of the same character as the virtue inherent in the material, and the gem became less potent when this was not the case. Certain images, those symbolizing the zodiacal signs for instance, were looked upon as possessing such power that their peculiar nature impressed itself even upon stones inherently of different quality; others again were only efficacious when engraved on stones the quality of which was in sympathy with them.

PLOT HOOKS

So, this adds birth stones and natal horoscopes to our lore. I'd suggest these are perfect for longevity charms. Note that for maximum power they need to be carved at an exact time of year, with the correct figure, on the correct stone.

MISCELLANEOUS SYMBOLS

An Italian manuscript, dating from the fourteenth century, gives the following talismanic gems. I'd suggest each of these adds +1 to the gem's material bonus. Remember: no mundane person in Europe carves stones anymore. You'll need to find them naturally occurring, or learn to do it yourself, or borrow the skills of a craftsman from an older covenant, or find faeries who will copy the figure for you. These negotiations and preparations are a source of stories. Note also that some of these sources will only provide a single figure: your lode of stones with the mark of the goat won't necessarily have any stone with the sign of the reaper.

If thou findest a stone on which is graven or figured a man with a goat's head, whoever wears this stone, with God's help, will have great riches and the love of all men and animals.

If a stone be found on which is graven or figured an armed man or the draped figure of a virgin, bound with laurel and having a laurel branch in her hand, this stone is sacred and frees the wearer from all changes and haps of fortune.

When thou findest a stone on which is graven the figure of a man holding a scythe in his hand, a stone like this imparts strength and power to the wearer. Every day adds to his strength, courage and boldness.

Hold dear that stone on which thou shalt find figured or cut the moon or the sun, or both together, for it makes the wearer chaste and guards him from lust.

A jewel to be prized is that stone on which is graven or figured a man with wings having beneath his feet a serpent whose head he holds in his hand. A stone of this kind gives the wearer, by God's help, abundant wealth of knowledge, as well as good health and favor.

Shouldst thou find a stone on which is the figure of a man holding in his right hand a palm branch, this stone, with God's help, renders the wearer victorious in disputes and in battles, and brings him the favor of the great.

A good stone is that one on which thou shalt find graven or figured a serpent with a raven on its tail. Whoever wears this stone will enjoy high station and be much honored; it also protects from the ill-effects of the heat.

On many of the amulets fabricated in Italy for protection against the dreaded jettatura, or spell of the Evil Eye, the cock is figured. His image was supposed in ancient times to assure the protection of the sun-god, and his crowing was regarded as an inarticulate hymn of praise to this deity. He was also a type of dauntless courage. All this contributed to make him a defender of the weak, especially of women and children, against the wiles of the spirits of darkness.

ANCIENT SHAPES CYLINDERS

A class of amulets even older than the Egyptian scarabs is represented by the engraved Assyrio-Babylonian cylinders. There has been much discussion among scholars as to the original purpose for which these cylinders were made, some holding that they were exclusively employed as seals or signets, while others incline to the belief that many of them were intended only for use as amulets or talismans.

These cylinders are perforated and were worn suspended from the neck or wrist, as is most frequently the case with talismans, and the engraved designs often represent religious or mythological subjects, the accompanying inscription merely consisting of the names of the gods. Cylinders of this type could not have been used as personal signets, and it is quite possible that Dr. Wiedemann is right in supposing that their imprint on a document was considered to impart a certain mystic sanction to the agreement, and render the divinities or spirits accountable for the fulfilment of the contract.

The oldest known form of seal is the cylinder. Babylonian and Assyrian cylinder-seals are known of a date as early as 4000 b.c. From the earliest period until 2500 b.c. they were made of black or green serpentine, conglomerate, diorite, and frequently of the central core of a large conch shell from the Persian Gulf. From 2500 b.c. to 500 b.c. the cylindrical form was prevalent, and the materials include a brick-red ferruginous quartz, red hematite (an iron ore), and chalcedony, a beautiful variety of the last-named stone known as sapphirine being sometimes used. On the cylinders produced from 4000 b.c. to 2500 b.c. the designs most frequently represent animal forms; on those dating from 2500 b.c. to 500 b.c. are generally inscribed five or six rows of cuneiform characters. Up to the last-named date the work was all done by the sapphire point, and not by the wheel, and it is not until the fifth century b.c. that wheel work is apparent in any Babylonian or Assyrian stone-engraving.

