

Ridley scott's film a blade runner: a detailed review

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



The Creator, the Candle, and the Replicant in Ridley Scott's Blade Runner

Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* features Rick Deckard, a detective, as he tracks down a group of rogue replicants, bioengineered slaves, who seek to find a way to extend the four-year lifespan imposed by them by their creator, the affluent and powerful Eldon Tyrell. Roy leads the replicants on their search for life, and by manipulating a genetic engineer named J. F. Sebastian, Roy finally gains access to Tyrell's headquarters. In this scene of Roy and Tyrell's confrontation, material wealth represents Tyrell's power, while flames represent Roy's power. The visual prominence of flames versus possessions echoes these men's fight for power in this scene.

The scene begins with a close up of Tyrell's replicant owl. The owl's right eye reflects the light in the way characteristic of replicants: the pupil turns reddish as it reflects light. The owl looks diagonally offscreen, blinks, and spins her head to the right of the screen.

The second shot is a long shot as Roy and J. F. enter Tyrell's chambers. The loose framing of this shot emphasizes the grandness of Tyrell's dimly lit, sepia-toned room. A large candelabra sits in the foreground. In the middle ground is an ornate couch and two lavishly styled columns on either side of the screen. Finally, in the background are the enormous, intricately designed double doors. All of these objects establish this space as Tyrell's domain. J. F. swings one of the large doors open, making another candelabra visible in the hallway. A reverse shot shows Tyrell, fastening his white robe in front of his large white bed, from a medium close distance and low angle; more candles

are visible in the background. The shots in this sequence serve to establish the room as Tyrell's domain. Everything, from the couch to the candles, belongs to Tyrell and exists to serve him, just as Roy belongs to Tyrell and exists to serve.

The next shot shows J. F., in a medium close up view, as he steps into the room, announcing that he's "brought a friend." Simultaneous to this announcement, the camera's depth of field pulls forward, blurring Roy who lurks behind J. F. A reverse shot shows Tyrell, looking curious and concerned, securing his robe again before stepping down off-screen stairs with the camera tracking his forward movement. The blurring of Roy in the first shot and Tyrell's expression in the second show his lack of knowledge of this man who stands outside his domain.

However, this mysterious person does not remain out of the room for long. The next shot uses the same framing as the second shot, but Tyrell stands so that the camera looks over his out of focus shoulder. Roy steps into the room—into Tyrell's territory—and he and J. F. proceed forwards. A medium close-up reverse shot shows Tyrell with two small, out of focus candelabras behind him, before a reverse shot shows J. F. and Roy advancing. When they reach the candelabra, Roy tells J. F. to wait while he continues towards Tyrell, stopping just after the main candelabra. In this position, the brightly burning candelabra in the room and the one in the hallway are on either side of Roy. A reverse shot shows Tyrell, then Roy. This visual prominence of flames mirrors Roy's confidence as he demands Tyrell give him more life.

The next shot shows Tyrell backing away as Roy walks towards him off camera. Two candelabras are still visible behind Tyrell; these flames which were just associated with Roy help to establish Roy's dominance in this moment. However, Roy's dominance is not complete, as he is still in Tyrell's domain. This idea is echoed by the low angle that this shot takes and the high position Tyrell obtains as he backs up the steps towards his bed; both of these factors magnify Tyrell's presence in the room despite the fact that Roy, too, holds some power at this moment.

The next shot is an eye level close up of Roy, who moves from the background, coming into focus as he reaches the foreground. His face is dimly lit, but his eyes gleam with the reflectiveness of replicant eyes. The candelabra burns brightly behind him, contrasting with the darkness of Roy's face. A series of reverse shots show Tyrell from a slightly low angle close up and Roy from an eye level close up. Behind Tyrell, a white curtain can be seen, while in the shots of Roy, flames take up an equal amount of space in the frame as the curtain does. This composition parallels the situation: Roy's passion holds equal power to Tyrell's influence.

After a final reverse shot of Tyrell, Scott cuts to a close up shot tracking J. F. as he walks behind the candelabra before the next shot returns to the close up of Roy, followed by a reverse shot of Tyrell speaking. Another cutaway shows J. F. behind the white candlesticks of the candelabra; the flames are not visible in this shot, and J. F. is smiling as Tyrell informs Roy that it is impossible to stop his death. This statement, that there is no way for Roy to

live, comes when the white candles on the candelabra— portions of Tyrell's wealth—are very visually prominent.

