

OFFICIAL

DOOM II

SOULBLIGHTER™

Bart Farkas with
Bob "CalBear" Colayco
of Gamers Extreme

STRATEGIES
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For Adam. (My agent told me I'd be doing this, but I didn't believe him at the time.)

—Bart

My work on this book is partly dedicated to all the kids whose parents told them “playing computer games will get you nowhere.” The real dedication, though, goes to Jenny—always my light and inspiration.

—Bob

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—Bart

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—Bob

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INTRODUCTION

Myth II: Soulblighter is the sequel to the award-winning *Myth: The Fallen Lords*. The *Myth* universe is born of the timeless and epic battle of good vs. evil, and, as in the original *Myth*, you fight on the side of the good guys, leading the forces of Light to stop Soulblighter and his minions from beginning a new Undead reign of terror. But even if you're a *Myth* veteran, you'll need some help to get the ball rolling in *Myth II: Soulblighter*.

This is a deceptively complex game, and even though Bungie has done an admirable job of covering the basics in their manual, there's just too much to cram into any single document. When relevant, I've included information about both multiplayer and single-player aspects of *Myth II*. Some of this information is duplicated in Chapter 11, "Head to Head—Multiplayer Tips from Gamers Extreme," but for the most part you'll find every section of the book informative in its own right. Best of all, I went straight to the source—Bungie—for much of this information. I hope this book provides you with a thorough understanding of *Myth II* basics and the gaming elements new to this sequel.

The game is divided into roughly 10 segments, mainly based on story components. You'll also notice differences in basic geography between segments—trends toward a snowy landscape, desert landscape, or even several scenarios dealing with a particular item or character. With Bungie's help, I've used these natural separations to organize this strategy guide into chapters. You'll notice I don't linger over the story line: I simply didn't want to detract from your pleasure in watching the cutscenes and reading/listening to the scenario openers.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Like the original *Myth*, *Myth II* features 25 scenarios. You must finish each to proceed to the next.

This is where I come in. If you have trouble in any one mission, I can help you find your way to victory—and the next scenario. *Myth II* includes a fair number of new Easter Eggs and subtle nuances, and I point these out every chance I get.



CHAPTER
I

DEAD AND ALIVE: THE UNITS



Myth I is a battle between the forces of good and the evil forces summoned by Soulblighter. It's going to get seriously ugly before the game is through. Knowing your units' every feature, strength, and weakness, every nuance of behavior, is critically important to achieving victory.

This chapter introduces you to each creature and briefly touches on their capabilities. In the single-player game, units comprise the Living and the Undead. Occasionally, some good units will work against you.

Read this chapter carefully, and then refer to Chapter 2, "Combat Tactics," for the lowdown on the more powerful characters' specialties.

FORCES OF LIGHT (LIVING)

These are the guys you'll lead into battle in single-player *Myth I* and in many multi-player games, as well. Get used to them: once you learn to use them properly, they'll save your skin many times over, and you'll have a heck of a lot of fun along the way. *Myth: The Fallen Lord* aficionados will want to revisit this section, if only to glean information on new units.





AVATARA

The Avatara is probably the most powerful creature on the Living side. As in the original game, you only see one Avatara, and that's King Alric, who is an important part of the story. Avatara can use their great intelligence to summon powerful Dreams for inflicting damage on enemy units. Alric has but one Dream in *Myth II*—the Dispersal Dream. It causes enemy units to explode in a chain reaction, and comes in handy late in the game.



You won't have access to Alric before the game's midpoint, and then you'll find him a welcome addition to your troops. Avatara and their Dispersal Dream give you what no other unit can in single-player—an alternative to physical combat.

The Avatara are very tough one-on-one, but when faced with two or more units in close combat, they fall quickly.

BERSERK

In a way, Berserks go right to the root of the original *Myth*. The Mel Gibson movie *Braveheart* inspired *Myth's* development, and Berserks resemble the Scottish warriors in that film. Berserk units are human. They carry huge claymores (two-edged swords), wear their hair long, and paint their faces in imposing patterns.



These special units are your best weapons for hand-to-hand fighting. When you send them to attack the enemy, they literally go nuts as they charge recklessly with claymores held high. In force, they can wipe out large numbers of Thrall. If you can take a horde of Soulless by surprise, your Berserks quickly will turn them into piles of purple powder.

The folks at Bungie say this about Berserks: "These fearless, shieldless humans wield giant claymores and live only to return the Undead to the uneasy slumber that comes from being hacked into a hundred wiggling pieces."

BOWMAN

Bowmen are another critical component of the Light's forces. Used properly, they can tilt the battle in your favor. But Bowmen come with





a price: they require more skill to use safely and effectively during battle, and they can't fight effectively hand to hand.

Bowmen fire a traditional bow and arrow and can hit the enemy from considerable range. Enough Bowmen can pick off advancing troops before they get close enough to do you damage, but this is risky. It's wise to keep some Warriors handy, just in case.

Myth II Bowmen come with a powerful new weapon—Flaming Arrows. These often will cause brush fires in and around their landing places (Figure 1.1). Bowmen with this ability get only one Flaming Arrow each, so use them carefully.



FIGURE 1.1

If a Flaming Arrow hits the ground, it's likely to start a fire like this.

DECEIVER

The Deceiver is a special unit in *Myth II*, and fortunately for us he's one of the good guys. The Deceiver is very powerful and (as you'll see) will use his powers to help turn the tide of the war against Soulblighter and his forces. Although the Deceiver is a self-serving egotist who enjoys





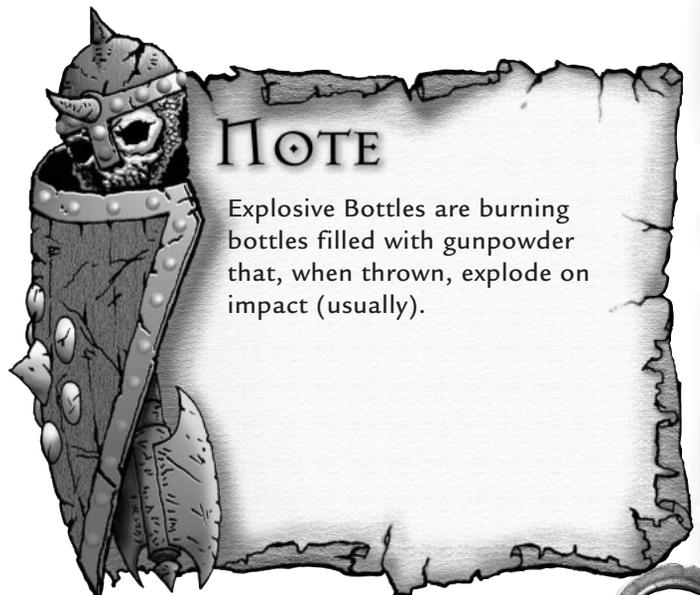
reveling in the suffering and misfortune of others, he's going to be your best weapon in several missions, so get used to him.

In one-on-one combat, the Deceiver is indestructible because his main attack literally dissolves the enemy without allowing it a chance to counterattack. In melee combat with many units, the Deceiver can usually sneak around and dissolve several units without being noticed. The other key ability of the Deceiver is the Binding Dream, which allows him to turn many enemy units over to your side. If played carefully, the Deceiver can swell your ranks with great Undead units like Myrkridia and Mauls.

DWARF

Dwarves are arguably the most potent day-to-day weapon in *Myth II*. They're small, swarthy fellows with thick, gray beards and surly attitudes. Unfortunately, they're few in number. Dwarves are critically important because of their unlimited supplies of Explosive Bottles. They lob these bottles at groups of the Undead, raining fire on them. When a bottle goes off in the middle of a pack of Thrall, you'd better duck, because body parts will soon fly everywhere. Managed properly, a solitary Dwarf can decimate an evil force single-handedly.

But wait! That's not all! Dwarves also usually start each scenario with four Satchel Charges in their pouch. They can place these anywhere they go themselves (press the T key when the Dwarf is selected). An Explosive Bottle lobbed in from a distance then can ignite the Satchel Charge, causing a much larger explosion





than the bottle alone. As Figure 1.2 shows, detonating a Satchel Charge amidst oncoming forces can deal the enemy a devastating (and gruesome) blow.

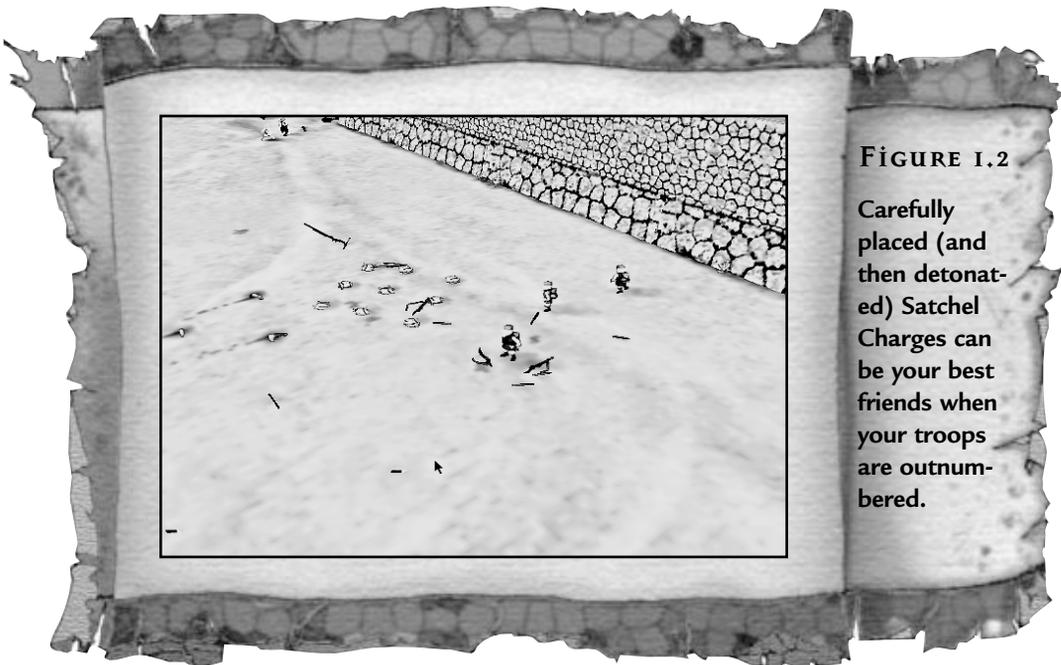


FIGURE 1.2

Carefully placed (and then detonated) Satchel Charges can be your best friends when your troops are outnumbered.

On the downside, Dwarves aren't fast; Undead Ghol's can run them down easily. They're also popular targets for Soulless spears: in fact, they're usually their *primary* targets.

Dwarves are scarce, available usually no more than two at a time. Chapter 2, "Combat Tactics," explains more about Dwarves and Satchel Charges.

DWARVEN MORTAR

The Dwarven Mortar is a specialized Dwarf unit with a mortar-like weapon—that is, a squat cannon that fires shells at high angles. These Dwarves' mortars do an impressive amount of damage and are truly formidable; however, the reload time is unusually long, making them extremely vulnerable during close-in attacks. Mortar Dwarves are





important in several *Myth II* missions for damaging distant units and structures, such as city walls.

DWARVEN PATHFINDER

The Dwarven Pathfinder has the same weaponry and skill set as a regular Dwarf, but the Dwarven Pathfinder also can render itself “invisible” to enemy units in certain missions (for example, “Into the Breach”)—very important. This ability is limited, however, because any offensive move or attack will give away your position.



Dwarven Pathfinders are “super” Dwarves: they throw farther, faster, and with greater accuracy other Dwarves. Bungie describes them as “Dwarves with tons of experience.” Take advantage of their relatively quick reload time and accuracy. This unit’s extra abilities can give you the edge you need for victory.

HERON GUARD

The Heron Guard were the old empire’s Elite Muirthemne Guard. They gave up their weapons and became penitent Journeymen when that empire fell. These “Journeymen with attitude” (Figure 1.3) have a good melee attack ability and still carry the Mandrake Roots for spot healing your troops. The Heron Guard are very handy, because you can take them with you into battle both as healers and fighters.



JOURNEYMAN

Journeymen are the spiritual backbone of your force. They’re slow and generally not great attack weapons, but they can tolerate a great deal of damage and carry a long axe to defend themselves when necessary. Journeymen use their magical powers together with Mandrake Root (they carry six) to perform a variety of special functions.



Journeymen have power over the Undead, because the Mandrake Root has a reverse effect on Undead creatures. For example, if a Journeyman heals a Thrall, the





FIGURE 1.3

Myth: The Fallen Lords players always wished Journeymen could have a little more bite. They just got their wish.

Thrall dies right then and there. This also is true in multiplayer games, where you may have a Wight and a Journeyman on the same team. If the Journeyman uses his power on the Wight, the Wight disintegrates, leaving behind a pair of special pouches called Pus Packets. Ghols can pick up these packets for other uses (see Chapter 2, “Combat Tactics”).

Because Journeymen can heal living troops, it’s often a good idea to keep one near a group of



NOTE

Mandrake Root is an herb from the Nightshade family. Journeymen use it to heal injured warriors. Without this root, the Journeyman/Heron Guard has no healing ability.



Bowmen: as your Bowmen take damage, your Journeyman can heal them and keep everyone fresh and ready to kill again. Journeyman are so versatile, they can even heal themselves, provided they're not under active attack.

Their only limitation is the number of Mandrake Roots they carry. But remember, when a Journeyman dies on the field of battle, he gives up his unused roots. Another Journeyman can pick these up to use for his side.

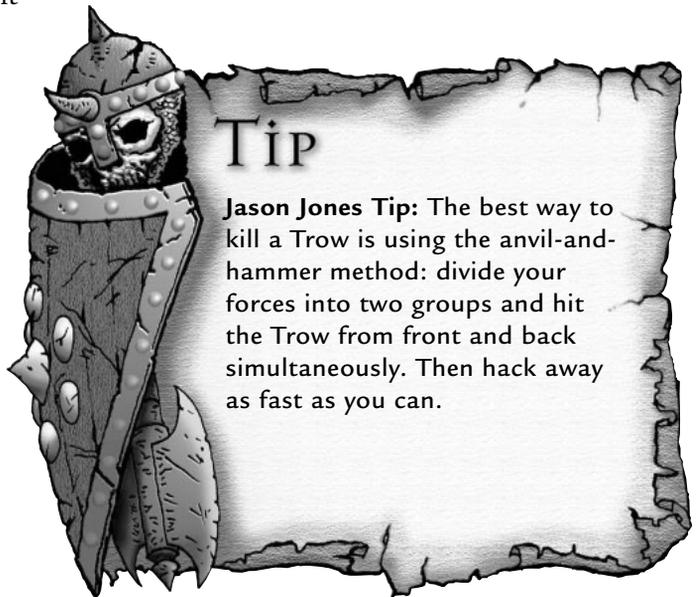
TROW

Trow are incredibly strong, massive creatures that literally can kick the stuffing out of anything nearby. They can plow through enemy troops by killing several at a time with one kick. Be very, very cautious around them.



Trow are rumored to be very tough, and it's said that, near the Poles, where it's extremely cold at night, the Trow simply freeze and recover: that's *tough*.

Fear not, however. There's an effective way to deal with Trow, but you must have a fair chunk of your forces to do it right. Simply throw everything you've got at them all at once. You may lose some troops, but if you can surround the Trow with Berserks and Warriors, you should be able to take them out. To kill a Trow using such small units, you must come from all sides and attack in





a large bunch. Surrounded Trow fall fairly easily. You'll get to use some Trow yourself in a couple of levels.

WARRIOR

Warriors are your armies' bread and butter. They're strong fighters equipped with armor, helmet, and short sword. For close-in combat, these guys are surprisingly solid, and have a definite advantage against the weaker Thrall, with whom they're usually matched.



Keep that in mind as you go into battle: if you can attack with a force of even 65 or 70 percent of your enemy's (Thrall) force, you should emerge victorious. In single-player, Warriors often represent the bulk of your forces, so use formations that benefit them. Chapter 2, "Combat Tactics," explains this in greater detail.

WARLOCK

The Warlock fights for your side, but his motives may not be the same as your other units'. Whatever his motivation, the Warlock supplies you with two very strong (and unique) abilities: First, his primary attack is a large fireball that travels over the land and explodes violently, doing heavy damage to all units in a close radius (including your units; see Figure 1.4). Because the fireball is dangerous in close quarters, use it only when you have a clean line of sight to your target.



Second, the Warlock carries a Confusion Spell. When invoked, this spell will confuse your enemies and cause them to fight the air, the ground, or even each other.

The Warlock isn't very tough, so if he gets into a hand-to-hand combat situation, he's in big trouble.



FIGURE 1.4

The Warlock's basic attack packs a punch, but don't use it in close quarters.

FORCES OF DARK (UNDEAD)

The Undead are the trash you'll face in battle (in single-player). You won't get a chance to use these units until you play a multiplayer game, but it's always to your advantage to know as much about your enemy as you can. So cover your nose and pull on some latex gloves: we're stepping into the scum-filled world of the Dark side.

BRE'UNOR

The Bre'Unor can best be described as horned, skeletal warrior that flings jawbones. In bunches, the Bre'Unor can do serious damage, but they're not resilient and are easy to defeat in melee combat. Their range is at least as good as the Bowmen's, so ranged attacks aren't always a good idea.





BRIGAND

Brigands are basically Warriors gone bad. They have the same qualities as a Warrior, and even look like Warriors, but they're in Soulblihter's army. If you've fought using your own Warriors for a while, you know what these guys can do. Keep an eye out for 'em!



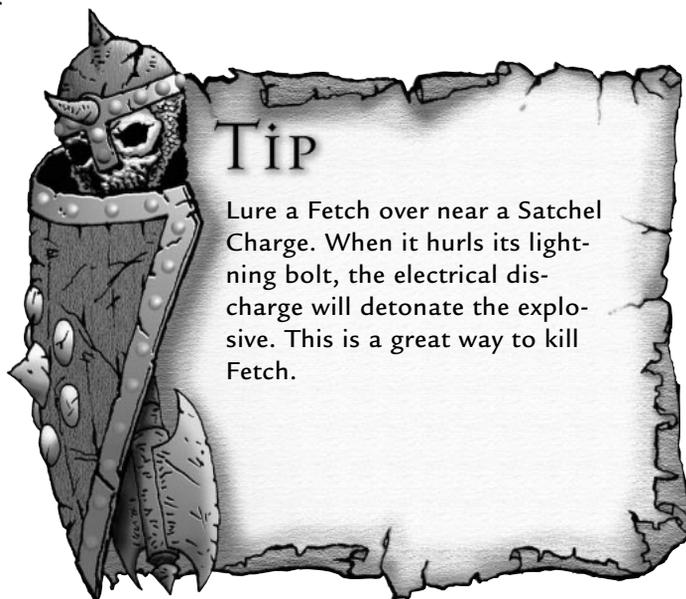
FETCH

Fetch are very dangerous Undead weapons. They clasp their hands together firmly in front of themselves to create high-voltage lightning bolts that pass out of their bodies. This weapon can take out entire blocks of Light forces in a few seconds.



