

The Elder Scrolls V - Skyrim

On November 11, 2011, Bethesda Softworks released this fifth installment of their Elder Scrolls series for Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360. Events in Skyrim occur 200 years after those in Elder Scrolls IV - Oblivion. Civil war divides the people of Skyrim, the frozen northern province of Tamriel. One faction wants to secede from the Empire, and the other wants to remain with it. In addition to the civil war, Skyrim residents must deal with Alduin, a god of the Nord race. He is a powerful dragon who has the ability to revive other long-dead dragons. You are the last living descendant of the Dragonborn, people with the special skills needed to slay dragons. You must Save Skyrim from ruin.

You begin the game riding in the back of a horse drawn wagon, along with three other prisoners, on the way to your execution. Your jailors have tied your hands with leather restraints. Ahead of you on the trail, another wagon carries five more prisoners. Move your mouse, to view the forest around you. In the small settlement of Helgen, at the end of the trail, both of the wagons stop. Armed guards order all the prisoners off the wagons. Hadvar reads aloud from a list of names. As he speaks each prisoner's name, each of the men walks over to the plaza, near a small stone.

Your name is not on the list. Hadvar asks who you are. The game now gives you a chance to build your avatar to your liking. Use the arrow keys to choose different variations from the setup menu. Click on the image and move your mouse to see your character from different views. Hadvar asks his captain what he should do with you. She tells him to execute you, along with the thief and the Rebel Stormcloaks. After the first prisoner loses his head on the chopping block, it is your turn.

As you lay your head on the block, a distant roar foreshadows the arrival of a huge flying dragon. It lands on top of a nearby tower and uses its Dragon Shout to knock everyone down. When you recover from the shock, you can move your character. Hit the Esc key to bring up your Journal, and then select "Quests". Find out what you should do next. The System part of the Journal allows you to change the game Settings and Controls. System is also the place where you Save and Quit. The Help menu can give you some valuable tips on how the various elements of the game work.

Unbound

Run southwest, through the doorway of a tower. The ex-prisoner, Ralof, will tell you to run up the stairs. When you get near the top, the dragon knocks a hole in the wall and you can see the plaza below. Ralof tells you to jump through the hole. Jump down through the burning roof of the inn below you, to the upper floor of the building. Then drop through a hole in that floor, to the ground. Exit the inn through the doorway and then find Hadvar. He has an arrow graphic floating above his head. Follow him on a zigzag path until he stops and speaks with Ralof, outside the Helgen Keep. Now choose to follow one of those two men. They stand near separate doors to the keep, north and west. You can easily change your allegiance in the civil war later in the game.

If you choose to go with Ralof

Enter the Helgen Keep door to the north, where Ralof is standing. Inside, he will kneel down next to his dead rebel companion. He will speak to you and then cut off your leather wrist restraints. Now, for the first time, you can use your hands. Ralof will tell you to take Gunjar's possessions. Activate his corpse to collect an Iron War Axe, Fur Boots and a Stormcloak Cuirass. Press the "Tab" key to bring up your Skills, Magic, Map and Items menus. Use the "Arrow" keys to select "Items", and then hit "Enter", to see all of your items. Scroll down the list to highlight a piece of armor and then "Click" on it to equip it (or hit the "E" key). Equip the Iron War Axe in the same manner.

In the Magic menu, select the Flames spell, to equip it in your other hand. Ralof tells you that he cannot open the gate from this side. Two Imperial Soldiers appear on the other side of the gate opposite. They have not seen you. Hide, until they open the gate, and then help kill both of them. Ralof will bend over one of the bodies and get the key to the gate. Follow him through the gate. The dragon will collapse the roof of the next passage. Open a door east, to a room with a large fireplace. Kill two Imperial Soldiers. Search the shelves, a table and a marked barrel for potions. Find four rare green Rock Warbler Eggs in a basket. Then follow Ralof through the next door.

In the next room, a pair of Stormcloaks fights two Imperial Torturers. Pick the lock on the cage containing a dead mage. Inside the cage, pick up his gold and a Spell Book. Open your inventory and then click on the book, to learn Sparks, one of 85 spells in the game. Take the mage's valuable clothing. Find a small round table with a Knapsack containing four lock picks. Now, if the two other Stormcloaks survived the fight, your group numbers four tough fighters.

Exit the room, following Ralof through a rocky tunnel. One of two locked (novice) cells in the tunnel has a skeleton with a coin purse. Three skeletons in the next room also have some gold. Fight some Imperials, including archers, in the next room. Pull a lever to lower a drawbridge. Farther into the cave, a side tunnel east has a skeleton with gold coins and a coin purse. Back in the main cave, battle some huge Frostbite Spiders. Beyond the spiders, sneak past a Cave Bear (or begin collecting ten bear hides for a side quest). Finally, exit outside to a pleasant mountain view.

If you choose to go with Hadvar

Enter the Helgen Keep door to the west, where Hadvar is standing. Inside, he will cut off your leather wrist restraints and tell you to search the room for armor and a weapon. Now, for the first time, you can use your hands. Open the marked Warden's Chest, to collect armor and a weapon.

Hit the "Tab" key to bring up your Skills, Magic, Map and Items menus. Use the "Arrow" keys to select "Items", and then hit "Enter", to see all of your items. Scroll down the list until you highlight the best armor. "Click" on each piece of armor and a weapon (or hit the "E" key), to outfit your character. In the Magic menu, select the Flames spell, to equip it in your other hand.

Hadvar will pull a ring to open a steel grate and then enter another small room and pull another metal ring. Past the next grate, help fight two Stormcloaks and do some looting. Hadvar will pull a third ring to open the next grate, giving access to a room leading to a passage that leads to a door. The dragon will collapse the roof of the passage. You can go no farther in that direction.

Enter the east door to a room with a large fireplace. Fight two Stormcloaks and then search the shelves, a table and a marked barrel for potions. Find four rare green Rock Warbler Eggs in basket. Follow Hadvar into the next room, where a pair of Imperial Torturers is fighting two Stormcloaks. Pick the lock on the cage containing a dead mage. Inside the cage, pick up his gold and a Spell Book. Open "Items" and then click on the name of the book, to learn Sparks, one of 85 spells in the game. Take the mage's valuable clothing. Find a small round table with a Knapsack on top of it. Inside the Knapsack are four lock picks. Take your time searching the room. Hadvar will wait.

Follow Hadvar through a rocky tunnel. One of two locked (novice) cells in the tunnel has a skeleton with a coin purse. Three skeletons in the next room also have gold. Fight Stormcloaks in the next room. Pull a lever to lower a drawbridge. Farther into the cave, a side tunnel east has a skeleton with gold coins and a coin purse. Back in the main cave, battle some huge Frostbite Spiders. Beyond the spiders, Sneak past a Cave Bear (or start collecting ten bear hides for a side quest you may do later on). Finally, exit outside to a snowy mountain view.

Before the Storm

Follow the river trail to Riverwood. Kill some wolves along the way. You may choose to make the journey with your companion, or go your own way, following the river north. If your companion is Hadvar, meet his uncle Alvor in town. Go inside the uncle's house and sit at the dining table. Avoid accidentally stealing anything highlighted in red. Speak with him when you get a chance. Then the uncle will let you take anything you need, within reason. Search the house for treasure.

If your companion is Ralof, follow him around to the rear of the sawmill. Meet Gerdur and Hod there. Then follow the group to their house. Take items you may need, within reason (not red).

On the main street, find Riverwood Trader and sell some of your treasure. Then find the stone bridge on the north end of town and cross the river. On the other side of the bridge, you have a choice of routes. The north fork takes you on a safe, leisurely path to Whiterun, where you will have few enemies. The left fork (west) twists and winds up a mountain trail to a snowy summit. This route is difficult, but you should choose it. In the next quest, you must go there anyway, and you can save yourself some time and trouble by scouting the route now.

So, go up the left trail until you can see a tower in the distance. Three bandits defend this tower. Sneak up on them and snipe them with your bow. When they see you, sheathe your weapon and have them chase you back down the trail toward Riverwood.

After a while, they will give up chasing you and walk back up the trail to the tower. Sneak up on them again and snipe them again. A high Sneak skill will help you throughout the game. One bandit may hide in the tower. At the very top, open a large wooden chest containing gold.

At the snowy junction at the top of the hill, approach Bleak Falls Barrow, going slowly west until the game puts a Fast Travel marker on your map. Do not go any farther yet. Instead, retrace your steps to the junction at the summit, marked by an orange banner blowing in the wind. Then take the northwest fork, down the hill.

Just above the wide valley at the bottom of the hill, note the huge bonfire to the west. Two Giants holding stone clubs inhabit Secunda's Kiss. If they hit you with a club *even one time*, you will die. However, you can outrun them. If you are quick, you can open their wooden chest, behind the bonfire, and take their gold before they realize what you are doing.

At the very bottom of the hill, in the wide valley, you should see a city in the distance northeast. As you make your way there, a group of three Imperial Soldiers may demand gold. If you do not want to give them any gold, have them chase you back up the hill to the Giants. The Giants will kill the Imperials. In another scenario, a "Frightened Woman" may run up to you. She is lost. Tell her about the city to the northwest. She will ask you to kill the bandits who held her hostage at a place called Mistwatch. Ignore that chore for now.

At the gates to the city of Whiterun, convince the guard to let you pass. Just beyond the main gate, sell some treasure inside The Drunken Huntsman. Other shops up the road will buy other kinds of goods. Then follow the path up to the top of the hill, to find a large building. Go through the wide doors of Dragonsreach Palace. Walk to the throne and speak with Jarl Balgruuf the Greater. Tell him about the Dragon attack on Helgen. He will send soldiers to help defend Riverwood.

Bleak Falls Barrow

The Jarl asks that you assist his court wizard in recovering a Dragonstone from a nearby cave/tomb called Bleak Falls Barrow. Follow him into the next room, to speak with court wizard Farengar Secret-Fire. Explore all dialog options. Agree to deliver the Frost Salts to Arcadia's Cauldron. Then exit the palace the same way you entered.

Assuming you passed by there before, on your way from Riverwood, Fast Travel back to Bleak Falls Barrow and Sneak up the snowy hill, close to the base of the steps. Three bandits defend the area. Again, do not try to take them on all at once. When they see you, have them chase you down the trail. Use a bow to wound them and then finish them off with a close-in weapon.

When the doorway to the temple is clear, enter the roofless building. Two more bandits are standing around a roaring fire at the entrance to a tunnel on the west side of the room. Use your bow to wound them. They will both come running when they become aware of you. When they are dead, pick the lock on the (novice) wooden chest they were guarding, and take their gold.

