

NIFLBERG

MAP LEGEND

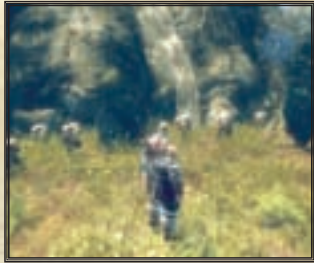
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BRIGHTHELM SETTLEMENT

REQUIREMENTS:	Talk to the Shaman, talk to the Chieftain
OPTIONAL GOALS:	Talk to all civilians, hunt for gold, search the nearby beach, free several Vikings
ENEMIES PRESENT:	None



Freya returns Skarin to Brighthelm, his strength, weapons, and armor intact. He's ready to fight, but he must speak to several people before rushing into the wilderness. People who have something important to say have icons over their heads. Approach these individuals and find out what they know about your situation and the state of the war.

Look around the area where you begin. Skarin starts near the Brighthelm Leystone. You will return to this area often; it's the closest Leystone to all of the stores you need in Niflberg. The blacksmith is here to give Skarin elemental runes; the general store is here for healing potions, maps, and throwing axes; and you can make money by bringing Mead back to the village.

All in all, there is plenty to do, and you should wander around to find the gold that people have made available to the warriors of Brighthelm. There are bags of gold throughout the village, and there are several more lucrative urns to break as well. Don't be shy about taking all of this money; it's there for you, and the people of Brighthelm know that it will be put to a good cause.



Gold Abounds



You probably won't find all of the gold in Brighthelm during your first pass. Use the money you find during the first forays to purchase the maps for gold bags, urns, and treasure chests.

These are invaluable for making even more money in the future. The sooner you buy them the more they pay for themselves!



Shaman Asta stands on the road, just below the Leystone area. Talk to her before going too far into the village. She explains some of what has happened to you, though she is somewhat unhinged. Being touched by the spirits doesn't make people terribly coherent!

Shopkeeper Osgood owns the general store, and he is on the village's western side. You can't talk to him yet; his store doesn't have any stock. All of the problems at Hilltop Farm have caused supplies to run dry here in Brighthelm, so you can't purchase any goodies until that situation is resolved.

The blacksmith is down at the base of the hill. You can find several hundred gold in Brighthelm, so it's entirely possible to buy your first elemental rune before you start to explore Niflberg. Fire and Ice are both very good choices here. Fire is more offensive, and it leads to faster military victories. Ice is more defensive, and helps to keep Skarin and his allies alive. You should even consider buying the first level of both!

Chieftain Haral is down by the gates of Brighthelm. He won't open the way into Niflberg until he talks with you. The Chieftain is extremely pleased that Skarin has survived the rigors of combat, regardless of how strange his reappearance may be. But things are not well in Brighthelm and throughout Niflberg. Many warriors have fallen, and still more are captured through the region. You must find these Vikings, save them, and boost your army's strength before taking on the Legion at the Gorge. Once that is done, you can start to retake northern Niflberg and eventually siege Darkwater, the local capital.



ODDASTRONG, THE LONG BEACH

REQUIREMENTS:	None
OPTIONAL GOALS:	Get two kegs of Niflberg Mead, free six Vikings
ENEMIES PRESENT:	None



Many small bags of gold are spread around the beach north of Brighthelm. Currently, no enemies attack the town from that direction, so Skarin can explore without risking himself. Take the gold that you find and look for surviving Vikings to free. Most of the warriors out there were lashed to poles and left to die a foul death, exposed to the elements. It's too late to help those poor kin. You can just hope that their valor was enough to send them to Valhalla and that these ignominious deaths will not rob Freya of even more good men.

The beached longships are of no use for now. They are interesting to look at, but there are too many local problems to even think about sailing away. This is no time for honorable raiding!

One cluster of living Vikings is on the beach's western side. Free them by approaching the stake to which they are lashed, and tap the controller button quickly to untie the men. These are the first new warriors to join your army. Before you go too far from there, scout around for some Niflberg Mead. Those barrels are worth a huge sum of gold back in Brighthelm; just talk to the beermaster.

A second keg of Mead is on the beach's eastern side, in a narrow section of sand that is probably underwater at high tide. Look at the end of that spot to see three more Vikings that need your help. It's a good thing that you were diligent, else those hapless men would have drown before long.

