An Editing Analysis of the First Meeting of Nameless and Sky in the movie, “Hero”

This is a 37 shot scene that comprises the initial meeting and interaction between Nameless and Sky. This short duel serves to allow the characters to test each other and decide how to truly fight their battle. After this scene concludes, the real contest begins. The director uses a series of quick shots, carefully chosen angles and distances combined with a series of consistent shots counterbalanced with select inconsistencies to continually build tension in this scene from the movie, “Hero.”

To add visual emphasis, this analysis predominantly employs the use of individual pictures of each shot with abbreviated information in standardized categories to conduct an analysis of each shot on one individual page. While this is a departure from the requirements, it is consistent with elements of the examples presented on the Yale web site.
Shot 1

Distance: extreme long shot
Angle: low angle
Focus: deep focus
Framing: the main character is in the center of the frame
Editing: short take (4 seconds)
Sound: no background music, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo,
       Nameless orders “Halt!” at the end of the shot
Movement: fixed
Description: Sky is walking up the steps, presumably toward the exit after defeating the
       Seven elite guards of Quin Court in non-lethal combat when a voice
       Orders him to halt.

Analysis: Sky is slowly, stoically exiting the arena after a triumphant battle which he did
       not desire or initiate. The viewer is expecting the action to be over for
now and the previous scene to close, transitioning to something new. The order from behind sky abruptly changes that. The viewer should be
       surprised. The low angle emphasizes the superiority of the victor, Sky.
Shot 2

Distance: long shot
Angle: high angle
Focus: deep focus
Framing: the defeated combatants are in the center of the frame
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: tense background music begins (string instruments in ominous chords), rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: The defeated seven elite guards of Quin Court turn their gaze from the Right to the left
Analysis: The guards serve to set up the transition introducing Nameless in the next shot.

They physically change their gaze a perceived 180 degrees from the direction on Sky to the direction of the person ordering him to halt. The high angle emphasizes the defeated nature of the guards.
Shot 3

Distance: long shot
Angle: eye level point of view shot from Nameless’ perspective
Focus: deep focus
Framing: Sky is framed in the center in an almost perfectly balanced shot, save for the granite chess chair
Editing: short take (4 second)
Sound: tense background music continues (string instruments in ominous chords), rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Sky slowly turns his gaze from the door to the person issuing the order.

Analysis: Continuing the transition we see Sky through the eyes of the yet unidentified new comer. We see how much distance is in between them and notice that they are both at eye level with each other. This shot also increases the tension by prolonging the delay in identifying the new player. The 180 degree rule is violated forcing us to guess at the actual distance separating us from Sky. Sky is slightly out of focus to add depth.
Shot 4

Distance: long shot
Angle: eye level point of view shot from Sky’s perspective, reverse angle to the last shot
Focus: deep focus
Framing: Nameless is framed in the center of this perfectly balanced shot
Editing: short take (4 seconds)
Sound: tense background music lowers in volume, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Nameless is shown for the first time in this setting.

Analysis: Continuing the transition we now see Nameless. We again see the distance.

   Nameless is elevated on the chess area. He is a lone figure in a large backdrop. He seems little match for Sky, being one solitary man (Sky just defeated seven men.) This makes nameless appear, perhaps, more ominous, as there must be a reason he would issue his illogical order to halt. The audience is left wondering what he has up his sleeve.
Wallin 6

Shot 5

Distance: close up
Angle: eye level shot
Focus: shallow focus
Framing: Sky is framed right of center allowing his weapon to remain in view, far left
Editing: short take (4 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues low in volume with low strings coming up,
   rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Sky acknowledges nameless, his position and asks what he can do for him.

Analysis: This cut to a close up allows us to quickly study his face. He seems strong and
   confident, acknowledging that another authority figure is present, but does not yield. He is not
   devoid of respect or courtesy and poses a ridiculous question, “What can I do for you?” It is
   obvious, that Sky intends to leave, and that the Local Prefect should not allow this, but he open
   the dialog, anyway. Sky is doing what he can to control the situation. We see a continued display
   of his power over authority. His face is strong, yet at peace with himself. The tension continues
to build for the viewer.
Shot 6

Distance: long shot
Angle: slightly low angle
Focus: full focus
Framing: Nameless is again perfectly framed in a balanced shot
Editing: short take (2 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues low in volume,
       rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Nameless states that he is in control here.

