

Ars Magica

# Through the Aegis

Developed Covenants



by Andersen,  
Lawford, Love &  
Romer

## Through The Aegis

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**Christian Rosenkjaer Andersen** is an Engineer living in Denmark. Developed Covenants is the fifth *Ars Magica* book he contributed to, and by far the largest.

As the project was still in the proposal stage he convinced his troupe to set their new saga in Sauerland for the vibrant mundane environment and Hermetic politics. The covenant in the saga only had few similarities with the one in this book. But a lot of the characters the troupe developed were eerily close to what had already been sketchily written for Collem Leonis. Christian thanks his troupe for unwittingly providing inspiration for many small yet amusing and impactful details.

**Mark Lawford** lives and works in Eastbourne on England's sunny south coast. When not building covenants new and old he enjoys a wildly nebulous technology role in a leading international bank. He is also currently co-editor of *Sub Rosa*, the *Ars Magica* fan magazine, an honour he shares with Ben McFarland, to whom Mark's work on this book is very respectfully dedicated.

**Richard Love** interprets prophetic visions about the Order of Hermes from New Zealand, where he lives with his partner Paula. She makes more immediate prophecies about domestic chores (in the form of a list stuck to the fridge). Richard hopes that everyone's prophecies of good things come to pass, and those of bad things are cleverly avoided.

**Christian "CJ" Jensen Romer** is a romantic fellow, and Jardin was inspired by his desire to exemplify themes he wrote about in *Faith & Flame*. He would like to thank Phil Jenkins, Paul Wheeldon and Jonathan Elcock for playtesting Jardin and bring it to life, and Tom Nowell for his support. Jardin is dedicated to my cats, Hansine, Cuddles, and Marmalade, and to all the women he would have ardently pursued had he not been working on this book!

*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](http://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](http://forum.atlas-games.com).

