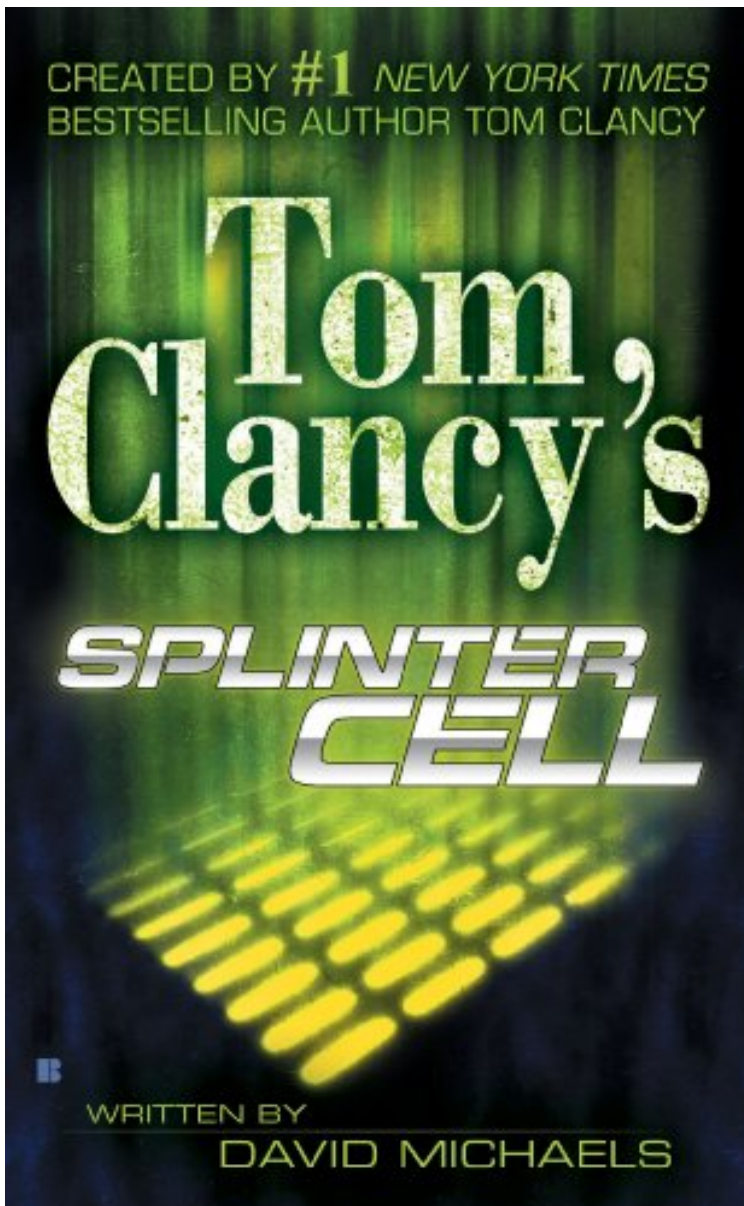


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Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell



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(Download) Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell

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Description : Description du produitIt's not just a game anymore-read the explosive new book series based on the video game Splinter Cell(tm). In response to the growing use of sophisticated digital encryption to conceal potential threats to the United States, the National Security Agency has ushered forth the new dawn of intelligence-gathering techniques. The top-secret initiative is dubbed Third Echelon. Its existence denied by the US government, Third Echelon deploys a lone field operative. He is sharp, invisible, and deadly. He has the right to spy, steal, destroy, and assassinate to protect American freedoms. His name is Sam Fisher. He is a Splinter Cell(tm). Sam Fisher works alone. But fights for us all.