Analysis: This cut to a long shot brings us closer to Nameless. As he states that this region is under his control, his authority is being reinforced by the lower angle and tighter shot than the first glance we see of him. He is very stationary and seems again unlikely to pose a threat, but he persists. His hat, dress and body language present him as more of an administrator than a warrior. The tension continues and we feel a heightened contrast between his solitary statement of authority and the powerful display the Sky provided in the last battle.
Shot 7

Distance: close up
Angle: eye level shot
Focus: shallow focus
Framing: Sky is framed right of center allowing his weapon to remain in view, far left
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: tense background music continues,
  rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Sky does not acknowledge Namless’ authority and asks him to continue.

Analysis: Sky appears defiant and asks in essence, “so what?” He is not yielding to this
government official and allows him to continue. He appears undisturbed by this little man.
Shot 8

Distance: long shot
Angle: slightly low angle
Focus: full focus
Framing: Nameless is again perfectly framed in a balanced shot
Editing: short take (4 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues low in volume,
    rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Nameless states that he is here to arrest Sky.

Analysis: The conversational back and forth cuts continue with Nameless getting directly
to the point. He is in control and will arrest the renegade. He speaks with
very little body movement. The audience is supposed to wonder if he will
yield to Sky and gracefully bow out. We now know that this is not going
to happen. The tension continues to build.
Wallin 10

Shot 9

Distance: close up
Angle: eye level shot
Focus: shallow focus
Framing: Sky is framed right of center allowing his weapon to remain in view, far left
Editing: short take (2 second)
Sound: tense background music continues,
       rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Sky continues to defy by refusing to reply.

Analysis: We see sky’s face. His forehead and face grimace ever so slightly is a signal
       meant to show his resolve hardening. We are meant to feel that he will not
       yield. A reply to the request is unnecessary. We know what is about to
       happen. The tension increases again.
Shot 10

Distance: long shot
Angle: eye level point of view shot from Sky’s perspective
Focus: deep soft focus
Framing: Nameless is framed in the center of this perfectly balanced shot
Editing: short take (3 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues low,
    rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Nameless raises the challenge to fight.

Analysis: We drop back to Sky’s perspective again and see nameless as a small solitary
figure, not in clear focus raising the challenge to sky. He is elevated in the
shot, but he is not elevated by the camera angle to suggest that he is no
more (or less) powerful than Sky. Nameless has now confirmed that he
intends to continue to usurp his authority. The tension is growing. We are
supposed to wonder now what Sky will do.
Shot 11

Distance: extreme long shot
Angle: low angle shot from behind Nameless, telephoto
Focus: Partial depth of field
Framing: Nameless and Sky are balanced in the center of the frame
Editing: short take (3 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues and begins to raise slightly, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Sky turns to fully face Nameless and accepts the challenge.

Analysis: Both figures are shot from a low angle, but due to the distance, nameless appears higher, bigger and more powerful. He is meant to now appear as a true threat. The telephoto shot make Sky appear closer than before. We are meant to see these two combatants squaring off against each other in a battle that will become personal between these two individuals, who now appear very close to one another.
Shot 12

Distance: long shot
Angle: low angle shot at a diagonal to Nameless
Focus: full depth of field
Framing: Nameless is balanced again, even at this angle
Editing: short take (3 seconds)
Sound: tense background music rises,
    rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: fixed
Description: Nameless lowers his weapon as he prepares to fight.

Analysis: Nameless is shot from a low angle to emphasize his strength and the framing is well balanced again, but the viewer is thrown off by this new angle. Until this point the shots have been straight on. Now we are closer again, but in a view, that while not canted, is almost canted by its angle relevant to Nameless. It is intended to heighten the tension and set the stage of disorientation for the view in preparation for the next few shots.
Wallin 14

Shot 13

Distance: close up
Angle: low angle shot
Focus: shallow depth of field, that blurs with the motion of Nameless
Framing: Nameless is framed to the left giving him room to move out of the shot
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: tense background music spikes upon Namless’ motion, a rushing wind sound effect is added at this moment, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo,
Movement: fixed at first, then pulling slightly left as Nameless exits right
Description: Nameless lunges out of the shot.

