

Bugging out in Skyrim: Falkreath Edition Part 3: Loredas, Sundas, & Concluding Thoughts

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Read [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#).

Loredas, 23rd of Last Seed

✘ I start the morning off by taking a sip of water, then head out immediately in search of food. I revisit nearly every location I have been to previously covering the most distance in a single outing yet. I find no signs of any life and decide on circling back to camp. I find myself by the burnt out carriage that I had discovered earlier in the week and spot a single fox.

Despite the ravaging sickness and hunger inside me, I line up my shot perfectly and take him down with one graceful shot. I go in to collect a pelt but sadly no usable meat. As I begin to get back up from processing the animal, I am attacked from all sides by a pack of wolves.

While I strike them down, I find their attack has left me feeling sleepy and a bit numb. I make sure to collect their pelts before heading out. On my way back to camp, it starts to rain again in full force preventing me from doing much outside of my tent. With no food to eat, I go to sleep awaking shortly later with signs of worse news.

✘ I seem to be suffering from new symptoms. My fingers ache and I have trouble holding onto anything as if my hands have no power behind them. Witbane certainly isn't the cause and I deduce I must have contracted rockjoint from one of the wolves from earlier.

Amazed at my poor luck, I decide I cannot simply idle despite the rain. I tan the pelts into leather finding I now have enough to make a waterskin but still need cotton. Sadly I haven't seen any in my many excursions in the area and it's doubtful it even grows here. It's typically found in tundras in higher altitudes, which this area definitely isn't.

The exposure to the rain has left me drenched so I retreat once again into my tent, relighting my fire to dry off. It is now well into the afternoon.

While sitting on my bedroll I am honestly at a loss in terms of what my next move should be. I need food but the weather has been brutal the last few days preventing me from utilizing much of the daylight available. The brief amounts of time I had were also all but fruitless in search of sustenance.

I weigh my choices. I can either attempt to search for food getting wet in the process potentially making my sicknesses worse or even potentially getting hypothermia, or wait it out. I only have to make it through the day and despite my hunger, it seems like waiting is the smart move.

With my mind made up, I get out briefly for a quick drink. I try to get a sense of the weather and doesn't appear as if the rain will let up anytime soon.

I decide on one final quick trip circling around my campsite in search of any life. Unsurprisingly I find nothing.

Before retreating back into my tent, I make sure there is enough wood for the night. Without an axe I resort to picking up deadwood off the ground. It takes longer and more energy out of me.



Late into the evening now, I cannot stop thinking of my incredible hunger. I am also growing very tired and sleepy. The symptoms from earlier are also now much more pronounced convincing me that I have indeed contracted rockjoint.

Without any other options I head to sleep for the night. I awake briefly around midnight to relight the fire and get a quick drink. Still extremely exhausted I have no problems returning to sleep immediately.

Sundas, 24th of Last Seed



It rained all through the night and I wake up to cracks of thunder in the distance. It seems the rain has moved on though as exiting my tent, there is no downpour. The sky is still dark and overcast but honestly I find it easy to ignore.

I made it to the seventh day and am eager to return to civilization. I get a quick drink before packing up my campsite. It also seems like my overabundance of sleep the last few days is finally paying off as I started the day with much more manageable symptoms.

 With my supplies all packed away and fire snuffed out, I pull out my map and compass to get my bearings. I find that I am a bit west of Falkreath and I have quite the hike ahead of me. The rockjoint has made it incredibly difficult to run or walk quickly so I carefully pace myself accordingly.

Within a couple hours I connect with a main road but am almost simultaneously attacked by a feral wolf. I am slow to defend but take it down eventually. My stamina is completely drained and I am on my last leg of willpower.

I finally trudge into Falkreath passing under the city gates around noon. A visit to Grave Concoctions is first on my list. I sell most of the herbs and plants I collected on my trip and purchase a Potion of Cure Disease to treat my ailments. I then head to Dead Man's Drink for a much needed and overdue

rest.

I gorge myself on a meal of stew, potato bread, and green tea. I then rent a room and begin my long and eager recuperation.



Concluding Thoughts

While this was originally conceived as a session centered around creating a specific playstyle through mods, I found that in playing through it with my own set of rules and guidelines, I found myself relying more heavily upon roleplaying than anything else. While the mods used were extremely well made and comprehensive, the nature of what Skyrim can do is definitely limiting in terms of a true survival playstyle.

Without delving too heavily into the specific and multiple mechanics in play, here are a few examples of the game breaking immersion or simply not allowing actions one would think could be performed:

- **Fish and Eggs.** One would think these are food items but in Skyrim they are in fact alchemical ingredients and are treated as such. Thus they cannot be cooked or eaten as food. While you can technically consume ingredients in the game, of which I did in my playthrough, it only serves to reveal to the player what kind of effects that particular ingredient may have in brewing potions.
- **Cooking Meat.** While the vast majority of the meat I obtained was easily cooked, I wasn't able to cook the crab legs as the only recipe in the game requires that I have butter and garlic. It's not logical but as is the nature of the game, it has no way of knowing that there are other ways of cooking crab aside from scampi.
- **Looting animals.** The issue with this is that it works as intended. Killing and hunting animals is the same as looting a corpse or random chest. The loot inside is randomized meaning I can take down a deer and get no meat from it only a hide. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense nor does the fact that only some animals have meat items scripted into the game. Meaning you will never get meat from foxes, wolves, or cats. There isn't much logical consistency to this as well since Skyrim strangely allows meat to be had from other unconventional sources such as dog, mammoth or even human.

There are many more examples of this, but ultimately I didn't find the lack of mechanics or complexity an issue, rather I found myself crafting a narrative to fill in the blanks and bringing it all together into a cohesive whole. The way in which as a character I reacted, planned, or act upon certain situations also reflected this to keep myself both entertained and engaged.

Subsequently I found I had to artificially make the game more difficult. While it was definitely quite the task to remain in good status across rest, hunger, thirst, and exposure, there was very little threat of actually dying. While much of that can probably be explained away by my embarrassingly high

hour count in Skyrim already, I found that it was quite difficult to simply die from lack of eating over just a day. This wasn't honestly much of an issue if at all since realistically people can go days without food as Les Stroud has done often on his quite real survival excursions on TV. It just means I probably could have started with less supplies on hand.

With some brief research, I did find that there are other immersion mods out there that could have done away with some of the "issues" listed above. [Hunterborn](#) apparently fixes the way in which animals are dealt with. Switching from a simple loot mechanic to actually having to process the animal. Also there is [Fishing in Skyrim](#) which adds the tools and mechanics needed to properly fish in the game. There are also things I could have done on my end now that I am actually familiar with the workings of Frostfall and Realistic Needs. For example, I probably didn't need to bring a woodcutter's axe, but could have used a pickaxe to mine ore or stone.

That all said, it was still definitely rewarding in unexpected ways. I found that utilizing such a small portion of the map with my own simple rules of play was still an intriguing method of enjoying the game. Overall, the session with breaks took around seven hours to complete and I was thoroughly engaged for most of it. The rather limited range of play also didn't get monotonous nor did the lack of map or compass lead me astray. I became intimately familiar with my small area of wilderness and even grew to have an attachment to it.

Ultimately the mods and actually surviving were secondary in this experience. The most engaging aspect of this session was creating a singular and unique player experience with my own roleplaying mechanics and creating a narrative that naturally grew out of that. It's a bit refreshing to say the least that after having clocked 400 hours into Skyrim, this brief session that actually limited most of the content in game, proved to be some of the most interesting.