

EXT. HIGH PLAIN - DAY

A naked and serene landscape. Dead wild flowers sway in a persistent breeze.

THE SKY is a sea of brilliant blue, but ominous clouds roll in and soon swallow the sun.

Now the RUMBLE of HORSES grows louder over this harsh and boundless terrain. Moving closer... closer... and --

-- FOUR HORSEMEN thunder toward us at an almost unreal speed. They are spread out wide, silhouetted by the darkened sky, like the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

EXT. SHALLOW VALLEY - DAY

A WALKER COLT .45 REVOLVER is sheathed in a crude leather holster. Partially concealed by a canvas longcoat, it hangs on the belt of a LONE HORSEMAN.

He rides at a sluggish pace, a Stetson brim obscuring his stubbly face. A MILITARY COAT OF ARMS (Mexican-American War) is pinned to his lapel.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN - DAY

The four horsemen ride ahead of the storm, SPURRING their horses with brutish force. The hooves gouge the blistered earth, hurling it in random parcels through the air.

EXT. SHALLOW VALLEY - DAY

The lone horseman continues along at a halting pace. He's in no hurry. His focus is on the ground.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN - DAY

One... by... one the four horsemen slow their horses to a gallop.

EXT. SHALLOW VALLEY - DAY

The lone horseman approaches an incline and stops suddenly to examine FRESH HORSE TRACKS --

Lightning reveals JOHN MORRISON, 38, ruggedly handsome face. His ice blue eyes could bore holes in steel.

He slowly removes a sawed-off shotgun from a saddle scabbard and pats his horse's neck. She responds without delay and takes off running like a bat out of Hell.

EXT. HIGH PLAIN - DAY

Above: BLACK CLOUDS roll in waves across the sky. LIGHTNING scorches the Heavens.

Below: The four horsemen ride at a casual trot toward the SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS up ahead, completely unaware of --

MORRISON

-- who advances on them from behind, his longcoat lashing behind him like a phantom's cape. He pumps the slide handle of the shotgun with his free hand.

The first horseman wipes his neck with a white handkerchief. Glancing back, his eyes open wider as he sees --

-- Morrison holding his shotgun high and riding at breakneck speed. (o.s.) A DISSONANT ARMY BUGLE screams in short bursts, as if playing off the storm's erratic energy.

The first horseman spurs his horse and signals to the others.

FIRST HORSEMAN
Christ almighty. Go! Go! Go!

Panic consumes the men as they realize --

-- Morrison is only twenty yards behind them and closing fast. He levels the shotgun, calmly picking out his target. Squeezes the trigger and BAWHOOM --

-- the second horseman is struck in the back by the blast. Lurches forward. Dead man now.

The third horseman points his pistol over his shoulder, trying desperately to steady it.

Morrison pumps the slide handle again and BAWHOOM --

-- the third horseman is launched forward off his horse. BLOOD sprays as he is sucked under the hooves, his guts stomped into mush by the animal.

Morrison sets the shotgun back in the scabbard. Grabs the Walker Colt from its holster -- spins it once -- FIRES.