

[Cursor Parking Lot]

Venomous Demesne

First of all, if your character's name is Corgin, Gregor(y), Grimwald, Suppe, or Daniel, this post is not for you. Turn back now.

Anyways, the time has come and my co-dm and I are planning a big trip to the Venomous Demesne. The party has been hired by the west branch of house cannith in order to investigate suspicious activity by house cannith south in the area. South has been working with a Rakshasa and sending expeditions to said city in order to learn parts of a ritual to summon an overlord.

We've never run a big city like this before, especially not one with such a dearth of information about it, so we're asking y'all for help. Here's what we've got so far:

Location:

The city is located imposed into a mountain in the Byeshk, the mountain is there physically with the city in a demiplane of kyber kind of stuck inside, with the mountain hollow from the perspective inside the city - think a city inside of a crater, but the crater only exists from inside the city. The Demesne is accessed by following a specific path, guided by a tiefling who knows the proper rituals. Only this allows someone to perceive and interact with the demiplane. The demiplane also blocks hostile action by the Quori.

History:

The city was founded by four Sarlonan noble houses who escaped the sundering before the going got bad, making pacts with four overlords to protect themselves from the Quori and other threats. Over time, the use of infernal magics warped the four families into the tieflings we see today.

The Four Clans:

All four clans are based on one of the tiefling variants, and members of the clan generally have at least the cantrips and first level spell from their subrace.

Mephistopheles Clan:

Compacted with the keeper of secrets, Sul Katesh.

Spells: Minor Illusion, Dissonant Whispers, Detect thoughts

Physical Description: Purple with nub horns, single bladed tail.

Leader: Magnanimity, soft spoken male tiefling, decently powerful caster, has helm of telepathy, isn't afraid to use it. Other leaders take precautions against it, he never really trusts somebody unless he can read them.

Mammon Clan:

Compacted with the king of servants (still working on a name), a custom overlord based on decadence and greed.

Spells: Mage Hand, Floating Disk, Arcane Lock

Physical Description: Red with medium horns, forked tail and tongue

Levistus Clan:

Compacted with the Daughter of Kyber, Tiamat.

Spells: Ray of Frost, Armor of Agathys, Darkness

Physical Description: Green-ish with large out-turned horns and claw-like fingernails. Their tail has multiple sharp blades in a row and can function as a whip.

Dispatar Clan:

Compacted with the scar the abides, Sakinnirat.

Spells: Friends, Charm Person, Suggestion.

Physical Description: Tannish with a hint of red (possible to mistake for human), no horns, thin tail unbladed tail.

Typically children between clans take on the traits of one of the parents. Halfbreeds are possible, and depending on the exact combination of traits are considered anywhere from no big deal to a bad omen and risk to the clan. Some combinations of infernal bloodline are dangerous, unlucky, or simply too likely to draw unwanted attention from an overlord. Offspring of a clan tiefling and a human are usually tieflings of that clan.

Commoners tend to be human with slight infernal heritage, perhaps nub horns or an otherworldly tinge to their skin. A few commoner families have more pronounced traits, typically ones with a history of infernal magics, but none have been as steeped in it as the four clans.

Governance:

Government is handled through the four clans, with commoners tied to a clan based on choice and tradition. A sort of client-patron relationship, not tied to geographic location. Each clan has it's own laws and customs, mediated by a council, 1 vote for each clan - ties are common. Over time customs have developed for common disputes, if a commoner robs a commoner under a different clan, there isn't likely to be serious argument over the remedy.

Duels are often used as a method to resolve insult or prolonged disagreement.

Duels:

Originally one on one duels were the norm, but recently invitational duels have gained popularity. The challenger allows the challenged to "invite" a number of loyalists to fight with them, setting up for example a 3 vs 3 battle. Generally duels are until first blood, unconsciousness, or yield, fatalities are rare. Noble blood is not easy to replace in the Demesne.

Each house has it's own traditions as to the specific rules for a duel, but often times commoner retainers are used as loyalists, in this case the noble is responsible for their behavior.

Role in Droam:

Historically the Demesne has remained extremely isolationist, but the daughters of Sora Kell have forced a level of integration with Droam. Demesne magewrights perform work across the land, and while tieflings are still an uncommon sight, they aren't unknown. The Demesne still avoids direct dealings with the dragonmarked houses (most notably Tharashk) who they consider out for their secrets.

Magic:

Magic in the Demesne is dominated by a culture of secrecy and safety, knowledge is to be learned only by those who are worthy. This can mostly be traced to the dangerous and occult rituals they perform to source power, while a Brelish magewright would draw on crushed dragonshards for power, a member of the Demesne is drawing directly from one or more overlords or demons. While the ends are similar, the means of shaping and bending this power is quite different and less fail safe, sometimes demanding sacrifice of blood, limb, or life. Typically this demonic power is tied to a kyber dragon shard, in abundance in the region. Recently the Demesne has started sourcing more siberys and eberron dragon shards from the outside world, but supply is still heavily constrained.

Warlocks and sorcerers are far more common than in the five nations, with nobles almost always forging a connection to the lord of dust associated with their clan. The average Demesne magewright is closer to a five nations warlock than a wizard, though the line is often blurred.

Economy:

The Demesne is essentially at carrying capacity. To grow any larger would require more space with sunlight for farming, which they just don't have. Mage produced sunlight has so far failed to be economical, and gardens and farms adorn the tops of buildings. Many alleyways don't get sunlight at all (continual flame suffices). Despite this, the standard of living is still a bit higher than the five nations, generations of wealth among a relatively small population.

Trade with the outside world is minimal.

Religion:

A common misconception is that the people of the Demesne worship fiends, it would be more accurate to say they placate them, trade with them in exchange for power and protection. Demesne arcanists have a healthy respect for the power they contract with, not a reverence. Otherwise, Demesne dwellers are not usually religious, older sarlonan forms of the silver flame and the sovereign host are practiced by a few, and some travelers to Droam have brought back worship of the Shadow, but these are a small minority.

Culture:

Much of the culture of the Demesne is focused on the placation of the fiends they draw power from, festivals and events in honor of or tied to a specific overlord are common. As individuals the people of the Demesne tend to be quiet and reserved, with a focus on not giving offense. Demonic familiars and summons are relatively common, to be treated with suspicion, but ultimately just another tool. Historically horrific accidents and summonings were somewhat common, and to this day the shout of "unbound quasit on the street!" can bring a rapid response.

Most speak a descendant of old sarlonan that is just barely mutually interpretable with common, and infernal is used in rituals. Travelers to Droam usually pick up goblin and modern common.

Residents often adopt virtue names (Truth, Beauty, Charm, etc.) when dealing with outsiders, names have power, and no resident of the Demesne wants to be beholden to outside forces.

Points of interest:

Main well, estate of each of the four clans (each has at least a temple and library), entrance to the city, entrances to other demiplanes of kyber (mining operations are common, also could qualify as dungeons), city center w/council meeting place.

Some Sources we used to varying extent:

[A VENOMOUS LOOK](#) by u/atamajakki

Exploring Eberron

<https://keith-baker.com/dragonmarks-tieflings/>

<https://keith-baker.com/qa-5-18-18/>

<https://eberronmap.johnarcadian.com/>

Okay, so that's a lot of stuff. What my co-dm and I are looking for is advice on how to run a big city, how to handle Npcs, travel, quests, etc, and how people have done it in the past. More information to flesh out the Demesne is a plus as well, and I'll be adding to this document based on comments.

 [Venomous Demesne Reddit Post](#)

Mephistopheles Deathock:

Always knows where gregor is in the domain, sul katesh is guiding him.