



# MODERN

## A FRIENDLY

# WARNING



By Stan!

A Short d20 Modern Adventure for Four 18th-Level Characters

No one in the modern world is well trained or well guarded enough to be completely impervious to harm. Despite the best and most modern safety measures, heads of state are still assassinated, rich and powerful individuals are still kidnapped and ransomed, the most valiant heroes still fall in battle, and terrorist attacks still take the lives of innocent victims. Life is fragile, and no matter how carefully it is guarded, some way always exists for a sufficiently fanatical opponent to end it.

Nevertheless, a certain haughtiness comes with experience. Typically, heroes who have defeated numerous threats to themselves, their loved ones, and their ways of life develop a certain pride in their ability to overcome the dangers of the world. All too often, however, this pride spills into overconfidence.

*A Friendly Warning* explores what happens when such experienced heroes become the targets of a man bent on proving that they are still vulnerable. This adventure can be set in any locale, but the best choice is a place in which the heroes feel safe and secure. The antagonist, Remi Leone, is stalking the heroes on their home ground, trying to get the better of them despite the fact that they have every possible advantage at their disposal.

The best way to use this scenario is in combination with another adventure, so that Remi Leone's interference comes at a time when the heroes are pursuing an assignment of their own. This option requires you as GM to determine what Remi knows about the other assignment, but it provides a rich, complex experience for the players.

## LEVELS

*A Friendly Warning* is a short scenario for four 18th-level heroes. With slight modifications, you can make it suitable for heroes at other levels, or for groups as large or small as you're comfortable adjudicating. See the Scaling the Adventure sidebar for guidelines on adapting this scenario for other groups.

You, the Game Master (GM), need a copy of the *d20 MODERN Roleplaying Game* to run this adventure. To get started, print out the adventure (including the map) and read it through. Make sure you are familiar with the rules for combat, movement, and cover from Chapter 5 of the *d20 MODERN Roleplaying Game*. You might also want to reread the various uses of the Climb skill in Chapter 2.

The text that appears in shaded boxes should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players. Opponents' statistics are provided in abbreviated form.

## BACKGROUND

The plot of *A Friendly Warning* has its beginnings in the history of your campaign. Unlike the typical adventure, the events of this scenario happen in direct response to situations created by the heroes' past actions.

### Making Waves

The history behind this scenario involves an adversary who knows the heroes well—a GM character with whom they have crossed paths on a number of occasions, or one who plans to come into conflict with them in the near future. The

### Scaling the Adventure

The encounters described in this adventure are suitable for heroes of any level. Only one way exists to tailor this scenario for other character levels or group sizes that those for which it is designed, however, and that is to adjust the EL of the main encounter—most notably by raising or lowering the DCs of the skill checks required to find the bomb and negate the threat it poses.

Since the heroes probably won't fight Remi Leone directly, it may not be necessary to adjust his statistics. Even if they do manage to notice and confront him, Remi is more interested in escaping than in overpowering the heroes, no matter how easily he might be able to do so. He's being paid to deliver a message—nothing more.

Remi's statistics are given in the section entitled Remi Leone, at the end of the adventure. If you find that you need to adjust them, you can do so as follows.

**To Lower Remi's Level:** If you want to pit lower-level heroes against Remi and give them any hope of beating him, reduce his character level until it equals the average character level of the party + 5. Begin by removing up to three levels of Infiltrator. Then alternate removal of Infiltrator and Gunslinger levels until both are exhausted. It should not be necessary to lower Remi's character level beyond that point.

**To Raise Remi's Level:** Remi should provide an adequate challenge for any group of heroes, but if you think he needs to be toughened up slightly, add one level of the Gunslinger advanced class. The rules in the *d20 MODERN Roleplaying Game* do not specifically cover character levels higher than 20th, but the method used to create Remi's statistics is briefly explained in the Reverse-Engineering Remi sidebar at the end of this adventure.

identity of this character is left wholly to your discretion. It could be a villain whose plans the heroes have thwarted, a rival group of adventurers who feel that the heroes' success has unjustly restricted their careers, or even a lackey or occasional ally who is tired of being bossed around (and having his life threatened) whenever the heroes find themselves in a jam. Alternatively, the character could be a criminal mastermind who realizes that the heroes are coming too close to unearthing her schemes, or someone new to the area who sees the heroes as potential competition or opposition.

The GM character must be someone who knows a great deal about the heroes and has a reason to warn them away from a particular course of action. But for one reason or another, the character is unable or unwilling to deliver the message personally and chooses to hire a professional.

### The Professional

Remi Leone is widely regarded as the top man in his profession, though it is maddeningly difficult to define what that profession actually is. Some say he is a hit man, and it's true that Remi has killed many men and women on the orders of third-party employers. But more often than not, his contracts do not center around killing. In fact, most clients hire him in order to avoid the mess, scandal, and official investigations that always result from an assassination.

The fact Remi can serve as a hit man—and an unerringly effective one—means that his appearance on someone's doorstep is a clear indication of how much trouble that person is in. And when Remi delivers a message instead of a killing blow, his target usually takes the information very seriously. A message delivered by Remi Leone is, after all, tantamount to a death threat, since it means the target is as good as dead.

