

## DETAILS

### Working Title

*Illumination*

### Logline

Based on *The Magic Flute*, three witches use trickery and magic to escape their pact with evil, finding adventure, humor, and love on their way to enlightenment in the Temple of Dawn.

### Characters

The following characters appear in *Illumination*. Details might change as the script develops.

**Alaric.** A sorcerer known as the Night King, Alaric seeks to plunder the magical secrets of the Temple of Dawn.

**Sonnhild.** High priestess in the Temple of Dawn and Pamina's mother, Sonnhild guides the protagonists along their paths.

**Three Witches.** Although they serve Alaric, the three witches Rosamund, Pamina, and Genia have decided to abandon the evil king. Each witch has two identities, one masked and one not. Few know the unmasked ladies and the masked witches are the same women.

*Rosamund.* The eldest witch, Rosa acts on motherly feelings toward the younger witches.

*Pamina.* The middle witch, Mina wants to be free to love Tamino.

*Genia.* The youngest witch, Gen initially acts for the thrill of it.

**Three Imps.** Magical creations and familiars of the witches, three imps aid the protagonists as magical extensions of their mistresses.

**Tamino.** A warrior prince from a neighboring land, Tam loves Pamina but knows nothing of her life as a witch.

**Papageno.** A fowler for the Night King, Papageno is a good-hearted playboy caught up in the witches' plots and carried along for the ride.

**Servants of Dawn.** Clergy and guards serve in the Temple of Dawn, including an elderly priest known as the Speaker of Light.

**Markell.** Night's spy in the Temple of Dawn, the warlock Markell lusts after Pamina, causing him to eventually reveal his true nature.

## **ABSTRACT**

*Illumination* is a retelling of *The Magic Flute* with the perspective that the Three Witches who serve the Night King orchestrate the scenario. It aims to be as fantastic and magical as the original while embracing modern perspectives.

The witch Pamina catalyzes events. She wishes to escape her pact with the evil Night King so she can freely be with her lover, the prince Tamino. Her fellow witches—older, wiser Rosamund and younger, wilder Genia—help her. They plan to escape, with Tamino, to the Temple of Dawn, where Pamina’s mother, Sonnchild, is the high priestess. There, all three can be purified of their connection to darkness.

This plan goes awry from the start, when Tamino shows up in the Night King’s realm early and runs afoul of a dragon guarding the king’s forest. The witches rescue the prince, whom the dragon knocked unconscious. Then they leave him to report to the Night King and move their plan forward. The Night King’s fowler, the free-spirited Papageno, finds Tamino awake and claims to have slain the dragon. When the witches return to send Tamino to the Temple of Dawn, they lie that Pamina is already being held prisoner there. Tamino volunteers to rescue Pamina, and the witches force Papageno to go along to pay for his dishonesty and help Tamino.

Within the temple, the characters face trials to move them toward their destiny. Truths are revealed, mistakes are made, an enemy is unmasked, and love grows. All the while, the Night King thinks his witches are serving his interests in plundering the mysteries of the temple. The witches undergo their purifications, Tamino becomes a temple initiate, and Papageno remains true to himself. But when the Night King discovers he has been betrayed, he takes the direct approach. Can the characters still acquire all they desire? Can light overcome darkness?

Answers to these questions are literal and symbolic in this retelling. Like in the original, this story is one of personal development through risk and sacrifice. It’s a tale of transformation and the bonds of differing forms of love. The tale is meant to be a joyous adventure.

Where this retelling differs most is in the characters’ social roles. That’s intentional. Gone is the sexist image of the Night Queen as a rebellious woman unwilling to bow to patriarchal values. The blackamoor and slaves have been altered to fit modern sensibilities. Fairy-tale love is also absent. Romance and friendship in this version of the tale are more mature, portrayed as either part of an extant relationship or developed over time. Although the female roles are elevated here, the males remain capable, each according to his individual nature and part in the plot. Tamino, given his prominence, is a man strong in body and mind. He’s a real prince.

Ultimately, the goal is to retell this fairy tale in a modern and adult way. So, twenty-first-century sensibilities outweigh eighteenth-century ones. It’s the magic that remains.

## TREATMENT

The sun rises over wooded hills. A beast's roar and the scream of a horse break the silence. Frightened birds leap into flight from the trees. TAMINO, wearing armor, fights a dragon near his dead horse. The dragon shatters Tamino's shield, and then Tamino breaks his sword on the beast's snout. Tamino panics. He dashes through the trees and cries for aid. The dragon bellows in fury, then gives chase. An IMP watching the battle takes flight to follow.