Fetch can be defeated using regular weapons, but it can be difficult to get near them. Although you can take out a Fetch with the Bowman's slightly longer range, you must work quickly and accurately or you'll be popcorn. A mad rush of Berserks (or other fast units) also is effective, because the Fetch can't attack enemy units within a certain radius (fairly close). Once you get a Berserk past that perimeter, you can hunt them down without fear of electrocution.

When a Fetch dies, it sort of deflates. In the words of *Myth's* original lead programmer, Jason Jones, this is because the Fetch is an "otherworldly being that has taken the flesh from an earthly creature and wrapped it around itself." A Fetch, then, isn't truly Undead, but it sides with Undead forces. Too bad—that lightning bolt is cool.



TIP

Lure a Fetch over near a Satchel Charge. When it hurls its lightning bolt, the electrical discharge will detonate the explosive. This is a great way to kill Fetch.



GHAŦ

To quote the game's design documents, the Ghast is an Undead peasant who's "a little quicker, a little weaker, a little fresher, a little hungrier, and a whole lot less well-armed than a Thrall." The Ghast has a weak attack, but it can paralyze your units in hand-to-hand combat, making it particularly annoying. You can lose your numerical superiority if three or four of your Warriors end up paralyzed (Figure 1.5).



FIGURE 1.5

Don't be surprised if your units end up paralyzed going toe-to-toe with Ghasts.

GHOL

Ghols are the natural enemies of Dwarves and, according to Myth legend, the two have a long and bloody history. Ghols are the game's fastest units and can run down Dwarves to take them out. Dwarves often can't launch their Explosive Bottles before the Ghols are on top of them, hacking and slashing them to pieces.





These strange creatures have a few quirks that benefit the Dark side. Ghols can pick up and throw the Pus Packets disassembled Wights leave behind. They can carry only one packet at a time (Wights contain two packets), but even a single packet can paralyze or destroy fairly large numbers of the opposing force. Ghols can pick up and throw a number of items: blades, heads, arms, Pus Packets—you name it, Ghols can throw it.

Ghols are creepy, too. They carry giant cleavers into battle and lope around the field collecting the hands and heads of their enemies. As they say, “If I’ve got your severed head and both your hands in a sack hanging around my neck, then you’re dead!” Protect your Dwarves well from these scoundrels.

MAHIR

The Mahir are the most elusive of the Undead minions. They are shadow warriors that cannot be harmed until they come up from the shadows to attack you. The Mahir can be seen as a moving shadow on the ground, and it’ll most certainly strike fear in your heart the first time you see one approaching. The best way to deal with the Mahir is to be sure you have multiple nearby units to attack the Mahir while the units the Mahir’s attacking keep it busy. Bowmen handle this job very well, so in the last two missions (“Twice Born” and “The Forge”) you should always keep some handy.



MAUL

Cross a Warthog with Arnold Schwarzenegger, and you get a Maul. These fast-moving, intimidating hulks pack a huge punch. Groups of Mauls easily can wipe out entire contingents of Warriors.

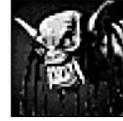


The Maul’s weakness is its inability to hit quickly. Once it delivers a blow, it takes a while before it can hit again. But, as *Myth II* lead programmer Jason Regier says, “You don’t want to meet a Maul alone in a dark alley.”



MYRKRIDIA

The Myrkridia are vicious creatures that can rip your units to shreds very quickly. You must always attack Myrkridia with a numerical advantage, or you'll surely lose the battle in melee combat. Fortunately, the Myrkridia can be turned to your side by the Deceiver in several of the missions, so you'll have the pleasure of using these bad-ass creatures for your own ends.



The Myrkridia cannot coherently fight to the death. Once their health level reaches a certain point (near death), the Myrkridia go crazy and throw their hands in the air. As soon as they finish this little dance, they attack the closest unit in a near-death frenzy. This can be used to your advantage by attacking Myrkridia with Bowmen. Myrkridia are very fast units, so always be on the lookout to protect your Dwarves and Bowmen from their wrath.

MYRKRIDIAN GIANT

The Myrkridian Giants are (according to lead programmer Jason Regier) “super-badasses.” I have to agree—that pretty much sums these creatures up. They have a devastating first-strike attack where they hurl bunches of exploding skulls at your troops, and trust me, it's usually not a pretty scene. Myrkridian Giants are best dealt with in the same manner as Trow: surround them with many units (Berserks or Warriors), and hack away until dead. Rinse and repeat as necessary.



Sadly, the Myrkridian Giants are immune to the Deceiver's Binding Dream, so you'll have to play multiplayer games to have the joy of using one.

SHADE

These reanimated Avatara corpses are very tough customers. As you might expect, the Shade can use a Dream against your forces, and that's not something to take lightly. The Shade's Dream is equivalent





FIGURE 1.6

A pair of Myrkridia slice up some Warriors as two more bear down to attack.

to the Light Avatara's Dream; that is, units in close proximity to each other will explode in a chain reaction. Fortunately, you won't see too many Shades until you get your feet wet.

SHIVER

Shiver is one of the Fallen Lords who has returned to fight Soul-blighter's battle. She is one ugly person, and she has a disposition that makes Joe Pesci in *Goodfellas* look like Ghandi. Shiver has a very impressive attack that takes out a regular unit with just a couple of bursts, so be sure to stay away from her whenever possible.





SOULBLIGHTER

Soulblighter is your ultimate enemy, and so it goes without saying that you'll meet him in the game's final mission. You're in luck, however, because in *Myth II* you meet up with Soulblighter before the final level.



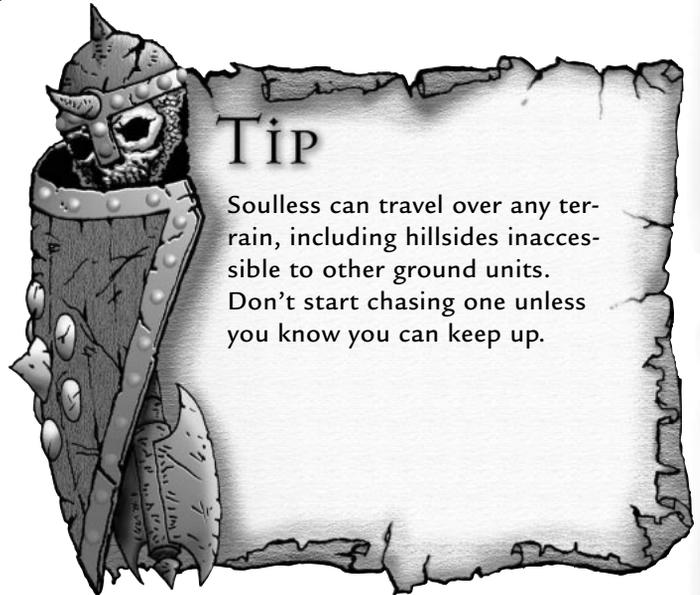
Just remember: Soulblighter is faster, stronger, meaner, tougher, and attacks harder than you ever could. He's also virtually indestructible, so don't even bother trying to kill him before the final mission.

SOULLESS

Soulless are the Undead equivalent of Bowmen, except for a couple of choice differences. Because they lack legs, they can pass over terrain Bowmen can't (deep rivers, hills, and the like). Unlike Bowmen, Soulless can use their spears in close combat (but usually they'll run rather than engage in hand-to-hand combat).



The Soulless weapon of choice is a barbed spear anointed with a venom that causes excruciating pain but isn't itself fatal. Getting hit with enough of these *is* fatal, however, so stay out of their range whenever you can. Soulless carry bundles of such spears and, to the Light side's chagrin, they never run out.





SPIDER

Spiders are more important in multiplayer *Myth II* than in the single-player game, but they deserve mention. In single-player, Spiders are merely natural life-forms that get in your way. They aren't Undead minions. In multiplayer, however, Spiders can be part of any player's forces, and should be used in large numbers to be effective.



Although Spiders are easy to kill, they can make up for that in numbers. Use care if they come at you in force.

STYGIAN KNIGHT

The Stygian Knight is an animated suit of armor. Because they're neither Living nor Undead, they're immune to paralysis. Thus, Wights and Pus Packet-tossing Ghols are of little concern to the Stygian Knight, but this is usually relevant only in multiplayer *Myth II*, where Undead forces oppose one another from time to time.



In the single-player game, it's important to note that Stygian Knights can resist arrows somewhat, forcing you into hand-to-hand combat more often than not. Stygian Knights are tough fighters; although they can't swing frequently, they don't flinch when hit, and their attack packs a wallop!

SUMMONER

The Summoner is a special character in *Myth II: Soulblighter*, and is only seen in one level entitled (not surprisingly) "The Summoner." He has two main abilities: the ability to teleport units *away* from him if he's being attacked, and the ability to teleport Myrkridia to his *own* position. For this reason, it's key to use Bowmen and/or the Deceiver to deal with the Summoner. He can also raise Myrkridia from skulls. Refer to Chapter 8 to see how to handle the Summoner when you're face to face.





THRALL

These walking dead are the least intelligent but most numerous Dark side minions. They're too slow and clumsy to wield a large sword effectively, and so the Fallen Lords have equipped the Thrall with axes. Even though Thrall are roughly equal to Warriors (both are "base" units), one-on-one, the Warrior can kick the Thrall's butt all the way back to its sorry little grave.



However, Thrall usually mill around in fairly large bunches, and this can be a very real threat to your forces. But because the Light side's Dwarves can move a little faster than Thrall, they can stay at a safe distance and blast the Thrall into hundreds of individual chunks.

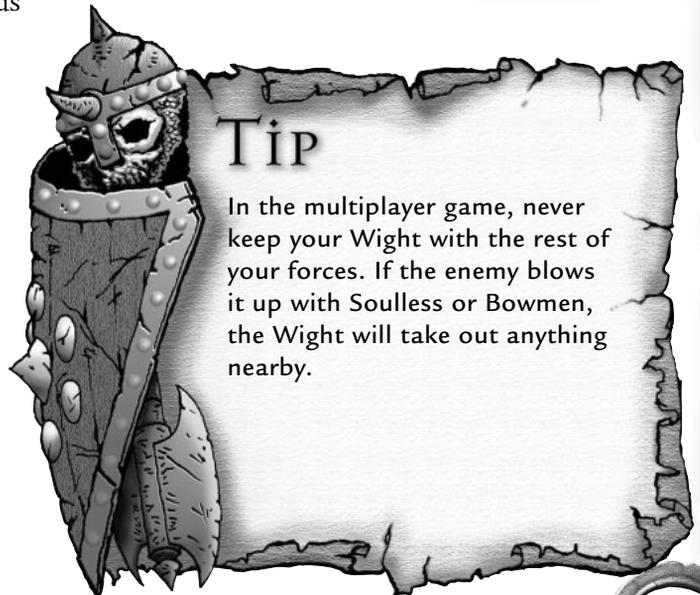
WIGHT

This is the foulest Undead creature. The Wight is nothing more than a walking bomb, waiting until it's close enough to the enemy to go off. It has a large explosive capability. When it blows, it kills not only with the concussion, but by releasing clouds of foul disease. The noxious fumes paralyze any units the explosion didn't destroy outright.



Wights are slow, and your Bowmen can pick them off easily from afar, but they'll try to sneak close to your troops when you're not paying attention. Keep a close eye on enemy Wights.

In the network game, Journeymen can dismantle Wights, leaving behind two Pus





Packets on the ground. Gholts then can pick up the packets and use them as explosive, disease-carrying weapons. The packets often are more effectively used by the very fast Gholts than when stuck in a slow-moving Wight.

WOLF

The Wolf is essentially wildlife gone bad. As in nature, Wolves tend to travel in packs, and they can quickly do serious damage to your units if they are allowed to sink their teeth in. Fortunately, the Wolf is fairly easy to kill, and it's no match for a group of Berserks or Warriors. As with the Myrkridia, it's a very good idea to keep an eye on your susceptible units (Dwarves and Bowmen) when Wolves are about.



WILDLIFE

Wildlife abounds in *Myth II*, and it actually doesn't serve much of a function except in multiplayer levels where killing Wildlife is part of the victory conditions. However, there *are* rumors of an Easter Egg level where you use a musket to kill all the Wildlife to win. I wonder how you might get there?



CHAPTER
2

COMBAT TACTICS



Despite its obvious similarities to other games in the genre (and the first *Myth*), *Myth II: Soulblighter* is a very complex game. It takes careful planning and superb tactical execution to win regularly. Mastering *Myth II*'s many subtle aspects of gameplay can make the difference between glorious victory and deeply disappointing defeat. I'm here not only to help you squeeze every last bit of power and health from each of your units, but to give you an awesome understanding of all the little things that can make you Soulblighter's perfect foil.

EXPLOSIVES

Explosive devices and units are *Myth*'s most decisive factors. Players who fail to use them soon find themselves on the losing end. Aside from any strategic advantage, the fact is—explosives are a blast! (So to speak.) They're what makes *Myth II* one of the most entertaining games ever, and if you don't believe me, just watch the ground ripple and the body parts fly after a Dwarf throws an Explosive Bottle into a throng of Thrall: *boom*—splatter!

In this section you'll learn everything you need to know about explosives (and a few things you don't).



WIGHTS

Wights are lumbering Undead creatures that carry foul pouches called Pus Packets. When detonated, these disease-filled explosive bags throw a pink cloud over the enemy, paralyzing many units for several seconds while damage is inflicted (Figure 2.1).

The Wight has two main functions. First, it's a walking bomb that lumbers across the landscape toward the enemy, ripping itself open in a huge, suicidal explosion when it gets close enough to do damage. These explosions are *Myth's* most spectacular, and, as you'll see, they rock the landscape with a very cool ripple effect. Frankly, it's worth detonating a Wight just to see this. Second, the Wight serves as a Pus Packet reservoir (in the multiplayer game).



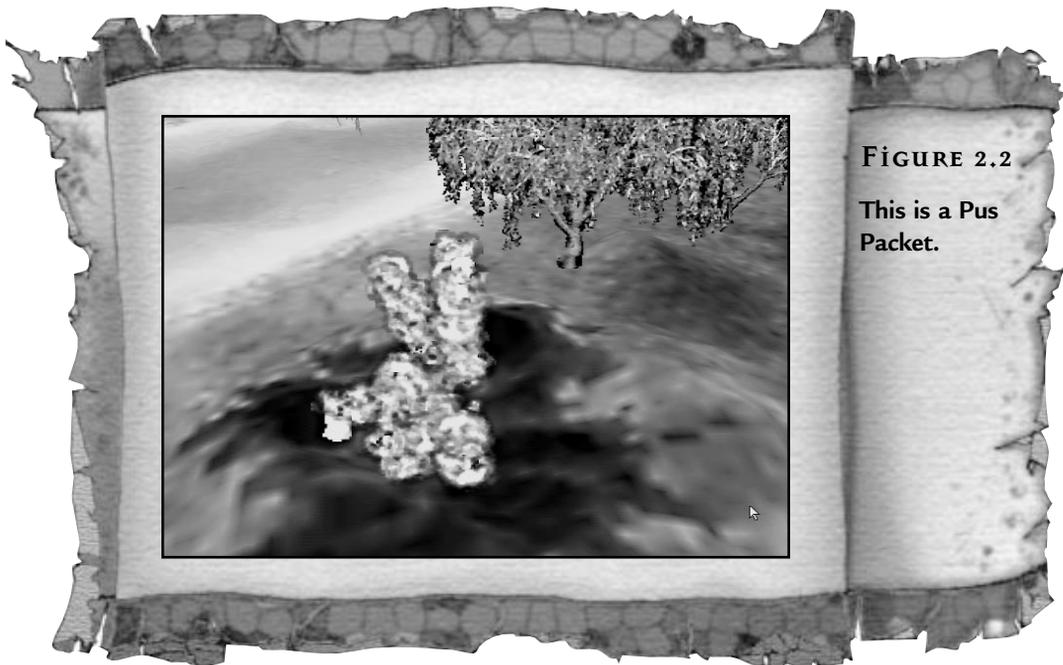
FIGURE 2.1

A Wight explodes and leaves surrounding units paralyzed.



PUS PACKETS

Because the Wight is Undead, you can kill it by having the Journeyman heal it. Healing enemy Wight is key. The Wight disintegrates, leaving between four and six (two are explosive) Pus Packets behind. You can also heal enemy Wights as a defensive measure, and then get a Pus Packet as a result. Only Ghols can pick these up (Figure 2.2), so if you have no Ghols, don't bother trying this.



Many gamers use their Wights only to disintegrate them for their Pus Packets—mainly because the slow-moving Wights are vulnerable to ranged attack from Bowmen or Dwarves. If you try to get your Wights close to enemy forces, they'll almost certainly get pulverized by enemy arrows before they can do their putrid damage.

THE WIGHT AS A WEAPON

Again, the Wight doesn't make a very good weapon because it's slow and can be picked off at long range. However, the Wight can make a devastating weapon if you



can sneak one into a battle without your opponent noticing. Diversion is the key here, and the best time to pull the old sneak-a-roo is in the midst of hot-and-heavy hand-to-hand combat. When there's a very evenly matched hack-n-slash battle going, the winner often is the one who best manages his or her troops, and that takes a lot of attention. This is where you sneak the Wight in: while the enemy is concentrating on thwarting your attack, you drift in and hit his troops with your Wight (Figure 2.3). A single Wight explosion can turn a formerly formidable force into chicken soup without the chicken.



FIGURE 2.3

The Wight can inflict serious damage when it self-destructs.

I use about half the force I'd normally bring to an all-out attack on enemy forces, and at the same time I start my Wight walking slowly toward the enemy position. Although my force is smaller than the enemy's, they're going to take my attack very seriously, and most likely will respond with most of their units. My force will begin to lose the battle, but I keep them close together; just when it looks like all is lost, the Wight comes in and blows the tar out of everything, destroying most enemy units in one fell swoop. I still have half my forces, and what's left of the enemy is badly



damaged from the explosion. Of course, this doesn't always work, and you take a terrible risk doing it. But when it does work, you'll laugh all the way to the boneyard.

A word about Wights: You can put a Wight in water, and when an enemy or two stumbles upon them, it will be a complete surprise. One of the best uses of Wights is posting them on units not being closely watched or attended.

