

SHIVA RUPAYA VISHNAVE
PART I — THE WARHORSE AND THE DANCER

S.S. KRISHNA KIRITI

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Mayasabha Publications · 2026

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PART I

THE WARHORSE AND THE DANCER



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BOOK INFORMATION

Title: Shiva Rupaya Vishnave — Part I: The Warhorse and the Dancer

Author: S.S. Krishna Kiriti

Publisher: Mayasabha Publications

Genre: Literary Historical Fiction

Setting: 8th-16th century, South India

Word Count: 93,684 words

Page Count: 347 pages

Trim Size: 6 × 9 inches

Paperback ISBN: 978-81-687604-0-0

Ebook ISBN: 978-81-687604-2-4

Price: ₹599

Release Date: 20th August 2026

Cover Design: Devanshi Mitruka

Special Feature: Contains an original song composed by Mani Sharma, sung by S.P. Balasubrahmanyam — scan QR code inside

SYNOPSIS

The Frame

Emperor Sri Krishnadevaraya, the greatest ruler of Vijayanagara, returns from three years of victorious war unable to feel his own victory. His new queen, Annapurna Devi — daughter of the enemy he defeated — attempted to kill him on their wedding night. Though he survived, the attempt shattered something medicine, priests, and counsel cannot cure. Into this desolation arrives a lone dancer from Kuchipudi, who claims his story holds the only cure. The dancer begins an epic tale that travels backward through eight centuries.

8th Century — The Stone and the Tribe

A nameless sculptor, drunk and intending to die, stumbles into a cave and carves a goddess — Ammavaru, the Mother — from an uncarved stone, leaving her left hand and right foot unfinished. He dies at the pond below. Years later, a wandering tribe discovers the cave and builds a village around it. When Adi Shankaracharya arrives and witnesses their rituals of blood sacrifice and fire-walking, he halts them: "A mother does not need her children to bleed." He persuades them to re-carve Ammavaru into Lord Shiva, places a Sri Chakra at the entrance to ensure the Mother is never truly gone, and walks away. The community, deprived of its raw devotion, quietly disperses. The temple is left standing in the jungle. Waiting.

11th–12th Century — The Twin Kings

In a devoutly Vaishnava kingdom, the queen dies giving birth to twins. The royal priest Jagannatha Charya discovers a blue Shaiva birthmark on the firstborn and demands his execution. The king complies — but the guard dies of snakebite before the burial is complete, and the infant is rescued by a traveling dance troupe. Their leader, Venkatapati, names him Siddendra and raises him among them. The surviving twin, Ugra Narasimha, ascends the throne at twenty-six, haunted by ancestral shame. Siddendra grows into the most mesmerizing dancer on the peninsula — his face split between a burn scar and his blue birthmark, his art carrying something that makes audiences forget reality. When he kills a soldier to protect his friend Bhadra, the troupe exiles him.

The Kingdom at War With Itself

Ugra Narasimha issues a radical decree granting religious freedom to his Shaiva subjects, wiping the Vaishnava namam from his own brow and drawing Shiva's ash lines in its place. Three successive wars follow — waged by Veera Varahasya, a neighboring king who has spent fifty years burning Shaiva territories in revenge for his father's death. The second war is nearly lost until the queen, Hamsa Nandini, secretly summons her Shaiva father Rudrasena, who arrives with a hundred and forty elephants and dies on the field that afternoon. Cornered by impossible mathematics, Ugra revokes the freedom decree. His Raj Guru Narayana Shastri takes the king's ceremonial sword and ends his own

life in the king's arms, catching the king's falling tear in his hand as he dies. The third war brings military victory and ideological defeat: Veera Varahasya dies with a smile, the freedom decree broken, the Shaiva idols at the bottom of the sea.

The Temple on the Hill — The Return

Siddendra arrives at the capital as an anonymous refugee. On the holiest night of the Shaiva calendar, he climbs the last uncleared temple on the highest of seven hills and confronts the king at the summit. He invokes a royal promise made earlier: "You said you would grant me anything. I never asked then. I am asking now. Give me this temple." Trapped between a sacred vow and a political oath, Ugra makes the only compromise remaining: the stone Shiva is renamed Vaikuntheswara — a Vaishnava title on a Shaiva form — governed by seven immutable edicts. The sculptor's chisel strikes that night. The two brothers never know they share the same blood. The emperor, healed by the dancer's story, descends to the dungeons where his queen has been imprisoned since their wedding night, sits on the cold cell floor, and offers her an unconditional choice. She extends her hand. Together they climb the seven hills on bare feet, shaved heads bowed, and stand before the deity whose true and bloody origin has been erased from memory.