Three witches work in a castle's alchemy lab, animating a third imp as a second watches. ROSAMUND instructs GENIA in the process as PAMINA watches. Suddenly PAMINA senses Tamino's peril through her imp, shown in the first scene. The witches don masks and depart the lab through a window, implying that they fly.

Tamino stops to catch his breath. He begs for help. The dragon barrels into him, knocking him down and out. Three witches bound down through the trees, and they slay the beast with sorcery. As they land, they discover Tamino unconscious. Pamina wants to stay, and Genia pokes fun, but Rosamund convinces all three to return to the Night King. Pamina's imp stays behind to keep watch.

In the throne room of a castle, the three witches explain to their king, ALARIC, what has happened. Pamina claims to have charmed Tamino to use him as a weapon against the Temple of Dawn. With him, the witches promise, they'll infiltrate the temple and bring it down from within, allowing Alaric to plunder its secrets. Alaric praises the three, gives them a magic flute and sistrum to aid the heroes, and dispatches them to carry out their plan.

Tamino awakens. He hears panpipes and decides to hide from whoever is approaching. PAPAGENO dances onto the scene, singing a bawdy song to himself. He hasn't noticed the slain dragon when Tamino steps into view. Tamino points out the dragon, and Papageno startles but then calms and claims to have slain it. The hidden imp listens in.

As the witches depart Alaric's castle, Pamina reveals Papageno's lies, as heard by her imp. Pamina considers telling Tam the truth. Rosamund points out that doing so is risky within the Night King's realm. Although the witches can use their powers to conceal their duplicity, Tamino has no such advantage. If he were to run afoul of another of the Night King's servants, Alaric might learn the truth too soon, dooming everyone. Besides, the witches need to precede Tamino to talk to SONNHILD, Pamina's mother and high priestess of the Temple of Dawn. It is she who can help them break their ties with dark magic. This discussion reveals what the witches already know: Pamina has been in psychic contact with her mother for some time now. Further, their plan was always to dupe Tamino for a time, so he would go willingly to the Temple of Dawn.

Agreed on their course, the three witches return to Tamino. They find him talking with Papageno, whom they confront for his dishonesty. The witches seal Papageno's mouth with

magic, then they tell Tamino his lover is being held prisoner in the Temple of Dawn on the border of the Night King's realm. Tamino volunteers to rescue Pamina from evil. Genia flirtatiously suggests Papageno also go, to pay for his lies and to aid the prince. Besides, Papageno knows Pamina, too.

Pamina gives Tam the magic flute. Genia gives Papageno the magic sistrum and unseals his mouth with a light kiss. The witches send their imps to guide the heroes. Men depart, and witches fly ahead. As the witches move out of earshot, Genia looks back and admires Papageno, mentioning him to the other witches.

The witches arrive at the Temple of Dawn. The SPEAKER, an elderly priest wearing a unique amulet of a sun disk, bars their way at the gate. Pamina claims the right to see her mother, Sonnhild. The Speaker calls forth guards and dispatches another cleric to summon the high priestess. Sonnhild arrives with an entourage of guards and clerics, including MARKELL, and embraces her daughter. The whole group goes into the temple courtyard.

Sonnhild welcomes the witches and commends their desire to free themselves from evil. Each witch has the opportunity to change, but she must do so without her magical powers, which are rooted in dark sorcery and must be changed by the light. Each witch must also face tests to prove her heart is ready and willing. Such trials will come in a manner that fate itself dictates, sometimes spurred by intuition or inspiration. Meanwhile, the witches must learn more from the temple clerics.

In a short talk, Sonnhild tells Pamina that her love for Tamino will be tested most. They will have to prove they belong together.

A montage shows various scenes. The men travel on foot through wooded hills, including some difficult but beautiful terrain for wide shots. (Possibly an action scene here to develop Tamino and Papageno further.) The witches remove their dark robes and masks, replacing them with the light robes of the Temple of Dawn. They begin study in the temple. An important implication is that a few days pass between the witches' arrival and that of the men.

Tamino and Papageno approach the temple, the imps urge Tamino forward. Then Pamina's imp pulls Papageno aside. It tells Papageno he must go another route. Pamina needs help, but Tamino must enter the temple through its gates.

