# Escape from Atlantis

## Overview

The new final level of Tomb Raider 10th Anniversary pitches Lara against a huge Atlantean War Machine controlled by Natla. Lara must escape from the crumbling remains of Atlantis through caverns filled with flowing Lava as the War Machine uses it’s terrifying energy beam to blast whole sections of cavern inward, Natla is hell-bent on destroying Lara and what left of Atlantis, nothing else matters to her now.

# Objective

Lara must escape from Atlantis through the volcanic caverns and destroy the war machine with Natla inside it.

# Level Flow -

**Lead in:**

The level begins where the last left off, inside the great pyramid structure. Lara has just battled with a mutated flying Natla and has seemingly killed her, Lara then climbs around the structure to find a way out, when she reaches the high columns and jumps onto the first one a cut scene is triggered –

**Cutscene:**

The pinnacle of the pyramid structure is blasted inward by a huge energy beam, a massive hole has been created in the roof sending floods of light rays into the dark interior, the whole structure starts to shake periodically as the unseen colossus approaches, Lara fights against the tremors to stay atop the column as she stares up into the light, waiting.

The light is drowned out as a huge shape fills most of the hole leaving only small streaks around it’s edges, the war machine pears into the pyramid looking for something, it’s search beams scanning the room beneath. Lara quickly hangs from the back of the pillar as the beam heads toward her, then down to the floor. The beam stops moving, it’s found what it came for, Natla.

The beam intensified as Natla’s limp body is dragged from the floor in the beam, as she begins to rise high into the void Natla stirs, shocked at first as she rises slowly toward the colossus above.

Lara climbs back onto the column and blasts at Natla as she rises in the beam, her bullets are harmlessly bounced away, Natla begins to laugh, a long insane laugh as she realises that Lara is still alive and she has the power to finish her off. She is carried all the way up into the belly of the war machine, ready to destroy Lara once and for all. The war machine turns to look at Lara.

Game on.

**In-Level Gameplay:**

1. Lara starts atop the tall stone pillar, her immediate aim is to cross the chamber to the exit on the far wall. She must move quickly as the War machine blasts the pillar she’s standing on just as she jumps to the next, it constantly targets Lara using the search beam as she jumps from pillar to pillar into the what she thinks is the exit tunnel.

2. Lara reaches the sloped tunnel and starts to run down it, there is a strange red glow at the far end. The war machine leaves the main pyramid chamber out of view, the huge tremors accompany it as it leaves. Ahead of Lara in the tunnel, small rocks and dust falls from the ceiling with each tremor, as the tremors become more distant the dust falls move further down the tunnel, Lara realises that the war machine is moving ahead ready to attack her again.

3. The tunnel joins high up into a larger cavern, looking down Lara can see a vast river of lava flowing to her left into the cave which is blocked off by a large rockfall, the lava flows between the rocks and off into an unseen cave, to her right lies a huge lava fall. Lara jumps across the cavern onto another high ledge and turns right toward the lava fall, the fall flows into an Atlantean chamber with a large suspended platform in its centre, the gantry that leads to the platform has been destroyed by part of the falls. Lara jumps, climbs and shimmys around the chamber until she reaches the platform, it’s some sort of lift that should take her to the surface.

Lara pushes the button on the lift and it begins to rise but stops as a huge blast rips through the wall of the chamber cutting the lift power, it malfunctions and drops toward the lava below. The lift platform lands in the lava with Lara still on it, luckily it floats down the river away from the falls back into the cavern toward the blocked off bit. As the platform approaches the blocked off area the huge familiar tremors of the war machine start again, this time getting closer and more intense, sending plumes of lava skyward.

Another huge blast shatters the blockage as the war machine peers through the hole, Lara jumps from the platform onto the rocky ledge and into a small tunnel, the tunnel dog-legs back into the main cavern which is now curving to the right

4. When she emerges the war machine is still there peering in through the darkness, search beam cutting through the mist, looking for her. The ledge Lara stands on has smaller outcrops jutting upward, giving her places to hide, but Lara is attacked by a smaller sentinel that alerts the larger war machine, it blasts the ledge, sending it into the lava, Lara jumps onto the ledge as it floats down stream, the war machine keeps tracking and blasts another huge chunk of ceiling from the cavern, it falls into the lava too, creating another platform for Lara to jump to. As Lara floats away from the sentinel it moves away again.

5. Around the bend the river narrows into another falls, jamming the platform against its walls, Lara climbs up the rock face into a larger chamber. The chamber has a high rock platform with the lava flowing downward through a natural archway into a large pool, a stone walkway leads around the edge of the cavern toward the exit, Lara runs across the walkway and is stopped by the energy beam from the war machine which tears through the walkway sending it tumbling into the lava, leaving Lara stranded on a small outcrop, she must climb back where she came from onto the platform.

Once back on the platform the war machine blasts through the ceiling again and targets Lara, there are a few rock formations in here that she can use as cover, but if the war machine sees her the beam blasts it away. Lara must get across to the opposite side of the chamber, the only way is to force the war machine into blasting a tall rocky outcrop, which falls across the gap creating a rock bridge.

Lara starts to run across the bridge, when she’s two thirds of the way across the energy beam rips through part of it, tilting it downward, Lara must sprint to make it to the other side before it falls into the Lava.