"The novel ends with the echo of a chisel striking stone, a crowd chanting a new name, a king weeping into history's first great compromise, and the unnamed bond between two brothers who lived and died without ever knowing they shared the same blood."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



S.S. Krishna Kiriti studied Electrical and Electronics Engineering before a story changed his direction entirely. A postgraduate degree in Film and Media from Annapurna International School of Film and Media took him into Telugu cinema, where he has spent eight years working as a screenwriter and assistant director.

Cinema is a collaborative art form, and he respects that deeply. But he learned something over those eight years: once a writer hands a story over, it passes through many hands, many voices, many creative decisions. Somewhere in that process, the original voice often gets suppressed. Not out of malice. Simply because that is how the medium works.

Some stories cannot survive that process. Some stories need to be told exactly as they were imagined — exactly as they were felt.

Shiva Rupaya Vishnave first arrived when he was sixteen years old. That story gave him the courage to enter cinema in the first place, to spend sixteen years learning how to tell it. It took every one of those years to bring it to the page in the form it deserved.

The Warhorse and the Dancer is his debut novel. He publishes under Mayasabha Publications, the imprint he founded to ensure that the stories demanding complete honesty would always have a home.

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ABOUT MAYASABHA PUBLICATIONS

Mayasabha Publications is an independent literary imprint founded by S.S. Krishna Kiriti to give complete creative honesty a permanent home.

The name Mayasabha comes from the great hall of illusions built by the demon architect Maya in the Mahabharata — a palace so extraordinary that even kings could not tell water from stone, reflection from reality. The name carries the belief that literature, at its finest, does the same thing: it builds a world so complete, so internally truthful, that the reader forgets they are reading and begins, for a while, to live inside it.

Mayasabha Publications exists for stories that demand to be told in a single voice, without compromise, without the dilution of collaborative processes that other mediums require. It was founded on the conviction that South Indian history, mythology, and culture carry literary potential that has not yet been fully realised in English-language fiction — and that the stories emerging from this tradition deserve the same precision and ambition that the tradition itself demands.

The Shiva Rupaya Vishnave Trilogy is the first major work published under this imprint.

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WHY THIS NOVEL IS UNIQUE

REVERSE CHRONOLOGY

The trilogy is structured in deliberate reverse chronological order — Book One shows consequences, Book Two shows causes, Book Three shows origins. Each book retroactively recontextualises the one before it. What appears as fate in Book One reveals itself as a decision in Book Two. What appears as a character flaw reveals itself as a wound in Book Three. This structure is not a stylistic device. It is the story's moral argument: we judge people by what they do. We rarely know why they do it.

EIGHT CENTURIES OF HISTORY

The trilogy spans eight centuries of South Indian history — from the 8th century to the 16th — tracing a single wound across three generations of kings and three theological wars. Very few English-language literary fictions have attempted this scope within the Deccan historical tradition at this level of narrative and emotional precision.

LITERARY HISTORICAL FICTION

This is not historical adventure fiction. It is literary fiction that happens to be set in history. The prose style prioritises interiority, emotional truth, and structural complexity over spectacle. The result is a novel that reads as contemporary literary fiction while being rooted entirely in a specific historical and cultural tradition.

SOUTH INDIA — AN UNDERREPRESENTED WORLD

The dominant tradition of Indian historical fiction in English has focused largely on the Mughal era and North India. The Vijayanagara Empire, the Deccan kingdoms, and the Vaishnava-Shaiva theological conflicts of South India remain almost entirely unexplored in English literary fiction. This trilogy enters that space with the seriousness it deserves.

KUCHIPUDI AND THE ARTS AS ARGUMENT

The classical dance form of Kuchipudi is not decorative in this novel. It is the vehicle through which the trilogy's central theological argument is made — that beauty and devotion are inseparable, and that a man can be changed by a story told through a dancer's body. The arts are not background. They are the mechanism of the plot.

THE VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE

The Vijayanagara Empire at the height of its power under Sri Krishna Devaraya was one of the wealthiest and most culturally sophisticated kingdoms in the world. It has received almost no serious English literary attention. This novel treats it with the depth and specificity it has always deserved.

