Cooper, M. Thomas (Author)

The first thing that will probably come to mind when readers see the title of this book is Douglas Adams and his tongue-in-cheek answer to the “ultimate question” from The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy. Although rich in humor and wry observation, this unconventional thriller reads more like Kobo Abe or even Thomas Pynchon than it does Douglas Adams. Centered on the quest of George Olson to find his missing wife and daughter, the novel quickly moves away from standard thriller fare into a kind of total paranoid immersion, as Olson’s finds himself trying to navigate a baffling but compelling surrealistic landscape. For those looking for a formulaic, easy-to-follow crime novel, this isn’t it. The book is a meandering, infuriating, and ultimately wonderful journey that lands its main character—as well as its readers—on strange shores of mind and spirit, all shaped from iterations of the mysterious number 42. Highly recommended for adventurous readers willing to expand the boundaries of genre fiction.

— Elliott Swanson