The next shot is a low angle close up of Tyrell backing up as Roy, out of focus as he enters the foreground, proceeds towards him. The camera tracks Roy as he walks past Tyrell, but it keeps Tyrell in focus. Roy, for the first time, reaches a higher position in the frame than Tyrell. As it becomes clear that Tyrell can't cure Roy, the focus shifts to Roy in the background, and the camera tilts down as he sits on the bed, a small cluster of candles becoming visible in the background. Tyrell, out of focus in the extreme foreground, walks past the camera as it zooms into a close up of Roy while panning to the right. Two candle flames are barely visible in the frame, as if they could flicker out of view at any moment, emphasizing Roy's vulnerability.

The next shot is a close-up of Tyrell, whose face is now dimly lit. As he says, " The light that burns twice as bright burns half as long, and you have burned so very, very brightly, Roy." A low angle reverse shot is a close up of Roy, with two bright flame tips at the bottom of the frame. This sequence of shots verbally, and again, spatially, aligns Roy with flames. However, Tyrell twists the idea of flames, which previously in the scene had paralleled Roy's power in the situation, to make it parallel Roy's fading life.

Another cut away shows J. F. behind the candelabra, grinning, as it becomes clear that Tyrell has no intention of helping Roy.

The next shot is an eye level close up of Roy with two bright candle flames out of focus behind him. Tyrell's hand comes into the screen, stroking Roy's

head before he sits behind and to the right of Roy. The focus shifts between Roy and Tyrell as they speak. Tyrell's position blocks the flames from the shot and puts him in a higher position than Roy, who is very vulnerable: he dared to enter Tyrell's territory, and now his mission has failed.

The next shot is a profile close up of Roy, his face illuminated by the warm, shifting light of candles. The camera tilts as he lifts his head to look at Tyrell. This illumination of his face by flames signals an eminent resurgence of his power.

The next shot has Roy partially visible in the foreground while Tyrell is on the right side of the frame in a high angle close up. The candle flames are visible between them. Roy puts one hand, then the other on Tyrell's half-illuminated face. A reverse shot has Tyrell's face partially on the screen and Roy's face fully visible as Roy kisses Tyrell. The camera zooms in and tracks around Tyrell's face as Roy crushes it. A reverse low angle close up shows Roy's face, his eyes reflecting light again, as he grimaces. Another reverse shot shows Tyrell's face from a high angle as Roy's thumbs press into his eyes. A final reverse shot returns to Roy. A cutaway shows the owl, before returning to the close up of Roy. Another cutaway shows J. F. behind the candles, crying. The reappearance of candles in this scene signals that the replicant's power grows.

The next shot is a medium close up of Roy standing over Tyrell with bloody hands. Several candles are visible in the background, and Tyrell is out of focus in the foreground as he falls down. Scott again cuts away J. F. behind the candles. A reverse shot shows Roy as he steps back and down, the

camera tilting slightly. A final cutaway to J. F. shows him retreating off screen. A medium close-up of Roy has the large candelabra and J. F. out of focus in the background until Roy turns to look at J. F. running away, shifting the focus onto J. F. as Roy proceeds towards him. The numerous candles visible behind Roy as he kills Tyrell and the reappearance of the main candelabra signal that, even though his mission for more life failed, he took control of the man who created him to die—created him, like a candle, to burn out.

The final shot is a close-up of the owl, facing diagonally off screen before spinning her head towards the left of the screen such that only her glowing, replicant eye is visible.

Ridley Scott's choice to have Tyrell's room filled with candles allows the association of Roy with flames. This relationship that Tyrell verbally asserts, saying Roy has "burned so very, very brightly" becomes clear through the framing of Roy and candles together. By strategically placing flames in the frame, Scott demonstrates the ebb and flow of Roy's power when he beseeches his creator for help. The flames are brightest when Roy has killed Tyrell and gained complete dominance over the situation. Unfortunately, this dominance is short lived, as he goes after Deckard and his life runs out. He dies quietly, like a candle fizzling out, reminding everyone that even the brightest flames eventually burn out.