# Blackholt Fort

A Crumbling Sanctuary

> ❝ *As long as I draw breath, Blackholt will not close its gates to those in need. Faulmoor's people are not just subjects to be ruled, but lives to be protected. If the Blight has taken their homes, if the nobles have turned their backs, then let them come here. It is my sacred duty to give them refuge, no matter the cost.*
>
> — **Commander Aeylan Vayne**

Blackholt Fort, the largest and most strategically vital stronghold in [Faulmoor](), was originally built to maintain military control over the routes to Fenmire and Ebonmoor. Its towering stone walls, watchtowers, and battlements once housed one of the region's strongest garrisons, ensuring [House Valkenmar]()'s dominance. However, the spread of the [Rotmire Blight]() has forced the fort to become more than just a military bastion—it has become a desperate sanctuary for refugees.
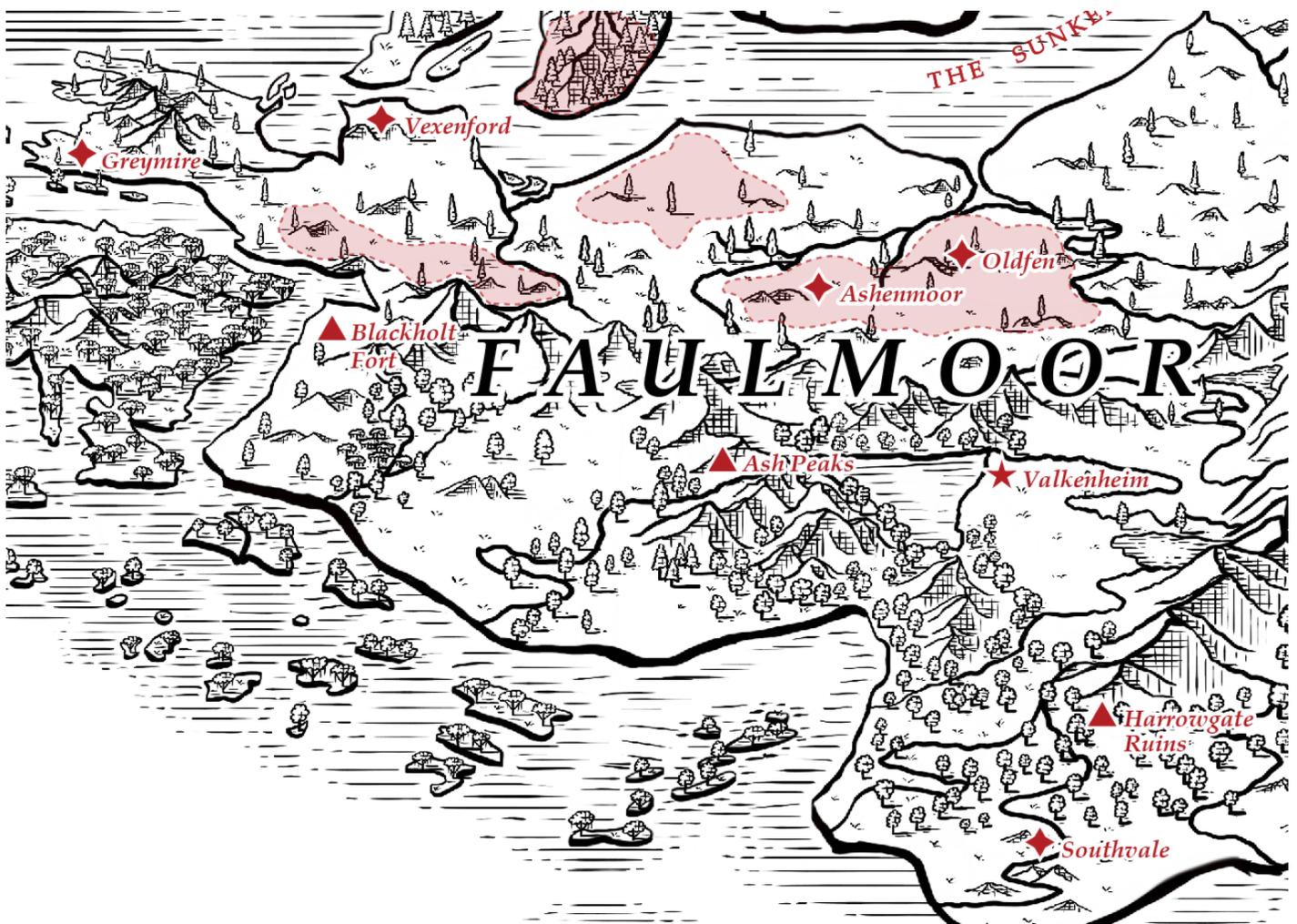
As thousands sought shelter within its walls, the fort's barracks, armories, and supply halls were hastily converted into overcrowded living spaces. With more displaced people arriving daily, soldiers were forced to tear down old structures to house the sick and starving, but space remained scarce. Diseases spread rapidly, food rations dwindled, and tensions between the military and civilians escalated into frequent clashes. The once-orderly fort now teeters on the brink of chaos, its courtyards filled with makeshift tents, broken supply crates, and the muffled cries of the suffering.

