

SCENE I

EXT. BEAR MOUNTAIN STATE PARK - HILLTOP - NIGHT

The Mages form a SMALL CIRCLE in front of a LARGE STAKE where an CHARRED CORPSE is tied to it. Bastion joins the circle.

The Charred Corpse is a PREGNANT WOMAN adorned with COLORFUL FLOWERS. SENTINELS stand on either side; to protect her.

Directly in front of the towering stake is an ALTAR. The ARCHMAGE, other worldly and grandiose, stands behind it. His DECORATED CLOAK shrouds his face. The ACCOUTERMENTS of his robe distinguish him from everyone else.

He holds up a WOODEN BOWL with both hands and lifts it high.

ARCHMAGE

What brings death... must also  
bring life.

The Archmage unsheathes an ORNATE MEDIEVAL DAGGER and cuts the stomach of the BURNED CORPSE. The Archmage opens the wound to remove a CRYING BABY. He holds the child above his head and places it on the ALTAR. The child SCREAMS!

ARCHMAGE

Energy cannot be destroyed... it  
can only be transformed.

The Archmage pours some water onto the Crying Baby.

A LEATHER POUCH is passed around. Each MAGE blindly takes one, and passes it down. Bastion carefully places his hand in, and selects a beautiful, RED, GLASS MARBLE, but accidentally drops it.

The Mage next to Bastion picks it up and places it into Bastion's hand. There is an ONYX RING on the Mage's finger. Bastion opens his hand to reveal a BLUE marble; not red.

ARCHMAGE

In the hour of your decision... let  
the "Arcanatum" admonish you.

Each Mage, in succession, reveals a BLUE, GLASS MARBLE. The Mage with the ring, opens his hand and the CHANTING STOPS. A RED, GLASS MARBLE lies in his palm. All of the other Mages brandish their DAGGERS and STAB him to DEATH!

The Mages pause to look at Bastion. He RUNS for his life.