Go through the cobweb-infested tunnel to a room with a Burial Urn to loot. Farther on, in a room with three pillars, watch a bandit pull a lever on the floor. The bandit will fall dead from darts shooting from the walls. Walk over to the wall with three pillars. Turn the pillars to match the icons on the wall. The center icon has fallen down, landing next to the lever. Then pull the lever.

Go through the new opening and read a book on the table, called "Thief", for a boost to your Pick Pocket Skill. Pick up a Soul Gem. Open a chest, to get some gold coins. Three rat-like Skeevers will run up the nearby spiral wooden staircase and attack you. Then go down that staircase.

At the bottom, loot the items on the table and then continue east. You will hear a voice, but not see anybody. Check a skeleton for gold and then turn north, where thick spider webs have blocked your further progress. Equip a hand weapon and cut down the webs. Inside the next room, find a huge Frostbite Spider and a man screaming for help. Stand on your side of the cobweb hole and battle the spider with spells or arrows, so that you can distance yourself from the arachnid. When needed, back up and use a Healing Spell. The spider cannot fit through the doorway.

Inside the spider room, open two urns and check two Desiccated Corpses. Speak with Arvel the Swift about the claw he found. He says he will give it to you if you release him from the cobwebs. Hack away the webs. Arvel changes his mind after you free him, and runs off with your claw. Follow him through the new passage. Open two urns and take the gold. Collect a Soul Gem.

Continue west, to a crypt room and fight two or three Draugr ghouls. You may find Arvel in here, dead. If so, get the Golden Claw. Loot the crypt for gold. A Restless Draugr lies at the end of the passage beyond the spiked gate. Stand behind the stone pressure plate on the floor. When the Draugr charges you, try to have him step on the plate. The gate should swing around and kill him.

Pass the pressure plate without stepping on it. If you did not find him before, you will find Arvel dead, just around the corner. In the next room, a Draugr will attack you. Then another one will get up from its crypt and attack you. Then a Draugr bowman will attack you. Lure all three of these enemies back down the corridor to the pressure plate. The gate will knock them all down for you.

Loot the crypt and notice the set of three Swinging Blade Traps. Unlock (apprentice) a wooden chest and then stand in front of the corridor with the swinging blades. **Save your game.** These blades seem to swing faster than those in Elder Scrolls IV - Oblivion. Use an overhead view and run past each one separately, using a Healing Spell between blades as necessary.

In the next crypt, activate the chain to stop the blades swinging, giving you a path to retreat. Continue down the tunnel and fight another Draugr. As you turn north, notice the rainbow hue of flammable fluid on the ground. It is leaking from the clay pots suspended from the ceiling. When the Draugr at the end of the hall sees you, it will come running. As the Draugr steps in the fluid, shoot a flame spell at the pool to ignite the fumes. Two more Draugr will follow behind that one.

Zigzag through more crypts and then up some weathered steps east. The next room has a waterfall. A Draugr arises from a sarcophagus. Loot a wooden chest. Activate a chain to open the iron grate. Follow the watercourse south, to a large cave. The east end of the cave has a nice chest. From the chest, go south. Kill another Draugr at the bottom of the next slope. Go down the spiral, snow covered rock shelf to the bottom of the waterfall. Loot two skeletons for gold and open a locked (novice) wooden chest. Return to the top of the spiral and then continue north.

At the end of the passage is a big room with a very strong Restless Draugr. If you retreat down the corridor to heal, it will not follow you very far. Loot the locked (apprentice) wooden chest he was guarding, and then go through the double door to "Bleak Falls Sanctum".

Follow the passage to another Swinging Blade Trap. On the other side of the trap, a Draugr will climb out of a sarcophagus and attack you. Turn around and pull the ring to stop the blades, allowing you a safe retreat if you need it. Past where you killed the first Draugr, two more of them wait. Clay pots containing flammable liquid hang between you and the next part of the room. Shoot a pot with an arrow and it will fall, igniting the pool and the Draugrs. Find some minor loot in a side room. Then walk up a log ramp and cross a stone bridge west. Open the "Iron Door".

Beyond that door, walk down the passage and stand in front of the Puzzle Door. Three concentric rings turn around the bottom keyhole. If you activate the keyhole, it will not yet open the door. You must turn the three rings above the keyhole to the correct alignment. Then activate the keyhole. The door will slide down. For a clue on how to set the rings to the correct alignment, look at the image of the Golden Claw in your inventory. Beyond the door, climb the stairway.

At the top of the stairs is a huge waterfall cave. Notice that you can climb up to the top of the broken, circular stone column. Cross the stone bridge and walk up to the base of the tall Word Wall, to learn your first Shout, or "*Thu'um*". The game calls this one "Unrelenting Force". Each Shout has three words. When you learn the other two words of a Shout, its power increases.

After you learn the Shout, a Draugr Overlord will slowly climb out of the sarcophagus sitting on the altar near the Word Wall. Put some distance between you and this tough opponent. His weapon is enchanted with a Cold Spell. Run back across the stone bridge, to a location near the broken column. When you climb to the top of its sloping side, the overlord cannot hit you with his axe, although he can still manage a weak Shout.

When he hides behind a vertical stone column, walk down the side of your fallen column. When you get close to the ground, he will come out of hiding and attack you again. Shoot him with arrows or spells while he is exposed. When he dies, take his Dragonstone.

Loot the altar and its wooden chest. Open another locked (novice) chest behind the altar waterfall. Find another chest behind the south waterfall. Exit the cave up the west slope and pull the handle. Loot one more chest and then walk west, to exit outside on a high snowy ledge. Fast Travel to Dragonsreach palace and enter the court wizard's chamber. Listen to a confidential conversation between Farengar Secret-Fire and Delphine. Then speak with Farengar.

Dragon Rising

Irileth runs into the room and yells a warning about a dragon sighting. Follow the group upstairs, to speak with Jarl Balgruuf the Greater. He will give you permission to buy a house in town. When you have the 5,000 gold necessary, speak with Steward Proventus Avenicci, the Jarl's right hand man. The Jarl will also give you a magic-enhanced item. Exit the palace and sell off some of your treasure. Also, while you are in town, find Arcadia's Cauldron and speak with Arcadia. Give her the Frost Salts you promised to deliver, in exchange for potions.

Go to the town's main gate and overhear a dialogue between two Redguard Alik'r Warriors and a town guard. The Redguards will ask you to help them find a woman named Auk'r. This starts a side quest "In my Time of Need". When you find her, they ask you to contact them in Rorikstead.

Go through the gate and then walk southwest, toward the tall stone tower visible in the distance. Your compass arrow will point you to the group of five soldiers huddled in a depression near the tower. Follow them to the tower. Climb the steps all the way to the top platform. You will hear the dragon, named Mirmulnir, attacking the five soldiers below. Get out a bow or a spell and start targeting the dragon. Run down the spiral steps and use your Healing Spell when you need to.

When the dragon dies, go back downstairs. Collect everything that the dragon carries and watch as it catches on fire and then transfers its power to you. A surviving guard will run up to you and say that you are Dragonborn. In your spells menu, select the Shout, Unrelenting Force, which you learned at the Word Wall in Bleak Falls Barrow. Hit the "Z" key to use the shout.

Return to Dragonsreach palace and speak with the Jarl. This begins the quest "The Way of the Voice" and completes "Dragon Rising". The Jarl will promote you to Thane. On your way out of the palace, a fighter named Lydia will stop you. Accept her offer to be your companion. She will defend you with her life. Then have her accompany you to Riverwood and the Riverwood Trader. Speak with Lucan Valerius. Return the Golden Claw, finishing the quest "The Golden Claw".

The Way of the Voice

From Riverwood, Fast Travel back to the Whiterun Stables and then head east, along the river road. This is a very long road. There will be wolves and bandits along it. You will come to a signpost, just before you get to a high stone bridge crossing the river. One of the signs points to "Ivarstead", your destination. Bandits infest Valheim Towers. If you pass near her, the guard at the gate will demand gold. If you speak with her and do not want to give her any gold, you can kill her. The bandits on the bridge above you will begin shooting arrows at you, but you do not have to stay there. Just continue following the river road east, through the pass.

On the other side of the pass through which the river runs, is another big valley. Continue following the road, as it turns south. Pass another signpost and cross another bridge. Pass by Fort Amol and then cross a nearby bridge at a huge waterfall. Just beyond that bridge, turn up the hill. Follow a dirt path south and west, zigzagging up the mountain. About halfway up the mountain, your path will meet another river. Here, watch for a troll. A novice character, even with Lydia's help, will not be able to defeat this troll. It can heal itself faster than you can damage it. However, it will not enter the river. Run into the water when the troll gets near you. Drive it back down the trail with arrows and spells, but do not let it hit you. It can kill you with two blows from its claws.

Run up the hill until you come to the town of Ivarstead. There, a stone bridge crosses the river. This begins the hardest part of the climb, the 7,000 Steps. Cross the bridge and begin the climb. You will come to a stone shrine, called an "Emblem". Each of the ten shrines is numbered. Read its message and then continue up the steps. When you reach the fourth Emblem, **save your game**. Just up ahead, a Frost Troll, blocks a narrow part of the trail. As before, this troll can probably heal itself faster than you can damage it. Two hits from its claws will likely kill you.

One way to get around the troll is to climb the rocks to the west and then circle around north. If Lydia is with you, she will take the direct route, distracting the troll. When you get back around to the 7,000 steps, run until the troll no longer follows you. Soon, you will come to High Hrothgar.

Enter the building through either of the two front doors. A Greybeard named Arngeir will walk toward you and begin speaking. Ask him questions. He wants you to demonstrate that you have the power of the Shout. Knock him back a bit with your Unrelenting Force. Speak with him some more. You must learn to enhance your power with "balance" and "force". Walk over the glowing words on the floor near the Greybeard named Einarth. He will give you the balance enhancement.

Arngeir will ask you to demonstrate what you have learned, by Shouting at three successive apparitions, named Wulfgar. Then he will ask you to follow Master Borri to the outside courtyard.

Outside, Master Borri will write another magical word on the snow. Walk over and stand on the word, to learn it. Borri will teach you the shout "Whirlwind Sprint", and then demonstrate it for you. Now select that Shout, stand between the two rock pillars and sprint through the gate before it closes, just as Borri showed you. Speak with Arngeir again, to end the quest "Way of the Voice".

The Horn of Jurgen Windcaller

You must retrieve the Horn of Jurgen Windcaller from his tomb in Ustengrav. To do this, you must travel into the marshes of Hjaalmarch. Open your world map and see the location of the marsh, far to the northwest. The following route to Ustengrav is complex, but does not require a fight with a dragon, a time-consuming task for a new character. Fast Travel to the Whiterun Stables and follow your quest arrow north, overland.

