

Campaign Introduction

Welcome to *The Festering Lands*

A Land Dying, A People Forsaken

It started as a sickness. A fever in the night, sweat pooling on straw bedding, a cough that never stopped. Then the flesh began to **blacken and split**, sores blooming like rotten fruit across skin. People prayed, called for healers, whispered of curses, but no remedy came. They watched as loved ones **withered before their eyes**, eyes glassy, breath slowing—until, finally, there was silence.

But death was not the end.

The first to return did so in the dark of night, their bodies stiff, their movements jerky and unnatural, as if they had forgotten how to be human. Their mouths opened in silent screams, black ichor leaking from dry lips, their twisted limbs reaching, grasping, pulling toward the living with a hunger that was neither born of need nor reason—only instinct. At first, people thought it was sorcery, a hex placed upon the land. Then they realized the truth.

The [Rotmire Blight](#) is not a plague, not a disease that passes from one body to the next. It is something *else*. Something that burrows into the flesh, that lingers in the marrow, that seeps into the very soil. The infected do not spread it through touch alone. The land itself carries it. The **air** carries it. A single misstep, a breath taken in the wrong place, a wound exposed to the mist, and the Blight takes root.

There is no cure. No escape.

The dead do not merely rise. They **change**. Some become slow, shuffling horrors, their bodies bloated and leaking. Others... others become *something worse*. Their forms stretch, their bones twist, their limbs lengthen into grotesque shapes, eyes bulging from hollow sockets as they learn new ways to hunt. Some speak in voices they do not own, **mocking, whispering, pleading**—not for salvation, *but to lure the living closer*.

The only mercy is [silver](#). A dagger through the skull, a sword through the heart, **the blessed metal cutting away the corruption**. Fire works, but fire is slow. Fire allows them time to scream.

And so the people of [Faulmoor](#) suffer. The land itself is turning against them—black rot creeping along once-fertile fields, **water growing thick with decay**, animals found **ripped apart, yet still moving**, their milky eyes staring as they try to drag themselves forward. The forests are silent

now. Even the crows have fled, leaving only **the things that should not be**.

The people burn their dead, but **ashes whisper in the wind**.

They close their doors at night, but **claws scratch at the wood**.

They pray... but the gods do not answer.

A Kingdom Cut Off – The Blockade of Norvostra

The Blight does not recognize borders, but kings and lords do. As the [Rotmire Blight](#) spreads, the rulers of neighboring lands watched with growing horror, not only at the dead rising, but at the desperation of the living. And so, they chose the only course of action they believed would keep their own people safe—**[Norvostra](#) must be sealed**.

The **land borders have been shut**, fortified with walls, barricades, and garrisons that do not hesitate to **cut down those who attempt to flee**. The desperate—men, women, and children who seek only to escape—are met with **cold steel and burning arrows**. No plea is heard, no bribe accepted. To those beyond [Norvostra](#)'s borders, **anyone who leaves may carry the Blight with them**. Even the few who manage to slip past the watchful eyes of the blockade soon find themselves **hunted, dragged from their hiding places, and put to the sword**. Mercy is a luxury the outside world can no longer afford.

Beyond the Greymere Sea, **[Norvostra](#)'s ports are no safer**. The navies of other kingdoms **patrol the waters ruthlessly**, sinking any ship that dares sail beyond the quarantined coasts. Entire fishing villages have been left to rot, their livelihoods stolen by a decree issued from a throne far away, their boats burned before they could even attempt an escape. Smugglers, once confident in their trade, now operate at even greater risk—**for to be caught is not simply to be turned away, but to be sent to the depths, ship and all**. Those who command the blockade have made their orders clear: **nothing leaves [Norvostra](#). Not the infected, not the healthy. Not even the dead**.

Faulmoor: A Land Ruled by Fear

The [Rotmire Blight](#) was not just an end to life—it was an end to order. The noble houses of [Faulmoor](#) were once stewards of the land, bound by ancient laws and sacred duty. But the Blight has shattered their oaths. Now, they rule not as protectors, but as **tyrants, schemers, and profiteers**, each clawing for survival at the expense of the dying land.

At the head of them all stands [House Valkenmar](#), the baronial family that once ruled [Faulmoor](#) with iron discipline. The Valkenmars are a house of soldiers, their name a byword for unwavering order. But order has become something cruel beneath the rule of [Baron Malric Valkenmar](#).