DWARVES

These little guys are your bread-and-butter explosives experts. Each carries an unlimited supply of Explosive Bottles and four Satchel Charges (sometimes more). Used properly, the combined firepower of these two weapons can easily turn the tide of battle—either for or against you: many a clumsy player has accidentally had a Dwarf lob a bottle into a group of friendly troops, destroying any hope of victory.

EXPLOSIVE BOTTLES

These are glass bottles with a bit of cloth stuffed into the necks. When tossed, the bottles arc gracefully through the air, trailing smoke (Figure 2.4). The bottles may or may not explode when they hit the ground, depending on a number of factors, including rain, snow, and water. The more rain or snow that's falling, the less likely the bottle will explode when it reaches its target. As you can imagine, a little rain can go a long way toward ruining your plans.

These bottles are designed to bounce when they hit the ground. You'll notice that a Dwarf may attempt to hit a target out of throwing range by aiming short and counting on the bounce to cover the extra distance. The bottle may bounce, explode before it gets a chance to bounce, or bounce but fail to explode. This kind of uncertainty is one thing that makes *Myth* so much fun: you just can't be sure what the bottles will do. When going Dwarf against Dwarf, throw your bottles at the point where the enemy *will* be rather than where they currently are. By anticipating their movements in this manner, you can often destroy enemy Dwarves without facing a retaliatory strike.



FIGURE 2.4

This Explosive Bottle is en route to a bang of a good time.

SATCHEL CHARGES

The Satchel Charge is one of *Myth*'s most powerful (and versatile) weapons; a single charge can make all the difference. But it's not without its downside. Only Dwarves can carry Satchel Charges (up to eight charges each), and they detonate them by throwing an Exploding Bottle at them. They can also be ignited by other means. Satchel Charges are essentially burlap sacks full of explosive powder with a force roughly equal to one Explosive Bottle (according to Bungie), but in the game they appear to pack a greater punch.

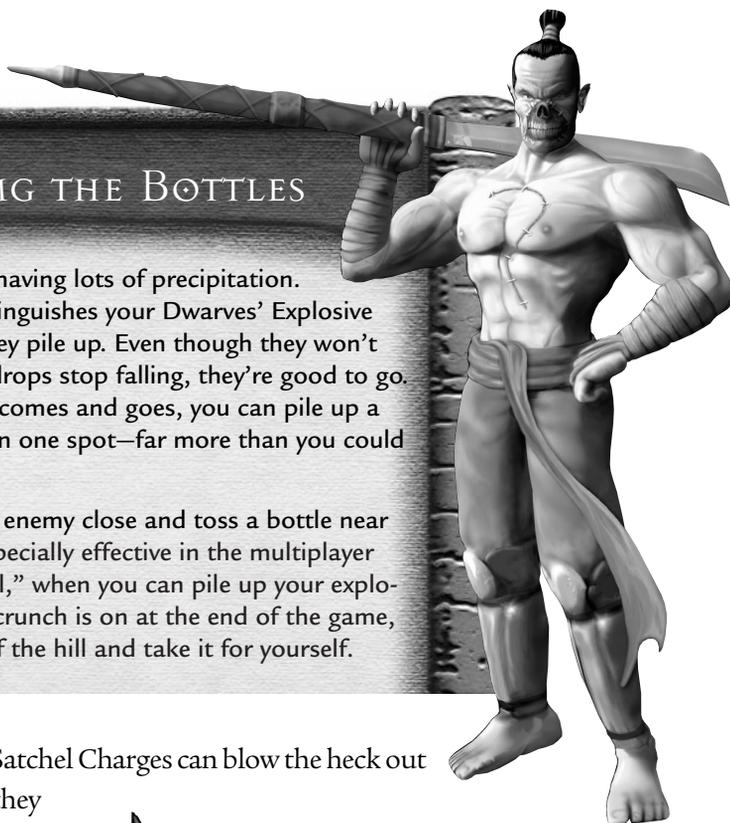
Typically, a Dwarf lays a Satchel Charge along a path you think the enemy will follow, as shown in Figure 2.5. Then, when the enemy hordes come chugging toward you, you can blow them to teeny, tiny, little bits by lobbing an Explosive Bottle at the charges just before they get in striking distance. The cool thing is that successive charges will go off one by one if they're laid close enough together, thus destroying entire chains of enemy forces. Using Satchel Charges successfully can be fantastically satisfying, especially if you manage to catch one of your friends (when playing multiplayer *Myth*).



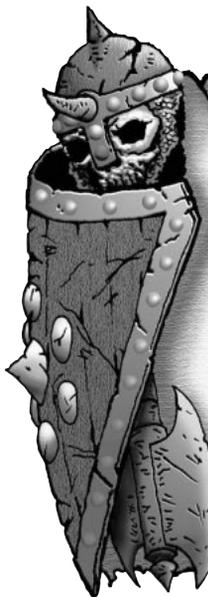
RAIN: DAMPENING THE BOTTLES

There's one big advantage to having lots of precipitation. Although the rain or snow extinguishes your Dwarves' Explosive Bottles, as you throw them they pile up. Even though they won't explode in the rain, once the drops stop falling, they're good to go. In a landscape where the rain comes and goes, you can pile up a bunch of unexploded bottles in one spot—far more than you could in clear weather.

Once it stops raining, lure the enemy close and toss a bottle near the others. *Kaboom!* This is especially effective in the multiplayer mission, "Last Man on the Hill," when you can pile up your explosives near the flag. When the crunch is on at the end of the game, you can blow everyone else off the hill and take it for yourself.



The downside here is that Satchel Charges can blow the heck out of your own troops as easily as they can the enemy's. If any of your Dwarves are killed, any extra Satchels they carried pile up on the ground. In multiplayer, if an enemy lobs an Explosive Bottle nearby, or a Fetch uses the Lightning Dream, *you* go boom. If you're unlucky enough to have this happen, at least take the time to enjoy watching all the body parts fly across the map. If it happens often, make a game of it by trying to predict where the parts will land!



TIP

The Satchel Trick for "King of the Hill": You can protect your interests by laying all your Satchel Charges around the flag on the hill. At the end of the game, when everyone rushes the hill, you need only throw an Explosive Bottle and all the enemy troops will magically turn into blood-spewing projectiles.



FIGURE 2.5

These Satchel Charges pose a serious danger if they get ignited.

Certain scenarios require you to use Satchel Charges to blow up objects on the map. Satchel Charges are powerful tools that can help you beat seemingly insurmountable odds, but they can also kick your own butt all the way back to the Stone Age, so be careful. A Satchel String is when you lay a few Satchels close enough together that setting one off causes a chain reaction. In multiplayer, a Bacon Bomb (a Satchel placed next to the bacon) can almost guarantee victory.

MORTARS

Dwarven Mortars are the same as regular Dwarves in every way, except they don't carry Satchel Charges or throw Exploding Bottles. Instead, they have mortars they can fire long distances at approaching (or fleeing) enemies. The mortar attack is especially deadly and can take out a large group of Soulless in one shot.

But because mortars are very slow to reload, you don't want to get into a situation where there's a large group of onrushing enemies and all you have to defend



yourself with are Dwarven Mortars. If you *do* get into that situation, have the Dwarves fire one at a time to maximize their weapon's effectiveness (Figure 2.6).

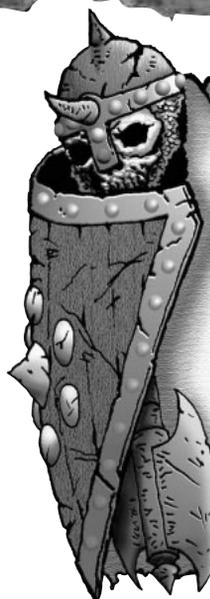


FIGURE 2.6

Mortars do a lot of damage, but they take forever to reload.

GHOLS

Ghols can throw all kinds of things, from rocks to Satchels to body parts. (Things like broken blades will do damage.) Ghols can carry one Pus Packet each, also. They use these as an explosive, paralyzing agent against enemy troops, as shown in Figure 2.7. They can throw it at either an enemy or the ground. Although the Pus Packet probably



TIP

Jason Jones Tip: Always throw the Pus Packet directly at the enemy, not at the ground in front of it. This way, if it doesn't explode on first contact, there's still a chance it will go off when it hits the ground.



FIGURE 2.7

This Ghol is throwing a Pus Packet at a group of unsuspecting Bowmen.

will explode, there's always a chance it won't. The one advantage of Pus Packets is that they aren't affected by rain or snow, and their explosive properties are enough to ignite an unspent Explosive Bottle or Satchel Charge. If there's plenty of moisture, the best thing to use to start an explosion is a Pus Packet, so it's always handy to keep one around just in case. And remember—Pus can be re-used.

RANGED WEAPONS

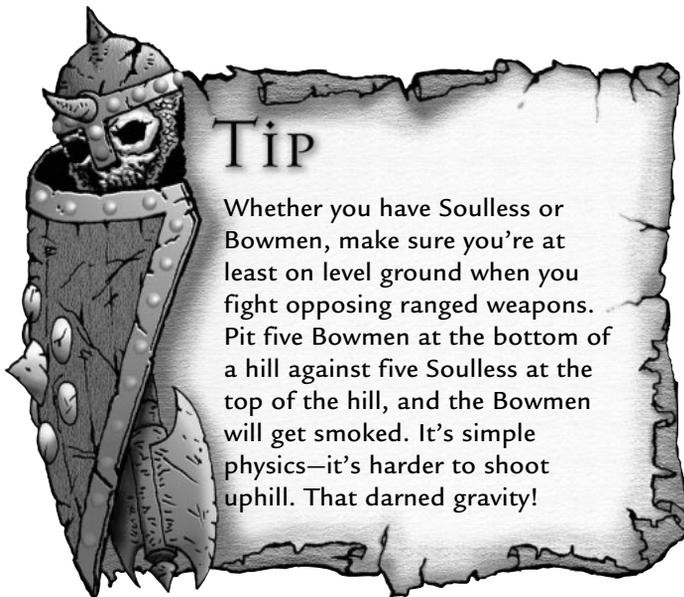
A ranged weapon is any weapon that doesn't require the attacker to be right next to the enemy to inflict damage. In *Myth*, Bowmen, Soulless, Dwarves, and Ghols all use some form of ranged weaponry. I covered Dwarves and Ghols in the Explosives section, so I'll limit the discussion here to Soulless and Bowmen.



BOWMEN

Bowmen fire a traditional bow and arrow and are great for long-range attack. Although they're vulnerable in hand-to-hand combat, you can double-click on a nearby enemy to have your Bowman knife him.

As with all other units, experience level affects the Bowmen's performance. The more kills they have, the more accurately they shoot, and the quicker they release their arrows. Experienced Bowmen are far better than newbies; therefore, it's always important to try to get them each a couple of kills early in a scenario. A pack of eight Bowmen with three or four kills each is a force to reckon with; they can take out even Gholts before they get close enough to hack the Bowmen to pieces.



TIP

Whether you have Soulless or Bowmen, make sure you're at least on level ground when you fight opposing ranged weapons. Pit five Bowmen at the bottom of a hill against five Soulless at the top of the hill, and the Bowmen will get smoked. It's simple physics—it's harder to shoot uphill. That darned gravity!

SOULLESS

Soulless equal Bowmen in every respect except movement. It's not their speed that's the factor—it's that Soulless are *dead*. Because Soulless float above the ground, they can cross deep water or otherwise impassable areas that Bowmen or other terrestrial units could never negotiate. They also can climb lofty buttes inaccessible to other units (Figure 2.8). The height lets them take out enemy units easily. You can exploit this ability in certain multiplayer games.



FIGURE 2.8

This hill gives the Soulless a height advantage that Bowmen, because of their legs, can't enjoy.

MAGIC

There are two categories of “magic” in *Myth II*—natural abilities and Dreams. Natural ability is what your Journeyman uses (along with Mandrake Roots) to heal an injured Warrior, or unheal an Undead fleabag. The Fetch’s use of lightning also is a natural ability. Some weapons in the game are magical (for example, the Warlock’s Magic Item).

But most cool magical events and spells that occur in *Myth II* are what the game’s creators call “Dreams.” Only a few characters use these.

DISPERSAL DREAM (ALRIC)

This is the Dream used by Alric, the Avatara you have access to in several missions. The Dispersal Dream packs the power of a Satchel Charge for each enemy it hits, and it can be extremely effective against large groups of enemies. This Dream acts



like an explosive on the unit you “cast” it on, but it doesn’t necessarily stop there. If another unit is within a certain distance of the unit you blew up, it will blow up, as well, scarring the landscape as it does (Figure 2.9).



FIGURE 2.9

This is the Avatara’s Dispersal Dream in action.

Any units close to the second exploding unit will blow up, as well, and so on. If the enemy is grouped fairly tightly, you can blow them all up easily this way. This Dream at work on a large group of Myrkridia is reminiscent of popcorn popping. Just remember: if the enemy is too close to your own troops when you cast the Dream, you’ll become part of that “fuse” and blow up, too, or at least take heavy damage.



SHADE'S DREAM

The Shade's Dream is basically the same as the Avatara's Dispersal Dream. Get close to a Shade, and he'll take out a group of your units in a few seconds. The key to dealing with the Shade is to keep your troops spread out so the Dream can't spread from unit to unit. When a Shade dies, it leaves behind glowing green orbs—unspent Dream charges. If you accidentally ignite one, you won't be around to see the aftermath.

DECEIVER'S BINDING DREAM

The Deceiver's Binding Dream is perhaps the game's handiest Dream. It causes the affected unit to change its allegiance to your side. You can bulk up your army by converting enemy units this way. In the mission "Relic," for example, you can use the Binding Dream to turn Myrkridia and Mauls to your side, not only adding these units to your army, but also disrupting enemy attacks. Because the Binding Dream works only on living units, you can't convert Soulless, Thrall, Ghosts, and Stygian Knights. Not to worry, though; there are plenty of other cool units you can snatch from among the enemy's minions.

WARLOCK'S CONFUSION SPELL

The Warlock can cast a Confusion Spell on a group of enemies. Its area of effect will confuse several units at once. You can identify affected units by the stars circling around them (Figure 2.10). A confused unit will behave unpredictably, often attacking adjacent units of its own kind. Although the Confusion Spell isn't usually used on a regular basis, it can be very effective when cast on tightly grouped clusters of enemies.



FIGURE 2.10

The Warlock's Confusion Spell will cause enemy units to attack one another.

THE ELEMENTS

Myth II: Soulblighter is unique, and some very special features help make it so. One of these is its incorporation into gameplay of natural elements such as wind, rain, and snow. Rather than act as nothing more than a cosmetic or artistic touch, the elements actually affect the way you play. You could play without ever acknowledging this, but understanding how the elements affect the game can give you the edge you need to beat your fiercest rival.

WATER

Water in *Myth II* behaves much like water in the real world—putting out fire and making some areas impassable—but there's more to water in *Myth II* than this. For example, when a unit walks through water, its normal progress slows noticeably; depending on the depth of the water, the unit may not be able to pass at all. If a unit



can't breathe as it passes through the water (if the water is too deep), the unit will go around—it won't kill itself trying to cross. Water comes in five levels, and some of these are too deep for many of your troops.

The Undead don't have to worry about breathing; they're already dead! Thus, many Undead units can cross any body of water and even hide beneath the surface. If you didn't already know Undead units could do this, you'll find this out early. It's not uncommon to have a horde of Thrall or several Wights come out of deep water just as you're trying to cross a river.

The Undead also can use water as a defense. If you're chasing down Undead units with a Dwarf, all the enemy has to do is hop into the odd river or pond to foil your plans. The Explosive Bottles your Dwarves throw must always hit the ground before they can explode. When they land in water, they go out. This can be frustrating, but if you're the one being chased, it can be a real boon.

SNOW

Snow doesn't have a particularly profound effect on gameplay, but it can affect the Dwarves' Explosive Bottles by extinguishing them before they hit the ground (Figure 2.11). This brings us to the next point: if snow is falling, there's probably snow on the ground, too; therefore, the bottle is even more likely to go out when it hits the snowy ground. The upshot is don't depend on Dwarves to blow things up with precise timing, or you'll be six feet under. A good way to ensure that your bottles will explode is to have more than one Dwarf throwing at the same time. This way, if one bottle explodes, they all will.

RAIN

Rain is much like falling snow, except it almost always will extinguish an Explosive bottle. Rain often comes and goes, however.

The interesting thing about the rain and snow in *Myth II* is that each drop is a real 3-D entity. Every drop or flake is affected by the physics of gravity and wind, and every drop is factored into the gameplay. It may not seem like much, but when you're saved from an enemy Dwarf by some newly falling rain, you'll thank the *Myth II* programmers plenty.



FIGURE 2.11

Snow often snuffs out Explosive Bottles.

WIND

Wind in *Myth II* is completely out of your control. You can't influence it, predict it, or reliably see where it blows. But wind plays only a minor role in the game, affecting elements such as rain and snow. It has no effect on Dwarves' bottles or Bowmen's arrows. It makes the game prettier, and not much more.

VISIBILITY

There are no specific visibility differences in *Myth II*, but it's easier to spot approaching enemy units from certain terrains. A dark, rainy landscape can make it difficult to see an approaching enemy unit. This is a nonfactor for some gamers, but when you're involved in an intense game and the overhead map is turned off, an enemy can get pretty close before you notice it.



TERRAIN

There isn't a great deal of gameplay variation among the various terrain types in *Myth II*, but it's still important to mention some subtleties and how they affect gameplay.

DESERT

The desert is nothing more than a waterless environment in which to play *Myth II*, as Figure 2.12 shows. Often it has fewer height differentials (high places for Bowmen and Dwarves to shoot from) than other landscapes, so it literally levels the playing field a little. However, a hot, dry environment greatly benefits your Dwarves, and you can expect their bottles to blow up with a very high degree of certainty. After spending time in rain or snow, the desert is a real treat—especially if you love to blow things up.



FIGURE 2.12

The desert is dry-looking, and that's about it.



On the downside, Bowmen's arrows usually will not start a fire in a sand dune, so don't look to catch the enemy in a brush fire on a desert level.

MARSHES

Again, marshes have no significant effect on movement or any other part of the game, beyond the fact that there's a fair bit of water lying around. That said, water slows units and provides hiding places for some Undead units. Be slightly more aware of these factors in the marshes.

FROZEN TUNDRA

You might expect your units to be weaker or function less well under cold and snowy conditions. This is not the case, however. The main factor in a snow-covered landscape is that snow puts out fire, making it hard for your Dwarves to be the factor you'd like them to be in a major battle. In fact, they're so ineffective in these conditions that in a tight battle it's not worth taking the time to micromanage them when you have other units to take care of.

As in the desert, there isn't much definition to the snowy landscape. There just aren't always a lot of landmarks to tell you where you are or where you're going. Keep your map on at all times (press the Tab key) to keep oriented. A disorganized army is an army that's ready to get its butt kicked.