You will come to some large stone ruins called Silent Moons Camp. Bandits infest this ruin, but you do not need to stop there. Continue past it, up the hill northwest. You will come to a mountain pass to the north. If you find a pass with two huge stone arches, you have gone too far west. A Frost Troll defends the two arches. Backtrack a bit to the east. Near the top of the correct pass is a Shrine of Mara. Farther up the mountain, near the very top, you may find a Scavenger looting the dead bodies of Imperials and Stormcloaks who fell battling each other. The Scavenger will attack you. Just as likely, you may find a wildcrafter gathering ingredients for "The Gourmet". Also possible, you may find a pair of Necromancers. There may be other types of spawns here as well.

Save your game here. Continue north, up to the snowy crest. Look over the edge to see another Word Wall, Skyborn Altar, below you. Nesting inside it is another dragon. It has *not* seen you. From here, detour south and down the hill west to the base of a set of steps. Do not go up those steps, or you will wake up the dragon. Instead, continue down the hill west, until you can see a large stone ruin below you. Bypass this ruin by going through a very narrow pass to the north. Then make your way down the rocks to the base of the hill, where you will find a road.

Follow the road northeast, to a hamlet called "Stone Hills". Do not go farther, or you will encounter another dragon. Instead, go cross-country, north until you get to Ustengrav, a circular stone hole in the ground. A Necromancer and *up to* four bandits have made this area their camp. When they see you, they will all come running. Be ready to use a Healing Spell and/or potions. If you have trouble, run south to some rocky cover. The Necromancer can be especially tricky.

Walk down the spiral stone steps to the bottom. Loot what you want from several containers and a bandit corpse. You may want to have Lydia wait here, so that you can be stealthier.

Enter the door to Ustengrav. Inside, find another dead bandit and wonder what killed him. Go into Sneak mode and kill a Necromancer and a Conjuror with your bow. Loot their room and then go through the north passage, following a trail of dead bodies down the stairway, until you turn a corner to see a long narrow room.

Inside the room are three Draugr who pop out of their sarcophagi when they detect you, even if you are in Sneak mode. If they see you, they will all come running. Whittle down their health with ranged weapons like arrows or spells, to give yourself some running room. Do not try to fight them all at once. When they get too close, run back to the entrance and go through the door to the outside. They will not follow you outside. Sneak back to the room and snipe them some more.

When all three are dead, loot two side rooms to the north. They contain huge urns, many with treasure. One broken urn has two potions in the bottom. Read a book "The Mystery of Talara Part II", for a boost to your Restoration Skill. Open a chest, to get some more gold coins.

Then continue east and south, to an intersection. The west fork goes to a table with gold coins scattered on it. Nearby, pull a chain hanging from a wall, to open a hidden rock door. Go down the tunnel to a small room with a chest.

Return to the intersection and then take the south fork to a very large room. Inside it, find three or four Draugrs. Exit this room east; up some stairs to a rock bridge which crosses the room. Loot a chest and then cross the bridge. Enter the door to "Ustengrav Depths".

Beyond the door, follow the tunnel to an overlook, tangled with vines. Below you, see a huge cave. Continue down to a second overlook, but this one gives you a clear view. Kill a Draugr here. In Sneak mode (2x damage), an accurate shot with a bow can destroy three or four Skeleton Warriors walking about far below you. When you leave the overlook, be wary of fire jet holes in the floor. Your new power "Whirlwind Sprint" works well here, to get you past the jets.

Cross another stone bridge over a dining room. Watch for two more Draugr in this room. The dining room has only minor treasure, but there are a chest and potions in a side room. Exit south; up more steps to another bridge, that crosses the same dining room.

The next room you come to has flammable liquid in a puddle on the floor. One or two Draugr will climb out of sarcophagi and attack you. Two gates, each with its own handle, block access to a small treasure room. One is on the south wall and the other handle is next to the gates.

Exit the dining room through a hole in the west wall. Then Sneak down the tunnel north and walk down a stone ramp to the huge room. If you destroyed all of the Skeleton Warriors from above, then only the king remains. You should find him sitting on his throne at the west end of the room.

Up the stairs west of the throne, avoid fire jets in the floor. Loot one chest and pick up some loose gems. The balcony up here ends at a pile of rubble, just above the Skeleton King's throne. This used to be the route you would take to access the upper levels of the cave, before the facility fell into such disrepair. You can see a chest, a dead Draugr and a soul gem beyond the rubble, but you cannot access any of that treasure from here.

You entered this huge cave by walking down a broken stone walkway. These walkways used to extend between the giant columns in the room. Most of the walkways have fallen down. If you want the treasure blocked by the rock fall, return southeast, to the top of the entrance ramp. At the first pillar, turn around and jump west, to the rock shelf. Walk along the shelf until you can jump north, to the nearby pillar. From that pillar, jump north again to the next pillar. Now, because the next space is too far to jump across, use your Whirlwind Sprint Shout to cross to the next pillar north. Finally, wait for Whirlwind Sprint to recharge and then use it to cross to the pillar west. Follow the intact walkway to a set of stairs going down to the treasure. When you return up the stairs, you can safely drop from the last pillar, to the floor.

Northeast of the throne, is a ramp that will get you down to another Word Wall. Stand next to the wall to learn your new Shout, "Fade - Become Ethereal". Up the ramp east of the wall, find a chest. Behind the base of the waterfall, fight a Draugr and loot another chest. Return to the throne area.

Then cross the very long stone bridge to the east end of the room. Defeat one Skeleton Warrior on a balcony at the top of a log ramp. That area has two urns containing gold. On the lower floor, three stones glow when you approach them. Each one controls a separate gate at the east end of the room. You can get two of the stones to glow at once, but not the third one. You *must* exit through the gated tunnel. If you become stuck between gates, you may return, but not move forward.

The secret to opening all three gates is to first stand where two stones light up. Then ready your Whirlwind Sprint Shout. Run toward the gate and activate the Shout when you near the third stone (the one closest to the gates). Keep running even after the sprint deactivates. You should pass by all three gates and find yourself in another room covered with fire jet holes.

You cannot see them yet, but when you pass the first set of jets, two or three Frostbite Spiders will drop down from the ledge on the south side of the room. After you kill them, walk along the rock ledge above the jets, to the narrowest part of the room. In the next part of the room, two more Frostbite Spiders are walking around. Shoot them with arrows or spells. **Save your game** here.

When you cross the next set of fire jets to the room where the two dead spiders are, a huge version of this spider will drop down on you from a large hole in the ceiling. If you run back across the jets and stand on the safe rock ledge, the spider will follow you. It is just as vulnerable to fire as you are. If you can get it to stand on the jets, they will help you incinerate the giant spider.

When the room is safe, cut through the thick cobwebs at the east end of the room. Then go through the "Wooden Door" and pull the chain to open a gate. Four stone dragons will rise out of the water as you cross the stone bridge to the altar, but they are for ambience only. When you get to the throne, you find that someone has taken the horn already. The mysterious stranger left you a note. Read the note and then open three urns.

Then go through the wooden door east, behind the altar. In the next room, find more urns and a chest containing better treasure. Go up the sloping tunnel north and through a door to Ustengrav. Walk through another tunnel and pull a big lever that gets you back to the side room you have already been to, the one containing large urns. Exit the dungeon.

Fast Travel southeast to Riverwood. Rent the Attic Room in the Sleeping Giant Inn from Delphine. She will tell you that they do not *have* an attic room and give you a room on the main floor instead. As soon as you enter your room, Delphine will walk in, give you the Horn of Jurgen Windcaller and ask you to follow her to a safer place to talk. This begins the quest, "A Blade in the Dark". Follow her to the basement, listen to her story and agree to meet her in Kynesgrove. Take a nice Blades sword from the rack on the wall.

Before you go to Kynesgrove, return to High Hrothgar and speak with Arngeir. Then stand in front of Wulfgar, while he paints a new word on the floor. Walk over the glowing glyphs. Then Wulfgar will give you the third and final word, "Push", for Unrelenting Force. All four Greybeards will then test you.

A Blade in the Dark

Exit High Hrothgar. Fast Travel northeast, to Valtheim Towers, the high bridge with bandits on it. When you arrive, run east along the river road again, ignoring the arrows of the bandits. Continue along the road when it turns south. Cross a bridge and continue southeast to a junction. Turn left (east), pass by Fort Amol, cross a bridge north, pass by Mixwater Mill and cross another bridge east, to Windhelm Stables. Then go up the road south and turn left up the hill, at the next intersection. Near Kynesgrove, a woman, Iddra, runs up to you warning you about a dragon. Just up the road are Kynesgrove and the Braidwood Inn.

Follow the trail that begins *behind* the Braidwood Inn. Go up the hill east, until you get to a cairn flying an orange banner. You can see a dragon flying in a circle, just beyond the rock wall ahead. **Save your game.** Turn south, along the trail. It will turn north, up the hill, to a view of a large shallow rock bowl in the middle of a clearing. Soon, the flying dragon will somehow use the bowl to create a new dragon, right before your eyes. When the new dragon, Shaloknir, takes to the air, it will attack you. This one is a frost dragon, weak to fire spells.

Nevertheless, it will be very hard for you to kill, even with Delphine's help. The best cover for you may be a pair of tall stones southwest of the stone bowl. Run that way and take cover there.

Use the cover of the rocks to recharge your spells and heal. Pop out and attack the dragon when you can. Use Unrelenting Force to stun it and then whack it with a weapon. Be *very* patient. All dragons stop flying and go to ground near you, when you do them enough damage. If you stand out in the open, it will literally eat you alive. Use your compass to keep track of it while it flies.

When the dragon dies, take its inventory and absorb its power. Unlock a Shout if you want, using the dragon soul. On a PC (in Magic > Souls), highlight the Shout you want to unlock, and then hit the "R" key. Speak with Delphine, to complete the quest.

Diplomatic Immunity

Delphine wants you to meet her in Riverwood. Find her at the Sleeping Giant Inn, downstairs in her secret laboratory. She wants you to infiltrate the Thalmor Embassy, by attending a party there. An insider, Malborn, will assist you. Meet him in the Winking Skeeever tavern, in Solitude.

Look on your world map to see that Solitude is far to the northwest. You can use the network of roads in Skyrim or go cross-country. Both routes are dangerous. Along both routes, you must fight, or detour around, bandits and flying dragons. The road route is far longer.

To take the road route, Fast Travel to Whiterun Stables. Go west and south, along the main road. Pass the Western Watchtower and Fort Greymoor. When you see a dragon flying in a circle to the west, detour north, cross-country, to avoid the dragon. Go as far as the base of the mountains. Along the way, stop at an altar on top of a low rocky hill defended by three Skeleton Warriors. Read a book "Liminal Bridges", raising your Conjuraction Skill. When you get to the spring at the base of the mountains, turn west. At the Shrine of Stendarr, read "Twin Secrets" to boost your Enchanting Skill. Keep going cross-country west, until you again meet the main road. Along the way, watch out for a Sabre Cat in its rocky den.