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# Through The Aegis

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>6</b>		
<b>HOW TO USE THIS BOOK</b> .....	<b>6</b>		
<b>COVENANT SEASONS</b> .....	<b>6</b>		
<i>Spring</i> .....	6		
<i>Summer</i> .....	7		
<i>Autumn</i> .....	8		
<i>Winter</i> .....	8		
<i>Second Spring</i> .....	8		
<b>THE COVENANTS</b> .....	<b>9</b>		
<i>The Northern Seas</i> .....	9		
<i>Jardin</i> .....	9		
<i>Didyma</i> .....	9		
<i>Longmist</i> .....	9		
<i>Collem Leonis</i> .....	9		
<b>The Northern Seas</b> .....	<b>10</b>		
<b>HISTORY</b> .....	<b>10</b>		
<b>BOONS &amp; HOOKS</b> .....	<b>10</b>		
<b>MAGI</b> .....	<b>13</b>		
<i>Carles Magnus of House Tytaus</i> .....	13		
<i>Hilde Oddfish of House Bjornaer</i> .....	13		
<i>Columba of Ex Miscellanea</i> .....	15		
<i>Matilda Page of House Verditius</i> .....	15		
<i>Tibor Milos of House Tremere</i> .....	15		
<i>Andrew of Jerbiton</i> .....	18		
<b>NOTABLE COVENFOLK</b> .....	<b>18</b>		
<i>Companions</i> .....	19		
<i>Dolly Price</i> .....	19		
<i>Otto-Pauels</i> .....	19		
<i>Laszlo</i> .....	20		
<i>Grogs</i> .....	20		
<i>Specialists and</i> .....	22		
<i>Other Covenfolk</i> .....	22		
<i>Ship's Captain</i> .....	22		
<i>Sailor</i> .....	22		
<i>Specialists</i> .....	22		
<b>COVENANT ORGANIZATION</b> .....	<b>23</b>		
<i>Hierarchy and Governance</i> .....	23		
<i>Income and Supplies</i> .....	23		
<i>Study and Laboratory Work</i> .....	24		
<i>Life At Sea</i> .....	24		
<i>Charting The Ocean</i> .....	24		
<i>The Charter</i> .....	25		
<b>COVENANT SITE</b> .....	<b>25</b>		
<i>Life on Board Ship</i> .....	25		
<i>Anatomy of a Ship</i> .....	25		
<i>Risk of Damage</i> .....	25		
<i>Laboratories</i> .....	25		
<i>Modifying the Ships</i> .....	25		
<i>La Charytee: Carles Magnus</i> .....	25		
<i>The Reliquary</i> .....	25		
<i>Carles' Laboratory</i> .....	26		
<i>Captain</i> .....	26		
<i>Marie de Bayonne: Hilde Oddfish</i> .....	26		
<i>Hilde's Laboratory</i> .....	26		
<i>Captain</i> .....	26		
<i>The Black Bark: Andrew of Jerbiton</i> .....	26		
<i>Andrew's Laboratory</i> .....	26		
<i>Captain</i> .....	26		
<i>The Laurens: Columba</i> .....	26		
<i>Columba's Laboratory</i> .....	26		
<i>Captain</i> .....	26		
<i>Le Genet: Tibor Milos</i> .....	27		
<i>Tibor's Laboratory</i> .....	27		
<i>Captain</i> .....	27		
<i>Trinite: Matilda Page</i> .....	27		
<i>Matilda's Laboratory</i> .....	27		
<i>Captain</i> .....	27		
<b>EXTERNAL RELATIONS</b> .....	<b>27</b>		
<i>Merfolk</i> .....	27		
<i>The Covenant of Favonius</i> .....	27		
<i>John Padbury of House Verditius</i> .....	28		
<i>Feliadexter, Demon of Wrath</i> .....	28		
<i>Captain Folpert Berlensis</i> .....	28		
<i>Waddenzee</i> .....	28		
<i>Oculus Septentrionalis</i> .....	28		
<b>RESOURCES</b> .....	<b>29</b>		
<i>Income Sources</i> .....	29		
<i>Enchanted Devices</i> .....	29		
<i>Brooch of Lungs of the Fish</i> .....	29		
<i>The Freshwater Barrel</i> .....	29		
<i>The Master's Chart</i> .....	29		
<i>Bell of Summoning</i> .....	30		
<i>The Magical Astrolabe</i> .....	30		
<i>Library</i> .....	30		
<i>Arcane Abilities</i> .....	30		
<i>Mundane Knowledge</i> .....	30		
<i>Books on the Arts</i> .....	30		
<i>Casting Tablets</i> .....	31		
<i>Laboratory Texts</i> .....	31		
<i>Vis Sources</i> .....	31		
<i>Fire From the Sky</i> .....	31		
<i>The Kraken's Egg</i> .....	31		
<i>The Summer Fog</i> .....	32		
<i>The Black Horse of Boulogne</i> .....	32		
<i>Vis Stocks</i> .....	32		
<i>Alfgeir's Resting Place</i> .....	32		
<i>Alfgeir's Bones</i> .....	32		
<i>The Oyster King's Shell</i> .....	33		
