

Glass Ceiling - A game about witches at work, by Jenn Martin & Todd Nicholas

Freeform Lunch-Larp (feel free to eat while playing) for Golden Cobra 2016

For 3-6 Players, including 1 facilitator with minor extra work, about 90 minutes to two hours

In *Glass Ceiling*, you play a coven of witches with day jobs. You all work for the same company, Seneca Holdings, where no one knows about your coven. You are overworked, underappreciated, and generally put upon. Fortunately, you've found strength in your sisters and, over the course of the game, you will decide to perform a ritual together that will help all of you in your careers. Harm none, do as you will, shatter the glass ceiling.

Getting Started (approximately 3-5 minutes)

Each player should take a few minutes to think about who their character is. Your character must be female. Other than that, you can come up with anything you want. What is your name; what is your position at Seneca Holdings; what is your current career challenge; what cool, witchy jewelry do you wear; that sort of thing. Come up with a general image of who you are.

Character Introduction: Job Interview (approximately 10-15 minutes)

Each player introduces their character by doing a mock interview with one of the other players for everyone to see. This does *not* represent an actual interview the character had, but is merely a fun exercise to get into character. To do this, pick a player to introduce their character first, then pick another player to interview them. The interviewer asks the interviewee to introduce themselves, and then picks two or three of the questions below to ask them to establish their character. Then rotate to a new character to introduce and a new interviewee until everyone has introduced their character.

- What sorts of useful skills do you bring to the table?
- What's your biggest weakness as an employee?
- What's your best quality as an employee?
- How did you first come to magic?
- Describe a difficult situation at a previous job and how you overcame it.
- Why did you leave your last job?
- What is your greatest accomplishment in life?
- What do you most regret?
- What would your former employers say about you?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Establish the Coven: Corporate Retreat (approximately 10 minutes)

Chance brought the coven together at a Seneca Holdings corporate retreat. In this exercise, you will establish relationships between the characters. Tell a shared story guided by the questions below. Go around the room and have each player pick a question and then answer it. Once all the players have answered a question, move on to Act I.

- What was the retreat about?
- Where did you all sneak off to during the retreat to talk?
- How did you all figure out that each other had magical power?
- Whose idea was it to initially start the coven?
- Who first suggested that maybe you could all use your powers to your benefit?
- Who needed the most convincing to join the coven?

Act I: What is the Ritual? (approximately 15 minutes)

In Act I, the characters have lunch and vent about their various work problems. Over the course of the conversation, feel free to fill in things about Seneca Holdings- your boss, coworkers, etc. The coven will, at some point during this conversation, decide to conduct a magic ritual together to help them solve their problems. Allow the following questions to guide your free roleplaying, but make sure every witch gets a chance to speak:

- Who first suggests the ritual?
- Who has a good experience with this sort of thing in the past?
- Who is nervous about conducting the ritual?
- What, exactly, is the ritual supposed to do?
- What does the ritual look like? What is needed for it?
- Who has had a bad experience with conducting a ritual like this in the past?

Decide your character's goal for the ritual from the following and announce it to the coven- *be visible, attract resources, charm a client, eliminate red tape, stretch time, stand your ground, fix a mistake*. Act I ends when everyone knows what they want out of the ritual.

Entr'acte I: Guided Meditation (approximately 5-10 minutes)

In between Acts I and II, the facilitator will lead the players in a guided meditation. During the meditation, they will picture the ritual the coven performs. The players close their eyes and the facilitator reads the following, pausing between each bullet point to give the players time to consider the ritual and their answers. It's okay if everyone sees the ritual differently.

- You gather together to perform the ritual with your sisters- what ritual object calls out to you tonight?
- You speak the words and hold each other's hands- what scent brings a memory to mind?
- Candle flames flicker- what do you see in the shadow?
- You offer up a personal token to fuel the magic- what is it, and why is it special to you?
- Your sister's goals in your head alongside your own- what do you hope in your heart for one of them?
- Your heart is full of love and trust in your sisters. Let it be done.

Act II: What Happened With the Ritual? (approximately 15 minutes)

Act II takes place at another lunch, a week or two after Act I. The ritual has been conducted and things have gone a bit awry. Like Act I, this Act involves chatting over lunch. This time, the characters will discuss the effects of the ritual. Allow the following questions to guide your free roleplaying, but make sure every witch gets a chance to speak:

- What went *right* about the ritual? How did it do what you all hoped it would?
- What were the unanticipated consequences of the ritual? What oddities have you unleashed upon Seneca Holdings?
- What came to light after the ritual that you wish you'd have known before?
- Who comes up with an idea to fix the unanticipated consequences? What's the idea?
- If you try to fix the ritual, who is worried it will undo the *good* things about what you've done?
- Who offers to give up her goal to aid the fix? Why won't the group let her let go of her goal?

Act II ends when the coven commits to a plan to fix the unanticipated consequences of the ritual.

Entr'acte II: Guided Meditation (approximately 5-10 minutes)

In between Acts II and III, the facilitator will lead the players in a guided meditation. During the meditation, they will picture what they do to fix the unanticipated consequences of their ritual. The players close their eyes and the facilitator reads the following, as before.

- Picture what you are doing to fix what you have done- what does it look like?
- You have strength- how do you contribute to solving the problems?
- You draw support from your sisters- how does their example help you face challenges?
- Candle flames flicker- what do you see in the shadows?
- Your heart is full of love and trust in your sisters. Let it be done.

Act III: How Did We Clean Up the Mess? (approximately 15 minutes)

Act III is another week or two after Act II, at yet another lunch. The coven has now executed their plan to fix the unanticipated consequences of their ritual. During this lunch, the coven discusses what has happened since they cleaned things up. Allow the following questions to guide your free roleplaying, but make sure every witch gets a chance to speak:

- How has this experience changed you as a witch?
- How have you changed as an employee?
- How did the corporate culture of Seneca Holdings change as a result of the ritual?
- What have you learned about yourself that you didn't know before as a result of this experience?
- How has this experienced changed your career ambitions?
- What will you do different in the future?

Act III ends when it feels natural to end the conversation.

Epilogue: The Company Holiday Party (approximately 5 minutes)

The epilogue takes place at the Company Holiday Party. The characters come together, now several months after the ritual, and discuss where they are. Did someone get promoted? Is someone about to quit? Who is still doing magic? Who isn't? The game ends when this conversation has run its course.

Notes on Content and Safety

- There are many people who identify as Wiccan. While this game focuses on the fantastic, we suggest that you treat portraying witches with sensitivity and care, taking the practice seriously as opposed to going for cartoonish stereotypes.
- We suggest that you begin the game with a discussion of safety, and use several of the available LARP safety tools during play, including cut and brake, and discussing boundaries. We also suggest that you take 10 minutes to debrief at the end. A primer on these techniques is available here: <http://leavingmundania.com/2014/02/27/primer-safety-in-roleplaying-games/>
- Thematically, this game is meant to focus on the supportive relationships between the characters, as opposed to infighting between them. If you are the facilitator, you may wish to bring this up at the beginning of the game to establish guidelines for play behavior to direct this.