CAVES

The caves are for effect only, with the exception of one mission that places you inside the Tain Shard. This cave-like map is very strange and sports special gates and elements you won't see elsewhere. But fighting inside a cave is no different than fighting outside a cave. There's just less space to do it in. Keep aware of the cave walls around you; you don't want to get cornered by twenty Myrkridia.



INDOORS

The indoor environment makes for some interesting gameplay quirks. For example, because *Myth II* uses a top-down viewpoint, often you can see units on both sides of a wall. These can be a very short distance away—a distance that would incite a riot in a normal level. Here, however, intervening walls protect the units from one another.

Likewise, you may want to use a Dwarf to attack a unit around the corner of a doorway. You may be able to see an enemy unit with your Dwarf, and it may *appear* that there's a line of sight to toss an Explosive Bottle, but it's not really there (Figure 2.13). Thus, a Dwarf may hesitate long enough to miss his window of opportunity.



FIGURE 2.13

It may look like you can make this throw, but with the doorway in your way, you probably can't.



OTHER COOL STUFF

Myth II isn't just a battleground game bound together by an interesting story. It's an engrossing, all-encompassing experience that includes many nuances. You'll find numerous bonus items sprinkled throughout *Myth II*. These include the following. Some are minor, and some are very important:

-  Gate Keys (for opening gates and releasing prisoners)
-  Warlock's Magic Item (in the "Shiver" mission)
-  Mandrake Plants (these yield Mandrake Roots)
-  Mandrake Roots (find these near riverbanks)
-  Magic Crystal (the Deceiver uses this to get past the Lightning Towers)
-  Lightning Sword (a Berserk uses this in "The Ibis Crown," and later Alric does, too)
-  Ibis Crown (serves no real function, but looks cool)
-  Elemental Claw (a giant claw with a force field that holds the Deceiver)

TROOP MOVEMENT

Unlike such games as *Warcraft* or *Command & Conquer*, *Myth* is a true tactical game. There's no resource management to consider; you're simply trying to win with what you've got in terms of units. And the only way to win is to beat the enemy *tactically*. Thus, troop movement becomes a critical part of the game. After all, if you can't manage how your troops move around the battlefield, you'll probably get pureed.

Moving your units around successfully is the *first* thing you should learn, because, in challenging scenarios (in both single- and multiplayer), you must be able to manage your troops without consciously thinking about it.



GROUPING UNITS

This is perhaps the single most important command for managing your troops in *Myth II*. Select the troops you want to group, and then press (and hold) Alt + (number key from 1 to 0), or Command + (1 to 0) on the Mac, to set that group as a preset. You can preset up to 10 groups in the game, giving you the ability to grab command of just the units you want quickly (Figure 2.14).

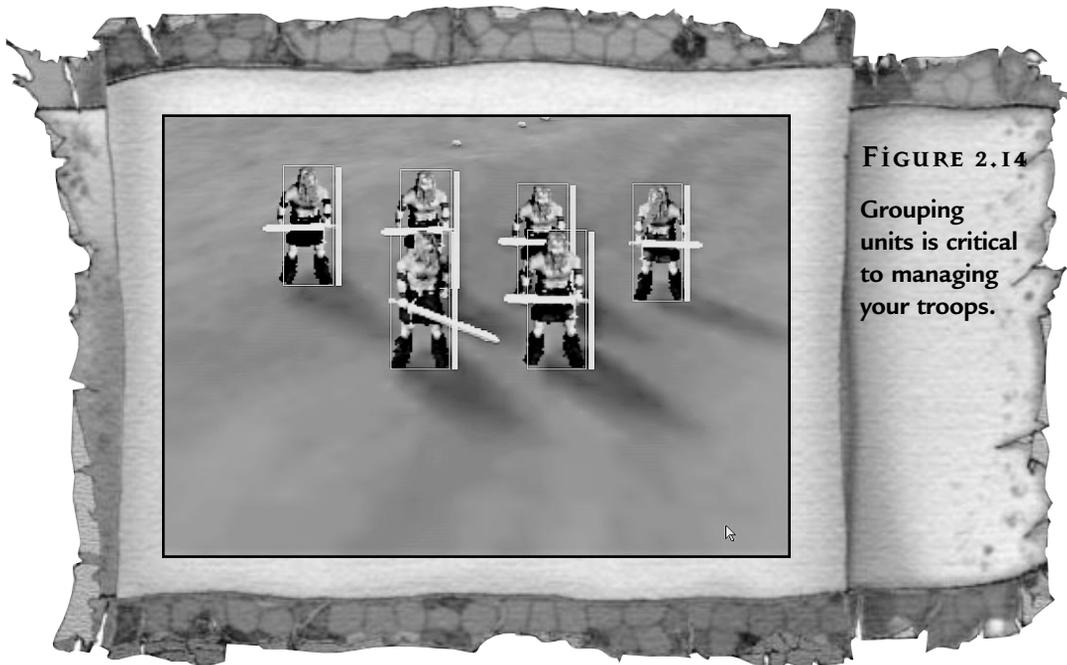


FIGURE 2.14

Grouping units is critical to managing your troops.

At the beginning of a scenario, many players group their like units before they set out. Bowmen, Warriors, and Berserks all can be placed in separate groups you can access quickly by pressing Alt + (the assigned number key), or Command + (the assigned number key) on the Mac. Thus, no matter how dispersed your troops become, you can grab command of them and send them to perform a task. Managing your units this way is critical to victory, so get a handle on it quickly. The manual covers the process in detail, so do some back reading if you need help.



FORMATIONS

You have a handle on grouping your units. Now take it a step further and make sure your groups are in some sort of *formation*. This is important, because large groups of troops moving around *without* formations just jumble together.

For example, the lack of a formation can result in Bowmen at the front of a group getting hit by arrows from those in the back. You don't need this grief. Make sure your troops are safe: set them into a formation. To do this, press the 0-9 keys after selecting a group. When you click on a destination, units in that group will arrange themselves into the formation you've requested.

Specifying formations as a part of movement is important for concentrating or dispersing a force and allows you to attack with precision instead of as a wild mob (which can also be helpful occasionally). Pressing numbers 0-9 will choose alternative formations. You can flip through them as many times as you want before clicking on a destination, so take the time to get the right formation.

Here's a breakdown of what each formation is and a little about what it's used for. Using formations is personal, and every player will have his or her own opinion on how to utilize each kind.

SHORT LINE (1)

The Short Line formation is a good choice when you have small groups of four units or fewer and you want them all standing side by side facing a certain direction. This is most useful for Bowmen and Warriors.

LONG LINE (2)

Use the Long Line formation to cover a large area defensively. If you're worried a unit might sneak past, or want to spread your Bowmen very wide to keep them from all being destroyed by one explosive, the Long Line is a good formation. The Long Line will put eight units abreast and then start a second line.



LOOSE LINE (3)

The Loose Line formation is similar to the Long Line, except the Loose Line is, well, loose. Units are slightly staggered along an axis. This is also used largely as a defensive position and is meant to keep enemy Ghols or other units from getting behind your troops.

STAGGERED LINE (4)

The Staggered Line formation gives a large group of Bowmen excellent lines of sight in a reasonably tight formation without risk of hitting one another. For most players, the Staggered Line is the formation of choice for large groups of Bowmen (or Soulless).

BOX (5)

The Box formation has some (glaringly obvious) limitations when the enemy has a Dwarf or Fetch handy. If your troops are rumbling forward in a tight box and a Dwarf puts an Explosive Bottle in the middle of the pack, you'll lose all those troops in a hurry. The Box also prevents units inside a formation from getting at the enemy. If you go up against a Trow with your troops in a Box formation, you might as well turn off your machine, because that battle is lost.

Boxes are good for grouping units into tight areas early in the game (heck, I use them all the time), but once a battle breaks out nearby, change the formation.

RABBLE (6)

The Rabble formation is a loose, widely (more or less random) spaced formation. This is generally how your units will arrange themselves naturally, so choosing Rabble isn't always necessary. Sometimes Rabble is as good a formation as any when rushing an enemy position, and its wide unit dispersal virtually ensures that every unit will confront an enemy.



SHALLOW ENCIRCLEMENT (7)

The Shallow Encirclement formation is essentially a shallow **U** with units facing inward. This is a handy formation for protecting a certain object when you know the direction the enemy is coming from.

DEEP ENCIRCLEMENT (8)

To be honest, I never use the Deep Encirclement formation. However, it could come in handy if you want to move across a map and protect a unit from flank attacks. The Deep Encirclement is a deep **U** shape with all the units facing inward and can be used to house a unit in the middle of the formation.

VANGUARD (9)

The Vanguard is a tried-and-true formation excellent for head-on attacks. It may provide you with some flanking, if the enemy moves to fight the units at the tip of the Vanguard first. This formation is occasionally used with Bowmen, because it provides a good dispersal of arrows from front to back.

CIRCLE (0)

The Circle formation is useful for one thing, and one thing only—to set up your troops to protect an object, unit, or flag. It sets a group of units in a perfect circle, all facing out. You'll see this used over and over again in multiplayer action, and occasionally in the single-player game. It's a solid defensive formation that provides a somewhat better measure of defense than most.

HEIGHT DIFFERENTIALS

Again, height is an important factor in *Myth II*. In real battle, troops fighting downhill perform better, but that's not the case in *Myth II*. Instead, only ranged weapons,



such as those of Soulless, Bowmen, and Dwarves, are affected by height. Because they're a critical part of the game, however, height advantages become very important if you want to win consistently.

Bowmen and Soulless fighting from a lofty perch almost always will prevail in an otherwise evenly matched fight, so try to keep at least level with your opponents. Dwarves also have an advantage if they're up high; when they're at the bottom of the hill tossing upward, they have a severe *disadvantage*. Because of their size and shape, Explosive Bottles are affected by gravity far more than are the Bowmen's sleek arrows. A bottle that doesn't make it to the top of a hill will tend to come right back down and blow up the thrower. Always watch your Dwarves to make sure they aren't making suicidal throws: if a Dwarf gets close enough to an enemy, it will toss an Explosive Bottle without your approval and in his desire to take out the enemy he'll often end up killing himself.

HANDLING UNITS

Double-click on one unit to select all units of that type. This is probably the most common way to select a group and it's a good way to group units at the beginning of a scenario.

You can select any group with the mouse by clicking and dragging a box around the units you want; then Shift-click on additional units to add them to the existing group.

PERSPECTIVE

Myth II is a fully 3-D game. Objects such as arrows or bits of flesh that have been blown up are actually independent parts of the game and behave as individual objects. This very cool 3-D environment means the perspective may take some getting used to. Because you can see only a portion of the terrain at any given time, you must adjust your view frequently to determine where you are and how to get where you're going. There are a few ways to do this, but probably the best way to gain



perspective in *Myth II* is just to play with the game and get used to the point of view. Once you get it down, it won't present any problems.

ORBITING

Keeping your orientation in *Myth II* is critical, so be sure you have a grasp of the controls necessary to do so. The Q and E keys will orbit you around a fixed point, giving you a much better idea of what's around you. If you're too close to the edge of the map, the orbit may not work; you'll have to move away from the edge. To orbit with the mouse, move it around the map and into the four corners.

ZOOMING

Press the V and C keys to zoom in and out of the battlefield. This usually isn't critical, but it looks cool, and once in awhile you must zoom in on something small, such as a Mandrake Root or a Pus Packet, to pick it up.

MOVING

To move forward and backward and turn left and right, use the W, S, A, and D keys. Panning (moving left and right) is activated with the Z and X keys.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Many units in *Myth II* have special abilities. These are activated by pressing the T key.

For instance, press T and the Journeyman heals the selected unit (if the Journeyman has Mandrake Root). The Dwarf drops a Satchel Charge when you press T. These special abilities are important, so experiment with the various units to be sure you know how to use them. Here's a list of the units and their special abilities:

-  **Bowmen:** Fire Arrow (T key)
-  **Dwarves:** Drop Satchel Charge (T key)
-  **Avatara:** Dispersal Dream (T key)



-  Wights: Blow themselves up (T key)
-  Journeyman: Heals (T key)
-  Heron Guard: Heals (T key)
-  Deceiver: Binding Dream (T key)
-  Warlock: Confusion Spell (T key)

RULES OF COMBAT

Everyone has their own *Myth II* playing style, but there are a few universal truths everyone should try to heed if they want to win. I'll touch on a few key areas here, but be sure to read the notes and tips scattered throughout the book for details on how to succeed in *Myth II*.

FLANKING

Flanking is something that's as old as warfare itself. You'll be flanked (annoyingly so) by Ghols. When the enemy senses you're close enough, the Ghols will rush in from all sides and rip your Bowmen to shreds. You can learn something from this. Whenever possible, try to get to one side of, or, better yet, *behind* enemy forces without them noticing. Once you begin your attack, they'll feel confident in their defenses—until you bring a small but deadly force up from behind and sandwich them! The moral of the story: Always try to attack from more than one location at once.

NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY

Always, always attack with more units than the enemy has, unless you have special units such as Dwarves. You can greatly decrease your losses by attacking with a 2:1 or 3:1 ratio, rather than 1.5:1. The more units you can send against the enemy, the less damage each of your units will suffer, and the more quickly the enemy will buy the farm.



SPECIAL UNITS

Use your Journeymen, Dwarves, and Avatars to their full potential. Lay Satchel Charges, and bait the enemy into an explosive trap. Use your Journeyman to heal ailing units. In short, use every last bit of power at your fingertips in each situation, because, often in the single-player game, the next group of enemies you'll face will be overwhelming.



CHAPTER
3

THE VILLAGE



Y

ou may consider yourself an accomplished *Myth: The Fallen Lords* player, but that doesn't mean *Myth II: Soulblighter* will be a cakewalk. Sure, many *Myth II* elements resemble those of its predecessor, but a number of new creatures, weapons, magic, and tactical aspects make this sequel something truly special.

These first three missions will familiarize you with the new *Myth II* interface and some new enemies. The challenges may not be overwhelming, but don't take these missions lightly. The process of honing your *Myth II* skills starts now.

WILLOW CREEK

As the scenario begins, your troops enter the map along the outskirts of the town of Willow Creek. The mayor of Tallow has begged you to sweep Willow Creek of the Undead menace killing the peaceful townsfolk.

You have a Dwarf, some Bowmen, and a group of Warriors at your disposal, but they should be more than you need as you get your feet wet in *Myth II*'s first mission.

Mission Objective Sweep the village of marauding bands of Ghosts.





YOUR GUYS

You start with a large group of Warriors, a few Bowmen, and a Dwarf. Despite the lack of finesse forces, your troops are more than powerful enough to overwhelm the Ghosts wandering the village of Willow Creek. The following units are at your disposal:

 Warriors

 Bowmen (with Flaming Arrows)

 Dwarf

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

For this first mission you'll face only wandering groups of Ghosts as they hunt down and kill the helpless villagers:

 Ghosts

LAY OF THE LAND

Your forces start in the lower-left corner of the map, and most of Willow Creek lies on the mid-right. A river runs from east to west along the map's lower portion. It can be crossed only near the windmill, but plays no part otherwise. The town provides various structures in which to hide from (or escape) the enemy when necessary (see the map in Figure 3.1). There are no other critical structures or features.

BATTLE PLANS

Group your units by kind (Bowmen, Warriors, and Dwarf), and then head north. As you cross the river at the windmill, you'll witness Ghosts hunting down villagers one by one. Being the hero you are, you'll get involved.

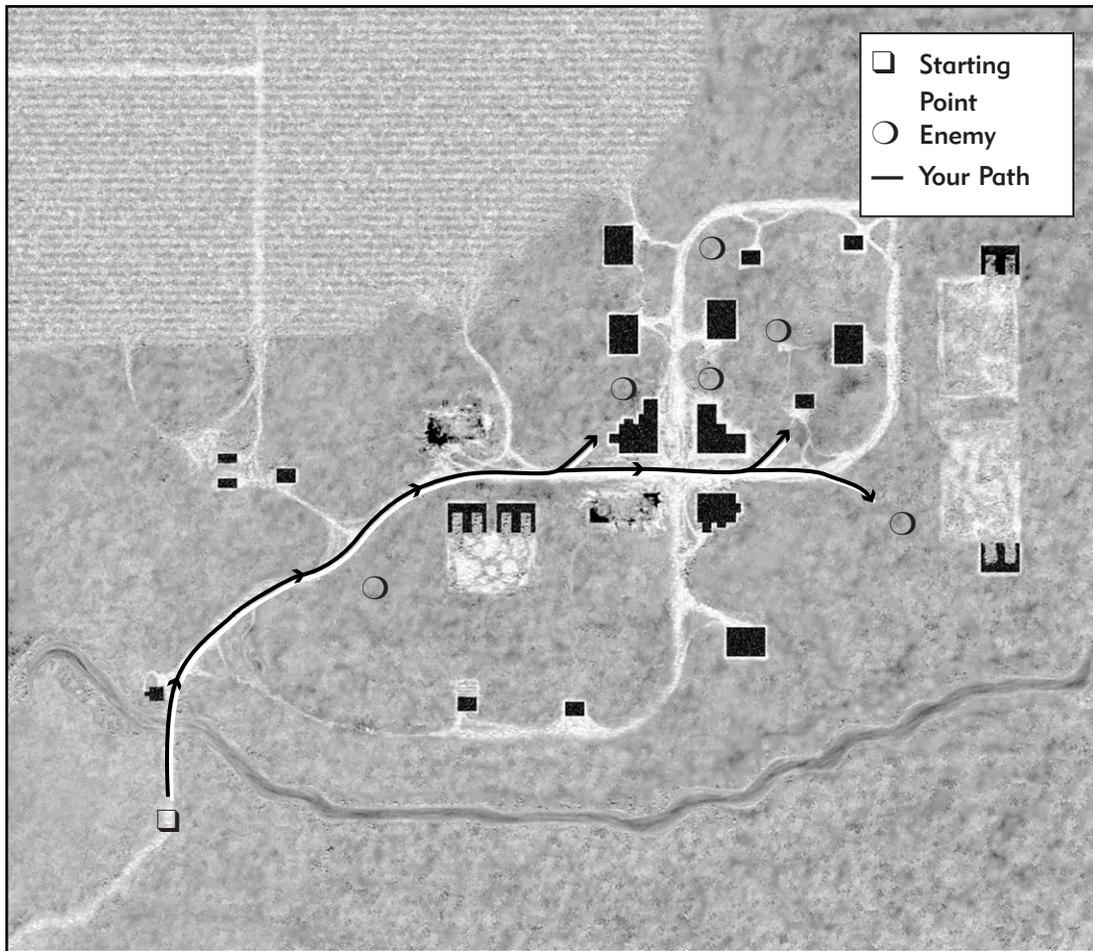


FIGURE 3.1 This map contains the most extensive town yet seen in the Myth universe.