DON'T WALK OFF THE DEEP END



Skarin is wearing too much heavy armor and equipment for a long swim. He can step into the shallow end of the beaches and rivers throughout Midgard, but he dies quickly if you lead him in over his head. For the same reason, you must be extremely careful of jumping over cliff edges. Landing in deep water is a death sentence for Skarin.



HILLTOP FARM

REQUIREMENTS:	Kill the defending grunts, free the Viking captives, talk to Miller Tait when you are done
OPTIONAL GOALS:	Search the treasure chest by the windmill
ENEMIES PRESENT:	A moderate number of Grunts

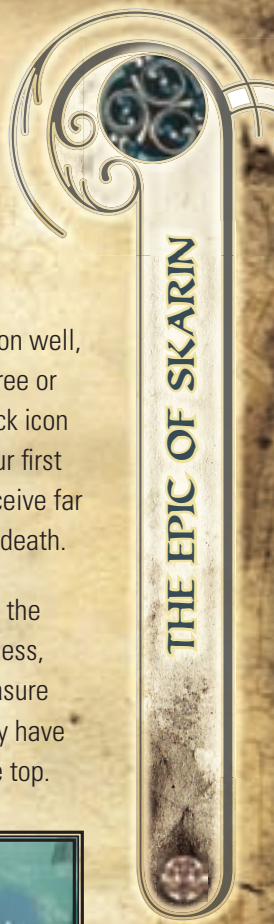


After saving the six men on the beach, return to Brighthelm and use the eastern gate to leave town. Turn north, off the road, and look on your map. Hilltop Farm is clearly marked, and in game you can use the map to mark the farm as your current target. This leaves the spot up on your Brisingamen and makes it much easier to find your way there.



Your first fight against the Legion comes almost as soon as you leave the safe region around Bright-helm. A lone grunt patrols the road, looking for signs of Viking activity. He runs over to Skarin, blade drawn and looking for death. Use the block command and notice how easy it is to ward off a sole grunt. Just keep facing the fiend, and he can never hurt you. Then, when you have learned this lesson well, punish your opponent with a series of fast attacks. Three or four of these rips apart the grunt. When the slow attack icon appears, press the corresponding button and score your first finishing move! The fatalities look wicked, and you receive far more elemental orbs than if you just beat the grunt to death.

Follow the winding area that leads up the hills toward the farm. There are a few gold bags left out in the wilderness, though they may still be hard to spot without your treasure maps. Not many grunts guard the way, so you probably have only one more warm-up encounter before reaching the top.



THE EPIC OF SKARIN

You have a choice when making your assault in Hilltop Farm. The fast route is to rush up the southern hill. This saves about a minute in circling the hill and coming up the northern road. The fast route is convenient, but it doesn't easily give you a surprise attack. Many of the enemies are located on the farm's southern end and will spot Skarin's approach.

Taking the long way gives you more cover and allows Skarin to face a few of the enemies in seclusion, thinning the group's overall numbers before a chaotic battle ensues.

There is a third option, which, in some ways, gives you the best of both worlds. Follow the southern route up the hill for a fast entry to the farm, but stay at long range and keep your distance from the buildings at first. Skirt the farm and enter on the eastern side, where there are some sheds and bales of hay. Fight the few grunts there, and you end with a smoother flow of combat without having to approach slowly!

Either way, Freya tells you about the farm as you enter its perimeter. She continues to do this for most of the areas that Skarin visits. Some of the information she gives you is downright useful. Other messages are interesting but don't shed light on your tactical concerns. In this case, she simply explains the history of Hilltop Farm and the necessity of retaking it.



The fighting itself isn't so tough. There are a handful of grunts, and the fight is quite manageable whether you are playing on Normal or Hard difficulty. Block while you lure the targets toward you, and then quickly punish attackers with two or three fast attacks. Use longer combos when there aren't many enemies nearby. When there are larger groups, use only single or double hits to avoid taking much damage from peripheral targets.

Once you slay all of the grunts, you must free the Vikings in the large cage. Approach the wooden structure and tap the "interact" button quickly to rip apart the beams that secure it. Vikings spill out and quickly arm themselves, ready to finish off any grunts that you've missed, though usually there aren't many left.

