Screenplay Readers:

>This is a complex and serpentine thriller that belongs in a unique sub-genre of military veterans experiencing psychic phenomena due to post-traumatic stress.

The protagonist loses his grip on the fabric of reality while struggling to cling to his humanity. Adam Tumbler is one of those lost souls, a broken man who we first see huddled in his pickup truck in the pounding rain beneath an unidentified freeway. It is a moody and effective introduction recalling the antiheroes of "Taxi Driver" and "Nightcrawler." We piece together fragments and flashbacks to build a picture of Adam as a former military grunt, outsider to the salvage business, a lonely, separated father and finally we see behind his multilayered façade, he is a journalist.

True to the genre, there are plenty of action set-pieces. Not only is there the gory spectacle of men preying on the roadside carnage, but there are also graphic and disturbing vignettes of Adam's Iraq War memories - and Ben's, of Vietnam. And there are twists and turns of organized crime capers, as the Senator's accomplices terrorizing and assassinate opponents. These scenes are evocatively described and liberally paced without excessive verbiage, and are presented on the page with good command of screenplay craft. The story delves into some heady concepts - Q-level conspiracies of secret military medical experiments and parapsychology mind games - but it doesn't hang around.

As Adam's lens into this netherworld, one can easily imagine the snarling bear-like Ben played with the leonine grandeur of Stacey Keach or John Voight. Adam is moodier and more saturnine. The two women in his life offer hope, with Adam's daughter Emily standing as his single 'sunflower' ray of light; and the wounded diner waitress, Memphis, hovering on the perimeter of a flirtation. We see some real humanity in Adam when he bonds with Ben and they scream 'Fuck off!' at the world that has treated them so unfairly. It is a sweet, eccentric moment in an otherwise unrelenting thriller.