

A Forgotten Empire, A Girl Who Remembers: New Queer Fantasy Novel From British-Canadian Author Reimagines Fall of Rome

A lyrical, queer fantasy debut set in the dying days of Rome—featuring a strong female lead, a 2,100-word language, and haunting companion soundtracks.

TORONTO, ON, CANADA, May 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- When memory begins to rot, who will remember the names of the lost?

“

Growing up in the English countryside, I often felt like I was living between two worlds—one vanishing, and one I hadn't found yet. The Hollow Vale is a book for anyone who has wanted to belong”

Alexander Paul Burton

Blending lyrical fantasy, queer identity, and forgotten folklore, [The Hollow Vale: Act I – The Crumbling Road](#) marks the striking debut of Alexander Paul Burton, a British-born LGBTQ+ author now based in Toronto. This immersive novel is the gateway into The Tharion Cycle, a new mythic fantasy saga for readers drawn to atmosphere, ancient mystery, and strong, female-led stories.

Raised in rural Somerset and now calling Canada home, Burton infuses fantasy with a rare, deeply personal

voice—one shaped by estrangement, migration, and a lifelong search for belonging.

"As a queer person growing up in the English countryside, I often felt like I was living between two worlds—one vanishing, and one I hadn't found yet. The Hollow Vale is a book for anyone who has ever felt like a ghost in their own story."

Set in the mist-soaked fens of a crumbling Roman Britain, *The Hollow Vale* follows Caelwyn, a girl of starlit blood raised in secrecy by a silent seer. When she begins to hear a Bell tolling in her dreams—a Bell no one else can hear—she is thrust into a fading world where roads shift, names disappear, and time itself unravels. Alongside a battle-weary legionnaire and a nameless child, Caelwyn must journey through the Hollow to reclaim what was lost—and decide whether the Bell should toll again.

What makes *The Hollow Vale* unforgettable:

- A [2,100-word constructed language](#), Tharionese—woven from Latin, Brittonic, and Old English influences, mirroring the fractured world within the story
- A strong, female protagonist in Caelwyn—resilient, vulnerable, and caught between silence and myth
- Queer and outsider identity intricately woven through the narrative—subtly told, yet powerfully present
- Companion soundtracks available on Spotify and all major platforms—composed by Burton himself, evoking melancholic, neoclassical tones to enhance the reading experience
- Hand-drawn illustrations, calligraphy and more
- Thematic depth exploring colonial trauma, language loss, memory, and the liminal space between life and legend
- Self-published and self-produced, embracing DIY queer artistry in both literature and music
- Self narrated Audiobooks for all books in the series



Alexander Paul Burton with their book, The Hollow Vale

Burton has also released The Tharion Cycle: Wyrdsong and the Forgotten Tongue, a companion guide offering deeper insight into the linguistic roots and mythopoetic structure of the series—perfect for lore lovers, language enthusiasts, and academics exploring conlangs and cultural memory, offering 2,100+ word constructed language.

The Hollow Vale is more than a fantasy novel—it's a love letter to the forgotten, a dirge for lost words, and a beacon for anyone piecing together who they are and where they come from.

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