

THE KILLING MAN

by

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EXT. HIGH PLAIN - DAY

A naked, serene landscape. Dead wild flowers sway from a light breeze.

THE SKY

is a sea of brilliant blue, but ominous clouds soon swallow the sun.

Now the distant rumble of HORSES grows louder on this harsh, boundless terrain, moves closer... closer...

FOUR HORSEMEN

Thunder ahead at an almost unreal speed. They are spread out wide, silhouetted by the darkened sky, like the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN/SHALLOW VALLEY - DAY

A crude leather holster sheaths a

WALKER COLT .45 REVOLVER

which is partly concealed by a canvas longcoat, hangs on the belt of a

LONE HORSEMAN

who rides at a sluggish pace, a Stetson brim obscures his face, a Coat of Arms is pinned to his lapel.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN - DAY

The four horsemen ride out ahead of the storm, spur their horses with brutal force. Hooves tear at the earth, hurl it in parcels through the air.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN/SHALLOW VALLEY - DAY

The lone horseman continues, his focus still on the ground.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN - DAY

The four horsemen slow their horses to a gallop.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN/SHALLOW VALLEY - DAY

The lone horseman stops suddenly, eyes FRESH HORSE TRACKS in the ground.

A lightning flash reveals JOHN MORRISON (35), handsome, rugged face, eyes could bore holes in steel.

He pulls a sawed-off shotgun from a saddle bag, pats his horse's neck. She takes off like a bat out of Hell.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN - DAY

Clouds roll in black waves, lightning scorches the Heavens.

THE FOUR HORSEMEN

ride on at a leisurely gait, unaware of

MORRISON

who advances on them from behind, his longcoat lashes behind him like a phantom's cape. He works the shotgun pump with one hand, repeats.

A HORSEMAN

wipes his neck with a white handkerchief, glances back, eyes widen as he sees

MORRISON

who rides at breakneck speed. A DISSONANT ARMY BUGLE SCREAMS (o.s.) in short bursts, as is playing off the storm's erratic energy.

THE HORSEMAN

who spurs his horse, frantic.

HORSEMAN

Christ almighty. Go. Go.

The other horseman follow his lead.

MORRISON

is only yards behind them. He levels the shotgun, FIRES.

THE FIRST HORSEMAN

is struck in the back by the blast. Dead man now.

THE SECOND HORSEMAN

points his pistol behind him, attempts to steady it.

MORRISON

UNLOADS the second shotgun barrel and

THE SECOND HORSEMAN

is launched forward off his horse, his guts stomped into mush by the animal.

MORRISON

puts the shotgun away, reveals the Walker Colt, spins it, FIRES.

THE THIRD HORSEMAN

jerks forward, blood sprays from his chest. He grabs his horse's neck, they fall to the ground.

MORRISON

swerves to avoid them, loses ground on

THE FOURTH HORSEMAN

with the white handkerchief, who escapes around a bend.

EXT. FIR TREE GROVE - DAY

Morrison squints from the rain, scans the trees.

The fourth horseman hides among them, aims a pistol, hand shakes like crazy, nerves all the way.

FOURTH HORSEMAN

(whispers)

Goddamm.

Morrison sees him, raises the Walker Colt.

The horseman squeezes the trigger, FIRES.

Morrison falls off his horse, gets off TWO SHOTS anyway, tries to pull himself back up, but the pain is too much.

INT. LARGE CAVE - NIGHT

The shirtless, chiseled Morrison pulls a knife from a fire. He bites down on a piece of rawhide, digs the blade into his bullet wound.

INT. LARGE CAVE - MINUTES LATER

He wraps his arm. A HORSE CLOMPING (o.s.) stirs his interest.

EXT. LARGE CAVE - NIGHT

He eyes the darkness, listens. All is quiet now.

EXT. SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS - DAY

He finds the horseman's blood-stained handkerchief, lines something up with his hand. Now he stands up, strokes his horse's neck.

MORRISON

He went West.

EXT. SACRAMENTO VALLEY - DAY

He rides through this vast, fertile landscape, dismounts for a closer look at

FLAT WHITE ROCKS

which are splattered with blood.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

SUPER: "San Francisco, 1849. The Gold Rush."

The city stands in the distance. White tents cover the hills. Steam ships, clippers clog the bay.

A CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT

Morrison rides past it, eyes vultures circling overhead.

EXT. RIVER BED - DAY

A FORTY-NINER uses a 'California cradle' to sort useless dirt from riches (or maybe Fools Gold). Morrison stops.

MORRISON

I'm looking for a man. Should've come through here in the past day.

FORTY-NINER

A lot of men come through here.

MORRISON

This one has a bullet in him.

INT. DILAPIDATED 19TH CENTURY BARN - DUSK

He kicks the door open, shotgun raised. Murky daylight filters in.

REMNANTS OF A CAMPFIRE

A canvas "Wells Fargo" bag sits nearby. He opens it to reveal stacks of cash. Now his eyes move to

PILE OF HUMAN ENTRAILS

Before he can even react, the GROUND SHAKES from a small Earthquake. He braces himself. Now it ends.

He listens to a LOW CREAK from overhead, glances up at

THE FOURTH HORSEMAN

who hangs from the rafters by a length of stained-black rope. His throat is cut, his abdomen slashed open.

Morrison grips his shotgun, whips around.

MORRISON

Show yourself.

But there is no one around. He grabs the "Wells Fargo" bag.

EXT. DILAPIDATED 19TH CENTURY BARN - DUSK

He mounts his horse, glances back at the barn one more time, rides off.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Christmas wreaths decorate the walls. Men drink, laugh.

The bartender is BILL HUNT (35), prize-fighter frame, big knife in his belt. He eyes one drunk man shove another.

BILL HUNT  
I'll ask you to kindly kill each other outside.

The men ignore him, continue to fight.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Swinging doors burst open. The two men fall into the street, land at Morrison's feet. Bill Hunt steps out, smiles at him.

BILL HUNT  
Then I take it you got my telegram.

Morrison eyes the two beaten men, nods.

MORRISON  
It's good to see nothing's changed with you, Bill.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - MINUTES LATER

They sit together at a table. Bill Hunt pours whiskey into two shot glasses.

BILL HUNT  
I hear they held up every bank east of Kansas.

MORRISON  
They came pretty close.

BILL HUNT  
That bunch was trouble back in the War. I don't know what in hell made them volunteer.

MORRISON  
Moctezuma's Gold. Same reason a lot of men signed up to fight. Only there was no gold, just a lot of angry Mexicans.

Bill Hunt offers him a shot, he declines.

BILL HUNT  
Where will you go now, John?

Morrison glances around.

MORRISON  
You've done well for yourself.

BILL HUNT  
I got myself shit rotten rich  
serving rummies. Life could be a  
lot worse.

Morrison sits back in his chair.

MORRISON  
I don't know where I'm headed. But  
I'm done bringing in bounties.

Bill Hunt looks surprised, belts back a shot.

BILL HUNT  
Well, there's plenty going on here.  
You might think about staying.

MORRISON  
If there's a reason to stay, I'll  
stay.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The dead horseman Morrison found is laid out on a buck board,  
which is pulled by horses.

It stops. Several men, visible from the waist down, dismount  
their horses, walk swiftly into:

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - CONTINUOUS

Sheriff BEN WALTER (50), large Gold ring, steps inside. JACK  
WALTER, his son (28), tall, wiry, and six deputies fan out  
around Bill Hunt, Morrison.

BEN WALTER  
I hate to break up your tea time,  
Hunt, but I got a man out there  
who's been cut to Hell and back.



BILL HUNT  
Then take him to a doctor.

BEN WALTER  
Afraid not. This one's dead. What's  
the fellow's name, Jackie?

JACK WALTER  
Wilkins. Dan Wilkins. He's one of  
them bank robbers from back east.

BEN WALTER  
I heard he came in here last night,  
and you told him he'd wish he was  
dead if he ever came back.

BILL HUNT  
He didn't come back, Ben. I guess  
your snitch left that part out.

He glares at DEPUTY "SMITTY" SMITH (28), a tall, muscular man  
with chiseled features.

DEPUTY SMITH  
Who you calling a snitch, boy?

JACK WALTER  
How would you like your fat head  
stuffed right up your ass, Hunt?

BILL HUNT  
Find me a man who can do it, Jack.

Jack steps toward him. He stands up. Ben steps between them,  
glares at Hunt.

BEN WALTER  
If I find out you killed him, I'll  
hang you right here. We'll have a  
drink to your goddam broken neck.

He eyes Morrison as he swaggers out, deputies in tow.

NORA HUNT (29) is quite pretty, walks with a noticeable limp.

NORA  
Bill, are you alright?

He drinks the second shot.

BILL HUNT  
Nora, would you fix Mr. Morrison a  
room? I need to step out.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Morrison sets the Walker Colt, bullets, and the sawed-off  
shotgun on a dresser. He is neat, precise.

Nora Hunt stands in the open doorway with bath towels.

NORA  
Will you be needing anything, Mr.  
Morrison?

He continues with his business, does not reply.

NORA (CONT'D)  
My brother rises late, but I have  
breakfast ready by seven. And don't  
mind the tremors. The earth just  
moves a little more out here.  
(off no reply)  
A set of manners would complement  
the guns nicely.

He turns to her, maybe a bit surprised.

MORRISON  
Thank you.

She sets the towels on a wash basin, satisfied.

He waits for her to go, loads a slug in the shotgun.

EXT. DESOLATE HILL - NIGHT

Bill Hunt stumbles around, drinks from a whiskey bottle.

A large man approaches him, a long-blade knife slides out of  
his coat sleeve.

Bill Hunt turns to him, flashes a drunken smile.

BILL HUNT  
What do you want?

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Morrison lies down, boots still on. His eyes become heavy.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE - NIGHT

A steady RAIN patters on the roof. Oil lamps illuminate several windows.

INT. QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE - SAME TIME

A younger Morrison (25) sits in a chair, reads a book by lamp light.

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN (23) snuggles on his lap, closes the book.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN  
Come to bed, John.

INT. BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Morrison leans over the woman, touches her stomach.

MORRISON  
I think it's a girl.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN  
What should we name her?

MORRISON  
Isabella. Just like her mama.

She starts to unbutton his shirt. He douses an oil lamp. Darkness. A FEMALE VOICE SCREAMS (o.s.).

END FLASHBACK

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - NIGHT

He grabs his Walker Colt off the dresser.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

He makes his way down a sloped roof, jumps down to the ground.

HIS HORSE

is spooked. He strokes her mane, eyes something nearby.

EXT. DESOLATE HILL - NIGHT

He walks past a CRACKLING CAMPFIRE, eyes Bill Hunt's whiskey bottle, pools of blood, now takes a knee.

A HORSE (o.s.) rides away. He looks over his shoulder, sees

BILL HUNT

Tied to a tree with stained-black rope. His throat, abdomen are slashed open like the horseman (Dan Wilkins).

He stands up.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Morrison carries Bill Hunt's body, sets him down on the front steps.

He hears the LEVER-ACTION of a rifle behind him, draws his Walker Colt in a heartbeat, whips around.

JACK WALTER

aims the rifle at his head.

JACK WALTER

I don't think you're that fast.

Morrison relents, lowers the pistol. Jack strikes him with the shotgun stock, staggers him. Strikes him again, harder.

Morrison hits the dirt, out cold.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Morrison is unconscious, cheek swollen. Candlelight flickers.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

The younger Morrison lights an oil lamp. The beautiful woman clutches his wrist, concerned.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Don't go.

He strokes her face.

MORRISON

It will be okay.

INT. QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/LIVING AREA - NIGHT

THREE BANDITS enter through the front door, knives drawn.

Morrison jumps one of them, throws a forearm, knocks him out.

The second bandit slashes his back.

Morrison grabs an iron skillet, smashes him across the head.  
The BEAUTIFUL WOMAN SCREAMS (o.s.).

INT. QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

She lies on the bed, her back to Morrison. The third bandit stands over her. She turns over now, her nightgown soaked with blood.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

John...

MORRISON

No.

He grabs a rifle propped in a corner, SHOOTS the bandit.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

His eyes open. Ben Walter emerges from the shadows.

BEN WALTER

I see the boy gave you a beating.  
He's got his mother's temper.

MORRISON

What did he get from you?

BEN WALTER

He got himself a badge... when the Rush started here I had two killings a day. Now I only got one a week, and that's because I don't take shit from nobody and everybody knows it. But you blow into town and I'm back to the bad old days.

