

A TRUE MAP OF THE CITY

It suddenly struck me what was happening. My tutor had once, in passing, mentioned that Deresthia had two very different dialects, one used in the capital and one used mostly by farmers, laborers, and other simple people in the outlying areas. The tutor had told me this, but all the while he had evidently, for some unknown reason, been teaching me the countryside dialect, instead of the metropolitan version I'd requested. I'd been bamboozled.

I explained this to my interpreter, who smiled and told the official, who, to my discomfort, laughed until tears rolled down his cheeks. He then turned and told all his colleagues, as well. My embarrassment as they joined in raucous laughter was exceeded only by my dismay that my carefully devised plan to impress all the conference attendees with my fluent Deresthok was ruined. I would have to give my lengthy opening speech in Anglic or be regarded as a rustic oaf.