Prsentation de l'diteurIn response to the growing use of sophisticated digital encryption to conceal potential

threats to the United States, the National Security Agency has ushered forth the new dawn of intelligence-gathering techniques. The top-secret initiative is dubbed Third Echelon. Its existence denied by the U.S. government, Third Echelon deploys a lone field operative. He is sharp, nearly invisible, and deadly. And he has the right to spy, steal, destroy, and assassinate to protect American freedoms. His name is Sam Fisher. He is a Splinter Cell. Extrait 1 Its like being in a state of nonexistence. A vacuum. Darkness and light at the same time, and no sense of gravity. Theres no air, but I know Im breathing. Certainly no sounds are present. I see and feel nothing. There are no dreams. Thats what sleep is like for me. Im blessed, I suppose. I can will myself to sleep anywhere, anytime. I didnt train to do it. Its always been that way, ever since I was a kid. I simply tell myself, Its time to sleep now. And I do it. Im sure a lot of people in the world would envy this talent. I dont take it for granted because in my business I have to catch sleep in the strangest places and at the oddest times. I feel the pulsating pressure on my wrist. It gently pulls me out of this dimensionless world, and I slowly regain the use of my senses. I feel the warm metal against my face. I hear far-off nondescript echoes. The OPSAT attached to my wrist continues to wake me. Theres a little T-shaped rod that protrudes from the flexible band when the silent alarm goes off. The rod rocks back and forth, nudging my pulse, telling my body that its time to rouse. When I first saw it demonstrated, it reminded me of a James Coburn spy movie from the sixties in which he played a secret agent who could stop his heart on command. This apparently put him in some kind of hibernation. He had a wristwatch with the same kind of T-shaped rod that poked him until he woke up. I remember laughing in the movie theater when I saw that. It was too ridiculous to take seriously. Now look at me. I take a few deep breaths. The air is stale and dry inside the ventilation shaft where I spent the last six hours. I flex my hands to get the blood circulating once again. I stretch my feet, even though theyre enclosed snugly in my boots. Then I open my eyes. Theres no more light in the shaft than there was when I first climbed into it. The OPSAT finishes its duty and the little T-shaped rod retracts. I bring my left hand to my face and press the button to illuminate the OPSATs screen. There are no new messages from Lambert. No incoming e-mail. Alls quiet in the world. The OPSAT is a handy little device that Third Echelon dreamed up for its agents. Its really called an Operational Satellite Uplink. Primarily a tool for communication, it has many other uses as well. I particularly like the camera capabilities that allow me to snap digital pics of anything I want. Im suddenly aware of how hot it is and I remember where I am. The ventilation shaft of the Tropical Casino in Macau. Im lying horizontally in a space slightly smaller than a phone booth. Its a good thing Im not claustrophobic or Id be a basket case by now. Since I had to wait for the right time to make my move, I set the alarm to wake me at four in the morning. I figured thats when activity inside the casino would be at its most muted. Its a twenty-fourhour joint, so theres always going to be someone here. Im sweating like a pig inside my custom-made uniform. I forgot to adjust the temperature control before going to sleep. I quickly turn the knob at my belt to make it cooler. Immediately I can feel the cold water flowing through the vessels embedded within the uniforms lining. The military calls it an Objective Force Warrior uniform. Its like an astronauts suit, only sleeker and tighter. I can make it cold or hot, depending on what kind of environment Im in. Its made of a heavy material with Kevlar sewn into it, yet its flexible enough for me to perform any gymnastic feat I wish to attempt. I wouldnt call it bulletproof, but its close. The tough outer hide feels like elephant skin to the touch, and it goes a long way toward deflecting stuff. I suppose if I were shot at point blank Id be dead, but bullets fired from a range of fifteen feet or more might penetrate the suit but not me. The Kevlar acts as a braking mechanism. Pretty cool stuff. Another interesting feature is that its got photosensitive threading that reacts when a targeting laser strikes the material. The suit sends a signal to my OPSAT, alerting me that Im in a snipers gun sight. My only beef with the uniform is that its so tight fitting and neat that it makes me look like a comic book superhero. Even my special headpiece looks like a mask when I have the goggles down. I pull the straw from the tube in the collar and suck refreshing cold water from the supply stored in the bladders distributed evenly throughout the suit. Theres enough water in there to last twelve hours as long as I use it sparingly. Its an odd concept, but I have to fill up my uniform every so often. Time for a little energy. I raise my body enough so I can reach into the Osprey strapped to my back and pull out a ration. The food in those things tastes a lot like the MREs the army gets, so theres a variety of stuff from Cajun-style rice and beans to spaghetti to grilled chicken breast. Maybe some of that stuff is actually in the recipes. The one I happen to pick resembles trail mix. As I munch on the delicacy, I recall how I got here and what the hell Im supposed to be doing. I had entered the casino during the early evening, just as the big crowds were beginning to populate the place. I wore street clothes and figured Id be less noticeable when a lot of people were here. Casinos in Macau are different from other ones around the world. The Chinese take their gambling very seriously. Theres never