Markell confronts Pamina in the temple's orchard. He claims that she is a liar and a spy. He is willing to help her, but only if she submits to his lurid advances. (Despite implications, Markell keeps his true alliance secret for now, and Pamina doesn't know him.) Tempted to use her magic on Markell, Pamina remembers she must not. Instead, she flees from him. He chases her, swearing to reveal and destroy her if she fails to submit.

Tamino arrives at the leftmost of temple's three front gates. He tries the gate, but it doesn't open. Overthinking the situation, he reasons he should try the farthest gate, but the right gate doesn't open either. The middle gate opens. The Speaker comes forth and confronts Tamino about why he has come to the temple.

Relating the lies he has been told, Tamino demands entry. The Speaker tries to tell Tamino the truth about the temple, the Night King, and Sonnchild. Tamino disbelieves at every turn. The prince starts to leave, believing the Speaker intends to deny him entry. However, the Speaker keeps him at the gate a while longer, talking.

Papageno arrives in the temple side court and climbs the wall. He hears Pamina cry for help and runs to aid her. He and Markell arrive on opposite sides of a clearing at the same time, with Pamina between them. Pamina moves toward Papageno. The three imps land behind Papageno, frightening Markell away from Pamina. (Papageno thinks he scared Markell away.) Recognizing Pamina, Papageno tells her Tamino has come for her, then wistfully wishes he had such love in his life. The two discuss love. Pamina suggests someone might like Papageno already as the two walk back through the orchard to the temple.

Tamino despairs to the Speaker that Pamina might already be dead inside the temple. The Speaker scoffs at the notion that anyone would be killed by the temple inhabitants. "The light can burn away darkness, but we are peaceful clerics," says the Speaker. "We have guardians, but even these warriors are devout, peace-loving souls. Anyone inside is alive and well. Harm can only come to those who enter intending harm in kind. Even then, only in equal measure."

Overjoyed at the Speaker's assurances, and starting to believe them, Tamino plays a note on the magic flute.

In the orchard, Papageno and Pamina hear the flute play. Pamina knows the music must come from Tamino. She urges Papageno to play his pipes in response.

A back-and-forth series of shots: Tamino responds on the flute. Pamina suggests Papageno respond with the magic sistrum. Tamino responds with the flute.

Tamino then begs the Speaker to let him in to find his friend. The Speaker smiles and relents. As they enter, the Speaker says the music is coming from the orchard and points the way. Tamino runs ahead of the elderly priest.

Markell returns with temple guards. He threatens to kill Papageno and take Pamina prisoner until she sees things his way. One guard points out that he understands his captain's anger at the violation of the temple, but killing is not necessary. Markell impatiently orders the Pamina and Papageno subdued. As the guards close in, Pamina reminds Papageno of the magic sistrum. Papageno plays the sistrum. It charms Markell and the guards, who wander off into the orchard

as if in a dream state, grasping at illusory chimes. Pamina leads Papageno away, hoping to find Tamino and talk to her mother about Markell. Pamina and Papageno leave the orchard.

Moments later, Tamino makes it to the orchard far ahead of the Speaker. He runs afoul Markell and the temple guards, who have recovered and take him prisoner as a trespasser. They take him away through a doorway other than the one he entered. The Speaker arrives in the orchard to find no one in it. Confused, he departs to look for Tamino.

In a courtyard, temple residents gather for relaxation, reading, and debate. Genia praises her own use of her wiles and magic on people, especially men, to a priestess here. The priestess suggests that pleasure is fine, but it can distract one from finding deeper joy. Such bliss, the priestess says, is not an extreme state such as happiness or grief, but a consistent state of contentment. Knowing oneself and one's world deeply and honestly allows one to find such joy. Acknowledging others as more than objects of pleasure is required to find a deeper way of relating to them. "Meditation helps," she says.

Genia considers these words as she notices Papageno and Pamina enter the same courtyard. Pamina for Sonnhild. A priest volunteers to bring her and departs to do so. The imps settle into trees unobserved. Genia cloaks herself and covers her face, and she serves Pamina and Papageno fruit. Pretending to be a priestess scarred by disease in her past, she talks with Papageno about his own history. He casually admits his ways, declaring she, a plain and modest lady, has nothing to fear from him in that way.

In a sunlit chamber, Rosamund sits with Sonnhild and several of the clergy. They discuss Rosamund's wicked past, spent doing work for the Night King and misleading others into his service. Sonnhild says desire is all that is required for change to begin. Rosamund has already taken steps in the right direction, sacrificing her temporal power and helping Pamina escape the Night King.

