

**STAR SEARCH**  
B. N. Saxton  
(Example Screenplay)

**1. EXT. – COUNTRY ROAD — NIGHT**

We see a rather narrow road which runs very straight through expansive fields. There is a sense of loneliness about the scene. The headlights of an aging blue pick-up can be seen ominously approaching.

**2. EXT. – FRONT OF FARM HOUSE – NEAR DAWN**

We see the truck arriving at a neat, two-story yellow farm house. The property is obviously owned by someone who takes great care to keep things in order. Absent are the usual piles of clutter that inhabit the yards of most farmhouses in the middle-west. The dirt drive is free from dead leaves, mud-holes, and deserted farm implements. Instead, it is lined with well-maintained flower beds and a few toys that indicate the presence of a young child. There is a freshly painted Barn at the rear of the house and some sort of out-building farther up the lane. There are three large trees (the only ones for miles) in the front yard (one of which supports a tire swing). The only sense we get of the reality of a working farm are the soft animal noises coming from somewhere beyond the barn. The last thing we notice, as the truck turns off its lights and rolls quietly to a stop, is that there doesn't seem to be another farm within sight of this one. The driver's side door swings open silently and a young man in jeans, a blue plaid flannel shirt, and beat-up tennis shoes exits. His hand is wrapped nervously around the hub-cap end of a blue-painted steel tire-iron. The iron is held with the lug wrench socket angling up from its extended end. The blue paint is chipped noticeably as if the iron has been clanging around unused with other tools in a chest. The door closes with only the faintest sound. The man walks around to the back of the truck and retrieves a red plastic gasoline can from the bed. We notice that it is beginning to get light; everything has taken on a pale blue-gray morning tint. The man pauses for a moment and then begins to walk up the drive to the house.

**3. INT. – FARM HOUSE MASTER BEDROOM (LOWER LEVEL) — EARLY**

Through transparent curtains we can see the front end of the pick-up. The rear of the truck is out of view around the corner of the house. The room is still quite dark, but we can see that it has been decorated nicely in the style of a married woman. There are many photographs on the walls and on the top of a large dresser near the bed. The glowing red numbers of an alarm clock on a night stand read 4:53. In the bed, asleep, is a

woman of about 31. Her husband sleeps next to her. He is a rugged, yet sensitive-looking man of about 36. He is clean-shaven and short-haired. He sleepily opens his eyes — then becomes suddenly alert. He sits up quietly, gets to his feet, and moves quickly to the window. He is wearing gray sweat-pants and a white undershirt. As he moves to the window, he pulls a flannel robe from the bed post. Pulling the robe into place he reaches the window and sees the truck parked out front. His face pulls tight and he is about to rush from the room. The awakened woman groggily sits partway up in bed.

WOMAN

(yawning)

Honey? Somethin' wrong?

HUSBAND

(a little surprised and a little too reassuring)

No. Everything's fine. It's okay . . . go back to sleep.

WOMAN

(still a bit confused)

Where're you going? What time is it?

HUSBAND

I'm just going to the kitchen for a drink, and then I'm gonna check on Lizzie. It's still early yet. Go back to sleep.

WOMAN

(lying back down, and not enthusiastically)

Do you want me to make . . . some milk or . . . muffin . . .

(she trails off with a sigh)

The man hurries from the room.

#### **4. INT. – FARM HOUSE DEN — EARLY**

In a rush but trying to be quiet, the husband enters the den, nearly trips on a chair, and switches on a small lamp. The den is also well furnished and contains several hunting trophies and a large wood-and-glass gun cabinet. The husband rushes to a large desk and pulls open the top drawer rapidly nearly spilling its contents on the floor. The drawer contains (among other things) a ring with two small keys attached. The husband snatches up the keys, moves to the gun cabinet, and fiddles with the lock.

#### **5. EXT. – FRONT DOOR OF FARM HOUSE — DAWN**

The front door pulls open and the husband comes out cautiously. He is carrying a long pump-action shotgun tightly in his hands at waist level. His eyes are fixed on the pick-up. He steps out onto the front porch.

HUSBAND

(trying to call without waking anyone)

David? . . . David, I've got a gun. . . . Go home, David.

There is no reply except the murmuring of some cattle in the distance. The husband takes several steps out toward the truck.

HUSBAND

(eyes shifting back and forth in a search — we see fear in them)

David?

The husband doesn't see the man hiding in the bushes near the front door. The man slips quietly through the front door and pushes it closed from the inside locking the husband out of the house.