On the main road again, turn north. Leave the dragon flying in circles behind you. Pass through Rorikstead. As the road goes steeply downhill north, four bandits will attack you, two of them archers. Look in their cart for a chest with gold. At this intersection, go north, down to the river bridge. Look just beyond the bridge to see a bandit camp called Robber's Gorge. They have built a wooden bridge over the road. Run under the bridge and continue running up the road, following the river until you come to an abandoned wagon. Two merchants lie dead here. Cross the bridge west and, a short distance later, cross Dragon Bridge to find the town with the same name.

On the other side of the bridge, turn north. At the signpost, *before* you reach the snow, turn right (northeast). You will come to the outskirts of Solitude. Note the windmill on your right. Continue through the main gate of the city. Past the main gate, enter the Winking Skeeever tavern, the first building on your left and then sit down at the table with Malborn.

The cross-country route to Solitude begins at Ustengrav. Then cross the marshes northwest. Look for tall stone columns, behind which you can take cover when the dragon attacks you. Trees do not work nearly as well. Eventually, you will get to a waterway, across which you must swim to the road beneath the Solitude bluff. Look for a set of streetlamps along the bluff road.

This entrance to Solitude is by way of an innocuous wooden door in the side of the rock wall. Beyond the door, a spiral rock stairway goes up. Do not take that route. Instead, go through the iron gate, to the city street beyond. Go left along the street, to find the Winking Skeevever.

Sitting at the table with Malborn, speak with him and then give him any weapons you carry. He will smuggle them into the embassy for you. Exit the tavern and follow your quest arrow west.

Go through the main gate and down the road until you see the windmill on your left. This is Katla's Farm. Delphine is standing waiting for you in front of the windmill. Speak to her and equip the set of Party Clothes and boots she gives you. Take *off* every other article of clothing you are wearing. When you do this, she will take all your other equipment from your inventory.

A cut scene shows you getting into a wagon and arriving at the embassy. Show the Thalmor Wizard your invitation, walk up the steps and enter the embassy. Malborn, who is tending the drinks bar, will interrupt the ambassador as she greets you.

Create a diversion at the party. You could do this by first speaking to Erikur. After that conversation, he will notice the comely servant girl Brelas. He will speak with her. After their conversation, speak with Erikur again. Then speak with the servant Brelas. Finally, speak with Erikur again. You must use subterfuge to convince both of them that you are trying to help them, initiating an argument between them. The argument is the diversion.

Alternatively, you could get a Colovian Brandy from Malborn or Brelas and then speak with Razelan. He has already had too much liquor and his host will not allow him more. Give him the brandy and then tell him that he can repay you by "causing a scene". He will insult his host.

As soon as everyone is paying attention to the diversion, run for the door behind the bar and Malborn will open it for you. In the hallway beyond, speak to him and follow him through the kitchen. Open a chest and get your weapons. When you go through the next door, Malborn will lock the door behind you. In the next hall, you will hear two guards talking behind an open door.

Hide behind the door, **save your game** and wait for the conversation to end. Wait about six seconds and then make your move. Just inside the room beyond the door is a counter on your right (south). You must go around the end of the counter and then up the stairway behind it. If you have a high enough Sneak Skill, you should have no problem with this action. However, the guards will easily detect characters with a low Sneak Skill. Another option is to outrun the guards, through the door, around the end of the bar and up the stairway south to the top.

At the top of the stairs run past the wizard guard and then turn left (west) at the "T" intersection. When you get to the next corner of the hallway, slip north, into the bedroom, and hide just inside.

If you ran past them, the two guards and the wizard will wander the hallways for a couple of minutes and then one of them will say, "Must have scared 'em off". Wait for another few seconds. The two guards will go back downstairs. The wizard will return to his post at the top of the stairs.

Save your game again. Loot the bedroom and then Sneak southwest and open the door marked "Skyrim". This puts you outside on a snowy balcony. Just around the corner north, are three more guards, one of them is a wizard. Do not try to fight them.

Come out of Sneak mode and run around the corner north, until you can turn left (west) into a courtyard. Keep running, even as they attack you, and enter a door to the north marked "Thalmor Embassy, Elenwen's Solar". The three guards will stop chasing you when you activate this door.

On the other side of the door, immediately go back into Sneak mode and wait until the guard with his back to you goes upstairs. You can hear a conversation between two men, but do not wait for it to end. Sneak northwest, as your quest arrow shows, to the corner of the room and find the chest.

In that chest are three documents, "Dragon Investigation: Current Status", "Thalmor Dossier: Delphine", and "Thalmor Dossier: Ulfric Stormcloak". Also in the chest is the Interrogation Chamber Key. Take all four items and then exit north, down some old wooden stairs. At the bottom, read the three documents and then **save your game** again.

Use the key to open the door. Still in Sneak mode, go down the next wooden stairs to a doorway where you can see the interrogation room. Rulindil is sitting at a table with his back to you. A Thalmor soldier is inside one of the cells, torturing a man named Etienne Rarnis. There are many ways to get through this section of the quest. This is mine.

Get your Sneak Level up to 30, if it is less, by sneaking slowly back and forth in the corridor. The slower you go toward or away from an enemy (or he goes toward and away from you), the faster you level up. In the level-up menu, choose the Perk "Stealth", level 1. Then choose the "Backstab" Perk, which gives you 6x damage for a one-handed Sneak Attack.

Sneak up behind Rulindil and hit him in the back with your one-handed weapon. The torturer in the cell may not see you. If so, Sneak back to the corridor and wait for him to leave the cell and stand with his back to you. If he sees you, use your "Unrelenting Force" Shout to knock him down. Run over and hit him with a Power Attack. **Save your game**, after you have killed both Thalmor.

Open the chest near the desk and take the document "Thalmor Dossier: Esbern", but *do not* read it. In addition, *do not* release either of the two prisoners, Etienne Rarnis or the servant Brelas (assuming you tricked her). Take the Interrogation Chamber key from Rulindil's corpse.

Open the cell farthest to the west. If you tricked Brelas, then she is in the cell. Stand with your back to the wall, at her left side. In Sneak mode, with your weapon unsheathed, and with your Unrelenting Force and a Healing Spell ready, read the document "Thalmor Dossier: Esbern". Reading this document triggers a sequence where two more guards enter through the same door you used to enter the interrogation room. They will have Malborn with them. If the guards see you, they will immediately kill Malborn, and then attack you.

You will hear one guard say, "Listen up spy, you're trapped in here and we have your accomplice". Wait patiently. One of the guards may open the cell next to you. He/she should walk past your cell without seeing you. When the second guard walks past, Sneak attack him/her in the back.

Then use your Unrelenting Force to knock back the other guard. Quickly use a Power Attack to finish off the guard, possibly with Malborn's help. **Save your game** again. Note that sometimes only one guard passes your cell. If this happens, use the save and try again or Malborn dies.

Release the prisoner(s). If Malborn blocks your exit from a cell, use the save. Neither of the prisoners is grateful to you. Loot the entire room, including the guards. For some better loot, take the south stairway. Beyond the door at the top, loot a chest behind more stairs. Then climb those stairs in Sneak mode, to an office near the main lobby where you entered the building.

The guard whom you saw walking up the stairs when you first entered the lobby is still patrolling somewhere. However, if he survived, you may have Malborn to help you defeat the guard (assuming he picked up a weapon). Once you have killed the guard, loot the entire building, especially the upstairs. Up there, you should find some nice potions, some gold, and an unlocked safe with some very good treasure. If you have *not* patched your game to version 1.4, you will find an "Unusual Gem" here as well. Then return to the interrogation room and go down through the "Reeking Cave" trapdoor, using one of the trapdoor keys from the guards.

Inside Reeking Cave, a short tunnel leads to a rock shelf overlooking a snowy pit. Below you is a Frost Troll. As soon as you can target it, hit the troll with your Unrelenting Force Shout. This will stun the animal long enough for you and anyone with you, to run south past the troll, *up* the ledge and out the exit. If you want a boost to your Illusion Skill, go back inside the cave, stun the troll again and have enough time to read the book "Before the Ages of Man". Lying next to the book is other treasure. If you *have* patched your game to version 1.4, you will also find the "Unusual Gem" (Stone of Barenziah) here. Outside, Fast Travel to Riverwood and speak with Delphine in the basement of the Sleeping Giant Inn, completing the quest "Diplomatic Immunity".

A Cornered Rat

Delphine wants you to go to Riftin and find Esbern. Recover your gear from the chest on the east wall of the basement and re-outfit yourself in your favorite armor. Open your world map to find Riftin in the far southeast corner of your map.

Fast Travel northeast to Kynesgrove. If there is a dragon here, go into Sneak mode and avoid it. Take a long trek south and east up the hill, along the main road. Bypass a lumbering Giant and another dragon, flying in circles west of Steamcrag Camp. At a major intersection of the main road, turn south and zigzag up the hill, *not west*, down the hill. Pass by Shor's Stone and Fort Greenwall. Bandits will chase you from the fort unless you go around the outside. At the gate to Riftin, you may have to help the guards defeat a dragon. Convince the guard to unlock the city gate and then enter the city. A man named Maul may stop you and talk to you. Speak with him and show him the Unusual Gem that you took from the embassy. This begins the side quest, "No Stone Unturned". Show the gem to Vex when you get to the Ragged Flagon inside the Ratway.

Follow your quest arrow to find a red haired man named Brynjolf. Before he will give you any information, he wants you to do him a favor. He wants you to steal a ring and then put it in the pocket of a man named Brand-Shei (Reverse Pickpocket). This begins the first quest for the Thieves Guild, "A Chance Arrangement". **Save your game.**

While Brynjolf distracts the crowd, stand behind Madesi's counter on the southwest side of the circular plaza of market stalls. Go into Sneak mode and, when you are "hidden", pick the lock on the sliding door of the counter. Then pick the lock of the small box inside the cabinet. Take Madesi's Ring. Follow your quest arrow over to the group of distracted people and stand behind Brand-Shei, behind some crates. Sneak the ring into his pocket and then walk away. Speak with Brynjolf again and he will reward you with 100 gold coins.

Alternatively, you may drop the ring and tell Brynjolf that you lost it. If you do not want to do *any* stealing, just stand and wait for Brynjolf's distraction speech to end. Then go downstairs to the dock, through a metal gate and through the door to the Ratway, failing the quest. Return upstairs and speak with Brynjolf. He will still tell you that you have the spark that he is looking for.