Some recipients of Remi's messages have tried to turn the tables and threaten his life, but that tactic merely converts the threat of violence into the real thing. In every such case, Remi has killed the impetuous target immediately and, no matter how competent the surrounding security forces, escaped with his own life. Indeed, he usually manages to decimate the security staff as well.

For his part, Remi thinks of himself as a freelance emissary—a person whose job is neither good nor bad and who is capable of remaining totally unsullied by the morality and politics of the parties involved. He has a very strict personal code of honor that he holds more sacred than his own life.

### Remi's Code

Remi Leone's code of honor is relatively simple but quite strict. He considers the following precepts sacrosanct and would rather die than go against them.

- Always be polite.
- Always deal directly with the target—do not trust other messengers.
- Use only the minimum force necessary to remove obstructions.
- Be as precise as possible, both with language and with violence.





- Warn opponents who are not actual targets before using deadly force, repeating the message three times. If the warning is still not understood or heeded at that point, the results are no longer your fault.
- Never harm a child.
- It is always all right to kill someone who is trying to kill you.
- The heroes have uncovered several apparently unrelated criminal activities. In fact, however, these events share one common feature that the heroes are only a few revelations away from discovering—namely, that a local politician is involved in funding all of them. The politician hires Remi Leone to scare the heroes off the trail before they can put all the facts together.
- A powerful member of an organized crime syndicate wants the heroes to perform a service for him. But either they have turned him down in the past, or he has good reason to believe that they will not accept the job without strong motivation. So he hires Remi Leone to give the heroes a very personal incentive—do the job or have a contract put on their lives.
- An opponent the heroes haven't yet encountered (the next big villain in the campaign) anticipates having to deal with them in the near future. She hires Remi Leone to frighten the heroes so that she can observe them in action, hoping to gain some insight into how to handle them in the future. As an added bonus, these events may instill in the heroes a measure of awe and fear pertaining to the new opponent, giving her at least a small psychological advantage over them.

## The Job

While the events leading up to Remi Leone's hiring can vary widely from campaign to campaign, his job in this adventure is always the same. Remi has been hired to deliver a message to the heroes and to impress upon them the seriousness with which they should treat it. The message itself doesn't matter; its contents depend entirely on the direction that you as GM wish to take the campaign. Perhaps a particular crime czar wishes the heroes to stop meddling in his affairs, or a rival group wants the heroes to stop stealing its customers. In any case, Remi's job is to deliver the intended message in a way that impresses the gravity of the situation on the heroes. In other words, the message is a warning that, if not heeded, could escalate the lethality of future encounters with the sender.

## SYNOPSIS

The adventure begins when Remi initiates contact with the heroes. At first, they may not even know that Remi's presence constitutes a separate adventure. Indeed, if the events of this scenario can be successfully intertwined with those of an ongoing mission, the heroes are likely to mistake them for part of that scenario.

Disguised as a corporate messenger, Remi hand-delivers a letter to the heroes. Superficial perusal of the contents indicates that someone is about to kill the messenger who delivered it. In an unmarked delivery truck, the heroes find what appears to be a powerful explosive device. In reality, however, this "bomb" merely contains blue dye intended to embarrass the heroes and get their attention. After either deactivating or detonating the device, the heroes find another note—this time, a message to which Remi's employers want the heroes to pay close attention. After receiving this message, the heroes are free to investigate the situation and find out who the mysterious messenger really was, and who could have hired him.

## Character Hooks

As GM, you know best how to involve your players and their characters in an adventure. In this case, however, you need not plan for the heroes' actions—Remi Leone will bring the adventure to them.

As GM, you must decide who hired Remi to put a scare into the heroes and what message that person wants them to take away from the experience. Below are a handful of possible situations that could set the events of this scenario into motion. As always, feel free to modify the details to fit your heroes.

## BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

*A Friendly Warning* is an event-based adventure that you can use in whatever setting best suits the heroes and the campaign. Unlike most scenarios, this adventure is not propelled by the actions or involvement of the heroes. Instead, they are the targets of a highly trained professional who plans his actions so that the encounters occur at times and places of his choosing, thus gaining a distinct advantage over the heroes.

The adventure begins when Remi Leone believes that he has a good handle on who the heroes are, what resources they can immediately muster, and how they are likely to react to his "gift." He plans the encounter to happen at a time that the heroes are accessible (as opposed to when they are on a stakeout or sequestered in hiding). It could occur at their offices (if they have any), at one of their homes, or at a public place they are known to frequent (a restaurant, coffee shop, lounge, or the like). Remi takes special care to choose a place where the heroes feel safe and relaxed. If they have not yet established any "home turf," you can use The Roasted Nut Coffee Lounge (see sidebar).

To start the adventure, you as GM must devise some plausible reason for the heroes to be in the chosen location and for the players to be roleplaying the scene. If they are on guard because they expect something unusual to occur, the surprise and tension of the first encounter will be ruined. In other words, if scenes at the heroes' office are usually handled "off screen" (that is, with you describing what happened rather than letting the players roleplay the action), then the group is likely to be wary if this particular visit to the office is suddenly played out in detail. The setup must be devised in such a way as to keep them from realizing that something important is about to happen.