In the course of the sixth century b.c. the cylindrical seals became less frequent, and the tall cone-like seals came into use. A new type makes its appearance about the fifth or sixth century b.c., namely, the scaraboid seal introduced from Egypt. From the third century b.c. until the second or third century a.d., the seals became lower and flatter, and the perforation larger, until they sometimes assumed the form of rings; later the ring form

becomes general. They are usually hollowed a little in the middle, which gives them the shape and size of the lower short joints of a reed; indeed, it has been suggested that the original seal was rudely patterned after a reed joint. The materials used for these cylinders include lapis-lazuli, very freely used and probably from the Persian mines, jasper, rock-crystals, chalcedony, carnelian, agate, jade, etc.; a hard, black variety of serpentine is perhaps the most common of all the materials used for this purpose.

The Cretan peasants of to-day set a high value upon certain very ancient seals—dating perhaps from as early as 2500 b.c.—which they find buried in the soil. These seals are inscribed with symbols supposed to represent the prehistoric Cretan form of writing. Of course these inscriptions, which have not yet been deciphered by archæologists, are utterly incomprehensible for the peasants, but they undoubtedly serve to render the stones objects of mystery. The peasants call them galopetræ, or “milk-stones,” and they are supposed to promote the secretion of milk, as was the case with the galactite. The careful preservation of these so-called galopetræ by Cretan women has served the purpose of archæological research, as otherwise so large a supply of these very interesting seals would not now be available.

NOTES

Some of the cylinders seem to be able to lay a hex on an agreement so that it harms those who break it. This is a form of faerie worship.

Milk stones may have some strong Creo influence, or be a vis source, or be the external vis of faeries who desire the milk for themselves.

GENITALS

It is a well-known fact that many amulets were made in forms suggesting objects offensive to our sense of propriety. These were thought to protect the wearers by denoting the contempt they felt for the evil spirits leagued against them. Some such fancy may have induced the peculiar designs of certain of the jewels alleged to have been pawned in Paris by the ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid for the sum of 1,200,000 francs....According to rumor, these pledges must be sold, as the sultan has failed to redeem them, but the designs are so risqué that they cannot be offered at public sale; therefore the stones and pearls are to be removed and the gold settings are to be melted and sold as metal.

NOTES

This sounds like a problem that Jerbiton magi might create. Just because want to animate statues of perfect human forms, to use as servants, doesn't mean you should or that the Church isn't going to question what's going on.

There's a lengthy folk tradition in England that nakedness scares away demons. I like the idea that some of the most powerful apotropaic magic items in the Order need to be hidden because they look vulgar. It seems like just the sort of thing a spiteful Verditius magus might do.

SCARABS

Scarabs are frequently engraved with the hieroglyph ⚓(anch, "life") and ⚡(ha, "increase of power"). The emblem of stability (tet) is also employed, as well as many others. In addition to these simple symbols, many scarabs bear legends supposed to render them exceptionally luck-bringing. The following are characteristic specimens.

Funeral scarabs were often made of jasper, amethyst, lapis-lazuli, ruby, or carnelian, with the names of gods, kings, priests, officials, or private persons engraved on the base; occasionally monograms or floral devices were engraved. Sometimes the base of the scarab was heart-shaped and at others the scarab was combined with the "utat," or eye of Horus, and also with the frog, typifying revivification. Set in rings they were placed on the fingers of the dead, or else, wrapped in linen bandages, they rested on the heart of the deceased...They were symbols of the resurrection of the body.

Some of the Egyptian scarabs were evidently used as talismanic gifts from one friend to another. Two such scarabs are in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. One bears the inscription "May Ra grant you a happy New Year," the text of the other reading as follows: "May your name be established, may you have a son," and "May your house flourish every day."

On the Egyptian inscribed scarabs used as signets were engraved many of the symbols to which a talismanic virtue was attributed. The uræus serpent, signifying death, is sometimes associated with the knot, the so-called ankh symbol, denoting life. Often the hieroglyph for nub, gold, appears; this symbol is a necklace with pendant beads, showing that gold beads must have been known in Egypt in the early days when the hieroglyph for gold was first used.

All these symbolic figures, of which a great number occur, served to impart to the signet a sacred and auspicious quality which communicated itself to the wearer, and even to the impression made by the seal, this in its turn acquiring a certain magic force.

