OPEN ON:

A FIELD OF GOLDEN WHEAT

waving in the wind. Off in the distance an old farm house sprouts up from the PLAIN at the end of a long dirt road.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY - SHOTS OF

A tire-swing swaying in the wind.

An idle tractor parked in an untilled field.

A bicycle in the yard and a mini-van in need of a wash before the small wooden porch.

Just your typical Midwestern farm where dad works sunup to sundown and mom's in an apron all day. Only today, with not a person or animal in sight, there's something eerie about the place, an unsettling quiet that hangs in the air.

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

The living room in a shambles - toppled chairs, farming magazines and a broken vase scattered over the floor, family photos a kilter on the wall.

One photo of mom, dad and their six-year-old son in an old western town - the little boy dressed as a cowboy.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME

The boy's room where a homemade curtain flaps in the breeze.

More happy photos here and sport posters hung on the walls, baseball trophies crowding a bureau top.

One trophy lies on the floor in front of a closet. The name plate reads

HOLCOMB BOBCATS
WEST KANSAS T-BALL CHAMPIONS

Just beyond it an eye peers out a closet door and labored breathing issues from within.

INSIDE THE CLOSET

A terrified HOUSEWIFE huddles on the floor drawing deeply on an asthma nebulizer.

Her hair in tangles, her clothing torn, she sits trembling in the dark breathing in and out, in... and out.

HOUSEWIFE'S POV:

Of the quiet bedroom, motionless but for the curtain FLAPPING in the breeze.

A storm shutter bangs against the house.

And Housewife jumps in her skin. Stops a scream with her hand. Breathes. Calms herself then bolts up and starts searching the closet.

Rifling through boxes, tossing aside clothing and toys, searching for something as if her life depended on it.

She stops and wipes a tear then notices a box on the shelf above her head. Recognizes it. Reaches, practically lunges for it and rips it open.

An old hand-carved wooden horse and stacks of baseball cards spill onto the closet floor. Housewife grabs the horse and clutches it to her chest. Found it!

She peeks out the door again, widens it and throws out the horse and shuts the door.

HOUSEWIFE
There, there it is. Take it! Now please...
(sobs and slumps to the floor)
leave me alone.

After a long still moment she ventures another peek.

The horse still lying on the floor and beyond it through the open window an old truck approaching the house.

Housewife GASPS.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

The truck comes to a stop and a FARMER and the LITTLE BOY hop out and saunter up to the house.

INT. BEDROOM CLOSET - DAY

Housewife, huddled on the floor, listens. Hears the front DOOR OPEN and indistinct VOICES come from the living room.

For a moment she looks suffused with hope, saved. But then gets a fearful look and bolts to her feet.

As she does a dead woman's hand shoots out of the wall and grabs her arm - a ghoulish, necrotic hand, mottled purple, black and white.

Housewife tries to scream but another rotting hand slithers out of the wall, covers her mouth and jerks her violently out of frame.

LITTLE BOY (O.S.)
(fading)
Mom?... Mom?

OPENING TITLES

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - CLOSE ON

A PHOTOGRAPH on a bedside table of a happy young couple - a pretty young woman in the arms of her handsome boyfriend out in a park.

OVER ON THE BED

The young African American woman sleeps alone - JILL DAVIDSON (early 20s) lies in bed staring at the ceiling with tears on her cheeks.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Water pours from a faucet.

Jill, in white lingerie, comes up from washing her face and looks in a mirror.

A troubled young woman staring back at her. Jill gazes at her reflection as if searching for an answer.

MOMENTS LATER

She brushes her teeth. One side of the sink packed with a woman's toiletries, the other side completely bare.

Jill takes floss out of a medicine cabinet with two shelves that are also bare.

Even one of the towel racks is empty. The whole impression is as if someone has vacated with all of their things.

Back in the BEDROOM Jill opens a closet and takes out a dress, nothing but empty hangers on one side of the clothes rack.

MOMENTS LATER

Jill, now dressed, checks a large professional make-up kit set out on a table. Locks it and places it by the door.