This mission is a “bug hunt”: your job is to scour the village area for these heinous gangs (Figure 3.2). Follow the road northeast into Willow Creek, and on into the center of town. As you work your way through the village, generally you’ll have plenty of warning

LEGENDARY CHANGES

This mission is the same at both Normal and Legendary difficulty settings.

**FIGURE 3.2**

You'll run into plenty of Ghosts in Willow Creek, but all you have to do is return them to dust to win.

of approaching enemies (refer to the map in Figure 3.1). Ghosts paralyze any unit they touch, so avoid hand-to-hand contact with these slimeballs, unless you have overwhelming numbers. Use your Dwarf and your Bowmen to soften up approaching Ghosts. When you must get down and dirty, your Warriors will make short work of their decaying bodies.

Try to deal with Ghosts one trio at a time. Move into town only far enough to get one group's attention, destroy them, and then move on. There are at least four groups of Ghosts on the map, and you must exterminate them all to claim victory. Try to coax them to your position by peppering them using your Bowmen; then have your Dwarf hit them with a couple of exploding bottles as they get close. Eventually, all the Ghosts should come to you if you stay in town. Move in your Warriors to clean up any Ghosts that get close to your position.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Group your units by kind.
-  Follow the road to the cemetery, watching for groups of Ghosts, and then return in the direction of Willow Creek.
-  Use your Bowmen and Dwarf to soften up the Ghosts as they approach your troops.
-  Kill all the Ghosts.



SALVATION

This second mission can be a fair bit trickier than the first. You must penetrate a damp, murky graveyard to free a group of villagers held by the Undead in a holding area at the top. You'll find the resistance in this mission a tad harder, and you must contend with both Warriors and Ghosts.

Mission Objective Rescue the imprisoned villagers and escort them back to the south edge of the map.

YOUR GUYS

Your troop selections are similar the those in the previous mission. It's a good idea to group them by kind for quick access to their individual abilities. Here's what you have:

-  Warriors
-  Dwarves



 Bowmen (with Flaming Arrows)

 Prisoners (no control)

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

This time you're up against Warriors gone bad—Brigands—as well as plenty of Ghosts. The enemy Warriors are as strong and resilient as your own, so bear that in mind when you face off against them.

 Brigands

 Ghosts

LAY OF THE LAND

Because this map is wet and murky, your Explosive Bottles won't detonate reliably. Plus, numerous water hazards will obstruct your troops, so take care not to get cornered (see the map in Figure 3.3). The main road leads through the gates into the cemetery—an enclosed area where Ghosts pop out of the freshly turned graves.

The Prisoners wait at the top of the graveyard, but you don't *have* to follow the road to get there. An alternative route to the left of the cemetery can save you plenty of conflict. Your final destination is the area at the south of the map where the mission began. Once you have the Prisoners, go south, young one!



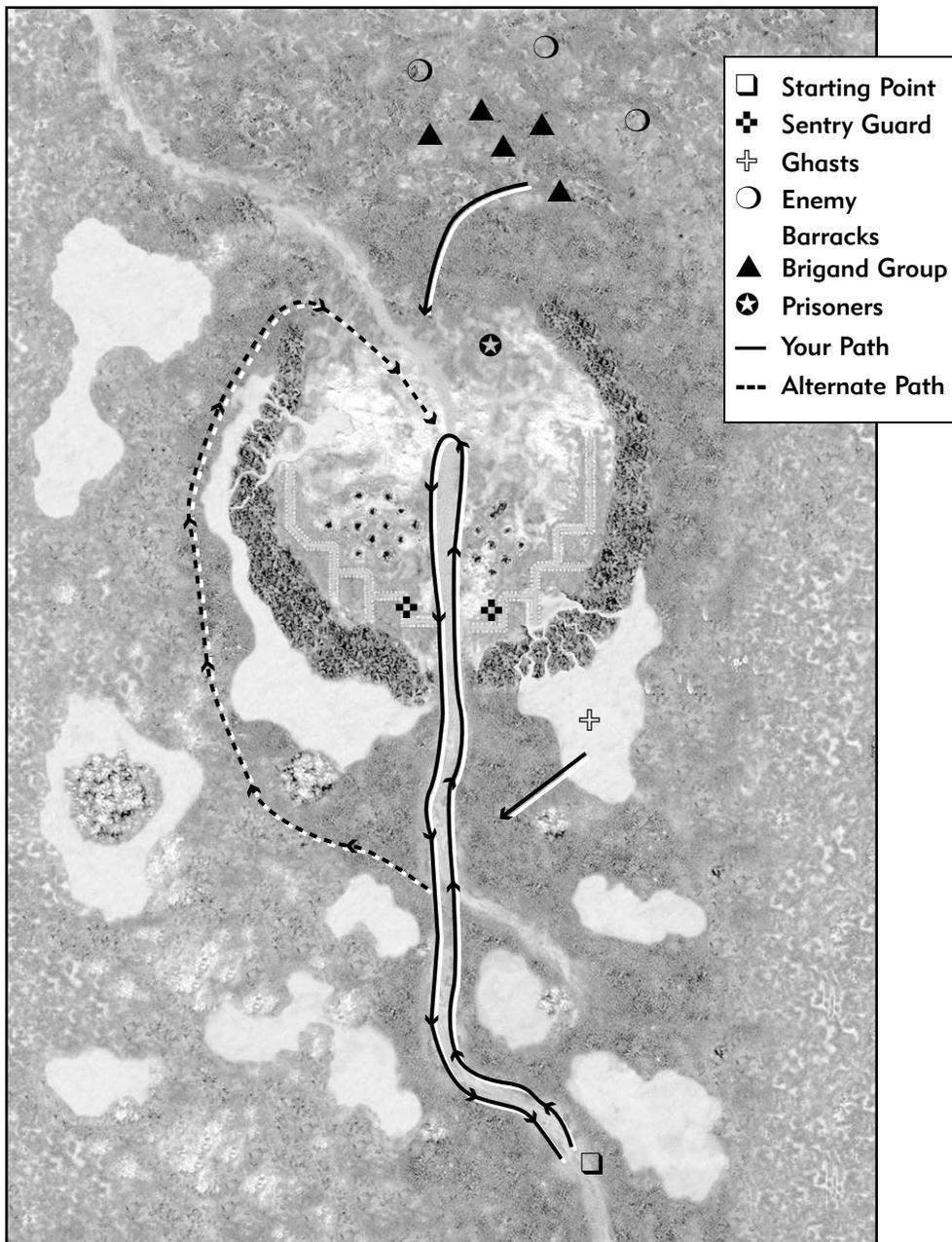


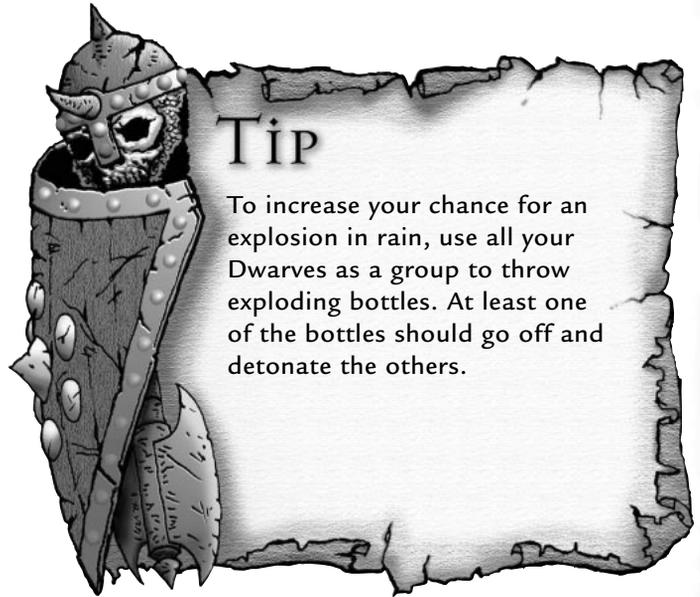
FIGURE 3.3 Don't let the rain get you down: double up your Dwarves to ensure some bottles explode.



BATTLE PLANS

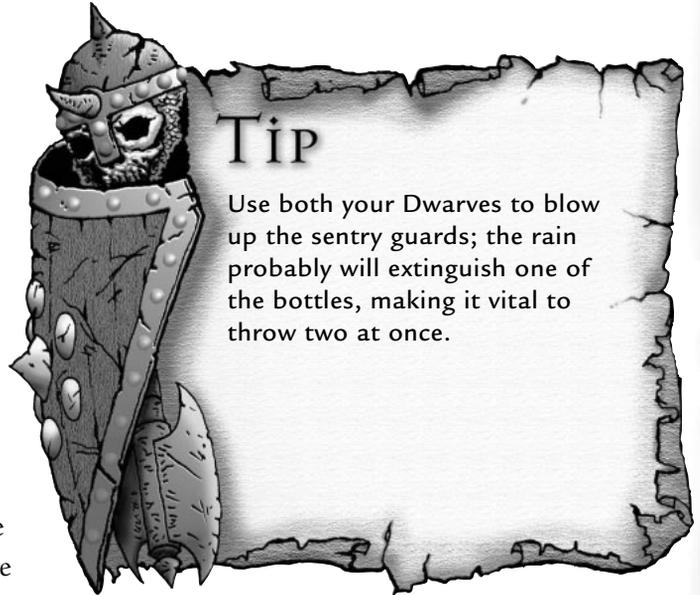
The cemetery and Prisoners lie directly north of your starting position. Group your Bowmen, Dwarves, and Warriors separately and move northward. As you progress, use your Bowmen on a Ghastr or two that staggers out of a pond toward you.

The key to this level is to take out the two Brigands guarding the cemetery gates; if you don't, they'll run north and alert the enemy garrison to your presence. The Brigands stand under the entrance arch, turned to the north (away from you). You can get fairly close before they notice. Have your Dwarves sneak up on these guys and hit them with a couple of Explosive Bottles (Figure 3.4). Consider sending a pair of Bowmen up with them, in case one volley of bottles isn't enough. Again, if the Brigands get away, they'll alert the troops in the barracks north of the Prisoners and a whole mob of Brigands will bear down on you.



TIP

To increase your chance for an explosion in rain, use all your Dwarves as a group to throw exploding bottles. At least one of the bottles should go off and detonate the others.



TIP

Use both your Dwarves to blow up the sentry guards; the rain probably will extinguish one of the bottles, making it vital to throw two at once.

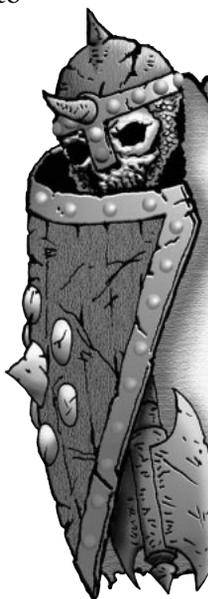


FIGURE 3.4

Sneak up on the Brigands guarding the cemetery gates, and then blow them up.

Only take up enough troops to release the prisoners. Set up a defense near the entry arch in case of alerted troops. Once you've released the captives, your objective becomes to lead them back safely to where you started the mission. The Prisoners, never under your control, walk slowly down the road toward the starting point, leaving you to keep the enemy at bay.

A prison guard walks up to check on the Prisoners every couple of minutes. Killing this guard with your Bowmen can buy you 90–105 seconds before the enemy misses him and sends troops out after you. If you prefer not to kill



TIP

David Bowman Says: An alternative way to reach the Prisoners involves diverting to the left of the cemetery. It doesn't necessarily make the mission any easier, but you'll confront the sentries as you leave, rather than before you enter. This alternate path is traced on the mission map.



the guard (Figure 3.5), don't free the Prisoners until just *after* he checks them. This will buy you a little more than a minute before he checks again and reports back to enemy troops.

How you deal with the Brigands that eventually pour down the road south is a matter of opinion, but generally it's a good idea to leave a few Warriors and a pair of Bowmen in the cemetery to slow them. It's also a *very* good idea to have your Dwarves lay Satchel

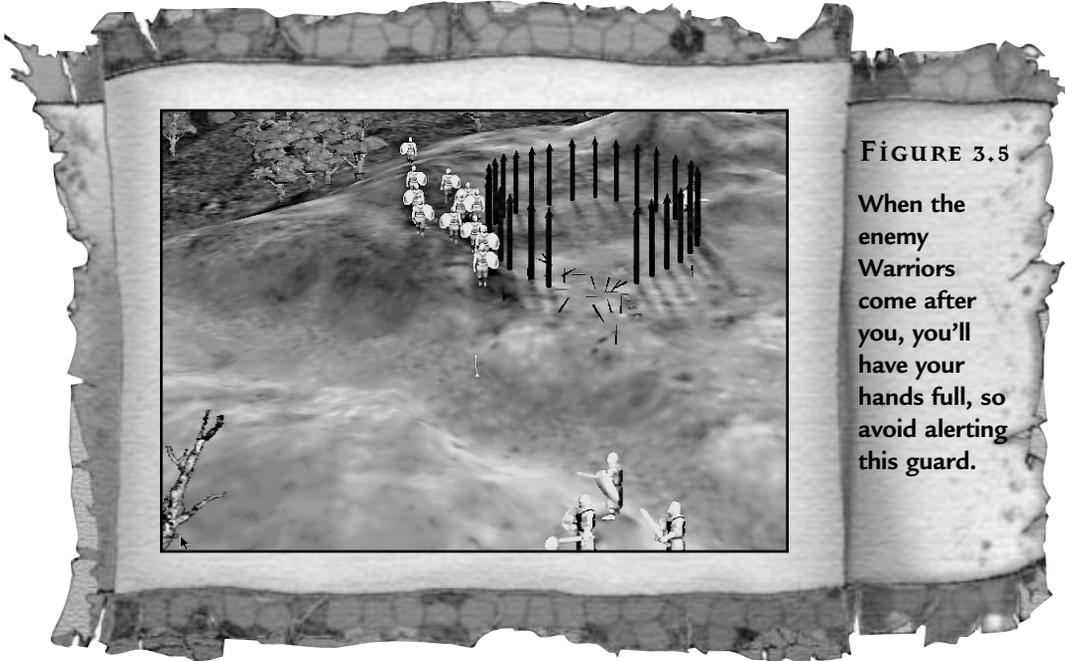
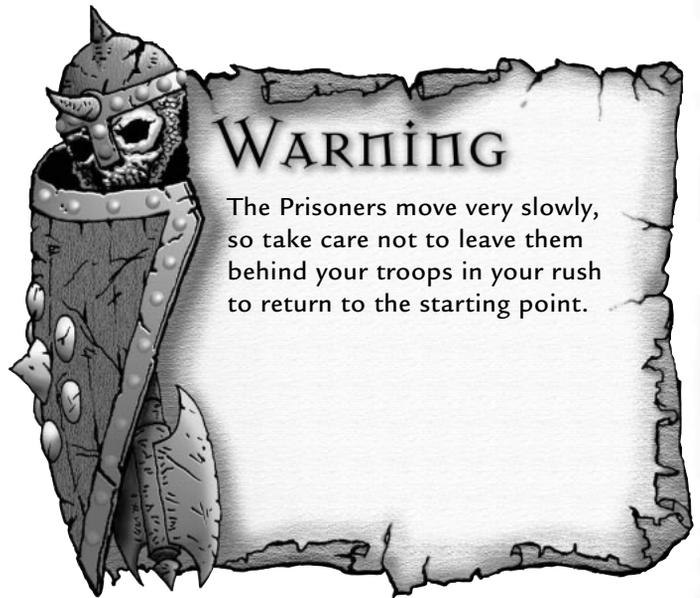


FIGURE 3.5

When the enemy Warriors come after you, you'll have your hands full, so avoid alerting this guard.



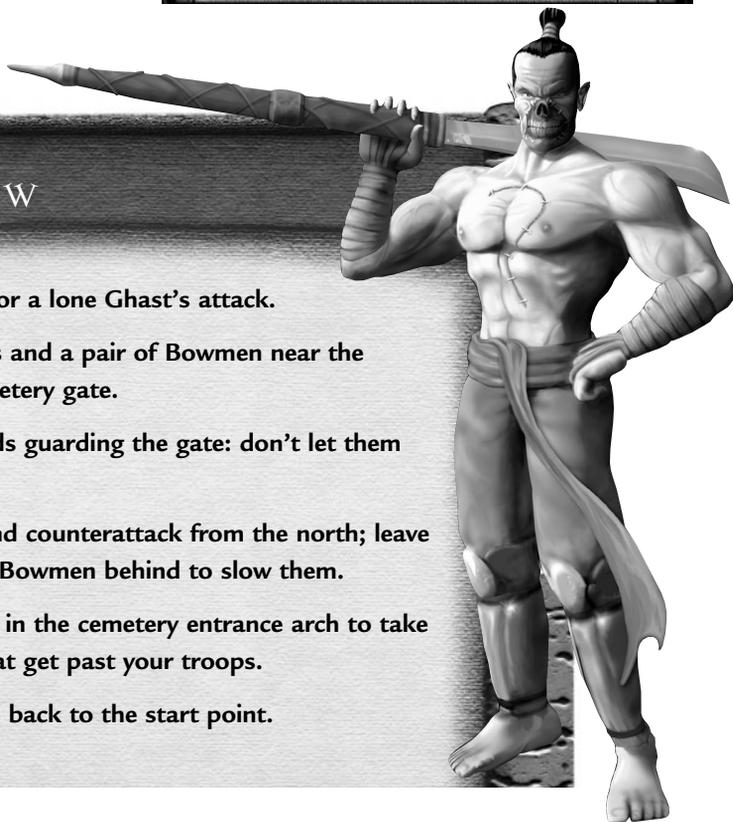
Charges in the entrance arch; when the Brigands try to get through, blow them to bits. A combination of all these elements should give you more than enough time to get those Prisoners off the south edge of the map.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

At Legendary difficulty level, three patrols of Brigands rotate around the perimeter of the cemetery, near the map edge. Twenty-four Brigands are stuffed into tents in the north—an awesome force. There are three Sentries at the entrance, and more wandering Ghosts.

BLOW BY BLOW

-  Head north, ready for a lone Ghost's attack.
-  Sneak your Dwarves and a pair of Bowmen near the Brigands at the cemetery gate.
-  Blow up the Brigands guarding the gate: don't let them get away.
-  Prepare for a Brigand counterattack from the north; leave a few Warriors and Bowmen behind to slow them.
-  Lay Satchel Charges in the cemetery entrance arch to take out the Brigands that get past your troops.
-  Escort the Prisoners back to the start point.