Sonnhild reveals that Alaric was one of Sonnhild's former lovers who, after living in the Temple of the Dawn for a time, lured a rebellious and teenaged Pamina away with lies and offers of power. (Again, he covets the magical secrets he believes exist in the temple.) Rosamund admits to being a part of luring Pamina into Alaric's service. Sonnhild smiles, saying, "I know. But that is the past. You are forgiven, and I hope your heart grows lighter in speaking this truth."

The priest from the previous scene enters to tell Sonnhild of Pamina's request. Sonnhild stands and go. Her attendants and Rosamund follow.

The high priestess and her entourage come into the sunlit courtyard to meet Pamina and Papageno. Pamina tells of Markell's actions, with Papageno's confirmation. Markell arrives with his guards and Tamino, who rushes to embrace Pamina. Angry and jealous, Markell shoves the two apart, presenting the prince as a trespasser and potential kidnapper. The Speaker arrives in

time to hear Markell's accusations and retells Tamino's mistaken impressions at the gate. Pamina defends Tamino. Papageno does, too, revealing the two are friends.

After listening, some clergy react poorly to the fact that Tamino and Papageno are (even unwitting) agents of the Night King. Sonnhild calms the crowd. She declares that everyone involved who wishes to stay at the temple must undergo initiation and purification. "Some of you will have to reveal hard truths, and others might need to disguise the easy ones. All of you have something to learn." The high priestess includes Markell in this purification, relieving him leadership duties among the guards until he atones for his improper actions. He claims he was diligently doing his duty and her "punishment" is unfair. In response, she only smiles sadly.

Montage of initiation in the temple. Most of the characters train with, meditate with, and learn from the clergy. The witches and Tamino do well. Although all three witches meet with Sonnhild, Rosamund is shown with the high priestess the most. Tamino and Pamina meet in passing. Papageno spends most of his time avoiding his duties. He enjoys the temple's amenities and the company of Genia in disguise, playing the sistrum or panpipes to entertain her. Occasionally, the Speaker berates him.

Markell lurks in a few montage scenes, spying. In the middle of the montage, he stands in a wilderness clearing, using magic to call up Alaric's ghostly image and make a report. The Night King reveals the witches' plot. The spy says none of the newcomers seem to be doing anything to harm the temple or make it weaker, besides maybe Papageno. Alaric tells Markell to continue watching and waiting. Pamina might be building trust she can later use in betrayal.

Also amid the montage, Sonnhild walks with Tamino. She asks if Tamino still believes Pamina is a prisoner. Tamino claims to believe the temple is a good place. He's confused why Sonnhild is forcing Pamina to stay. The high priestess demurs, saying only that Pamina remains in the temple for her own protection. She asks Tamino to remain faithful and patient, and the truth will come to light. "In the meantime," she says, "I have the privilege of getting to know you."

The montage continues. It implies many days, perhaps weeks, pass.

To end the montage, from her private chamber, Sonnhild calls for Pamina. They talk about Tamino. Does Pamina love Tamino? Why is she using him this way? When will she tell him the truth? Pamina acknowledges Tamino's goodness and promises to tell him everything.

Tamino and Papageno appear before a council of clergy led by Sonnhild. The high priestess declares Tamino ready to begin his final trials. Papageno can attempt the trials only if Tamino chooses to take his friend along. Tamino does. Two warrior-priests in ceremonial armor lead the two men to a courtyard to begin the trials. They are instructed not to speak when anyone besides the clergy is present. Three imps land nearby and watch.

Illusions of the three witches accost the men. These illusory ladies threaten hidden danger in the temple, such as human sacrifice, and accuse the men of betrayal. Finally, they warn the Night King is coming. They depart in frustration when neither man addresses them, although Papageno makes a lot of frightened noises. (And the imps scold him.) When the illusory ladies leave, Papageno says, "I'm too young and handsome to die!" He faints.

The warrior-priests come and guide Tamino away, and one imp follows. The Speaker comes and helps Papageno up, although the fowler claims he was only resting. Two imps look on.

Pamina meditates in a garden, an imp watching over her. Markell sneaks in the foliage, ogling her. He whispers, as if to an invisible listener, about his desire for Pamina and how all she does is devote herself to temple practices. (He's speaking to the Night King telepathically.) As if ordered to do so, he conjures an image of the Night King with a fiery display and frightens Pamina out of meditation. Alaric threatens Pamina and charges her (and her sister witches) with fulfilling the task she promised to carry out the Temple of Dawn. Moreover, to prove her loyalty, she is to assassinate Sonnhild. Markell reveals his true allegiance, offering Pamina a dagger to carry out the king's demand. The Night King's image fades.

