

Sci-fi Thriller Misses its Mark

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are taking a new designer drug, Synchronic. It's either a hallucinogen that makes you think you can go back in time or a magical pill that actually does the deed. Steve has a unique interest in the drug and downs a pill. Then Dennis' teen daughter Brianna (Ally Ioannides, TV's Parenthood) goes missing. The last time anyone saw her she was high on the stuff. Steve tries to find her, and his experiment with the drug starts him on that journey.

Initial scenes are a huge disappointment. Sequences fit together decently, however, what's on view is a miss for showcasing supernatural or technological wonders.

The basic story could take audiences places—physically, spiritually, emotionally—nut it doesn't.

The friendship between the two men is more interesting than the main event. Mackie and Dornan create a convincing brotherhood, not a shallow alliance. It feels like Steve genuinely loves his friend's daughter and that Dennis is completely concerned about his buddy's welfare. It's a nice bromance.

The drug itself does have some allure. Drop it and it affects the pineal gland, a small endocrine gland in the center of the brain, sometimes referred to as the "third eye," due to its sensitivity to light. The gland receives data from the environment regarding the light

outside, affecting the flow of melatonin, which modulates sleep patterns.

This biological part of the setup is kind of fascinating. Though audiences aren't looking for a science lesson, exploring the data behind the drug might have added some depth to a very thin script.

Mackie is respectable in a mediocre movie. He's been more compelling (The Hurt Locker), magnetic (Captain America: Civil War) and edgy (The Hate U Give) in other films. Dornan may never escape the smarmy shadow of the 50 Shades... franchise.

Dwight Brown is the film critic for the National Newspaper Publishers Association, the Black Press.

Tensions Boil into Unrest

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agents clothed in riot gear surrounded a building — warning people that trespassing on federal property would be subject to arrest.

Authorities declared an unlawful assembly and ordered protesters to disperse. At least one person appeared to have been detained.

Family and friends had described Peterson as a former high school football player and the proud father of an infant daughter.

In a statement, Clark County Sheriff Chuck Atkins said a joint city-county narcotics task force was conducting an investigation when they confronted a man who was suspected of selling illegal drugs in a motel parking lot. The person produced a handgun and the officers backed off, investigators said. A short time later, three Clark County deputies fired their pistols at the man. They did not say if the suspect fired a handgun that was found at the scene, making it unclear what happened just before the shooting.

Mac Smiff, an organizer of

Black Lives Matter protests in Portland, said he knows Peterson's sister and spent more than five hours at the scene.

"There was a ton of grief, a ton of grief. He's 21 and has a baby, an infant," Smiff said. "They're not sure what happened, why the encounter took place. Everyone was extremely disheveled and confused."

Jake Thompson, a high school acquaintance of Peterson, said

he took photos at the wedding of Peterson's parents in Portland in 2018. On Friday, he posted a black-and-white photo of Peterson in a suit and bow tie as he flashed a big grin.

"I didn't sleep much last night," he said Friday.

Peterson played football at Union High School in Vancouver, loved sports of any kind and was a big personality who was known and liked by everyone at school, Thompson said.

--Associated Press contributed to this story



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