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Sinopsis

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Daniel Quinn, author of a series of detective pot-boilers, accepts an assignment as a real private investigator from a man who dials his phone number by mistake. His mission: to keep an eye on the man's father, a former linguistics professor who has spent time in jail for bizarre childrearing experiments. Quinn quickly loses track of both his client and the suspect, as well as his own apartment and belongings, and finally his identity. This metafictional mystery, reminiscent of Robbe-Grillet's anti-novel *The Erasers*, challenges conventional notions of character and plot. However, unless the remaining volumes of this projected trilogy provide more depth and substance, Austin's previous book, *The Invention of Solitude*, will probably remain the best introduction to his work.