Analysis: For a split second we see Nameless’ face, then he breaks the tension by lunging out of the shot with a mighty sound of rushing wind and a blurring of focus intended to impart the feeling of great speed that bursts forth from a state of calm. We expect him to fight, but are not supposed to be prepared for this burst of energy, and should be startled by it. The previous shot began to disorient us.
Shot 14

Distance: long shot
Angle: very low angle shot
Focus: full depth of field
Framing: Nameless is framed in the center in an unbalanced shot
Editing: short take (2 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues with another low to moderate staccato of chords, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo,
Movement: tracking shot keeping Nameless in center of frame
Description: Nameless charges off the chess platform toward Sky

Analysis: Again the shot departs from straight on so we are continuing to feel uneasy.

Nameless is shot from very low angle o add to his power. His body stance with an extending clenched fist, extremely outstretched legs and a large lunging, almost flying forward leap off the platform emphasizes his rapid acceleration and the powerful outburst that is now headed for Sky. He is to be perceived as having a superhuman power.
Shot 15

Distance: extreme close up
Angle: high angle shot
Focus: vivid focus, high speed
Framing: Nameless’ boot and water splash dominate the center of the frame
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: tense background music continues with a large menacing slam of Nameless boot on the ground followed by the splash of displaced water, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: stationary shot of where the boot will hit.
Description: Nameless pushes off the ground with a mighty slam

Analysis: In an unexpected shot, we see the first mighty landing of Nameless as he bounds off the chess platform. We are meant to feel all of his energy pounding off the ground as he lands and pushes off toward Sky. The water is no match for him and the calm blanket of water on the slate floor explodes upon contact. This power is headed for Sky. We are meant to continue our disorientation and feel fear for what is about to be unleashed.
Shot 16

Distance: close up
Angle: Eye Level
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Sky is framed in the center
Editing: short take (2 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues with another staccato raising in volume, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: Slow push in on Sky’s face
Description: Sky watches Nameless come

Analysis: We are supposed to be surprised again to see Sky remain motionless and apparently unimpressed by what he sees. He should be taking action, but does not. He in fact allows his eyes to droop just a bit at the end of the push as if either board by this display, or possibly focusing on the action. It happens too quickly to tell. This is intended to continue our confusion during this action sequence.
Shot 17

Distance: close up
Angle: High angle
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Nameless’ feet and legs remain centered in the frame while he runs
Editing: short take (2 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues with another staccato, sound of Nameless running on a wet hard surface, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: tracking shot with Nameless’ running legs
Description: Nameless runs toward Sky

Analysis: Nameless is closing the distance on his prey, his feet are not slamming down, but almost lightly hitting the ground as he runs, but continues to displace water. We are now seeing increasing motion with the tracking camera and continue to build tension toward the coming confrontation.
Shot 18

Distance: close up
Angle: Eye Level
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Sky is framed in the center
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: tense background music continues with another staccato, now we continue to hear the footsteps running in the rain, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: Slow push in on Sky’s face
Description: Sky continues to watch Nameless come

Analysis: The illusion of the distance gap closing is added to this shot as we can now continue to hear Nameless run toward Sky. He opens his eyes a bit wider in anticipation, and our anticipation is supposed to grow along with Sky.
Shot 19

Distance: close up
Angle: High angle
Focus: shallow depth of field, out of focus
Framing: Nameless’ left hand and sword handle remain centered in the frame while he runs
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: tense background music continues with staccatos and footsteps increasing their pace and volume, sound of Nameless running on a wet hard surface, sound of metal on metal as something happens with the sword, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: tracking shot with Nameless’ left hand and sword as he runs
Description: Nameless continues running toward Sky

Analysis: Nameless picks up speed and intensity as does the background music and effects. Our anticipation and fear is meant to rise and quicken in response to the action. The blurry focus is meant to cause continues disorientation while providing a heightened sense of the speed of this interaction.
Shot 20

Distance: close up to big close up
Angle: Eye Level
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Sky is framed in the center
Editing: short take (2 seconds)
Sound: tense background music continues with frenzied staccatos and continued footsteps running in the rain, rain drops hitting the hard ground with echo
Movement: Slow push in on Sky’s face continues at a faster pace
Description: Sky still continues to watch Nameless come

Analysis: Nameless comes faster and faster as Sky surprisingly continues to watch. The tension is now building in his face, through slight twitches in his eyebrows as he intently studies his attacker. We should be terribly concerned.
Shot 21