If you purchased one of the elemental runes before leaving Brighthelm, use your power now to buff these Vikings and see how the effect works. It's a quick process: just hold down the button for elemental magic and press a second button to select which elemental type to use. There is an achievement for buffing a large number of Vikings later in the game, so it's always nice to get big groups like this one.



Don't leave Hilltop Farm even after the area is secure. Look for Miller Tait. He comes out of the main building and has an icon over his head to show that he needs to speak to you. He tells you about the Lost Cargo that is nearby, which is necessary to get the general store up and running. He also lends you his support, giving strong words to show that he and his people believe in what you are doing.

Search the area near the windmill, on the western side of Hilltop Farm. There is a chest of gold there, and you need all the money you can get this early on in the war.



RETRIEVING THE LOST CARGO

REQUIREMENTS: Open the treasure chest and return its contents to Shopkeeper Osgood in Brighthelm

OPTIONAL GOALS: None

ENEMIES PRESENT: A few Grunts



THE ANCIENT RUINS

REQUIREMENTS: Free the Viking prisoners, discover part of the Dragon Amulet

OPTIONAL GOALS: Collect more money and visit the Arena afterward

ENEMIES PRESENT: Grunts



Make sure Skarin heals from his encounter at the farm. Outside of combat, he returns to perfect health quickly. Just watch the health bar climb, and notice that it fills even faster when Skarin isn't doing anything. Hold still and watch the farm settle back into its routine. Then hurry off on your next quest when Skarin is good to go!

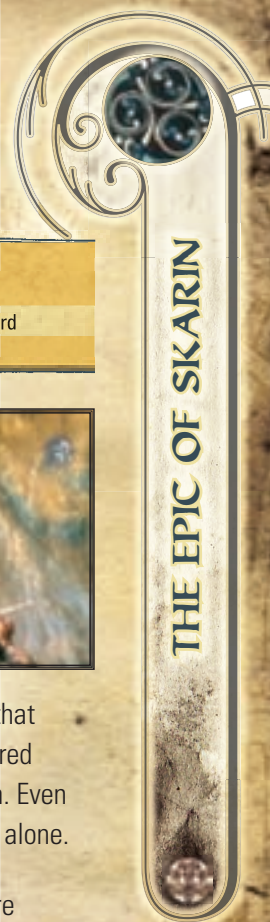
The Lost Cargo is very close to Hilltop Farm. Run down the hill and destroy the few grunts that are close to the cart. Look on your map if you have trouble seeing the cargo—it's also marked as Map Point 2 on the map provided with this walkthrough.

There are only a few defenders at the site of the Lost Cargo, and they can't really stop Skarin. Start building up your elemental magic bar again, and then loot the chest when the area is clear. Bring the goods back to Shopkeeper Osgood. He then opens the general store in Brighthelm. Use the money you've already amassed to purchase either the health rune or some of the treasure maps. Both have major benefits. The health improvement is permanent, so it helps Skarin for the rest of the game! The treasure maps help you find all of the out-of-the-way treasure.

When you're strapped for cash, it's usually best to buy only the treasure map for the gold bags. These are the hardest treasure items to notice visually, and their map is the least expensive one to buy!

You still don't have enough allies to siege the bridge that leads into northern Niflberg. Hel has well over a hundred troops protecting the gap, and a champion leads them. Even the best warriors in the world couldn't face all of that alone.

So, hit the Ancient Ruins first and see if there are more Vikings there. After you purchase any supplies that you can afford, leave Brighthelm again and turn south after exploring the area along the road.



A Dark Nook



There is a small cave on the northern side of the ruins (marked as Map Point 3). It's somewhat easy to miss, so keep an eye on the side of the path. Several Vikings are trapped inside, and a few armed grunts guard them.

Stay at the lip of the cave to prevent Skarin from being flanked. Use fast attacks and blocking to punish the captors without risking yourself.

When the work is done, save the Viking inside. This is a good deed, and it helps you in your upcoming battle; all of the people you've freed aid you in the attack, and every man counts!

Beyond that, there are several bags of gold inside the cave. It's always nice to get paid for your fighting, so look carefully and loot everything in sight before you leave.

