

Survival Instinct – Excerpt 2

*The firing stuttered and died away into echoes.*

*D'onne stuck her head out to see what was going on; a stub round smacked into the pillar right beside her the instant her head was visible. Tola pulled her back in sharply. 'Don't be stupid Donna, they know we're still here.'*

*Another shot and a ricochet whined past as if to underline the point.*

*'So what do we do now, Tola?' D'onne was trying to sound sarcastic instead of frightened while pushing the blonde plaits out of her eyes. She felt unable to quite believe she was being lectured by an Underhive brat five years her junior who couldn't even get her name right. Tola didn't even seem to notice her fantastically withering glare.*

*'Well, if we waits a while they'll start a-sneakin' and a creeeeepin' up here,' she sang quietly, eyes wild with the rush of the firefight. 'We could pop out then. Pow! Pow! Mebbe take a couple, but then they'd shoot us down like rats.' She scowled dramatically. 'Not good.'*

*Having a child talk to you as if you were another, younger, child is, D'onne concluded, one of the most excruciating things that can ever happen to a person. She was just glad there was no one else around to hear it. If Tola kept this up she'd rather get shot than stay behind the pillar with her.*

*'Then...' she prompted.*

*'Then we could try'n a-sneakin away ourselves, find a spot and wait for them to come nosin' around our old post and then Pumph!' D'onne clapped her hand over Tola's mouth to stifle her going, 'Pow! Pow!' again. Her eyes were bright with fearful intensity.*

*'Shut it Tola, I hear them!' D'onne hissed.*

*And here they came, the jingle and squeak of gun harnesses a chilling counterpoint to the heavy clump of running boots. It was an incredibly menacing sound, the sound of people running to kill you.*