MORRISON

I had no reason to kill Bill Hunt.

BEN WALTER

You had a reason to kill Wilkins.

MORRISON

He was wounded by me. No more.

BEN WALTER

I know who you are, Morrison. So go on back to whatever hell you're from. I'm making this a town for decent folks, not for mercenaries.

Jack Walter enters, smirks at Morrison.

BEN WALTER (CONT'D)

Your bail was paid. Now get out of my jail, or I'll have the boy close that other eye.

Morrison stands, eyes them.

MORRISON

I guess I was mistaken then.

BEN WALTER

How's that?

MORRISON

I thought you were the man of the family, Ben.

Jack lunges at him. Ben restrains him.

BEN WALTER

Go on, Jackie. Get out.

He leaves under protest. Ben hands Morrison the Walker Colt, business end pointed at him.

EXT. JAIL - NIGHT

Jack, Deputy Smith smoke cigarettes, watch Morrison leave.

JACK WALTER  
Shit, I know how I'd deal with him.

DEPUTY SMITH  
You think so?

Ben Walter appears in the doorway.

BEN WALTER  
Go on, Smitty. You don't need to hang around.

DEPUTY SMITH  
Hey, Jackie, you want to head on down to Rosie's?

BEN WALTER  
He ain't going nowhere. So you got all those whores to yourself.

Deputy Smith angrily tosses his cigarette down, walks on.

JACK WALTER  
Why do I have to stick around?

BEN WALTER  
Do what you're told.

JACK WALTER  
Goddamm.

BEN WALTER  
We have folks to answer to, boy. Get that through your head.

JACK WALTER  
Maybe those folks should be happy that two no-accounts ain't among the living.

Ben's eyes narrow, suspicious.

BEN WALTER  
What did you see over at Hunt's when he was all cut apart?

JACK WALTER  
It was real dark.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Morrison nears his door. Nora Hunt approaches him.

NORA  
Somebody should break Jack Walter's  
arms for what he did.

MORRISON  
I've seen worse.

NORA  
I told the deputies that you knew  
Bill from the War. They can be real  
threatening.

He pushes his door open.

NORA (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry about all of this.

MORRISON  
Good night.

He enters his room, closes the door.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

A LARGE MAN, dark clothes, black hat, face masked in shadow,  
eyes Morrison's window.

He scrapes a STONE FLINT, creates a flame, touches it to a  
thin cigar.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Morrison sits on the bed, touches his swollen cheek.

A "HOLY BIBLE" is on the night stand. He turns it face down.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - SAME TIME

The large man puffs the thin cigar, stands motionless.

MORRISON'S WINDOW

The light inside is extinguished.

He slips into the shadows, disappears.



INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - DAY

Morrison, shirtless, stands at a wash basin, wipes dried blood off his face.

A FAINT KNOCK (o.s.). He looks preoccupied, does not react.

Nora Hunt enters, he sees her in a mirror.

MORRISON  
Have you considered knocking?

She extends a bar of soap, he takes it.

NORA  
There are biscuits left from breakfast.

MORRISON  
I'm not hungry this morning.

NORA  
That makes two of us... and I did knock. Maybe you didn't hear it.

She sneaks a coy peak at him, leaves.

EXT. CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Blocks of plywood buildings extend away from San Francisco Bay to form the heart of this burgeoning city.

Storefronts include: dry goods, saloons, cafés, hardware stores. Sign on a building reads: "Alta California" (a newspaper).

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Morrison rides past a

GRAVEYARD

as two grave diggers toss the body of Dan Wilkins (the horseman) into an unmarked grave.

EXT. MARKET STREET - DAY

He dismounts in front of a nondescript building. Sign over the door reads: "WELLS FARGO & COMPANY"

INT. WELLS FARGO OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

He drops the canvas "Wells Fargo" bag on the counter. A BANK OFFICER stamps documents in a slow, machine-like manner.

MORRISON

This money needs to go to Edwin  
Forth in your Kansas City bank.

The bank officer does not look up.

BANK OFFICER

And... ?

MORRISON

You'll need to include a note.

BANK OFFICER

Sounds very important.

He stamps another document. Now he mutters to himself, walks at a snails pace away from the counter.

MORRISON

All his money is accounted for.

No reply. Morrison's patience is fading. The bank officer returns with a fountain pen, still does not look up.

BANK OFFICER

Come on then. What's the note  
regarding?

MORRISON

The Wilkins gang: I killed them.

He looks up now, Morrison winks.

INT. MERCANTILE SHOP - DAY

A SHOPKEEPER drops a sack of horse feed on a counter.

SHOPKEEPER

Ten pounds of feed. Best in the  
city. You got Ted's word on it.

Morrison looks through a window, sees Ben and Jack Walter leading a bound Chinese man down the street. Now he eyes the shopkeeper again.

MORRISON  
Best in the city, huh?

A LARGE MAN enters now, wears a black hat, coat. Only hints of his hideously scarred face are visible. He reaches into a glass jar full of thin cigars.

SCARRED MAN  
How much?

SHOPKEEPER  
Five cents apiece. That's one fine  
smoke alright. Real popular.

The scarred man tosses coins down, CLINKS another repeatedly on the counter.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)  
What brings you to town, friend?

SCARRED MAN  
Throw in one of those flints.

His eyes move to Morrison, who senses it. The shopkeeper is oblivious.

SHOPKEEPER  
We have a lot of folks coming and  
going now. It's not like the old  
days. Oh, no. But I do hope your  
business here has gone alright.

SCARRED MAN  
My business here isn't done.

He stops CLINKING the coin. Morrison touches his Walker Colt.

MORRISON  
I suggest you make your intentions  
clear.

The scarred man reaches into his coat, just as three CHILDREN enter through the front door.

CHILDREN (IN UNISON)  
Do you have licorice today?

SHOPKEEPER  
Why don't you step right up and  
let's see what we have.

## FEMALE CHILD

Did you see? They're hanging a  
Chinaman today.

The jubilant little ones, unaware, get right between Morrison  
and the scarred man.

The shopkeeper opens a jar full of black licorice sticks.

## SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)

(to both men, big smile)  
They just love this stuff.

Morrison, the scarred man are locked in a stare down. The  
shopkeeper realizes, smile disappears.

The scarred man turns now, exits. Morrison removes his hand  
from the Walker Colt, grabs the sack of feed.

## EXT. PORTSMOUTH SQUARE - DAY

Morrison rides his horse through a noisy crowd.

Jack Walter leads the Chinese man by the neck.

Ben Walter stands with MAYOR EDWIN DOBBS (46), stout, well-  
dressed.

## MAN IN CROWD

Murdering Chinks! Hang 'em all!

A group of Chinese women huddle together, sob.

## A GALLOWS

Jack uses his left hand to cover the Chinese man's head with  
a sack, slips a noose around his neck.

The crowd becomes hushed.

The trap drops, the man's body twitches, falls limp.

The WAILS of the man's family are drowned out by the WHOOPS  
of the crowd.

## MORRISON

(sotto)  
These must be the decent folk.

He rides on.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - DAY

Nora chops a carrot, sees Morrison walk down the stairs, steps out from behind the bar.

NORA  
I was hoping to speak with you.

MORRISON  
It's not the best time.

NORA  
What is your price to find my  
brother's killer?

He reaches into his coat, reveals a wad of paper bills.

MORRISON  
Your brother was a good man, but I  
don't do that kind of work anymore.  
And it's getting dark.

NORA  
Then you're just leaving?

MORRISON  
I'm sorry for your loss.

NORA  
Bill was all I had in the world.  
And I can't accept that he died in  
vain, gutted like some animal.

He sets two paper bills on a table.

MORRISON  
That should cover the room, and  
what you paid to get me out of  
jail.

FRONT ENTRANCE

He pushes the swinging doors open.

NORA  
Mr. Morrison, I didn't pay to get  
you out of jail.

He looks surprised, turns to her.

NORA (CONT'D)

And Ben Walter wouldn't just let you out. Not unless he or Jack had a reason to do so.

EXT. PORTSMOUTH SQUARE - DAY

Morrison rides his horse past the gallows. The Chinese man dangles by his neck.

EXT. REDWOOD FOREST - DAY (DUSK)

He rides at a controlled pace, eyes the massive trees. He suddenly pulls on the reins.

MORRISON

Whoa.

He listens. Another HORSE TROTS (o.s.). He glances back, sees nothing.

MORRISON (CONT'D)

Okay, let's go.

EXT. REDWOOD FOREST - DAY (DUSK)

He rides on, looks to his right.

A LARGE MAN rides a black horse, wears a black coat, hat and gloves, disappears behind some trees.

Morrison slides the Walker Colt from his holster.

MORRISON

Where is he, girl?

The large man emerges ahead of them, rides in a zig zag fashion, taunting.

Morrison pats his horse, she picks up the pace, closes in on the black horse.

The large man disappears again.

Morrison, agitated, glances over his shoulder as

A TREE BRANCH

comes down hard on his head, knocks him to the ground, the Walker Colt falls nearby.

His horse comes to his side, nudges him. He swipes at the ground, disoriented.

MORRISON

Gun...

The large man dismounts the black horse, holds a long knife in his left hand.

Morrison locates the Walker Colt, just as the knife comes down at him.

His horse kicks at the large man, who stumbles, drops the knife.

Morrison gets to his feet, unsteady, the Walker Colt drawn.

The large man is gone. A HORSE (o.s.) trots away.

He picks up the knife, strokes his horse.

MORRISON

Good girl.

He touches his throat, sees a drop of blood on his finger, presses a bandana against the wound.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Nora eats her dinner by candlelight. She eyes the swinging doors as they open, strains to see who entered.

MORRISON

steps into the flickering light.

MORRISON

My price is five-hundred a head.  
And I'm always paid in advance.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Morrison eats, his table etiquette is superb.

NORA

Call me Nora, if you like. And I'd be lying if I said I wasn't curious why you changed your mind.

MORRISON

The stew is good.  
(off her expectant smile)  
And it looks like I have unfinished business here.

She sets money on the table, he takes it.

NORA

It's all there.

MORRISON

Did Bill have any friends, enemies to speak of?

NORA

He had trouble with Ben and Jack Walter. Truth is, Bill kept to himself mostly. But I know he was fond of George Barker.

MORRISON

Who is that?

NORA

A Doctor. He's the one who took Bill's body. His office is on Jackson Street. Number twelve.

THUNDER rumbles (o.s.).

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

SEVERAL KNOCKS at the door. GEORGE "DOC" BARKER (58), a wisp of a man, opens it.

Morrison stands outside in a steady rain.

DOC BARKER

If you're not at death's door then come back in the morning.

MORRISON

I'm here to talk about Bill Hunt.



DOC BARKER  
The man is dead, sir. And I don't  
believe I know you.

MORRISON  
The name is Morrison. I was told  
you could help.

The Doc looks him over.

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Books piled everywhere. Titles from Medicine to Mythology.

Morrison, his hat off, sits in an arm chair. Doc Barker pours  
himself a shot from a bottle.

DOC BARKER  
Billy told me all about Mexico. It  
takes an uncommon man to stare into  
the face of death. Rum?

MORRISON  
I don't imbibe.

The Doc is seized by an Asthmatic cough, drinks a shot, which  
calms it.

DOC BARKER  
I knew Nora wouldn't believe that  
Chinaman killed Billy.

MORRISON  
So why did they hang him?

DOC BARKER  
A lot of folks hate the Chinese.  
Ben Walter gave them what they  
wanted.

MORRISON  
That's not justice... so do you  
have any idea why someone would  
want Bill dead?

The Doc pours himself another shot.

DOC BARKER  
You say your name is Morrison? I've  
read stories about a hired gun by  
that name from back Chicago way.

MORRISON  
Thanks for your time.

He gets up to leave, the Doc grabs a stack of papers.

DOC BARKER  
I don't know why someone would want Bill dead. Truth is, I've treated stabbed men a thousand times, yet this time it's the similarities that got me. Billy and that outlaw Wilkins: medically speaking I've never seen anything like it. It's all here. In these notes.

MORRISON  
I better be going.

A KNOCK at the DOOR (o.s.).

EXT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Doc Barker, Morrison walk through the rain.

DOC BARKER  
It seems a boy's been cut up in tent city. You're welcome to ride with me.

They untie their horses.

MORRISON  
Why did they come all the way down here?