Distance: extremely long to long shot
Angle: High angle
Focus: full depth of field
Framing: Namless’ is centered in the frame while he runs and begins a flying lunge
Editing: short take (4 seconds)
Sound: tense background music reaches its peak and comes to an end as does Nameless’ footsteps when we hear the sound of his sword being drawn and the quiet sound not unlike a jet aircraft taking off, Nameless lets out a little snort, the rain drops hitting the hard ground is now gone
Movement: tracking shot with Nameless’ as he runs, draws his sword and performs the beginning of a flying lunge (on cables) toward Sky.
Description: Nameless begins his flying lunge toward Sky

Analysis: The music and shot is setup to make us believe that this will be the culmination of the prior build up shots, the way the music comes to an end and the sword is drawn. The next shot must show the strike. We are at the edge of our seats. The anticipation cannot be pushed any further. The speed has now slowed to a slow motion shot of the action. There is a slight discontinuity in this shot that is imperceptible except under close scrutiny. Nameless should have closed more distance in this time, but is only a few paces away from the chess platform at the beginning of the shot.
Shot 22

Distance: extreme close up
Angle: Eye Level
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Sky is framed in the center
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: eerie eastern sounds in background
Movement: medium push in on Sky’s face
Description: Sky watches the imminent attack

Analysis: Sky is perceived to be staring down his attacker at this last moment before contact. The viewer is delayed again in witnessing the confrontation. The tension rises, yet.
Shot 23

Distance: long shot
Angle: High angle, over the shoulder shot
Focus: full depth of field
Framing: Namless’ is mostly centered in the frame while he continues his flying lunge
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: tense background music rises again as the eerie eastern sounds fade
Movement: tracking shot with Nameless’ as he continues his flying lunge (on cables) toward Sky.
Description: Nameless continues his flying lunge toward Sky

Analysis: Nameless is mythically performing a flying lunge towards Sky. We get the impression that the sword is only the very sharp and lethal end of the entire weapon which consists of Nameless and the sword. We see the impending death and sky’s end coming now, aimed squarely for Sky in an impossible fashion. We are to get the impression that there is no way out for him, yet, sky is still standing defenseless. This shot is also new and disconcerting.
Shot 24

Distance: medium close up
Angle: Low angle, over the shoulder shot
Focus: close depth of field
Framing: Sky is mostly centered in the frame while Nameless attacks
Editing: short take (3 seconds)
Sound: tense background music ends as we hear Sky ready his spear and the two metal weapons make contact
Movement: Shot begins stationary on Sky then tracks with his spear as the sword makes contact.
Description: Nameless makes contact

Analysis: A lot of action occurs in this 3 second period of time. Sky begins standing in a defiant stance weapon at his side. This is the Sky we know. Just when we might think that this is all that will happen, he then quickly brings the shaft of the spear to a defensive posture. As the sword enters the scene and makes contact he positions his body in a defensive position to absorb the weight of impact. He appears confident and skillful. The low angle emphasizes his strength and we find that he moves fast as well.
Shot 25

Distance: close up
Angle: high angle
Focus: full depth of field
Framing: Sky’s feet are centered in the frame
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: continued sound of the two metal weapons making contact. More eerie eastern noises begin to come in at the end of the shot.
Movement: Tracking shot on Sky’s shoes.
Description: Sky shuffles left as he is attacked

Analysis: Here we see that Nameless has had an impact on Sky. He must shuffle to stay upright. His motions are seemingly less coordinated than the footsteps we have seen of Nameless during the charge. We begin to feel that Sky may be in trouble.
Shot 26

Distance: close up
Angle: low angle
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Sky is in the right portion of the frame while the sword takes up the left half
Editing: short take (2 seconds)
Sound: continued sound of the two metal weapons making contact even though they are not, more eerie eastern noises and sound of a sword being retracted
Movement: Tracking shot on Sky’s in the right of the frame as he pulls away from the sword
Description: Sky is almost sliced by the blade

Analysis: Sky almost meets his end and he dances past the blade. It comes within centimeters or millimeters from his neck as they pass each other. We are to draw references to the mortality of this battle and how life can end abruptly in one fail swoop. This was close.
Distance: medium close up  
Angle: high angle, over the shoulder  
Focus: full depth of field  
Framing: Sky is in the right portion of the frame while the sword takes up the left half  
Editing: short take (1 second)  
Sound: continued mix of indistinguishable eerie eastern sounds and/or metal on metal play  
Movement: The shot pushes in tight on Nameless while he lunges at Sky and Sky pulls out of the shot  
Description: Nameless lunges again

