

Shot Analysis:

Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon

Directed by Ang lee

Written
by Joseph East
12/06/04

“SHU LIEN AND LI MU BAI-
THE MOONLIT COURTYARD”

PURPOSE: "Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon" is a breathtaking fairy tale about romance, betrayal, honor, the past the present, and the future. This film's timeless themes are so deeply moving to me that I wanted to share and explore further with you the elements that make this story what it is.

To set up the shot I'm about to break down, this is at the point in the story where Li Mu Bai, (played by Chow Yun Fat) has just reclaimed the Green Destiny sword and has taken it to a deserted courtyard at night where he practices an effortless Wudan routine. Focused on wielding the sword so gently and so powerfully, he doesn't notice that Shu Lien, his hidden love, (played by Michelle Yeoh) watches him in the shadows from a distance.

ASPECT RATIO: "Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon" was filmed in anamorphic widescreen with an aspect ratio of 2:35:1.

Shot 1

DURATION: This shot extends over eight seconds.

SHOT SIZE: The shot size is a medium close up.

SOUND: The diegetic sound in this first shot captures the voice of Li Mu Bai's sword, the Green Destiny. As Li Mu Bai runs a gentle finger along the course of the blade, the blade itself resonates with a pure crystal tone, almost as if it were speaking to its master. When Li Mu Bai reaches the tip with his finger, he flicks the edge with effortless strength, sounding a shivering chime throughout the blade. These, I'm sure were foley sounds. Because we are so close to Li Mu Bai's face, the surrounding space in this shot is presented intimately as far as sound is concerned. The music here emits a very mysterious feeling, but is still very thoughtful of Li Mu Bai's present concentration. Therefore, it remains for the time a background and secondary element.

CONTRAST DOMINANT: In this shot, the contrast dominant is unmistakably the green destiny. Placed in the foreground, the sword stretches the entire length of the screen. As Li Mu Bai's fingers travel the blade, as also does the moon's reflection, giving the sword a majestic and almost ethereal quality. This sword is a pivotal character. Our eyes are immediately drawn to it, because aside from Li Mu Bai's face partially hidden behind it, the rest of the screen lies in complete shadow and darkness. The comparison of the

radiating sword to the background is almost as black and white. Naturally, after being visually acquainted with the sword, our eyes travel back to he that holds it. This makes Li Mu Bai the subsidiary contrast while even he is enveloped a good deal in shadow. The combination of the Green Destiny's heavenly light and the fluid movement of the camera help create the smooth journey our eyes take as we follow the sword to its edge. This mirrors the journey Li Mu Bai takes with his eyes as well.

CHARACTER MOVEMENT: Character movement is subtle in this shot and we as an audience are almost able to internalize the movement because all of it exists to place emphasis on the Green Destiny. It begins with Mu Bai's hand as he raises the sword horizontally into the frame. As the camera moves with the blade from left to right, Mu Bai's head simultaneously rotates with the camera's movement, as well as the speed in which it moves in order to follow the sword. Almost directly after bringing the sword into picture, Li Mu Bai's left hand raises lightly to the sword, pressing two fingers to the blade and traveling the length of it, to show his true reverence and respect for his legendary weapon.

CHARACTER PROXEMICS: Li Mu Bai faces fully frontal towards the camera, revealing an expression of pure focus, but a subtle longing that shifts in his eyes. By standing in this position, he is hiding nothing from us. In fact, his closeness to the camera and the direction he faces provides an intimate relationship between him and us- the audience.

CAMERA MOVEMENT: The camera movement is a simple pan from left to right. Its purpose is to reveal the entire sword's length (which simply cannot fit into an unmoving shot). This gives the Green Destiny a breathtaking scope and presence. The movement helps us to emotionally connect with the sword bit by bit as we slowly take in its valor and importance.

CAMERA ANGLE: The camera is positioned at eye level with Li Mu Bai. By using this objective angle, it is another element that lets us into Li Mu Bai's emotions at that moment and gives us an honesty that would be skued by a subjective camera angle.

LENS USED: The lens used to compose this shot was a telephoto lens. I feel this because it is almost as if space is compressed to focus on the sword- the key element

in the frame. Also, the camera has to pan across it in order to see it in full.

DEPTH OF FIELD: This shot was composed in deep focus, because although the Green Destiny lies in the foreground, Li Mu Bai who stands behind him also absorbs focus as well. Using this type of focus, the audience is reminded of the relationship these two share, as well as informing us of their importance relative to the story and to each other.

LIGHTING: The lighting key used for this shot was a combination of high and low key. The background behind Li Mu Bai is almost completely pitch black. We know that the moon lies in front of him, reflecting off of the sword and in turn illuminating part of Li Mu Bai as well. The moon is an organic source of light, and is motivated to capture and highlight the sword while being a subtle and natural source at the same time. The way the light hits the sword and not entirely Li Mu Bai reveals the Li Mu Bai places the Green Destiny before himself in importance, identifying it as much more than a piece of metal.

COLOR USAGE: The main colors used in the frame are of course the light brown flesh tone of Li Mu Bai's skin, the