The best way to ensure that the players (and thereby the heroes) don't become too suspicious or wary is to make

them believe that the scene is integral to some other adventure—perhaps a wrap-up to their previous case, a strategy meeting about an upcoming venture, or a meeting with a potential new client. If you can successfully misdirect the heroes' attention, Remi should be able to take them unawares with relative ease. In fact, if they are obviously on their guard, Remi aborts the mission and makes plans to try again another day.

## A. SPECIAL DELIVERY

Remi chooses a moment when he is certain that the heroes are focused on another matter to approach the group. He is dressed in a loose-fitting, plain brown uniform complete with a cap, and he carries a shipping envelope and clipboard. He also has a Glock 17 hidden beneath his uniform and a knife strapped to his ankle. (Though he does not want to come into direct conflict with the heroes, he always makes sure he is prepared in case something goes terribly wrong.)

Remi politely asks for one of the heroes (the recognized leader, if they have one) by name, saying that he needs a signature confirmation for delivery. Once the hero signs for the package, Remi takes the clipboard, hands over the envelope, and leaves. During his departure, Remi quickly and quietly gets as many people and objects between himself and the

group as possible. He doesn't want to draw attention to his exit, but he does want cover and distractions available in case the heroes decide to follow him.

Once Remi has managed to get out of the heroes' direct sight, he ducks into a restroom or other private space at the first available opportunity. He removes his brown uniform to reveal the loose golf shirt and jeans (or other outfit appropriate for the current weather), that he was wearing beneath it. He puts the uniform and clipboard in the trash but saves the paper that the hero signed, knowing that he may be able to use it should his path cross this group's again. Remi then dons a pair of round sunglasses, tucks his Glock 17 under his shirt, and steps back into the crowd to watch the heroes' reactions—preferably from a safe distance. His change of attire provides Remi with a +2 bonus on Hide checks made against the heroes.

Once the heroes have accepted the delivery and opened the envelope, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

The envelope opens easily. It contains a manila file folder with a typed, color-coded label on the tab that reads, "Initial Contact."

Allow the heroes to handle this situation at their own pace. Don't give the players the impression that either you or the scenario is pushing them into opening the file or performing any other specific acts.

Any hero who closely examines the envelope or file before opening it automatically gains the following information (no check required).

- The envelope is a standard priority-style envelope, sized to hold up to 100 sheets of letter-size paper. It does not bear any corporate logos or other markings.
- The envelope has been addressed with a plain white mailing label laser-printed with the signing hero's name, the delivery address, and any specific delivery instructions necessary to get it into that hero's hands.
- No return address is printed anywhere on the envelope.
- The file folder feels empty. It cannot possibly contain more than three or four sheets of paper, and they must be smaller than full letter-size because they do not show along the edges of the folder.

When the heroes open the file, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

The file is empty except for a small, yellow sticky note that reads, "Sometimes you have to shoot the messenger."

Unless they have a basis for thinking otherwise, the heroes are likely to interpret this message as a threat against the person who just delivered the envelope. If the players fail to think of this potential meaning, each hero can attempt a DC 10 Intelligence check to gain that insight. The message could also be interpreted as a hint that the messenger is their opponent, and they would do well to eliminate him. Doing so, however, would accomplish little in this case, since Remi's employer would still have a point to make with the heroes.

