

## **Harley White-Wiedow - Lead Designer - Tomb Raider: Underworld**

Developer's Note: Ordinarily, at this point in a project, my life would be all Tomb Raider all the time, but I'm eight months pregnant, so these days my main interests are food and making sure the team is as well prepared for my impending maternity leave as possible.

6:30 AM: I wake up, feed the animals, get ready for work, and then fill my purse with food and waddle out the door.

First breakfast: two toaster waffles (surprisingly healthy when you look at the ingredients) with a drizzle of honey.

I pick up my carpool buddy (a character animator on our cinematic team) at her house and we chat on the way. The baby kicks quite a bit. Traffic is pretty good, so we're at work before nine.

Second Breakfast: Bowl of cheerios and milk, plus a second glass of milk eaten while checking my email. Nothing is on fire, so all I need to do is reply to a few requests for information before I can get down to my goal for the day; working with the combat group to polish our first melee encounter to beta.

The game won't run for me off the bat this morning, so while the computer is building the code fix for the problem, I'll go in and work on the final pass for the enemy collision as the art for this section is pretty much done.

The combat designers stop by to discuss some trickier implementation demands with Player Tailoring. We make a plan and then I'm attracted to the meowing of Eric Lindstrom (our Creative Director)'s cat.

I'm a sucker for animals and in my condition I'm pretty much helpless around a meowing kitten - my hormones demand that I try to do something. I haven't seen her in almost a week, and she's huge - and hungry. She's eating solid (ish) food now - he's feeding her a mixture of baby food, cat food, and cat formula out of a spoon and she's covered in the stuff. He goes to a meeting and I pet her for a while until she gets sleepy, then put her in her box and get back to enemy collision.

11:00 am - Steve Goodale, the lead systems designer, stops by for our daily check in. He's focusing on Lara's movement and platforming these days, and he's got things well in hand, so after a short discussion off he goes to get some of the things I want to see more of in game. I field some level design questions, often referring the question to Steve McManus, who will be acting as our main Level Design contact during my maternity leave.

12:00 - It's time for first lunch - enchiladas - while Eric and I go over some of the combat notes that he's collected in the past month or so. Midway into this discussion, his kitten wakes up and demands some play time. This leads to the cognitive dissonance of talking

about the mechanisms of killing panthers while Eric keeps a black kitten smaller than my hand from hurting herself on the floor of my cubicle.

After lunch I discover something's wrong with my collision - there's a large swath of it that's refusing to allow enemies to path correctly in this unit. I'm puzzling over that when the line starts to form again, and what with this discussion and that (how should we implement fire damage etc.) it's soon 3 pm and time for second lunch. Second lunch is leftover Greek salad from last night, and I'm curious to see if it will make the baby kick like it did then. Sure enough, as I do my afternoon rounds, the baby is kicking up a storm.

4:30 - Snack time! I grab a nectarine from the "Fruit Port" (an empty office our producers keep stocked with fruit) and a big handful of pecans and munch them while I check email again and set up some time with the combat guys to go over the changes I'd like to see in the setup and tuning of the encounter I just built collision for. That done, so is my day; I leave at 5 for my pre-natal Yoga class and get home just in time for... first dinner!