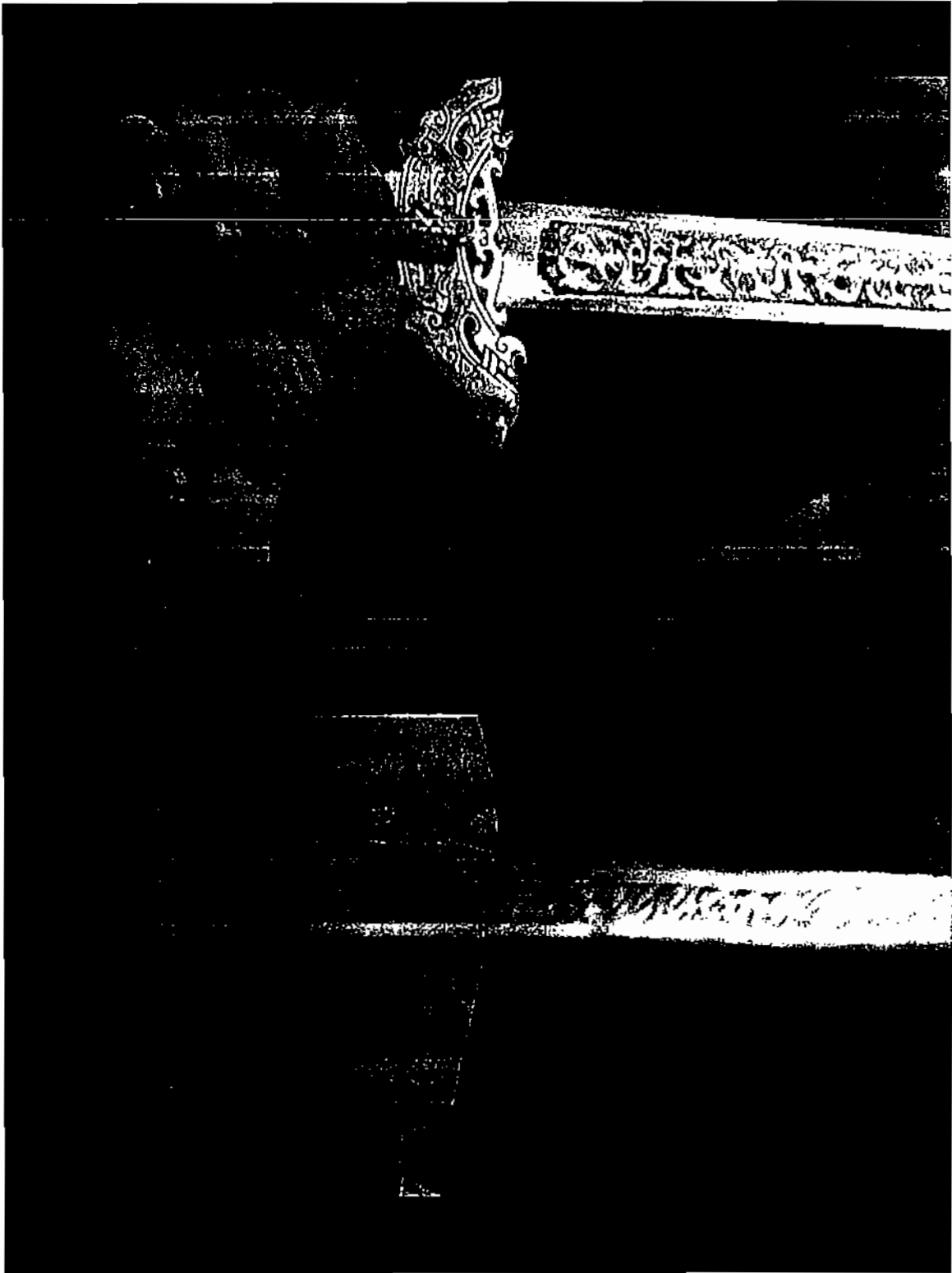
shiny metallic blue of the sword's blade, the white of his robe, and the black of the surrounding background. (For a closer look on the color symbolism, go to shot 4 under "Color Usage."

SCREEN GRAPHICS/COMPOSITION: The frame is obtrusively divided into two almost equal parts by the horizontal position of the sword. The brightness of the sword compared to its surrounding environment almost provides for the density that the shot has. Li Mu Bai, whose head occupies G1, G2, G4, G5, G7 and G8 also gives a slight weight to the frame, but on a much subtler scale. The two leading lines in the frame are certainly that of the Green Destiny's two edges, and because the camera moves directly left to right, it also gives these lines a direction as well. As we watch, our eyes move directly horizontal across the frame, because every element that makes up this shot, (the lines, the camera movement, the lighting) directly tells us to do so. Overall, the composition is simple.

EDITING STYLE: (See shot 4).

TIME: (See shot 4).

SHOT 1



SUBTEXT: The combination of all these elements coming together symbolize and reveal the Green Destiny as a life form. This sword brings about the end of lives, it saves lives it is fought over at the price of live. The reason of its importance is intangible, and therefore, it must be expressed through visual techniques, which I truly believe has been done.

Shot 2

DURATION: This shot extends over seven seconds.

SHOT SIZE: This is a medium close up shot.

SOUND: The sounds heard in this shot are fluid wisps and ringing lunges made by the sword, as well as several stifled grunts from Li Mu Bai as he moves. In this shot, the cello strikes a beautiful note that is held through almost the entire seven seconds.

CONTRAST DOMINANT: The contrast dominant in this shot is without a doubt Li Mu Bai. Now that the camera has pulled back to reveal his strikingly white robes against the shadowed surroundings, Li Mu Bai has instantly become the light source. Also, of his surroundings, he is the only

movement, and considering the amount of movement he does, our eyes immediately go to him. The sword, on the other hand becomes a secondary member in this shot, as if Li Mu Bai has taken immediate authority over it as he wields it.

CHARACTER MOVEMENT: The movement here is so beautifully orchestrated, for as Li Mu Bai, while rooted to his spot performs a flawless Wudan routine with the Green Destiny, the camera moves subtly around him and we as an audience are so absorbed in the moment that we don't even realize that Chow Yun Fat moves in accordance with the camera's rotation. The sword is lunged towards the camera on the z axis which almost causes the audience to move back in their seats for a moment. It is like an invisible dance between the camera and the character. The camera therefore directs the character's movement, and vice versa.

CHARACTER PROXEMICS: As opposed to the last shot, Li Mu Bai's position in relation to us is at a more impersonal distance, and I feel that this is out of Li Mu Bai's consideration for us as audience members, for he is protecting us from the edge of his blade.

CAMERA MOVEMENT: The slight waver as the camera moves around Li Mu Bai reveals that it was probably a steadicam. The move the camera makes is spherical, moving left and almost making a half moon around Li Mu Bai as he moves. The movement exists to accentuate Li Mu Bai's movements and give him an element of majesty as he performs his mastery.

CAMERA ANGLE: The camera is positioned at a slightly lower angle on Li Mu Bai, for in this moment we are meant to perceive Li Mu Bai as dominant, in control, and we are literally meant to look up to his character for all that he stands up for and believes in.

LENS USED: I believe the lens used in this shot was a wide angle lens because whenever the Green Destiny is lunged forward on the z axis, this movement is greatly accentuated, so it seems as if the sword is just breezing past the camera while it probably in actuality isn't.

DEPTH OF FIELD: Once again, this is a deep focus shot, and although everything may be in focus, we know who we are supposed to watch and follow, based on the color direction and character movement being used for Li Mu Bai.

LIGHTING: The light source is motivated on Li Mu Bai from the moon, which, as explained in the following shot is an organic and therefore must be used subtler than a mere spotlight. This light reflected off his robes gives him a heavenly and spiritual aura that surrounds him and this certainly molds our emotions in his favor as the story progresses.

COLOR USAGE: (The colors here are the same as shot 1. See shot 4 for details).

SCREEN GRAPHICS/COMPOSITION: The darkness surrounding Li Mu Bai gives a visual weight to this shot, simply because darker is heavier. Throughout the shot, our eyes are mainly transfixed on Li Mu Bai's right arm, because this is the one that performs the most movement, as well as the one that holds the Green Destiny. Mainly, this is composed simply.