## The Roasted Nut

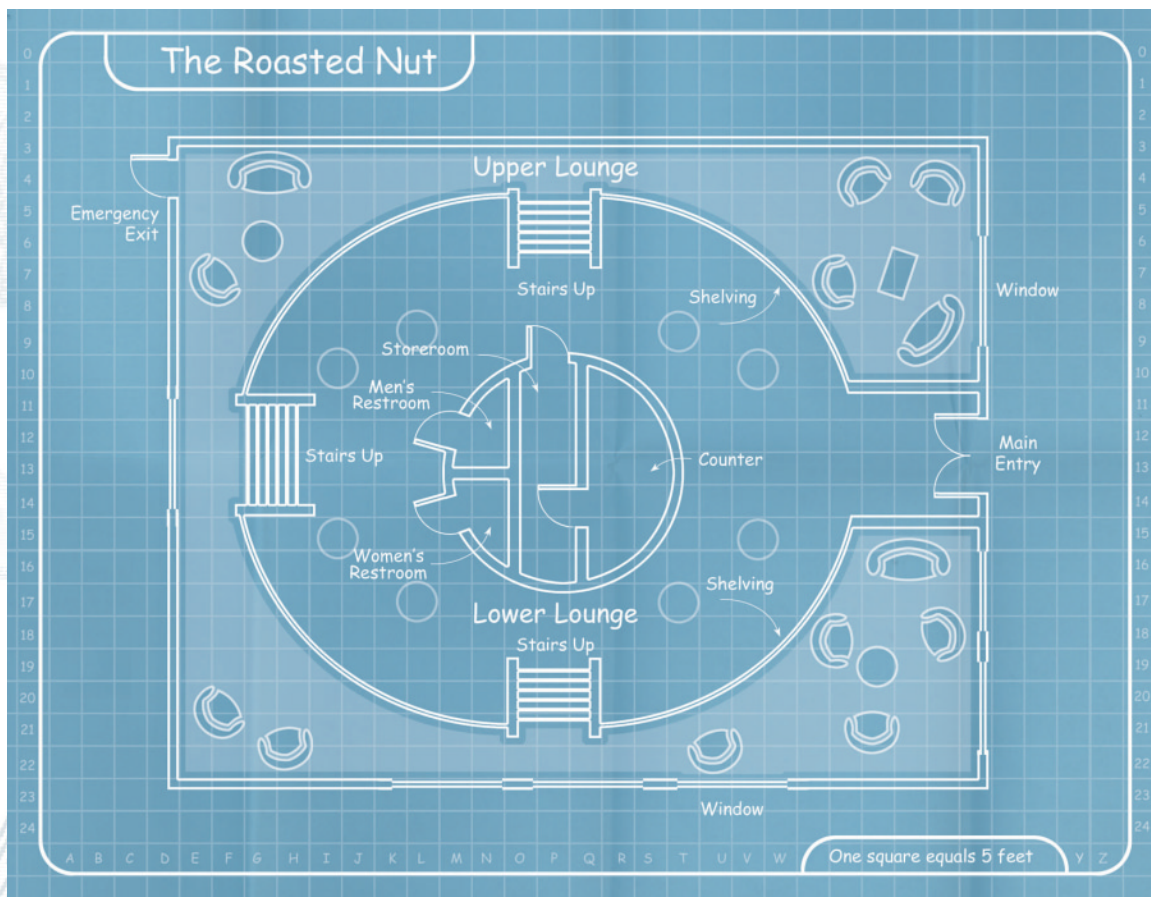
In most U.S. cities, the coffee shop has become one of the most common gathering spots for groups of friends, small organizations, and low-key business partners. In any given city, the number of coffee shops—including famous franchise stores, local haunts, and cafés in hotels, bookstores, and other businesses—may well be higher than the number of restaurants.

At the Roasted Nut Coffee Shop, patrons can buy coffee, espresso, tea, and other drinks by the cup, plus ground coffee, loose tea, and various accoutrements such as mugs, travel cups, French presses, and so forth. The Roasted Nut does not sell music CDs, but it does carry newspapers, mints, gum, and T-shirts bearing the store's logo. The shop is clean and well decorated enough to attract successful business types during the day and the after-theater crowd at night, but it is still relaxed and inexpensive enough to be the most popular meeting place for those who live in the neighborhood.

Displayed on the wall behind the barista are the menu and some framed 8×10 signed photos of the store's most famous patrons. (Depending on the campaign, the heroes might well be included in that rogues' gallery.) The lower lounge features small, café-style tables, each of which has a reading lamp to provide light for those who wish to peruse the newspaper. The chairs around the tables are stylish but not overtly modern. The upper lounge is furnished with a mix of sofas, loveseats, and armchairs—all plush but in an eclectic range of styles and upholstery. Coffee tables and end tables provide places to set drinks and even play games or do crossword puzzles.







5

By the time the heroes read the note, Remi has disappeared into the crowd unless the players specifically said that their heroes were keeping an eye on him when he left. Even in this case, a hero must make a successful Search check (opposed by Remi's Hide check) to actually find him. If the heroes did not pay particular attention while Remi was in their presence (specifically asking about his appearance or mannerisms, for example), they remember only the following details about the delivery man.

- The messenger was a Caucasian male, apparently in his mid-thirties. He stood about 6 feet tall and looked broad-shouldered and bulky, though whether his bulk came from muscle or flab wasn't clear. He had dark hair that he wore slicked back, a mustache, and thick stubble (but not a beard) on his chin.
- He was wearing a brown uniform that marked him as an employee of a popular shipping company.
- He spoke with an accent that was difficult to place. It certainly sounded European, but whether it was Italian, French, Swiss, or Greek is highly debatable.

If the heroes want to wrack their brains to see whether they can remember any more details or draw any conclusions, allow a single Spot check by whichever member of the group the players choose. Compare the result to the table below. The hero gains all the information for check results equal to or lower than his own.

SPOT CHECK RESULT	DETAIL REMEMBERED
20	The man's uniform was a very effective fake. The messenger clearly wanted to look as though he worked for the popular shipping company.
25	The envelope has no postmark, tracking code, or other processing mark. Although it has been made to look like a package handled by a major shipping company, it clearly has not actually gone through the usual process.
30	The messenger's accent was Italian.
35	Eccentricities in the man's accent indicate that he spent his developmental years traveling extensively throughout the Mediterranean.
40	He moved as though he had had martial arts or military training.
45	His uniform was loose-fitting enough to conceal a handgun.

Either because they think the messenger might be the target of an assassin's bullet, or because they have identified him as a phony, the heroes should eventually decide to follow or find the man who delivered the envelope. Continue with encounter B when they do so.

