

Camryn Baenen

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Image & Sound Essay

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### **Introduction**

For this image and sound essay, I have chosen to analyze a scene from Game of Thrones called the Battle of the Bastards. Even though this is what the entire episode is named. I will be analyzing just the battle scene from minute 32 to minute 45. This is one of the most popular scenes in the TV show as a whole. If you were to compare this scene with any other scene, you can see the change in production and how important this one scene is to the entire plot line of the TV show. Each snippet during this one scene has so many different components melted together to be able to give the audience a fantastic battle scene.

### **Shots**

Right off the bat, there is a two-shot of Sansa Stark and Jon Snow at the round table trying to figure out what to do during this battle. This is an important shot because this two-shot gives the audience a feeling that they are finally starting to team up with each other and that they are a team that shouldn't be messed with. While Jon is waiting for the battle, there is an extreme close up shot of him on his horse that gives the audience a little bit of evidence that he has some worry and nervousness about trying to get his younger brother Rickon back. Right after Ramsy (one of the bad guys) kills Jon's brother Rickon, there is a close up of Ramsy with a very snarky look on his face that taunts Jon which then leads to the main battle scene.

The first shot that shows the armies that are ready to fight would be the high angle shot of all the men that are enemies, and they have to try to beat Jon and Sansa. This shot shows that the Boltons have more men and more gear to defeat Jon and Sansa. This shot is made to show the audience that it is going to be a close fight and either side could win, it gives the audience a little bit of worry.



(High Angle picture of the armies being talked about above)

During the fighting scene with just Jon, there is a steady camera that follows Jon around while he is fighting. Even though you cannot see all of the expressions on Jons face during this scene because everything is moving so fast, you can see the struggle that he is facing because of how close the camera is to him. This shot makes it feel like the audience is right in the battle with him.

### **Sound**

Throughout the scene there are a lot of different sounds that come into play. There is a kind of eerie music that plays in the background to help the audience understand how important this scene is to the plot of the show. There are also many other non diegetic sounds that come into play with this scene. Two of the most used sounds during this scene are the sounds of

swords hitting each other, and other people. This sound is important to the scene because it gives off the impression that this is a high energy battle with a lot on the line. The other sound that is most popular during this scene is the sounds of horses, whether they are whining because they have just gotten injured, or the sound of their hooves on the ground. These are all examples of non diegetic sounds in order to make the scene more instance for the viewers.

One example of a diegetic sound would be the grunts of all the men fighting. Throughout the battle scene, whoever was fighting in the frame, you can hear the different types of noises they would give off when they were fighting with someone else. During the shot that follows Jon Snow around during the battle, you can distinctly hear that he is the one giving off the grunts while fighting and it's all coming from him and it is not prerecorded.

### **Lighting**

The lighting that is given throughout this scene isn't the most important to the plot line, but it does give the viewers a better understanding of what goes on during the battles. During the first part of the scene when each house is on different sides of the fields, the lighting is more of a soft light, there are not many harsh shadows and it looks like the sky is in cloud cover. During this scene, the lighting presented makes the scene more sad and worrying. It gives off a feeling that a lot of people are going to die during this battle. This type of lighting during close ups, makes the characters look more worried and nervous.

After the battle has started, the lighting moves into more of a harsh lighting, which we call high-key lighting. This type of lighting gives off shadows that make the battle scene more harsh. There is a specific shot, where Jon Snow is cutting people down one by one, and you can see a direct beam of sunlight shining off of his face. With this high-key lighting, you are able to see all the blood, mud, and cuts on his face. This lighting follows him around while he is fighting

so you are able to see the blood and sweat that comes off of people when they are struck by a sword. During this lighting, you get the feeling that things are starting to look up for Jon during this battle and it looks like he is starting to win. All of the sudden, the lighting fades back to a soft light when Ramsy comes into play again and calls for his soldiers to surround Jons crew. The lighting in the battle scene may not seem like much, but it really does help the production crew give the audience subtle clues on how this battle will end up.

### **Conclusion**

The Battle of the Bastards episode in Game of Thrones has a lot of things that make it one of the best episodes that was ever put out. With the combination of all different types of shots, extra sound effects and cued lighting, it makes for a great battle scene. All of these different things like wide shots, soft lighting, non diegetic sounds and more create a pleasurable viewing experience where people cannot predict the ending because of how back and forth the plot goes between Jon Snow and Ramsy Bolton.

## References

- Butler, J. G., & Lotz, A. D. (2018). *Television visual storytelling and screen culture*.  
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