Many scarabs and signets exist made of the artificial cyanus, which was an imitation lapis-lazuli made in Egypt. This was an alkaline silicate, colored a deep blue with carbonate of copper. Often a wonderful translucent or opaque blue glass was used. The genuine lapis-lazuli was also used to a considerable extent for scarabs and cylinders, in Egypt and Assyria, and gems were also cut from it in imperial Roman times. A notable instance of the use of lapis-lazuli in ancient Egypt was as the material for the image of Truth (Ma), which the Egyptian chief-justice wore on his neck, suspended from a golden chain.

In Roman times some of the legionaries are said to have worn rings set with scarabs, for the reason that this figure was believed to impart great courage and vigor to the wearer.

NOTES

In parts of the order, the Feather of Maat is found in magic items wielded by the Guernicus in their duties. It is mentioned in Sanctuary of Ice, for example, and fits the Alpine cultural trend of harking back to ancient glories. The scarab might make a suitable badge for the hopolites.

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

This week is a hybrid episode where we show the difference between Ars Magica and Magonomia. If you are listening to this podcast episode when it is released, the Magonomia Kickstarter will be closing within a week or so. In Ars Magica faeries are liminal spirits. Fairies in Magonomia are Elizabethan spirits. The easiest way of showing you the difference is by giving you a faerie tale which has Elizabethan roots.

This is the biography of Robin Goodfellow, who later turns up as Shakespeare's Puck. The following recording was released into the public domain through LibriVox by Melaine Jensen. Thanks to the whole gang. The Ars Magica statistics for Robin will eventually be added to the blog.

Once upon a time, a great while ago, when men did eat and drink less, and were more honest, and knew no knavery, there was wont to walk many harmless spirits called fairies, dancing in brave order in fairy rings on green hills with sweet music. Sometimes they were invisible, and sometimes took divers shapes Many mad pranks would they play, as pinching of untidy damsels black and blue, and misplacing things in ill-ordered houses ; but lovingly would they use good girls, giving them silver and other pretty toys, which they would leave for them, sometimes in their shoes, other times in their pockets, sometimes in bright basins and other clean vessels.

Now it chanced that in those happy days, a babe was born in a house to which the fairies did like well to repair. This babe was a boy, and the fairies, to show their pleasure, brought many pretty things thither, coverlets and delicate linen for his cradle ; and capons, woodcock, and quail for the christening, at which there was so much good cheer that the clerk had almost forgot to say the babe's name, — Robin Goodfellow. So much for the birth and christening of little Robin.

When Robin was grown to six years of age, he was so knavish that all the neighbours did complain of him ; for no sooner was his mother's back turned, but he was in one knavish action or other, so that his mother was constrained (to avoid the complaints) to take him with her to market or wheresoever she went or rode. But this helped little or nothing, for if he rode before her, then would he make mouths and ill-favoured faces at those he met : if he rode behind her, then would he clap his hand on the tail ; so that his mother was weary of the many complaints

that came against him. Yet knew she not how to beat him justly for it, because she never saw him do that which was worthy blows. The complaints were daily so renewed that his mother promised him a whipping. Robin did not like that cheer, and therefore, to avoid it, he ran away, and left his mother a-sorrowing for him.

After Robin had travelled a good day's journey from his mother's house he sat down, and being weary he fell asleep. No sooner had slumber closed his eye-lids, but he thought he saw many goodly proper little personages in antic measures tripping about him, and withal he heard such music, as he thought that Orpheus, that famous Greek fiddler (had he been alive), compared to one of these had been but a poor musician. As delights commonly last not long, so did those end sooner than Robin would willingly they should have done ; and for very grief he awaked, and found by him lying a scroll wherein was written these lines following in golden letters : —

*Robin, my only son and heir,
How to live take thou no care :
By nature thou hast cunning shifts.
Which ril increase with other gifts
Wish what thou wilt, thou shall it have ;
And for to fetch both fool and knave.
Thou hast the power to change thy shape.
To horse, to hog, to dog, to ape.
Transformed thus, by any means
See none thou harm*st but knaves and queans :
But love thou those that honest be,
And help them in necessity.
Do thus and all the world shall know
The pranks of Robin Goodfellow,
For by that name thou called shall be
To age's last posterity ;
And if thou keep my just command.
One day thou shall see Fairy Land "*

Robin, having read this, was very joyful, yet longed he to know whether he had the power or not, and to try it he wished for some meat ; presently a fine dish of roast veal was before him. Then wished he for plum-pudding ; he straightway had it. This liked him well, and because he was weary, he wished himself a horse : no sooner was his wish ended, but he was changed into as fine a nag as you need see, and leaped and curveted as nimbly as if he had been in stable at rack and manger a full month. Then he wished himself a black dog, and he was so ; then a green tree, and he was so. So from one thing to another, till he was quite sure that he could change himself to anything whatsoever he liked. Thereupon full of delight at his new powers, Robin Goodfellow set out, eager to put them to the test.