any shouting of Jackpot, much less any hint of smiles from these people. They look as if they'd just as soon shoot you as deal you a card. Its par for the course, I guess. Triads hang out in Macau casinos, and Ive never seen a cheerful Triad. Given the fact that since 1999 Macau was no longer a Portuguese colony and was now one of the Special Administrative Regions of China, I could imagine that the inhabitants were not very happy. Like Hong Kong, Macau was now part of Communist China, even though the Chinese government promised that things would remain relatively the same for the next fifty years. It was still unclear what the colonys underworld was doing about the hand-over. During the twentieth century, Macau had developed a reputation as a hotbed of spies, vice, and intrigue. I played a few games, lost a little money, gained some of it back, and then went to the washroom across from the broom closet I needed. I had memorized the building plans before the mission commenced. I could make my way around the casino blindfolded if I had to. I slipped out of the washroom when I sensed no one was in the hallway and moved to the broom closet door. I had to use a lock pick to open it. Luckily, it wasnt a high-tech lock. After all, it really was just a broom closet. Once I was inside, I locked the door and proceeded to remove the street clothes, revealing my funky superhero uniform underneath. I folded the clothes and tucked them neatly in the Osprey backpack. I donned the headpiece and was set to go. The change from Clark Kent to Superman had taken me about forty seconds. I climbed a tool shelf to reach the ventilation shaft opening, gently pried off the grill cover, and hung it on a nail on the wall. I tested the strength of the structure to make sure it would hold my weight and then pulled myself in. I could just barely turn myself around to reach out, grab the grill cover, and fasten it back on the shaft from the inside. I did another about-face and crawled silently through the shaft until I came to a spot that was sufficient for a nap. And here I am. I finish my meal and eat the digestible wrapper so I wont leave any trace of my being here. I doubt anyone is going to look inside the ventilation shaft, but one never knows. Time to act. I crawl farther along the shaft, make the left turn I know is coming, go about twenty yards, hook a right, and then shimmy down a vertical drop for ten feet. On the next level the shaft goes in three directions. I tap the OPSAT for the compass mode just to confirm that the tunnel on my left is the westerly direction, and then I crawl that way. One more right turn and I can see the grill at the end of the shaft. The casino presidents office. I peer through the grill to make sure the office is dark and uninhabited. I carefully push the grill off but hold on to it. I dont want a loud clang when I drop it. I worm my upper body out of the shaft and gently place the grill behind a sofa directly beneath me. I then clutch the bottom of the shaft opening, roll my lower back and hips out, and somersault onto the carpeted floor. So far, so good. I push the goggles over my eyes and switch on the night-vision mode. No need to turn on any lights and attract attention. Being quiet and invisible are the two main rules in my profession. Get the job done without being seen or noticed. If Im caught, the U.S. government will deny any knowledge of my existence. Id be on my own, in the hands of a foreign agency with no legal recourse or means of escape except with what I can manage to achieve with my body and mind. Its a test I dont particularly want to take, even though Ive studied for it for years. There are always trick questions in that kind of test. I go straight for the computer on the presidents expansive mahogany desk, power it up, and tap my fingers impatiently while I wait for the system to load. When it asks for the password, I type in the one that Carly assured me would work and sure enough, it does. Carly St. John is a wizard when it comes to technical shit. She can hack into any system, anywhere. And she can do it from her desk in Washington, D.C. Using the Search function, I quickly find the folders I want. They contain files of payoff records to various organizations and individuals. I have to make sure these are separate from the legitimate casino expenses, and Carly has briefed me on how to tell the difference. Once again, the telltale flags she mentioned are there, so I know Im in the right place. I unzip the pouch on my left leg calf and remove a link that I insert into the computers floppy drive. The other end I plug into my OPSAT. A touch of a few buttons and voilthe files begin to copy onto my portable device. It takes only a minute or so. As the OPSAT does its work, I think about Dan Lee, the Third Echelon man who was murdered in this casino three months ago. He was tracking illegal arms sales in