Speak with Madesi at his stall, to pick up his fetch-it quest. He needs two Flawless Sapphires, a piece of Gold Ore and a Mammoth Tusk in order to make a unique piece of jewelry.

Follow your quest arrow down some steps, to a metal gate. Open the gate and then open the door behind it to, "The Ratway". **Save your game** here. You have a tough fight coming up at the "T" intersection at the end of the entrance tunnel. You can hear Hewnon Black-Skeever and Drahhf having a conversation. When they detect you, they will attack you. Just beyond the two men may be a "Lowlife", who may attack the two men or you. If you do not meet him now, you will later.

After you have killed all three men, continue down the tunnel to a ledge. Drop down and activate a door. Jump back immediately, to avoid the spike trap, and then go through the door. Beyond the door is a round stone room with flammable liquid dripping from a clay pot. Look for a Skeever in the south tunnel. The room to the west has only minor treasure. Exit through the south door, to a room with five Bear Traps. "Gian the Fist" will attack you here. In a corner, find an Alchemy Lab.

Open a gate to the south, *run* up the steps east, to avoid a swinging log trap. Open the gate and go through the north tunnel to a room with a book on the table. Read "Beggar", for a boost to your Pickpocket Skill. Go east and open the door to the "Ragged Flagon" tavern. Speak with Brynjolf for another job, "Taking Care of Business" and ask him about "an old guy".

Exit the tavern through the southeast door, "The Ratway Vaults". In the multi-tiered room ahead, kill three Thalmor soldiers. A good bow works well against them if you are in Sneak mode. When they are dead, drop down to the walkway east. Exit through a passage north, to a room with an Anvil and a Workbench with four iron ingots. Open a nice wooden chest and then go west, down some steps to a room with three more chests. Two of them are locked (apprentice). Take four coin purses sitting on the table. Go through the doorway south, east and south again to a door, "The Ratway Warrens". You will come to a two-tiered room.

Hefid the Deaf hides behind the locked (apprentice) door on the lower level of the north wall. She is no threat to you, even though she waves a knife around. Salvianus, in the room through the west door is also no threat. However, behind the gate at the top of the stairs, Knjakr may be sharpening his War Axe. He is preparing to butcher you for dinner. If you have the required ingots, you can upgrade your weapons at his Grinding Stone.

Activate the south door on the upper level to speak with Esbern. Convince him to let you in his room. Wait a while until he unlocks all the chains. He will open the door and invite you in, ending "A Cornered Rat". There is a known bug in the game here. Unless you have an updated version of the game, Esbern will open the door's peephole, but he may not speak to you - or open the door.

To fix this glitch, you can download BSA Unpacker, a small program that will fix the problem: <https://www.nexusmods.com/skyrim/mods/4804>. However, you must also have a program, such as WinRar, that allows you to unrar a compressed file. Then follow the instructions below:

1. Open BSA Unpack.exe
2. Click on the "Open" button at the bottom of the BSA Browser window.
3. Navigate to find the file **Skyrim - VoicesExtra.bsa** inside the Data folder of the game installation, probably: Computer>C:\ Drive>Program Files x86>The Elder Scrolls V Skyrim>Data
4. Single click on that file, **Skyrim - VoicesExtra.bsa** to select it, and then click Open. Another popup window will say, "The BSA archive has an unknown version number. Attempt to open anyway?" Click "Yes".
5. Click "Extract All". In the popup Browse window, browse to the game installation "Data" folder, probably: Computer>C:\ Drive>Program Files x86>The Elder Scrolls V Skyrim>Data
6. Single click on the "Data" folder to highlight it and then click "OK". Nothing will seem to occur, but if you go to Data>Sound>Voice>Skyrim.esm> maleuniquesbern folder and look inside it, the voices for the Esbern character are now there in a long list.
7. Close the BSA Browser and start your game.

Alduin's Wall

Inside the room, have a conversation with the absentminded Esbern. Before you escort him back to Riverwood, to meet again with Delphine, read a book, "Lost Legends of Skyrim" which is sitting on the table near the cooking pot. This begins a side quest "Forbidden Legend". Find a book, "Fire and Darkness", in a box at the foot of Esbern's bed. Read that book, and get an increase to your One-hand Skill. If you wait in the room long enough, a trio of assassins (Gissur, a Thalmor soldier and a Thalmor wizard) will barge in, attacking you and Esbern, who is a powerful conjuror. Note that Esbern may not follow you if Hefid the Deaf remains alive.

On your way out of the Ratway, you may notice that someone has reset the Bear Traps. A woman named Shavari will attack you. She may have help from some Thalmor soldiers. When you get to the room where you read the book, "Beggar", go through the north tunnel and pull a large lever on the wall. This lowers a wooden drawbridge, providing you an exit from the Ratway.

Outside, Fast Travel to Riverwood and speak with Delphine and Esbern in the basement of the Sleeping Giant Inn. Esbern will speak of Alduin's Wall. The three of you must now travel to Karthspire. You may go as a group, or meet them there. Look on your world map to see that Karthspire is located in the far west. Fast Travel as close as you can. Rorikstead is a good choice.

When you get to Rorikstead, Alduin will be reanimating another dragon, Nahagliiv. Walk up the hill west of town. The stone circle up there has several handy obelisks around it to provide you good cover. Note that dragons fly in loops near where they were reborn. After you have killed the dragon, go up the road north from Rorikstead. At the intersection where you may earlier have killed four bandits, turn left (west) at the cart. The road sign points to Markarth.

At the "Broken Tower Redoubt" castle, a member of the "Foresworn" will run up to you and attack. Kill your attacker and then continue past the castle, down the hill west to a stone bridge. On the other side of the bridge, continue to the next intersection. Turn left, following the river road toward Markarth. Pass by Blind Cliff Cave and cross a stone bridge below a large waterfall.

Near Pavo's House, where a stone bridge crosses the river and Kolskeggr Mine is located, three Foresworn will attack you. After you have dealt with them, cross the bridge south. At the next intersection, take the left fork and follow the river east. Cross a stone bridge below a waterfall. Near the next bridge, you will hear and see a Blood Dragon flying above the Forsworn settlement of Karthspire. Neither the dragon, nor the Forsworn will be happy to see you. With the help of Delphine and Esbern, kill the dragon and absorb its soul. Then eliminate any of the Foresworn who prevent you from entering their encampment.

Lead your two friends west, to the Karthspire Cave entrance. This cave leads to Skyhaven Temple. Inside the cave, more Forsworn will attack, but they are no match for your group. Loot the area and then follow your friends deeper into the cave.

You will come to an open-air clearing. Delphine and Esbern will attempt to decipher symbols on three pillars. Turn them so that all three show the arrow design. The stone drawbridge to the south will lower. As you cross the bridge, you can hear your friends talking about "pressure plates".

When you get to the room, you see the floor covered with pressure plates. If you step on the wrong ones, fire comes out of the hole in the pillar on the other side of the room. Delphine and Esbern will wait for you to neutralize the trap. Use your Whirlwind Sprint Shout to cross the room, or walk a path across the plates with the arrow symbol. Stand next to the pillar and pull the chain hanging from it, to stop the fire and lower the next drawbridge.

Your friends will go into the north tunnel. Follow them across the stone bridge, up some steps and down some more steps, into Skyhaven Temple. Loot the huge wooden chest in the center of the room, and then stand near the stone Blood Seal on the floor in front of the huge stone head. Activate the circle to initiate a cut scene where you kneel down and cut your finger with a blade. The blood falling on the stone causes the stone head to tilt backward, revealing a keyhole-shaped entrance to some steps that lead up to a door to Skyhaven Temple.

Beyond the door, walk up a long series of stone steps, to the huge room at the top. Stand close to Alduin's Wall, near where you can see the quest marker. Esbern will walk over to the wall. Listen, while Esbern describes the events pictured on the history wall. You learn that a special Shout was what defeated Alduin, but the wall does not indicate the name of the Shout. Delphine speaks to you and regrets that you must consult the Greybeards. Perhaps they know the name of the special Shout. This conversation ends "Alduin's Wall" and begins "The Throat of the World".

The Throat of the World

Your friends will explore the temple while you return to High Hrothgar and speak with Arngeir. Before you leave, explore the room to the west. Find some excellent Blades Armor and a Dragonbane Sword in a chest and on a table. Also on the table, read "Mace Etiquette", for a boost to your One-hand Skill. Then go up the steps north. A room there has a huge fireplace that sometimes spawns meat cooking on a spit. In this room, open seven wooden chests. One of them may have a Mammoth Tusk, for Medesi the jeweler.

In the same area, find four doors opening outside. Fast Travel to High Hrothgar and follow your quest arrow to find Arngeir. He knows only the *name* of the Shout you want - "Dragonrend".

To learn the new Shout, you must first speak with Paarthurnax, at the very top of the mountain. Before you attempt that climb, you must learn a Shout that clears away the stinging icy mist on the mountain. Follow Arngeir and the other Greybeards outside to the courtyard. Walk over the three words (Sky, Spring, Summer) painted on the snow, to learn the "Clear Skies" Shout. Then walk up the stone steps until you get to the mist that blocks your view of the path. Use your new Shout, to clear your view for only 20 seconds, although the Shout recharges quickly.

Go up the snowy mountain trail and watch for two or three Ice Wraiths, white flying skeletal monsters. Pass between two tall stones on either side of the trail. At the top of the mountain, find the Throat of the World. Just ahead, a huge dragon blocks your path. This is Paarthurnax.

Have a long conversation with the dragon. Walk over to the Word Wall and learn the Shout, "Fire Breath". Paarthurnax insists that you try the power on him first. You may see an odd instance where Paarthurnax spirals up into the air for a long time, before coming back to earth.

Then Paarthurnax lands and speaks to you again. Have another long conversation with him. Even he does not know the Dragonrend Shout. He tells you that Hakon, Gormlaith and Felldir, leaders of the last rebellion against Alduin, used the Shout to defeat him. Reading the Elder Scroll will allow *you* to learn Dragonrend. To inflict 25% more damage when you use the Fire Breath Shout, tell Paarthurnax that you want to *meditate* on a word of power. Do this for all three words, Fus, Feim and Yol. The Magic section of your Journal lists this Active Effect as "The Fire Within". When this conversation ends, "Throat of the World" ends and "Elder Knowledge" begins.

Elder Knowledge

You must find an "Elder Scroll". To help you find it, return to High Hrothgar and speak with Arngair. Find him by following your quest arrow. He suggests that you speak with the mages at the College of Winterhold, where mages train. If you speak with Esbern, who may be standing on the terrace outside the Skyhaven Temple, he will tell you the same thing. You can also listen to him tell of a dream he had about an orange flame.