DOWN A BROKEN PATH

Again, you must protect a Villager, but this time you'll protect and escort him through the entire mission. The villager in question is Rurik, a village leader, and you must escort him to the Tallow town gates so he can pass important information to Tallow's mayor. Expect considerable resistance as you work your way to the river crossing and on to the gates.

Mission Objective Escort the Villager safely to the town gates.

YOUR GUYS

As in the previous two missions, you have a standard group of units with which to confront the enemy:

 Warriors

 Bowmen

 Dwarves

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

Enemy units come out in considerable force in this mission, including a unit you haven't seen since *Myth: The Fallen Lords*. Here's what you'll face:

 Soulless

 Thrall

 Ghols

LAY OF THE LAND

The defining feature in this map is the river that forks from north to south (Figure 3.6). Indeed, this river forms the major obstacle before the Tallow town gates.

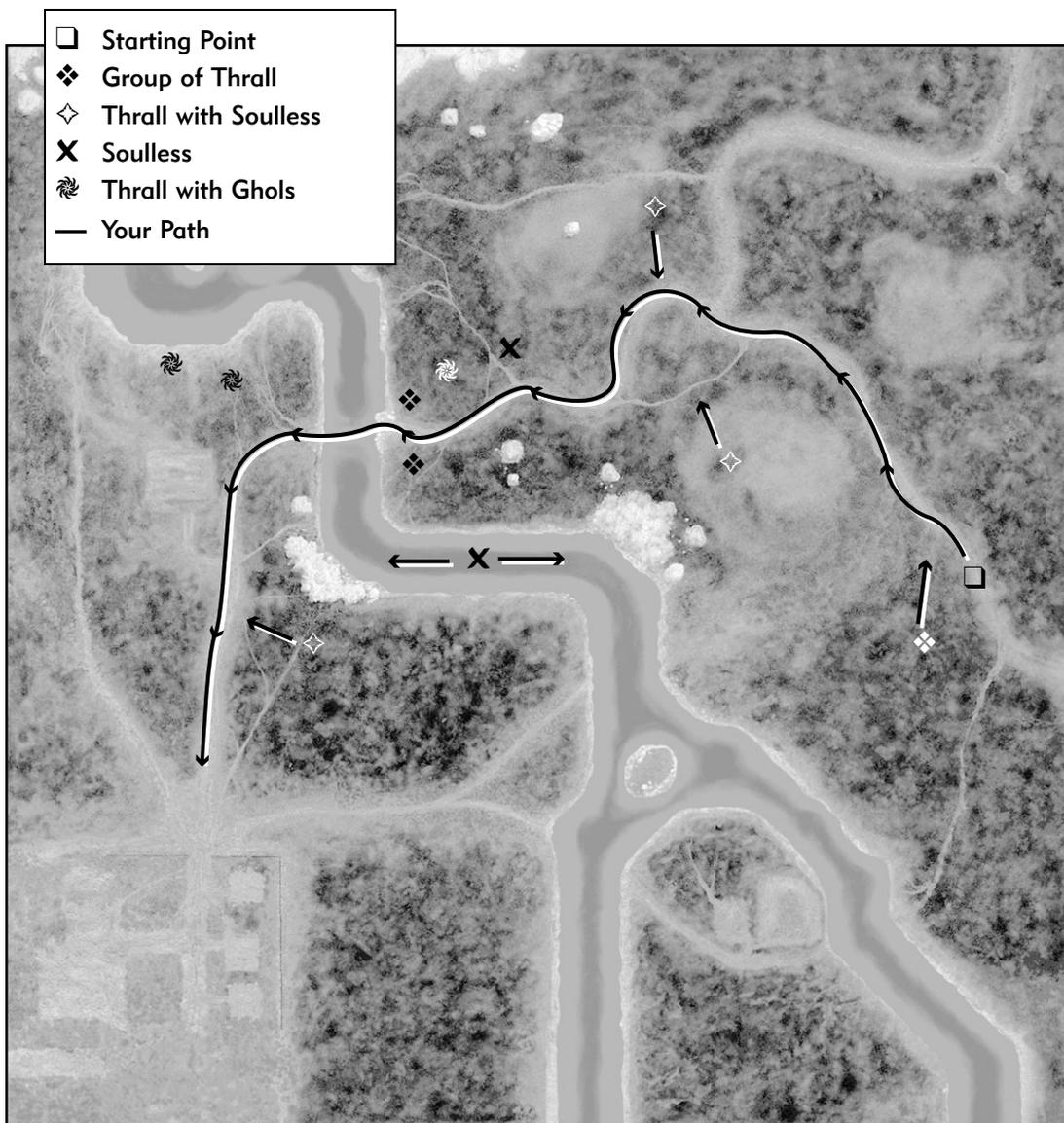


FIGURE 3.6 As with many missions, crossing the river is key.



The crossing is a shallow area in the northwest. It's worth mentioning for a couple of reasons. First, Thrall waiting in the deep water on either side of the crossing will climb out and attack you as you cross. Second, a group of Soulless patrol the length of the river; to avoid them, simply let them pass by unmolested.

This map contains splendid weather, so you needn't worry about your Explosive Bottles failing to explode.

BATTLE PLANS

This mission turns up the pressure. The road to Tallow is rife with groups of vile Undead beasts just waiting to sink their evil weapons into your flesh.

As you start to follow the Villager, remember the large group of Thrall that approaches from behind in a few minutes. Either flee or confront them (Figure 3.7). Although you can outpace this group easily, if you get bogged down before you reach the river crossing, they'll catch up and kick the stuffing out of your troops. Often it's best just to hunker down and destroy these Thrall, especially if you're good with Dwarves.

When you move up to the fork in the road (there's a signpost there), you'll face a group of Thrall backed by a Soulless. Use your Bowmen to take out the Soulless as soon as you see it. Then sit back and shred the lumbering Thrall as they approach. You can eliminate this group of enemies easily, so wipe them off the map before moving on.

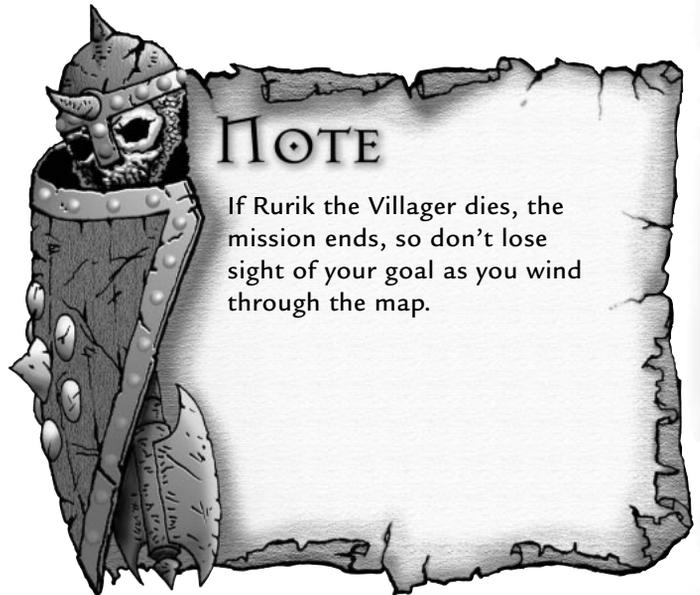




FIGURE 3.7

Destroy the initial waves of enemies, or you could get caught in the middle of an Undead sandwich later.

The Villager will follow your troops as they move, so don't worry about him wandering off. But keep an eye on where he is in relation to enemy troops. As you approach the river, a wave of Ghol and Thrall sweep down from the north, so be ready for them.

At the river, watch out for the pack of patrolling Soulless. Generally, it's best simply to avoid them. When you cross, send your Warriors first to take out the Thrall concealed in the deep water (Figure 3.8). When you reach the other side, make a hard left turn and run for the town gates.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

At the **Legendary** difficulty level, five patrols of Thrall pursue you, and a horde of Ghol with Pus Packets attack from the North. There are far more trees in otherwise open areas.



As the map shows, two groups of Thrall and Ghols race up behind you to put a major damper on your day. Have your Dwarves bomb the quickly advancing Ghols, or leave a few Warriors behind to occupy them while the Villager slips safely through the gates. Don't take these Ghols lightly: they're very fast and will gun for the Villager, so leaving a few Bowmen behind for mop-up is a good idea.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Take out the Thrall that follow you after a couple of minutes.
-  Move to the fork in the road and take out the Soulless and Thrall with your Bowmen.
-  Proceed toward the river, wary of a wave of Ghols and Thrall that attack just before you get there.
-  Watch out for the Thrall waiting in the deep water at the river crossing.
-  Make a hard left after crossing the river and run for the gates.
-  Keep your Bowmen and a few Warriors behind the Villager to take care of Ghols that come up from behind.
-  Get your troops inside the Tallow town gates.



CHAPTER
4

THE KEEP



In this pair of missions, you'll use your resources to track down and kill the evil Baron Kildaer, who trades in human body parts. First you must penetrate the outer walls of the Keep. Then you must hunt down and destroy the Baron inside the walls of his protective bunker. These two missions feature unique, never-before-seen elements, including an indoor mission and a drawbridge. You'll encounter much that's new and exciting as you fight your way toward the Baron.

INTO THE BREACH

Baron Kildaer, hiding in his heavily fortified Keep, is committing unspeakable crimes against humanity. You must march your troops to the entrance of the village outside the Keep, all the while fending off attacks from marauding bands of Ghols. This mission introduces a pair of new elements—fire by way of Flaming Arrows, and a drawbridge you must lower before you can storm the Keep.

Mission Objective Penetrate the drawbridge and enter the Keep.



YOUR GUYS

The most impressive addition to your forces in this mission is the Dwarven Pathfinder, who arrives partway through the mission. Here's how your forces shape up:

-  Bowmen (with Flaming Arrows)
-  Dwarves
-  Warriors
-  Dwarven Pathfinder (in midmission)
-  Reinforcements including Dwarves, Warriors, and Bowmen

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

You have a great new weapon in the Flaming Arrows, but guess what? The enemy has them too, and they'll cause you no end of suffering. This is what you'll be up against:

-  Bowmen (with Flaming Arrows)
-  Thrall
-  Brigands
-  Ghols
-  Stygian Knights

LAY OF THE LAND

The defining features of this map, shown in Figure 4.1, are the Keep walls and the drawbridge. The Keep walls are especially troublesome: enemy Bowmen are posted along the length of them, making it difficult to approach the Keep even when the drawbridge is down. The only way to climb the Keep walls is from within the Keep itself. There's a sort of boardwalk on the left side of the map, but no way to access it directly. You'll gain access to this area after you approach the drawbridge, and even then only with a Dwarven Pathfinder. Don't let the tranquil open areas deceive you. Groups of Ghols lurk among autumn's falling leaves.



- Starting Point
- ☆ Ghols
- ◆ Group of Thrall
- ◆ Thrall with Bowmen
- ✿ Enemy Bowmen
- Enemy Warriors
- Your Reinforcements
- ☼ Winch
- Your Path
- Dwarven Pathfinder's Path

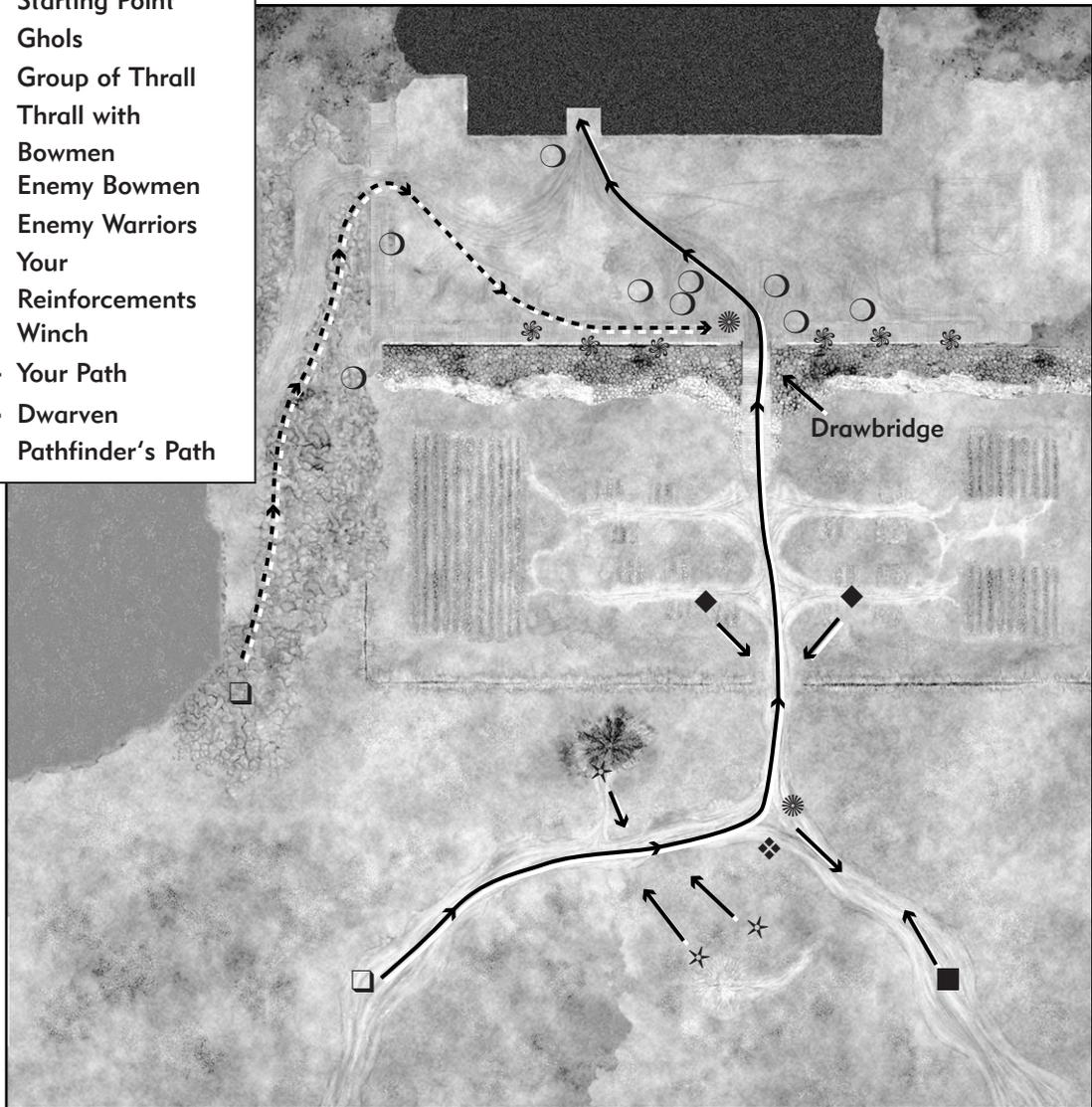


FIGURE 4.1 This map is unique because you will be working in separate areas of the map at the same time.



BATTLE PLANS

Divide your units into two equal groups of Warriors, one group of Bowmen, and one group of Dwarves. Move east down the road until you notice Ghols moving around you. Your Warriors will destroy the Ghols easily, but take care to protect your Dwarves and Bowmen from them. Send one of your Warrior groups to deal with Ghols, and use your Bowmen to hit the remaining Ghols from afar. The other group of Warriors can stay close to your Bowmen and Dwarves to defend them from sneaky Ghols.

After the Ghols are dust, move toward the entrance to the village outside the Keep (it's up the same road). As you approach this area, you'll notice a group of Thrall moving away from the Keep. You needn't engage these troops. At the entrance, enemy Bowmen will launch barrages of Flaming Arrows at your troops (Figure 4.2), and Thrall will march relentlessly toward your position. Use your Bowmen's Flaming Arrows to damage the enemy Bowmen and Thrall defending the village. This should reduce their numbers drastically and, when the flames die down, you can storm the village with your Warriors to finish the job. Use care with your Bowmen, especially those who still have Flaming Arrows; you don't want to lose them before they've had a chance to use their special weapon.

After you eliminate the enemy forces and penetrate to the drawbridge, reinforcements (Warriors, Bowmen, and a Dwarf) arrive. However, the Baron will raise the

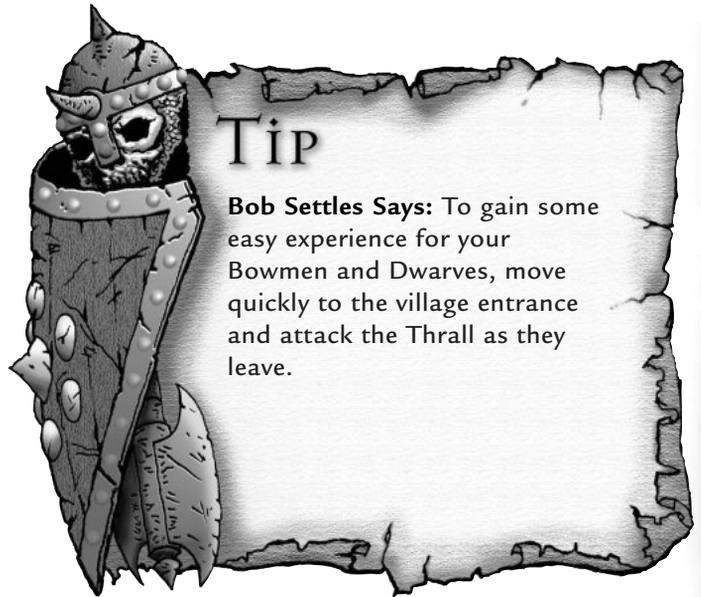


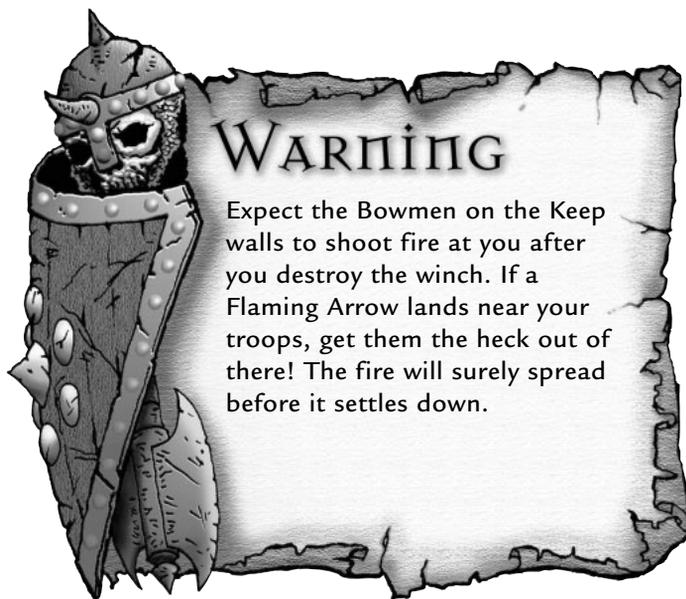


FIGURE 4.2

Be wary of enemy Bowmen launching Flaming Arrows at your positions. If your troops get caught in a brush fire, your goose is cooked.

bridge, stranding you outside the Keep. At this point, a Dwarven Pathfinder will appear on the left edge of the map. Move him carefully through a side entrance into the Keep and find your way to the winch controlling the drawbridge. The Dwarven Pathfinder will remain invisible to the enemy as long as he doesn't get too close to an enemy unit.