<i>Fixed Arcane Connections</i> .....	33		
<i>The Magus' Share</i> .....	33		
<i>Otto-Pauels' Share</i> .....	33		
<i>Dolly Price's Share</i> .....	33		
<i>Wealth</i> .....	33		
<b>THE COVENANT IN PLAY</b> .....	<b>33</b>		
<i>Covenant Themes</i> .....	33		
<i>Player Character Roles</i> .....	33		
<i>Dealing with the Elder Magi</i> .....	34		
<i>Suggested Storylines</i> .....	35		
<i>Adventure</i> .....	35		
<i>Exploration</i> .....	35		
<i>Lost and Drowned Cities</i> .....	35		
<i>A New Tribunal</i> .....	36		
<i>The Involvement of House Tremere</i> .....	36		
<i>The Loss of a Founder</i> .....	36		
<i>The Voice of Sin</i> .....	36		
<i>The Cold Northern Seas</i> .....	36		
<i>The Unfriendly Waters</i> .....	36		
<i>Longevity and the Like</i> .....	36		
<i>The Hermetic Journey</i> .....	36		
<i>The Northern Seas as an NPC Covenant</i> .....	36		
<i>Allies</i> .....	36		
<i>Adversaries</i> .....	37		
<i>Suppliers</i> .....	37		
<i>Customers</i> .....	37		
<i>Filial Relationships</i> .....	37		
<b>Jardin: A Summer Covenant</b> .....	<b>38</b>		
<b>HISTORY</b> .....	<b>38</b>		
<b>BOONS &amp; HOOKS</b> .....	<b>39</b>		
<b>MAGI</b> .....	<b>41</b>		
<i>Joia du Lua of House Jerbiton</i> .....	41		
<i>Lexora of House Bjornaer</i> .....	41		
<i>Xenophanes of House Criamon</i> .....	42		
<i>Beatriz of House Jerbiton</i> .....	44		
<i>Ahenobarbus of Tremere</i> .....	47		
<i>Alyssa, Maga Trianomae</i> .....	48		
<b>NOTABLE COVENFOLK</b> .....	<b>51</b>		
<i>Companions</i> .....	51		
<i>Serena Montdumerc, the Other Lady of Jardin</i> .....	51		
<i>Grogs</i> .....	53		
<i>Rosamonde Unaud, Turb Captain</i> .....	53		
<i>Specialists and Other Covenfolk</i> .....	53		
<i>Specialists</i> .....	53		
<i>Servants</i> .....	54		
<b>COVENANT ORGANIZATION</b> .....	<b>54</b>		
<i>Hierarchy and Governance</i> .....	54		
<i>Life at Jardin</i> .....	54		
<i>The Charter</i> .....	54		
<b>COVENANT BUILDINGS</b> .....	<b>55</b>		
<i>Environment</i> .....	55		
<i>Main Structures</i> .....	55		
<i>The Library</i> .....	56		
<i>The Tower</i> .....	56		
<i>The Guesthouse</i> .....	56		
<i>The Kitchen</i> .....	56		
<i>The Laboratories</i> .....	56		
<i>The Gardens</i> .....	56		
<i>The Bower</i> .....	56		
<i>The Door Marked Summer</i> .....	56		
<b>THE GARDEN OF LOVE</b> .....	<b>56</b>		
<i>The Summer Garden (Regio, Faerie Aura 5)</i> .....	56		
<i>The Pool</i> .....	57		
<i>The Maze</i> .....	57		
<i>The Night Garden (Regio, Faerie Aura 7)</i> .....	57		
<i>The Lake</i> .....	57		
<i>The Bower of Your Heart's Desire</i> .....	58		
<i>Laboratories</i> .....	59		
<i>Joia du Lua's Laboratory</i> .....	59		
<i>Lexora's Laboratory</i> .....	59		
<i>Xenophanes' Laboratory</i> .....	59		
<i>Ahenobarbus' Laboratory</i> .....	59		
<i>Beatriz's Laboratory</i> .....	59		
<i>Alyssa's Laboratory</i> .....	60		
<i>The Guest Laboratories</i> .....	60		
<i>The Village, Belfort du Quercy</i> .....	60		
<i>Chapel of Saint Desiderius</i> .....	60		
<i>The Unaud Barn</i> .....	60		
<b>EXTERNAL RELATIONS</b> .....	<b>60</b>		
<b>RESOURCES</b> .....	<b>61</b>		
<i>Income Sources: The Vineyards</i> .....	61		
<i>Enchanted Devices</i> .....	62		
<i>Library</i> .....	62		
<i>Mundane Knowledge</i> .....	62		
<i>Books on the Arts</i> .....	63		
<i>Laboratory Texts</i> .....	63		
<i>Vis Sources</i> .....	64		
<i>The Black Grapes</i> .....	64		
<i>The Reflection of Beatriz's Lover</i> .....	64		
<i>The Heart of a Lover</i> .....	64		
<i>The Fiery Liquor</i> .....	64		
<i>The Highest Leaf</i> .....	65		
<i>Change of Heart</i> .....	65		
<i>The Fur of the Saturated Beast</i> .....	65		
<i>Blood on the Talons</i> .....	66		

