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Sinopsis

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Starred Review. A life quickly flames out in Flanagan's firebrand follow-up to 2002's acclaimed Gould's Book of Fish. Gina Davies, a 26-year-old nightclub pole dancer (referred to throughout as "the Doll"), leads a provincial life in Sydney, Australia, spends \$2,000 a month on clothes and is given to the occasional racist rant. But after a one-night stand with a man named Tariq, she turns on the TV and learns she's been pegged as the accomplice in an attempted terrorist attack on Sydney's Olympic stadium. She's instantly the most-wanted woman in Australia and the source of a raging tabloid media feeding frenzy led by sleazy TV journalist Richard Cody. The fast-paced narrative builds to a fittingly bloody crescendo, and Flanagan drops astutely cynical observations along the way (the Doll, for instance, "realized that her life was no longer what she made of it, but what others said it was"). A true page-turner as well as a timely, pithy critique of celebrity culture and the politics of fearmongering.