EDITING :(See shot 4).

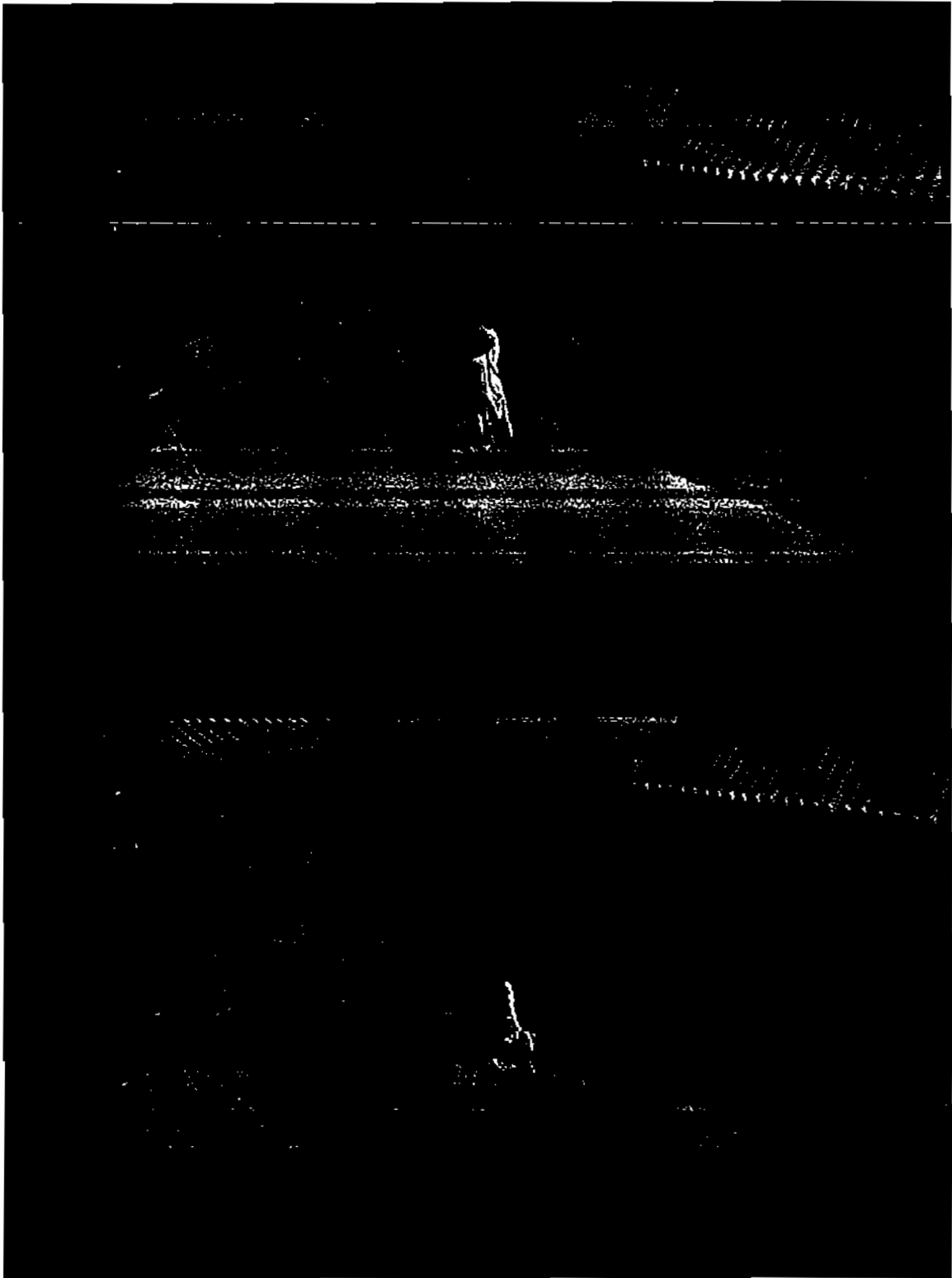
TIME :(See shot 4).

SUBTEXT: Emotionally, with every stroke Li Mu Bai lets fall, this is a movement we are supposed to internalize,

SHOT 2



SHOT 3



because every move he makes means something to him, and in order to identify with him, we must look through his eyes. The filmmakers, through their use of camera and storytelling elements allow this to happen.

Shot 3

DURATION: This shot is ten seconds long.

SHOT SIZE: This shot is an extreme long, or establishing shot.

SOUND: In this shot, we can only hear the scuffle of Li Mu Bai's feet. The music moves on, beautifully unchanging.

CONTRAST DOMINANT: The contrast dominant remains Li Mu Bai. Even though this is a much wider shot, the same principles that direct our eye to Li Mu Bai are the same. The color of his robe and his movement surrounding the much darker environment call us to his every stir. (See shot 2).

CHARACTER MOVEMENT: Due to the much greater distance between Li Mu Bai and the audience, his Wudan movements and certainly less accentuated than they would be at the closer range. Although they may be more subtle, because this is

the only movement in the frame, it still immediately draws us to it.

CHARACTER PROXEMICS: Although Li Mu Bai is much farther away from us in this shot, we accept this temporary distance because it is the first time in this scene where the entire courtyard is revealed and for a moment our focus goes back to establishing the story for ourselves in order to understand what is to come in later scenes.

CAMERA MOVEMENT: The camera only gives a slight downward tilt to keep Li Mu Bai from falling out of the bottom of the frame. Otherwise, it is completely immobile.

CAMERA ANGLE: The angle is quite high for this shot, as if it was positioned on a rooftop and aimed down into the courtyard where Li Mu Bai performs his routine. I believe that this angle was mainly chosen for establishment of the surroundings because, as it was said above, this is our first look and the location in its entirety.

LENS USED: I believe the lens used to compose this shot was a wide angle lens because it gives us a greater sense of distance, as well as easily captures a great amount of

distance on the x axis. This provides the audience with a scope (the) feels rightfully epic according to the story.

Depth of Field: (See shot 2).

LIGHTING: (See shot 2).

COLOR USAGE: The main feeling of color used in this shot is blue, reflecting on the moonlight shining into the courtyard. Also are the white of Li Mu Bai's robes as well as the black of the shadows. (See shot 4 for more details).

SCREEN GRAPHICS/COMPOSITION: In this shot, the angled shadows surrounding Li Mu Bai help add weight to frame. The edge of the shingled roof as well the edge of shadow where the shadow becomes light are implied lines that actually create a barrier that Li Mu Bai cannot, so to speak pass on the other side of. This helps subconsciously to keep our eyes directed to the action and not drifting elsewhere. The journey our eyes take remains the same. We follow Li Mu Bai's every movement.