# Through The Aegis

The Blooming of Love	66
Vis Stocks	66
The Rainbow Leaves	66
The Indigo Pawns of Toulouse	66
The Beast's Bath Water	66
The Sanguine Roses	66
Sands of the Mistral	66
The Fiery Liquor of Vazerac	67
The Wondrous Poems	67
The Frozen Kisses	67
The Pawns of Healing	67
The Changing Hearts	67
The Perfumed Spirals	67
<b>THE COVENANT IN PLAY</b>	<b>68</b>
Covenant Themes	68
The Struggle for Dominance	68
The Crusade	68
The Question of Faith	68
The Threat From Witbin	68
Broken-Hearted Questers	68
Player Character Roles at Jardin	68
Loyalty	69
Jardin as a Background Covenant	69
<b>The Oracles of Didyma</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>HISTORY</b>	<b>70</b>
The Branchidae	
of House Ex Miscellanea	70
The Founder Branchos	70
UnGifted Branchidae	70
Branchidae at other Covenants	70
Recent History	71
<b>BOONS &amp; HOOKS</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>MAGI</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>NOTABLE COVENFOLK</b>	<b>80</b>
Companions	80
Callista: Arche and representative in Miletos	82
Philip: Arche and turb captain	82
Ella the Oracle	82
Niketas Metropolitan of Miletos	82
Grogs	83
Ariane's Blind Maidens	83
The Turb	83
William's Frankish Mercenaries	83
Specialists and Other Covenfolk	84
Teachers	84
Specialists	85
<b>COVENANT ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>85</b>
Hierarchy and Governance	85
The Council of Archai	85
Income and Supplies	85
The Charter of the Council of the Magi of Didyma	86
Votes at the Council of Magi	87
Agenda for the Council of Magi	87
<b>COVENANT BUILDINGS</b>	<b>87</b>
Environment	87
Main Structures	87
Apollo's Temple	87
Sacred Spring	87
Athena's Temple	87
Zeus' Temple	87
Temples of Dionysus and Hermes	87
The Baths	88
The Large and Small Round Altars	88
Ruined Temple and Church	88
The Covenant Wall	88
Laboratories	88
Alexander's Laboratory	88
Nikola's Laboratory	88
Ariane's Laboratory	88
Herakles' Laboratory	88
William's Laboratory	88
Abandoned Laboratories	89
Associated Properties	89
The Warehouses	89
The Delphinion	89
<b>EXTERNAL RELATIONS</b>	<b>89</b>
Apollo Didyma	89
The Sacred Way	90
Miletos	90
The Strategos at Miletos	90
The Kommerkiarioi	91
The Church	91
Panormos	91

The Coast and the Didyma Plain	92
Agamemnon	92
Hermetic Relationships	92
The Kretan Phyle	93
Other Theban Covenants	93
<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>93</b>
Enchanted Devices	93
Vermin Ward	93
Ward Against Rot	93
Warning Flame	93
Bath Rock	93
The Oracle's Dredge	93
Porter's Helpers	94
Defender Swords	94
Zeus' Arm	94
The Spice Wand	94
Vis Divining Rods	94
Diamond of Hermes	94
The Vis Net	94
Pestilence Ward	94
Arcane Abilities (151 BP)	94
Mundane Knowledge (255 BP)	94
Hermetic Arts (719 BP)	95
Laboratory Texts	95
Vis Sources	96
Arab Market	96
Harvest of Aftonsitiron	96
Hunt	96
Mouth of the Meander River	96
Sacred Springs	96
Vis Stocks	96
Wealth	96
<b>THE COVENANT IN PLAY</b>	<b>96</b>
Covenant Theme	97
Player Character Roles at Didyma	97
Suggested Storylines	97
A Sanctuary	97
The Branchidae	97
City, Church, and War	98
Sleeping Beast	100
Didyma as a Background Covenant	100
<b>The Covenant of Longmist</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>HISTORY</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>BOONS AND HOOKS</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>MAGI</b>	<b>103</b>
The Elder Magi	103
Lugh-écnaid of The Younger House	103
Conchobor Crosach of House Merinita	104
The Younger Magi	104
Caillach Dhé Dherg of House Verditius	104
Dara Connachtach of The Younger House	104
Eochaid Dubh of House Merinita	106
Mícheál Ambreadh of House Tyrtalus	106
<b>NOTABLE COVENFOLK</b>	<b>107</b>
Companions	107
Bran in Gai Móir	107
Éamonn Cruittire	110
Teachers	110
Columb Bratbair, The Penitent Monk	110
Cathal Gobba, the Blacksmith	110
Specialists	111
Úna, the Herbwife	111
Iombar, the Librarian	112
Maghnus, the Scribe	112
Piaras, The Percarnarius	112
Cináed mac Cathail, Apprentice Blacksmith	112
Fearghal, the Animal Handler	112
Servants	113
Grogs	113
<b>COVENANT ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>113</b>
Hierarchy and Governance	113
Life at Longmist	114
Consensus and Community	114
The Offices of Longmist	114
Manner of Dress	114
Music at the Covenant	114
Meal Times	114
Dawn and Dusk	115
Working Schedules and Experimentation	115
Punishment	115
Visitors and Aegis Tokens	115
<b>COVENANT SITE</b>	<b>115</b>
Environment	115