Markell offers to betray the Night King if Pamina will run away with him. Pamina refuses. Markell attacks her, screaming that he will claim the glory of undermining the temple. As the cost of her betrayal, Pamina will be a casualty of the war between darkness and light. No one else will have her.

Rosamund rushes into the garden and clashes with Markell. (She felt the danger through the imp.) He stabs her in the struggle, badly wounding her. Sonnhild arrives with clergy and temple guards, and a flare of light drives Markell back. He flees. Guards chase Markell, who warns the Night King will come to claim his due. The priests caring for Rosamund report she has been poisoned and carry her away for treatment. Sonnhild declares Markell banished in front of the remaining witnesses, then turns to leave.

Pamina, expecting retribution against Alaric, begs Sonnhild to forgive the Night King. Sonnhild says vengeance is not her way. She and Pamina tenderly discuss when Pamina ran away to join the Night King as a teenager. Sonnhild reveals his lies and treachery, warning that conflict and domination are inevitably what he seeks. In the end, Sonnhild gently points out how Pamina has lied to Tamino. Such lies were the beginning of the Night King's fall long ago. Without truth, love cannot flourish. Sonnhild then departs to see how Rosamund fares.

In the temple court where Papageno is recovering from his fainting spell, the Speaker makes sure the fowler is well and then leaves. Papageno complains to himself that everyone has abandoned him, and that he's hungry and thirsty. Two imps lead him to another court where some of the temple inhabitants enjoy a meal. Genia is there, still in her disguise. She offers

Papageno food and wine. He remarks how sweet she always is to him, and asks to see her face. The clergy prevent it, remarking at the rudeness of Papageno's request. Genia flees the scene.

In another garden, Pamina follows her imp to Tamino and tells him the truth. He doesn't speak. She begs him to say something, anything, but he only looks at her mournfully. She believes he is angry with her and runs away. Her imp remains.

In a fine bedchamber, Sonnhild and a few other priests nurse a feverish and semiconscious Rosamund. "I have grown quite fond of you," says Sonnhild, "and I hope the light can purge the poison." Sonnhild raises her hands, then touches Rosamund. Rosamund opens her eyes. Sonnhild smiles, welcomes Rosamund back, tells her to rest, and leaves the room.

Sonnhild comes to the garden and warns Tamino. Markell, the Night King's agent, wounded Rosamund. (Sonnhild is quite emotional about Rosamund.) The temple guards failed to catch the villain, who warned his master was coming. Sonnhild releases Tamino from his vow of silence, since she can tell its purpose has been served. However, Tamino must prepare for his final ordeals to temper his mind and soul for any coming battle. Pamina's imp witnesses the exchange, then it flies away.

Pamina's imp returns with Pamina as Tamino is preparing for his tests. Sonnhild bids them say their final farewell. (Pamina mistakes the meaning of *final* here.) The warrior-priests take Tamino away, saying they will prepare him for the test. Sonnhild leads Pamina in another direction, saying Pamina must leave Tamino to finish his tests alone. The imp follows Tamino.

A shot of a sunset over the temple.

Pamina laments in her chamber, thinking she might never see Tamino again. Her imp flies in and comforts her. It knows where Tamino is. Pamina then decides to choose her own course and rushes to Tamino. She finds him at the base of a steep cliff, illuminated by the waning sunlight. The warrior-priests instruct Tamino. He must ascend the cliff (air), pass through a stone gate (earth), and survive chambers of fire and water.

Pamina rushes over and says she will join Tamino in the tests. The guards solemnly allow her to do so, saying she can use her powers, which have been sufficiently purified. Pamina and Tamino embrace, and they discuss the lies that led to this point. She admits fearing what he would think of her. Tamino wants to know more after the test, but he forgives her. Both look up the cliff. Tamino holds out his hand. Pamina takes it. Behind them, the "solemn" guards smile.

Papageno wanders in the orchard at night, talking to himself. He sees an imp. Where is Tamino? Where is my lady friend? The imp tells him to ring his sistrum, and perhaps someone will find him. He does. Genia shows up soon after. Papageno is delighted to see her again and plays his panpipes for her. She dances.