Despite its struggles, Blackholt remains loyal to House Valkenmar, at least in name. The fort's commander, a seasoned officer known for his restraint and compassion, upholds his duty but quietly refuses the Baron's more extreme and brutal orders. Though still a critical military stronghold, the garrison has been greatly weakened by both battle and illness, and many soldiers have been reassigned to maintain order within the overcrowded quarters. Those stationed here remain loyal to Valkenmar, but the commander has begun sheltering people who would otherwise be executed under strict quarantine laws. Some whisper that this act of defiance is not out of mere sympathy, but a calculated choice—the commander knows that should Valkenmar's rule collapse, he may need allies among the refugees to ensure Blackholt's survival.

With space above ground running out, many refugees were forced to move into Blackholt's lower levels—an expansive underground storage area meant for supplies and emergency shelter. These subterranean halls were once a vital resource depot, housing weapons, rations, and medical goods,

while also concealing escape tunnels that led deep into an extensive natural cavern system. The tunnels, some carved by hand and others remnants of an ancient, forgotten network, were once used by smugglers long before Valkenmar seized control of [Faulmoor](). There are rumors that some of these passages lead to ruins that predate even the old empire, and that things best left undisturbed may still dwell in the darkness.
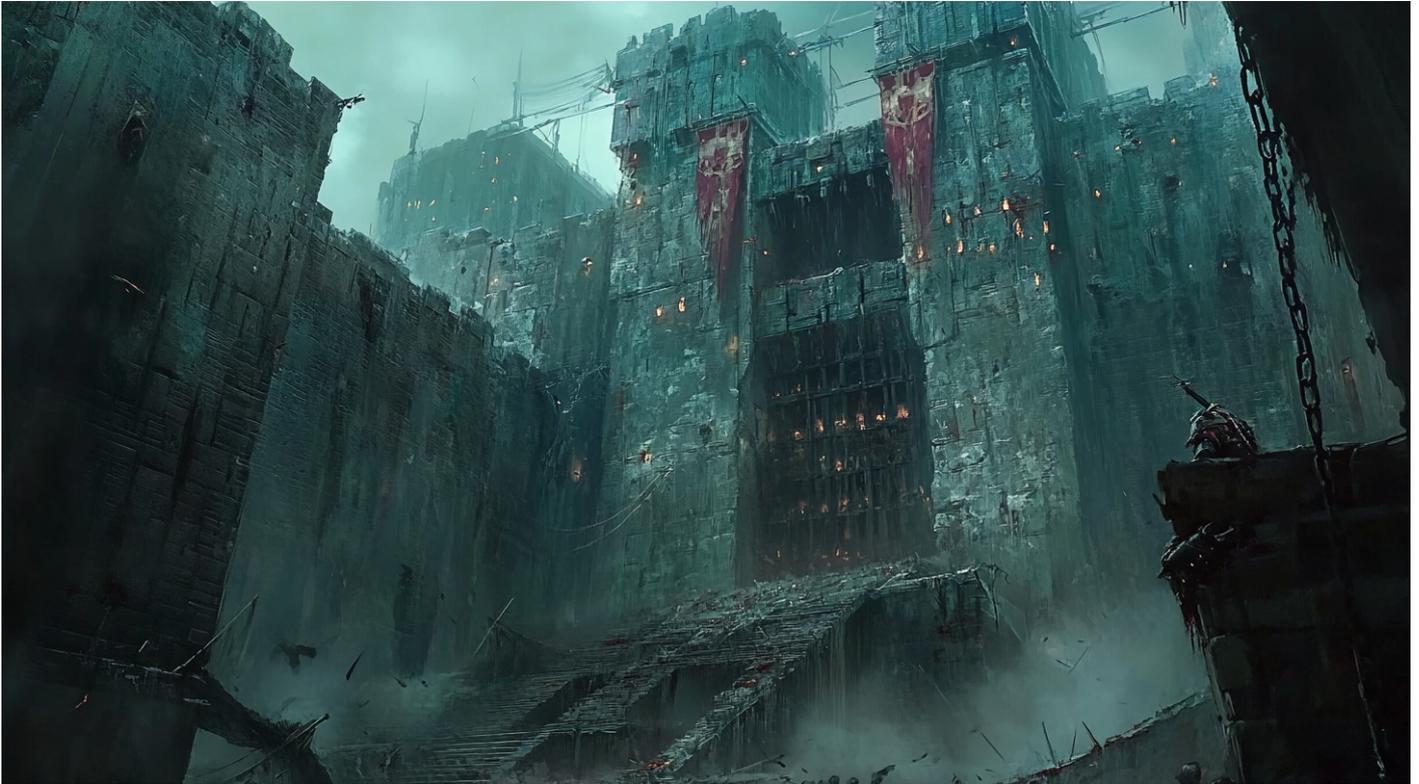
At first, these underground vaults seemed like salvation, providing ample space and protection, but the close quarters and poor conditions quickly turned them into a deathtrap. The [Rotmire Blight]() found its way below, and with no means to stop its spread, the infection tore through the underground refuge. Those who fell ill turned on the others in mindless violence, their fevered bodies warping into something inhuman before the end. Some fought to escape, clawing at the heavy doors, begging to be let out—but the fort's leadership made a brutal decision. The tunnels were sealed, the escape routes collapsed, and thousands of pounds of supplies were abandoned behind heavy iron doors.