Main Structures	116
The Lesser Tower	116
The Greater Tower	116
Laboratories	116
Lugh-écnaid's Laboratory	116
Conchobor's Laboratory	116
The Caillach's Laboratory	117
Dara's Laboratory	117
Eochaid's Laboratory	117
Mícheál's Laboratory	117
The Remaining Laboratories	117
Outlying Buildings	117
The Chapel	118
Associated or Owned Properties	118
The Fish Runs	118
The Toll Bridge	118
<b>EXTERNAL RELATIONS</b>	<b>118</b>
Clan Mac Tire	118
Important Boons and Hooks	119
Income	120
Mobile Laboratories	120
Mundane Relations	120
Ruadan mac Goibhniu	120
Giants	120
Faerie Merchants	121
The Banshee and Her Kind	121
Elemental Spirits	121
Druids	121
<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>121</b>
Enchanted Devices	121
Ualgrimm's Pelt	121
The Enchanted Door	121
The Broken Shield of Cú Chulainn	121
Cearnach's Mount	122
The Bronze Man	122
The Observance Bell	122
Prepared Casting Spaces	123
Library	123
Arcane Abilities	123
Mundane Knowledge	125
Books on the Arts	125
Casting Tablets	126
Laboratory Texts	126
Vis Stocks	126
The Fleas of Saint Nannan	127
The Burning Hand	128
The Balm of Tír Nan Óg	128
The Ax of Cú Roi mac Dáire	128
Vis Sources	128
Tribute from the Underworld	128
From the Very Walls Themselves	129
The Swine in the Woods	129
Gold Teeth from the Pike Pulled	129
The Leeward Side	129
The Gifted Blacksmith	129
The Needfire	130
The Black Root	130
The Floating Stones of Maghera	130
The Hunt	130
Wealth	130
<b>HIDDEN RESOURCES</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>THE COVENANT IN PLAY</b>	<b>131</b>
Covenant Themes	131
Player Character Roles at Longmist	131
Suggested Storylines	131
The Death of the Elders	131
Covenant Governance	131
Rebuilding the Covenant	131
Clan mac Tire	132
Alliance with the Tríatba Dé Danann	132
Rejoining Hermetic Society	132
Expelling Foreign Magi from Fíbernia	133
Longmist as a Background Covenant	133
<b>Collem Leonis</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>HISTORY</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>BOONS &amp; HOOKS</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>MAGI</b>	<b>136</b>
Ferra of Bonisagus	136
Baliana of Bonisagus	138
Freki of Bjornaer	139
Tiberius of Flambeau	139
Julia of Tremere	141

## Through The Aegis

NOTABLE COVENFOLK.....	142
Companions.....	142
<i>Jobanna the Autocrat</i> .....	142
<i>Erich the Spy</i> .....	143
Groggs.....	143
<i>Francois the Grog Captain</i> .....	143
<i>Geri the Hunter</i> .....	143
<i>Paul the Spearman</i> .....	143
<i>The Rest of the Turb</i> .....	143
Specialists and Other Covenfolk.....	144
COVENANT ORGANIZATION.....	144
Hierarchy and Governance.....	144
<i>Income and Supplies</i> .....	144
<i>Study and Laboratory Work</i> .....	144
Life at Collem Leonis.....	144
The Charter.....	144
<i>Ruling Council and Seats</i> .....	144
<i>Voting and Meetings</i> .....	145
<i>Rights, Responsibilities and Sharing</i> .....	145
<i>Censure and Dismissal</i> .....	145
<i>Peripheral Charter</i> .....	145
COVENANT SITE.....	146
Environment.....	146
Main Structures.....	146
Laboratories.....	146
<i>Ferra's Laboratory</i> .....	146
<i>Standard Laboratories</i> .....	146
<i>Unmaintained Laboratories</i> .....	146
Outlying Buildings.....	146
Uncontrolled Portals.....	147
<i>Predicting Events</i> .....	147
<i>Magical Regio: Jotunheim</i> .....	147
<i>Faerie Regio: Midgard</i> .....	148
Associated Properties.....	149
<i>Julia's Townhouse</i> .....	149