Pamina and Tamino bound up the cliff face using Pamina's powers. With the magic flute, the stone gate barring the way takes on humanoid shape and dances out of the way. In a fiery, volcanic cave, Pamina moves the couple quickly along a safe path, while Tamino's playing on the flute causes fire and smoke to dance away. They pass unscathed through a wall of steam into a cavern filled with rushing water. Light shines through a massive waterfall at the cave's far end, revealing the exit. Pamina uses her powers to allow the couple to run across the water. Tamino's music parts the waterfall. They emerge into a wilderness glade, shocked to find the two warrior-priests waiting there to laud their success. The priests clap their hands, and thunder sounds. All four people end up at the base of the cliff and head back toward the temple.

Papageno walks in the orchard with Genia. In a rambling way, he talks of how she has been the kindest to him of anyone at the temple. He admits to caring about only beauty and pleasure from his previous relationships. His words hint at his affection for Genia, and she encourages him to reveal more. He admits he'd like to be with her. She reveals her face. Papageno is surprised and pleased, but he is a little cross at her trickery. She smiles and says, "If you only knew." He laughs and gives her the magic sistrum, as they walk arm and arm through the orchard in the fading twilight.

Montage of life at the temple for a short time. Ends with another sunset.

It's midnight. From within the temple's darkened entryway, a thunderous knock cracks the right gate. (This is the leftmost gate from the outside.) A montage quickly flashes between the main characters reacting to the sound. It stops on Sonnchild. "He has come," she says.

A montage shows all the main characters rushing to the gate, along with many of the temple's other inhabitants. Various emotions play out; some people very afraid, while others are stoic. The main characters, besides Papageno, fall into the latter category. Everyone arrives to find the Speaker and two guards standing in the remains of the gate that cracked in the previous scene. His arms outstretched, the Speaker says, "Go back! The likes of you cannot enter here."

Beyond him, the menacing figure of the Night King looms, flanked by Markell in the dark robes of a warlock. Markell calls the Speaker a liar, since Markell himself was able to enter the temple before. The Night King orders the Speaker aside. Sonnchild warns that Markell is mistaken. He once came intending to spy, yes, but he also intended to serve as part of that role. There was hope for him then, so he was allowed to stay despite his treachery.

Hope, too, existed for the Night King, says Sonnchild. He could have remained in the temple and served. In time, he might have uncovered all the mysteries he now seeks to plunder. If he came with a willingness to humbly learn, even now he would still be welcome here. However, bound in his own great and dark desires, he cannot cross the threshold of Dawn.

The Night King scoffs and strides through the broken gate, casting the guards aside with his powers. He gives the Speaker one last chance to flee. Markell steps through as well, declaring that his reward for his service will be Pamina. Alaric raises his hand to strike down the Speaker with black magic. The Speaker puffs up and stretches his hands upward. His eyes glow.

All the priests and protagonists close their eyes and bow their heads. Papageno instead stares in fear and wonder, mouth agape. He recoils and shields his eyes as the entryway fills with light like a miniature sun, all flowing from the Speaker. Markell and the Night King throw up their hands and cry out as the light kindles them like fire to dry paper. They burn away into dark smoke. This smoke blows out of the gateway as the light explodes outward. Tiny motes of dark ash float in the fading glow.

The Speaker remains in the same outstretched pose. Everyone looks up. Sonnhild has tears flowing down her cheeks, as does Pamina. The Speaker's form falls apart, rendered to white ash. A glowing spirit ascends from the crumbling form in a flash.

In the central court, everyone gathers to honor the Speaker's sacrifice, as well as the success of Pamina and Tamino. Sonnhild announces that Tamino and Pamina have chosen to remain at the temple, together. Trials for a new Speaker will commence in three days. Rosamund will take them. Pamina and Tamino hold hands, and Sonnhild takes Rosamund by the hand. Papageno and Genia embrace. "What do you think about children?" she asks. Papageno's eyes widen, then he smiles and winks at her.

In a montage, Papageno and Genia say farewells at the temple gate. They carry their belongings. Later, the witches and men build a small, fine house on a hill overlooking the Temple of Dawn to the east. Papageno and Genia wave to their friends leaving the complete house. The house is shown in autumn and winter, then spring with a small garden and a more lived-in look, along with many birds and a single imp.

Fade to black.

Fade in. The cry of a woman giving birth breaks the silence of a gorgeous sunrise.

Birds flutter around the house seen in the last scene. Three imps watch over the doorway. Tamino idly tends the garden. He looks up at the cry of a newborn. Papageno rushes out of the front door, followed by Rosamund wearing the Speaker's amulet. Through the door, Pamina can be seen stroking Genia's head in the aftermath of labor. Genia looks tired but happy.