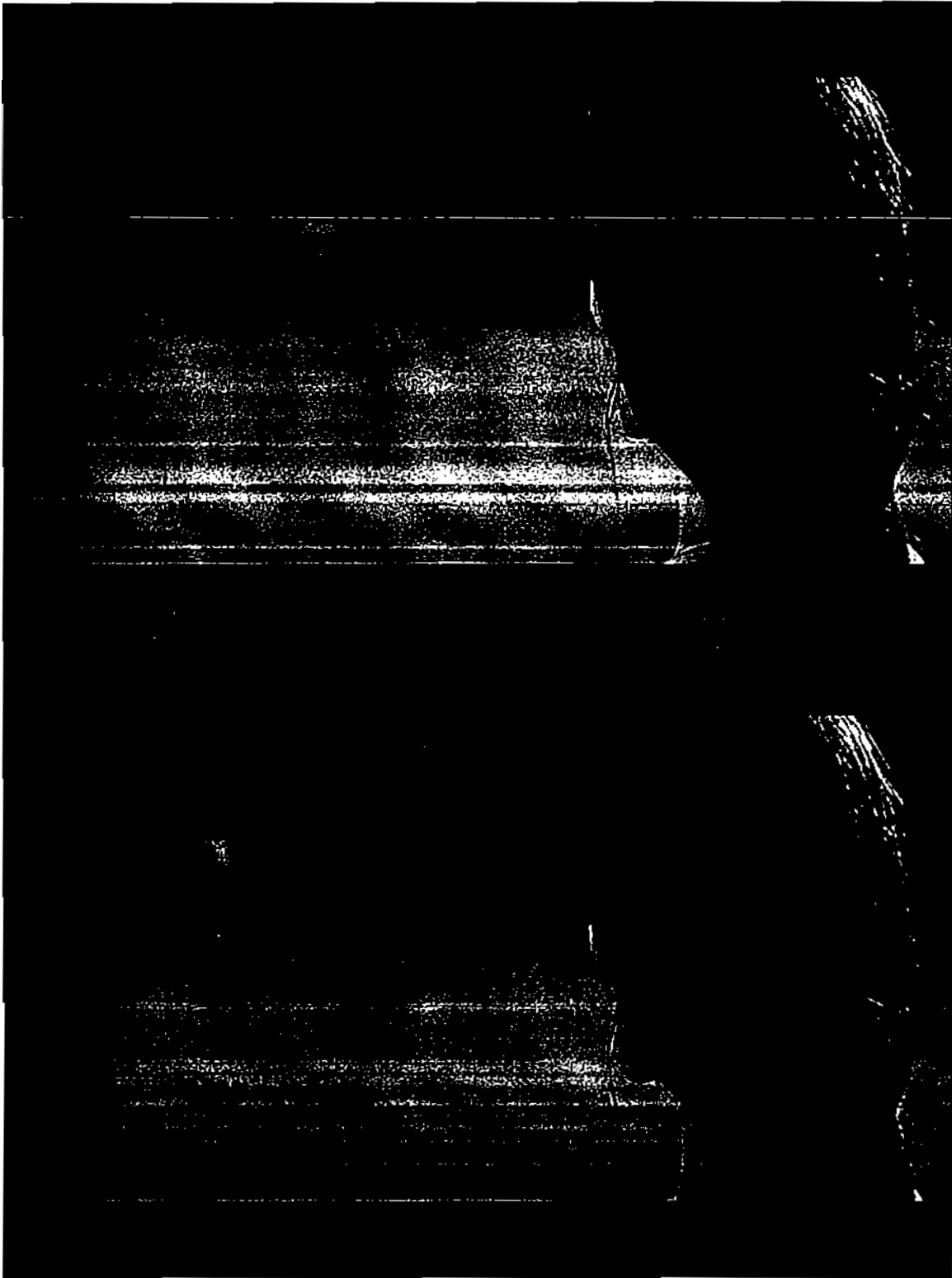
EDITING : (See shot 4).

TIME: (See shot 4).

there is no difference
betw/ shots!

good

SHOT 4



SUBTEXT: Emotionally, we don't like being separated from Li Mu Bai, for he is the ultimate strength and wisdom of the story. When at this distance, there is a certain insecurity that erupts and we want nothing else to be at his side once again.

No!
It is
at least
showing
his concern
from different
levels of observation
here "god's eye view"

Shot 4

DURATION: This shot extends over a period of 125 frames within seven seconds.

SHOT SIZE: This particular shot is a combination of a medium close-up of Shu Lien standing in the foreground, and an extreme long shot of Li Mu Bai moving blurred in the background.

SOUND: Sound is a truly special element concerning this shot and this sequence altogether. The diagetic sounds present in this shot only consist of Li Mu Bai's staggered breathing (in reaction to his various sword thrusts) and the stomp of his foot. Due to the nature of their surroundings, all of the sounds emerge hollow and echoed. These diagetic sounds may possibly have been Foley sounds.

↓
were certainly

The music however is the driving component of this sequence, for it becomes the third character. A cello is used in these moments, it's notes weaving amongst the two characters like an invisible thread, connecting them through the music's sheer emotional resonance. The cello's strokes are romantic and sad, telling the audience the tale of these characters' hidden desires for one another. The music is so honest - so emotionally intuned that it becomes difficult to lower your eyes and ears from the screen for even a moment.

CONTRAST DOMINANT: I find there to be two important figures in this shot, separated by the ground line that runs across the middle of the frame. Li Mu Bai moves within G1 dressed in a white tunic against a dark background. These two colors set against one another provide an immense contrast, and, because the scene is darker, our eyes are first drawn to the light, making him a perfect contrast dominant. Also, Li Mu Bai is the only movement in the frame, which acts as another contributing factor to his role. On the lower half of the frame on the other hand, the ground is much lighter, and against Shu Lien's head inhabiting G3, G6 and G9, another major contrast in light and dark is created. Therefore, she becomes the subsidiary contrast.

The journey our eyes take across the screen begins in the upper left corner of the frame with Li Mu Bai and continues down to the lower right corner to Shu Lien, so, this is a very natural, organic, and comfortable movement for our eyes.

CHARACTER MOVEMENT: There is one source of movement in this shot, and that is Li Mu Bai who moves fluently among GI. As of this time, he has no knowledge of Shu Lien's presence, and so it would seem that their actions are independent of one another. Yet Mu Bai wields the Green Destiny with such a sense of distinction, grace and elegance that Shu Lien cannot help but stand rooted, transfixed from a distance upon his every flowing move. Shu Lien is affected by Mu Bai, and this transforms their actions into connected ones. In Li Mu Bai's movements, he harnesses such a distinctive energy and focus that he channels directly into every stroke of the sword. The sword is an extension of himself metaphorically, but also literally. Due to the long flowing sleeves, it is difficult to distinguish where the sword begins and his hand ends.