<i>Eisenhöbe and the Mine</i> .....	149
EXTERNAL RELATIONS.....	149
Nobility.....	149
<i>Count of Mark</i> .....	150
<i>Herr Vorderhagen</i> .....	150
<i>Duke of Limburg and Count of Jülich</i> .....	150
<i>Freiberr Reinbart II of Soest</i> .....	150
The Church.....	150
<i>Engelbert</i> .....	150
City of Dortmund.....	150
Covenants of the Order of Hermes.....	150
<i>Crintera</i> .....	151
<i>Durenmar</i> .....	151
<i>Heorot</i> .....	151
<i>Fengheld</i> .....	151
RESOURCES.....	151
Income Sources.....	151
Enchanted Devices.....	151
<i>Clasp of the Ambassador</i> .....	151
<i>Spear of the Armiger</i> .....	151
<i>Mask of the Predator</i> .....	152
<i>Circlot of the Governor</i> .....	152
Library.....	152
<i>Mundane Abilities</i> .....	153
<i>Texts about the Uncontrolled Portals</i> .....	153
<i>Books on the Arts</i> .....	153
<i>Laboratory Texts</i> .....	153
<i>New Spells</i> .....	153
Vis Stocks.....	153
Vis Sources.....	153
<i>Silver Spring</i> .....	154
<i>Albino Stoot</i> .....	154
<i>Blue Stones of the Mine</i> .....	154
Wealth.....	154
HIDDEN RESOURCES.....	154

<i>Franka's Hermetic Nursery</i> .....	154
<i>Arcane Abilities</i> .....	154
<i>Books on Arts</i> .....	154
<i>Joachim's Stolen Cache</i> .....	155
<i>Arcane Abilities</i> .....	155
<i>Books on the Arts</i> .....	155
<i>Diabolical Books</i> .....	155
<i>The Tree House</i> .....	156
<i>Holzstein's Laboratory</i> .....	156
<i>Vis Source: The Man in the Woods</i> .....	156
<i>The Armoire of Excess</i> .....	156
<i>Silverware of the Wastrel</i> .....	157
<i>A New Vis Source</i> .....	157
<i>Portal of Living Wood</i> .....	157
<i>A Missing Bookcase</i> .....	157
THE COVENANT IN PLAY.....	157
Covenant Themes.....	157
Player Character.....	
Roles at Collem Leonis.....	159
<i>Suggested Storylines</i> .....	159
<i>Rebuilding Collem Leonis</i> .....	159
<i>Counts and Bishops</i> .....	160
<i>Reforging Hermetic Relations</i> .....	160
<i>Mystical Portals</i> .....	160
Collem Leonis.....	
as a Background Covenant.....	160