Grinning like a fool, Papageno holds up a naked baby girl to greet the rising sun.

THE END

## ILLUMINATION

BLACK

TEXT INSERT:

"Your past is just a story, and once you realize this, it has no power over you." -Chuck Palahniuk

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODED HILLS - DAY

Wide shot of rolling hills covered with trees. The still silence breaks with a roar, the shriek of a horse, a man's battle cry, and the sound of a sword being drawn. Birds take flight in fear.

The wide shot zooms through the trees to TAMINO, an armored warrior, fighting with sword and shield against a serpentine dragon the size of a rhinoceros. Tamino stands between the dragon and a slain horse.

They clash, circle, clash again. The dragon's bite then shatters Tamino's shield.

TAMINO  
(staggered)

Shit!

They clash, circle, clash again. Tamino holds his own, delivering solid cuts, but his sword finally breaks with a metallic clang on the dragon's snout. The dragon rears back and snarls.

TAMINO  
(aghast)

Shit! Shit!

Tamino bolts into the forest. The dragon chases, hindered by its size and the trees.

TAMINO  
Oh, gods! Help! Anyone! Help!

CUT TO:

A cute, batwinged creature, the size of a baby and somewhat feminine in form, watches Tamino flee. From a tree above the dead horse, the IMP whistles and takes flight to follow the chase.

CUT TO:

INT. CASTLE ALCHEMY LAB - DAY

From behind, three ladies dressed in dark finery lean together over a work table in an alchemical laboratory. An IMP noticeably different from the one in the previous scene watches from a perch. Light comes from windows open to show wooded hills.

From the perch, the imp flaps its wings and jumps to the shoulder of the center lady. Pan over ladies, looking down at another, different IMP. It looks dead, its eyes milky and wide open.

Close-up of the ladies from the front. The central lady, ROSAMUND, reaches down.

CUT TO:

She uses her long fingernail to open the imp's chest.

CUT TO:

Ladies from the front again.

ROSAMUND

Now, Genia, your blood seals the bond.

GENIA, the youngest lady on Rosamund's right, winces as she pricks her own finger with a silver wand.

CUT TO:

Blood flows from the finger into the imp's open chest. The imp's eyes close.

CUT TO:

Ladies from the front again.

GENIA

Why is black magic so . . . nasty?

Genia sucks her pricked finger. The lady on Rosamund's left, PAMINA, laughs in a friendly way.

PAMINA

You are such a child, Gen!

GENIA

(pouts)

Black magic IS . . .

CONTINUED:

PAMINA

(looking into the distance, grabs Rosamund)  
Wait! Rosamund, Tamino is in the forest! One of the  
king's dragons just killed his horse!

ROSAMUND

Your imp is sure? I thought you told him to come  
three days from now.

PAMINA

It's MY imp. Of course it's sure. Forget what I  
told him. We have to go!

ROSAMUND

Well, all right! Let's!

GENIA

(excited)

Yes!

CUT TO:

Mid shot shows the whole room. Pamina rushes toward the window,  
donning an elaborate mask that covers all but her mouth and chin.  
When she puts it on, the uncovered parts of her face change color  
to match the mask. Rosa and Gen do the same, the imp on Rosa's  
shoulder returning to its perch. In turn, the ladies leap from the  
window over the forest. The imp on the table begins to twitch.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODDED HILLS - DAY

Series of shots as Tamino flees wildly through the trees, the  
dragon in pursuit. He's exhausted and leans against a large tree.

TAMINO

(panting)

Nothing for it . . . I'm lost.

The dragon bursts through the trees, lunging at Tamino. He turns  
toward it stumbling back and throwing up his hands. The creature's  
first snap comes up short, but it's enough to knock Tamino off  
balance. He tumbles backward (toward the camera) and falls to the  
ground amid the roots of the tree.

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

The three ladies leap through the trees with the sound of rushing wind. Each lady points a silver wand.

CUT TO:

Close-up shots of each lady as she speaks. Wide enough to show each lady launching a spear of silver light from her wand at the dragon as she speaks.

ROSAMUND

We have heard you!

GENIA

You are saved!

PAMINA

Die, monster!

CUT TO:

Wider shot shows light lance through the dragon, and it dies with barely a sound. Ladies land around Tamino, who is unconscious where he fell. Blood smears one of the tree roots. The imp that was following Tamino lands on Pamina's shoulder.