Goes for her purse on the nightstand and pauses to look at the photo of her and her ex-boyfriend in the park.

Jill picks it up. Studies it. Happier times.

Drops it in a waste basket and walks out.

CLOSE ON: THE PHOTOGRAPH - ITS SHATTERED GLASS

A symbolic crack now dividing the once happy couple.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

A bare industrial space where a professional photo shoot is underway. Lights. Reflectors. MODELS and CREW.

The models pose.

A photographer shoots - CARLOS VEGA, cool, laid-back, on the plus side of forty but still far too handsome and fit for anyone to notice.

He CLICKS away.

AD LIBS directions to the models.

Three gorgeous women in *haute couture* and a male model all in white - deck hand pants and an open silk shirt.

Observing it all with a disapproving eye is TINA GREER (51), the producer of the shoot. Slender, sultry, easily pegged as a former model herself, she's a woman who exudes confidence and style.

TINA
No, no, no. C'mon, Dino, for Christ's sake, stop pouting. It makes you look constipated. Just relax.

DINO AKAU

22, is hapa (half white/half Polynesian) with gorgeous GQ features and an arrogance about him that suggests he believes "the world and all its women are at his feet".

TINA (CONT'D)
(to Carlos)
Change the set up. Let's get some shots with a different background. Try that faux Jackson Pollock backdrop that looks like throw-up - that suits my mood.

Dino and two female models stop posing and disperse around the set.

A couple of grips move lights, reflectors.

Carlos comes over to a table blanketed with cameras beside Jill's make-up stand. Loads film into a camera. Looks at...

Jill sitting bonelessly in a chair staring blankly into space.

CARLOS
Hey, cheer up. Life goes on, you know.

JILL
My circle of friends is way too small. Does everyone in town know?

CARLOS
No, just everyone with a phone.

JILL
Great... Just shoot me already.

Carlos takes her photo.

CARLOS
There. Better?

JILL
Oh, yeah, much. Now my misery's been immortalized.

CARLOS
Ah, come on. Where's my brave girl, huh, my lion tamer?

JILL
Smashed into a million little pieces.

Carlos comes over and massages her shoulders.

CARLOS
Hey, now, don't take it so hard.
You're gonna be okay.

JILL
That feels good. Don't stop.

Jill closes her eyes and enjoys the massage.

JILL (CONT'D)
You know what I'm gonna' do after this.
(looks up)
I'm gonna' go back to my tiny, little empty apartment.

CARLOS
That's redundant.

JILL
Yeah, and so's my life. It's the same crap over and over again. Which is why I will go home to my *tiny*, *little*, *empty* apartment, put on my favorite Alanis Morrisette song,"*You Oughtta Know*" fill my tub with wine... and drown myself.

CARLOS
Why don't you drown him instead?

JILL
Yeah, good idea - in acid.

Carlos CHUCKLES, stops the massage and goes back to the table and changes the lens on the camera.

JILL (CONT'D)
(rolls her head)
Oh, that was great. Can't I get more?

CARLOS
Nope. Back to work.

JILL
You're cruel, Carlos. You know that? You're worse than Tina.

CARLOS
No, I'm not. No one's worse than Tina... except maybe Cersei Lannister and she's not real.

Carlos snaps another photo of Jill and walks off.

JILL
Hey, I want those!

David just waves and heads back to the set.

Jill sits for a moment and thinks. Then spies...

A mouse under a nearby chair sniffing for food.

Jill picks up a box of raisins on her make-up table and tosses a couple under the chair.

Watches the mouse run off with the morsel.

ACROSS THE SET

Tina approaches carry two cups of coffee. Hands one to Jill and takes a seat beside her.

TINA
Now it starts.
(off Jill's look)
All the condolences for being dumped. That's the worst part, isn't it? Everyone knows and they all want to make you feel better... the bastards. Have you talked with him?

JILL
No. He changed his number.

TINA
Be glad, at least now you can't go begging after him.

Jill shoots her a look.

TINA (CONT'D)
Sorry. It's what I did... do. Every time.

Tina looks at Jill with a friend's concern.