As he was crossing a field, he met with a red-faced carter's clown, and called to him to stop.

" Friend," quoth he, " what is a clock "

" A thing," answered the clown, " that shows the time of the day."

" Why then," said Robin Goodfellow, " be thou a clock and tell me what time of the day it is."

" I owe thee not so much service," answered the clown again, " but because thou shalt think thyself beholden to me, know that it is the same time of the day as it was yesterday at this time "

These shrewd answers vexed Robin Goodfellow, so that in himself he vowed to be revenged of the clown, which he did in this manner. Robin Goodfellow turned himself into a bird, and followed this fellow who was going into a field a little from that place to catch a horse that was at grass. The horse being wild ran over dyke and hedge, and the fellow after, but to little purpose, for the horse was too swift for him. Robin was glad of this occasion, for now or never was the time to have his revenge. Presently Robin shaped himself exactly like the horse that the clown followed, and so stood right before him Then the clown took hold of the horse's mane and got on his back, but he had not ridden far when, with a stumble, Robin hurled his rider over his head, so that he almost broke his neck. But then again he stood still, and let the clown mount him once more. By the way which the clown now would ride was a great pond of water of a good depth, which covered the road. No sooner did he ride into the very middle of the pond, than Robin Goodfellow turned himself into a fish, and so left him with nothing but the pack-saddle on which he was riding betwixt his legs. Meanwhile the fish swiftly swam to the bank. And then Robin, changed to a naughty boy again, ran away laughing, " Ho, ho, hoh" leaving the poor clown half drowned and covered with mud.

As Robin took his way along a green hedge-side he fell to singing : —

*And can the doctor make sick men well
And can the gipsy a fortune tell
Without lily, germander, and cockle-shell
With sweet-brier, And bon-fire
And straw-berry wine. And columbine.*

And when he had sung this over, he fell to wondering what he should next turn himself into. Then as he saw the smoke rise from the chimneys of the next town, he thought to himself, it would be to him great sport to walk the streets with a broom on his shoulder, and cry " Chimney sweep." But when presently Robin did this, and one did call him, then did Robin run away laughing, " Ho, ho, hoh ! " Next he set about to counterfeit a lame beggar, begging very pitifully; but when a stout chandler came out of his shop to give Robin an alms, again he skipped off nimbly, laughing as his naughty manner was. That same night, he did knock at many men's doors, and when the servants came out he blew out their candle and straightway vanished in the dark street, with his " Ho, ho, hoh ! "

All these mirthful tricks did Robin play, that day and night, and in these humours of his he had many pretty songs, one of which I will sing as perfect as I can. He sang it in his chimney-sweeper's humour to the tune of, " / have been a fiddler these fifteen years."

*"Black I am from head to foot.
And all doth come by chimney soot.
Then, maidens, come and cherish him.
that makes your chimneys neat and trim/"*

But it befell that, on the very next night to his playing the chimney-sweep, Robin had a summons from the land where there are no chimneys. For King Oberon, seeing Robin Goodfellow do so many merry tricks, called him out of his bed with these words, saying : —

*"Robin, my son, come quickly rise :
first stretch, then yawn, and rub your eyes ;
For thou must go with me to-night.
And taste of Fairy-land's delight."*

Robin, hearing this, rose and went to him. There were with King Oberon many fairies, all attired in green. All these, with King Oberon, did welcome Robin Goodfellow into their company. Oberon took Robin by the hand and led him a fair dance : their musician had an excellent bag-pipe made of a wren's quill and the skin of a Greenland fly. This pipe was so shrill, and so sweet, that a Scottish pipe compared to it, it would no more come near it than a Jew's-harp doth to an Irish harp.