Jump across the broken bridge and use the southern road that leads into the ruins. Alternatively, you can avoid the bridge, run all the way to the east, and then come into the Ancient Ruins from the Arena side. Both options get you to the same place without a great deal of fighting, so it's more a matter of preference. If you wish to grab a special move or two right now, take the eastern route first. Look on your map, mark the Arena, and stop there before climbing back up the cliff. Get Thor's Hammer some time soon; that is arguably the most powerful of the inexpensive moves that Skarin can learn.

Additionally, there is a keg of Niflberg Mead on the beach, not far from the Dueling Arena. Look along the edge of the cliff for this, along with an urn that you can break and loot.



There is a Leystone on the eastern side of the Ancient Ruins. You need to visit these Leystones only one time to activate them. Afterward, Skarin can jump with impunity between Leystones he's visited. This particular Leystone is so far to the south that it isn't as tactically useful as some other Leystones, but it gets you close to the Arena. That is a very good thing, because Skarin must visit the Arena often to learn all of his special moves!

It's time to free your friends! Follow the small strip of ruins along the southern cliff. This passes the Leystone and a strange dragon altar. You find only a couple of grunts down there, so this route avoids a huge fight. There is also a convenient urn to grab along the way, and you're probably starving for wealth now. Take the money and continue.

Draw the last guard you see away from the cage of Vikings that he guards. Fight this grunt in the south so that none of Hel's people realize what is happening. Then break open the cage and use your elemental magic to buff the Vikings inside. They rush the remaining cluster of grunts, and you can enjoy a fast and easy slaughter! It doesn't get any better than that—well, actually it does, because there is an even bigger fight coming up soon. Still, that rush is beautiful when you perform it perfectly.



If you bring Skarin in from the north or down the main path into the Ruins, it is *much* harder to win. You have to fight off the entire cluster of grunts without any backup. They hound and harass Skarin, and it's a long fight in which you are forced to give ground, pick off grunts one at a time, and sometimes even run away to heal. This takes quite a while because you must get out of combat for Skarin to heal.

After all of the grunts in the area are killed, talk to Warrior Cadby. He tells you about Havelock, a Viking who was with the others during their ambush. Cadby says that Havelock was acting strangely, and now nobody knows where he is. It sounds like you should look around for Havelock and see what really happened during the ambush. This conversation causes a new mark to appear on your map, on the eastern shoreline. That is your next quest!

Before you leave the Ancient Ruins, walk to the northern side of the area and search for a treasure chest. That gets you a nice sum of gold, but there is even more important treasure above. Skarin can climb onto a broken section of wall very close to the chest. This leads onto a ledge that is easy to traverse as long as you are careful. Leap from that area to another tiny ledge, and sidestep over to the left.

Jump over to keep moving along the set of ledges, and hop up to a higher tier at the end of the path. The walkways wrap around the Ruins from there, but they dead-end at a wall with a great deal of overgrowth. Push Skarin into the wall and watch as he grabs hold of the vines. Climb left and down until you can get below another ledge, and then slip up onto it. It's then a simple run to reach another chest. This one has the Dragon Gem known as Hugin. You'll absolutely need this before long.

Retrace your path, hop down to the lower ledges, and then drop from there to the floor of the area. Collect any final gold you wish and move on.

There is Niflberg Mead on the eastern beach. You can pick this up while you walk from the Ancient Ruins up to Havelock's location on the map.

There is a beached longship near Havelock's position, and there are Legion grunts all over the place. Havelock is up there with them, but it doesn't look like he is a prisoner—a grim piece of news. He talks to Skarin briefly, and then it's a fight for survival.

Back away to deal with the early trio of grunts that attacks. Use the beached ship to block enemy sightlines and to avoid the arrows fired from archers in the distance.



WHAT HAPPENED TO HAVELOCK?

REQUIREMENTS:	Find Havelock and do what needs to be done
OPTIONAL GOALS:	Get another keg of Niflberg Mead and visit the Arena again, as necessary
ENEMIES PRESENT:	Grunts and Archers



Next, rush to the wooden planks and hop up to fight the archers. You can do this without attracting Havelock's attention or his two remaining grunts—just stay to the left as you move forward. Cut through the undefended archers and then leap down to slay the grunts. Do this quickly, and you can fight Havelock one-on-one. His sword attacks are easy to block, and you should respond with fast attacks. Havelock has no chance.

