

Lara Croft: Tomb Raider - The Orb

By Orlando_Hamar

Submitted: April 17, 2006

Updated: April 17, 2006

A short, to-be-continued-with-enough-comments, fan-fiction I wrote upon completing Tomb Raider: Legend.

Tell me what you think.

Provided by Fanart Central.

http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/Orlando_Hamar/31877/Lara-Croft-Tomb-Raider---The-Orb

**Chapter 1 - Chapter 1 - Once Upon a Time In
America**

2

1 - Chapter 1 - Once Upon a Time In America

A hundred and sixty miles per hour.

This was cutting it close. Men with guns behind her, and a half finished freeway ahead, it became a question not of 'how can I survive this?' but more one of 'do I want to live forever?' to which the answer was an inevitable yes.

She lifted the front wheel slightly as she came to the second wave of '*Turn Back Now!*' signs, crashing through them and sending the debris into the path of some of the men trailing her. Her bike caught some air from the warning, and she took her chance.

While in mid air, she pulled her pistols from her sides, turned round as far as she could and, as Zip would often put it, 'did her thang'.

One man in the head. He fell instantly.

Another in the chest mirrored the first.

A third man beat her to the shot, and managed to shoot a gun out of her hand, leaving her with only one. She shot him in the face. His bike swung round and took four more men out for her.

Her bike hit the ground again, and she felt the impact. Putting the one remaining gun back into her pocket, she hit the throttle and blasted forward

She dodged as many road workers as she could; the rest luckily jumped out of the way. That, naturally, didn't save them from the Yakuza bastards trailing her.

She bit her lip, wincing with the empathy. She would have shot them, but the obstacles she had to dodge...killing herself in an attempt to save just one person, who probably wouldn't even die - it was easy to see why she chose to live.

Ducati hadn't let her down before, but when you were hurtling down a half-finished freeway at a hundred and sixty miles per hour, there was no force short of God that could save her. And since she was a 'strictly science' kind of girl, it seemed she was ultimately screwed. As Zip would say.

And there it was; the end of the line - the end of the road; where the brownish-grey and white came to an abrupt halt. Why did North America have this obsession with building freeways well out of Earth's reach?

North America had been the last place she was expecting to find Yakuza. And she wouldn't have; it was her bloody fault for killing Takamoto!

She couldn't turn back now; so she did the only thing she could, and kept on going. The lemmings that

the inked-up-corpse had sent after her would follow her to the grave; that gave her some comfort.

In a final act of desperation, she turned the bike toward the sides of the road; to the concrete-encased railings, just as she reached the end of the track.

The bike leapt from the concrete as the beneath its wheels became the wind of the valley below.

Lara looked ahead, toward the other end of the road. Below her was scaffolding and a dirty river. Behind were men who had not discovered their imminent deaths. To either side was the eternity of the horizon, and before her, it seemed was death.

All the times she could have died in a tomb, and she was going to die in America? What had happened to bring her to *this*?

Lara Croft pulled up next to the site. Her bike, a red GT1000, shimmered in the dull American sun, and the light wind picked at the dry dirt in its tires.

`Ambassador Croft.' A man smiled.

`Come now, Mal.' Lara smiled, getting off the bike. `You know me well enough to call me Lara.'

Mal, or Malcolm was in his forties; he wore a casual mixture of browns, with only his coat and boots meeting the extremes. His matching hat hid his dark hair, and his blue eyes glinted slightly. On his face was a smile that didn't fit him in the least.

`Rich people deserve a title.' He joked.

`Then let mine be Lara, hmm?' She smiled, and took his hand as he held it out. Suddenly, she embraced him. `It's good to see you again. What's it been? Three, four years?'

`It's been a while.' Mal nodded. His eyes drifted to her sides. `I see you came prepared.'

`Oh? These?' Lara tapped her pistols. `I just know how to accessorize.'

`What are you planning to meet? Mummies?'

`You'd be surprised what I meet on trips like these.' She raised her eyebrows to Mal's sides. `Besides, you didn't exactly come unarmed. That's a revolver; a colt anaconda, to be specific. Right?'

`Yes.' He lifted it out and examined it. It was large bronze thing; quite heavy and very effective. Lara, however, preferred pistols. Revolvers weren't much in the way of ammunition.

`Anyway, what was it you wanted to show me?' She asked. `I don't come here much; nothing in the way of anywhere to go other than cities, and I've been to Tokyo, so America's nothing special.'

`We have our fair share of artifacts. They're just all in museums. Anyway, I found my way out here, and discovered this thing. I'm not much interested in history or whatever, but you...I thought you might like it as a bit of a payoff.'

`Payoff for what?' She frowned.

`Saving my life.'

`Oh, Mal. That was out of friendship. Besides,' she muttered, `I've saved your life so many times; I don't think you *could* pay me back.'

`You might want to repeat that.'

He pulled back a few bushes, revealing a shabbily uncovered stone plate. Moss had grown all over it, but most had been swept away, revealing some inscriptions and a few hieroglyphs.