CHARACTER PROXEMICS: Although Li Mu Bai may be the contrast dominant, I believe Shu Lien is the important figure in

this frame. Shrouded in shadow, Lien inhabits a third of the picture. Looking upon Li Mu Bai from a distance, her back lies towards the audience, disconnecting us from her feelings and her emotions. Rightfully, this is her intent. Lien fears that by loving Li Mu Bai, she is severing the Chinese traditions of love and marriage - an unthinkable act. Therefore, by turning her back to us in these moments, we are refrained from reading her disguised expressions - ones of love, passion, and hidden desire. The distance between these two characters also has a special significance, because it symbolizes what their relationship is forced to be within their culture's moral standards: tragically separate. This shot shows exactly how "public" their relationship is, yet as the story progresses, we find that the distance between them evolves into an intimate closeness, where their most passionate moments together also become their last.

CAMERA MOVEMENT: The camera itself plays a very passive role in the language of this shot, for it makes no moves at all.

CAMERA ANGLE: The camera angle in this shot feels neutral in its essence because it is positioned directly at Shu Lien's eye level followed to Li Mu Bai in the background.

LENS USED: Isolation is such an important theme in this story and there is no mistaking the space that lies between Shu Lien and Li Mu Bai. Their distance just pleads to be conveyed, and is achieved through several significant elements - one being their actual proximities (as discussed above) and the other important one being the beautiful use of the lens. I believe the lens used to compose this shot was a wide angle lens, because the space between them is immensely accentuated, creating that gaping sense of isolation that they feel, but that we also feel as an audience.

DEPTH OF FIELD: The picture is divided seamlessly into two depths. Shu Lien, who stands in the foreground, absorbs the focus, while the picture drifts outward into a blur where Li Mu Bai stands. This specific depth of field strikes an emotional chord, because it is as if Shu Lien looks upon a future and a love that she cannot quite discern. All of us can easily relate to this sense of uncertainty and instability. Through the combined elements of the blur and

Li Mu Bai's distance, his figure becomes very dreamlike and surreal: a fitting look, considering that her only dream is to be with him.

At the same time, in this shot specifically, the audience's connection with Shu Lien is a strong one, given our focus on her. We long for an insight, begging to understand her passion and her suffering. Naturally, her position and focus in the frame allows for us to crawl in through this temporarily open window.

LIGHTING: This scene and particular shot are set in a moonlit courtyard. This being the case, the moon is the only source of motivated light, casting soft beams upon Li Mu Bai. The moonlight seems to trickle down along Mu Bai's robes and travel across the length of the courtyard but immediately stopping at Shu Lien's feet, thus placing her on the outside, cloaked in shadow. For a scene set at nighttime, the picture achieves light and darkness. Besides a small glint of light that reflects off of Shu Lien's hair, she is the darkest part of the frame, perhaps suggesting her mysterious appearance, or her emotional state at that moment. Conversely, the light surrounding Li Mu Bai appears very angelic, allowing the audience to feel

a sense of comfort, strength, and reassurance that perhaps some good will come with time.

this is how she sees him

COLOR USAGE: The four colors significant in this shot are a twilight blue (which covers the area of the ground bathed in light), a navy blue (spreading over the darker areas hidden in shadow), black (Shu Lien's hair) and white (Li Mu Bai's robes). The two shades of blue sprawl across the majority of the picture, divided horizontally from one another where Li Mu Bai stands. Blue represents tranquility, purity and wisdom - all virtues Li Mu Bai has taken to heart long ago. Therefore, his position amongst the blue light is no coincidence. This color reflects Mu Bai's thoughts, feelings and manifestations and becomes an almost outward calling to Shu Lien, with hopes that she will only answer.

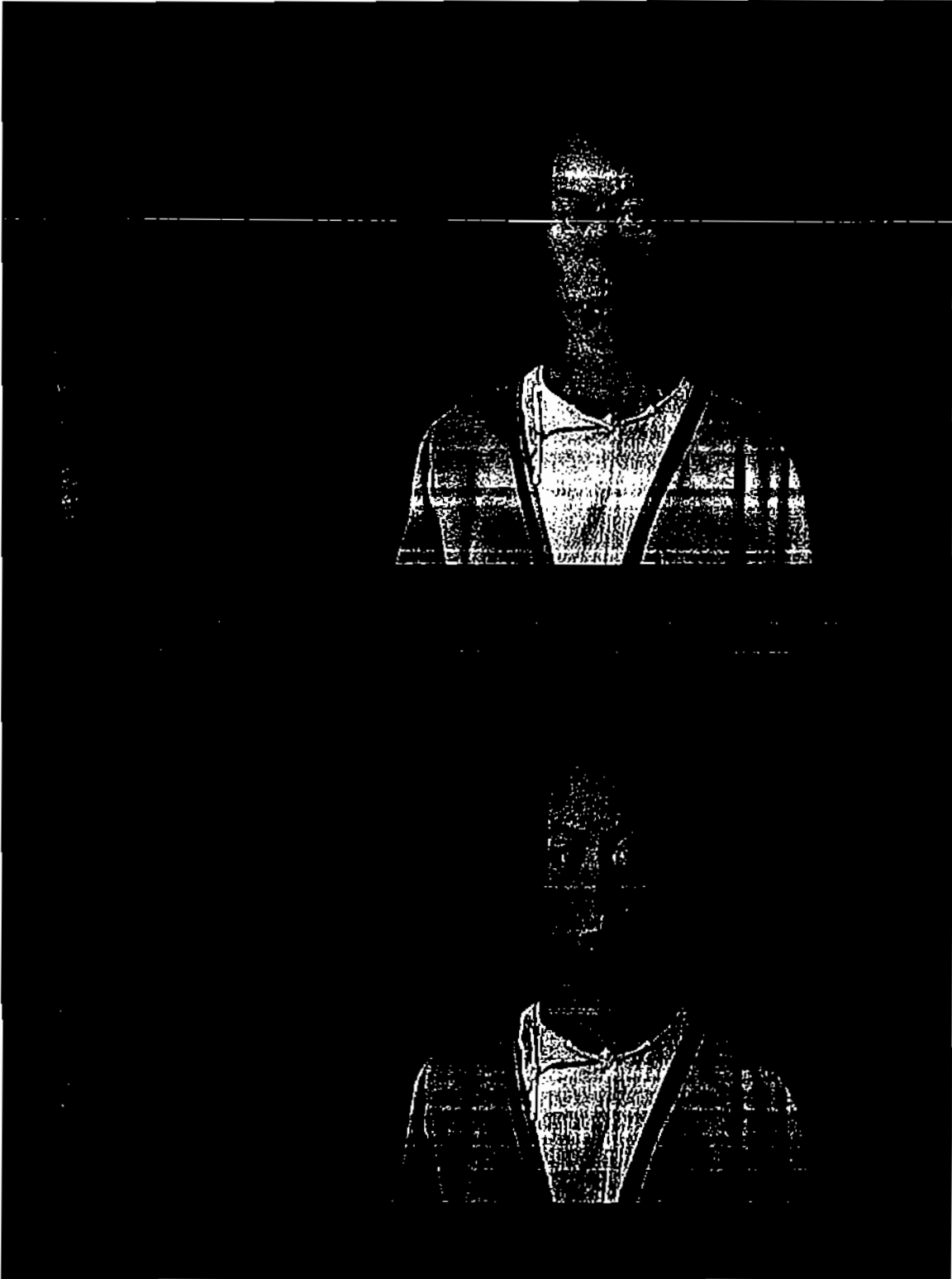
SCREEN GRAPHICS/COMPOSITION: The weight of this picture is immediately recognizable because of the immense light/dark contrast in the frame. The shot is predominantly weighted on the right third of the screen because of Shu Lien's head and her short distance from the camera. In addition, the shadows behind Li Mu Bai (taking up G1 and G2) add significant weight to the upper portion of the frame,