## B. BROWN GO ROOM

What the heroes find when they go after the messenger depends on exactly what they are looking for. If they are looking for “the messenger who just left,” they see a handful of people in the general area wearing messenger uniforms from various companies. If desired, you can give some of these messengers physical characteristics similar to Remi’s. Allow each hero to make Search checks as appropriate during this process. However, the fact that they are specifically looking for a messenger gives Remi the +2 bonus on his Hide checks mentioned in the previous encounter, assuming that he has already ditched his uniform. If the players specifically mention that they are looking for anyone who fits the messenger’s physical description, Remi loses this bonus, but he should still be difficult to find.

Any hero whose Search check result beats DC 12 also notices several brown delivery vans parked in the area. A hero whose check result beats DC 15 realizes that most of the vans have corporate logos painted on their sides, but one does not. If this fact does not make the heroes suspicious, then over the course of 15 minutes or so, they observe all the vans leaving (driven by someone other than the messenger they seek), until only the one with no logo remains.

Continue with the following section when the heroes decide to investigate the van.

### B1. In the Van

The doors to the van are locked, but breaking a window or picking a lock is not an especially difficult task.

**Window:** Hardness 1, 5 hp.

**Door Lock:** Hardness 3, 5 hp, break DC 15.

When the heroes gain entry to the van, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

The cargo space in the van is bare or cargo, carpet, shelving, and other accoutrements. It is also suspiciously spotless—no dirt, dust, or other refuse sullies the floor. In fact, the only object in the van is an unpolished metal box approximately 2 feet long, 1 foot wide, and 1 foot tall. A quiet thrumming noise comes from somewhere inside it.

Anyone who touches the floor of the van feels a slight but steady vibration. A successful Demolitions or Intelligence check reveals that the vibration is coming from the box. Anyone with even a single rank in Demolitions can automatically tell (no check required) that this object looks and acts exactly the way a bomb would. In fact, however, it is only a clever facsimile of a bomb that Remi made and left here to make the heroes believe they are dealing with a live explosive device.

Each hero may attempt a Craft (chemical) check to gain the following information. A successful Knowledge (physical sciences) or Knowledge (technology) check gives the same information, but each DC increases by +5. Compare the Craft (chemical) check result to the table below. The hero gains all the information for check results equal to or lower than her own.

CRAFT (CHEMICAL) DC	INFORMATION GAINED
10	This particular type of bomb is commonly used by terrorists.
15	Without opening the case, it is impossible to tell exactly how much damage this bomb can deal.
20	A bomb this size could contain up to 4 pounds of C4/Semtex.

Disarming the “bomb” requires a series of three Demolitions checks at the DCs given below. A hero may substitute a Craft (chemical), Disable Device, or Knowledge (technology) check for any or all of these Demolitions checks, but the corresponding DC increases by +10 in that case. Since the “bomb” has no external timer, the heroes cannot tell how much time remains before it goes off.

The first Demolitions check (DC 15) is to safely remove the cover, which is connected via a bundle of red, blue, white, and yellow wires to a circuit board, a detonator, and a small brown lump of some claylike substance that looks very much like about 3 pounds of C4/Semtex. (If this check result or any of those following beats DC 30, the hero determines that the material is simple potter’s clay, not real plastic explosive.)

The second Demolitions check (DC 25) is to safely disconnect the detonator from the circuit board. The board acts as the timer for the bomb and the trigger for the detonator. Its removal stops the countdown but does not end the danger. Any hero with at least 1 rank in Demolitions, Craft (chemical), or Knowledge (technology) automatically realizes that although the timer has been removed, sufficient static charge may still remain in the detonator to explode the bomb.

The final Demolitions check (DC 30) is to safely remove the detonator from the apparent explosive.

If any one of these checks fails, the bomb explodes. Since it is not a real bomb, the damage is incidental—the box contains a lump of potter’s clay covering a small amount of C4/Semtex and a container of blue dye. The explosion deals 1d4 points of damage to everyone within 20 feet (DC 15 Reflex save half) and also sprays every creature and object in the area with the dye (DC 30 Reflex save avoids discoloration).

This dye is similar to the type that authorities often use to mark ransom money. When placed inside a case of money with the appropriate trigger device, it marks both the cash and whoever opens the case, to ensure easy apprehension. Although the dye does no permanent damage, it discolors the skin for a period of 3d4 + 4 days.

### B2. Standing Down

After the bomb has been either deactivated or triggered, the heroes must figure out who went to such extreme lengths just to embarrass them—and, perhaps more importantly, why. The obvious first step in this process is a close examination of the bomb casing.

Any hero who makes a successful DC 15 Search check notices that the van has a hidden compartment below the bomb casing. Once located, this compartment requires only a screwdriver (or other similar device) and a DC 5 Dexterity check to open. If the heroes fail to find the hidden compartment, the local police discover the space later and report their findings to the heroes.





Inside the hidden compartment are the following items.