Take the traitor's Helmet and return that to Cadby at the Ancient Ruins. Cadby hears your news, responds appropriately, and tells you to talk to Torv. Torv is the innkeeper back in Brighthelm, and he's the one who needs the Niflberg Mead; he stands near the drinking area, at the foot of Brighthelm's hill. You can now turn in the casks you've collected. They are worth a good sum of gold. Use the nearby Leystone to reach Brighthelm quickly, and purchase any treats you want. Then look on your map to find your next target.



RETRIEVING YOUR BIRTHRIGHT

REQUIREMENTS:	Slay a Legion Champion and take his Battlehorn
OPTIONAL GOALS:	Grab the Hilltop Farm Leystone
ENEMIES PRESENT:	Grunts and a Champion

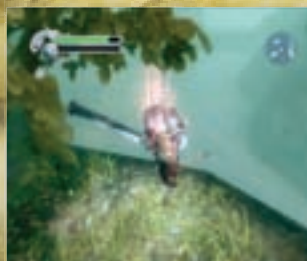


Feel free to walk all the way up to the area marked as "Battle Horn" on your map (Map Point 7 on this walkthrough's map). It's a shorter trip to use the Ruins Leystone, but you might want to take the overland route for monetary reasons. By now, you probably have one or more of the treasure maps from Osgood's store. That makes it easier to find loot out in the wild, and you can stop by Hilltop Farm to see if you missed anything there.

This is also a good time to get the Hilltop Farm Leystone if you haven't found it already. Look at Map Point 6 and search there until you see the small pillar of stone. This Leystone is rather valuable because it gets you so close to the Gorge area. The next two quests are somewhat difficult when you first get acquainted with them, so it's comforting to know that you can leap right back into the action if Skarin gets torn up.

The champion with your Battle Horn patrols the road close to the Gorge. He has a handful of grunts to help defend the region, but they aren't nearly the threat that he is. Champions endure a huge amount of damage, and they require a lot of dodging from Skarin. Keep the fight as safe as possible by killing off the grunts quickly. Use a throwing axe or two to hit the first few at range, and turn your attention to slaying the others while you avoid the champion.

LET GRAVITY DO YOUR WORK



You can certainly defeat this champion through honorable combat, and we'll tell you how to do that. But it's nice to have options. If the battle goes poorly, you can eliminate the champion without much fuss.

Lure the big guy over to the cliff's edge and slip around to his flank. Follow that with your block attack (hold the block button and make fast attacks). Essentially, these blows are body checks. They don't inflict much damage, but they knock targets backward, away from Skarin. You'll get a laugh when the champion goes over the cliff's edge!



Once the champion is alone, you can fight with much more comfort. Most of the big guy's attacks are obvious, though they are still dangerous. He pulls back and makes either a single swing or a series of wide attacks. Use your dodge to avoid the initial swing, and come forward only to punish the champion after you see him lose his momentum. Hit the fiend with a few fast attacks, and end with one of your special moves.

Repeat this a few times and wait for the champion to lean over, weary and exposed. The first button to press appears as an icon over his head—you must press it to begin the finishing moves. Watch the buttons carefully and tap them as best you can. Any failure forces you to repeat part of the fight against the champion, so be careful!

Purchase a Meal from Brighthelm if you need any assistance in this encounter. The temporary boost to Skarin's health makes a huge difference in fights like this one, and spending such a trivial sum of gold isn't a big deal.

Skarin collects the Skirmish Key and the Battle Horn when the champion dies. These are the final implements he needs before fighting the Battle of Slaterdale. Finish any last errands in town, be sure that you've bought at least one of the elemental runes, and go into your map. Highlight the Gorge area and "Initiate Your Attack" to start the fight.

The Army Comes at Your Behest



You can initiate these battles as soon as all of the qualifying conditions are met. You can't fight the Gorge battle until you liberate all of the Viking clans in the area and acquire the Battle Horn. Future battles have more requirements, but the tasks you must complete are usually spelled out quite clearly.

Once you prepare the army, they attack the location whenever you tell them to. In other words, you *do not* have to take Skarin to the Gorge to initiate the fight. He can be in Brighthelm, sunning himself at the beach, or busy ripping the arms off of evil grunts. Just use the map and watch the fun start.