leaving the bottom half feeling light. There is an unmistakable horizontal line that runs across the frame, dividing the ground line. This line appears to be resting, or lying down. We also can notice the curved lines of Shu Lien's head as well as the curved outline of Li Mu Bai's figure, which leads our eyes fluently as we watch them.

The overall composition is simple in nature but immensely powerful and expressive at a closer look, for when we combine character positions with depth, color, and sound, a distinct language comes to life and speaks to us with every frame.

EDITING STYLE: The editing style in this sequence is simple, moving from straight cut to straight cut with the intention of invisibility. The editing exists to compliment the emotions in this scene and not to distract from it. Therefore, each shot, though only seven to ten seconds long blends seamlessly into the next. The audience then becomes free to explore the scene without any abrupt interruptions or diversions. The rhythm is subtle, established in the pattering of Li Mu Bai's sword strokes. All in all, I find that the editing compliments the story wonderfully in that it supports the message as a whole as opposed to trying to survive as a separate entity.

SHOT 5



TIME: This sequence takes place over a period of about two minutes and the time is realistic- not stretched or sped up. This moment takes place in present time and, compared to the rest of the story, attempts to stay true to the realistic time code.

SUBTEXT: There are a great many patches that make up this beautiful quilt as I have come to find out. All of these elements (lighting, camera position, music, color etc.) are important symbols that give the story it's texture and it's meaning. This shot is trying to express isolation, loneliness - remoteness. Shu Lien looks upon a sea of blue, which for her symbolizes sadness. This is an emotion that dwells deep inside of her over her relationship with Li Mu Bai. He is her angel, sent to restore a meaning to her life that she soon discovers, simply by being with him- by confessing her love to him. This is a very strong moral.

Shot 5

DURATION: This shot is five seconds.

SHOT SIZE: This is a close shot of Shu Lien.

I disagree
the sword
form takes
about 10-
15 minutes
at least
to perform ->
there is time deletion
present - there are not
matched
action
cuts
are there?

SOUND: The only sound in this shot is the music which at this moment underscores Shu Lien's emotions as she stares upon Li Mu Bai.

CONTRAST DOMINANT: The contrast dominant is Shu Lien, because she is the central point of light against the darkness that dwells behind her. It almost looks as if she is lost in a certain space, because it is impossible to tell what is behind her. Our eyes first survey her saddened expression before pulling back to look on what we can see of her entirely. The contrast dominant here is literally unmistakable which makes it very effective.

CHARACTER MOVEMENT: Shu Lien stands perfectly still in this shot as merely a passive onlooker. This mirrors the relationship she feels she must have with Li Mu Bai, unable to approach or make the choice she wants to make.

CHARACTER PROXEMICS: Shu Lien has made a great deal of progress from the last shot, for now, instead of having her back to us in hiding, she has allowed for us to unravel her emotions by standing completely face forward and allowing us to be quite close to her in distance. Although she may feel some reluctance in letting us do so, Shu Lien is

strong as well and has a deep dwelling desire to share her pain with someone- she has chosen us as her advocates.

CAMERA MOVEMENT: The Camera doesn't move in this shot.

CAMERA ANGLE: The camera is set directly in front of Shu Lien at eye level, and again, I find that this position is so honest and so true. It completely eliminates distractions that may come from any other odd angles and allows us to focus on Shu Lien and her emotional dilemma at the moment.

LENS USED: The lens used here I believe was a telephoto lens because it seems like space is slightly compressed into Shu Lien, helping her to remain the focus and helping us to really get inter her sentiments.

DEPTH OF FIELD: Shu Lien is certainly in focus, though it is difficult to tell about the surrounding environment, because it is so dark.

LIGHTING: From the front, is revealed that the light of the moon also reaches to Shu Lien, but not beyond. Therefore, the great pools of darkness from behind her and the light

that hits her create low lighting key. Because she is the only one capturing light from where she stands, this would make the light source extremely motivated, as if she is the only figure worth illuminating.

COLOR USAGE: Shu Lien is dressed in soft light colors that give off a subtle tint of blue, and these colors contrast greatly to her black surroundings. This contrast definitely expands the z axis and immediately brings Shu Lien away from the darkness.