China, and the trail led him here to Macau. The Shop, of course, are the guys doing the dealing. Before he was killed, Lee had given Lambert proof that the Tropical Casinos accounting department was being used as a front for the illegal transactions. Shutting down the Shop is one of our primary directives, and the only way to do it is to work from the outer ends of the pipelines back to the source. And there are lots of pipelines, all over the globe. Uncovering them is only half the battle. Now, with these files listing the Shops customers in our possession, other U.S. agencies can act on closing this particular pipeline. We still dont know exactly what happened to Dan Lee. A Chinese recruit, Lee had worked for the NSA for something like seven years. I never knew him personallywe never meet the other agents in Third Echelonbut I understand he was a stand-up guy. He did

his job well and was a good man. Lambert thought that someone in the Shop had learned of his identity and lured him to the casino with information as bait. Lee never left the casino. The OPSAT finishes the transfer just as I hear noise in the hallway outside. Shit. I pull the link out of the computer. Keys rattle in the door and I hear a voice followed by a laugh. There are two of them. I have no time to shut down the computer, but I hit the monitors Off button. I leap away from the desk and eye the distance to the ventilation shaft. The key turns in the lock. There's no time for that route. I scamper up a set of filing cabinets and press myself into the corner, my head against the ceiling. It's a difficult position to hold. I have to use my knee against the top of the filing cabinets to leverage myself while at the same time pushing with my arms on the two walls to anchor my body. It isn't comfortable. Just as I settle myself, the door opens. Maybe they won't notice me since I'm some four or five feet above their heads. I recognize the first guy, the one with the keys. It's Kim Wei Lo, probably the mastermind behind the Shop's operation in Macau. He's on the wanted lists for all the three-letter agencies you know, the CIA, the FBI, the NSA . . . When the other guy turns slightly, I make him, too. He's Chen Wong, Lee's bodyguard. Wong is a big guy, but I've seen bigger. If it came down to a face-off, I'm pretty sure I could take him. Lo hits one of the two light switches on the wall by the door. The fluorescents directly over the desk blink on. Thank God he didn't switch on the other one. My side of the room would've been showered with illumination. At least I'm still in the shadows. If they look up and focus on the back wall, corner and ceiling, they'll see me hanging there like a spider. The two men go to the desk and Lo says something in Chinese. I catch the word computer, so I figure he's wondering why someone didn't shut it down for the night. It doesn't bother him too much, though. He sits at the desk and begins to work while Wong paces slowly behind him, gazing out the large glass window that overlooks the main drag cutting through this poor excuse for a city. An urban area is a more appropriate term. As it's the middle of the night, there isn't much traffic or neon lights. I hope something will mesmerize him enough that he'll keep his back to me while I wait this out. As a precaution, though, I mentally practice drawing my Five-seven N from where I am, but, ultimately, I don't think it's possible without falling to the floor. I have a directive not to kill anyone if I don't have to. Unfortunately, I've had to disobey that directive on numerous occasions. I don't like doing it, but sometimes you gotta do what you gotta do. It's hot in the room. They must shut off the AC at night. Or maybe it's a ruse to get gamblers to buy more drinks. I'm dying to adjust the temperature in my uniform, but I don't dare move. I can feel the sweat building underneath my headpiece, and it's starting to trickle down my face. Shit. Wong turns and walks aimlessly around the desk and heads my way. He's drawn his own pistol. It looks like a Smith Wesson .38 from here and he's twirling it in his hand, Western-style. He does an abrupt turn and faces a bookshelf. As he continues to twirl the gun, Wong scans the titles of the books. I guess the guy really can read. Lo says something and Wong grunts in reply. He doesn't walk back to the desk, though, damn it. Instead, he moves away from the books and starts ambling toward the filing cabinets. All he has to do is glance up and he'll see me for sure. The carpet must be awfully interesting, though, because he's keeping his head down. It's as if he's watching his feet as he walks. Oh, for Christ's sake, he's standing right beneath me now. Most of my body is above the filing cabinet, but my head and shoulders extend away from the wall, flat against the ceiling. Just don't look up, you bastard. I feel a bead of sweat run down the bridge of my nose. Aw, fuck. I can't wipe it. I can't even move. That little drop of salt water builds up on the very tip of my nose, threatening to fall right on Wong's head. My breathing stops. Time stands still. And then the drop of sweat falls and hits his square, crew-cut head. He notices it, too. He reaches up, feels the moisture, and slowly arches his head back to look at the ceiling. I shove off the walls and pile-drive the man to the floor. He drops his Smith Wesson along the way. For hand-to-hand combat, I exclusively