DOC BARKER  
I'm assuming the victim is close to death.

MORRISON  
Are you some sort of miracle worker?

DOC BARKER  
Hardly. I'm the coroner.

EXT. TENT CITY - NIGHT

Dense fog abounds. Morrison, Doc Barker appear on foot. Miners stand around a bloodied YOUNG MAN (20).

DOC BARKER  
What happened to this boy?

MINER #1  
Should be pretty clear, Doc.

Morrison shoots him a withering look.

MORRISON  
Does someone want to add to that?

MINER #2  
Well, Charlie the kid here had words with a fellow.

MORRISON  
What kind of words?

MINER #2  
I don't know. But we heard Charlie shouting like holy shit was being handed down and run up there. Otherwise, the bastard would've killed him like a stuck fucking pig.

DOC BARKER  
Do you know who cut him?

MINER #2  
You saying I had something to do with it, Doc?

Morrison grabs him by the collar.

MORRISON  
He asked if you know him.

MINER #2  
Well, nope. And I didn't see him neither. The tent he done his evil in is just up the hill, but the fucker cleared out right fast.

INT. MINER'S TENT - NIGHT

Morrison crawls inside, holds an oil lamp.

The tent is empty, blood is splattered on the ceiling, walls.

A ROLLED BLANKET

is pushed into a corner. He opens it, removes a length of stained-black rope.

EXT. TENT CITY - NIGHT

Morrison stuffs the stained-black rope in a saddle bag.

Ben and Jack Walter, along with Deputy Smith, ride up.

BEN WALTER

You know, I'm getting real curious why you're still hanging around.

MORRISON

It's not every day a man tries to kill you on your way out of town.

He eyes Jack Walter, who sneers.

BEN WALTER

What's your business with the Doc?

MORRISON

I had a headache.

JACK WALTER

Don't be a smart ass with us, boy.

MORRISON

Who paid to get me out of jail?

JACK WALTER

An old friend of yours.

MORRISON

I don't have any old friends.

JACK WALTER

This boy, Humble Jim, seemed to think otherwise. And, Jesus, somebody roasted him real good.

BEN WALTER

Settle your scores someplace else, killer. Not in my town.

They ride off.

INT. LARGE MINER'S TENT - NIGHT

Morrison leans over the injured young man. Doc Barker looks on.

MORRISON  
The man who cut you, what did he  
look like?

YOUNG MAN  
Th -- the --

DOC BARKER  
He's delirious.

MORRISON  
Quiet.

The young man attempts to form words. Morrison hangs on them.

YOUNG MAN  
It was black.

He closes his eyes, falls unconscious.

DOC BARKER  
A strong man took the knife to him.

MORRISON  
A strong man also got the best of  
Bill Hunt and Dan Wilkins.

EXT. TENT CITY - NIGHT

Morrison, Doc Barker mount their horses.

DOC BARKER  
Would you consider a visit to the  
undertaker Harper? Billy's corpse  
is still there.

MORRISON  
I've never found a dead man to be  
much help.

DOC BARKER  
I thought I'd show you the burns.

MORRISON  
What do you mean, burns?

The Doc reaches in a saddle bag, reveals a stack of papers.

DOC BARKER

Read them over. If you're still interested in the morning, I'll see you at eight-thirty. If not, I'd ask for them back. Harper is at the corner of DuPont and Clay.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Morrison looks over Doc Barker's papers.

Handwritten notes include: "DECEMBER 27, 1849. PRIMARY CAUSE OF DEATH: MASSIVE BLOOD LOSS AS A RESULT OF SEVERE TRAUMA TO MAIN ARTERIES."

He rubs his eyes, sets them aside, douses a lamp.

EXT. WATERFRONT - NIGHT

A UNION ARMY SOLDIER, cigarette in mouth, tries to light a flint.

UNION SOLDIER

Dang it.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Let me help you.

A gloved hand holds out a flame, lights his cigarette.

UNION SOLDIER

Thank you, friend.

A knife blade glints, slices his throat. He chokes on blood.

A LARGE MAN

stands before him now, plunges the knife into his chest.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - DAY

Morrison eats breakfast. Nora goes to pour him coffee.

MORRISON

You don't need to do that.

She sets the pot down, smiles, impressed.

NORA  
How uncommon.

He pours himself a cup.

MORRISON  
When I've finished my work here  
I'll go, whether or not I've found  
Bill's killer. I'll return your  
money if I don't complete the job.

NORA  
I thought we had an agreement.

MORRISON  
An agreement is not a promise. My  
decisions are based on business.  
Nothing more.

NORA  
May I ask, Mr. Morrison, what your  
other business is?

MORRISON  
I'm not obliged to tell you that.

NORA  
I see. Yet you feel obliged to tell  
me not to count on our agreement,  
as if I should've expected such a  
turn of events.

Agitated, she walks away from the table.

MORRISON  
I haven't lost a bounty yet. I can  
tell you that.

She turns to him, more assured.

NORA  
Bill's funeral is today. Do you  
think you'll be attending?

MORRISON  
No.

NORA  
I understand. It's not such an easy  
thing to say goodbye.

INT. UNDERTAKER'S OFFICE/EMBALMING ROOM - DAY

Morrison, Doc Barker stand over Bill Hunt's naked corpse. Lacerations on his abdomen, neck are stitched up. Small, circular burns dot his bluish chest.

DOC BARKER

The burns are from a cigar or cigarette. Wilkins had them, too. This was the same killer.

MORRISON

You sound pretty sure of that.

DOC BARKER

Both men had their throats cut. That's what killed them. The abdominal cavity was then opened. He went in below the sternum. No skill here, just brutish strength.

MORRISON

What point can be made if they're dead?

The Doc points to a long laceration.

DOC BARKER

Look here: these wounds also suggest our killer favors his left hand.

MORRISON

Jack Walter favors his left.

DOC BARKER

You don't say?

MORRISON

This is all guesswork, Doc. There's no proof of anything.

The Doc nods to himself, contemplative.

DOC BARKER

In 1836, James Marsh, an English chemist, confirmed arsenic as the cause of death in a murder trial. He used a series of chemical processes on the walls of the victim's stomach...

(MORE)



DOC BARKER (cont'd)  
 in 1784, again in England, John  
 Toms was convicted of murdering one  
 Edward Clushaw with a pistol. A wad  
 of crushed paper used to secure  
 powder in the muzzle matched a torn  
 newspaper found in Toms' pocket.

MORRISON  
 What are you getting at?

DOC BARKER  
 There's a new science. I believe it  
 will be a way to prove how someone  
 is killed, and, in some cases, by  
 whom. Not in my lifetime, but it  
 will come to pass.

Morrison turns Hunt's palm up, eyes a burned in image IMAGE  
 OF SAINT MICHAEL WITH SWORD STANDS ON A DEFEATED SATAN WITH  
 HORNS AND TAIL (typical of 1840s Mexican Iconography).

MORRISON  
 San Miguel: "The weigher of men's  
 souls." I saw this in Mexico.

DOC BARKER  
 Do you think a Mexican did this?

MORRISON  
 Mexicans have the fear of God.  
 Whoever did this has no fear.

EXT. EMPTY LOT - DAY

Humble Jim, his scarred face partly visible, approaches Jack  
 Walter, who throws the dead Chinese man's clothes on a FIRE.

JACK WALTER  
 Jesus, you are not real easy to  
 look at in daylight.

HUMBLE JIM  
 I don't have time to waste.

JACK WALTER  
 Well, Jim, you're in my world, so  
 you can waste whatever time I see  
 fit. Unless, of course, you'd like  
 to pack up your shit and head right  
 the hell on out.

HUMBLE JIM  
What do you want?

Jack tosses a straw hat on the fire.

JACK WALTER  
Let's step inside and talk about  
it. I don't want too many eyes on  
us.

INT. UNDERTAKER'S OFFICE/EMBALMING ROOM - DAY

Morrison watches Doc Barker add a clear liquid to a petri  
dish.

DOC BARKER  
We can't rule out drugging, so,  
like our English friend, Marsh,  
let's see what the stomach fluid  
tell us. Would you like a closer  
look, Morrison?

MORRISON  
No, I'm okay from here.

A door opens. RICHARD HARPER (50), the undertaker, steps in.

RICHARD HARPER  
Are you almost done here? I need to  
prepare this body for services.

DOC BARKER  
Mr. Harper, we must not rush this  
most delicate process.

RICHARD HARPER  
You are an odd little man, George.

DOC BARKER  
I'm sure they said the same about  
Napoleon. Of course, he did rule an  
Empire.

RICHARD HARPER  
Collect your instruments and leave.

He walks out.

DOC BARKER  
Stubborn ass. I'll go speak with  
him.

He follows him out.

Morrison stays behind, eyes the

ICON OF SAN MIGUEL

burned into Bill Hunt's palm.

INT. UNDERTAKER'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Morrison exits the embalming room. Doc Barker sips from a flask, coughs under his breath.

DOC BARKER

A message came for you, Morrison.

He hands him a square of paper, which Morrison unfolds. Written on it: "YOU WILL KNOW SOON"

MORRISON

When did this arrive?

DOC BARKER

Just now. A boy delivered it.

Morrison heads for the door.

DOC BARKER (CONT'D)

Is something wrong?

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Morrison grabs a NEWSPAPER BOY by the arm.

MORRISON

Did you leave a message for Morrison?

NEWSPAPER BOY

I don't know what you mean, sir.

He eyes another BOY, who jumps on a wagon.

MORRISON

Hold on, boy.

The wagon picks up speed. He tries to keep up with it on foot. It rounds a corner, disappears into waves of people. He loses sight of it, frustrated.

EXT. ANOTHER CITY STREET - DAY

He walks his horse. Doc Barker catches up with him.

DOC BARKER  
I'd like to work with you,  
Morrison.

Morrison ignores him, continue to walk.

DOC BARKER (CONT'D)  
You have to agree that these  
killings were anything but  
ordinary.

MORRISON  
I'll agree with that.

The Doc struggles to keep up with him.

DOC BARKER  
There are stories I've pored over  
for years: the journey of Ulysses;  
the Ten Labors of Hercules. And I  
am now ready to embark on a similar  
adventure.

MORRISON  
Those are stories, Doc. Fiction.

DOC BARKER  
This city is small, but there are  
places a man could hide. You'd have  
a hell of a time finding him, as  
skilled as you are. I know the city  
and I know the people. And history  
has taught us that people talk.

Morrison mounts his horse.

MORRISON  
History's also taught us that folks  
who do things they have no business  
doing end up dead... and Hercules  
endured twelve labors, not ten.

EXT. WHARVES - DAY

Morrison watches two UNION ARMY SOLDIERS console a HYSTERICAL  
WOMAN.

HYSTERICAL WOMAN  
It's there -- over there!

EXT. WHARVES - MOMENTS LATER

The Union Army soldier from the night before is tied to a piling with black rope, his naked torso ripped open. The remnants of a small fire smolder nearby.

One of the soldiers covers him with a military coat.

Morrison rides on.

INT. LARGE MINER'S TENT - DAY

Morrison steps inside, looks around. It is empty.

EXT. TENT CITY - DAY

He walks up to an OLD MINER.

MORRISON  
Where is the boy who was in the  
tent up the hill?

MINER  
Don't know. They took him.

MORRISON  
Took him where?

MINER  
Don't know. Those Army fellows just  
come and scooped him up.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Mayor Edwin Dobbs stands with a UNION ARMY OFFICER.

SUPER: "CAPTAIN WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN"

Sherman's famous red hair, bad temper are on display.

WILLIAM T. SHERMAN  
These streets are crawling with the  
worst elements of a nation.

MAYOR DOBBS

The bad always comes with the good.  
They are reluctant twins after all.

WILLIAM T. SHERMAN

I would gladly accept orders to  
report to Hell if it meant leaving  
this place forever.

Ben Walter approaches them.

MAYOR DOBBS

Ben, I believe you know Captain  
Sherman.

WILLIAM T. SHERMAN

William T. will suffice, Edwin.

BEN WALTER

Captain, I saw you at Bella Union  
Hall just last week. The Minstrels  
provided some fine entertainment.

WILLIAM T. SHERMAN

I have affairs to attend to now.  
And I believe you do too, Sheriff.

He walks on. Ben eyes Mayor Dobbs, unsure.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

Morrison eyes a pack of wild horses in the distance. Now he  
turns to a wooded area, sees

EVERGREEN BRANCHES

moving around.