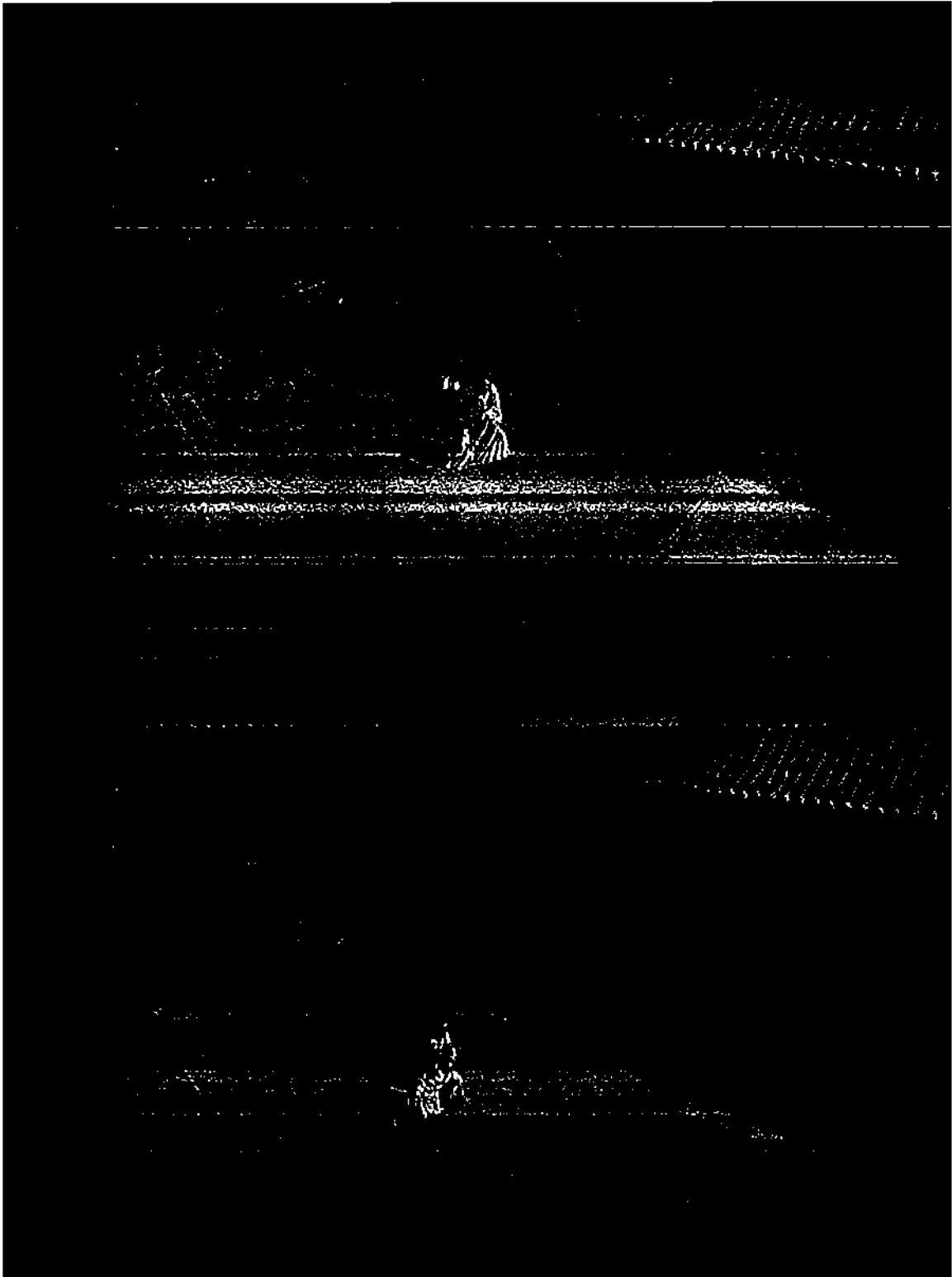
SCREEN GRAPHICS/COMPOSITION: There is a beautiful simplicity to this shot. Shu Lien is a bit off centered to the right and provides the frame's weight. The main lines evident are those of her curved head and shoulders, which provide an organic flow which we follow down to the bottom of the frame.

EDITING STYLE: (See shot 4).

TIME: (See shot 4).

SUBTEXT: When we think of every part of She Lien as subtle, this word almost becomes a theme that captures her feelings

SHOT 6



and her emotions. It is almost as if everything is stifled, her true feelings buried underneath it all. The lighting, as well as the other compositional elements almost determines what is to come later, because in this moment she is emerging from the darkness into light, or into a realization that her love for Li Mu Bai is all that truly matters.

Shot 6

DURATION: This shot extends over four seconds.

(This is a repeat of shot 3.)

Shot 7

DURATION: This shot extends over three seconds.

SHOT SIZE: The shot begins as a medium full shot and moves into a medium shot.

SOUND: The sounds in this shot are the stomp of Li Mu Bai's feet and the clear resonance of the Green Destiny as it is forcefully thrust out. The music remains as an underscore here. The Green Destiny's ringing is followed by reverberation, which makes the space feel hollower. Seeing as how this is not the case with the sound throughout the

other shots, it is as if the sound wants us to focus specifically in on this moment.

CONTRAST DOMINANT: Once again, Li Mu Bai is definitely the contrast dominant, because here, he drastically pulls himself into the air and hovers there a bit longer than normal. This motion draws our eyes to him instantly. Also, the camera in this moment simultaneously moves in closer to Li Mu Bai's action, directing our attention even more so into what is happening. Seeing as how part of the building from behind Li Mu Bai has pulled out of shadow, this could be considered the subsidiary contrast.

CHARACTER MOVEMENT: Li Mu Bai moves himself greatly by jumping into the air for several moments and then coming back down in a Wudan stance, thrusting the Green destiny our in front of him. This movement, over all else seems to be the most directed one, and the focus on his face reinforces that. Because the camera moves in on this movement, it almost looks like Li Mu Bai is moving towards us.

CHARACTER PROXIMICS: Li Mu Bai begins this shot with a good closeness to us, but he even becomes closer by the camera's movement into him.