use Krav Maga, an Israeli technique that literally means contact combat. It's not so much a self-defense martial art as it is a no-holds-barred system for survival in any situation. It combines elements of Eastern disciplines, such as karate, judo, and kung fu, with basic boxing and down-and-dirty maneuvers. It's taught and used by the Israel Defense Forces, the Israeli National and Military Police, and other anti-terror/special forces in Israel. Since its development by Imi Lichtenfeld after World War II, Krav Maga has emigrated all over the world and is now widely taught alongside other martial arts. Krav Maga isn't a competitive sport. It's a fight for your life. The whole idea is not only to defend yourself but also to do as much damage as possible to your opponent as quickly as you can. So with Wong on the floor beneath me, I ram my forehead, goggles and all, into his face as hard as I can. He screams in agony as the edge of the goggles rips into his skin. I chop him hard in the throat for good measure, but he moves too quickly. My knuckles don't connect with his Adam's apple, so I only succeed in hurting him rather than killing him. The big guy rolls and throws me off as if I'm a blanket. In an instant we're both standing and ready for more. By now Lo has stood and drawn a gun of his

own. Its some kind of semiautomaticI cant tell for sure what it is because things are moving way too fast. He points it at me and I reach for Wongs shirt collar. I pull him toward me, swinging his body around so hes between the desk and me. Los gun fires and Wong jerks as the bullet penetrates his spine and bursts out through his sternum. I feel its heat as the round whizzes past my ear and embeds itself in the wall behind me. The blood follows a split second later, splashing me in the face and chest.Im still holding on to Wong, so I shove him backward toward the desk. His body crashes over it and knocks the computer monitor into Lo, who by now realizes he killed the wrong guy. He panics and makes a run for the door. I anticipate this and beat him to it. Lo isnt a fighterhes more of a brains guy, so he isnt equipped to handle the chokehold I lock around his head. My arm muffles his cries as I pop his head forward, snapping the surprisingly brittle bones in his neck. He collapses to the floor just as the sound of running boots outside grows louder. Theres no time to get into the ventilation shaft, so I press myself flat against the wall next to the door.It bursts open and three armed security guards rush inside to find Lo and Wong dead on the floor. Their shock and dismay give me the opportunity to slip out behind them through the open door. Theres no way I can do it without detection, though. One of them shouts something like There he is! and the guards are after me. I run down the corridor to the staircase I know is straight ahead. Its the only way out at this point. Instead of taking the steps, I leap over the rail and land in a crouching position in the middle of the lower flight. I take the remaining steps three at a time and Im on the ground floor. By now, of course, a few more guards have been alerted to my presence. In fact, one guy is running at me from the direction of the big gaming room. He shouts and I dart toward him. He pulls a Smith Wesson out of his holster, but I leap at the corridor wall, bounce off of it by kicking with the soles of my boots, and propel myself into him. He tumbles back as I gracefully land on my fingertips, do a split-second handstand, and then jackknife in the air to alight on my feet.The nearest exit is the front door of the building. To get there I have to traverse the gaming room.

Unlike many Macau casinos, the Tropical has one big gaming roommuch like the casinos in Las Vegaswhereas others in Macau might have separate rooms for different games. Here you have blackjack, roulette, poker, baccarat, slot machines, and a couple of weird Chinese gambling games Ive never heard of, all in one big space. At this hour there arent many patrons, so I decide to give them something to talk about when they go to work the next day. I run into the room and dart through an aisle of blackjack tables.The place is deadly silent. The fifteen or so gamblers look up from their various games and stare, open-mouthed. The dealers are too shocked to move. Whos this gweilo in the funny military costume running through the casino? The two guards at the front of the room, though, react differently. They draw their pistols and aim at me, not bothering to shout to the patrons to drop to the floor. As one guard takes a bead, I leap onto a blackjack table and dodge a bullet. I jump to the next table, spraying a pile of chips in all directions, and then bounce to another one as the second guards gun erupts. I feel like a frog on lily pads.Part of my extensive training with Third Echelon involved learning to utilize my surroundings to propel myself quickly. I can use walls, furniture, and human beings as push-off points in order to get across an obstacle course. When I saw other guys doing it, I immediately thought of pinballs doing their thing inside arcade machinesand thats precisely the concept behind the technique. Its especially effective when someones shooting at you. A moving target that haphazardly changes direction is truly difficult to hit.Now that the bullets are flying, the casino guests naturally shout in fear and cower. Some