He pats his horse's neck.

MORRISON

Let's go.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Ben Walter sits across from Mayor Dobbs.

MAYOR DOBBS

The problem here is the young man who later died was a nephew of the General Riley, Governor Riley, over at the Presidio. He also fought bravely as a volunteer in the War.

BEN WALTER

I'll be damned.

MAYOR DOBBS

You see, Ben, this just adds to the General's doubts about you.

BEN WALTER

What the hell does that mean?

MAYOR DOBBS

The council prefers a police force, as they have in other cities.

BEN WALTER

Police force? I bet that damn Law and Order Party is behind this.

MAYOR DOBBS

Captain Sherman informed me that a corporal was found near Clark's Point earlier. Someone cut him open and placed burns on his skin.

BEN WALTER

Well, Mayor, you can be damn sure that --

MAYOR DOBBS

The General arrives from Monterey on Christmas Eve. Should you bring in the man who killed his nephew and that soldier, you can keep your badge. At my request.

BEN WALTER

Christmas Eve's only two days away.

MAYOR DOBBS

Then I'd suggest you get to work.

EXT. LARGE CLEARING - DAY

Low fog shrouds the hills. Morrison dismounts his horse.

The remnants of a CAMP FIRE smolder on the ground.

He takes a knee, eyes a THIN CIGAR BUTT among the ashes, spears it with his knife.

A HORSE snorts (o.s.), prompts him to glance back at a RIDER ON A BLACK HORSE

The man's face is obscured by the fog.

MORRISON  
Is this your camp?

No reply. He stands up.

MORRISON (CONT'D)  
I asked you a question.

The rider FIRES a pistol at him, rides off through the fog.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

Morrison rides hard, keeps one hand on his Walter Colt.

The rider in black stays twenty lengths ahead.

Morrison pats his horse, she accelerates.

The rider disappears into a dense patch of fog.

Morrison tries to locate him, glances back.

THE RIDER

is now behind him. He grabs the Walker Colt.

The rider spurs his horse, gains on him.

Morrison places his hand on his horse's mane.

MORRISON  
Now, girl. Go.

He pulls on her mane. She turns hard, faces the black horse.

Both horses rear at the same time, strike at each other with their forelegs.

The black horse plants its forelegs first, disappears into the fog.



Morrison pulls the reins hard, pursues.

MULTIPLE HORSE HOOVES (o.s.) grow louder, draw closer. He hears them, but is unable to see anything through the fog.

Suddenly, the pack of wild horses appears through the fog, fan out around him. His horse is spooked, spins around.

MORRISON

Easy girl.

He steers her clear of the horses, tries to locate the rider again. WATER SPLASHES (o.s.).

EXT. SHALLOW STREAM - MOMENTS LATER

He glances up and down the stream, eyes the evergreen forest ahead of him.

There is no sign of the rider anywhere.

He slides the Walker Colt pistol back into the holster.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Doc Barker sits in a pew, eyes closed. Morrison takes a seat beside him.

MORRISON

I didn't take you for a praying man.

The Doc shrugs, then becomes more serious.

DOC BARKER

A soldier was brought to me. He was killed in the same way as Billy and Wilkins.

MORRISON

Are you done here?

DOC BARKER

I'm at your service.

MORRISON

This won't be like the stories you've read. And we'll do things my way.

The Doc smiles, grabs his hat.

DOC BARKER  
Sometimes I find it hard to dispute  
the power of prayer.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Morrison exits, almost runs into Deputy Smith.

DEPUTY SMITH  
You got something to confess, boy?

MORRISON  
Nothing yet. But it's early in the  
day.

DEPUTY SMITH  
God's going to save you? Is that  
what you think?

He steps in front of Morrison, cuts him off.

DOC BARKER  
Don't you have anything better to  
do with your time, deputy?

DEPUTY SMITH  
You should watch the friends you  
keep. This one's a killer, Doc.

DOC BARKER  
Go on. You have no business here.

Deputy Smith swaggers away. Morrison glances at the Doc.

MORRISON  
They hand out badges to just about  
anyone here.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - DAY

Nora Hunt wears a black dress, prepares to leave. Ben Walter  
steps through the swinging doors.

BEN WALTER  
Afternoon, Nora. Closed, huh?

NORA  
There are plenty of places to  
drink. Nobody will go dry.

BEN WALTER  
I have this feeling you went and  
hired out that Morrison. Just call  
it a hunch.

NORA  
Then let's call it that.

He partially blocks the doorway now.

BEN WALTER  
You should know that kind of thing  
don't set well with me.

NORA  
What I know is my brother is dead  
and justice hasn't been served.

BEN WALTER  
Nora, a girl like yourself should  
be real careful about the company  
she keeps.

NORA  
Thank you, Sheriff. Your concern is  
taken in the same spirit you offer  
it.

BEN WALTER  
Have we reached an understanding?

NORA  
I'm late.

She brushes past him, leaves.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - MOMENTS LATER

Ben Walter, accompanied by TWO DEPUTIES, mounts his horse.

Jack Walter rides up.

BEN WALTER  
Where have you been, Jackie?

JACK WALTER  
I told you that crippled up bitch  
wouldn't be no help.

BEN WALTER  
Christ, you must be one of them  
soothsayers with all that knowledge  
in you. Now come on, we're heading  
over to Sydney Town.

JACK WALTER  
What the Hell for?

It hangs there.

BEN WALTER  
You know, I'd hate to think my  
deputies were making deals with  
unsavory characters without me  
knowing. Know what I mean, son?

JACK WALTER  
That'd be a real shame.

Ben leans in close, eyes narrow.

BEN WALTER  
Ride in the back. Make sure nobody  
sneaks up on us.

He rides on, the deputies follow. Jack sits there.

JACK WALTER  
Ride in the back? Fuck this.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

Morrison, Doc Barker view the crumbling Spanish fort on a  
distant hill.

DOC BARKER  
The Spaniards built it, but they  
left years ago. All that remains  
are the stories.

MORRISON  
What do you mean?

DOC BARKER  
Some people say spirits live in  
there. The kind that possess men to  
do unspeakable things.

Morrison is amused.

MORRISON  
Then we better stay clear of it.

EXT. LARGE CLEARING - DAY

They stop at the camp fire (same one Morrison found earlier).

MORRISON  
A rider was just over there. He  
shot at me.

DOC BARKER  
Good thing he missed.

MORRISON  
He wanted to get my attention. Even  
a poor shot could've killed me from  
that distance.

DOC BARKER  
Maybe you startled him.

MORRISON  
No. It didn't happen that way.

DOC BARKER  
Coincidence you mean.

Morrison nods, rides on.

EXT. SHALLOW STREAM - DAY

Morrison, Doc Barker look upstream.

DOC BARKER  
That will get you back to the city,  
but it's a bit roundabout.

MORRISON  
And straight ahead?

DOC BARKER  
Nothing but forest for ten miles.

MORRISON

He must have wrapped back around  
and used the stream as cover.

DOC BARKER

I don't think I'm following.

MORRISON

A man tried to kill me the other  
night. He was a good rider. Strong.  
Just like the man I saw today.

DOC BARKER

But I thought you were looking for  
Bill Hunt's killer.

Morrison mounts his horse.

MORRISON

The tracks will come out at some  
point downstream.

Doc Barker sighs, frustrated. Morrison holds out the cigar  
butt he found.

MORRISON (CONT'D)

This was in the campfire. I'd say  
it's about the size of the burns on  
Bill's body. See, Doc, your science  
is already paying off.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Brothels, saloons dominate this steaming den of iniquity.

SUPER: "Sydney Town"

Ben, Jack Walter and the two deputies stand with FOUR SYDNEY  
DUCKS. (A San Francisco street gang, their accents are low-  
end Australian meets Western U.S.).

BEN WALTER

You help bring this son-of-a-bitch  
in quick and there's more for you.

He hands DUCK #1 a gold coin.

DUCK #1

I reckon there'd have to be, mate.

The other Ducks snicker.

BEN WALTER

You know, the only reason you ain't hanging by your necks is because I find you kind of useful. But that could change in half a heartbeat.

DUCK #1

We'll get this fellow. Sniff him out like a rotten old rat.

JACK WALTER

How do you aim to do that?

DUCK #1

We got our ways, deputy. You should know that by now.

JACK WALTER

What I know is that you're a pack of piss ants who ain't even fit to eat shit.

BEN WALTER

Just find this cutter.

The Ducks watch Ben, Jack walk away.

DUCK #1

There goes some low class lawmen, mates.

EXT. ROCKY CLIFF - DAY

OCEAN WAVES crash against large rocks below.

Morrison takes a knee, presses a horse track in the mud.

MORRISON

It's like I thought: he followed the stream and came out down here.

DOC BARKER

We must be getting close then.

MORRISON

Is that what you think?

DOC BARKER

I'm not really sure.

MORRISON

You see all these tracks? They're all fresh, too. No, Doc, we're not getting close.

Aggravated, he walks back to his horse.

DOC BARKER

My tracking skills apparently leave much to be desired.

Morrison's demeanor softens a bit.

MORRISON

You can head on back now. I still have work to do.

THE FOLLOWING SCENES ARE IN QUICK MONTAGE STYLE:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Ben Walter and two deputies ride with authority.

DEPUTY #1

Out of the way.

Pedestrians jump aside to avoid being trampled.

INT. BUTCHER SHOP - DAY

Two Sydney Ducks beat a BUTCHER about the face. Duck #1 waves a meat cleaver at him.

DUCK #1

Fess up. You cut those Army boys good.

INT. TANNING MILL - DAY

A bloodied MILL WORKER hangs by his feet amongst animal hides, moans.

Two Sydney Ducks take turns, kick him in the face.

SYDNEY DUCK

We can do this all day, mate.

A third Duck removes paper money from a cash box.



END MONTAGE

INT. DARKENED ROOM - DAY

A large man wears black gloves, SHARPENS a KNIFE on a stone. Now he runs the knife blade against his forearm, draws blood. He stands up, opens a door. Daylight streams in as he leaves.

EXT. YERBA BUENA CEMETERY - DAY

Nora Hunt sits beside a grave. Mourners pay their respects.

HANK WEBBER (32), thick beard, stands before her.

HANK WEBBER

Miss Hunt, my name is Hank Webber.  
We met once or twice.

NORA

Oh, yes, Hank. From the lumber  
mill.

HANK WEBBER

Accept my sympathies. It's a real  
shame this had to happen to Bill.

NORA

Thank you. Kindly.

As he moves aside, Doc Barker steps forward, removes his hat.

DOC BARKER

Nora, my dear.

He takes her hands. She smiles.

INT. MERCANTILE SHOP - DAY

The SHOPKEEPER from earlier eyes the cigar butt Morrison found.

SHOPKEEPER

Yep. That's one of mine alright.

MORRISON

Ten shops could sell these same  
cigars.

SHOPKEEPER

I roll these myself. That's my wrapping.

He shows Morrison cigar wrappers to make his point.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)

What's this all about, friend?

MORRISON

I'm looking for a man. He came in here yesterday. Large fellow. His face looks like it was burned up pretty good.

SHOPKEEPER

Yeah, I remember him. But he only ever came in that one time.

Morrison tips his Stetson to the man, goes to leave.

SHOPKEEPER (CONT'D)

Of course, I did see him earlier over at the livery. He and the Sheriff's son were talking about something. Looked pretty serious whatever it was.

EXT. YERBA BUENA CEMETERY - DAY

The mourners disperse. Nora holds Doc Barker's arm, walks down a rocky slope.

A LARGE MAN

on a black horse eyes them from a distance, his face obscured by shadows from a nearby building.

NORA

glances up, sees the man, slows down a bit.

DOC BARKER

Are you alright, my dear?

NORA

I'm not sure if I know him.

He follows her eyes to the large man, a look of ambivalence on his face.

DOC BARKER

Why don't we take the foot path.

He leads her in another direction, away from the man.

EXT. BRIGHT RED BUILDING - DAY

Morrison ties his horse to a post, walks inside.

Sign over the door reads: "ROSIE'S"

INT. ROSIE'S BROTHEL/BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jack Walter pulls a BLOND PROSTITUTE by her hair.

JACK WALTER

I don't care what you like or  
don't. You're getting paid here,  
girl, so get to it.

The door flies open. Morrison grabs Jack, pins him to the bed.

MORRISON

What's your business with Humble  
Jim?

JACK WALTER

Go to hell.

