

## THE ASCENDED

### Lore Primer

#### The World Did Not End All at Once

Humanity did not fall to a single apocalypse. It failed slowly, then desperately, then violently.

Climate collapse came first—water shortages, food failures, mass migration. Governments were captured by oligarchs who strangled solutions that did not turn a profit. When scientists discovered Aetherion, a material capable of absorbing deadly radiation and even cooling the planet, it should have been salvation.

Instead, it threatened satellite empires and energy monopolies.

The research was buried. The scientists were silenced.  
And the world kept burning.

#### The Shield That Saved the World (And Doomed It)

Generations later, astronomers discovered a horrifying truth: a nearby star was going to unleash a gamma ray burst directly at Earth.

Panic came too late—but desperation worked fast.

The forgotten Aetherion research was rediscovered. Engineers rushed to deploy The Shield, a vast, patchwork veil of Aetherion in space meant to absorb the incoming radiation.

When the burst arrived, the Shield worked.

Humanity celebrated. History books declared victory.

They were wrong.

The Shield did not disperse—it fell back to Earth, atomized and saturated with radiation, slowly coalescing into a new, corrupted form.

The Scour had begun.

#### The Scour and the Fall

Aetherion rained back into the world.

Water turned poisonous. Crops failed. Fish died or mutated. Entire ecosystems collapsed under a creeping violet contamination known as The Scour.

Humanity fought back again—this time with colossal filtration plants and atmospheric scrubbers. Safe Zones emerged. Life stabilized. Hope returned.

Then the sky broke.

Aetherion had gathered into massive meteorites.

When they struck, cities vanished. Filtration plants were destroyed. Oceans and continents were poisoned in weeks. Billions died.

The ultra-wealthy sealed themselves in bunkers.  
The rest of the world was left to burn.

This was The Fall.

## **Humanity Endured Anyway**

Against every expectation, people survived on the surface.

Over centuries, life adapted. Animals grew larger and stranger. Plants became aggressive and resilient. And humans changed.

Aetherion entered the blood.

Some people became Tolerant—able to survive low exposure.  
Most remained Intolerant—sickened and weakened by it.  
A rare few were born altered, able to use it.

## **The Return of the Old Monsters**

When the descendants of the oligarchs finally emerged from their bunkers, they expected a dead world.

Instead, they found a rebuilt one that no longer needed them.

So they did what their ancestors had always done.

They built a religion.

The Church of the Pure promised food, safety, and meaning. Slowly, its message shifted—from charity, to destiny, to blame. The Ascended were declared unnatural, dangerous.

Persecution followed, then war.

The War of Ascension tore across N'Amur, ending only after an Ascended hero annihilated an entire Church army at the cost of his life.

The Church won control of most of the continent.  
The Ascended survived—but learned to hide.

## **The World Today**

It is now the year 2720.

N'Amur is ruled by the Church from its capital, New Lanna.  
Cascadia stands to the west, democratic and Ascended-accepting.  
The Territories are fractured deserts, ports, and city-states.  
The Confederation of the People defends its land fiercely to the north.

Aetherion is everywhere—in the soil, the water, the blood.

Technology is old and salvaged, rarely manufactured.  
Truth is dangerous.  
Faith is weaponized.  
Power always has a cost.

## **Who You Are in This World**

You are not heroes by default.

You are survivors, scavengers, couriers, rebels, pilgrims, smugglers, believers, or liars.

You may be Ascended, hiding what you are.  
You may be Tolerant, walking the line the Church allows.  
You may be Intolerant, trying to survive in a world that poisons you by existing.

Every choice trades safety for power.  
Every victory leaves a scar.  
And the world is watching.