

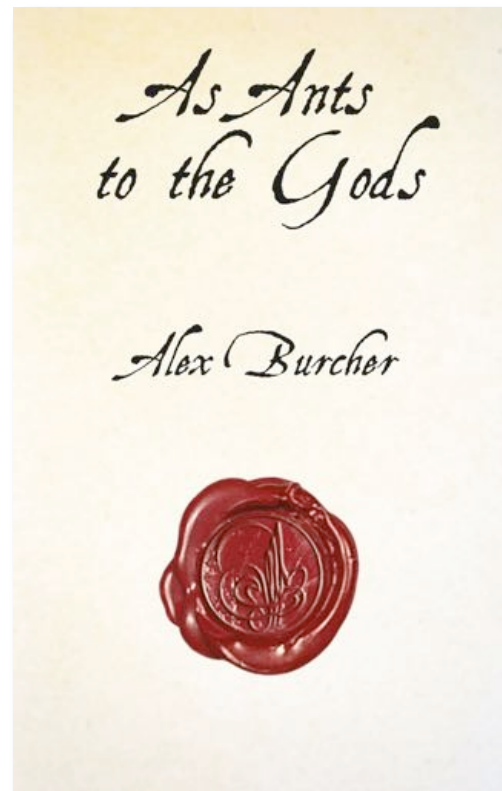


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## ADVANCE INFORMATION

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**AUTHOR:** ALEX BURCHER  
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**If they found and destroyed the Scroll they would bring down all civilisation.**

**Would the sacrifice of one man's life save humanity?**

Five years after the Great Fire of Lundun, ex-dragon Laqua is lured into helping the *Keepers of the Light*, a secret band that fight the equally clandestine *Cult of the Death of Hope*. The Cult would bring down the empire of the Moors and, indeed, all civilisation. An empire that has conquered most of Europe, where now the language is Arabic and the flag of the falcate moon flies; where alcohol is banned and hashish is legal; where prison is unknown and punishment is by whip, knife or hook. A world in which steam engines chug, the Industrial Revolution is well advanced, and the Norse have settled the New World. In Lundun, the capital of the Tin Isles, the largest mosque towers over St Paul's Cathedral and Samuel Peppin has given up his diaries and writes bawdy poetry instead.

The key to defeating the Cult is an ancient secret Scroll, the final chapter of the Sacred Script, its authenticity assured by the same Seal. While the Cult would destroy it, the Keepers intend to publish it for all to read, but they do not yet have the means to achieve that goal and so Laqua is charged with helping to keep the Scroll safe until they do. He falls in with a dour, castrated functionary from the Court of the Amir in Qurtuba, and a perfidious, possibly drug-addled, theologian. And what part might a libidinous Norsewoman play? Ahead of him lie spying, fighting, loving, torture and tragedy... and the discovery of a dreadful truth.

*As Ants to the Gods* is an alternate history adventure that challenges some of the orthodoxies and assumptions of Western culture. For adults only, certainly not for the faint-hearted or easily shocked, it is a ribald and irreverent exploration of a world that could have been.

Visit [bit.ly/AsAntsToTheGods](http://bit.ly/AsAntsToTheGods)

Alex Burcher is a health-care professional with a predilection for skiing, cycling, swimming, rock music (think the Black Crowes and the Duhks), red wine and Calvados, and trying to learn the saxophone and piano. Alex has written technical articles for professional journals but is now venturing into fiction.

Alex can knock out a generous ten-seafood paella in half an hour.

His deployment of anatomical knowledge in his writing has sometimes to be restrained. He loves words and believes that vocabulary should not be confined to the familiar, that nearly all are worth preserving and enjoying. Alex does not see why a book cannot be both exciting and well-written. Writers he admires include Phillip Roth, Robert Harris, Michael Chabon, Keith Roberts, Margaret Atwood, Harlan Ellison and many others too obscure to mention.

Prices shown are typical retail price. Actual sale price may vary by retailer. Electronic edition UK and EU prices include VAT.

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