He presses his Walker Colt against Jack's nose.

MORRISON

I don't generally ask more than  
once.

JACK WALTER

You got some kind of shit nerve  
putting your hands on a lawman.

MORRISON

What will it be, Jack?

JACK WALTER

Nothing good. For you.

TWO DEPUTIES press pistols against the back of Morrison's head. He lowers the Walker Colt.

JACK WALTER  
Take him around back. Make sure  
he's still warm when you're done.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

DEPUTY #1 punches Morrison in his bloodied face. DEPUTY #2  
kicks him in the ribs, drops him to his knees.

DEPUTY #1  
That should do it. He's pretty well  
tenderized.

They walk on. Morrison gasps for breath.

EXT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

The Doc tosses his hat on a chair.

A DESK

He sits down, reveals his flask.

DOC BARKER  
(sotto)  
At last.

He holds a magnifying glass up to a piece of black leather,  
writes something with a feather pen.

A MEDICAL BOOK

opens to a page with a DIAGRAM OF A HUMAN TORSO.

He sips from the flask, studies it. Now he grabs a book from  
a nearby stack. The word "Homer" is visible on the cover. He  
eyes it, smiles, writes something down.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

Morrison staggers to his feet, EVERYTHING IS BLURRY to him.  
He locates his Walker Colt, checks the cylinder, which is  
empty. Now he looks up to see

A LARGE RIDER

on a black horse blocking the exit.

MORRISON  
What do you want?

He tries to adjust his eyes.

MORRISON (CONT'D)  
Humble Jim.

The large rider suddenly spurs his horse, gallops at him. Morrison jumps to one side, a long knife misses his neck.

The rider stops, turns back.

Morrison stumbles toward the street.

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

He mounts his horse. The large rider, still blurry to him, emerges from the alley, rides down a side street.

EXT. ROCK QUARRY - MINUTES LATER

Morrison turns a corner as a WORKER sets dynamite sticks under a slab of rock.

THE LARGE RIDER

appears just up ahead, turns to face him, defiant, then rides down an alley.

Morrison loads a bullet into the Walker Colt, pursues him. Dynamite EXPLODES (o.s.) nearby. His horse is spooked.

MORRISON  
It's alright.

He strokes her mane to calm her.

EXT. SMALL CITY SQUARE - MINUTES LATER

His horse stops in front of a

WATER TOWER

The large tank on top is supported by a wood planks, two-by-fours.

He looks over his shoulder, just as the large rider throws

A STICK OF DYNAMITE

at his head. It misses, EXPLODES upon contact with the water tower, topples it. His horse back away as tank CRASHES to the ground, sends a torrent of water toward them.

MORRISON

Go, girl. Go.

They haul ass away from the deluge of water, which is ready to overtake them. He pulls the reins, his horse turns sharply to the left.

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

They turn a corner, the water rushes past them.

MORRISON

Whoa.

He looks back, incensed.

EXT. NARROW STREET - NIGHT

Two union Army officers on horseback hold lanterns.

OFFICER #1

You there. You're blocking the way.

No reply.

OFFICER #2

You heard him. Move aside.

A LARGE MAN

maneuvers his black horse to one side.

The officers ride past him, see his face is obscured by a black hat. They continue on, their HORSES grunt.

OFFICER #1

Easy now.

OFFICER #2

What is it?

Their HORSES grunt again. They stop, glance back in unison.

The large man is right behind them, a long knife in his left hand.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Morrison's horse drinks from a trough. Nora walks out, smiles.

NORA  
My word, she's thirsty.

MORRISON  
She's earned it today.

NORA  
May I pet her?

MORRISON  
Go ahead. She loves the attention.

She strokes her mane.

NORA  
What's her name?

MORRISON  
Isabella.

NORA  
What a beautiful girl. And you  
treat her like a princess.

MORRISON  
I've had her since she was a filly.  
I suppose it's become a habit.

They exchange a gentle glance.

NORA  
Have you had any luck so far?

MORRISON  
Nothing worth mentioning.

NORA  
I suppose I'm too eager about it.

MORRISON  
Things like this take time.

NORA

The truth is there's something else  
I wanted to mention to you.

TWO UNION ARMY SOLDIERS

ride past the saloon with the mutilated bodies of Officer #1  
and Officer #2 draped over their horses.

He watches them go, half glances at her.

MORRISON

It will need to wait.

EXT. ROSIE'S BROTHEL - NIGHT

Jack Walter holds some gold nuggets in one hand, kicks a WELL-  
DRESSED MAN, who cowers on the ground.

JACK WALTER

Hooey, boy. No wonder you can  
afford those fancy trousers. Now  
I'm taking this gold here as  
payment for you running your mouth  
off there, dandy.

He kicks him again. Deputy Smith stands nearby, lights a  
cigarillo.

DEPUTY SMITH

I'll see you later, Jackie.

JACK WALTER

Where are you going?

DEPUTY SMITH

That redhead wore me right out. I  
need some sleep.

Jack lights his own cigarillo.

JACK WALTER

Hell, my night is just starting.

He stumbles a bit. Deputy Smith catches him, holds him up,  
straightens his collar.

DEPUTY SMITH

Pace yourself. You never know when  
you'll need your strength.



He pats Jack on the shoulder. Jack flashes a crooked smile.

INT. BUSTER'S SALOON - NIGHT

Doc Barker stands at a corner table. Three DRUNK MEN are his audience.

DOC BARKER

It was, he thought, the nature of man to explore the darkest regions of the soul. Those places where God himself turned a blind eye; where few dared to travel; and from which none had returned unchanged.

He raises a glass of beer. The men applaud, just as the two Union Army soldiers from moments ago approach the Doc.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

A large, darkened male figure pushes the swinging doors open.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/NORA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Nora brushes her hair, listens to FOOTFALLS (o.s.).

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

She steps out, just as the door to Morrison's room shuts.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A large man walks past the window.

A KNOCK (o.s.) at the DOOR. He turns to it.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Nora waits a moment, KNOCKS again.

NORA

Mr. Morrison?

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - SAME TIME

The large man reveals a long knife.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - SAME TIME

She shakes her head, mystified.

NORA

Mr. Morrison? Are you in there?

THE DOORKNOB

She begins to turn it.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - SAME TIME

The large man stands beside the door, knife raised.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Nora removes her hand from the door knob.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - SAME TIME

NORA WALKS AWAY (o.s.). The large man slides the knife under his black coat.

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The bodies of Officer #1, Officer #2 lay on separate tables, bloody torsos exposed.

Doc Barker takes notes. Morrison enters.

DOC BARKER

Morrison. We have some work to do.

THE OFFICERS' UNIFORMS

Coat of Arms are missing.

MORRISON

He's killing soldiers.

DOC BARKER

The question is why?

MORRISON

I was hoping your Science would have a theory on that.

The Doc waves him over to Officer #1.

DOC BARKER

Look here: this officer has grooves cut into his cheek, while the other has part of his ear lobe removed. The corporal that was killed yesterday had his nose severed. And Billy was cut on the eyelids. But these are variations. The organ removal, the icon burned into the palm, the black rope used to tie them up are all the same.

MORRISON

I've known violent men, but none of them have killed in this way.

DOC BARKER

I'll be honest with you. It reminds me of those stories in the newspaper.

MORRISON

What newspaper do you read, Doc? I haven't seen anything like this.

DOC BARKER

What I mean is each week a new part is printed, but it's the same story. Now we have witnessed six killings in three days, so similar that they seem less like separate acts than parts of one purposeful and, dare I say, inspired design.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Morrison arrives on his horse, dismounts.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - MINUTES LATER

He lights an oil lamp.

THE NIGHT STAND

The knife, stained-black rope are gone. In their place is a MILITARY COAT OF ARMS, which is coated with dried blood. He holds up the coat of arms, glances again at the night stand.

THE HOLY BIBLE

A square of paper is stuck between two pages.

He opens it to the marked page, removes the square of paper. Written on it: "TUESDAY WEBBER"

The page also has a passage underlined:

MORRISON

(reading)

If anyone accepts its mark on his hand he will drink the wine of God's wrath poured full strength into the cup of his anger.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. UNDERTAKER'S OFFICE/EMBALMING ROOM - DAY

The San Miguel icon, burned into Bill Hunt's palms.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Morrison pushes open the swinging doors, sees

A MAN

in a nearby alley, lurks in the shadows.

Morrison reveals his Walker Colt pistol.

EXT. ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

He moves through the shadows.

THE MAN

is just up ahead, slips down another alley.

Morrison turns down an adjacent alley.

EXT. ADJACENT ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

He grips the Walker Colt, turns a corner.

THE MAN

faces in the opposite direction, lights a cigarette.

Morrison spins him around, holds the Walker Colt to his eye.

MORRISON

What's your business here?

The man, one of the Sydney Ducks, does not reply.

Morrison draws the hammer back.

SYDNEY DUCK

I been told to keep an eye on you.

MORRISON

Who told you?

SYDNEY DUCK

Sheriff's son. He's real curious about your whereabouts. He don't like you. I can see his point.

Morrison grabs his throat.

MORRISON

Were you in there?

SYDNEY DUCK

In -- in where?

MORRISON

The saloon.

SYDNEY DUCK

Hell, no. I wouldn't set foot in that shithole. I'm too good.

Morrison searches his pockets, despite his protests.

MORRISON

Go on. Get out of here.

SYDNEY DUCK

You best watch who you pull a gun on, mate.

(MORE)

SYDNEY DUCK (cont'd)  
 You're messing with the Sydney  
 Ducks. You'll get yourself dead  
 right quick.

MORRISON  
 I'll try and remember that.

He swings a forearm, strikes him in the face, levels him.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Morrison arrives at his room door. Nora stands nearby.

NORA  
 Ben Walter came by today. He knows  
 about our arrangement.

He is distracted, does not reply.

NORA (CONT'D)  
 Is something wrong, Mr. Morrison?

MORRISON  
 Just a bad dream.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE - MORRISON'S QUICK MEMORY FLASHES

-- QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/BEDROOM

The younger Morrison reads a book by lamp light as rain  
 batters a window.

The beautiful woman from his earlier dream kisses his face.

-- QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/LIVING AREA

He fights with one of the bandits.

-- QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/BEDROOM

The younger Morrison sees the beautiful woman on the bed, her  
 nightgown soaked with blood.

-- GRAVEYARD

The younger Morrison watches as a casket is lowered into an  
 open grave.

-- UNDERTAKER'S OFFICE

He eyes Bill Hunt's dead body.

-- HUNT'S SALOON

Nora Hunt, grief stricken, approaches him as he walks to his room.

-- GRAVEYARD

The younger Morrison stands alone, vultures circle overhead.

The beautiful woman lies dead in a casket, her face drained of color.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - DAY

He sits up, soaked with perspiration, breathing labored.

AT THE WINDOW

He composes himself, looks out, sees

NORA HUNT

on a nearby hillside.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

He walks up beside Nora, who eyes a distant hill.

NORA

We call it Telegraph Hill. Bill  
planned to build a house there.  
It's all I've ever wanted: a home  
and someone to share it with. What  
about you, Mr. Morrison?  
(off no reply)  
Bill said I ask too many questions.

MORRISON

I'd like a farm. A little house. I  
think of it. More lately.

NORA

It sounds like a good life.

She takes a step, stumbles. He holds her arm.

NORA (CONT'D)

Please don't feel sorry for me.

MORRISON

I don't. I think you take care of yourself just fine. You probably did the same for your brother.

NORA

Thank you for saying that, Mr. Morrison.

MORRISON

Call me John.

NORA

Do you have a family of your own?

MORRISON

I had a wife.

He stops there.

NORA

You've been alone for a long time.

MORRISON

There was no reason for them to die the way they did. But there's not much reason for anything as far as I can tell.

NORA

There's always a reason, John. And I believe your wife and Bill, and your child, are with God.

MORRISON

I don't count on Heaven.

NORA

Why do you say that?

MORRISON

When you've killed as I have, you just do your best to keep living.

She removes a medallion from her neck, hands it to him.

NORA

Take it. For strength.



He eyes the medallion, which bears an IMAGE OF SAN MIGUEL.

MORRISON  
Where did you get this?

NORA  
At the funeral. There was a note,  
too. It said the medallion would  
offer clarity. And that Bill's soul  
had been counted.

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Morrison tosses the medallion down on a table.

MORRISON  
Take a good look at that.

The Doc does so.