CUT TO:

Upward shot from Tamino's position. The ladies look down and trees tower above.

PAMINA

(gasps)

He's hurt!

ROSAMUND

(waves her wand)

He's fine. Just . . .

GENIA

I'll say! You never said how fine he is, Pamina.

PAMINA

Gen, please! Be serious! And don't say my name!

GENIA

But you just said my name!

CONTINUED:

ROSAMUND

Ladies! We should go and tell the king what has happened. This (she gestures downward at all of Tamino) affects our plans.

PAMINA

I should stay with him. Keep him safe.

GENIA

(giggles)

I bet. I should stay. You might . . . give yourself away.

PAMINA

(irritated)

You . . . you . . .

ROSAMUND

Ladies! If anyone should stay, it should be me. But, no one will. Our duty is clear. We must ALL report to the Night King.

GENIA

(jovial)

You first, Mina.

ROSAMUND

Go, Gen! (pointing to Pamina) You follow.

GENIA

(pouty)

Oh, Rosa, you're NO fun.

Genia departs, followed by Rosa. Both move out of the upward shot by turning away from the central focus. The sound of rushing wind follows them. Pamina blows a kiss, and her imp mimics her.

PAMINA

Sleep safely, my prince.

Then Pamina also leaves, her imp fluttering from her shoulder. The sound of rushing wind follows her.

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

Wide shot of Tamino sprawled near the dead dragon. Above him, Pamina's imp hides in the crook of a tree. A tune on panpipes resounds through the trees. Tamino stirs, sits up, and rubs dried blood from the back of his head.

CUT TO:

Mid shot of PAPAGENO playing panpipes and dancing through the trees. He has a backpack made of reeds, like a basket. His bird-catching tools are attached to it. Papageno sings:

PAPAGENO

(singing verse)

I'm the king's fowler,  
yes indeed!  
Everyone around here  
knows me!

(plays panpipes)

Shot widens to show Papageno dancing into the area where Tamino fell. Tamino hides behind a tree. Papageno doesn't notice the dead dragon or Tamino. He continues to sing, seeming to make it up for his own amusement as he goes along:

PAPAGENO

(singing verse)

Birds hear my pipes,  
they see me dance!  
Not one bird here  
has half a chance!

(plays panpipes)

I'm the king's fowler,  
yes indeed!  
Everyone around here  
knows me!

(plays panpipes)

My skill, my grace,  
they're plain to see!  
It ain't just birds  
that flock to me!

(plays panpipes)

CONTINUED:

PAPAGENO

(singing verse)

I like to cast a net  
for pretty girls!  
With my wit, my charm,  
my long, fine curls!

(plays panpipes)

I live for fun, for sweets,  
for wine and meat!  
But the best kind of sugar,  
you can't eat!

Papageno laughs to himself, and he continues to play and dance. He's about to dance out of the area when Tamino emerges from his hiding place.

CUT TO:

A closer shot of Tamino approaching Papageno.

TAMINO

(loudly)

Hi there, friend. Who are you?

PAPAGENO

(startled, pipes blurt and end)

Um . . . well, I'm Papageno. Strange you don't know me. Everyone does. Who are you?

TAMINO

I'm Tamino. A prince from a neighboring land, just over the mountains.

PAPAGENO

(skeptical)

A land over the mountains, eh? Never heard of such a place. And you, a prince? What kind of job is that?

TAMINO

(amused)

It's . . . it's not really a job. I'm a king's son. One of the younger ones.

CONTINUED:

PAPAGENO

Oh, a king's son. Your king has sons, eh? My king doesn't have any of those.

TAMINO

Your king?

PAPAGENO

Yeah! Boy, you are new around here. The Night King. I'm one of his hunters. I catch . . .

TAMINO

(pointing to the dragon corpse)

Hunter? So it was you who killed that dragon?

PAPAGENO

(jumps and spins to look)

DRAGON!?

CUT TO:

INT. CASTLE GREAT HALL - DAY

Mid shot as the three ladies, still masked, sweep through an open doorway into the hall. Gloom pervades. Drapes cover every window. In the fore, ALARIC stands before a great fireplace with a low-burning blaze.

CUT TO:

Closer shot from Alaric's front. The ladies gather behind him.

ALARIC

(gazing into the fire)

My dear ladies come to me, unbidden. Pray, tell me. You have some news, yes? A dragon slain? A trespasser in the forest?

TO BE CONTINUED!