Fast Travel to Kynesgrove and then go north, along the main road to Windhelm. From there, go east, still on the main road. Pass by Brandy-Mug Farm. At Hlaalu Farm, swim across the river north. On the other side, walk northwest, to find a coin purse on top of a book, "The Wolf Queen", which gives you a one-point boost to your Lockpick Skill. The book sits between two tall boulders, just above the shoreline of the river.

Walk northwest, up the snowy windblown hillside to an area with several cairns. This is a Shrine of Arkay. Get a blessing, to cure any diseases you have. Walk a bit east of the shrine and then continue up the mountain north. Over the crown of the next hill is "Snow Veil Sanctum", another group of cairns. A dragon may attack you here. A road runs along the base of the mountains. It will take you to Winterhold. Watch for *very tough* Ice Wolves and Ice Wraiths in this area.

At the north end of town, Faralda will stop you and speak to you. Convince her to let you cross the bridge into the college. One dialog choice that works is "I want to unravel the mysteries of Aetherius". Faralda will want to test you. Knock her back with your Unrelenting Force. She will escort you over the bridge, beginning the mage quest, "First Lessons".

Enter the college through the double wooden doors to the "Hall of the Elements". On the other side of the door, immediately turn southeast and go through the double doors to the "Arcanaeum". Inside the next room, speak with Urag gro-Shub. Ask him about the Elder Scrolls. Tell him that you are Dragonborn. He will get you two books to read. "Effects of the Elder Scrolls" tells of the blindness that can occur when you read the scrolls. When you read "Ruminations on the Elder Scrolls", a difficult text to understand, the side quest "Discerning the Transmundane" begins.

Speak with Urag about that book. Now you must find Septimus Signus, the author of the book. Go back outside and check your world map, to find his location north of you. Retrace your steps, south along the main road out of town. Not far along the road, you will come to a place where you can go up the slope west. You can see a huge stone arch at the top of the slope. Just beyond the arch, circle back north and down the slope. Watch for big Sabre Cats and Snow Wolves. Work your way slightly west and down the hill to the water. Here, watch for several large grey Horkers. They look like Sea Lions. They are slow enough that you can easily outdistance them.

Run west, across two narrow water channels, to an island with a statue of a god wearing a winged helmet and killing a serpent. This is a Shrine of Talos. Near the statue, read a book named "The Importance of Where", for a boost to your One-hand Skill.

From the shrine island, swim north, to the next island. On one shore of the island is Ysgramor's Tomb, a round hole in the ground with steps leading down. On the far side of the island, find *another* Shrine of Talos, with the dead body of a mage named Llas-Tei, lying on the ground in front of the shrine. A pack of Skeevers may have killed him. One may attack you. Near the body, read a book, "Breathing Water", to increase your Alteration Skill. Work your way around to the east side of this island and look up from there, to see Winterhold high above you.

Swim east, to an island where a spit of land sticks out from the north shore. Several small ice floes connect this peninsula to the next island north. Use the ice as stepping-stones to the next island. There, find a beached boat and a wooden door in the ice bank. Enter "Septimus Signus's Outpost".

Past the door, walk down the spiral ledge of an ice cave, to speak with Signus at the bottom. He will tell you that you need to go to Blackreach. He will give you a "Blank Lexicon", which is an information storage device and an "Attunement Sphere", which is a musical key to a Dwemer lock.

Exit the cave and look on your world map southwest, to find Alftand. Retrace your steps and find the deserted camp by following your quest arrow across the snowy slopes. When you get there, go down a series of wooden ramps and steps to the "Alftand Glacial Ruins".

Inside the ruins, find a Dwarven Ingot, read Sulla's Journal, look inside a Knapsack and open two chests. A bit farther along the tunnel, you will hear a voice, but see nobody.

Keep descending the slope, passing a huge broken pipe leaking water and a broken Dwarven Spider, until you come to a large room. On a table in the room are two more broken spiders, two books about the Dwemer and some "Research Notes". Behind the table, partially buried in the ice, is a metal chest. The gate to the north will not open until you get farther into the ruin. On the south wall, the big metal pipe with closed ends contains a *functional* Dwarven Spider Worker that will pop out and attack you when you approach the pipe.

Continue down the tunnel. Another spider will attack you and then you will see a dead spider in the middle of the floor. South of here, find a little nook and open a small metal chest. Then continue west down the slope, where another worker spider will attack you. At the bottom of the slope, J'darr (the voice you heard earlier) will attack you. In the same area, find the dead body of J'zhar. Take some gold from the top of two barrels and enter a room with a dead spider on a table.

Save your game here. Past the table is a large room with flammable liquid on the floor. Note the covered holes on the west and east walls, reminiscent of those in Bioshock II. At least one of them contains a metal ball, called a Dwarven Sphere. When the ball hits the ground, it unfolds into a robot soldier and immediately attacks you. These Spheres are very tough and move very quickly on wheels. If you climb up on top of the broken pipe in this room, the sphere cannot get to you, but it will roll away and hide. As soon as you get down from the pipe, it will again attack you. Between here and the entrance, I could find no good place to fight the robot.

However, if you run northeast, deeper into the ruin, passing through a gas-filled corridor, you get to a larger room containing a Blacksmith Forge. Jump up the rubble, into a small cubicle on the west wall of this room. A big pipe defines one wall of the enclosure. The sphere should not reach you there, although one or two Dwarven Spiders may be able to. Deal with the spiders first.

Whenever you move away from the wall, the sphere robot will run toward you. Shoot it with arrows or spells, so that it cannot touch you. When you back up into the corner again, the sphere may hide behind a large vertical pipe in the middle of the room, or hide around a corner. Keep shooting the robot until it collapses. Remember this fighting spot when you go deeper into the ruin. Use the forge in the southeast corner of the room if you want. A locked gate (novice) on the north wall opens to two locked (adept and apprentice) chests. To get some extra treasure, return to the room where the Sphere first appeared.

On the west wall of that Sphere room, note the three pistons going up and down. Jump onto the lowest piston, then the next one and then the highest one. From there, jump to the ledge and open two chests. Find several other treasures on the shelf as well.

Then return to where you fought the Sphere and go down the corridor west, to a "T" intersection with an unlocked chest. The pressure plate in front of the chest pushes spikes out from the wall. Both the north and south directions have a spider defender. Rubble has blocked the north fork.

Go south, past a living area, to another junction. To the west, note a locked (apprentice) door. Behind that door is another Dwarven Sphere, guarding a chest inside a small room. If you want to fight the Sphere, have it chase you back to the room with the Blacksmith Forge and kill it there.

Farther into the ruin is a two-tiered room with noisy machinery. Work your way around to the other side of this room, avoiding the pistons by jumping over them. Fight two or three Dwarven Spiders. On the other side of the room, find a hall going east to a door, "Alftand Animonculory". Beyond the door, pass by more living quarters and then go through another huge golden door.

Beyond that door, kill a spider and find Endrast dead, at the east end of a narrow pipe tunnel. Read his journal and get a lock pick. The nearby locked (adept) chest has only minor treasure. When you exit the tunnel, you will hear another Dwarven Sphere patrolling in the room outside the tunnel. Stand just inside the entrance to the tunnel. The sphere will attack you when you attempt to leave, but roll away if you shoot it with a bow. Pop back into the tunnel when it gets close, but do not back up any farther than necessary or the Sphere may find a way into the tunnel.

Then go up some stairs east and kill a spider hiding inside a pipe. Go up a ramp east. If you step on any of the three pressure plates on the ramp, a blade that works much like a helicopter rotor moves down the central groove. At the top, another Dwarven Spider inside a pipe may not see you until you come out of Sneak mode. Kill it and then activate a lever to lower a metal grate. Past the grate, find a stone bridge overlooking an enormous cave.

A Dwarven Spider in a cubby northwest guards a locked (novice) chest. Go down a spiral rock shelf, kill another spider and stop at a locked (apprentice) double door. In the room beyond, destroy another spider and then open a chest. Behind the locked (expert) gate is a skeleton holding a book, "The Locked Room". Read it, to get a one-point increase in your Lockpick Skill. The locked (master) chest has excellent loot, but is extremely difficult to open.

Outside this room, drop down off the ledge to land next to the dead body of Yag gra-Gortwog. One ramp goes *up* to a minor chest. A stone pressure plate here releases a Dwarven Spider Worker from an overhead pipe. Trigger that trap and kill the spider. Remember this little nook at the top. It is the highest point in the cave that you can go now. Another ramp spirals down into the abyss.

As you begin this descent, many Falmer will come up the ramp and attack you. Use Unrelenting Force to blow them off the narrow rock ramp. Stand upslope of the lateral piston, so that it can help you knock down the Falmer. Retreat to the nook at the top, to recharge your Shout.

Continue down the spiral ramp to a landing and watch for a Dwarven Spider. Just beyond this point, be wary of a tripwire, connected to a large spring-claw trap. Pass easily by the fire shooting down from a pipe and then go through the gold doorway to the north. At the end of the next hall, steps go down to a Falmer living area. Two of them will run up to attack you.

After you have dealt with the two Falmer, note their odd tents. Find some alchemy ingredients near the Alchemy Lab. From the floor near the shelves on the east wall, pick up a piece of gold ore for Madesi. Farther down the hall, look through the bars to see below you, three more Falmer, all bowmen. They will all attack you at once. Do a fighting retreat. Because they are using bows, they will not come too close to you, so you have a chance to find cover and heal up. You could close the gold doors near the column of flame, heal up and then open the doors to resume the fight. After you have killed them, find a locked (expert) chest in one of their tents. **Save your game** here.

Farther down the corridor, at the bottom of the next steps, is a group of four *much* tougher Falmer. They use ice spells that cripple your retreat to slow motion when the ice bolts hit you. Again, they will all attack you as a group and, if they have wounded you, continue to pursue you all the way to the top of the spiral. This is an almost impossible fight for a low-level character. After much experimenting, the only success I had (without dumbing down the difficulty level) was to have some or all of them chase me to the nook at the very top of the spiral. There, while they are all crowded in front of me trying hard to kill me, I use my Unrelenting Force to knock the whole group over the edge of the abyss. Then heal up, go back down the spiral and look for stragglers.

When you finally defeat them, loot their torture room. The lift will take you up to the locked gate where you met your first active Dwarven Spider. Open the gold doors to the east and then continue down the ramp. Near the bottom, watch for two tough Falmer and a Frostbite Spider. Loot their camp and then go through the door north and down a ramp. Avoid a large claw trap and then go through the gold door west, to "Alftand Cathedral".

Beyond the door, be wary of three pressure plates on the floor. These activate a set of four swinging bars that come down from the ceiling. Past them, watch for another Falmer, and then go through the big gold door west. On the other side, two Falmer sneak back and forth at the top of the next steps. Snipe them with a bow in Sneak mode, and then loot four chests, two of them locked (novice and adept). Harvest some glowing mushrooms; kill a Frostbite Spider and then activate the big lever on the raised platform. This lowers the spike gate to the west.