DOC BARKER  
San Miguel.

MORRISON  
What day is it?

DOC BARKER  
It's Tuesday. But what is all this  
about?

Morrison reveals the square of paper from the Bible, eyes it.

MORRISON  
Nora Hunt received that medallion  
yesterday.

DOC BARKER  
You don't say.

MORRISON  
How many Webber's do you know in  
the city?

DOC BARKER  
May I ask what this is --

MORRISON  
How many?

DOC BARKER

Okay, well, there's old Mrs. Webber here on Jackson Street; and Zane Webber, who lost his leg in a mining accident; and then there's Hank Webber who owns the lumber mill on Mason Street. Let's see...

Morrison eyes a newspaper. A headline reads: "SOLDIER KILLER STRIKES AGAIN"

MORRISON

Tell me about Hank Webber.

DOC BARKER

He's done well for himself. And Billy talked to him, being that they both... fought in the War.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Jack Walter approaches Humble Jim, whose face is still obscured.

JACK WALTER

We need to talk there, Jimbo.

HUMBLE JIM

I am losing my patience, Deputy.

JACK WALTER

Yeah? Well, you ain't receiving unannounced visits from the bastard. And I practically served him up to you. All you had to do was collect his ass. So as I see it, the tariff has gone up.

Humble Jim reaches in his coat. Jack pulls a pistol on him.

JACK WALTER (CONT'D)

Slow her down there, partner.

Humble Jim removes paper money from his coat.

HUMBLE JIM

Turn a blind eye. Or our next meeting will be an unpleasant one.

EXT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DAY

Doc Barker EIGHT UNION ARMY OFFICERS on horseback.

UNION ARMY OFFICER  
You will ride in groups of two and  
check in every two hours. We will  
find this murderer.

As they ride on, Morrison emerges from the lumber mill.

MORRISON  
They say he went to Gilroy on  
business.

DOC BARKER  
Gilroy. I know the town. It's an  
hour south of here, if you ride  
like Hell.

Morrison mounts his horse.

DOC BARKER (CONT'D)  
You're going there now?

MORRISON  
It won't come to me.

He rides off.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Ben Walter, three deputies approach the Sydney Ducks.

BEN WALTER  
I got two more dead soldiers since  
I hired you. You may be just as  
worthless as folks say you are.

SYDNEY DUCK #1  
How about you do it yourself. You  
got able-bodied deputies who could  
start earning their keep.

Ben shoves a pistol in his face.

BEN WALTER  
Would you care to repeat that?

SYDNEY DUCK #1  
 You don't need to get all personal  
 and such about it, mate.

BEN WALTER  
 Then cut the shit and start showing  
 me some results.

He lowers his pistol, eyes the Duck who Morrison belted. The man has a large welt over one eye.

BEN WALTER (CONT'D)  
 What happened to you?

SYDNEY DUCK  
 Morrison. And I may just kill him  
 if I see him.

Ben holsters his pistol.

BEN WALTER  
 Are you looking for my blessing?

EXT. GILROY LUMBER MILL - DAY

Morrison stands with a MILL WORKER.

MILL WORKER  
 He left already. Couldn't have  
 stayed more than ten minutes.

MORRISON  
 I thought he had business here.

MILL WORKER  
 I don't know about that. He sure  
 wasted his time, though.

The man goes back to his work. Morrison grows impatient.

MORRISON  
 But he was asked to come down here.

MILL WORKER  
 Not by me. And not by anybody else  
 here. If you ask me, it's all kind  
 of strange.

MORRISON  
 No stranger than anything else  
 that's happened since I got here.

EXT. CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO - SUNSET - ESTABLISHING

Vibrant hues of light spill across the Western horizon.

EXT. JAIL - DAY (DUSK)

Ben Walter, Deputy Smith, three other deputies sit on their horses.

BEN WALTER  
Any word down in Sand Ridge?

DEPUTY SMITH  
Nobody's seen nothing. And we don't even know what type of man we're looking for.

BEN WALTER  
It doesn't matter. He'll slip up and we'll be there to get him.

DEPUTY SMITH  
If you say so.

BEN WALTER  
Where the hell is Jackie?

DEPUTY SMITH  
He's been running off a lot these days. Maybe you should keep his ass on a leash.

BEN WALTER  
Go make yourself useful, Smitty. I know it ain't easy for you.

Deputy Smith spits a mouthful of tobacco, rides off.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY (DUSK)

Humble Jim, his face still partially obscured, rides his black horse down a crowded street. A small BOY eyes him. The BOY'S MOTHER takes his hand, frowns at Humble Jim.

BOY'S MOTHER  
Come on, son.

Humble Jim rides into an alley, fades into the darkness.

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - DAY (DUSK)

The Doc opens a cigar humidor to reveal a .38 pistol.

EXT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

He stuffs the .38 pistol into his belt. A YOUNG COUPLE approach him. The woman is very pregnant.

DOC BARKER  
I'm sorry, folks, but I don't have  
the time. And, darling, you have at  
least a week until your date, so go  
home and get some bed rest.

He waves to them, hurries off.

INT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DAY (DUSK)

Hank Webber, the man at Bill Hunt's funeral, holds an oil lamp, walks toward the back of the mill.

A BLACK BOOT

steps inside the entrance.

EXT. PORTSMOUTH SQUARE - DAY (DUSK)

Morrison rides hard. Pedestrians move aside to avoid him.

INT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DAY (DUSK)

Hank Webber sets the oil lamp down, straightens some boards. STEEL SCRAPES on WOOD (o.s.). He holds up the lamp, squints.

HANK WEBBER  
Can I help you?

MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Webber...

HANK WEBBER  
Who's asking?

A large man steps into the lamp light, keeps his back to him.

LARGE MAN  
You were a soldier.

HANK WEBBER  
Why don't you turn around, friend.  
I can't see you too well.

The large man reveals a long knife in his left hand. Webber sees it.

HANK WEBBER (CONT'D)  
What is it you want here?

LARGE MAN  
Your soul has been counted.

EXT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DAY (DUSK)

Jack Walter hears a MAN SCREAM (o.s.), stops his horse.

EXT. CITY STREET - DUSK

Morrison gets stuck behind a slow wagon, is unable to get around it.

MORRISON  
Come on.

He turns his horse around, rides back one full block, turns down another street.

INT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DAY (DUSK)

Flames from the shattered oil lamp burn on the floor. Jack Walter steps inside.

The large man kneels over the bloodied Hank Webber.

Jack sees this, stumbles backward.

JACK WALTER  
Holy shit.

He reaches for his pistol, but the large man overwhelms him, jams the knife into his chest.

EXT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DAY (DUSK)

Doc Barker arrives on foot.

Jack Walter staggers out, shirt bloodied, collapses at the Doc's feet. Several people gather around them.

Morrison arrives, dismounts his horse, sees Jack, now eyes the mill.

INT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DAY (DUSK)

Morrison grips his shotgun, walks past the flames.

HANK WEBBER

lies in a pool of blood.

Morrison stands in front of a row of glass window panes. The dying flames highlight

A LARGE MAN ON A HORSE

just outside the windows.

Morrison whips around, FIRES the shotgun, SHATTERS the GLASS.

He listens as a HORSE GALLOPS (o.s.) away.

INT. JAIL - DUSK

Ben Walter sits at a desk, feet up. Signals to TWO DEPUTIES.

BEN WALTER

Go on. Earn your keep. And don't listen to a damn thing anybody tells you. Not the Mayor, and not those Army boys.

DEPUTY #1

Okay, Sheriff.

BEN WALTER

Remember who wears this badge.

The deputies look confused, leave. Ben reveals a whiskey bottle, takes a slug.

THE FRONT DOOR

opens and a MAN enters, winded.



MAN  
Sheriff, I think you should come  
with me.

BEN WALTER  
This better be damn good.

EXT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DUSK

Doc Barker works on Jack Walter. He looks up at Morrison,  
shakes his head.

DOC BARKER  
There's nothing I can do. What do  
you think happened here?

MORRISON  
I don't know. And he's not about to  
tell us.

Ben Walter arrives, pushes through a crowd, sees Jack.

BEN WALTER  
Jesus God.

He rushes to his side.

DOC BARKER  
I did what I could, Ben.

Ben realizes Jack is gone, eyes Morrison.

BEN WALTER  
You son of a bitch.

DOC BARKER  
He's not responsible for this.

Ben stands up.

BEN WALTER  
You did this, Morrison. Since you  
showed up here men have been dying,  
one right after the other.

He dives at him, tries to choke him. Morrison elbows him in  
the head, knocks him out cold.

DOC BARKER  
Dear God. The man was out of his  
mind with rage.

Morrison cradles his elbow.

MORRISON  
How would you feel if your son just  
died in your arms?

INT. WEBBER'S LUMBER MILL - DAY (DUSK)

Morrison kneels over Hank Webber, eyes small burn marks on his skin.

A PAGE OF THE HOLY BIBLE

is on the floor, a passage circled.

MORRISON  
(reading)  
The smoke of their torment shall  
rise forever.

Handwritten below the passage: "WEDNESDAY MORRISON"

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Doc Barker eyes the page of the Bible. Morrison paces.

DOC BARKER  
What does this mean?

MORRISON  
He intends to kill me. And this is  
to tell me I can't beat him.

The Doc holds out his flask.

DOC BARKER  
How about now?

Morrison takes a slug of the booze, hands the flask back to the Doc.

MORRISON  
A man named Humble Jim got me out  
of jail. I think he made an attempt  
on my life yesterday.

DOC BARKER  
He's the man doing these killings?

MORRISON

I don't know.

DOC BARKER

But you're getting closer.

MORRISON

That's what he wants. That's why he gave Nora the medallion; he knew I'd see it. That's why he left me the note about Webber; he wanted me to try and stop him.

He walks to a window, looks out.

MORRISON (CONT'D)

I didn't want to kill again, but he's leaving me no choice.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - NIGHT

FLASHBACK MONTAGE - MORRISON'S QUICK MEMORY FLASHES

-- QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/BEDROOM

The younger Morrison is awakened by a noise, rain falls hard against a window.

-- QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

The younger Morrison fights off two of the bandits we saw earlier.

His WIFE SCREAMS (o.s.).

MORRISON

Isabella...

-- QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/BEDROOM

The younger Morrison, tears in his eyes, tries to revive his dead wife, her nightgown soaked with blood.

-- QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

The younger Morrison steps on one bandit's chest, shoots him in the head several times.

-- GRAVEYARD

The younger Morrison watches as a casket is lowered into the ground.

-- DOC BARKER'S OFFICE

Morrison eyes the dead Army Officers #1 and #2

-- DILAPIDATED 19th CENTURY BARN

Dan Wilkins hangs by a length of black rope, his abdomen slashed open.

-- HILLSIDE BEHIND HUNT'S SALOON

Morrison stands over the dead Bill Hunt.

-- QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE/BEDROOM

The younger Morrison's dead wife lies on the bed. Her lifeless eyes stare up at him.

-- GRAVEYARD

A man lies dead in an open casket, his face covered with a black cloth. It is pulled away to reveal Morrison's lifeless face.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/MORRISON'S ROOM - DAY

He stands beside the bed, aims his sawed-off shotgun into space, fearful.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - DAY

He hands Nora a wad of cash. She looks confused as he walks toward the swinging doors.

NORA

I don't understand.

MORRISON

There's nothing to understand. I don't want it.

She follows him now.

NORA

You're in danger, aren't you?

MORRISON  
I'll handle myself.

NORA  
(indignant)  
John Morrison.

He stops, turns to her.

MORRISON  
I've taken many lives. And whatever  
happens to me I've had it coming.

NORA  
Don't say that.

MORRISON  
I will fight though. I'll always  
fight.

She takes his hands.

NORA  
I've gotten you into something  
terrible.

MORRISON  
If anything, Nora, you showed me  
there's still goodness left in this  
world.

NORA  
What can I do?

MORRISON  
Say a prayer.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - DAY

He prepares his horse. SOUND of FOOTSTEPS (o.s.). He draws  
his Walker Colt, wheels around. Doc Barker raises his hands  
in the air.

MORRISON  
That's a good way to get shot.

DOC BARKER  
I would like to help you confront  
this man.

MORRISON

No.

DOC BARKER

Dammit, why?

MORRISON

Go home.

DOC BARKER

I'll die anyway before long, broken  
and pitiable.

MORRISON

That's just crazy talk. Now let me  
finish up here.

