Editorial Memo

**Leaping Lion Books**

**Date:** Novermber 21, 2018

**Memo to:** Mike O’Connor

**From:** Xavier Arcamo

**Subject:** Xavier Arcamo, *Waterfall of Sand*

Xavier Arcamo is a Canadian writer, looking to publish his first novel entitled *Waterfall of Sand*. His manuscript fits within the fiction genre; specifically, low-fiction. This differentiates it from J.R.R Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, and likens it to G.R.R Martin’s *A Song of Ice and Fire* series. Xavier is an avid scholar of history, with considerable knowledge from ancient history to the late 16th century. He created *Waterfall of Sand* and applied his background knowledge in the story’s worldbuilding. People who enjoy learning about history will recognize historical inspirations in *Waterfall of Sand*, all of them employed in interesting and creative ways.

The fiction genre makes up a massive chunk of the book market, and narrowing it down to the fantasy sub-genre doesn’t trim down the number of works that *Waterfall of Sand* will compete against enough. However, this work does fit a narrow niche in the market, and there, it will perform well with relatively less competition.

Currently, the top fiction books on Amazon include *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas, R.A. Salvatore’s *Archmage*, and a number of the *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling. Most of the books on the top list draw heavily from fantasy tropes and little from actual history. Most stories follow the Tolkien formula of elves, dwarves, orcs, and magic. And when real historical inspiration is used, they usually come from well-known and frankly, overused events like the Hundred Years War, and the Norman Invasion. It is hard to find well-researched (and well executed in terms of historical inspiration) fantasy works in the market. Often, well-researched fiction titles are found mainly in the historical fiction genre such as Diana Gabaldon’s *Outlander* series. Some actual fantasy titles are poorly-executed in terms of historical references and inspiration. Such titles include David Drake’s *Chronicles of Carce* series, where many elements of his works are mere direct analogs of real historical places and events.

The historical references in *Waterfall of Sand* are subtle yet deep, and it can be compared to the *A Song of Ice and Fire* series and others such as *Hide Your Ears* by Joel Jamieson and most of Harry Turtledove’s works. *Waterfall of Sand* can also be compared to Robert Silverberg’s (Multiple winner of Hugo and Nebula Awards) works such as *Roma Eterna* and *The Face of the Waters*.

Because of these similarities, *Waterfall of Sand* will appeal to readers who have enjoyed the abovementioned titles.

Currently, the manuscript has 32 chapters and 298 pages in total. As discussed with the author, we have decided on a 5”x7” trim size along with front matter, back matter, and blank pages. There are no illustrations within the book. The front and back cover will be color coated and will feature cover art to be commissioned to an artist.

The writing in the manuscript is decent, although there will have to be major editing for tone. The author has written many academic papers and the detached, straightforward, and robotic tone required in academia is present in many sections of the manuscript. In terms of grammar mistakes and other minor errors, there are few corrections to be made, comparatively.

I will have to consult with Mr. Arcamo to discuss the cover art. Once the editorial plan has been approved and implemented, I will also meet with him to discuss the changes made to the manuscript.

We will need to hire an artist to create the cover art for the book. The price of commission should be in the range of $45-$120.

I recommend that the editorial plan suggested here be approved and that we move forward with the project as indicated.