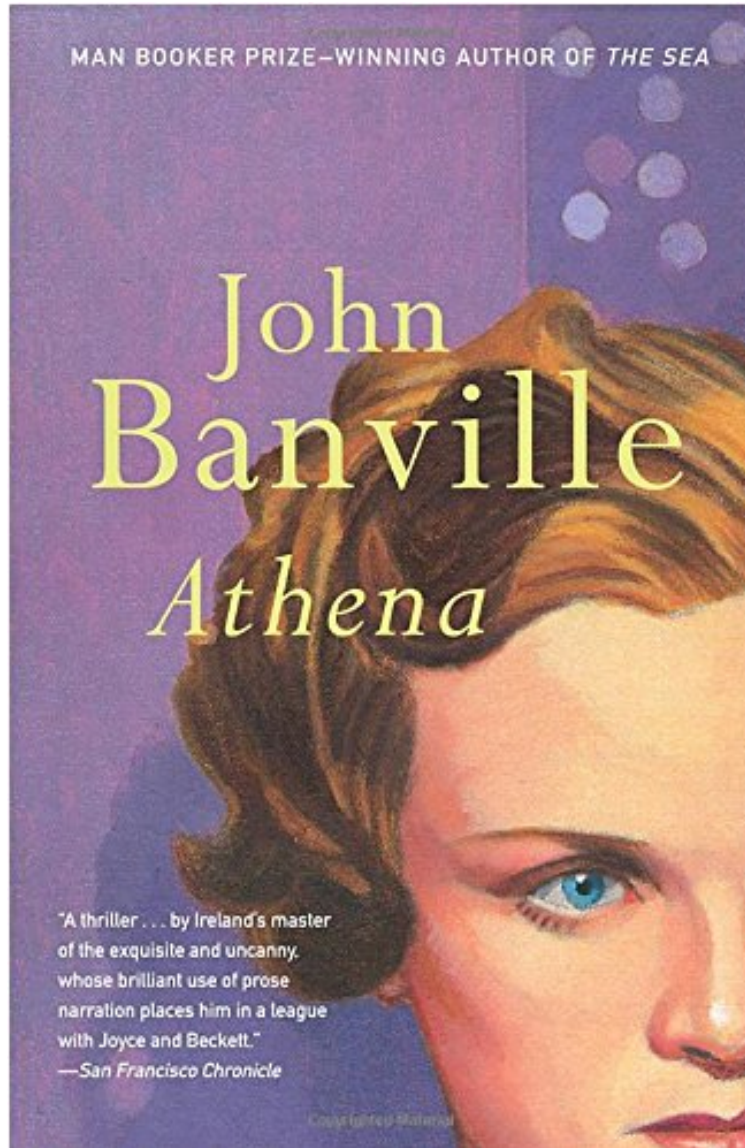


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Athena

John Banville

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John Banville : Athena before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Athena:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A good writer that cannot write a good book. By Java Dude Banville can undoubtedly spin words into spun sentences. You'll have to be content with just that, as he has little else to offer here. The plot, if one exists, is thin as a mist. Sometimes you'll be tempted to invent one of your own and play along with Banville in order to finish the book. Else, you'll weary of this cloying wordsmith. Athena lacks balance in the

extreme. Nonetheless, if you enjoy reading sentences for the sheer wonder of their translucence, and don't mind the fact they don't form a recognizable story, you may find the struggle of sticking with this book all the way to the end worthwhile. I did finish the entire book, but only because I refused to surrender to the author. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. John Banville is the greatest writer drawing breath today By Daniel D. Morgan John Banville is the greatest writer drawing breath today. The prose of *Athena* is utterly intoxicating, the verbal equivalent of a cask strength single malt. A seamless companion piece to *A Book of Evidence*, and though the described paintings and their fathers are fictitious, the strokes of the Brueghels and Vermeer flow through every passage. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Dissapointment By martin alberto I didn't enjoy reading it. I was dissapointed and exhausted by the vague topics entertained and the somewhat dense writing. I stopped reading it short of the last third of the book. I loved the previous two novels by this author

From the internationally acclaimed author of *The Book of Evidence* and *Ghosts* comes a mesmerizing novel that is both a literary thriller and a love story as sumptuously perverse as *Lolita*. "A strange and dreamlike book . . . Banville has a breathtaking style."--*Boston Globe*.

From Publishers Weekly Irish novelist Banville offers a literary thriller in which his guilt-plagued narrator is drawn into both an art theft and a passionate affair with a mysterious woman. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Art historian Morrow is hired by small-time crook Morden to authenticate and catalog a cache of eight paintings stored in a decrepit house. As Morden and his seedy assistant, Francie, lead Morrow through the house, a delicious sense of impending menace is evoked by simple things: the rising staircase; a door standing ajar; an intense, bright light; and a watching dog. Morrow's brief glimpse through a crumbling wall of a woman's leg in stockings and black high heels is the beginning of his increasingly destructive sexual obsession with the woman, identified only as A. Irish writer Banville has created such a fantastic feeling of suspense and foreboding in his slightly surreal world?with hints that Morrow may be the same ex-convict narrator of his earlier novels, *The Book of Evidence* (LJ 3/1/90) and *Ghosts* (LJ 9/15/93)?that the somewhat anticlimactic ending is a letdown. But Banville's sure way with language, style, and character development make this essential for literary collections. Highly recommended.?Patricia Ross, Westerville P.L., Ohio Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Banville has a most distinctive and prodigious way with metaphor. His latest novel is narrated by a man for whom everything is like something else. Each of this narrator's sharply attuned sensory perceptions recalls earlier childhood memories, a whisper from his lover, or a vague piece of the past. He recollects his fateful story with strenuous precision, beginning by addressing his lost love in a sonorous, compelling voice: "If words can reach whatever world you may be suffering in, then listen, I have things to tell you." Memory can be unreliable, and he questions the relative truth of the fragmented, fateful events he presents. As an art expert with a criminal history, he is lured into authenticating ill-gotten paintings for a gang of underworld characters. His appraisals of these classically themed pictures echo, with critical detachment, a wild, doomed, duplicitous love affair he conducts in the house where he does his secret work. Only pieces of the picture are offered, and the story ends with its beginning. Loveless and duped by the criminals he was too apathetic to resist, the narrator continues his vague, existential drifting. His exacting recollections, oblique insights, and piercing hindsight result only in tragedy, not redemption. Deanna Larson