Go west and up the steps to find a giant mechanical man coming to life. This is a Dwarven Centurion. It shoots powerful high-pressure steam at you, but moves slowly. Use your new Fire Breath Shout against it and keep out of the way while you recharge. Alternatively, lead the robot back into the corridor with the pressure plates and have the swinging bars disable it.

Open the gate behind the Centurion and find two people, Sulla Trabatius and Umana, arguing and fighting. However, if they see you, they will attack *you*. One way to defeat them is to leave the Dwarven Centurion active. Let Sulla and Umana see you and then run back to where the Centurion stands. Either Sulla or Umana will attack the mechanical man. Use that distraction to defeat whoever is *not* fighting the Centurion. Then defeat the survivor.

One Centurion has the key to the gate in front of the Alftand Lift. This elevator takes you up to the snowy surface. If you find your inventory nearly full, use the lift and Fast Travel to Whiterun. Sell or stockpile your inventory and then return to the lift.

Open three chests, one of them locked (apprentice). Stand on the west side of the Dwemer Mechanism and then activate it. Go down the steps, to the door to Blackreach. Beyond the door is one of the largest and darkest caves you have ever entered. Turn up your Brightness setting. Walk south, up to the mounted crossbow in front of you and pull the lever, to fire the bolts at a Dwarven Sphere near the door to the southwest. If you want to ignore most of the cave's attractions and do only what is necessary to continue the main quest, then skip past the green text.

One or two Falmer sneak around in a depression southeast of the entrance balcony. A button on the gold head of a statue in front of the building to the south opens a gate in front of another lift to the surface, the Great Lift at Alftand. Below the crossbow handle, find the first of more than thirty Crimson Nirnroot spread about the cave, beginning a side quest, "A Return to your Roots". Note that all the Crimson Nirnroots outside buildings re-spawn after ten game days. To help find them, listen for the sound they make, much like a wind chime.

The door, southwest, that the sphere was guarding was Sinderion's Field Laboratory. Inside, find his skeleton and read his Field Journal, to learn the import of Crimson Nirnroot. Also, read "De Rerum Dirennis", to raise your Alchemy Skill. Open two chests; get some Soul Gems and potions.

In a high building behind Sinderion's Laboratory, to the south between Great Lift at Alftand and the laboratory, one or two Falmer are creeping along a balcony. They guard a nice chest.

Behind that building is a long stone wall with an arched opening in the center. Just past that arch, on your left (south), are the War Quarters, a sleeping area for troops. The building has exotic natural gas lighting, but is empty, except for two nice chests.

Southwest of the arch is a large stone circle. A lever next to the circle activates a spinning blade. On an altar west of the circle, read the "2920 Midyear Book" for a one-point boost to your Heavy Armor Skill. At the south edge of this circle, steps lead down to an intersection. From there, one set of steps goes up to a dead end guarded by a pair of trolls. **Save your game.**

Pull the lever at the circle, to get the blade going. Then go down the steps to the intersection. Go up the steps and encourage *one* of the trolls to chase you back up to the stone circle. If both of them chase you down the steps, stand on a unique point of rock at the intersection. Snipe the trolls from there, to split them up. One should run back up to their camp. Then run up to the stone circle. Stand always on the other side of the circle from the troll and stay away from the blade. The troll is not smart enough to do this and the blade will slice him dead with about three cuts. Do the same with the second troll and collect a Crimson Nirnroot where they made their camp.

From the intersection halfway down the steps, go west down to the base of a huge waterfall. Swim in the pool at the bottom to find two more Crimson Nirnroot. Open the door to a "Derelict Pumphouse" on the west side of the pool. Inside the pump house is a Dwarven Spider guarding a locked (adept) chest. Turn a red underwater valve to open the metal grate and then pick another Crimson Nirnroot. A lift from here takes you back up to the top of the waterfall.

From the top of the lift, a ramp takes you southeast, up to a door to "Raldbthar Deep Market". Left of this door is a locked (master) chest. A locked (novice) gate to the right of the door opens to a cage containing a locked (adept) chest. Watch for a small Falmer camp next door, to the west. Beyond the market door are two chests, one of them locked (master), behind a locked (expert) gate. The door to the east end of the room is the bottom of a lift only accessible from the surface.

North of the lift you took up from the Pump House, find another lift to the surface, named the "Great Lift of Raldbthar". From here, wade across the top of the falls, north and east. Continue in those directions until you again find the entrance balcony.

From the entrance balcony, go west and swim across a pool at the base of another waterfall. When you get to the other side of the pool, walk across a rock bridge to a tower. Shoot the three Frostbite Spiders on a ledge high above the tower west. Then enter "Reeking Tower" and kill all the spiders that infest the tower. Open a chest at the top, hidden behind cobwebs. Activate the lift to Blackreach. It takes you up to the ledge where the three spiders were. Find a Crimson Nirnroot.

Back at the base of the Reeking Tower, in Sneak mode, snipe two Falmer in a camp far below you to the south. Then swim east, back across the pool to the entrance balcony.

From the entrance balcony, go down the hill west, to the main road. Open the chest next to the Centurion. Now go southwest, under a bridge connecting two towers defended by a pair of Falmer and a Chaurus bug, a large black chitinous insect. Just past the bridge, on your right (west), pass by a sloping entrance to the largest concentration of buildings in the cave.

The city-sized buildings with the giant orange ball (sun) above them are home to many Falmer and their servants. All of them carry weapons. They will attack you when they detect you. Here, are located the Debate Hall and the Ruminant Chamber. Clearing this area takes patience and stealth. One Crimson Nirnroot grows on a walkway. Another grows in a pot, hidden around a corner at the very top of the Ruminant Chamber. Use the Ruminant Chamber Lift to get to it.

Facing west from the outside of the city, notice a large sewer pipe, which is an entrance to the Silent City Catacombs. This pipe leads to a pumping facility defended by Falmer. Among its attractions are a nice chest and a swinging pipe trap. The hallways eventually get you up to a Debate Hall door. If all that was not challenging enough for you, try this. Hit the sun with your Unrelenting Force Shout, dragon will fly toward the city from the northern reaches of the cave.

Continue down the road south, watching for a pair of Chaurus bugs. Pass another Centurion and then cross a stone bridge west. On the other side of the bridge are wide steps that comprise the main entrance to the city. From these steps, you can see the Tower of Mzark to the south. West of Mzark, find the Farm Overseer's house. It has potions and two locked (adept and novice) chests.

Also from the main city steps, another road goes west. Along this road, up the hill north, find the Mzinchaleft Gatehouse, another room that appears to be just an empty corridor. You can only access this lift from the surface. However, the nearby Great Lift at Mzinchaleft *will* take you up to the surface. Avoid a strolling Giant along this road. He will not attack unless you provoke him.

From here, continue east along the road, to "Silent Ruin". Inside the ruin are a chest and a book, "Warrior" that raises your Block Skill. Stepping on the pressure plate in front of the book activates a spinning blade. Pick a Crimson Nirnroot. East of here, watch for several Wisps. These look like weaving trails of white light. A very tough Wisp Mother accompanies them.

As you work your way west, along the roads of the huge cave, be ready to fight several more Falmer and at least one large black chitinous insect called a Chaurus. If you release a Centurion, by pulling its lever, it will attack you. If you go inside the high buildings of the city on the southwest wall of the cave, many Falmer and their servants will attack you. On your local map, this area is marked as the Debate Hall. To continue the main quest, bypass the city and make your way to the tall tower almost at the end of the cave, to the southwest. This is the "Tower of Mzark".

Enter the tower and pull the lever to rise up into a small stone room. Open a locked (novice) chest and an unlocked chest on the same set of shelves. Open another novice chest on another set of shelves. Read "The Armorer's Challenge", in the west corner of the room, for a one-point boost to your Smithing Skill. Open the door to the west and find a giant metal sphere almost filling the room. Find a ramp behind it and go up to a set of five gold posts. Four of them are switches. Activate the Lexicon Receptacle, to place your Blank Lexicon in it.

Press the second button from the right four times, to light up the second button from the left. Press the second button from the left twice, to light up the button on the far left. Press the button on the far left once, to make the mechanism above the ball release the scroll. Take back your cube from the Lexicon Receptacle, and then go down and collect the Elder Scroll. This action completes the quest "Elder Knowledge" and begins "Alduin's Bane".

Alduin's Bane

Exit through the door east. Pull the lever to ride the Lift of Mzark to the surface. At the top, activate the lever near the gate, to open it. Fast Travel northeast, back to Septimus Signus's Outpost. Give him back the Lexicon Cube. If you have not gotten to level 15, he tells you that he will contact you later. When you reach level 15, a messenger will give you a note from Signus.

If you *have* gotten to level 15, Signus tells you he needs blood from all five types of elves. Then he can open the locked Dwemer Box. When you try to leave the ice cave, a blue smoky cloud, called a "Wretched Abyss", blocks your exit. Speak with it, to find that it is the god Hermaeus Mora. He wants you to take Signus's place as the god's lackey. Choose either dialog option to exit.

Fast Travel southwest, to the Throat of the World and listen to Paarthurnax give a short speech. After he stops speaking, **save your game**. Walk northwest, to the area of snow where the quest arrow points you. Open your inventory and read the Elder Scroll. A video recording will show you the event in the past when Nords used the scroll to help banish Alduin to the future. Sometimes, after Gormlaith says, "We will know soon enough, Alduin approaches", the recording freezes and Alduin never lands on the ground. If this happens, load the save and try again.

As soon as you get control of your character, equip your new Shout, Dragonrend. You will see Alduin hovering in the air in front of you. Hit him with the Shout, and it will force him to the ground, where you can whack him with your weapon. After a few moments, Alduin will recover and fly off again. He will attack you from the air and you must dodge fiery stones, but Paarthurnax will join in the battle, trying to help you. Paarthurnax gets in the way much of the time. It may sometimes be difficult for you to tell the two dragons apart. Even so, whenever you can get in a clear shot, hit Alduin with the Dragonrend Shout again. Keep hitting him with your favorite weapon until his health meter reaches zero. You may think you should have killed him, but you have not. Alduin will give you a little speech and then fly off.

The Fallen and Season Unending

Speak with Paarthurnax again. Then go to Dragonsreach and convince Jarl Balgruuf to let you imprison a dragon in his palace. After that, go to High Hrothgar and speak with Arngeir about hosting a peace conference. Then Fast Travel northeast to Windhelm and enter the Palace of the Kings, at the north end of the long courtyard. Speak with Ulfric Stormcloak about the Greybeard's message. Convince him to participate in the peace conference. Then Fast Travel west, to Solitude. Walk northwest up the ramps and enter Castle Dour. Speak with General Tullius about the Greybeard's message. Convince him to participate in the peace conference.