The official story speaks of a cave-in, a structural failure that made the lower depths unsafe, butthose who helped seal the underground know the truth. Even now, soldiers patrolling the sealed corridors report faint scratching sounds from beyond the stone, whispers drifting through the cracks, and the unsettling feeling that something remains alive in the darkness below. Some claim to have heard voices, pleading in a tongue no longer spoken, or to have seen figures moving in the deep shadows where no light should reach. The bravest, or most foolish, among the refugees whisper of ways to break the seals—of hidden paths yet undiscovered, and of treasures buried beneath the fort.

Now, Blackholt Fort stands at a crossroads. Though it still holds immense strategic value as the last major stronghold before the marshes, its strength is dwindling. The loss of supplies and soldiers

weakens its ability to maintain control, and the growing tension between the refugees and the military threatens its stability.

The fort's commander walks a dangerous path, knowing that his quiet defiance of Valkenmar's harsh rule may soon bring consequences. Meanwhile, beneath the stone, something waits—something that should have perished with the Blight-stricken souls trapped below. Should the underground seals ever be breached, the consequences could be catastrophic.

Detailed Overview

Attribute	Details
Region	Faulmoor
Ruling House	House Valkenmar
Population (Before Blight)	1,000 (Primarily soldiers)
Population (After Blight)	2,000 (Military & refugees)
Major Industries	Military Operations, Refugee Management, Supply Depot
Primary Exports	Weaponry, Quarantine Enforcement
Current Ruler	Commander (More compassionate than Valkenmar's other officers)
Government Type	Military Rule under House Valkenmar
Defenses	Stone fortifications, stationed troops, underground escape tunnels (now sealed)
Notable Features	Largest fort in Faulmoor, strategic control over routes to Fenmire and Ebonmoor, houses overcrowded refugees, sealed underground chambers containing an outbreak
Status	Overcrowded, struggling with dwindling supplies, secrets beneath the fort remain unknown to most