

TV Review: Game of Thrones Season 4 Episode 4: 'Oathkeeper'

Including the furriest Ser in all the realm. [George Wood](#) reviews

Wednesday 30 April 2014



Rating: ★★★☆☆

Warning: this article contains spoilers.

"That was me knocking your ass to the dirt with your own hand" – Bronn

It was inevitable *Game of Thrones* would fall into a lull at some point. The slower pace of 'Oathkeeper' means the episode is more geared towards setting events up for the future, though there's a few revelations and curveballs to spice up the plot. One is the discovery of Olenna as a conspirator behind Joffrey's death, which should come as no surprise to book readers. There's a nice seamlessness between Littlefinger's speech and the scene between Olenna and Margaery, and though Littlefinger is coming across ever so slightly pantomime-ish, Olenna's reveal in the murder (with Margaery's best intentions) is played to perfection thanks to Dianne Rigg.

The other big reveal of the week was the White Walkers – a treat that book fans (like myself) did not see coming. Seeing what happened to Craster's children was played out hauntingly thanks to some great direction. The teasing nature of the shots perhaps left me with more questions than answers, but kudos to the show runners for a brilliant cliffhanger to surprise everyone.

Speaking of direction, the shots in this episode were quite stunning. Seeing the slaves in Meereen crowd

over that slave-master was an effective way of representing a city-wide revolt, as was the slow pan to show the various slave-masters pinned to the posts around the city. Lighting and colour was pretty striking: the sunset on Jaime and Bronn's scene, the flickering light of the torches in Meereen's sewers, the claustrophobic darkness on Littlefinger's rocking boat, immediately followed by the lush greens in the Tyrell scene. With the exception of the awkward CGI in the Daenerys / Meereen shot, 'Oathkeeper' was beautiful to watch.

Jon's story was mostly set-up in preparation for his assault on Craster's Keep (though the re-introduction of Locke – previously sent by Roose Bolton to find Bran and Rickon and thwart their potential claim to the North – was interesting). The mutineers at Craster's Keep were brought back in a vile reminder that Joffrey isn't the only despicable character to exist in *Game of Thrones*. As much as these characters are disgusting in their rape and revelry, their capture of Bran and co sets up for a far more intriguing plot line than Bran's been having recently.

However, despite all these plot set-ups, where the episode fails for me is in [the criticism I suggested last week](#). The handing of the titular sword of this episode from Jaime to Brienne could have been so much stronger had Jaime's story arc not been skewed by the rape scene in the previous episode. As I discussed before, the lack of repercussions regarding that scene is disappointing, and where the relationship between Jaime and Brienne (tied into Jaime's redemption) was one of the best parts of season three, it feels somewhat tainted here.

Thankfully, what could have been another let's-break-a-taboo scene between Tommen and Margaery (who is now trying to influence her young husband-to-be) ended with a kiss on the forehead, in what turned out to be quite a sweet scene (not to mention it introduced Ser Pounce!).



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