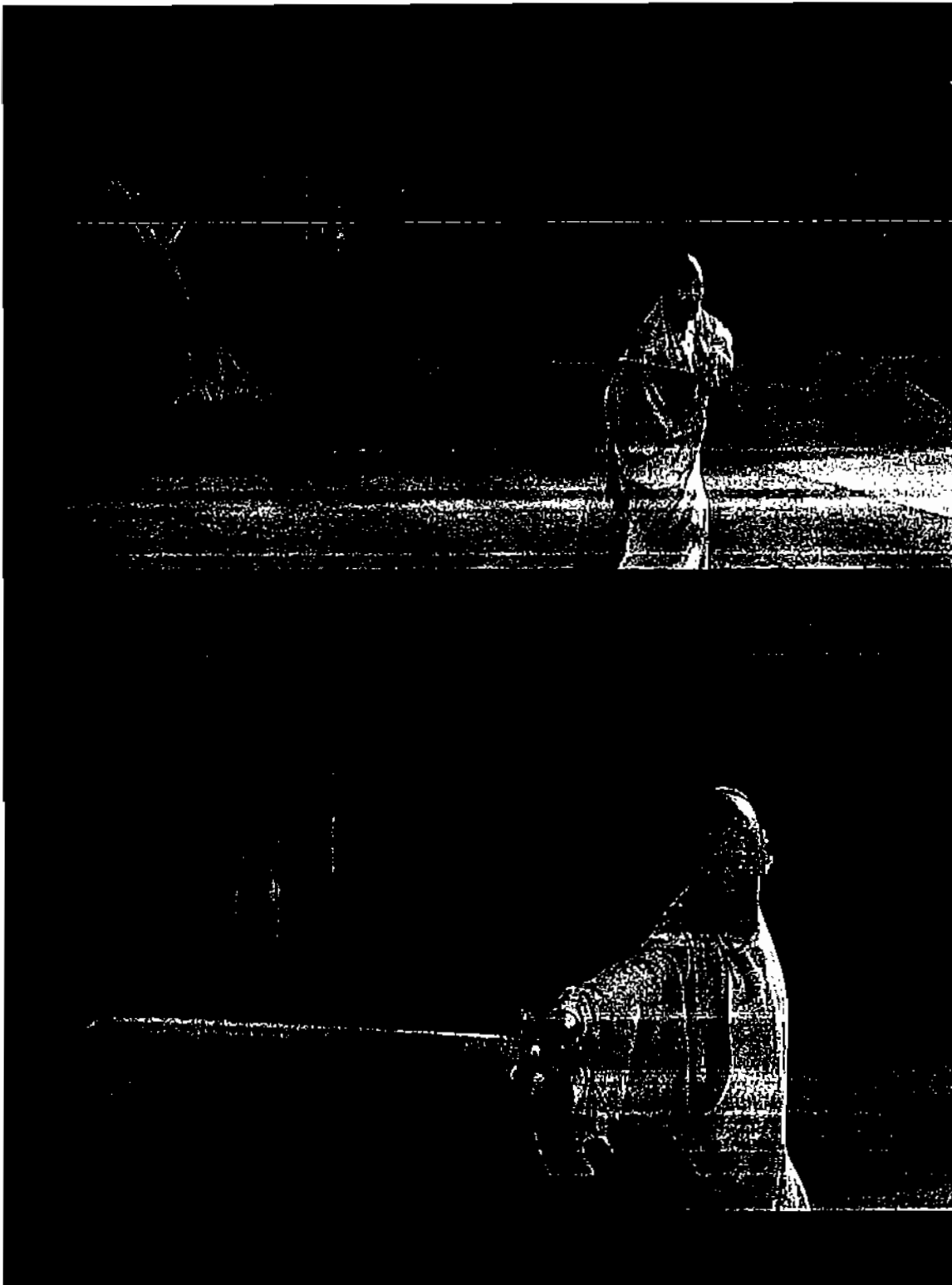
CAMERA MOVEMENT: Here, there is a slight waver in the camera as it moves. This leads me to the conclusion that it is again a steadicam. When Li Mu Bai rises into the air, the camera tilts up to keep him in the frame. While it tilts however, it also moves several feet towards Li Mu Bai, so once he has landed, the camera is that much closer to his sword lunge. As an audience, we are completely immersed in this moment, and I feel this camera movement has a great deal to do with it.

CAMERA ANGLE: Generally, the camera remains eye level with Li Mu Bai.

LENS USED: For this shot, the wide angle lens would have needed to be resorted back to, and I feel this again because the lunge comes very close to the camera.

DEPTH OF FIELD: Deep focus is used at the beginning of this shot. However, as the camera moves in, the focus stays on Li Mu Bai and places all behind him slightly out of focus. This directs our eyes to remain on Li Mu Bai through the course of the shot.

SHOT 7



LIGHTING : (See Shot 2) .

COLOR USAGE: (See Shot 2) .

SCREEN GRAPHICS/COMPOSITION: The shadow on the upper half of the frame gives the visual appearance of weight, but Li Mu Bai's contrast to this darkness also provides a different kind of weight. When Li Mu Bai thrusts his sword out, it becomes a great directional line which runs up the course of Li Mu Bai's figure. Like the others, this shot is compositionally simple.

EDITING STYLE: (See shot 4) .

TIME: (See shot 4) .

SUBTEXT: The combination of the movement as well as the angle used, color and sound bring us into the character of Li Mu Bai in a big way. His strength and focus reveal his passion, and by reading this in him, we are instantly reminded of the passion we share for the story.

Shot 8

SHOT 8



Shot 8

DURATION: This shot is three seconds long.

SHOT SIZE: Li Mu Bai is shown in a close shot.

SOUND: The only sound that comes into play here is the score that breathes heavily on the visuals.

CONTRAST DOMINANT: (See shot 2).

CHARACTER MOVEMENT: Li Mu Bai moves by turning his head a quarter turn from facing profile to the front where Shu Lien stands (though she is not in the picture). By turning his head, he goes from revealing only part of his expression to showing all of it. This, on his part is extremely truthful and effective.

CHARACTER PROXIMICS: Li Mu Bai once again shares an intimate space with us as an audience and allows us into his feelings by remaining close to the camera and making an effort not to hide his emotions.

CAMERA MOVEMENT: There is no camera movement in this Shot.

CAMERA ANGLE: The angle here is at eye level with Li Mu Bai. (See shot 1).

LENS USED: I believe a telephoto lens was used here because once again, space is slightly compressed inward, crowding Li Mu Bai tightly into the shot.

DEPTH OF FIELD: In this shot, Li Mu Bai, who stands in the foreground, is completely in focus. His surrounding environment is ultimately dark, which makes it irrelevant whether or not it is in focus. What matters is that our hero is. When a character is in focus, this is also a method of identifying with him or her, because we can literally "see" them clearly. For me, a worrisome moment is when Li Mu Bai steps out of focus, because it may suggest out of reach trouble, or perhaps fear or forboding. Luckily, Li Mu Bai remains in focus for the majority of the story.

LIGHTING :(See Shot 2).

COLOR USAGE: (See Shot 2).

SCREEN GRAPHICS/COMPOSITION: The shot's weight stems from the lower right hand corner of the frame with Li Mu Bai's torso and up along the arm to the sword. There is a beautiful flow throughout the frame beginning with this lower right hand corner because Li Mu Bai's head points in the direction of this flow, trafficking our eyes from one corner of the screen all the way to the other. The outline of Mu Bai's body in contrast with the darkness behind him gives this unique organic shape which is almost soothing to look at due to its fluidity. All in all, this is a simple yet wonderfully composed shot.

EDITING STYLE: (See shot 4).

TIME: (See shot 4).

SUBTEXT: Li Mu Bai is a symbol of courage, of hope, and also of sheer stability. Shots such as this one really visually interpret these virtues, whether it is from the crystal clear focus brought upon him, the angelic light bathing him from above, or the closeness and the intimacy we have with him, all of these make him who he truly is- our hero.

Joseph:

This is a very good analysis - and you are clearly moved by the characters & the technique. However I do wish that you had summarised the scene and included a bar graph of shot durations. I think that would have helped you to see the time deletion included here.

Good work!

(A-)

Ps: I'd like to get a copy for the archives