

Mengxi Seeley and Shadow Mountain Publishing release unique new novel — 'Silk and Sensibility'

Novel moves Jane Austen classic to 16th-century China

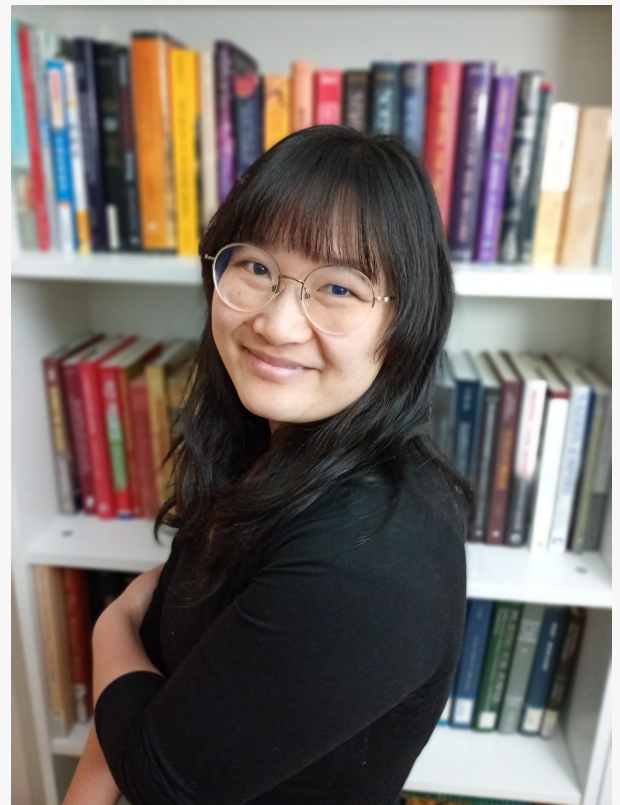
SALT LAKE CITY, UT, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Author [Mengxi Seeley](#) and [Shadow Mountain Publishing](#) have released their first collaboration, "Silk and Sensibility," a retelling of Jane Austen's "Sense and Sensibility" set in Ming-dynasty China.

Ailin and Meilin are sisters navigating love, family expectations and the complicated rules of 16th-century Chinese society. After their father's death leaves the family in a precarious financial position, the sisters face very different questions about marriage, duty and what they are willing to risk for love.

Ailin is cautious and conscious of her responsibility to her family, while Meilin is more outspoken. Their contrasting approaches echo Austen's original sisters, while giving Seeley room to explore the expectations placed on women in Ming-dynasty China.

For Seeley, a 1.5-generation immigrant to the United States from China, the book is also a chance to write the kind of story she wished she could have read growing up. "When I was young, I was sad that there were virtually no Chinese girls as main characters in historical love stories with happy endings," Seeley said. "Now, it feels amazing being able to add a little more happiness to the world with 'Silk and Sensibility.'"

Seeley's connection to Austen stretches back to her teenage years. "I also have younger siblings, so I especially loved Austen's 'Sense and Sensibility,'" she said. "Writing a retelling means that I get to share with readers my love and interpretation of 'Sense and Sensibility,' but set in a completely different time and place."



Mengxi Seeley

Seeley came to fiction by way of scholarship. Most of her previously published work consists of English translations of academic articles by Chinese historians, and her studies at Brigham Young University and Stanford University helped prepare her to create the historical setting for the novel. "My translation work, and my academic studies at Brigham Young University and Stanford, helped me learn a lot about Asian history, which was necessary to fleshing out the world of 16th-century China," she said.

Historical fiction also gave the author freedoms her academic work did not. "I got to add a lot more emotion, as well as write the endings the way I wanted, featuring the triumph of true love over all challenges," Seeley added.

"Silk and Sensibility" earned a coveted starred review from Booklist, which praised Seeley's ability to honor the framework of Austen's original while creating something distinctive in its 16th-century Chinese setting. Booklist recommended the novel to readers of Jane Austen, Lisa See and Amy Tan.

Seeley hopes the different culture and historical setting ultimately highlight something familiar. "If readers only remember one thing about 'Silk and Sensibility,' I hope it's the knowledge that no matter how exotic a culture might seem on the outside, the human heart's yearning for love is universal."

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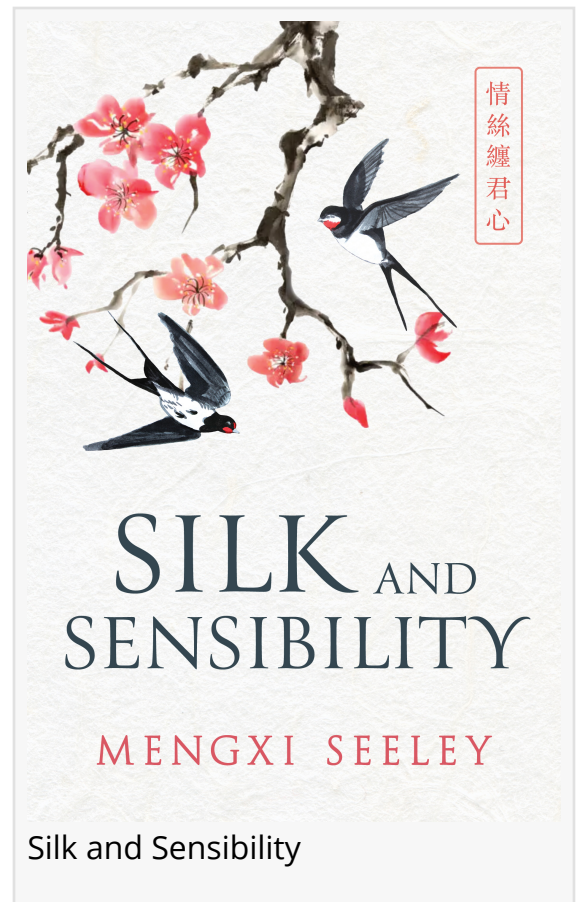
"Silk and Sensibility" is [available in all formats](#) wherever books are sold.

About Mengxi Seeley

Mengxi Seeley is a 1.5 generation immigrant born in China and raised in Utah. She has an MA in East Asian Studies

from Stanford University and a BA in international relations from Brigham Young University. After working for many years as an academic translator, she now writes novels inspired by historical research, but with fantastically happy endings. Her debut novel, *Silk and Sensibility* (Shadow Mountain, 2026) received a starred review from Booklist.

Mengxi actively participates in the Storymakers Conference, where she has taught as faculty and led the "Diversity Ink" group. When not writing, she enjoys reading, gardening, running, and over-analyzing movies with her family. She lives in Virginia with two little princesses and an absent-minded professor.



About the Publisher

Shadow Mountain is a general trade publisher of fiction and nonfiction. It is the publisher of the New York Times best-selling series "Fablehaven" and the sequel series "Dragonwatch" by Brandon Mull. It is also known for its Proper Romance® line of sweet romances. Nonfiction titles include cookbooks from popular bloggers Six Sisters' Stuff as well as the New York Times best-selling history book "7 Tipping Points that Saved the World." Best-selling fiction titles include Jason F. Wright's "Christmas Jars" — now a major motion picture — and the award-winning "The Rent Collector" by Camron Wright. Shadow Mountain cultivates stories worth telling, questions worth exploring and beauty worth sharing to improve the lives of families, children and society.

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