## List of Inserts

Carles Magnus.....	11	Story Seed: Heresy in the Library?.....	63	The Warrior Women.....	116
Covenant Summary.....	13	Summary of Vis Sources.....	65	Story Seed: The Dwindling Fish.....	118
Columba.....	13	Summary of Vis Stocks.....	66	Ruadan mac Goibhniu.....	119
Hilde Oddfish.....	14	Covenant Finances.....	66	Story Seed: A Service for a Service.....	121
Tibor Milos.....	16	Suggested Storylines for Jardin.....	67	Story Seed: The Missing Cathach.....	122
Matilda Page.....	16	Moving Jardin to other Tribunals.....	68	Story Seed: The Cattle Raid.....	122
Andrew of House Jerbiton.....	17	Branchidae Tradition Virtues.....	70	The Blade that Slew the Wolf.....	123
Otto-Pauels.....	18	Prophecies and the Oracle.....	71	The Bronze Man.....	124
Dolly Price.....	19	Covenant Summary.....	72	Shape and Material.....	
Laszlo.....	19	Didyma Magi.....	73	Bonuses for the Boibel Loth.....	125
Bullcalf.....	20	Aoede of House Ex Miscellanea.....	74	Lost or Broken Devices.....	127
Young Feeble.....	20	Alexander of House Ex Miscellanea.....	75	Summary of Vis Stocks.....	128
Shadow.....	21	Nikola of House Ex Miscellanea.....	77	Summary of Vis Sources.....	130
Fang.....	21	Herakles of House Merinita.....	78	Loyalty.....	132
Silence.....	21	Ariane of House Jerbiton.....	79	Covenant Finances.....	132
Thrice-Dead Ned.....	22	William of Normandy: House Flambeau.....	81	Moving Longmist to Other Tribunals.....	133
Sailor of the Northern Seas.....	23	Callista.....	83	Covenant Summary.....	135
Ship's Captain.....	23	Philip.....	83	Ferra of Bonisagus.....	137
The Gift of Magestones.....	24	Marcel the Mercenary.....	84	Dominator of Ghosts.....	137
Story Seed: The Magical Whale.....	24	Magarethe: Archon and Servant of Ariane.....	84	Baliana of Bonisagus.....	138
Story Seed: The First Contract.....	24	Ella the Oracle.....	84	Tiberius of Flambeau.....	139
Story Seed: The First Act of Piracy.....	24	Sphinx.....	89	Freki of Bjornaer.....	140
The Long Bone of Saint Epiphanius.....	26	Recent Ecclesiastic Rulers of Miletos.....	90	Julia of Tremere.....	141
Story Seed: The Rusted Bars.....	27	Story Seed: Taxation Audit.....	90	Story Seed: The Dark Magus.....	142
Feliadexter.....	28	Niketas, Metropolitan of Miletos.....	91	Erich the Spy.....	142
Story Seed: The Fall.....		Agamemnoth: Prince of the Moving Earth.....	92	Paul the Spearman.....	143
of the Mercantile Families.....	29	Story Seed: The Children of Olympos.....	92	Is This Really Jotunheim?.....	147
Story Seed: The Oyster Prince.....	33	Story Seed: Spice Harvest.....	96	Summary of Vis Stocks.....	153
Covenant Finances.....	34	The Tessa and Damen Wards.....	97	Story Seed: The Winter Litter.....	154
Loyalty.....	34	Moving Didyma to Other Tribunals.....	99	Summary of Vis Sources.....	154
The Legend of Jardin.....	38	Hibernia.....	102	Story Seed: Apprentice's Lofty Cave.....	155
Covenant Summary.....	39	Covenant Summary.....	103	Story Seed: The Mischievous Kobold.....	155
Joia du Lua of House Jerbiton.....	40	Past Magi.....	103	Story Seed: Sins of the Predecessor.....	155
Lexora of House Bjornaer.....	43	Designing Your Own Magi.....	104	Agnes, Guardian Spirit.....	156
Xenophanes of House Criamon.....	45	Lugh-éccnaid.....	105	Story Seed: Lost Laboratory.....	156
Beatriz of House Jerbiton.....	47	Conchobor.....	106	Story Seed: Agents Provocateurs.....	158
Ahenobarbus of Tremere.....	49	The Caillach.....	108	Story Seed: A Simple Request.....	158
Serena, Autocrat of Jardin.....	51	Dara Connachtach.....	109	Story Seed: Impossible Thefts.....	158
Alyssa, Maga Trianomae.....	52	Eochaid Dubh.....	109	Story Seed: Old Alliances.....	158
Rosamonde Unaud, Turb Captain.....	54	Mícheál Ambhraidh.....	110	Story Seed: The Church Lands.....	158
Story Seed: No More Gardening?.....	54	Bran in Gai Móir.....	111	Story Seed: The Enemy of My Enemy.....	158
Fighting One's Emotions.....	58	Partholon's Crown.....	111	Story Seed: The Army of King Gorm.....	158
Attaining Your Heart's Desire.....	58	Longmist Grog.....	112	Moving Collem Leonis to Other Tribunals.....	159
Shield of Dismissal.....	62	Éamonn Cruittire.....	113	Lindorm of Jotunheim.....	159
The Mysterious Book.....	62	The Offices of Longmist.....	115	Story Seed: The Ravens Fly Again.....	160

