

# ***“Tomb Raider”***

By Helen Lutz

When my husband and I were first married back in the mid 1970's we were poor. Stationed in Japan and living in a tiny house off-base (he didn't have enough stripes to get us command sponsored living quarters) we would go to the NCO Club, buy a 50 cent beer and play the new quarter video games – loved those Space Invaders. We also saved our money and finally bought a home video system – an



Atari. We got pretty good at playing Pong. Forty-two years later we still have that gaming system and it still works. We got a Wii for Christmas a couple of years ago, but have never really gotten into modern video games. I've never played the Tomb Raider game starring Lara Croft, but I have seen Hollywood's version of the game “Lara Croft: Tomb Raider” starring Angelina Jolie and found it a little hokey, but entertaining.

Lara Croft rides her bicycle on to theater screens everywhere in the remake of “Tomb Raider” currently in theaters. This time around we are introduced to Lara (Alicia Vikander) while she's in a boxing/wrestling ring getting her tail whipped. Lara is rough around the edges, works as a restaurant bicycle delivery person and is really poor – always looking to make an extra quid (or buck). She learns of a fox and hound game played by bike riders who are looking for a fox to chase. Lara signs up, attaches the foxtail to the back of her bike, punches a whole in the paint can to leave the trail and takes off with a short head start. All goes fairly well until a slight distraction causes her to have an unfortunate run in with none other than a police car.

When Lara was young, she was daddy's girl and the apple of his eye. Lord Richard Croft (Dominic West) owns a huge multi-national company and mysteriously went missing. Ana Miller (Kristen Scott Thomas) runs the company in his absence and also shows up at the police station when bail money is needed. Ana convinces Lara to at least come into the office and talk with the attorney; her father has been missing seven years and it really is time for Lara to sign the paperwork declaring him dead, receive her huge inheritance and become involved with the many holdings of the Croft business empire.

I have many favorite scenes in this movie, but I especially appreciate Lara walking into the Croft building and stopping at the security desk. She is abruptly told that “deliveries are around back.” She calmly insists that she has an appointment with Ms. Miller and is again told to take it around back. The third time's the charm when disgusted security guard finally asks her for her name and she replies Lara – does Lara have a last name? Yes, Croft; he's toast.

Lara learns one of her father's secrets while meeting with Ana and the attorney which begins her adventure as she retraces her father's last trip off the coast of Japan in search of the tomb of the ancient Japanese “death queen,” Himiko. She starts off in Hong Kong meeting Lu Wren (Daniel Wu) captain of his late father's ship. Wren's father had taken Lord Croft to the cursed island of Yamatai where Himiko is supposedly entombed. It's a virtual death trap for ships and Wren's is no different. Barely escaping with their lives, Lara finds a whole lot more that she ever anticipated.

If you're not into the video game and attend the movie with limited expectations, then “Tomb Raider” is a fun adventure twisting and turning its way throughout the film. It's amazing what can be done with a huge waterfall and an old rusted out airplane. “Tomb Raider” qualifies as a good date night movie which should be seen on the big screen, with big sound and big popcorn and maybe even a beer/wine if you're in the right theater. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give “Tomb Raider” ... TWO 1/2 HARTS. The characters are believable and well played and I appreciated that the silly stuff that ruins so many movies of this type, like fighting armies of skeletons, is missing in this one. I'm ready for the next story in the franchise.