Return to High Hrothgar and witness a sharp conversation between Delphine, Esbern and Arngeir. Your two friends have shown up to the conference without an invitation. Arngeir relents, allowing them a seat at the table. Walk east and south, to the conference room. Have a seat at the head of the table, where the quest arrow indicates. Then everyone else will sit.

You must negotiate a temporary truce between the two feuding sides, by convincing each side to give up some territory. When the discussion reaches a certain point, Ulfric Stormcloak and Galmar Stone-Fist, may get up from their chairs and prepare to walk out of the talks. Esbern will get up from his chair and make a convincing argument for everyone to stay. The two sides will come to an accord no matter which dialog choices you make.

Esbern believes that you can lure a dragon by calling its name. Here, you learn the Shout that is the dragon, Odahviing's, name. Now everyone walks out of the room except Delphine. She has a very frank discussion with you about Paarthurnax. Because the white dragon worked in the past with Alduin, she refuses to give you any more help unless you kill him, beginning the side quest, "Paarthurnax". Ignore her demand for now.

The next part of the main quest puts you in an area where you cannot Fast Travel. Sell off, or store, your unwanted inventory, so that you have more room for treasure. Put some *filled* Soul Gems in your inventory if you are using magical weapons. Stock up on potions. Return to Dragonsreach to speak with the Jarl. Tell him that you are ready to spring the trap on the dragon, Odahviing.

Follow the group up the stairs north, behind the Jarl's throne. Go through the door to "Dragonsreach, Great Porch". Equip the Shout "Call Dragon", to lure Odahviing to the porch. A few seconds after you use the Shout, the dragon will appear in the sky above the porch. When Odahviing lands on the porch, do not attack. Lure him to the closed west end of the porch. The Jarl's soldiers will spring the trap and now you can speak with Odahviing.

The World-Eater's Eyrie

Alduin has flown off to Sovngarde. This is the Nord underworld. Alduin is there to feed on the souls of the dead. That is how he regains his strength. You must get to Skuldafn, high in the Jerral Mountains. The only way to get there is to fly. Tell Odahviing that you will free him if he flies you Skuldafn. Climb up the stairs on the southeast wall of the porch. Pull the chain hanging from a square post, releasing the dragon. He will waddle out to the balcony. Go back downstairs and tell him that you are ready to go. A cut scene will show you climbing on his neck and flying away. When you land, Odahviing will fly off, leaving you standing alone in front of a huge stone edifice.

Now you must find Alduin's Portal to Sovngarde. As soon as you move toward the first stone arch, two or three Draugr will begin attacking at you. While you are trying to kill them, a dragon will join in the battle. Use the tall stone for cover, switching your priority to the dragon. Be patient and kill him the way you have all the others. Then finish off the Draugr.

South, from beyond the next arch, two or three Restless Draugr will attack you. When they are all dead, go up the steps and under a third arch. Just beyond it, another dragon will attack you. Use the arch for cover and kill the dragon. Then, for extra treasure, go inside the "South Tower". Inside the tower, kill three Draugr on the lower level, open a big urn and go up to the top of the spiral wooden ramp. At the top, kill two more Draugr; open the chest and another urn. Two doors open off this room to a balcony, but it does not give you any tactical advantage or treasure.

Exit the tower and go up the steps east, to another courtyard. Sneak around here, to snipe several roving Draugr patrols on the level above you and raise your Sneak Skill. Farther into the courtyard, enter another tower door. Kill any Draugr in there and open another chest. Behind the north base of that tower, go through the arch to another small courtyard. Deal with several more Draugr here and at the top of the next steps. Then go up those steps. You have removed most of the threats, so you may only have to deal with two or three more Draugr on the upper level. On this upper level, besides the door to "Skuldafn Temple", are another tower and a chest at the top of the south steps, defended by another tough Draugr.

When you are ready, enter the temple door and kill three Draugr in the distance, to the north. Open one chest and two large urns. Avoid *two* stone pressure plates. Loot six small Burial Urns.

Then go up the north steps and kill one Draugr standing out in the open. Four more of them will pop out of the vertical sarcophagi on the walls. This room has two gated exits, three moveable pillars and a lever. The arrows at the base of the pillars give you a clue as to the position where the icons must face. The icons on the east and west walls give you further clues. Rotate the pillars into position. Put the bird in the middle. Then pull the lever. The gate to the northeast will open to a chest for you to loot. Return to the center pillar and change it to a snake, to open the gate to the northwest. Go up the stairway behind that gate.

At the top of the steps, kill a Draugr in the pit below you. Two more of them will pop out of sarcophagi. Open one chest and three urns. Then squeeze through the narrow opening to the west. The three Frostbite Spiders just around the next corner cannot chase you through that opening. Deal with them, hack the cobwebs to the east and then kill another spider. At the top of the east steps, kill two more spiders and open a hidden chest. Then go through the "Iron Door".

In the next room, kill two Draugr, loot one large urn and a chest. Then go up the log ramp to find a lever and two moveable pillars. Unless you turn the pillars to the correct position, the holes at the base of the lever pillar shoot darts at you when you pull the lever. The icons above the north and south tunnels tell you how to set the two upper pillars. Do so, and then go back down to the lower level to align a third pillar, using the third icon. Go back up the ramp and pull the lever, to lower a wooden drawbridge. Loot two large urns and then go through the door to "Skuldafn Temple".

The tunnel behind the door leads to three Draugr. Kill them and then go up the stairs. Cross the bridge west, to a room with a spiral staircase. Avoid the stone pressure plate on the floor. It ignites the flammable liquid on the floor and shoots darts from the stonework on the north wall. Check the large urn and the shelves for treasure and then climb the wooden spiral staircase.

At the top of the stairs, three Draugr stand guard behind the south door. They can see out of two viewports. When they detect you, they will rush out the door and attack you. If you act quickly, you can shoot the hanging pot just inside the door, incinerating them. In any case, after you have dealt with them, loot their chest and pull the lever inside that room. This opens the north gate.

Beyond that gate, in the next large room, two *dark* camouflaged metal pressure plates can release a hanging pot. When it falls, flame fills the room. Loot a chest and then go around the corner to face the Draugr Overlord. He carries a very nice weapon. Take his Diamond Claw and note the symbols inscribed on it. Loot a large urn and then stand in front of the locked door. Turn the three rings to match the symbols on the claw and then activate the keyhole. The door will slide down. Inside the huge room beyond is a Word Wall. Walk up to it and learn the new Shout, "Storm Call".

Continue up the steps north to a side room with three urns and some potions. On the south wall, take the linen from a bowl on the shelf. At the bottom of the bowl are three flawless gems.

Then go through the door to Skuldafn. This puts you outside with four Draugr. Defeat them, *without* harming any of the many dragons perched about. Return through the Skuldafn door when you need to heal between fights. The Draugr will not chase you there. After you defeat them, go down the wooden steps opposite the door to Skuldafn. The series of steps and ramps has scattered treasure and a nice chest at the bottom.

Then go up to the top of the north steps to see a Dragon Priest named Nahkriin, floating in the air above the small altar ahead. Do not walk up to him. He will attack you with ranged frost bolts. Take out your bow and peek over the top of the steps, so as not to expose yourself more than you need to. Use your own ranged-attack against him. Take his Dragon Priest Staff.

Ignore the perching dragons. Climb to the top of the altar north, where you first saw Nahkriin. Activate the Dragon Seal and watch as part of the stone floor turns into a swirling maelstrom. Jump into it, to land at the top of some steps. Look above you, to see where you came from.

Sovngarde

Walk down the steps and through the valley. Use your Clear Skies Shout to dissipate the mist. Partway down the valley, a Stormcloak Soldier will stop you and warn of the danger ahead, "The world eater waits within the mist". Continue to the bottom of the valley. Here, the trail goes left, right and straight ahead, up a small hill. Take this middle route up the steps of the hill. You will hear and see a dragon flying in the air above you, but Alduin will not yet attack. At the top of the hill, see the Hall of Valor to the north. Remember this hilltop location. Climb down the rocks to the bottom and then walk north to the pile of bones. Tsun the gatekeeper waits to speak with you.

Ask Tsun to allow you access to the Hall of Valor. He says that he must first test you to see if you are worthy. Have your Unrelenting Force Shout ready. As soon as the conversation ends, Tsun will attack you with his sword. Immediately hit him with the Shout, to stun him for a moment. Then run back up the road south, around the hill either left or right. Tsun will follow on your heels, but he must stop to swing his blade, giving you space enough to outrun him. Eventually, partway up the misty hill, Tsun will turn around and return to his post at the pile of bones.

Sneak back to the top of the small hill, to where you can just see Tsun at his post far below you. Get out your bow and start peppering him with arrows and spells. He may run to the base of the hill, but he will not climb it. When you have taken about half of his health, he will turn and walk leisurely back to his post. You have passed the test. Follow him back there and past him, across the bridge made from a dragon's spine. Enter the Hall of Valor through any of the four doors.

On the other side of the door, you find yourself in a huge dining hall. A man named Ysgramor will stop you and speak to you. He tells you that three of the other warriors in the room are willing to help you defeat Alduin. If you want to explore this building, do so now. The doors will lock when you leave. Then walk over to the area where three quest arrows hover over the heads of three of the warriors: Gormlaith Golden-Hilt, Hakon One-Eye and Felldir the Old. When you join that group, they will speak a few words and then all run to the exit.

Dragonslayer

Follow the group back across the bone bridge and then equip your Clear Skies Shout. Gormlaith Golden-Hilt will suggest that all four of you use that Shout at the same time. Use your Shout first and they will join you. The mist clears, but you must repeat the sequence twice more to clear all of the mist permanently. Drink the potions that you have been saving for a special occasion.

Now Alduin will appear in the skies above your group. Change your Shout to Dragonrend. Use it to force Alduin to the ground. With help from the others, hit him with your best weapon. Repeat this tactic as many times as necessary, until Alduin can no longer fly. Hit him one last time and then watch as he dies in an explosion of fire.

The group will give you a few cheers of victory. Tsun will tell you that you cannot stay. When you tell him you are ready to leave, Tsun will teach you a new Word of Power, the "Call of Valor". This brings one of the three warriors to your side to fight for you. A cut scene will transport you back to the Throat of the World.

Do not attack any of the many dragons flying around you. Speak with Paarthurnax for a while. At the end of the conversation, he will fly off. Odahviing will take his place. He tells you that you may still have to fight a few unrepentant dragons. He will come to your aid if you call his name.

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