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Splendor in the Glass
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A Sense of Place

It is a little known fact, but Charleston, South Carolina is where the Ashley and Cooper Rivers come together to form the Atlantic Ocean. Ancestral pride runs deeper than either river, and unless one can prove one's forebears have lived in this genteel city since the 18th century, one is considered to be "from off."

Abigail Timberlake and the gang are definitely "from off." Nonetheless, they delight in Charleston's charms. The cobblestone streets, the colonial architecture, "Rainbow Row" of Porgy and Bess fame, the myriad of secret gardens, each with their own splashing fountain, horse-drawn carriages, spreading oaks festooned with Spanish Moss — this is a city quite unlike any other. Which other municipality can boast of a public park where 49 pirates were hanged in one year? Or a headless ghost that is fond of crawling into bed with unsuspecting female tourists? Throw in some of the finest restaurants in the country, and the finest fresh shrimp anywhere, and it's no wonder that God takes his vacations in what is fondly called the Holy City.

Rich in history, Charleston is where the Late Unpleasantness began. When the Civil War submarine, the Hunley, was raised from its ocean grave and transported into the harbor, grieving Confederate "widows" lined the banks. The women wore authentic period dresses, complete with hoop skirts. For many, the tears were real.

To be called an eccentric in Charleston is a badge of honor. Abigail's mother, Mozella, and best friend, Calamity Jane, certainly qualify. Although they are "from off" in more ways than one, the ladies are well-mannered. Good manners will get one anywhere in Charleston but the top — which, of course, is reserved for folks with 300-year-old pedigrees. After all, Charleston is consistently named among the top ten most polite cities in the nation.

Abigail is thrilled to have purchased a new Den of Antiquity in this historic city, on fabulous King Street. Less thrilling is the fact that trouble seems to have followed her from North Carolina like a dog behind a meat wagon. In *SPLENDOR IN THE GLASS* our plucky petite heroine faces her greatest challenge yet — that of keeping one tiny step ahead of a very determined killer.