Pegasus Publishers Submission Package

Horse of the Servant

Book Details

Title: Horse of the Servant **Series:** Blood and Thrones, Part 1 **Author:** RV Menon

Word Count: Approximately 120,000 words

Genre: Historical Fiction / Literary Fiction

Target Audience: - Readers of literary historical fiction aged 25-55 - Fans of Amitav Ghosh, William Dalrymple, and Manu S. Pillai - Readers interested in South Indian history, particularly Kerala - Those seeking Indian historical fiction beyond Mughal-era narratives - NRI readers with connections to Kerala and Maharashtra

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Author Information

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About the Author:

RV Menon is a software engineer who grew up between Kerala and Maharashtra, two lands whose histories intertwine in this novel. The stories in these pages draw from memories shared by his father, grandparents, uncles, aunts, mother-in-law, and wife, woven together with historical research into a narrative that honours both family lore and the documented past.

His work reflects a deep engagement with South Indian history, particularly the 18th-century transformation of the Malabar coast under rulers like Marthanda Varma of Travancore.

Horse of the Servant is his first novel.

Synopsis

They break him in a Portuguese cellar under Goa, nail by nail, question by question, until his name feels like a lie.

Nagoji Sawant was *huzurat* cavalry under Chimaji Appa, a rider sworn to drive foreigners from the Konkan coast. Captured at the edge of victory, he is shipped south in chains. A storm tears the vessel apart. He lives.

He does not wash up in safety. He washes up on the pepper coast, where every kingdom is a bargain and every bargain is backed by steel. In Venad, the ambitious king Marthanda Varma is crushing rival houses and dragging small polities into a single state. The Dutch East India Company wants that state divided. Cochin and northern powers want it stopped. The sea is full of flags that smell of monopoly.

Pulled into court as a useful stranger, Nagoji is set to train horsemen for a war no one can afford to lose. As alliances tighten and old grudges ignite, the decisive clash comes at Colachel, where sand, smoke, and discipline decide whether Europeans can be humbled on an Indian beach.

The novel spans 1738-1753, following Nagoji as he adapts to Travancore's matrilineal society, falls in love with the sharp-tongued Princess Revathi Bayi, fights at the Battle of Colachel, and rises to command cavalry under Captain De Lannoy (the captured Dutch commander who became Travancore's military architect). When Pune offers him estates to return with intelligence, he burns the letter. When Dutch-backed revolt threatens, he orders scorched earth through his adoptive mother's pepper fields, saving the kingdom but wounding his marriage.

The novel culminates in 1750's *Thrippadidanam* ceremony, when Marthanda Varma surrenders the kingdom to Lord Padmanabha, making the state "God's own country." An aged Nagoji, asked what Travancore was like before, answers: "I miss what it cost."

Horse of the Servant is the first instalment of Blood and Thrones, a visceral work of historical fiction about loyalty, statecraft, and the price a kingdom pays to become untouchable. The second book will follow Dharma Raja, Marthanda Varma's nephew and successor, as he faces Tipu Sultan's terrifying southward expansion and makes the fateful decision to seek British alliance, a choice that preserved the kingdom but planted the seeds of a different subjugation.

Submission Notes

Format: This package contains synopsis and author information. The complete manuscript is available as a single Word document upon request, formatted in 12pt Times New Roman as specified.

Email: submissions@pegasuspublishers.com

Full Manuscript Location

The complete manuscript is available at: `manuscript_v2.md` (in repository root)

Note for submission: Convert `manuscript_v2.md` to a single Word document (.docx) before submission.

Ensure: - Single file (not separate chapter files) - Microsoft Word format - 12pt Times New Roman font