naiveté is occasionally rewarded by finding an amulet that causes crops to flourish or a figurine that repels vermin. Others are not so lucky.

**Shadowgates**

Many shadowgates survived the Shadow Wars, when the Sorcerer Kings summoned hordes of darkfiends through them. A few shadowgates have been active since their creation, while others have been dormant for centuries. The most dangerous gates open every few days, allowing darkfiends to pass through. Other gates only open when specific events, like thunderstorms or a new moon, occur. A surge of natural arcana in the land or a person nearby can even reactivate a dormant gate. When darkfiends pass through the gates, they are of various species, although some gates draw only certain kinds of the fiends. Darkfiends often adopt the area around their gate as a lair. When these are discovered, champions are mustered to destroy them.

No one knows where all the gates are located. The Sovereign’s Finest are tasked with finding them, and the sovereign offers a substantial reward to anyone else who discovers one and reports it. Finding the gates is easier said than done, however. The Sorcerer Kings cloaked many with illusions, and others are in remote ruins or far underground. Some are also protected by powerful wards. Once a gate is found, the Sovereign’s Finest and Rose Knights are sent to destroy it. If a gate is too powerful to be destroyed or sealed, guards and arcane wards are placed around it, and its location is not revealed to the populace, if possible.

Except in Kern, where shadowgates are coveted, attitudes about shadowgates are the same throughout the world, even in nations as different as Aldis and Jarzon. Defeating darkfiends and destroying shadowgates are the kinds of tasks that generate rare cooperation between the Sovereign’s Finest and the Purist priests of Jarzon. Some of them have learned mutual respect and even admiration after working together against Shadow.

**Sorcery**

Despite its extensive use of the arcane arts, even the Kingdom of the Blue Rose is wary of sorcery. The Shadow Art has the potential to corrupt even the most innocent soul, so every adept must guard against its siren call.

The most conspicuous forms of sorcery pervert the natural order. They include the secrets of summoning darkfiends and creating the unliving. Generally, sorcerers willing to do these things have already gone over to Shadow, although there is the occasional naive adept, trying to explore the bounds of the arcane arts, certain he is the exception. Arcane masters learned long ago that trying to fight the forces of Shadow with their own weapons is a fool’s errand.

More dangerous than the overt forms of sorcery are the subtle ways it creeps into the other arcana. The use of the arcane arts to alter or influence others against their will is also sorcery, and many arcana can be used in this way.