Character Creation Guide for The Festering Lands

Characters in **The Festering Lands** exist in a kingdom reshaped by the Rotmire Blight, political fragmentation, quarantine, scarcity, renewed interest in the Old Ways, and the return of relics whose purpose is poorly understood.

This guide describes stable setting pressures rather than requiring every campaign to begin in the same place or with the same mission.

Character Questions

Useful starting questions include:

The strongest characters for this setting usually begin as people with a life that existed before the adventure: work, obligations, loyalties, habits, and a personal relationship to the compromises that now pass for normal.

- Where is the character from, and what did that place teach them about survival, authority, faith, or scarcity?
- What was their life before the Blight changed Norvostra?
- What have they lost, protected, abandoned, or profited from?
- What are they willing to do to survive, and where do they draw the line?
- How do they view quarantine, noble authority, the Blighted, silver scarcity, and the Old Ways?
- Do they believe the Blight can be understood or stopped, or only survived?
- What would make them risk entering a quarantined district, ruined settlement, noble stronghold, or relic site?

These questions are prompts, not alignment tests. The setting is built around pressure, compromise, and the consequences of choices made under fear.

Regional Origins

Characters may be native to affected regions or outsiders drawn into Norvostra by duty, desperation, profit, faith, scholarship, family, crime, or circumstance.

Faulmoor

Faulmoor is the principal crisis region in the setting, shaped by Blight pressure, quarantine, noble rivalry, smuggling, and relic activity.

Blackvale

Blackvale is the kingdom capital, associated with noble and mercantile competition for influence.

Mistvale

Mistvale is associated with cold, fog, superstition, healers, mystics, and old secrets.

Nighthollow

Nighthollow is associated with outlaws, assassins, crime, and survival by coin.

Greyhelm

Greyhelm is a high mountain region sometimes called the “crown of the world” in surviving public material.

Other Regions

Ravenhollow, Duskhollow, and Frostvale survive in public tradition as dangerous or poorly understood regions associated respectively with curses and restless dead, disappearances, and frozen isolation.

Faith and the Old Ways

A character may approach religion through devotion, disillusionment, practical indifference, occult curiosity, or renewed interest in the Old Ways.

Visions, relic phenomena, apparent miracles, prophecy, and false prophecy all exist within the setting's public experience. A character's interpretation of those events is not automatically the truth.

Pressure and Survival

The Blight creates moral pressure without dictating what a character must believe. Useful questions include whether a character would break or enforce a quarantine, steal from someone weaker, hoard or surrender silver, betray an ally to protect someone they love, or work with a noble house they distrust because the alternative is worse.

Silver, food, safe passage, information, and trustworthy allies can all become more important than conventional wealth.

Political Ties

Characters may serve, oppose, distrust, or bargain with House Valkenmar, House Wilthorne, or House Harrowden. None of those relationships determines a character's morality, and survival may force cooperation with institutions a character dislikes.

Campaign-Specific Onboarding

Earlier campaigns required characters to have a reason to be in Faulmoor and, more specifically, Greymire. That was a campaign-opening structure rather than a permanent law of the setting.

Future campaigns may begin elsewhere without changing the underlying world.

See Also

- The Festering Lands: An Introduction
- Norvostra
- Faulmoor
- Rotmire Blight
- Silver and its Importance
- The Pantheon

Revision #17
Created 2025-02-21 13:17:51 UTC by Sean Green
Updated 2026-10-06 15:12:41 UTC by Wiki Bot