

START THINGS OFF WITH A BANG!

5

Okay, each of us gets an Action. On your Action you can do one of two things. I'll do the first thing, which is to create a Goal. <Take a 3x5 card and write "Kill Hostages" on it> This is something my villain wants to do. Here's a die for him. <Place a red die on the card, with "1" facing up> Some of you heroes may want to stop him. Here's a die for you. <Place a blue die on the card, with "1" facing up> Eventually this will resolve, and when it does, whoever has the higher value on their side will get to narrate whether the hostages live or die. Until then, nobody can narrate anything that would resolve the conflict. I can't kill hostages, and you heroes can't save all of them. That's my Action. Now I get to narrate what it means in the game-world. <Narrate, establishing your villain or villain-group's raid on the lab, and their heartless disregard for innocent life (but short of killing anyone)>

Once everyone has a character, you'll get into the first Scene. This will probably be the first place where people start really giving you strange looks about how the system works. Again, playtests have shown that the easiest way to get people over their initial discomfort is to move them through and to provide a good example of using the system.

Capes is closer in structure to a card or board-game than to many traditional roleplaying games. It provides an explicit turn order, with players acting one after the other. And it makes clear who is allowed to be narrating the happenings of the game. As you guide players through the first scene, you'll have to shepherd them through this structure as well.

In essence, the structure of play is a series of repeating loops, each nested within the next. You play a Scene. Each Scene is made of Pages. Each Page starts with Claiming Goals, then has Actions (one for each character, generally), and ends with Resolving Goals. Each Action either creates a Goal, or uses an Ability. If it uses an Ability then the Action may also have Reactions (up to one per player). See the diagram at right.

Happily, it's fairly easy to get people into this immediately. You'll teach them Actions, then Reactions (as applicable), then show them how Actions are grouped together in Pages, and how Pages form a Scene. Start with shpiel 5 at left. When you're done you should have something that looks like the figure at right.