Lara finds herself on another large platform and must keep moving here, a series of jumps lies ahead onto a section of sloping platforms, Lara jumps between them as they are blasted one by one behind her, after the jumps lies another platform with a large outcrop near it’s edge. High up on the wall is a small cave entrance but it’s too high for Lara to reach, she must trick the war machine into blasting the outcrop, the force of the blast slams the outcrop against the wall, creating a way up to the cave entrance, Lara quickly climbs up and into the cave.

6. The cave doglegs back into the main cavern onto a small rock platform, Lara must climb down from it onto a lower platform just above the surface of the Lava. There are more platforms sticking out from the surface, some are flat while others are sloped, the lava is also more violent here with plumes of fire and ash jetting upward into the cavern. Lara must cross this section to proceed onward.

The cavern joins into another larger cave that runs across it, the lava is faster in here and is fed by another lava fall to Lara’s left. Large chunks of rock are constantly pushed over the falls and down the river, she must use them to cross to the far side just before the cave bends to the left.

7. Lara jumps onto the small platform and is attacked by smaller sentinels, she jumps down onto a lower platform which breaks away from the cavern wall and floats down around the bend, as Lara turns the corner she is confronted with a truly terrifying site, the war machine is standing in what looks like the crater of a live volcano, it’s huge legs bracing it against the walls with it’s massive body hanging over the centre of the lava lake, it seems to be dormant as Lara approaches she sees the long proboscis hanging down into the lava, it’s recharging itself for the final battle.

8. The lava lake has a large island in the centre with a hole in it, with the rest of the lava flowing around it. As Lara jumps onto the island the war machine is awakened, it retracts the proboscis and tracks Lara, the machine must be destroyed thus killing Natla too but this is no easy task as it tracks Lara with more ferocity than before, blasting chunks of the island away as it does so.

The war machine uses it’s tractor beam to lift huge chunks of rock from the island and blasts them back at Lara, if she leads the war machine near a molten ball of lava that’s just been spat from the lake it will beam them up too, Lara must shoot the magma ball whilst it’s in the beam to explode it near the war machine, taking damage from it and temporarily disrupting it’s shields, she can now target the elbow structures of its four huge legs, but only for a short while before the shields go back up. Only two of the four elbows must be destroyed to send the war machine crashing into the lava.

**Cutscene:**

The war machine explodes in the lava lake, sending plumes of magma across the island, Lara begins the long climb up the side of the crater to the light above, as she climbs the sound of a chopper can be heard, Lara looks down and sees the lava boiling up inside the crater, the volcano is about to erupt, she climbs faster and sees the chopper. Winston, Lara’s trusted butler, talks over the loudspeaker “Afternoon ma’am, I just thought I’d drop in and give you a hand” the lava begins to rise, Lara quickly jumps to the chopper and grabs the landing skid, the chopper rises quickly out of the crater as the lava plume chases it up, the volcano explodes just as the chopper clears it, Lara shouts to Winston “Mine’s an Earl Grey, white with two sugars. Oh and Winston, thanks”

The End.

## Technical Info

**The War Machine**

Although huge and terrifying, the war machine isn’t actually a full blown enemy due to its size, it’s actually bigger than the area Lara moves through, so having it appear on the outside of the room is a good thing. The war machine will have a series of scripted animations, which are triggered as Lara moves through the caverns –

Appear over the hole – The war machine straddles the hole in the roof and lowers its torso inside.

Disappears from view – The war machine lifts its torso out of the hole and walks off.

Once in position the war machines torso and head area can track Lara, this isn’t done with animation but in code, allowing it to follow her pretty much anywhere in the room below.

The war machine has one pretty terrifying weapon in the form of an energy beam, Lara must move quickly as the beam has a slight lag before it catches up to her, the player has a warning period before the full energy beam is activated, as follows:

Search beam = Green

As the war machine tracks Lara it’s search beam is harmless, she can quickly dash through it without harm but if she lingers in it too long –

Pre Fire Target Lock = Red

The beam turns red, signalling to the player that they have to get out of the beam quickly before they get toasted, if they fail to get out –

Energy Beam = White

A huge ray of pure energy is blasted forth from the war machine, taking heavy damage from Lara, she can only be hit twice with a full Health bar by this. She will even lose a small amount of damage just being near to the beam.

Weak Spot = No Beam

After the energy beam has expired there is a small period before the search beam kicks in again, this is Lara’s chance to rain a few well-placed shots into the massive lens. This will stop the war machine tracking Lara for a short while.

Our aim is to give the impression that the war machine is present in the level even if the player can’t see it. There are many tricks we can use to accomplish this –

Camera Shake – Used to represent the war machine stomping around on the surface whilst Lara is below, the camera shake should be scaleable to allow us to strengthen or weaken the shake to give the impression that the war machine is passing overhead, couple this with timed dust effects from the ceiling and good meaty stomping sound effects and the illusion is complete.

The Energy Beam – The war machine will mostly be represented by this, we have triggered areas of the map that prompt an audio ‘power up’ effect to warn the player, then the energy beam blasts through the ceiling, creating a hole (flip map), if Lara is caught in the beam she loses tons of damage. So the player thinks the war machine is near even though they don’t see it.

The final confrontation – In the final room the war machine is already inside the volcano in position. Its head and torso tracks Lara as before but now she can target the knee joints, so another few anims are needed to show the machine getting hit and taking damage.

**Moving Platforms**

This level requires the use of moving animated platforms, to allow us to float chunks of rock down the lava rivers, the platforms should also have the facility to have attractors, FX and triggers attached to them which move with the platform, ala TR6.