- A manila envelope containing file folders similar to the one delivered earlier. Each folder contains a dossier on one

### There He Is!

Remi Leone's plan is to hide from the heroes' view before they actually open the package, then watch their actions from a safe distance. He has no desire to confront them face to face. However, Remi might do an unusually poor job of hiding himself, or the heroes might do an extraordinarily good job of searching him out. Should the heroes happen to find him, Remi's reaction depends on how the heroes treat him.

### Just a Delivery Guy

If the heroes treat Remi as though he is a simple delivery person, he maintains that pretense. If pressed on matters such as his delivery orders, the other packages in his van, or details about his dispatch office, he eventually switches tactics.

If confronted with proof that his uniform was a fake and he is a fraud, Remi changes his story slightly. He claims to be an acting student who was approached by a mysterious figure and paid a great deal of money to play the part of a messenger and deliver a simple letter. "He said there wasn't anything dangerous or illegal about the package—did he lie?" If asked, Remi says he knows nothing about the unmarked brown van.

If these pretenses fail and the heroes begin to treat Remi with deep suspicion, he eventually changes his tactics to those described below.

### Wolf in the Fold

If the heroes act as though they have identified Remi as a highly trained opponent, he immediately attempts to escape. Although he knows he could confront the heroes and give them a credible challenge, he is not being paid to do so and thus does not wish to make that effort.

Remi uses crowds and innocent bystanders to his advantage, taking cover behind them or intimating that he might do them harm in order to convince the heroes to keep away. Once he has put sufficient distance between himself and the heroes, Remi again attempts to disappear entirely from their view. To that end, he may hide, steal a vehicle, or simply run around a corner, into a building, or otherwise out of sight.

The only situation in which Remi pulls his gun or otherwise uses direct violence against the heroes is if they actually catch up to him and force him into combat. If he cannot avoid violence, Remi participates only until he finds another opportunity to escape. In any case, Remi observes his personal code at all times (see Background, above).

If the heroes injure or kill a child during their pursuit of Remi, he changes tactics entirely. After doing what he can to remove the child from danger, he uses every weapon at his disposal to kill the hero responsible.

of the heroes. Although these reports are by no means exhaustive, they are unerringly accurate and contain considerable information about the heroes' private and professional lives.

- Another manila envelope containing photos of the heroes, individually and as a group. Some of these photos are recognizable from media coverage the group has gotten (if any), but others are new, clearly taken within the last few weeks. The photos show the heroes at work, at home, and in public places. If any of the heroes have been engaging in any covert activities, a few of the pictures show those as well.
- A legal-sized envelope with the heroes' names (or their group's name) handwritten on the outside. Inside are two pieces of paper. The first is a letter from Remi Leone, introducing himself as the messenger with whom they spoke earlier and explaining his business—assuring the heroes that he has no interest in them beyond delivering a message and ensuring that they treat it with the utmost seriousness. The second page is the message itself, the details of which are entirely up to you as GM (as noted in the Background section above).

With the discovery of the items in the hidden compartment, the heroes have reached the conclusion of this adventure. At this point, however, they probably have more questions than answers. Some further information can be obtained through research (see encounter C, below). Other facts will come to light only when you see fit to take the campaign to its next stage.

## C. OBSERVE AND RECORD

This portion of the adventure is really more of a denouement than a part of the action, but what happens here has a significant impact on what the heroes take from this experience. Their observations will shape their actions in coming adventures and provide a basis for their choices and suspicions as they deal with whatever person or organization hired Remi Leone.

Information about Remi Leone is readily available—he is, after all, a particularly well-known operative in certain circles. Facts about him can be garnered in the usual ways—mostly through use of the Gather Information and Research skills. You as GM must determine whether the heroes can use similar methods to gain additional information about Remi's employer. Allowing them to do so would certainly be a good way to seed the group with information that you want them to have before sending them on their next adventure.

### CI. Gather Information

By questioning their contacts in the underworld and the law enforcement field (or other quarters that you deem appropriate), the heroes can acquire information about Remi Leone, his previous clients, and exploits attributed to him, plus a few unsubstantiated rumors.

Any hero who succeeds on a DC 15 Gather Information check obtains some reliable basic information about Remi—namely, all the data in the Background section under the

heading “The Professional,” except for the details of Remi’s code. If the Gather Information check result beats DC 20, the hero also gains one of the following additional pieces of information, plus one more for each 2 points by which the check result exceeded 20 (that is, two pieces of information for DC 22, three for DC 24, and so forth). It is up to you as GM to decide which of the following facts and rumors the heroes receive.

- The heroes gain a detailed understanding of Remi Leone’s code of honor (see Background, above), plus a list of jobs that Remi is rumored to have performed.
- Remi is a consummate professional who never gets emotional about his work. However, he has some crazy idea that everyone in his line of work ought to follow the same chivalrous rules as he does.
- One time, Remi used himself as a human shield to protect some kids who happened to be riding their bikes near a hit gone bad. He took eight slugs to the chest and gut, then killed the shooter with his bare hands after the kids had left.
- Remi doesn’t like to take straight contract hits anymore because he’s on some sort of crusade to give people a chance to change their lives. Of course, if they don’t make an effort, he doesn’t mind killing them in cold blood.