Make your way to the gate, and then sneak in when the gate opens to admit an enemy Brigand. Do nothing with your



WARNING

Expect the Bowmen on the Keep walls to shoot fire at you after you destroy the winch. If a Flaming Arrow lands near your troops, get them the heck out of there! The fire will surely spread before it settles down.



Pathfinder except move. If you attack an enemy unit or lay a Satchel Charge, you'll become visible and die quickly. When you're in position on the Keep wall, toss an Explosive Bottle at the winch and take it out (Figure 4.3). If you're lucky, you'll take out a couple of the enemy Bowmen in the process.

After the bridge drops, you can rush your troops inside en masse. Rush your Warriors in first, with your Bowmen in the rear distracting the enemy Bowmen along the Keep's walls. Keep your Warriors in the archway of the drawbridge to avoid enemy Bowman fire. You'll face a bloody battle just inside the gates, but you can overpower the enemy Brigands easily.

When you've secured the gate area, make a run for the inner Keep entrance (see the

LEGENDARY CHANGES

In the **Legendary** difficulty level, the Ghols surrounding you early on will target your Bowmen and Dwarves, rather than your Warriors. Also, a group of Thrall will attack you from behind after you cross over the drawbridge.



FIGURE 4.3

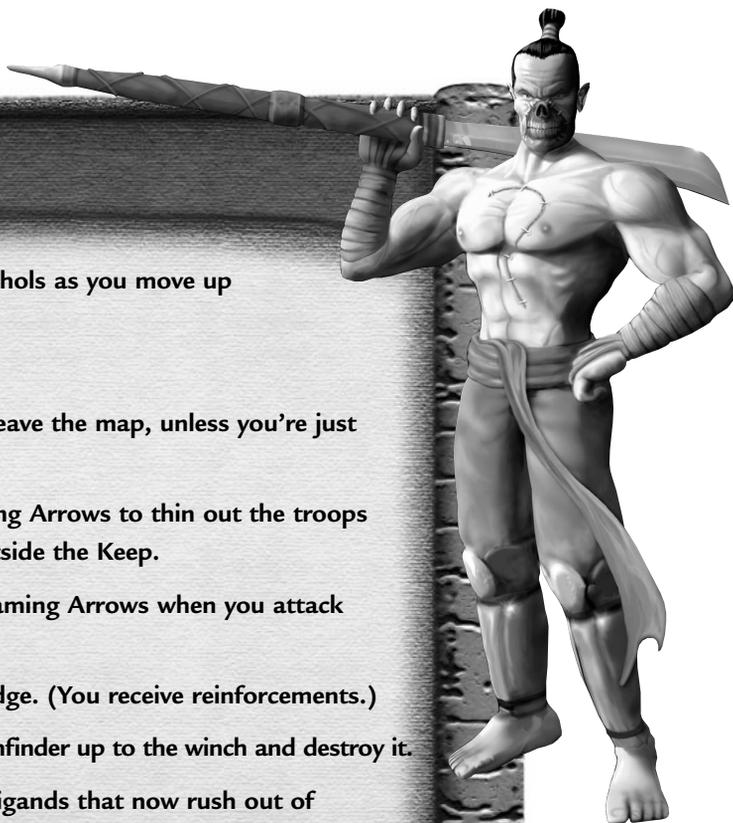
The Dwarven Pathfinder must take up a position atop the outer Keep walls and toss an Explosive Bottle to destroy the winch and lower the drawbridge.



map for your final destination) and attack the garrison of defending Stygian Knights. Follow your Dwarves and Bowmen into the Keep to back up your attacking Warriors. After you defeat the troops guarding the door, move your forces inside quickly. You need only get a few troops through the door to win this level, so move fast, before roving enemy Warriors reduce your overall strength and prevent you from defeating the troops at the door.

BLOW BY BLOW

-  Be wary of marauding Ghols as you move up the road.
-  Eliminate any Ghols.
-  Let the group of Thrall leave the map, unless you're just dying to fight.
-  Use your Archer's Flaming Arrows to thin out the troops defending the village outside the Keep.
-  Watch out for enemy Flaming Arrows when you attack the village.
-  Move up to the drawbridge. (You receive reinforcements.)
-  Sneak your Dwarven Pathfinder up to the winch and destroy it.
-  Keep an eye open for Brigands that now rush out of the Keep to meet you.
-  Rush your Warriors into the Keep and make a mad dash for the door to the inner Keep.
-  Destroy the forces guarding the door (Dwarves are most effective); then enter the Keep.





THE BARON

The Baron is in real trouble. You've penetrated the Keep. Now you need only find the Baron and end his life to complete the mission. However, this mission, unlike any you've experienced before, takes place *inside* a building, and so your normal battle tactics are moot. You must prevent the Baron from escaping: there are two exits from which he could steal away into the night. Guard these exits as you hunt down the Baron.

Mission Objective Find and kill the Baron. Prevent him from reaching any of the Keep's two exits.

YOUR GUYS

Your Dwarves are critical to this mission's success, so protect them well. Here's what you'll have at your disposal:

-  Warriors (16)
-  Bowmen (4)
-  Dwarves (3)

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

After your brief introduction in the previous mission, you will again face the Stygian Knight. These guys are about as tough as Warriors, but they dole out a heck of a lot more punishment. Here's the Undead breakdown for this mission:

-  Bowmen
-  Brigands
-  Stygian Knights
-  Baron



LAY OF THE LAND

This map, shown in Figure 4.4, is very cool, indeed. The entire mission takes place inside the Baron's Keep, so any walls you see are absolute barriers both to the enemy and to your units. Thus, if he's on the other side of a wall, an enemy Bowman right

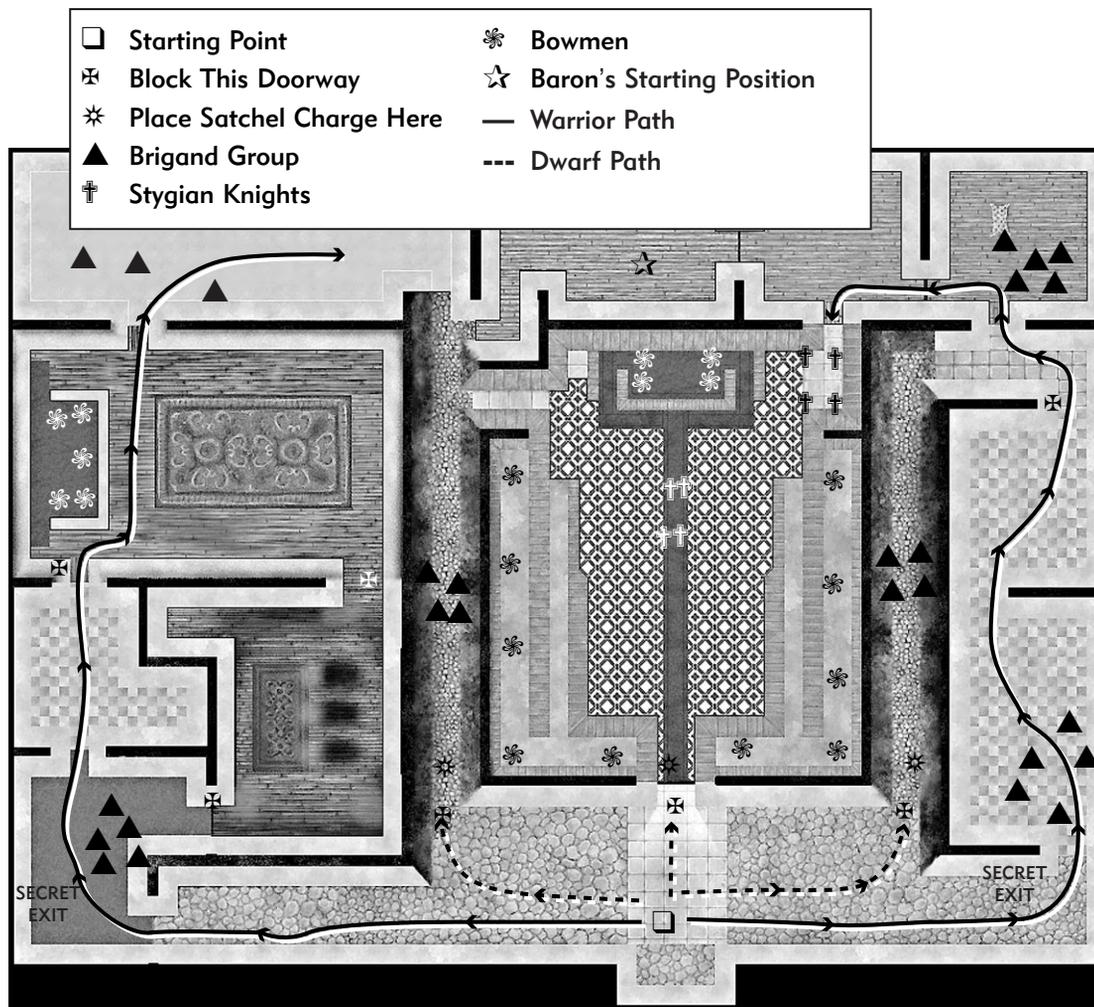


FIGURE 4.4 This map contains two main exits you must block while you search for the Baron.



beside you is no threat. Also, remember that your Bowmen and Dwarves can't see around corners (as you can), so they may not be able to get off the requested shot without hitting a wall.

Two secret exits are hidden in bookshelves in the lower-left and -right corners of the map. Brigands guard both. The third exit is the one through which you entered; however, your Commander has positioned units outside the entrance so the Baron won't exit through this route. Try to anticipate the routes the Baron might take to an exit and block the hallways accordingly.

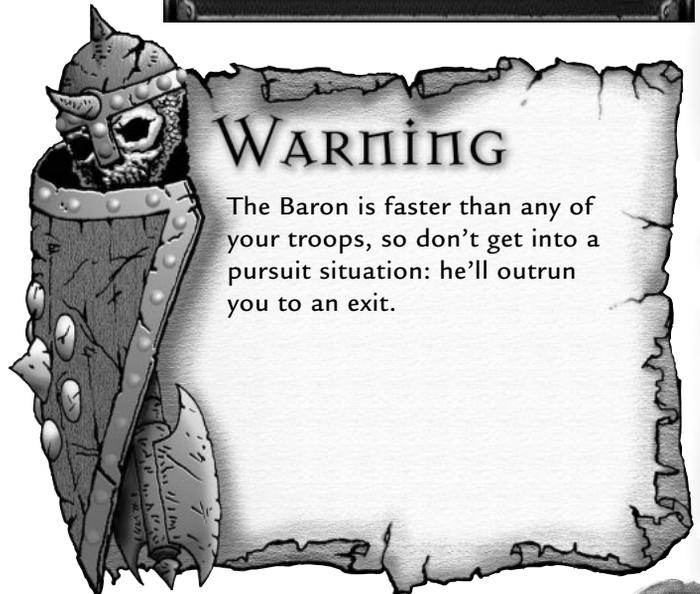
BATTLE PLANS

Divide your Warriors into two groups of eight. Move the two groups to the lower corners of the map (just outside the library rooms). Move your Dwarves, one at a time, up to the central archway and the two long hallways. Then have them lay down Satchel Charges and back off. In the two side hallways, a patrol of Brigands shows up eventually. Toss an Explosive Bottle on them just as the charges go off to take them out en masse (Figure 4.5).

A group of Stygian Knights comes at you as soon as you cross the threshold of the central archway. Lay down Satchel Charges, and then rush back into position to set them off. If any Brigands or Stygian Knights get past your Dwarves, use your Warriors to clean them up.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

At Legendary difficulty level, a few more troops guard the Baron and he heads for the exits a little earlier, forcing you to rush your initial attacks.



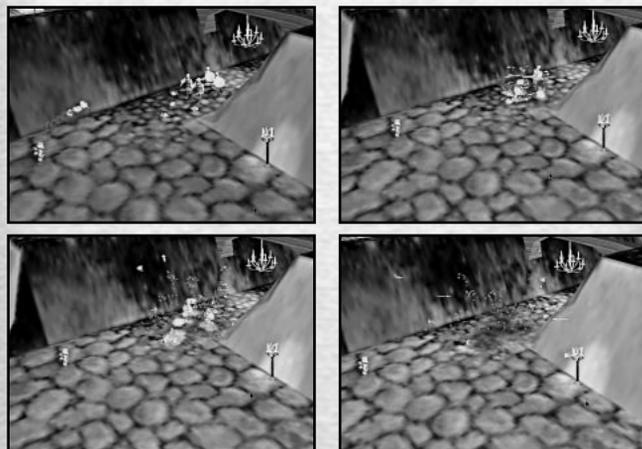


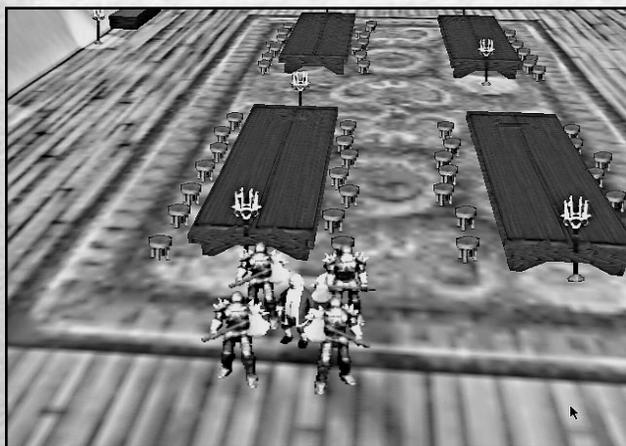
FIGURE 4.5

Use your Dwarves to lay Satchel Charges and take out the Brigands patrolling the hallways.

After dealing with the first three groups of enemy troops, move your two larger Warrior groups into each of the library rooms and take out the Brigands standing guard there. Once these areas are secure, the Baron has no exit, and you can take time to plan your strategy.

There's no telling where you'll find the Baron, but four Stygian Knights protect him, so you can't just waltz over and kill him with a couple of Warriors. The best way to take him out is to move through the Keep systematically, one room at a time, not letting the Baron get around your forces.

As you move through the Keep, be aware of a group of Brigands in the upper-right area of the Keep and four Stygian Knights guarding the Baron (Figure 4.6). Two rooms, including the great room (in the middle of the Keep), are dotted with enemy Bowmen, as well. Avoid these rooms if you can. If you must move into one, rush the Bowmen with your Warriors. This minimizes damage to your forces and

**FIGURE 4.6**

Four Stygian Knights guard the Baron. Don't take them lightly!

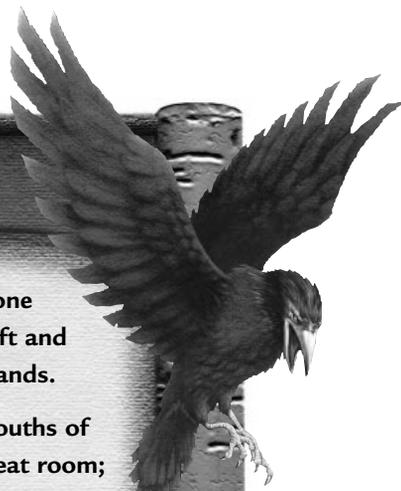
saves your own Bowmen for later, when you may need them to pick off the Baron from afar.

Work your way toward the Baron room by room. When you find him, take him out. If the Baron hides in the great room, bring in your Bowmen to take him out: your Warriors will never catch him, and the enemy Bowmen lining the room will plaster them.



BLOW BY BLOW

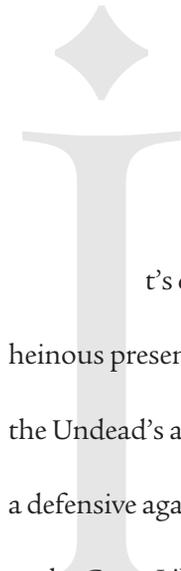
-  Break your Warriors into two groups of six and one group of four. Move the six-packs to the lower-left and -right corners of the map, taking out enemy Brigands.
-  Have your Dwarves lay Satchel Charges at the mouths of the two long hallways and the entrance to the great room; then blow the charges when the enemy approaches.
-  Sweep through the Keep in search of the Baron.
-  Always keep at least one unit at each of the three exits. Ideally, keep at least one unit near any doorway the Baron could escape through.
-  Squeeze your troops down on the Baron until he has nowhere to go. Then attack and kill him.





CHAPTER
5

SOULBLIGHTER



It's clear now that the disturbances around Forest Heart are due to the heinous presence of Soulblighter. In the following three missions, you'll cut off the Undead's attack route, reassemble a World Knot to reach King Alric, and mount a defensive against Soulblighter's forces. In the last of the three missions, you return to the Great Library to retrieve the Total Codex, a key to finding the Summoner.

GONEN'S BRIDGE

Having ravaged the countryside around Forest Heart, the Undead forces are bearing down on your position. Their overwhelming numbers are panicking the troops. To prevent Soulblighter's vile forces from advancing against you, you must cross Gonen's Bridge and blow it up behind you. This means a long and arduous trek across a map rife with enemies, testing your tactical abilities in the extreme.

Mission Objective Get your troops (specifically Garrick) across Gonen's Bridge, and then blow it up.