## Chapter One

# Introduction

Whether it is a brand new foundation freshly hewn from the wilderness or an ancient wreck creaking under centuries of magic, the covenant is the center of most sagas. This supplement for *Ars Magica* Fifth Edition describes in detail five covenants, their resident magi, and the resources available to them, including vis sources, libraries, and enchanted devices.

Each covenant can be used as inspiration for your own saga, as a place to visit, or as the player character covenant. Your player characters can either replace or complement the described residents.

Although these covenants have each been strongly integrated into a particular location and Tribunal, all can be used wherever your saga is set. However, your troupe will need to modify the location and Tribunal-specific content accordingly.

The characters detailed for the covenants have in some cases been generated season-by-season, taking into account the character's duties and the resources available at the covenant. The experience totals of such characters may thus vary slightly from that expected via the Detailed Character Creation method (*ArM5*, page 32). Life-events such as Twilight may also cause the Virtues and Flaws of some characters to be either unbalanced or to exceed the normal allotment. When this applies it has been noted.

When existing communal covenant resources, such as enchanted items, have been acquired or made by the current residents, then these have been effectively paid for twice: once in terms of seasons of work, and once in terms of covenant build points. On the other hand, resources personal to a magus, such as talismans and some enchanted items, have not been paid for out of the covenant build point budget. Generally, if a magus would likely take a resource with him if he left the covenant, it has been considered a personal resource. However, sometimes, it has been necessary to make an arbitrary decision as to whether a particular resource is communal or personal.

## How to Use this Book

The five covenants detailed in this book make ideal starting points for a new saga. The magi resident in each serve equally well as ready-made player characters already embedded into the fabric of their covenants, or as suggestions to spark entirely new magi in keeping with each covenant. Similarly, the grogs, companions, and other specialists are all either ready-to-play or detailed enough that introducing them is straightforward. You could even take these characters individually and use them in your own saga if you wanted to.

The covenant as a character is also well-developed. From Hooks and Boons, to resources, allies, and enemies, and even the state of the covenant's coffers and the loyalty of its covenfolk, each covenant is already a living, breathing entity all by itself.

Each of the covenants is accompanied by a wealth of saga threads and story seeds that your troupe can explore over decades of game time. Some of these challenges are readily apparent while others are more subtle, leaving your troupe free to develop them in any number of ways.

Each covenant is also an example of one season in a covenant's life-cycle, from Spring, through Summer, Autumn, Winter, and back to Spring again. If you are creating your own covenant, then the covenants detailed in this supplement provide solid examples of the situations and challenges that each season brings.

For existing sagas, these covenants might be used as fully-detailed background covenants. Each provides information for using them in a range of ways, such as a source of information, political allies or opponents, or even naive young magi to manipulate. Their aims may coincide or cross with those

of your player magi, and finding the right way to deal with them provides challenging stories. As the covenants are well integrated into their different Tribunal settings, they also provide an impetus for magi to visit these different Tribunals, drawing them out of their own covenants and into a much wider Hermetic world.

Lastly, the vis sources, enchantments, and books described throughout this supplement can be used as a mine of ideas, or just statistics and book titles, for your own magi and their covenant.

Whether you are about to start a new saga or you are approaching the autumn of your current one, the covenants found in this book have something to offer, so populate them, contest them, spy upon them, or straight out raid them: the choice is yours.

## Covenant Seasons

Covenants are often classified according to their season, which is a complex measure of the age, power, and influence of the covenant. Both players and characters might refer to a covenant's season and the following gives an indication of its meaning. Of course, this can only be a guide, as the circumstances of each covenant are unique.

### SPRING

Spring covenants are young settlements, recently built or occupied, that pose many challenges to the magi taking them on. The main characteristics of a Spring covenant are: