

## Crystal Compass Podcast: Episode #29 - Transcription

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**Description:** Episode #29 of the Crystal Compass Podcast talks the systems of survival with Rise of the Tomb Raider Game Director Brian Horton. Brand Coordinator Robin Huey explores popular franchise Easter eggs in the Classic Crystal segment. Hosted by Meagan Marie.

### Intro

*[Meagan Marie]* Hello everyone, welcome to the Crystal Compass podcast. You're listening to episode 29 of our monthly show, and I'm Meagan Marie, Senior Community Manager at Crystal Dynamics and your host.

*[Meagan Marie]* This episode we'll dive into the systems of survival in Rise of the Tomb Raider, speaking to Game Director, Brian Horton from the studio. He'll also join us for the Take 5 Q&A segment.

*[Meagan Marie]* In our Classic Crystal feature, which follows a nostalgic musical break, we'll dive into a list of our favorite Easter Eggs in the Tomb Raider franchise. Thanks for listening, enjoy!

*[Musical Transition]*

### Quick Hits [1:24]

*[Meagan Marie]* All right so we are going to talk about the Systems of Survival shortly with Brian Horton but first, a bit of news! Our Brand Coordinator, Robin Huey, is joining me so you won't tire of hearing my voice so quickly. Thank you Robin!

*[Robin Huey]* Thanks Meagan! Hi everyone.

*[Meagan Marie]* Our first big news story of the month! Lara Croft Relic Run! Crystal Dynamics and Square Enix have been working with the talented team at Simutronics, who are developing the all-new Lara Croft: Relic Run. Relic Run is an adventure runner with a huge amount of diversity in play, allowing for seamless transitions between acrobatic-inspired running, combat, vehicles, and epic boss fights, including but not limited to the return of the infamous T-Rex which I know was super exciting when fans saw that key art, which has Lara running away from the T-Rex – a shot of nostalgia!

*[Robin Huey]* It looks so good.

*[Meagan Marie]* Robin, have you had a chance to play the game?

*[Robin Huey]* I did. I played it on your phone, by the way. Everyone, you have to go play this. This is a must play. It's a lot of fun.

*[Meagan Marie]* Well right now, currently, the reason why Robin is playing it on my phone is because it is only out in the Netherlands. We soft launched it there to test it and work out the kinks before full launch so soon, we will have news on when it is coming for a global release. When it releases globally, it will be launching on iOS, Android, and Win8 Phones. We're very excited to get you more details on that. I'll make sure to get you an update as soon as it's live.

*[Robin Huey]* In our next bit of news, we have a bit of franchise excitement to spread around. The 2013 Tomb Raider reboot crossed a major milestone this month, selling more than 8.5 million copies worldwide. In addition to hitting first day and month sales records, this achievement makes it the bestselling title in franchise history. We released a handful of early concepts from the Tomb Raider reimagining on the blog to celebrate. They look really good. If you haven't seen them yet, check them out at <http://tombraider.tumblr.com/>.

*[Meagan Marie]* Yeah that's my favorite thing to do - to find reasons to release concept art from past games because we have so much and a lot of stuff that you guys have never seen before so I find any reason to celebrate.

*[Robin Huey]* They look beautiful. Check them out.

*[Meagan Marie]* They're quite cool.

*[Meagan Marie]* In a bit of mobile news, Lara Croft's original adventure, as in 1996 adventure, launched on Android devices this month. An iOS update also became available so you can look for both on them on AppStore and the Google Play Store, supported in English, German, Spanish, French, Hungarian, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, and Brazilian Portuguese, which is a lot of languages.

*[Robin Huey]* That's a ton.

*[Meagan Marie]* Yeah, I've always said as a nerdy tidbit about myself that if I could choose any superpower, it would be to speak every language living or dead around the world, which I think would be a much more interesting than flying.

*[Robin Huey]* Also, coding languages right?

*[Meagan Marie]* Yes... because they all count in my head, because I make the rules.

*[Robin Huey]* In other news, in addition to our other two recent hires in studio – which we talked about in the last podcast - we welcomed industry vet Casey Lynch to the studio this month. He is taking up post as Editorial Director for Square Enix. As Editorial Director, Casey provides editorial guidance to the suite of Square Enix Franchises throughout their development, delivering internal feedback and recommendations, drawing on his experience as EIC at IGN, as well as his

PR and Biz Dev experience. Welcome Casey!

*[Meagan Marie]* Welcome Casey! He's a great guy and a great asset to both the studio and Square Enix as a whole.

*[Robin Huey]* Also has awesome hair.

*[Meagan Marie]* Yes, he does, and an awesome – goatee? I'm not a facial hair expert, but I think it's a goatee. I hope he listens to this and gets embarrassed.

*[Robin Huey]* Some sort of facial hair.

*[Meagan Marie]* But it's pretty epic. It's kind of Viking inspired.

*[Robin Huey]* Check out his twitter! ([@Lynchtacular](#))

*[Meagan Marie]* Our monthly newsletter has returned, recapping big news of the month and showcasing fan art, studio snapshots and more. If you can't keep up with daily updates and would like to have a big monthly recap sent straight to your inbox, register for email updates at [crystald.com](#).

*[Meagan Marie]* What's up next Robin?

*[Robin Huey]* In other news, Bill Doran of Punished Props is making an awesome replica of Lara's bow from Rise of the Tomb Raider. Follow his progress at [Facebook.com/punishedprops](#) for pictures and video.

*[Meagan Marie]* Eventually, he will have a recap video of the entire build. Bill is a fantastic asset to both the cosplay community and the prop-making community so you can learn a lot from him. If you're thinking about making your own replicas someday, you should definitely check him out.

*[Meagan Marie]* And last up, a reminder that [our official forums](#) have a lot of fun and exclusive content on them including an [LCTOO community challenge thread](#), where people are diligently keeping track of challenge progress and rewards as well as exclusive forum Q&As with the team, contests, and more. Check them out – the official Tomb Raider forums.

*[Meagan Marie]* We are going to transition to our systems of survival segment with Brian Horton shortly and then Robin will return for the Classic Crystal feature so thank you Robin.

*[Robin Huey]* Thank you. We're going to talk about Easter Eggs! It's getting real!

*[Meagan Marie]* So hold onto your pants. Is that a saying?

*[Musical Transition]*

Exploring the Systems of Survival with Brian Horton [6:55]

*[Meagan Marie]* I have Brian Horton here with me, our Game Director on Rise of the Tomb Raider and we're going to talk about the systems of survival which is really exciting because we touched on this briefly with Game Informer but we're going to dive a bit deeper into it.

*[Brian Horton]* Yeah, it's really exciting. We had a little bit of detail before but I'd love to go into more detail in this segment.

*[Meagan Marie]* Awesome. So in the 2013 Tomb Raider Reboot, survival was more of a narrative theme than a systemic feature. Can you talk a bit about how survival evolved from Tomb Raider 2013 into Rise of the Tomb Raider?

*[Brian Horton]* Sure, we always wanted to as much we could to bring survival into the gameplay of Tomb Raider. Especially in the last one we experimented with a lot of different things like gathering resources and health management of injuries and things of that ilk that you could often think of that were part of survival. What we found was that the loop was slower than we wanted it to be when we were making the game. So this concern still exists for us but we did want to go deeper and take survival systems further.

*[Brian Horton]* The way we decided to do that is to put resource behind the hunt itself so it's not just a generic XP but there are physical things like getting hide off deer or other animals that you hunt in the game. These go into crafting recipes so these are for arrow upgrades and different weapons and things in the game that you can enhance. Not only can I craft a resource to create a new arrow type like the poison arrow, I can also strengthen my bow with that same material. The ability to then tie hunting more into a loop that actually helps your character get better felt like that was the right blend of bringing that survivalist system to bring into our game without slowing down our pacing.

*[Brian Horton]* In Tomb Raider, we have three core pillars which existed in the last Tomb Raider game (2013). These pillars are traversal, puzzle solving, or smart resourceful Lara as we call it, and combat. The combat changed slightly, smart resourceful Lara and puzzles have changed slightly and traversal has been built pretty much on the same foundation as we had in the last game, so let me talk about the differences.

*[Brian Horton]* For smart resourceful Lara, we really wanted to try to create challenges that are a little bit larger. Our tombs are no longer one isolated location with one isolated problem but they're spread across this large, vast place. The players are going to have to solve smaller puzzles that all work against a large goal. That is our nested puzzle formula and that is one of our big important loops that we have in the game.

*[Brian Horton]* The other loop is our combat. We've created this guerilla combat style now which is new for the franchise. It really incorporates pre-combat as much as assault combat so the player has a little more flexibility in how they are going to approach enemies or animals. That loop works in the same way – the more cautious you are at approaching an animal or an enemy, the more you can take them unaware and that gives you an advantage. We really wanted to use traversal as something that gives you an advantage so that traversal can be something like Lara is climbing up to a tree and getting the high ground or using low ground and bushes for additional cover. That is a big difference from the last game on how we're evolving the systems

and the gameplay loops to create a more rewarding experience. We think it wraps really well to the overall survival sandbox in the new location.

*[Meagan Marie]* Can you expand a little bit more on some of the unique resources that you'll be able to gather in Rise of the Tomb Raider? For example, animals and plants?

*[Brian Horton]* We tried to come up with recipes that felt practical to the environment so in the survival research that we've done, it's really looking at what you have available to you. In this Siberian location, we knew we were going to have some plant life, scraps of cloth and animals. Those were foundations for a lot of the recipes that we could use to craft.

*[Brian Horton]* The other thing that we're making use of is – the salvage system that you saw before is very generic – we want to make sure that everything you acquire has a practical application to something you would use. So, if I had a piece of hide and a piece of cloth that seemed like a really good combination to upgrade your bow.

*[Brian Horton]* We want to make sure that we contextualize everything that we acquire to come up with a recipe that you could make into something that you would see visibly on your character. That idea – the things I collect create a world fiction connection - that will feel satisfying to a player once they've found these things and go "that makes sense." If I took these berries from this tree and took this cloth, I could use it to bind one of my wounds. Having that ability to now, in game, make a choice to speed up your recovery through healing items seemed like another great way to expand into using those resources.

*[Meagan Marie]* So when it comes to these resources, can you choose what you want to use them for? Do they have multiple uses? Single uses?

*[Brian Horton]* Multiple uses! So that cloth that I acquired and the berries I acquired, those make a great recipe for healing items but I can also use that cloth and a hide and some sticks to create another upgrade. It's really player choice. You gather these resources that gives you an ability to make a strategic choice to be more defensive or offense. It gives the player that feeling of, "I used this resources this way," while their friend could use them in a completely different way.

*[Meagan Marie]* Can you touch on the rarity or scarcity of some of these things? Are some of these upgrades pretty difficult to get because the items or recipes are more complex?

*[Brian Horton]* Some animals come out certain times of day so I might need to find this specific buck and he only comes out at night. When you hunt that buck, you get the antlers and those antlers will be a very scarce resource. You'll feel that once you acquire them, you can do something really cool and get a significant upgrade. We are trying to do these things that you look for and you can find information about that through journals and things that you find in the world that give you ideas on what you can be looking for.

*[Meagan Marie]* Spinning off from that, let's get a bit more into hunting and how hunting has evolved because that ties into how Lara has had to survive in the wild. It feels like there's been quite a step up from hunting in the last game.

*[Brian Horton]* Yeah, we don't force the player to hunt, for those that didn't feel great about killing the deer (in Tomb Raider 2013). But, we do encourage it as a means to upgrade your character. The recipes and the resources we get from animals will all lead to recipes that allow you to upgrade Lara so the different animals that we've introduced, even the bear that we show in the beginning, will have a big pay-off. The hope is to try to create recipes that will utilize the different animals that we have based on the region that you're in. When you introduce a new animal, you get new crafting and abilities. The hope would be that the player is going to spend some time and invest in that and they can immediately find a use for it and immediately find an upgrade when they go to the basecamp and be able to utilize these things to create a much more robust and rich character.

*[Meagan Marie]* So what about the animal AI? Has that improved? Or even Lara's ability to track and find those animals?

*[Brian Horton]* We've tried to create an AI that is believable so you're not going to be able to walk right up to a deer. They're very much aware. If a player is moving quickly, they're going to hear the sound of your footsteps and they're going to skitter away. So, you as a player, controlling your speed, utilizing cover, staying up and away from an animal to be able to get close is something we've ensured to make sure the AI is very believable in that way.

*[Brian Horton]* We also have them using a needs system, so if they're hungry or thirsty, they'll go to a feeding bush or water. We really want to make sure that the animals feel like they're living in the world so even if you're observing them, they go through patterns that are not just scripted. They have needs that they will fulfill. That creates a more naturalistic feel of herding and gathering in a location. Sounds will go off and they will perk their ears up and start to look around. We try to make sure the world has an ecosystem in it, of itself, and we want to make sure the animal AI respects that.

*[Meagan Marie]* And another pretty cool thing is that you can see their footprints in the snow. So even in an environment, you can track them, correct?

*[Brian Horton]* The environment interactivity not only goes to Lara and the enemies, it goes to the animals as well. So it's really cool because you can go into one of our valleys and then you see a deer and it starts to make tracks and you might lose it around the corner but those tracks remain. You can use those tracks as a way to locate and track down the animal you want to hunt, or it's just great to see that feedback. If you're not into that animal hunting aspect, you can appreciate the connection between the player, characters, animals and the world that they live in.

*[Meagan Marie]* Specifically with basecamps, we've talked a little about crafting and so on but there are new things you can do at basecamps including upgrading your equipment and your ammo capacity and so on. Can you dive a little bit more into that?

*[Brian Horton]* We don't want to have much restriction. The things that we're trying to do is make sure that we're pacing these upgrades along so that, using basecamps as a means to open up the ability to craft new resources, like basically find new recipes. Sometimes we do that narratively, sometimes we do that at basecamps as something you can purchase. There's many more things we can purchase in the game now. We're going to go in a lot of detail of that in the

future but know that we're really trying to expand these systems and give the player a lot more choice on how they choose to play the game, and that ultimately is the thing we find the most exciting.

*[Meagan Marie]* So generally speaking, when people talk about survival in the wilderness or so on, they're thinking of hunger meters and that sort of thing, having to find those immediate resources like food or water and so on. We're not going to encumber those players with those sort of mechanics, correct?

*[Brian Horton]* It's something that we really wish worked better with the survival action formula but it doesn't so when we did experiment with the idea of hunger as something that we have to maintain by hunting for food or going to water and streams to drink, these all seemed like very natural things to do in a survival situation but once again, we wanted to put those through the filter of the pace of the story and the game we're trying to make and it really didn't weave very well into that pacing. The best thing I can say is that we did attempt these things and they do make a lot of sense in the context of survival, but not in the game that we are trying to make.

*[Brian Horton]* We are encouraged, though, by the fact that we have opened up many more resources that you can collect, things that you can acquire through hunting and making our hub spaces as rich and dense as you possibly can. So if you are going off the beaten path, if you are exploring, you're going to find so many things that are going to reward the player for that exploration and be able to turn that around and make that a choice for how you play the game. We think that that choice ultimately gives it that feeling of improvisational survival – it gives you that choice between life and death. We think that's the right recipe for us.

*[Meagan Marie]* That sounds like a good balance. Okay, Brian, we're going to take a quick break and then you're going to be back to answer some fan questions so... stick around!

*[Musical Transition]*

## Take 5 with Brian Horton [20:13]

*[Meagan Marie]* Brian, are you ready for some fan questions?

*[Brian Horton]* Let's do it!

*[Meagan Marie]* The fans always have some great questions and they always have the great names, like this one, Chocolate\_shake, who asks: "Are ancient traps (like darts and spikes) making a comeback in the tomb areas?"

*[Brian Horton]* We are invested in traps. I'm not going to go into detail about the types of traps because I want you guys to be surprised when you encounter them in the game but Noah [Noah Hughes, Franchise Creative Director] was extremely specific about wanting to see traps come back to Tomb Raider and being a part of the puzzle team, we've been able to bring those to our levels so it's very exciting.

*[Meagan Marie]* That's all we need to say, I feel like, because the confirmation that there are some of these more contrived ancient traps is pretty great.

*[Brian Horton]* Yeah, tombs are guarded and we've talked a lot about animal guardians but, you know, traps are a big part of the recipe for tombs.

*[Meagan Marie]* Protecting their secrets. Great.

*[Meagan Marie]* Another question, also from Chocolate\_shake is, "Will there be a level/hub set in an urban space?" and he says this applies to both to Rise and future titles but we are not talking about future titles, we are only talking about Rise at this time.

*[Meagan Marie]* We have showcased a screenshot that there is some sort of semi-urban facility. You could talk about that lightly...

*[Brian Horton]* Yeah, so in the Game Informer footage, we showed a vista and we have a screenshot of it that people have tried to interpret what it is. This is a Soviet Mining Camp so you see train tracks, resources and they are mining for resources and if you google that, you can find these Soviet Installations. We've referenced them heavily so it's a cool, destroyed, urban environment. It's not a currently occupied one.

*[Meagan Marie]* It appeals to those sort of layers of history. There's a lot of history there even before the Russian installations.

*[Brian Horton]* Absolutely and like I've said about our layers of history formula is not all of them are active. We like the idea of something that's almost modern but not quite. It's middle history, having its own sense of ruin.

*[Meagan Marie]* From Thetford, "How much does "real world" research (actual history, geography, etc) goes into the designing, writing and story of the game (whether it is the main quest/McGuffin, artefacts/documents, environments etc), and is it a challenge to keep it entertaining?"

*[Meagan Marie]* I thought this would be a great question for you because you get to do a lot of that in early research, not just from a visual perspective, but a historical perspective, correct?

*[Brian Horton]* Yeah, we pride ourselves on doing research. Tomb Raider is a mix of, as Noah [Noah Hughes, Franchise Creative Director] would say, google-able myths, something you can look up and understand, but we always like to take a twist and getting John Stafford [Senior Narrative Designer] and Rhianna [Rhianna Pratchett, Lead Writer] to help build that fiction and make it our own and build upon something you know is always important. From a research perspective, Bren [Brenoch Adams], as Art Director, and myself, we really love to dive in and research, whether it's online or going to locations. I haven't announced the locations we researched on this last game but we always tend to find someplace we can photograph and we bring that photography back and it helps and inspires the team not only in the way things look but in the culture feel. I love capturing the broad, vast reference as well as the details that help make a culture and a place really legitimate.

*[Meagan Marie]* And do you take those creative licenses because he asks, is the challenge to keep it entertaining? So how strictly do you hold yourself to those real world restraints versus your own creative imagination and the team's imagination?

*[Brian Horton]* We like to think of it as the foundation, as the bedrock in which we build our world. If you don't have something that's believable, anything you put in there that has a fantastic twist or something that we are inventing tends to fall short as believable. So, often, I stay away from the word "realism" because I don't think our game is about realism, but it's about a believable universe, something that feels familiar, but when you bring in that something that is different, something that is unique and invented, that you can swallow it as something that is real.

*[Meagan Marie]* so here we had a pair of questions about stealth: "Will ROTTR contain a developed system of stealth kills?" and "Will the route you choose (stealth or head on) affect the turn out of the game?". These are from Chriss\_02 and Gitb97.

*[Brian Horton]* So we do have pre-combat which is our form of stealth. That allows the player to pick a path that will allow her to be unseen and take advantage of the fact that the enemy AI is unaware of her presence. We expanded on that and we had a little of that in the last Tomb Raider game but we've really expanded on the systems. Being able to have more navigational choice, being able to decide where to go, whether going up trees or along bushes or the water as a means to escape being seen really brings a lot of interesting dynamics to the combat. We're very excited about this new, rich experience of being unaware to the AI and then, if you choose, you can play that same scenario full combat and for the different players, they're going to have a different experience. We support both in all of our combat set-ups.

*[Meagan Marie]* And there's pros and cons to each, correct? Because you're going to use a lot more resources if you go head-on into combat?

*[Brian Horton]* Exactly and there are some situations, to be clear, that we are going to force an assault but we try to make sure that we balance that mostly with situations where the player has a choice.

*[Meagan Marie]* And there is actually an option to leave people alive and sneak past them, correct? You don't have to take out everyone if you only need to take out one or two to pass.

*[Brian Horton]* Absolutely. That is something that we found that we can do through playing. The way that the AI works is that you can completely sneak past a whole squadron of enemies in certain situations. That brings its own satisfaction in itself by creating distractions, using the different kinds of cover that Lara can use, whether it be high ground or low ground and that has its own sense of reward. Expect to see a lot more player choice when it comes to combat.

*[Meagan Marie]* That's great for replay-ability too.

*[Meagan Marie]* Okay, thank you very much Brian. We'll have you back next month for another Take 5 segment.

*[Brian Horton]* Great. It's great talking to the fans and looking forward to giving you guys more information where we can give.

*[Meagan Marie]* Yes, we can say it's going to be E3.

*[Brian Horton]* Absolutely.

*[Meagan Marie]* E3 you will not-miss Rise of the Tomb Raider so that will be great.

*[Meagan Marie]* And now for Crystal Compass radio, prior to our classic feature. This episode we'll be listening to the masterfully crafted Venice violins by Nathan McCree and the haunting main theme for angel of darkness by Peter Connolly. Have a request for what you'd like to hear next month? Shoot us an email at community at crystald.com Enjoy!

## Crystal Compass Radio [26:55]

- Strings of Venice, Tomb Raider II
- Angel of Darkness Main Theme

## Classic Crystal: Tomb Raider Easter Eggs [33.04]

*[Robin Huey]* Welcome back everyone and thanks for joining me for the Classic Crystal segment of the podcast. Our topic this month is the Easter Eggs of the Tomb Raider franchise!

*[Music: Tomb Raider I Theme]*

*[Robin Huey]* Here, we'll be counting down favorite Easter Eggs from the franchise ranging from classic titles to more recent adventures such as Temple of Osiris and the 2013 reboot. We'll also be joined by Brian Horton who will tell us about his favorite Easter Egg!

*[Robin Huey]* To begin our countdown with number 8 on our list which finds us in the "Main Hall" of Croft Manor in Tomb Raider 1. As you begin the game, you can walk through the gym and are introduced to the Main Hall, you'll see a group of crates that the delivery people have yet to move. Next to those crates, you'll find the golden Ark of the Covenant.

*[Robin Huey]* Easter Egg number 7 on the list is when Lara visits the streets of Paraiso, Peru (in Tomb Raider: Legend). After Lara punches the ball past the dummy and into the gap between the two narrow fences resembling a soccer – or should we say "futbol" – goal, you can hear the crowd erupt in cheers, yelling...

*[Sound Effect: "GOAL!" Peru]*

*[Music: "The Grinding Gears" from the Lara Croft and the Temple of Osiris OST]*

*[Robin Huey]* Speaking of football, let's move onto a more recent Easter Egg in our December 2014 release, "Lara Croft and the Temple of Osiris." First noted in the forum Temple of Osiris

discussion thread, if you venture up to the northern-most point near the Tomb of the Silversmith, you'll find an oval shaped arena with a regenerating ball at the center and two giant circular basins at the opposite ends. Sound like something familiar?

*[Robin Huey]* If it sounded like a football pitch to you, then you would be correct. When creating the game, the LCTOO team purposely added a mini soccer game to the arena, hoping players would find it and get a little extra co-opetition element when playing the game. There's even a convenient health generation station directly above the field for injured players to quickly recover and get back onto the pitch to keep playing.

*[Music: Tomb Raider: Underworld - Kraken]*

*[Robin Huey]* Easter Egg number 5 is the creatures of the Tomb Raider franchise receiving fan names. In Tomb Raider: Underworld, we met Underpuss the Kraken, who later appeared in Tomb Raider 2013 as a stuffed plush animal in Lara's Endurance cabin.

*[Music: Tomb Raider 2013]*

*[Robin Huey]* The fourth Easter Egg on our list is from Tomb Raider 2013, where we had FeeFee the crab. FeeFee the crab had an unlockable secret achievement if you happened to hunt FeeFee. It was called "Crab Cakes"! Fun fact, FeeFee was the name attributed to the crab after fans saw it in the Turning Point Trailer at E3 2011.

*[Music: Tomb Raider: Anniversary Main Theme]*

*[Robin Huey]* Our third Easter Egg in this list is a group of Easter Eggs focused on another "Classic Crystal" franchise, Legacy of Kain. In Tomb Raider Legend and Anniversary, you can find several references to this franchise including Kain's portrait, Raziel's clan symbol emblazoned on Lara's jacket and wetsuit, or Lara's ability to wield the Soul Reaver in Tomb Raider: Legend.

*[Sound Effect: Classic Chime]*

*[Robin Huey]* The penultimate Easter Egg on our list is the Classic Chime from Tomb Raider 2013, which is a direct reference to all the earlier classic Tomb Raider games. This is also my personal favorite of all the Easter Eggs we might've mentioned. So spoiler alert for those who have not played Tomb Raider 2013. Spoiler alert!

After unlocking the last GPS cache in Tomb Raider 2013, the chime from Tomb Raider I will ring and Lara will say her infamous "aha" much like she does in the past games, attributing herself to all the previous games where she explored tombs and began all those crazy adventures that we know and love.

*[Music: Tomb Raider 2013 – The Scavenger's Den]*

[Robin Huey] And here I have with me is Brian Horton, our Game Director for Rise of the Tomb Raider. Hi Brian.

[Brian Horton] Hello.

[Robin Huey] And he's here to talk to us about his favorite Easter Egg...

[Brian Horton] Yeah, I love Easter Eggs. Ever since I've been playing games, I've always found that the reward for going off path and finding something and feeling, "Oh my god. I found something that... you know"... it allows you to be a little irreverent. You don't have to be too serious.

[Brian Horton] One of my favorite Easter Eggs on Tomb Raider 2013 was actually cut from the final game. It was a familiar volleyball with a red handprint and straw coming out for hair. The fact that we had it in the E3 trailer - the E3 play through on the stage demo - and someone spotted it and commented on it, made me pretty happy. It didn't make the final cut but we're always inspired by different games, different movies, and different media.

[Brian Horton] Obviously we were making a survival story and that Tom Hanks movie, *Castaway*, was definitely one of our inspirations and we thought it was a funny thing to have in the den with that crazy dude with dreadlocks.

[Robin Huey] It was a magical moment too - seeing that there and having everyone spot it too!

[Brian Horton] Yeah, and that's the thing about cool thing about Easter Eggs. It's sort of like a little inside joke for people, if they spend the time looking and say, "Oh, did you find that crazy thing? That crazy thing that no one else really saw!"

[Brian Horton] Another Easter Egg that I don't know if other people know about, that I always gives me a chuckle is that we had this little plush bunny collectible around a really sad story about this family in 2013 that perished on the island. Just for a laugh, and we never meant it to be for something other than a laugh, we put our biggest burliest scavenger on the Endurance boat had that little bunny tucked in his belt. A lot of people saw it and they thought, "Oh my god. Is that the guy that killed the family?!" and we never thought of it that way. You know, Kam Yu [Principal Artist] and I thought it'd be funny to tuck it into his belt, you know, this big huge burly dude that you have to beat up to get through the Endurance mission.

[Robin Huey] I don't think I ever saw that bunny on him!

[Brian Horton] Yeah, he's got a bunny on his belt! So now if you play it again, you can look for it.

[Robin Huey] Maybe it's just his weakness. He's just a big softie...

[Brian Horton] He is a big softie.

[Robin Huey] Yeah! All right, thanks Brian.

*[Brian Horton]* Thank you very much.

*[Robin Huey]* Okay everyone, that's it for this edition of the Classic Crystal segment. Thank you for listening and tuning in and talking rabbits, volleyballs and classic Tomb Raider with me, all under the premise that these are Easter Eggs!

*[Robin Huey]* Special shout outs to our forum contributors Rai, Roli, AlexWeiss, Dark7Angel, MaxRaider, Error96\_, Driber, NSW\_pride, and Elysrae. We appreciate the Easter Eggs that you sent us. We picked them and thanks for contributing. We hope to see you on the forums again soon. Until next time, Robin out.

## Outro:

*[Meagan Marie]* That's it for this episode! Remember you can send feedback and show suggestions to [community@crystal.d.com](mailto:community@crystal.d.com). Till next time!

*[Musical Transition]*