

***By the Rivers of Babylon*** is Mary Glickman's latest novel. The fascinating story begins in South Carolina in June of 1997. The plot revolves around Abigail and Joe Becker, a Jewish couple from Boston. Aged somewhere in their 30's, they have been married seven years. Abigail is a schoolteacher and Joe is a successful children's author. They have come to spend the summer on Sweetgrass Island in a lovely home that Abigail inherited from her great aunt. If they enjoy living on the island, they might stay on past the summer.

Abigail, a beautiful woman, is described as "a marvel." She often has male admirers, but they usually fade away when they realize Abigail is interested only in friendship. Abigail instantly attracts the attention of Billy Euston, an older man known as both the island's acclaimed BBQ pitmaster and leading lothario. Billy befriends the couple, but his sights are set solely on Abigail. Will Abigail succumb to his charm?

Abigail and Joe settle into the island life. They enjoy the live music scene, become acquainted with the locals, buy guns, and learn to shoot them. As they adjust to the intricacies of Southern life, Abigail and Joe are stunned by the antisemitism they encounter on their idyllic island. They wonder how much they really know about the people they have gotten close to. The couple forges ahead with trying to educate their new friends about Judaism and decide to make Sweetgrass Island their permanent home. Both resolutions have shocking consequences.

Glickman describes her plot as having "several love stories, a lust story, and a murder investigation." These themes, along with the current of antisemitism, are what make ***By the Rivers of Babylon*** a novel of great depth.