are smart enough to fall to the ground as I spring past them. The two guards, now blocking my exit, are firing their weapons indiscriminately, hoping to land a lucky shot. I have no choice but to act offensively. I duck behind a table, draw my Five-seveN and release the safety. Its the Fabrique Nationale Herstal tactical model with a single-action trigger and a twenty-round magazine that holds 5.728mm ss190 ammunition. The rounds offer good penetration against modern body armor while keeping the weapons weight, dimensions, and recoil at reasonable levels. The damage the rounds do to unarmored bodies is something to behold. Its a weapon I dont like to use in full-scale firefights, though. It has a fairly limited range, so I mostly use it in situations where I know Ill have the advantage. Like this one.I reach around the bottom leg of the table and fireone, twohitting both guards in the chest. Now the way is clear for me to rush the exit. I stand and move forward, leaping over one of the bodies as I do so.I hear a shouted command behind me, followed by more gunfire. I glance back and see three more security guards running into the room. Damn, where did all these guys come from at this time of night? Youd think that at four in the morning theyd keep just one or two on duty to save money. I suppose bad guys all over the world retain guards in reserve for that one instance when an American operative barges through HQ in the middle of the night.I reach for the pocket on my right outer thigh and remove a smoke grenade, one of the more harmless ones. I carry a couple of different types of smoke grenadesone that only produces dark smoke

to cover my tracks, and another one filled with CS, or what tongue-twister lovers call O-chlorobenzalmalononitrile gas. That stuff is nasty. Exposure to CS gas causes violent respiratory seizure, and prolonged contact produces unconsciousness. I pull the ring and toss the grenade behind me and wait for the loud pop. The thing works surprisingly fast. Black smoke fills the gaming room in less than five seconds. Its almost as if someone simply turned off the lights. With my goggles on Im spared the eye irritation and can also see the archway out of the room. I run into the casinos main lobby and past a couple of frightened patrons. The entrance guards must have left their posts to chase me in the gaming room, because Im home free. I push the glass doors open and bolt down the steps to the street. Its still dark, of course, but lighting from the street lamps illuminates the area quite well. The few casinos on the street are still open. It will be a matter of minutes, maybe seconds, before more trouble appears on the scene. I make my way around the building to the small parking lot and go to the first SUV I see. Its a Honda, one of their luxury utility vehicles. I drop to the cement and roll underneath the car. Taking hold of the chassis, I pull myself up and lodge my body into the crevice so I cant be seen from ground level. I spring a hook thats embedded in my belt buckle and latch it on to the chassis to help hold me in place. Sure enough, I hear running footsteps and shouts. The guards make it outside and begin to search the parking lot thoroughly. I imagine the looks of bewilderment on their faces. Where the hell did he go? He couldnt have disappeared so quickly! I see feet run past the SUV. More shouts. More confusion. The guards boss is yelling at them, cursing in Chinese. Its going to be his head for this! Find that gweilo now! More feet patter by as the men search up and down the aisles of cars. It takes them ten minutes before they give up. They figure the intruder must have gone in another direction. I wait another five minutes to make sure its completely quiet, and then I lower myself to the cement. I look around for signs of peoples feet. Nothing. I roll out from under the Honda, look both ways, and then rise to a crouching position. I slowly lift my head over the hood and survey the parking lot. Im alone. I leave the property the way I came, using the shadows to mask my presence. I move like a tomcat, quiet and unobtrusive, sticking to walls and street objects. Stealth is the name of the game and Im damned good at it. As missions go, this one went relatively smoothly. No mission is easy, per se. They all have their challenges. I cant take anything for granted and I must be certain that I do my job invisibly. Thats what being a Splinter Cell is all about. Leave no footprints. Get in. Get out. Youre done. A Splinter Cell works alone. A remote team monitors and supports me professionals that are damned good at their jobs, toobut its my ass thats out there in the line of fire. Every move must be thought out as if the field were a gigantic chessboard. A single mistake can be fatal. I like to think I dont make mistakes. Im Sam Fisher. I am a Splinter Cell. Presentation de l'diteur In response to the growing use of sophisticated digital encryption to conceal potential threats to the United States, the National Security Agency has ushered forth the new dawn of intelligence-gathering techniques. The top-secret initiative is dubbed Third Echelon. Its existence denied by the U.S. government, Third Echelon deploys a lone field operative. He is sharp, nearly invisible, and deadly. And he has the right to spy, steal, destroy, and assassinate to protect American freedoms. His name is Sam Fisher. He is a Splinter Cell.