After they had danced, King Oberon said to Robin : — " Whene'er you hear the piper blow. Round and round the fairies go ! And nightly you must with us dance, In meadows where the moonbeams glance. And make the circle, hand in hand — That is the law of Fairy-land ! There thou shalt see what no man knows ; While sleep the eyes of men doth close ! " So marched they, with their piper before, to the Fairy Land, There did King Oberon show Robin Goodfellow many secrets, which he never did open to the world. And there, in Fairy Land, doth Robin Goodfellow abide now this many a long year . .

MAN : THE WIZARD'S PALACE

This week, one of our Isle of Man episodes

If your characters want to found a covenant they need somewhere that has an aura. Maybe this folktale can provide them with the perfect place and, if they can find the right spells to counter the Faerie Wizard's petrification magic, they might have some brave and loyal covenfolk to boot.

Note the inadvertent use of Sovereign Wards.

The following recording was released into the public domain by Spider Scientist through LibriVox. Thank you to Spider Scientist and all of the people who supported them over at LibriVox.

Statistics for wizard will eventually be published on the blog accompanying the podcast.

Long hundreds of years ago there was a fine palace on a mountain sloping up from the sea. It was like a palace in a dream, built of shining marble of all colours and having great doors covered with gold.

In it there lived the mighty Wizard who had made it for himself by his spells. But his hatred of other people was as great as his power, and he would not allow any person to come near him except his own servants, and they were evil spirits. If any man dared to go to see the palace, to ask for work or to beg for charity, he would never be heard of again. His friends might search for him, but they would never find him. Soon people began to whisper that some of the blocks of granite near the palace were like the men who had gone up the mountain and never came back. They began to believe that the Wizard had caught them and frozen them into grey stone. At length the Wizard became the terror of the whole island, so that no person would pass within several miles of his palace. The people of that side of the island fled from their homes, and the place was lonely and desolate.

So things went on for three years, until one day a poor man going on the houses happened to travel on that side of the island, not knowing anything of this Wizard. His road took him over the mountain, where the Wizard lived, and as he came near it, he was astonished to see

the place so silent and desolate. He had been looking forward to the usual food and shelter, with the friendly welcome, but he found the houses empty ruins and the kindly country people gone. And where was the straw and hay which made such a snug bed in the barn? Weeds and stones were lying thick in the fields. Night came on him, and he walked and walked; but never a bit of shelter could he find, and he did not know where to go to get a bed. 'It's a middlin' dark night,' he thought; 'but it's better to go on than back—a road a body is used on is no throuble to them, let it be night or not.' He was travelling on the old road over the mountain, going ahead singing 'Colcheragh Raby' for company to himself, and after a long while he saw a light in the distance. The light got brighter and brighter until he came to a grand palace with every window lit up. The singing was all knocked out of him.

'In the name of Fortune where am I at all? This is a dreadful big house,' he said to himself; 'where did it come from, for all? Nobody never seen the like of it on this bare breas' before—else where am I at all, at all?'

He was hard set to get to the door with the blocks of stone lying about like frozen men.

'I'd swear,' he said to himself as he stumbled over one, 'that this was lil' Neddy Hom, the dwarf man tha's missin', only it's stone.'

When he came to the big door it was locked. Through one of the windows he saw a table, and supper ready on it, but he saw no person. He was very tired and hungry, but he was afraid to knock at the door of such a fine place.

'Aw, that place is too gran' for the likes of me!' said he.

He sat down on one of the marble seats outside, saying:

'I'll stretch meself here till mornin', it's a middlin' sort of a night.'

That day meat and bread had been given to him at the last town he had passed through. He was hungry and he thought he would eat, so he opened his wallet and took out a piece of bread and meat, then he put his hand into his pocket and drew out a pinch of salt in a screw of paper. As he opened the paper some grains of salt fell out, on to the ground. No sooner had this happened than up from the ground beneath came the sound of most terrible groans, high winds blew from every airt out of the heavens, lightnings flashed in the air, dreadful thunder crashed overhead, and the ground heaved beneath his feet; and he knew that there was plenty of company round him, though no man was to be seen. In less than a moment the grand palace burst into a hundred thousand bits, and vanished into the air. He found himself on a wide, lonely mountain, and in the grey light of dawn no trace of the palace was to be seen.

He went down on his knees and put up a prayer of thanksgiving for his escape, and then ran on to the next village, where he told the people all that he had seen, and glad they were to hear of the disappearance of the Wizard.