Having lost his wife and children to the Blight, his grief has hardened into something unrecognizable—*obsession*. His soldiers enforce brutal quarantines, his alchemists conduct inhumane experiments, and his scholars whisper of things that should remain buried. **Entire villages have been put to the torch to slow the spread**, and those caught outside the fortified halls of [Valkenheim](#) or the bleak walls of [Blackholt Fort](#) find themselves abandoned to fate. The Baron's one remaining heir, a boy no older than ten, is the last flickering ember of his bloodline, and his father's madness is driven by a singular goal—to keep the child alive, no matter the cost.

Across the **Greymere Sea**, on the island of [Ebonmoor](#), [House Wilthorne](#) watches the chaos unfold with calculating eyes. [Lord Eadric Wilthorne](#) was once a man of honor, but honor is a fool's game in a land without hope. While he professes loyalty to House Valkenmar, his true allegiance is to **gold, secrecy, and opportunity**. He has turned [Ebonmoor](#) into a smuggler's haven, profiting from the suffering of those too desperate to see the knife at their back. Ships slip through the Greymere under cover of night, ferrying silver, grain, and relics of the old ways—all at a price. **His men speak softly and carry poisoned blades**, and in the shadows of [Ebonmere's ancient towers](#), they plot a future in which the Valkenmars fall and Ebonmoor rises.

Then there is [House Harrowden](#), the unwanted child of Faulmoor, long mocked for its backwater lands and swamp-born lords. But the world has changed, and in this new age, the Harrowdens hold the one thing all men seek—[silver](#). The mines of [Thornmere](#) churn out the only metal that can strike down the Blighted, and [Lord Garric Harrowden](#) does not forget the years of scorn his house endured. Now, the mighty come to [Fenmire](#) with open palms, and Garric makes them pay dearly for every ingot, every silvered blade, every desperate plea for aid. He is no refined lord; he is a **bitter, vengeful man** who has learned that mercy is weakness. He welcomes supplicants into his halls, feasts them like old friends, then watches them squirm as he **sets his price**—a price that is always too high.

And so, Faulmoor crumbles, not beneath the weight of the Blight alone, but under **greed, desperation, and the cruelty of those who still breathe**.

The Old Ways—A Return to Desperation

When the world was whole, the [Old Ways](#) were the realm of scholars and mystics, their teachings pondered in dusty libraries but dismissed by the common folk as relics of a forgotten past. But when all else fails, when the prayers to new gods go unanswered, when steel and coin no longer hold meaning, people will **cling to anything**.

They whisper forgotten names, scratch old sigils into doorways, bind their children's wrists with strands of consecrated twine. **Charms and relics—once mere trinkets—are now clutched with desperate reverence**, their bearers convinced that a rusted amulet or a faded scrap of parchment might ward off the horrors that lurk beyond their doors. Shrines that once gathered dust

are now polished clean, their altars stacked high with offerings of bread, blood, and silver. The faithful claim to hear voices in their dreams, guiding them toward salvation—or **warning them to flee**.

But for every true believer, there are two deceivers waiting to **feed on their fear**. False prophets roam from village to village, peddling hollow blessings in exchange for food and coin. **Relic merchants sell baubles of tin and glass, claiming them to be holy artifacts of the [Old Ways](#)**. Men and women who once scoffed at faith now drape themselves in robes, claiming divine visions, their silvered tongues wringing the desperate dry. Some of them are charlatans. Others... *others are something worse*.

In Faulmoor, faith is both a shield and a dagger. It is salvation and damnation in equal measure. And those who turn to the old ways for guidance must ask themselves—**are they truly calling upon something greater, or are they simply calling something to them?**

Your Story Begins in Greymire

Whatever road led you here, it was not a kind one. [Greymire](#) is no haven, but it is *alive*, and that is more than can be said for much of [Faulmoor](#). This once-thriving fishing and shipping town now reeks of desperation, its docks filled with men and women who deal in contraband, who trade in secrets, who know better than to ask too many questions. Gold still changes hands here, but silver is the true currency. The price of a single silvered dagger can buy a man's life—or end it.

And it is here, in a well-furnished backroom of a dubious tavern, that you find yourself face to face with **Jorik Vance**, a fixer, a man whose smile is worth less than the breath he wastes speaking. He has a job for you, and in a place like this, work is the difference between *eating* and *starving*. A simple task, he says. Retrieve a sealed crate from a monastery deep in quarantined lands and bring it back. He promises gold, promises silver, promises *more*.

Outside these walls, the world waits—bleeding, burning, *dying*. The road ahead is uncertain, the land treacherous, and the dead... the [dead do not rest](#).

Whatever fate has in store for you, whatever reason you have for setting foot in this doomed land, one thing is certain: **once you enter the Festering Lands, there is no turning back**.

Revision #12

Created 25 February 2025 15:13:47 by Sean Green

Updated 11 March 2025 19:00:35 by Sean Green