TINA (CONT'D)
I told you not to get involved with a model. They'll sweep you off your feet and for a time you'll feel like you're walking on air. Until they drop you like a hot potato and you land splat! flat on the ground... You know they're all butterflies, don't you? Straight or gay, all they want to do is go from flower to flower, sucking the life out of each one until there's nothing left but a shriveled mess.

JILL
Gee, thanks, I hadn't quite thought of it like that. How uplifting.

TINA
What are friends for? Hey, do you need a real pick-me-up?

Tina grabs her purse off a table. Takes out several bottle of pills and shows each one to Jill.

TINA (CONT'D)
Here, I got pills for everything - all natural and very effective. Like this one... Guarana. You'll be dancing across the set if you take one of these.

Holds up others.

TINA (CONT'D)
One for menopause - which you don't need, yet, thank God. One to sleep, one to wake up, one to remember things - although I always forget to take that one. I got it all. Sure you don't want one?

JILL
No, thanks.

TINA
Yeah, well I do. I'm exhausted. I can't sleep.
(MORE)

TINA (CONT'D)
That's what happens when you get old, you gain weight and lose sleep.

Tina takes a pill with her coffee, reacts bitterly.

JILL
You're not old.

TINA
Oh, please, I've been at a party since I was sixteen. I was old at thirty. Now I'm fifty-one, I'm practically fossilized.

JILL
(notes one bottle is a prescription)
What's that one for?

TINA
Oh, that, my heart. It's made special for people who love French food and hate exercise. Such as moi.

JILL
Are you okay?

TINA
Oh, yeah, it's nothing serious. I just have a nervous doctor.

Tina wants off the subject. She shifts tone on Jill.

TINA (CONT'D)
But what about you, hm? You gonna' be all right?

JILL
I guess... This came out of nowhere, you know. I had no clue. I think that's what hurts the most.

Tina has the insight to just listen, which is all Jill needs.

JILL (CONT'D)
This isn't the first time, too. I've been fooled before.

TINA
Haven't we all.

JILL
You know, I used to be so optimistic about life... about love. But now I don't think I'll ever find anybody who will love me just for me.

TINA
Sure you can, it's easy.
(off Jill's look)
Just look in the mirror.

Jill ponders the sage advice.

TINA (CONT'D)
I'll tell you what. I've got just the thing to get you back on your feet and it's not a pill. It's a shoot I've lined up for this weekend. It's out in the desert but it pays really well. And if you ask me getting away for a few days is just what you need. You up for it?

JILL
I'll think about it.

TINA
Take your time, it's not like I need an answer today or anything.

Tina reaches over and affectionately takes Jill's arm.

TINA (CONT'D)
I know it hurts, but try to move on, right away. Really, it's the best thing.

JILL
Thanks.

TINA
(stands)
You bet, tasteless coffee and armchair psychology, what else is a best friend for.

Tina drops her coffee in a wastebasket and walks off, immediately back on the job.

TINA (CONT'D)
Ah, c'mon, Andy, leave Honey alone for a minute, would ya. And get that goddamn reflector out of the way, it's throwing a huge shadow into the shot.

ANDY BROWN

a handsome but paunchy grip in his late 20s, breaks away from an intimate conversation with HONEY CHUGANI (20), a stunning East Indian model.

Jill sits there a moment, thinking. ROBIN KIROV (21) a tall, blonde model comes and sits in a make-up chair and looks expectantly at Jill, who gets up and goes back to work.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A white 2023 Chevy Express Van 1500 travels a paved highway in the DESERT.

INT. VAN - DAY

Jill stares out the window at the bland scenery, lost in thought as the RADIO MUSIC, ENGINE, and ALL SOUND FADES leaving her in a cocoon of SILENCE.

MOS: Jill stares out at the desert flashing by.

- The flat brown landscape speckled with sage brush.

- The bordering hills, barren and dry.

- A lone hawk banking on updrafts in search of its prey.

SOUND UP: as Jill comes out of her reverie.

END OF WEBSITE EXCERPT. If you'd like to read the full script contact johnroyan@tahoefilmgroup.com.