Analysis: This scene features a rare use of low key lighting in this film. Earlier shots have portrayed Sky as a warm character by the use of this clothing colors in contrast to the steel blue and black tones of everything else. He has been portrayed as intelligent, likeable, and prone to avoid confrontation unless it comes looking for him. Nameless is quickly portrayed as a dark, murderous, evil assassin lunging out of the dark at Sky. Nameless is now clearly a significant threat. We are supposed to fear him as well.
Shot 28

Distance: close up
Angle: low angle
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Sky is in the right portion of the frame while the sword takes up the left half
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: continued metal on metal play sounds with a Chinese word grunted by possibly Nameless?
Movement: The shot tracks on the sword as it lunges at Sky and he pulls away
Description: Nameless sword takes aim

Analysis: Once again we are made to feel that Sky has met his end. The sword comes lunging in right at his neck and he backs up, but we remember his back being toward the door, so we think he is out of options again. The director has played a trick on us though, because sky turned during the contact of the last shots and is about to find a way out. We are about to be surprised again.
Wallin 30

Shot 29

Distance: close up
Angle: high angle
Focus: full depth of field
Framing: The legs of Sky and Nameless pass through the center of the frame, a stone railing is a predominant feature of the frame running horizontally in a canted fashion. A chess board and lantern are also key distracters that orient the view to this setting.
Editing: short take (3 seconds)
Sound: eastern drums and other rhythmical instruments come up
Movement: The shot partially tracks the feet of Sky and Nameless as they step up off the ground onto the railing and up into the air flying off the shot
Description: Sky and Nameless step up and into the air

Analysis: We are surprised once again and find that the sequence is not over as we step away from the corner Sky was pushed into. The changing music signals a new twist to the plot of this fight. We become disoriented again.
Shot 30

Distance: long shot
Angle: slightly low
Focus: medium depth of field
Framing: Sky and Nameless fly from the left of the frame toward the center
Editing: short take (2 seconds)
Sound: The drums form a cohesive beat characteristic of a pre-modern military
Movement: The shot tracks Sky and Nameless as they fly away from the camera
Description: Sky and Nameless take flight across the courtyard

Analysis: We now realize that a new battleground is in play, the air. There is a moment
of grace and peacefulness as the combatants play out movements that defy
gravity. This adds to the mysticism of the ancient battle and shows by the body
stances that Sky would rather back away gracefully rather than fight. His arms
are open, weapon at his side. Nameless is attacking without a moment of retreat
even during this slow graceful air flight.
Distance: long shot
Angle: high angle crane shot
Focus: full depth of field
Framing: Sky and Nameless fly from the left of the frame toward the right
Editing: short take (3 seconds)
Sound: The drums continue a cohesive beat characteristic of a pre-modern military
Movement: The shot tracks Sky and Nameless as they fly away from the camera, the
   camera is also panning around the two as it flies by to create two opposite
   intertwined slightly twisting motions
Description: Sky and Nameless continue their flight across the courtyard

Analysis: This is a transitional scene that brings the two to the new battleground area in
   the courtyard. It also serves to transition the viewers mind to accept the mystical
   elements of these mythical battles, realizing that gravity and physical are not
   constants. The story may be bigger than the laws of the universe. Perhaps there
   are things that go beyond these laws. In this transitional scene we get the
   impression that Sky may also be taunting Nameless, rather than simply
   maintaining a posture of one who would prefer not to fight. Be may be daring
   him to strike. This does emphasize beauty as a key element of martial arts.
Shot 32

Distance: close up
Angle: low angle
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Sky is centered in this shot bringing up the staff of his spear to defend a blow
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: The drums continue a cohesive beat characteristic of a pre-modern military, metal on metal blow sound effects
Movement: The shot tracks Sky as he brings the staff of his spear up to defend a blow
Description: Sky defends a blow in mid-air

Analysis: This shot is meant to disrupt us again. Just as we think we might have a reprieve from battle, the blow comes again suddenly as we cut to this close up. The tracking shot with motion in the background also keeps us on edge.
Shot 33

Distance: extreme close up  
Angle: low angle  
Focus: shallow depth of field  
Framing: A portion of the staff is centered in this shot  
Editing: short take (1 second)  
Sound: The drums continue a cohesive beat characteristic of a pre-modern military, while we hear the reverberation from the sword strike  
Movement: fixed shot  
Description: The speak reverberates