DOC BARKER

My chest is clear, Morrison. I  
can't tell you the last time I felt  
this way. And I'm a good shot. I  
just need a drink to steady my  
hand.

EXT. WHARVES - DAY

A BOTTLE of BOOZE SHATTERS into the water.

Doc Barker holds his smoking .38 pistol, Morrison stands  
beside him.

DOC BARKER

That was quality rum... so what do  
you think?

MORRISON

I've seen worse.

DOC BARKER

Then I'm cleared for duty?

Morrison scrutinizes him.

MORRISON

Why did you show up at Webber's  
last night?

DOC BARKER

I thought I could help. Sadly, I  
was too late. This time I intend to  
be there.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

They ride their horses past a graveyard.

EXT. ROCKY CLIFF - DAY

WAVES CRASH against rocks behind them.

MORRISON

I'll draw him out at sunset. We'll be able to see him coming from here.

DOC BARKER

Do you think he'll follow you?

MORRISON

If he wants to kill me, he'll have to come and get me.

He walks to his horse.

MORRISON (CONT'D)

Let's get back.

DOC BARKER

There is something I've been curious about.

MORRISON

You are full of questions.

DOC BARKER

Of all the saints, why do you think he chose San Miguel?

MORRISON

San Miguel sent Satan to Hell for eternity. I guess he thinks he's doing something close to that.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - SUNSET - ESTABLISHING

The streets bustle with pedestrians, wagons.

SUPER: "Christmas Eve"

Children stand in front of a church, SING Christmas Carols.

EXT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - DAY (DUSK)

Doc Barker dismounts his horse

DOC BARKER  
I'll just collect a few of my  
things.

Morrison begins to ride on.

MORRISON  
Be ready to go in ten minutes.

DOC BARKER  
This should take no time.

INT. LIVERY STABLE - DAY (DUSK)

Humble Jim, his face still obscured, a thin cigar in his mouth, unties his black horse.

Two Sydney Ducks appear in front of him.

SYDNEY DUCK #1  
Hey, mate. What's your business  
here?

No reply. Sydney Duck #2 waves his hands at him.

SYDNEY DUCK #2  
You some kind of mute, boy? The man  
asked you a question.

Humble Jim walks his horse past them.

SYDNEY DUCK #1  
Where the fucking shit do you think  
you're heading?

No reply. Sydney Duck #2 touches his horse, which snorts. He turns around, faces the them.

SYDNEY DUCK #1  
How about we cut that ugly face of  
yours right off, huh? Show you what  
the Ducks can do.

He reveals a knife. Humble Jim disarms him, shoves his own knife through the side of his head.



HUMBLE JIM  
Show me what it is you do.

Sydney Duck #2 fumbles for a pistol. Humble Jim jams the knife through his heart.

The cigar falls in the hay, starts a fire.

Humble Jim mounts his horse, rides past their bodies.

FIRE RISES behind him.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY (DUSK)

Morrison stops his horse, eyes

DARK SMOKE

which rises above a row of buildings on the next street.

A MAN ON HORSEBACK rides past him.

MAN ON HORSEBACK  
Fire. Over by Denison's Exchange.

EXT. LIVERY STABLE - DAY (DUSK)

Morrison rides up, listens as HORSES WHINNY (o.s.).

INT. LIVERY STABLE - DAY (DUSK)

He rushes in, sees the two dead Sydney Ducks on the floor. The smoke is thick. He begins to choke. A HORSE WHINNIES (o.s.).

FIRST STALL

Morrison opens the gate, a horse runs out.

SECOND STALL

Two horses run past him.

THIRD STALL

A stunning white horse rears, he pulls at the reins.

MORRISON  
Come on, boy. Come on.

EXT. LIVERY STABLE - SAME TIME

Horses run out to safety. Thick smoke billows out behind them.

INT. LIVERY STABLE - SAME TIME

The white horse kicks at him.

MORRISON

Easy now.

The flames rise higher behind them, he sees it.

MORRISON (CONT'D)

I need you to cooperate. Come on.

The horse rears again.

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - DUSK

Doc Barker sits at his desk, writes something.

SHOW THE FOLLOWING:

-- "SUBJECT: HANK WEBBER"

-- "THROAT CUT, AS WITH ALL PREVIOUS VICTIMS"

-- "SAME RELIGIOUS ICON BURNED INTO LEFT PALM"

Now he gathers a stack of papers together, hastily places them in his bag.

INT. LIVERY STABLE - DAY (DUSK)

Flames surge from a nearby stall, knock Morrison to the ground.

The white horse rears again, WHINNIES.

Morrison removes his longcoat, throws it over its head.

MORRISON

Come on, boy. Let's go.

He tries to grab the horse around the neck, but it knocks him aside. Determined, he grabs it around the neck, holds on tight. The horse takes off running.

EXT. LIVERY STABLE - DAY (DUSK)

The white horse run out, Morrison around his neck. Smoke, flames pour out behind them.

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - DAY (DUSK)

The Doc sees his front door is ajar.

DOC BARKER  
Is someone there?

He shuts the door, turns back.

A LARGE MAN

stands in front of him, his eyes widen.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY (DUSK)

Structures are engulfed in flames. Men, women and children run in all directions. Shops are looted. One man SHOTS another in cold blood.

Morrison eyes the madness around him, reins his horse.

MORRISON  
Let's go girl.

He rides away.

INT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - DAY (DUSK)

He enters, chokes from heavy smoke, covers his mouth with his bandana.

MORRISON  
Doc?

A chair is flipped over, papers strewn about.

MORRISON (CONT'D)  
Doc, where are you?

He tries to walk further in, but the smoke overwhelms him.

EXT. DOC BARKER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

He leans against his horse, coughs. Three of the Sydney Ducks approach him from behind.

SYDNEY DUCK (THE ONE MORRISON BELTED)  
There's that son of a bitch.

MORRISON  
I'd advise you to back off.

SYDNEY DUCK (THE ONE MORRISON BELTED)  
You're a dead man, mate. You got  
shit to answer for.

They reveal knives.

MORRISON  
I don't have time for this.

He grabs his sawed-off shotgun, swings the stock, strikes one of the Ducks.

A second Duck slashes at him. Morrison strikes him with the shotgun, knocks him down.

SYDNEY DUCK (THE ONE MORRISON BELTED)  
Fuck off.

He reveals a pistol. Morrison draws his Walker Colt faster than lightning, SHOOTS him in the head. The two other Ducks look stunned.

MORRISON  
Move on. I won't say it again.

They bum rush him, one right behind the other. He FIRES the pistol. The blast rips through one Duck, then the other. They both collapse.

He eyes the three dead men, disgusted. Mounts his horse, rides off.

EXT. FLAT LAND - NIGHT

Morrison rides away from the city, heads toward the Western horizon.

EXT. JAIL - NIGHT

Ben Walter, drunk, falls against the front wall. Mayor Dobbs, Captain William Tecumseh Sherman and TWO UNION ARMY SOLDIERS approach him.

MAYOR DOBBS  
Are you aware that the heart of our  
city is ablaze?

Captain Sherman extends a palm.

WILLIAM T. SHERMAN  
Sheriff, I request you hand over  
your badge without incident.

MAYOR DOBBS  
Ben, I'll ask you to do as the  
Captain says.

Ben's eyes burn with rage. He rips off his badge, tosses it on the ground.

BEN WALTER  
Without incident.

He pushes his way past them, salutes mockingly.

WILLIAM T. SHERMAN  
Your lack of dignity appalls me.

BEN WALTER  
Oh yeah?

He spits on the ground, lurches down the street.

EXT. STREET CORNER - MOMENTS LATER

Ben falls against a post, props himself up, eyes glazed.

A HORSE-DRAWN WAGON

careens around a corner, almost out of control.

BEN

steps in front of it, raging, defiant. He extends his arms, as if to say "stop." The horses trample him, the wagon rolls over him. He's broken... bloody... done.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Fire consumes entire blocks of buildings, as people run for cover.

SUPER: "The First Great San Francisco Fire"

An EXPLOSION. Flames shoot into the air. A building collapses into the street.

EXT. ROCKY CLIFF - NIGHT

Morrison stands beside his horse.

FIRE

rages in the distance, yet no one approaches on horseback. He shakes his head, concerned.

MORRISON  
Something's not right.

He mounts his horse, rides back toward the city.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - NIGHT

Candles flicker. Nora sets a fresh baked pie on a table, listens to DISTANT VOICES SHOUTING (o.s.).

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - MOMENTS LATER

She sees people run past, eyes the flames in the distance, looks anxious.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - MOMENTS LATER

The candles are out, she stands in complete darkness.

NORA  
Oh, my.

THE BAR

She crouches down behind it, grabs an oil lamp, lights it.

A CANDLE

She lights it using the oil lamp, sets it in a holder, does the same for another.

A LARGE MAN

stands behind her, silent.

She senses something now, keeps her back to him, nervous.

NORA (CONT'D)  
We're not open for business.

The OIL LAMP

SMASHES on the floor.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Morrison rides through a mass of panicked residents, tries to avoid running into anyone.

EXT. HUNT'S SALOON - MINUTES LATER

He dismounts his horse, walks inside.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - MOMENTS LATER

He sees the untouched pie on a table, the broken oil lamp on the floor.

MORRISON  
Nora?

He waits for a reply.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

He KNOCKS on her door.

MORRISON  
Nora, are you in there?

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - MOMENTS LATER

He walks toward the swinging doors, hears FOOTFALLS (o.s.) behind him, looks relieved.

MORRISON

I began to wonder where you --

Just as he turns around, someone punches him in the jaw, knocks him down.

HUMBLE JIM

his disfigured face fully visible, grabs him by the neck, throws him over a table.

Morrison lands hard on the floor, holds his side, picks him up.

A KNIFE BLADE GLINTS

Morrison sees it, just as Humble Jim stabs at him. The blade catches his wrist, draws blood. He reaches for his Walker Colt, Humble Jim knocks it out of his hand.

He steps back, swings a chair. Humble Jim catches it, throws it aside.

MORRISON

Jesus.

Humble Jim throws him against the bar. He almost falls right over it, catches himself. Now he eyes a

SHORT WOODEN BATON

just under the bar.

Humble Jim raises the knife blade.

He spins around, baton in hand, smashes him across the face with it.

THE BROKEN OIL LAMP

He grabs it, jams it into Humble Jim's face, elicits a scream.

Humble Jim grabs him around the throat, starts to choke him.

HUMBLE JIM

Don't fight it.

Morrison's eyes roll back, he gasps for air. Humble Jim squeezes harder.

Now Morrison grabs his balls, he groans, lets go of him.



This gives Morrison enough time to act fast. He picks up the Walker Colt, SHOOTS him in the chest, sends him crashing to the floor.

MORRISON

What happened to Nora? What did you do with her?

He leans down, grabs his shirt.

MORRISON (CONT'D)

Who are you?

(no reply; more enraged)

I said who are you?

HUMBLE JIM

I was hired by a a man from Chicago to cut out your heart. Meade. You killed his brother.

MORRISON

James Meade... you're a bounty hunter. You followed here through the mountains.

Humble Jim's breathing more labored.

MORRISON (CONT'D)

Did you kill the soldiers?

Humble Jim emits a loud sigh, dies.

INT. HUNT'S SALOON - MINUTES LATER

He stands at the bar, pours whiskey over his wrist wound.

Now he eyes a SQUARE OF PAPER nearby, holds it near a candle. Written on it: "JOHN, YOU WILL FIND ME AT THE"

MORRISON

Why?

Enraged, he sweeps his arm, knocks the candles off the bar.

EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - NIGHT

He rides hard through the darkness. Hazy moonlight illuminates his path.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT - NIGHT

Its fractured parapets stand in silhouette.

He pulls his shotgun from the saddle bag, works the pump twice.

MORRISON

You stay here, girl. I'll be back soon.

He walks toward the entrance.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT/ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

He enters through an open doorway. The walls are high on all sides. Large chunks of log lay around. Several cannon stand idle in the darkness.

He steps over chunks of broken adobe, eyes

A FIRE

like a campfire, several yards away. He grips the shotgun tighter, approaches.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT - MOMENTS LATER

Nora stands near the fire, her back to Morrison.

MORRISON

Nora.

She does not move. He steps in front of her, sees her mouth is gagged, her hands tied with black rope to a wood post. She sees him, begins to weep.