ORIGINAL SONG WITHIN THE TEXT

The novel contains an original Telugu song composed by Mani Sharma and sung by S.P. Balasubrahmanyam — accessible via QR code within the printed book. This integration of music into literary narrative is unprecedented in Indian English fiction.

TRILOGY OVERVIEW

BOOK ONE — THE WARHORSE AND THE DANCER

Early 16th century Vijayanagara. Emperor Sri Krishna Devaraya returns from war unable to feel his own victory. When doctors and priests fail him, a Kuchipudi dancer offers him an unusual cure: a story. The story journeys backward through eight centuries, following a forgotten sculptor, a wandering tribe, kings, warriors, and the three older men — Veera Varahasya, Rudrasena and Vaikunthanatha — whose histories the young king Ugra Narasimha does not yet fully understand.

Status: Complete — 360 pages, 90,000 words

Release: 20th August 2026

BOOK TWO — THE BURNING INHERITANCE

A prequel to Book One. The fathers of Book One's central characters — Rudrasena, Vaikunthanatha, and Veera Varahasya — are young men now, and the wound that shaped them all is still being made. Three kingdoms, three kings, three choices. What seemed like character in Book One reveals itself as inheritance in Book Two.

Status: Draft complete — in revision

BOOK THREE — THE NAMELESS SOLDIER

The origin. Two kings — Veera Anantha and Maha Simha — and the theological war with Prataparudra that set half a decade in motion. The friendship that should have been the strongest thing in both their kingdoms. The betrayal that was not what it appeared to be. The nameless soldier who was never nameless at all.

Status: Draft complete

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

The trilogy is told in reverse chronological order. The reader encounters the consequence first, then the cause, then the origin. The timeline below shows the historical periods in the order they actually occurred — oldest to newest — to help orient new readers before they enter the story.

THE ORIGIN — BOOK THREE: THE NAMELESS SOLDIER

◆ **10th–11th century** — Two kings — Veera Anantha and Maha Simha — and their theological war with Prataparudra, a Shaiva king whose devotion becomes something no boundary can contain. A friendship that should have been unbreakable. A betrayal that was not what it appeared to be. The wound that sets two centuries of consequences in motion. This is where everything begins, though the reader arrives here last.

THE INHERITANCE — BOOK TWO: THE BURNING INHERITANCE

◆ **11th–12th century** — One generation after the origin. The sons of Veera Anantha, Maha Simha and Prathapa Rudra — Veera Varahasya, Vaikunthanatha, and Rudrasena — carry their fathers' wounds into the next war. Three people shaped by the same catastrophe into three completely different responses. Their choices become the inheritance that Book One's characters are born into. The reader meets these men at the end of their lives in Book One. Book Two shows them at the beginning.

The Consequence — Book One: The Warhorse and the Dancer

◆ **8th century** — Within the story-within-the-story: a nameless sculptor carves a goddess in a cave. A wandering tribe builds the village of Kuchipudi around her. Adi Shankaracharya arrives and transforms the goddess into Lord Shiva. The temple is left standing in the jungle.

◆ **11th–12th century** — Within the story-within-the-story: the twin kings Ugra Narasimha and Siddendra — brothers who never know they share the same blood — fight the ideological war that the origin set in motion and reach the only compromise the hill will allow.

◆ **Early 16th century** — The frame narrative. Emperor Sri Krishna Devaraya of the Vijayanagara Empire, broken by three years of war, receives a dancer from Kuchipudi who carries a forbidden story eight centuries old. The consequence of everything that came before arrives here, in this court, in this listening king.

Book One contains all three periods within a single reverse-chronological frame. Books Two and Three each travel further back to reveal the layers beneath. The trilogy does not ask the reader to read in historical order. It asks the reader to read in the order of understanding — consequence first, then

cause, then origin — because that is the order in which human beings actually encounter the wounds of history.

"Most historical fiction tells you where the fire started and then shows you the burning. This trilogy shows you the burning first, then takes you back to find the match."

BOOK SPECIFICATIONS

Format: Paperback

Trim Size: 6 × 9 inches

Page Count: 347 pages

Word Count: Approximately 93,684 words

Paper: Cream offset

Cover: Full colour, matte laminate

Paperback ISBN: 978-81-687604-0-0

Ebook ISBN: 978-81-687604-2-4

MRP: ₹599

Trade Discount: 40%

Returns: Non-returnable

Publisher: Mayasabha Publications

Release Date: 20th August 2026

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