[[ If a job is likely to hurt a lot of innocent people, Remi turns it down. Moreover, he makes it his personal goal to stop the person who does take it.]]

- Remi used to be the best contract killer in Europe, but he quit because he was becoming too famous. Even ordinary, noncriminal people had heard of him and considered him some sort of “super spy.”
- Remi’s closest contact is a lady down in the Italian section of town. She owns a restaurant called Matilda’s Kitchen and runs a brothel in the building above it.
- Several of the surprising corporate mergers in the last few years happened after one side hired Remi to “negotiate” with the other.
- One time, a client double-crossed Remi. Twenty-five professional assassins were lying in wait for him, but Remi killed them all without suffering so much as a scratch. He completed his original assignment, collected his fee, and then killed his client.
- The police, the INS, the CIA, and the FBI all know about Remi, but none of them has any proof that he has done anything wrong.

## C2. Research

Remi Leone may walk in the shadowy world of the underground, but his actions leave a record. Because no one is ever one hundred percent certain that Remi has been involved in a particular episode, however, a lot of discrete pieces of information have never been pooled to create a complete picture.

Heroes with access to official police or government records can gain some information by combing them for

information about Remi Leone. Each hero perusing such records may make a Research check. If the check result beats DC 30, the hero gains one of the following additional pieces of information, plus one more for each 5 points by which the check result exceeded 30 (that is, two pieces of information for DC 35, three for DC 40, and so forth). It is up to the GM to decide which of the following facts the heroes receive.

- In Europe, Remi used an HK PSG1 sniper rifle when performing assassinations. Now, however, he usually uses a Glock 17 and does the job at close range rather than from a distance.
- The heroes gain a general comprehension of Remi’s training (that is, the players discover what Remi’s skill bonuses are for 1d4+2 of his most critical skills).
- The CIA and the NSA have both used Remi on several occasions—mostly to communicate with underworld figures, but also to eliminate terrorists before they could strike within US or Canadian borders.
- The heroes gain a general understanding of Remi’s innate capabilities (that is, the players discover 1d6+2 combat-related feats and/or class abilities that he possesses).
- Remi’s fingerprints are on record. Because of a clerical error, they are mistakenly labeled as those of a convicted murderer who was executed five years ago.

## C3. A Double-Edged Sword

The heroes aren’t the only ones who can expand their understanding in the wake of these events. Remi Leone loses no time updating his files on the heroes, their tactics, and their capabilities based on his encounters with them during this adventure. He also follows up on any insights gleaned from his close interaction with and observation of the group.

Remi knows that in his line of work, he is likely to run across this group again, and he is fully aware that he achieved his current status by always being better prepared than his opponents. Thus, he continues to study the heroes and formulate plans for dealing with them when the time is right.

## REWARDS

The action in this adventure is mostly nonlethal, but the heroes nevertheless have to deal with one of the world’s top assassins, as well as a bomb that they believe to be a deadly threat. Thus, the group should receive 1,350 XP for successfully defusing the bomb (one-half the value of defusing a real bomb) and an additional 10,000 XP for surviving their encounter with Remi Leone (roughly one-quarter of what they would get for completely overcoming him). You should also give the group standard experience point rewards for any extra obstacles that you added while tailoring *A Friendly Warning* to your own campaign.

In addition, the heroes may receive some media attention or monetary reward if they succeeded in defusing Remi’s bomb. Even though the threat turned out to be minimal, a group that acted in the public’s best interest without any hesitation should get some positive feedback. On the other hand, if the heroes failed to defuse the bomb and were





sprayed with blue dye, they may receive negative publicity for being less heroic than they pretend to be.

## CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

The particular events in *A Friendly Warning* do not warrant expansion to further missions. However, when the adventure is over, you should have two new plot “veins” to mine for future adventures.

First of all, whoever hired Remi Leone is still out there, waiting for the heroes to make the next move. As discussed in the Background section, you could well use this adventure as a springboard into the next segment of your campaign.

The second hook for future adventures is Remi Leone himself. Although he has completed this assignment and has no cause for further interaction with the heroes, they may not be willing to let the matter drop so easily—they might well wish to track down their tormentor. Alternatively, another client might want to hire Remi now that he has proven that he can get the better of the heroes. (As a very principled criminal, however, Remi takes only those assignments that appeal to his sense of fair play and honor.)

Remi may also cross paths with the heroes again in a more subtle fashion. An interesting tweak to a future adventure could result in Remi and the heroes working on the same case, but from opposite ends. Perhaps a situation will arise in which it makes sense for them to team up against a common enemy. In such a case, Remi would certainly be willing to put the events of *A Friendly Warning* aside—it’s all just business, after all—but will the heroes be able to do the same?

## REMI LEONE

Remi Leone is a world-class assassin who has chosen to forge a new career for himself as an envoy and emissary. Although he sometimes takes contracts that involve killing, he most often simply passes messages from one person to another—though these messages usually involve an implied threat. Despite the generally peaceful nature of his missions, he has no qualms about adding to his body count if the situation calls for such action.