MORRISON

It'll be alright.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT/ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A large man, his face obscured, lights a thin cigar.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT - NIGHT

Morrison reveals a knife, goes to cut Nora's hands free.

She shakes her head 'no.'

He removes the gag from her mouth.

NORA

Above me.

He looks up, sees a log rigged above her head, which is attached to the rope that binds her hands.

He looks her in the eyes.

MORRISON

Trust me?

NORA

Go ahead.

He cuts the rope, pushes her aside. The log crashes to the ground where she just stood.

MORRISON

You okay?

Her eyes widen.

NORA

John, behind you.

He moves to his right, just as a knife blade slashes his shoulder. He wheels around, looks straight into the demonic eyes of

DEPUTY SMITH

who throws a thin cigar aside, grips a long knife in his left hand.

DEPUTY SMITH

Evening, Morrison.

He lunges on him, presses the knife toward his throat.

DEPUTY SMITH (CONT'D)

I just knew you'd show up.

Morrison tries to push the knife away with his free hand, reaches for his Walker Colt with the other.

DEPUTY SMITH (CONT'D)

No, you don't.

He pins his hand, won't allow him to remove the pistol from the holster.

The knife tip is a hair from Morrison's jugular.

Nora smashes Deputy Smith in the head with a rock.

NORA  
Get off him.

She goes to hit him again, he swipes her leg, knocks her to the ground.

DEPUTY SMITH  
Bitch

Morrison rolls free, grabs his sawed-off shotgun.

Deputy Smith is gone.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT/CANNON AREA - MINUTES LATER

Nora crouches down between two cannon.

MORRISON  
Stay here. It'll be safer.

NORA  
John, he forced me to write the note.

MORRISON  
Don't move. I'll come back for you.

She clutches his wrist, concerned.

NORA  
Be careful.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT/SECOND LEVEL - NIGHT

He pulls himself onto a walkway, which runs the length of the fort, stands ten feet above the ground. From this vantage point he can see

NORA

She sits among the cannon, glances around, the small FIRE CRACKLES nearby.

MORRISON

holds the sawed-off shotgun at hip level, notices a pile of logs is on fire below the walkway.

DEPUTY SMITH'S VOICE (O.S.)  
I missed killing you more than  
once, Morrison. It won't happen  
again.

He raises the shotgun.

DEPUTY SMITH'S VOICE (O.S. CONT'D)  
And I want you to meet the one who  
arranged all of this. Of course you  
already know each other.

Someone steps out from behind the burning pile of logs. The glow of the fire reveals

DOC BARKER

He wears an odd smile.

DOC BARKER  
I couldn't imagine a better stage.  
The solider's home. And I'll be  
damned, Morrison, you inspired this  
epic finale.

Morrison lowers the shotgun, stunned.

MORRISON  
Not you, Doc.

The Doc glances up at the walkway.

DOC BARKER  
We're both fond of stories, so  
here's a grand one for you: an old  
physician in failing health with  
nothing much to live for, except  
his fascination with what makes men  
kill. He meets a young deputy with  
a thirst for blood, and the ideal  
means to not be caught.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Deputy Smith, badge prominent, covered in blood, hacks up a soldier.

END FLASHBACK

Doc Barker walks past the cannons.

DOC BARKER (CONT'D)

The doctor and his protege had just begun their work. Then a stranger blew into town, a hired killer with an odd sense of morality -- one whose reputation the doctor was well aware of. It was timely, to say the least. The protege made the first attempt on the stranger's life, but it failed. This gave the Doctor a chance to know the man, to play on his need for the truth.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE - DOC BARKER'S MEMORY FLASHES

-- OUTSIDE DOC BARKER'S OFFICE

Deputy Smith stands in the dark, rain, out of Morrison's view, speaks to the Doc.

-- OUTSIDE CHURCH

Doc Barker gives Deputy Smith a conspiratorial look when Morrison's back is turned.

-- DOC BARKER'S OFFICE/FRONT DOOR

The Doc eyes the partially open door, turns to face Deputy Smith, grins.

END FLASHBACK

Morrison steps along the walkway.

MORRISON

All those notes were your idea?

DOC BARKER

The notes, the medallion. You gave me a venue for my masterwork.

MORRISON

You had men killed for sport.

DOC BARKER

For legacy. And they were damned anyway.

MORRISON

That's not for you to decide, Doc.

Doc Barker stops, holds up a stack of papers.

DOC BARKER

I have detailed death in a way that has never before been documented. Morrison, don't you see? I will be famous. They will discuss my findings for years to come. My name will be etched in history.

MORRISON

Nobody will give a damn.

DOC BARKER

You're wrong. This story is as timeless as anything in Homer or Shakespeare. And you've helped to create something greater than yourself. Consider that as you die.

Morrison levels the shotgun.

MORRISON

Then I guess this is goodbye.

The Doc suddenly grabs Nora by the arm, holds his .38 pistol on her.

DOC BARKER

She will die.

MORRISON

Let her go.

The Doc draws the hammer back, she screams.

DOC BARKER

Set the shotgun down, Morrison. It's done.

MORRISON

Why me, Doc? What interest am I to you?

DOC BARKER

The others were all strong. But you are a true killer. Perhaps the best there is. Until now.

MORRISON

turns to one side, just as

DEPUTY SMITH

brings the knife down on him.

Morrison swings the sawed-off shotgun, but Deputy Smith grabs the barrel, pushes it away.

One BARREL discharges.

They wrestle for the shotgun, move closer to the edge of the walkway. Morrison almost falls.

The shotgun flies out of their hands, lands further down the walkway.

Deputy Smith slashes at Morrison. The blade catches his hand, opens a wound.

DEPUTY SMITH

I'm going to drain you.

He grabs Morrison's bleeding hand, squeezes it.

MORRISON

You won't beat me.

They spin together. Morrison's feet leave the walkway. He hangs onto Deputy Smith's arm, regains his footing.

THE FIRE

from the logs has now spread throughout the fort.

MORRISON

pushes himself against Deputy Smith. They fall against a wall. Deputy Smith grabs him thumb, bends it backward. Morrison groans. Now he grabs Deputy Smith's pistol.

DEPUTY SMITH

Oh, no.



He pins his arm, the pistol falls out of his hand, lands on the ground below.

Morrison pulls his thumb free, throws a forearm.

Deputy Smith grabs his throat, pushes him toward the edge of the walkway.

DEPUTY SMITH (CONT'D)  
I plan to take my time with you.

He head-butts him, slashes his chest with the knife. Morrison staggers.

FLASHBACK - MORRISON'S FLASH OF MEMORY

-- GRAVEYARD

Morrison's wife lies dead in a casket

Morrison himself lies dead in the casket

END OF FLASHBACK

Morrison throws a wild punch, Deputy Smith elbows him in the jaw.

The fort begins to SHAKES. Earthquake.

Morrison struggles to keep his balance, as sizeable logs separate from the fort walls.

NORA AND DOC BARKER

Large hunks of adobe fall near them.

NORA  
John.

MORRISON AND DEPUTY SMITH

His eyes become focused, pushes Deputy Smith, who loses his footing, falls against the wall.

Morrison eyes the fire, which is just below the walkway, and rising.

The EARTHQUAKE ends.

Morrison throws himself against Deputy Smith again.

DEPUTY SMITH  
You're as good as dead.

Morrison lands a forearm across his mouth, teeth fly.

MORRISON  
Not yet.

Deputy Smith stabs at him, misses.

The walkway shifts under them, flames shoot up through it behind Deputy Smith.

Morrison sees this, kicks him hard in the chest, knocks him into the flames. His clothes, skin combust, he screams in agony.

NORA AND DOC BARKER

They watch in horror.

DEPUTY SMITH

his body engulfed in flames, rushes at Morrison, who grabs the sawed-off shotgun.

Deputy Smith jumps on him, tries to set him ablaze.

Morrison presses a barrel against his face, FIRES. The impact blows his head right off, his lifeless body falls off the walkway, drops into the fire below.

Morrison regains his balance, loads a slug into the sawed-off shotgun, levels it at Doc Barker.

MORRISON  
Let her go now.

DOC BARKER  
Drop the gun.

MORRISON  
I won't say it again, Doc.

DOC BARKER  
Dammit, I will send the girl to her Heavenly reward. And if you have any doubt about that --

He SHOOTs Nora in the lower leg. She screams, falls to the ground.

MORRISON

No.

The Doc pushes the pistol against her head.

DOC BARKER

The next one is not for effect.

Morrison relents, tosses the shotgun.

DOC BARKER

(quoting)

"The smoke of their torment shall rise forever."

(in his own words)

God won't save you, Morrison. And like our friend, San Miguel, I will send you to eternal damnation. Your soul will be counted in Hell.

He aims the .38 pistol at him.

Morrison runs fast along the falling walkway, hurdles over the raging fire, comes down right on top of the Doc, BONES crunch.

The Doc is half-conscious, bleeds from his nose, mouth.

Morrison staggers to his feet, pick up the Doc's .38 pistol.

MORRISON

I liked you, Doc. That was my first mistake.

He levels the pistol at him.

NORA

You're better than this, John.

He watches Doc Barker slip closer to death.

MORRISON

I'm done.

He tosses the pistol.

HIS BANDANA

He uses it to wrap her leg wound, ties it off.

MORRISON (CONT'D)

Come on. We need to go.

NORA  
I don't have the strength.

MORRISON  
Yes, you do.

NORA  
Just go, John. There's not much  
time.

He takes her by the arm.

MORRISON  
We're leaving here together. Now  
come on.

NORA  
I can't.

MORRISON  
You damn well can. And you will. Or  
I will die here beside you.

She finds the strength, rises to her feet.

He puts her arm around his neck, holds her waist.

He stops now, looks back at something.

NORA  
What is it, John?

DOC BARKER'S PAPERS

As fire touches each piece, it shoots forward like a flaming  
rocket.

SHOW THE FOLLOWING:

"ABDOMINAL TEARING FROM A..."

"BURNS TO FACE, CHEST, UPPER AND LOWER EXTREMITIES..."

"ORGAN REMOVAL, INCLUDING..."

"COMMON INCISION POINTS"

"KILLER FAVORS LEFT HAND"

"MODERATE DISFIGUREMENT OF ALL SUBJECTS"

"SERIALIZED IN NATURE"

"PRESENCE OF NARCOTICS POSSIBLE"

"ALL VICTIMS HAVE SOME MILITARY BACKGROUND"

"RELIGIOUS MOTIVATION?"

"KILLER... UNKNOWN"

Gone. The first recorded notes on the first modern serial killer.

He grips her hand tighter.

MORRISON  
It's nothing.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT/ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

They struggle to breathe in the heavy smoke. Nora almost falls. He holds her up, ducks to avoid falling chunks of adobe.

MORRISON  
(indicating)  
It's just up here.

THE ENTRANCE

is consumed by fire and heavy smoke, almost ready to collapse.

NORA  
How do we get out of here?

He removes his longcoat, wraps it around her.

MORRISON  
Keep your head down. We only have  
one shot at this.

He holds her close to him. Now they run together toward the entrance.

EXT. CRUMBLING SPANISH FORT - MOMENTS LATER

They emerge from the flames, fall to the ground. A section of his shirt is on fire, he pats it out.

Now he glances back as

THE ENTRANCE COLLAPSES TOWARD THEM

MORRISON

Go. Go.

They lunge forward, just as it crashes to the ground. Flames smolder, thick plumes of smoke float upward through the darkness.

No sign of them...

And now

MORRISON AND NORA

rise from the ashes, exhausted, relieved, falling into each other's arms.

EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

Nora sits on a large rock, Morrison wraps her leg wound.

MORRISON

The slug is out, and I cleaned it as well as I could. It should heal okay.

NORA

I'll keep an eye on it.

They eye the city of San Francisco, which smolders in the distance.

MORRISON

I'm sorry.

She acknowledges, takes his hand.

NORA

Tell me about Illinois, John.

EXT. QUAIN T COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

The same one from Morrison's dreams. They stand before it, hold hands.

MORRISON

The place needs work, but it should make a good home.

NORA  
It's perfect.

They start to approach the house.

He stops suddenly, glances over his shoulder, sees

DEPUTY SMITH

who holds a big knife in his left hand.

Nora eyes him, empathic.

NORA  
It's okay now.

He shakes off the bad memory, smiles at her.

MORRISON  
I know.

They exchange a tender kiss, a loving caress, walk toward  
their new life together.

FADE OUT