

ANNWYRE – A FIRST LIGHT

# What This World Is

Annwyre is a world that remembers.

Stone holds truth. Blood carries consequence. Oaths linger long after the mouths that swore them have turned to dust. Nothing here happens in isolation, and nothing ends cleanly. The land itself watches what is done upon it, and it answers in time.

This is not a world of simple good and evil. It is a world of bargains struck under pressure, of faith tested by silence, of survival paid for in scars. Heroes rise, but they rise burdened—shaped as much by what they refuse as by what they fight. Victory is possible, but it is never free.

The gods of Annwyre are not distant ideals. They are facets of the world made willful: fire that warms and burns, light that reveals and judges, shadow that gathers where blood soaks the ground. They do not exist to serve mortals, nor to save them from their choices. They endure. They remember.

Magic flows through the world like a wounded current—powerful, erratic, and never neutral. Where it gathers, the land changes. Where it is drained, the world sickens. Nothing wielded without cost remains harmless for long.

At the heart of Annwyre lies the Mallachd: a scar where the world was broken and never healed. Forests stand frozen mid-scream. Rivers run poisoned. The air itself resists breath. It is not merely a place of death, but a reminder—proof that the world can be wounded deeply enough to remember forever.

Annwyre is a setting built for stories where choices matter, where the past presses in on the present, and where the world responds to what is done within it.

What you do here will matter.

And the world will not forget.

# How Stories Take Shape Here

Stories in Annwyre are driven by **consequence**, not destiny.

Events do not resolve cleanly. Victories create debts. Defeats leave scars that shape what follows. When something is broken—land, oath, bloodline—it does not reset when the danger passes. It persists, warping what grows around it.

Power in Annwyre is contextual. Authority comes from land, faith, memory, and force—but never from one source alone. Kings rule only so long as the land tolerates them. Priests speak with divine weight, but that weight shifts by place and season. Ancient truths carved in stone may outweigh fresh victories, while whispered rumors can undo generations of law.

Conflict rarely announces itself as evil. It arrives as necessity.

A city tightens its laws to survive and becomes cruel.

A faith burns heresy to preserve unity and creates something worse.

A people cling to tradition until it strangles them.

Most antagonists believe they are preventing catastrophe. Often, they are not entirely wrong.

The past is always present. Old wars echo in modern borders. Forgotten crimes resurface as curses, plagues, or rebellions. The dead do not rest simply because enough time has passed. History is not background—it is an active force pressing forward.

Choice matters here because the world responds unevenly. Mercy may save a life and doom a city.

Ruthlessness may end a threat and poison the land. There are no universal answers, only consequences that unfold over time.

Stories in Annwyre are not about saving the world in a single stroke. They are about deciding **what the world becomes next**, and who bears the cost.

That is how tales endure here.

Not by resolution—but by what they leave behind.

# A TRAVELER'S WARNING

No one goes to the Mallachd on purpose.

They tell you that first, usually after the second drink.

They say the land changes before you ever see the scar. Birds vanish. Wind dies. The ground hardens beneath your boots, not into stone, but into something brittle—like bone left too long in the sun. Sound carries strangely there. Words feel louder. Thoughts feel heavier.

They say the trees closest to the Mallachd still stand as they were when the world broke—roots torn halfway from the earth, branches twisted as if trying to flee. Leaves never fall from them. They simply blacken and cling. Rivers run sluggish and foul, carrying a taste that lingers on the tongue long after you've left.

Most who speak of the place lower their voices without realizing it.

They will tell you the land is cursed, and that is true. But they will also tell you something else, if you listen closely: the Mallachd is not empty. It watches. It remembers. Paths shift. Old landmarks vanish. Those who stray too far sometimes return changed—if they return at all.

Once, this was fertile country. Villages stood where ash now lies thick as snow. Fields fed thousands. That memory still exists, buried beneath the ruin, pressing upward. The Mallachd is not merely a place of death—it is a wound that refuses to forget what it was.

People skirt its borders for good reason. Some settlements linger too close, forced by land, hunger, or stubborn pride. Others were abandoned generations ago, their names remembered only in curses and half-kept songs. No one agrees on what should be done with the scar—only that leaving it entirely unattended invites disaster.

Some believe the Mallachd must be sealed, cut off from the world before it spreads further. Others claim any attempt to bind it would only deepen the wound. There are those who insist it should be studied, watched, or endured, and those who will not speak of it at all. What little consensus exists fractures quickly under fear.

A few still whisper that something valuable lies buried within—relics, truths, or answers left behind when the world broke. Whether that is hope or madness depends on who is telling the story.

Every generation produces a few who believe they will be different. Better prepared. Favored by fate.

**The land has heard that before.**

# What Follows

This document is not a guide, nor a promise of what must come next.

It is a threshold.

The world of Annwyre continues beyond these pages—in histories layered with contradiction, in cultures shaped by faith and survival, and in stories where choice leaves marks that do not fade.

Those depths are explored more fully in the **Annwyre Worldbook** and its accompanying adventure modules, which expand this setting with lore, mechanics, and play.

Those works are currently in final preparation.

Until then, let this stand as it is meant to:

a first light cast across a land that remembers,  
and an invitation to step closer when the way opens.