Analysis: We hear as well as see the reverberation from the sword blow. Sky’s hand has to change its grasp in response to the power of the blow. We can see that the battle is not over and Sky is having a bit of difficulty with this. We are supposed to stay tense as the battle continues.
Shot 34

Distance: medium long shot
Angle: low angle
Focus: shallow depth of field
Framing: Nameless is a little left of center but is the dominant portion of the frame
Editing: short take (1 second)
Sound: The drums continue a cohesive beat characteristic of a pre-modern military, while we hear another sword strike and a grunt from one of them
Movement: mostly fixed shot (a little camera movement detected, unsure what it was tracking on, if anything)
Description: Nameless strikes again while in air

Analysis: The low angle again gives Nameless a more powerful stance. This is enhanced by his grimacing face and sword strike here, obviously the battle will be continuing on and on (or so we are meant to think.)
Shot 35

Distance: extra long shot
Angle: high angle
Focus: good depth of field
Framing: We are approaching a perfect framing again, the camera is canted a touch, and more space is given to Nameless, but there is general balance in the lines of this shot
Editing: short take (5 seconds)
Sound: The drums continue a cohesive beat characteristic of a pre-modern military and draw to a close just at the end of this shot with a very slight crescendo, while we hear the reverberation from the last sword clash
Movement: mostly fixed shot (a very slight pan to the left and down as the combatants drop to the ground)
Description: Nameless and Sky twirl to the ground

Analysis: This is a very graceful shot of the two pulling away from their violent embrace during the last shot and taking up new ground to begin again. The five seconds of this shot seems quite long compared to the volley of quick shots the viewer has just taken in. The audience is being played with, and asked to believe that the action is slowing to a stop again. We should not believe anything.
Shot 36

Distance: Close up pulling back to medium long shot
Angle: low angle
Focus: full depth of field
Framing: Shot starts out framed on the top of the spear and pulls back to center on Sky
Editing: short take (4 seconds)
Sound: The reverberation from the last sword clash dies down and we can detect an earthy base tone in the background
Movement: The camera begins tight on the tip of the spear, and pulls back to sky
Description: Sky regroups

Analysis: Here we see sky. We hear the effects of the last encounter in the reverberating weapon of his and we can see the determination and focus on his face. He is shown strong from the low angle. His face says he is now serious about this. He is supposed to be taken as sizing up his enemy again and regrouping after their brief initial encounter. Often, combatants will take a quick practice round to size each other up.
Shot 37

Distance: Medium shot
Angle: low angle
Focus: somewhat shallow depth of field
Framing: Nameless is placed in the center of the shot his sword and sheath provide counterbalancing perpendicular lines
Editing: short take (2 seconds)
Sound: The earthy base tone in the background dies away as well
Movement: Stationary
Description: Nameless regroups

Analysis: Nameless is shown, powerful, resolute and unmoving from where he landed, much as he did not move a lot when barking his orders. He does not appear affected by the short duel, which is disturbing. He is almost too calm. He seems to simply be waiting for Sky to make the next move, with no need to regroup or size up.
Collectively, all of the shots in this scene employ warm colors with cold blue metals being dominant in the slate temple construction. The contrast is slightly grainy with a normal exposure. The shots employ various frame rates from 24 FPS to possibly various rates of slow motion.

The director does a marvelous job of managing transitions. The use of transitional cuts of the elite guards changing the direction of their glance, along with the flying and landing sequences at the end of the scene smoothly bring us from one point of action, to the next in a seamless manner.

The director also does a wonderful job of introducing Sky and Nameless to each other. They are distant unknown persons at the beginning and gain an “in your face” kind of knowledge of each other. This is reflected in the early use of extreme long shots, transitioning to medium shots, and finally close ups during their initial encounter.

The characters also interact well with a great balance of shot/reverse shot, point of view, over-the-shoulder and angled shots.

The Director uses all the above tools in a series of quick shots. The action takes place quickly, and at times unexpectedly, using a series of repeating shots and framing to build a familiar pattern, followed by unexpected shots to keep the view surprised. The tension builds from the very beginning of the scene, all the way through to the end. In addition to the patterns noted above, he employs unexpected plot twists, unexpected body language, and a defiance of natural laws to create increasingly heightened senses of tension that Sky and Namless interact. This is a wonderfully orchestrated scene.