Remi is an impressive physical specimen. He stands slightly more than 6 feet tall and has a broad-shouldered and muscular frame. His swarthy complexion sets off his deep-set, dark eyes and his black hair. He has a quiet but imposing demeanor and prefers implied threats to verbal ones. Remi’s native language is Italian, but he is fluent in many other tongues as well, speaking them all with a slight accent that marks him only as European.

**Remi Leone (Fast Hero 4/Soldier 3/Gunslinger 7/Infiltrator 10):** CR 24; Medium-size human; HD 4d8+12 plus 3d10+9 plus 7d10+21 plus 10d8+30; hp 215; Mas 16; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 35, touch 33, flat-footed 35 (+5 Dex, +18 class, +2 light undercover shirt); BAB +15; Grap +18; Atk +20 melee (1d4+2 piercing, knife) or +18 (damage varies, bludgeoning, improvised weapon) or +22 ranged (2d6 ballistic, Glock 17) or +22 ranged (2d10+2 ballistic, HK PSG1); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d4+2 piercing, knife) or +18/+13/+8 (damage varies,

bludgeoning, improvised weapon) or +22/+17/+12 ranged (2d6 ballistic, Glock 17) or +22/+17/+12 (2d10+2 ballistic, HK PSG1); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ close combat shot, defensive position, improved evasion, improved sweep, improvised implements, improvised weapon damage, lightning shot, sharp-shooting, Skill Mastery (Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Tumble), sweep, Weapon Focus (Glock 17), Weapon Focus (HK PSG1), weapon specialization (HK PSG1), without a trace; AL Remi Leone’s code; SV Fort +11, Ref +20, Will +11; AP 12; Rep: +7; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14.

**Occupation:** Military (class skills: Hide, Move Silently), Personal Firearms Proficiency.

**Skills:** Demolitions +15, Disable Device +12, Escape Artist +28, Hide +35, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (tactics) +5, Listen +12, Move Silently +34, Read/Write English, Read/Write French, Read/Write Italian, Read/Write Russian, Read/Write Arabic, Read/Write Cantonese, Sleight of Hand +31, Speak Arabic, Speak Cantonese, Speak English, Speak French, Speak German, Speak Italian, Speak Japanese, Speak Russian, Speak Spanish, Spot +20, Tumble +25.

**Talents (Fast Hero):** Evasion, uncanny dodge 1.

**Feats:** Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Agile Riposte, Burst Fire, Dead Aim, Dodge, Double Tap, Far Shot, Heroic Surge, Mobility, Nimble, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank

### Reverse-Engineering Remi

Remi Leone is a 24th-level character in a game whose rules do not address character levels higher than 20th. Thus, his statistics had to be created using a special extrapolation of the existing rules. In short, Remi was allowed to take additional levels of existing basic and advanced classes. The only extra material needed was an expansion of Table 7–8 from the *d20 MODERN Roleplaying Game* that would allow the experience point awards to be set fairly and consistently.

Expansion to Table 7–8: Experience Point Awards

PARTY LEVEL	—ENCOUNTER LEVEL—				
	21	22	23	24	25
14th	45,800	—	—	—	—
15th	35,200	47,600	—	—	—
16th	27,000	36,800	49,400	—	—
17th	20,400	28,400	38,400	51,200	—
18th	15,200	21,600	29,800	40,000	53,000
19th	11,400	16,000	22,800	31,200	41,600
20th	8,400	12,000	16,800	24,000	32,600

As a 24th-level character, Remi can provide high-level heroes with challenging opposition. While it is possible to generate heroes with character levels higher than 20th using this method, it is strongly suggested that you not allow such progression in your games. There are a staggering number of rules that potentially need adjustment to fairly adjudicate a game in which the party level exceeds 20th, and you might well discover that you need to spend more time doing game design than campaign design.

Shot, Precise Shot, Shot on the Run, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy, Strafe, Weapon Finesse (knife).

*Equipment:* Ammunition (and spare clips for all firearms), cell phone, Glock 17, HK PSG1, knife, light undercover shirt, and other equipment as necessary.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stan! has been publishing fiction, cartoons, and games professionally since 1982. He has served as a graphic designer and line editor for West End Games, an editor and designer for TSR, Inc., and an author, senior designer, and creative director for Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Stan! is currently the Creative Vice President for The Game Mechanics, Inc. <<http://www.thegamemechanics.com>>. His recent projects include the *d20 Future* book for Wizards of the Coast, Inc., plus *Modern Magic, volume 2* for The Game Mechanics. In what he laughingly refers to as his spare time, Stan! writes and illustrates the *Bolt & Quiver* comic strip.

Stan! lives in Renton, WA, where he eats nothing but meat and cheese. Visit him online at <<http://www.stannex.com>>.

## Credits

<b>Design:</b>	Stan!
<b>Editing:</b>	Penny Williams
<b>Typesetting:</b>	Nancy Walker
<b>Cartography:</b>	Rob Lazzaretti
<b>Creative Direction:</b>	Christopher Perkins
<b>Web Production:</b>	Eric Haddock
<b>Web Development:</b>	Mark A. Jindra
<b>Graphic Design:</b>	Cynthia Fliege, Sean Glenn

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