She raised an eyebrow. `You just...came across this?'

`Okay, a friend went out hiking and came across it. *He* told me about it. The guy was weak; couldn't get it open; wanted help...he lost interest pretty quick, though.'

`Did you manage to get it open?'

`I did, actually. The idiot tried lifting it. It's a slide door.' He gave the ridge a hard push with his foot, and the door slid right open; revealing a set of half-eroded stone stairs.

`Don't tell me you raided it too.'

`I took a look around. Why?'

Lara sighed. `Oh well. Maybe there'll be something for me to take a look at.'

`Maybe I didn't see anything I'd be interested in-'

`Yes,' Lara cut in. `These places don't always seem to deal in dollars or gold, do they?' She grinned.

She made her way into the hole, turning her personal light source on as she went. Before the two of them knew it, the place was illuminated in a bright white light.

Before her was a long corridor. Marks of water were on the floors and ceilings, while moss had grown all over. The walls themselves were covered with text. Lara took a glance, and turned away; whatever was written there was just religious garbage; nothing that interested her. First, she would have to find out what this place was.

She spoke into the microphone off the end of her earpiece. `Zip, you getting this?'

`Yeah.' He replied, his voice slightly muffled by static. `Nice place, but...nothing we aint seen before. Hey,

Alister; what d'you make of all this?'

'It reminds me of what we saw in Bolivia...but a bit less interesting; more Northern.'

'Hell, I could've told you that!' Zip laughed.

'Well, she's only ten feet in; there really isn't anything that I can say.' He retorted.

'Boys.' Lara warned. She received apologies almost immediately after she finished the word.

The two of them walked down the long, empty hallway for a while. The sound of running water caught her attention, and she quickened her pace. She caught a shimmer in the darkness ahead, and then was when Mal began to notice her interest.

'So...do you really think I couldn't pay you back?'

'Well...!' She was speechless, not from awe, but from insult; a brass orb no larger than her fist that sat atop a pedestal just past a small stream in a cut of bare earth. 'You have got to be kidding me.'

'What?' Mal asked, shocked at her response.

'It's a piece of junk!' It had cracks and dents everywhere; like a piece of cheap gold tin foil that had been rolled into a ball.

She reached out for it, and the moment her fingers touched the bare brass surface, the thing leapt into the air; light shining from the cracks. 'Holy...!' It split apart, the rivets growing wider and wider until what had previously been a ball had split into thousands of shards of brass. They orbited a central glowing orb; it shone so bright it reminded her of a sun.

'Did...did it do that when-' Lara began.

'No. I thought it was just a ball!' Mal cut in

Frowning at it, she reached out slightly.

'Lara-'

'Hold on.'

Pushing her hand through the brass sphere, she made to grab the central orb. The brass was sharp, cutting at her skin, but doing little else besides; not that she noticed it, as she had quickly gained hold of the mini-sun. It shone so brightly as to shine right through her hand and the black gloves she wore over them.

Suddenly, the brass particles sped up; spinning round her hand faster than her eyes could track. She felt the orb becoming warm, but her hand wouldn't let go! What was happening?

The chunks of brass began to stretch along her arm; looking as if to tear it apart. Lara tried with all her might to let go of the damn thing, but her hand wouldn't respond!

Yet they did no such thing; they instead began to arrange themselves in the shape of a...a what? It was like some sort of cannon, but far more sci-fi.

`What in the hell is that?' Mal snapped, having backed off several paces.

`I...I'm not sure.' Lara replied slowly. `But, whatever it *is*, it brings new meaning to the phrase "hand cannon".'

She began to examine it in more detail. The `hand cannon' was separated into rings, and each ring was a different size and length, the largest spreading half way down her forearm, and rotating extremely slowly, the smallest was spinning extremely quickly around her wrist in the opposite direction.

`Alister?' Lara asked.

`I'm looking at the moment.' Came the distorted reply. `But I've not seen anything remotely close to what you have there.'

Lara began to walk away from the pedestal, trying without result to get her hand moving again; why wasn't it doing anything? She shook her wrist in a final act of annoyance, and before she knew it, the fragments of brass had returned to their source.

`Well...!' She said, and slid it into a pouch at her side.

`Lara!' She shook her head, and looked to Mal.

`Wha-' And then, mid word, she realized. Mal had a face of utter shock on his face, and around him, stones fell, dust formed clouds in the air, and the walls trembled as they fell apart.

He took her arm, his hands gripping tightly, and half tore it off as he began running for the light at the end of the tunnel; the way out.

Floor panels behind them vanished into oblivion as the walls caved in and the ceiling collapsed. Lara kept her feet going; running with all the strength she possessed.

She felt the ground at her feet becoming unstable. She could hear the walls trembling. She could see the ceiling exerting clouds of dust and dirt.

The light was brighter now; she could make out details in the glare! All it took was a little bit more-

She had overtaken Mal, who was becoming increasingly unsteady in the dust and the heat. In the last step before the stairs, he tripped. Lara, who now had a tight grip on his wrist, leapt for the first step. She threw the grapple at Mal's car - a black SUV - and it caught hold of part of the chassis after bouncing off the floor.

The floor below him fell, and Mal swung down into the oblivion. Or he would have, had Lara not had such a strong hold on his arm.

Her arm strained under his weight, but she wouldn't let up; all it took was a bit of persistence - a bit of strength. Strength she felt she didn't have. No! There was no point thinking like that! She had to pull him up...but he was too heavy. She had to...just a little.

`I...am not...losing any more...of my friends!' She snarled, and refused to let up. To let go. If she let go, she would just end up bearing the weight of his death on her shoulders...she couldn't...

In one final act of strength, she pulled up, and swung him onto the stairs above her. He had passed out from the horror of it all. Lara felt like doing that herself.

`Miss Croft.' Came a voice from above.

Lara opened her eyes, and saw a pale face shadowed by a greasy matt of black hair and thin, unforgiving lips. Hanging from his ears were a pair of tinted sunglasses. His voice was tinged with a slight Japanese flavor.

`Takamoto.' Lara growled. `Looking for revenge?'

He growled and pointed a gun at her head, removing his sunglasses to reveal a pair of soul-less blue eyes.

`Do you really think killing me is going to solve anything?' Lara asked, sitting up slightly.

`Takamoto?' Zip asked, confused. `I thought he was dead!'

`That was Shogo.' Alister replied. `This is Yoko. In other words: Junior.'

`I will be taking that.' Yoko muttered, pulling the earpiece and throwing it into the abyss. `Killing you provides relief to me, Lara.'

`Yes, but-' She took the orb from the pouch, and held it over the abyss. `You kill me, and you won't get this; and it's worth a lot more than what I took from your father.'

`What is it?' Takamoto snapped.

`Take it.' Lara held it out. `If you take a good look at it, you'll see just how much it's worth.'

`Do not try to trick me, Lara. I know of your tricks.'

She shrugged. `I'll be keeping it then.' She made to slide it back into her pouch, but Takamoto snatched it from her hand.

`Now you die.'

He clicked the trigger, but she was too quick. She knocked the gun out of his hand and kned him in the crotch. Not stopping the motion, she rolled over Mal, who was slowly waking up, and dragged him up the stairs as Takamoto issued orders to the pawns outside; the ones who stood next to their motorbikes with sub machineguns cradled in their arms.

Before they could fire, she threw Mal into his car, and pulled out her guns.

Rolling under the first bullets, she practically felt them skimming her hair. Leapt onto the closest man and kicked off. They shot him, aiming for her, and she fired back, nailing two men in the chest and one in the head.

A fourth man fell as she disarmed him and subsequently kicked him into the abyss.

Takamoto approached her, and she hit him in the stomach, following through with a kick to the shin, and a hit to the face. That was where she found herself caught.

He threw her arm out of the way and swung for her head. Lara spun and ducked. Takamoto missed, and pulled a knife, swinging just early enough to scratch her leg.

Now angered, Lara hit him again, grabbed the hand with the knife, and snapped his fingers and elbowing him in the face. As he fell to the floor, she reached into one of his pockets and took her prize back.

She tore a strip of cloth from the man's white jacket and tied it around her leg before getting back onto her bike, and tearing back up the way she had arrived. Little did she know of the men waiting outside this enclosed area. The thirteen Yakuza who were wholly ready to take her out when they saw her; even if it meant driving off the edge of an unfinished freeway.

And it was here where Lara found herself now; suspended over a gorge with nowhere to go but down. It wasn't that she was going to die that annoyed her most, however; it was that the other side of the freeway bridge was so, so close.

In the spur of the moment, she took the item out of her pouch and re-activated it. This time though, she felt something up against her thumb. She frowned.

The bike had begun to tilt forward, so she was almost looking down again.

She realized that she could move her thumb! Seeing this as her last chance to do *anything*, she pointed her arm toward the other side of the bridge, and mobbed her thumb against the...whatever it was. There was a click, and suddenly a surge of air.

The landscape blurred and she shot forward faster than she could possibly comprehend; the bike with her.

The GT1000 hit the ground gracefully, the suspension bouncing upon collision with the concrete. Lara

felt it as if it were far away, though. She instinctively brought it to a halt as quickly as possible, yet couldn't help but stare at her arm; the brass rings that orbited them had slowed down, but they were speeding up slowly; recharging, maybe?

She took a deep breath, and shook her arm. Putting the sphere back into her pouch, she took her cell phone from her pocket, and called home.

`Croft Manor.' Came the answer.

`Winston!' Lara gasped. `I've never been so glad to hear your voice.'

`Lara!' She could practically hear him smile. `I saw on the camera. Are you alright?'

`I'm fine, thank you. Tell Zip to organize a pick up.'

`Of course, ma'am.'

`Tell him to call me back at my room in the hotel.'

`Certainly.'

`Goodbye.'

`See you in a few hours, ma'am.'