YOUR GUYS

You have no particularly special units. They're what you're used to, however, so there's nothing new to distract you. Here's what you get:



Warriors



Warrior Captain (Garrick)



-  Bowmen
-  Dwarf
-  Journeymen

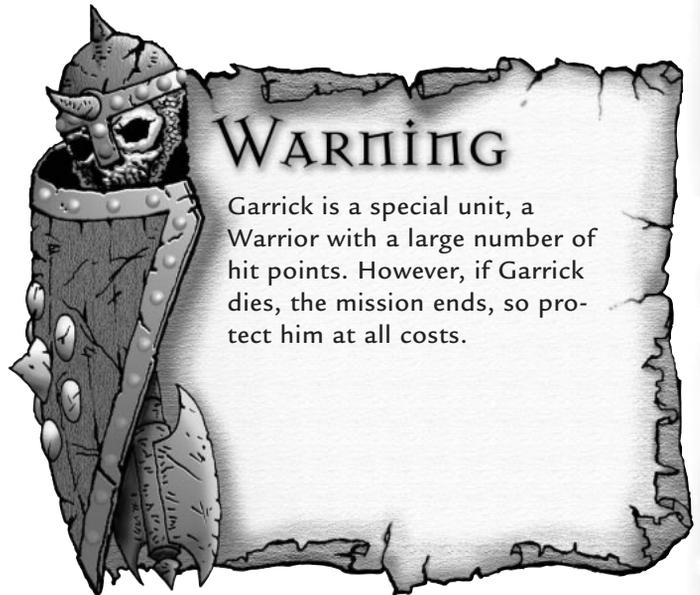
SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

This map is chock-full of vile Undead types, and you become reacquainted with the Wight. Here's what you're up against:

-  Wights
-  Thrall
-  Ghols (with Pus Packets)
-  Soulless

LAY OF THE LAND

Three arms of a large river segment this map, shown in Figure 5.1. This effectively leaves you with two paths to Gonen's Bridge. In several areas, you must climb hills with switchbacks that expose you to attack from enemy units at the top. A couple of areas are heavily forested, and that can work to your advantage here, especially if Soulless are on your tail as you try to make your way to the bridge. You'll





- Starting Point
- Reinforcements
- X Group of Soulless
- ◆ Thrall
- * Group of Ghols
- ⊗ Wight
- Your Path
- Alternate Path

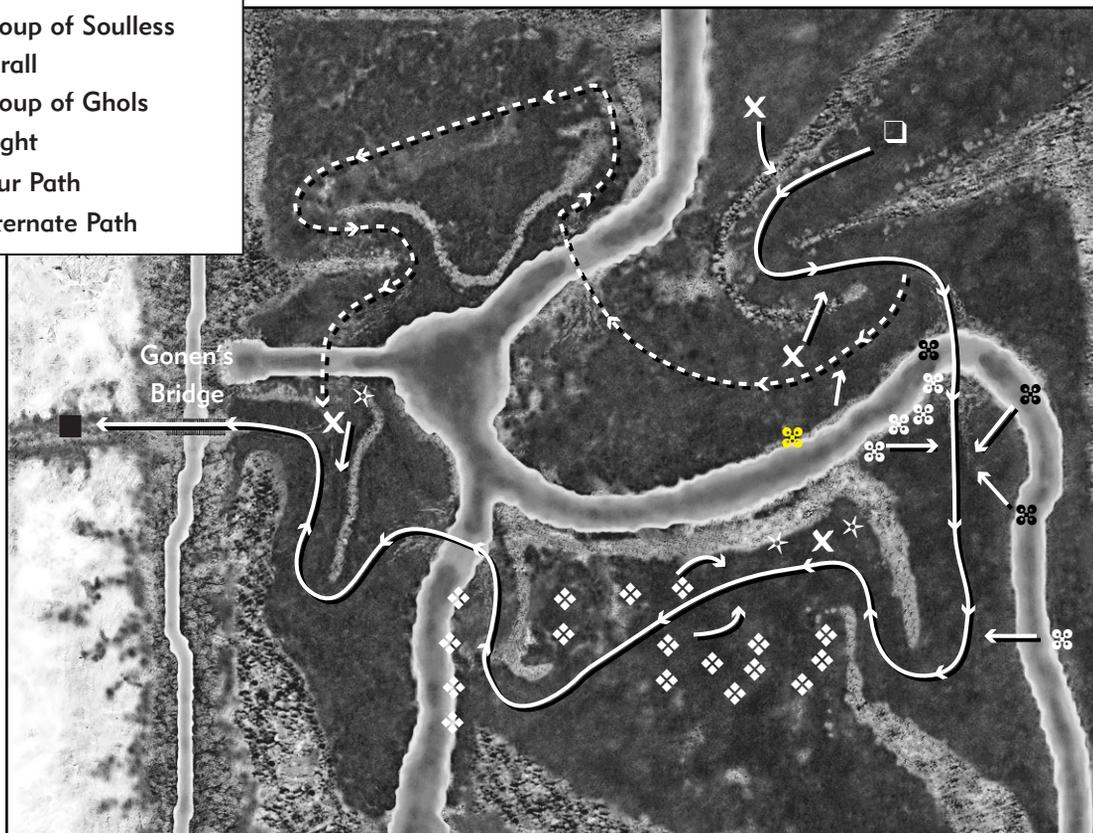


FIGURE 5.1 Never stop to look back when you're playing this mission because Soulblighter's forces will be chasing you at every turn.

experience no adverse weather to speak of, but Ghasts, Thrall, and even Wights await you at the river crossings.

BATTLE PLANS

You may choose from two routes to the bridge—a short northern route, or a longer southern one. If you opt for the shorter route to the north, you'll face far more resis-



tance. The longer route is less populated with enemies. The following walkthrough follows the latter.

Immediately start your troops down the hill and around the switchback. Be ready for a pair of Soulless that come up from behind you as you make your first turn. Take them out with your Dwarf and Bowmen, and then proceed to the first river crossing.

Plenty of Wights wander around this area, including a few that pop out of the deep water (Figure 5.2). Have your Bowmen take care of these guys before they can do serious damage to your troops.



FIGURE 5.2

Watch out for the Wights that come out of this river when you cross it.

Continue to the next hill and climb halfway up, until the Ghols and Soulless come into view. Nudge your Bowmen and Dwarf up the hill until the Ghols rush you; then have your Dwarf take out a couple of them while your Warriors and Bowmen clean up the rest. Run your Warriors at the Soulless to chase them away as you crest the hill.

You now have a relatively flat, treed area to cross, but you must get past the throng of Thrall heading straight for you. Destroy only those you must to sneak



past and outrun them. If you stick around to kill them all, you'll risk losing troops and waste time getting to the bridge.

When you get to the river, your problems won't be over; you'll have either a group of Thrall to deal with. Use your Bowmen and Dwarf to do as much long-range damage as possible before your Warriors mop up. Cross the river and begin the short climb up the final hill, where Gonen's Bridge awaits. A couple of Soulless and several Ghols await you at the top of the hill (Figure 5.3); it's the Ghols you must be wary of. They're packing Pus Packets and will use them on

LEGENDARY CHANGES

The only difference between Normal and Legendary difficulty levels is that Legendary scatters a few more enemies across the map.



FIGURE 5.3

Let's hope you have enough troops left to deal with these guys. They're the last of the enemy you'll see before you cross the bridge.



your Warriors. Try to use your Dwarf and Bowmen to take out the Ghols before they get a chance to start chucking pus.

After the final few Undead are...dead, you can send Garrick and your other troops across the bridge. When you're on the other side, you'll get reinforcements (which you can't really use). More importantly, you can have a Dwarf blow that bridge! Enjoy.

BLOW BY BLOW

-  **Get started right away!**
-  **Immediately watch out for Soulless coming at you from the front and backside.**
-  **At the river crossing, watch out for suicide Wights. Have your Bowmen take them out from afar.**
-  **When you reach the clearing atop the first hill, you needn't take out all the Thrall. Simply kill only the ones in your path and run past them.**
-  **At the second river crossing, you'll face either Thrall or Ghasts that rise from the deep water.**
-  **Watch out for Pus Packet-toting Ghols just before you reach the bridge.**
-  **Blow the bridge after Garrick and the rest of your troops have crossed it.**



BEYOND THE CLOUDSPINE

It is indeed Soulblighter who is at the root of recent disturbances from the dark side. This information has come at the cost of Cruniac's life. You must find a way to



reach and repair the World Knot so you can reach Madrigal and warn King Alric of Soulblighter's return.

This mission has you managing dwindling resources as you fight your way across the map to reach the World Knot with your group of Dwarves intact.

Mission Objective Make it to the World Knot with your Dwarves and repair it. Then exit via the World Knot.

YOUR GUYS

In this mission you finally get your hands on some Berserks and a Journeyman. The Journeyman is especially important because he can heal an entire group of units single-handedly. Here's what's what:

 **Bowmen (with Flaming Arrows)**

 **Berserks**

 **Dwarves**

 **Journeyman**

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

Undead forces on this map are numerous, but nothing you haven't seen before. Here's what you'll face.

 **Thrall**

 **Ghols**

 **Soulless**

 **Wights**

LAY OF THE LAND

A large waterfall lies where this map's river forks (Figure 5.4). The World Knot lies on the central land mass inside the Y, and although there are a couple of ways to reach it,



you'll confront fewer enemy units if you cross under the Y and go up the other side. As in other levels, you have reason to be cautious at river crossings, where Wights tend to hide in the depths. A group of Thrall resides at the base of the waterfall, as well, so if

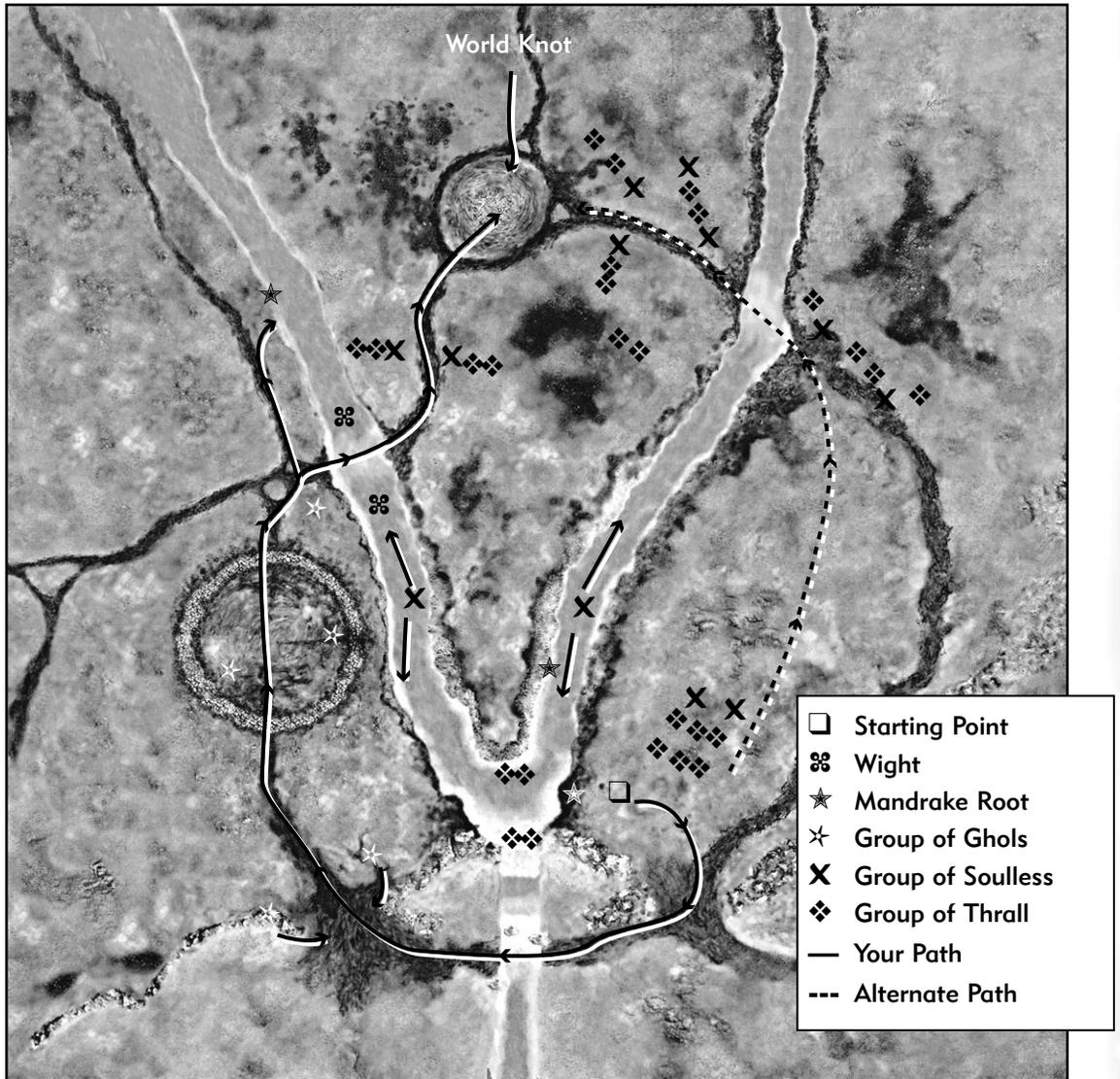


FIGURE 5.4 Protect your Dwarves at all costs—you'll need them to repair the World Knot.



you're going down there to pick up some extra Mandrake Root you must deal with them first.

BATTLE PLANS

When this level begins, you can choose to turn and head straight for the crossing above the waterfall, but I suggest you stay put and fight the Thrall and Soulless army that run into your troops (Figure 5.5). This gains your Bowmen and Berserks some experience and eliminates the enemy units from the map—permanently. This is important, because any units that you don't destroy as you play through the mission will rush you en masse at the World Knot. You can pay now or pay later.

After you make chop suey of the Undead army, you may want to pick up some extra Mandrake Root at the base of the waterfall, but be careful of the Thrall lying in wait down there.

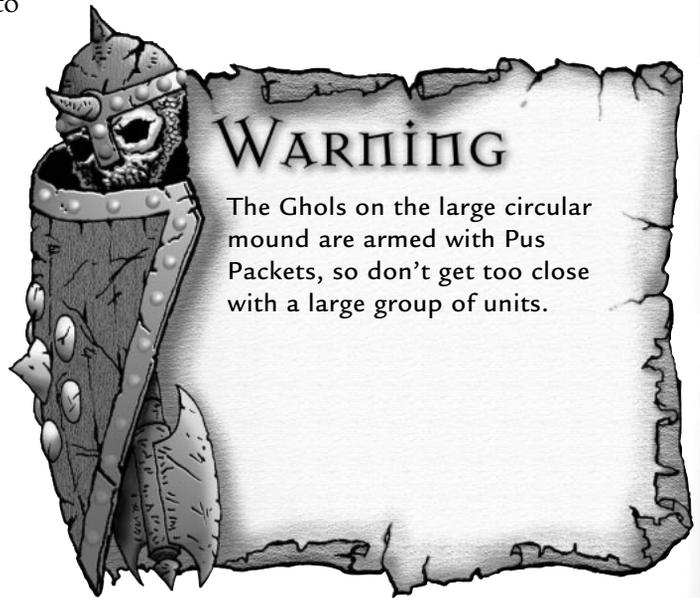




After toying with the waterfall Thrall, head up above the waterfall and cross the river. As soon as you cross, a couple of groups of Ghols attack you, so be ready to take them out. Move your forces north to the circular mound and carefully take out (using Bowmen and a couple of Berserks) the Ghols roaming the area.

Now move your forces north to the next river crossing. If you need more healing abilities, have your Journeyman head up the riverbank; he'll find a patch of extra roots there for the taking. When you're ready to rock 'n' roll, send a possum Berserk across the river to draw the Wights from the depths, and then take them out with your Bowmen.

You'll notice that there's a sizable army of Soulless and Thrall on the other side of the river. Don't worry, they won't rush you if you inch up on them and have your Bowmen fire a few warning shots in their general direction. Get all your forces to the far bank of the river while the enemy army backs away from you in stages. Once you're across, though, the enemy will rush you eventually, so use your Bowmen and a couple of Dwarves to take out their Soulless before they can nickel-and-dime you to death. Your Berserks can clean up the Thrall easily.



LEGENDARY CHANGES

The **Legendary** difficulty level includes several more roaming bands of Ghols, all carrying Pus Packets. Wights only appear on Heroic or Legendary—keep this in mind as you follow the map.

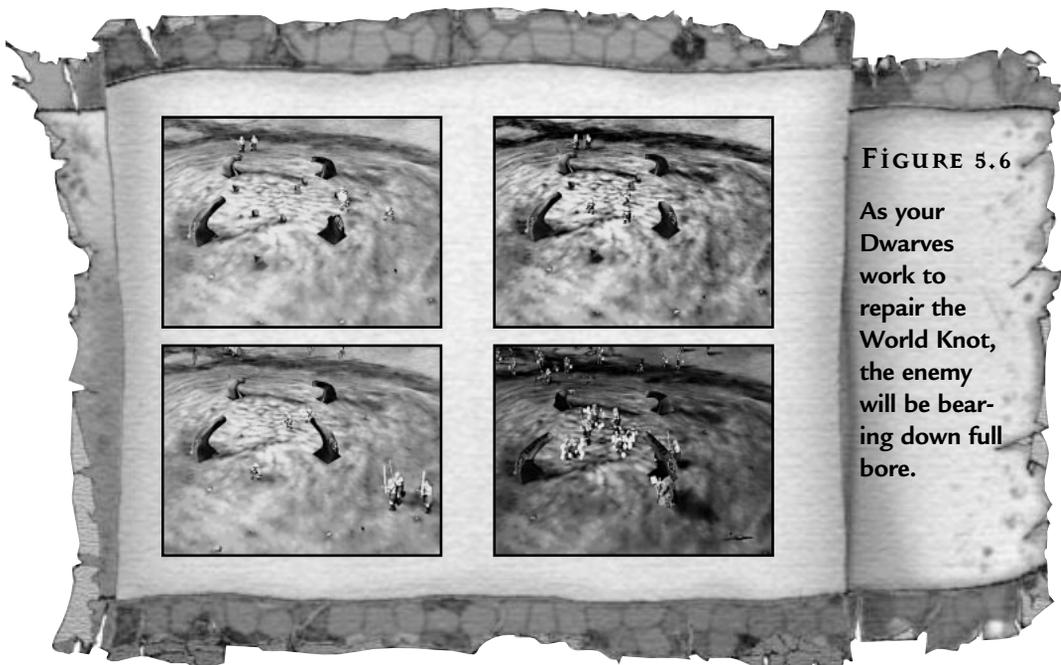


FIGURE 5.6

As your Dwarves work to repair the World Knot, the enemy will be bearing down full bore.

This is where the fun begins. Move your Dwarves (and other units) close to the World Knot; then take your Dwarves and, one at a time, click on a piece of rubble for them to pick up. Each Dwarf will pick up a piece and use it to repair the World Knot, so using all your Dwarves will speed the process considerably, as the screen shots in Figure 5.6 show. Completing the repairs quickly is critical because, from the first piece of rubble you pick up, every enemy on the map will move toward your position at the World Knot. (See why it helps to kill the enemy along the way?)

After the World Knot is repaired, it glows and instantly transports any of your units inside it. Put all your units into the World Knot and your mission is over!



BLOW BY BLOW

- 
-  Take out the army of Thrall and Soulless that approaches you right off the bat.
 -  Pick up the Mandrake Roots by the waterfall, if you need them, but watch out for Thrall and Soulless in the river and waterfall.
 -  Move your troops across the river above the waterfall and take out the Ghols on the other side.
 -  Sweep your forces to the next river crossing, taking out the Ghols and Soulless you meet along the way.
 -  Convince the Wights waiting at the river crossing to come out and play.
 -  Cross the river and take out the army of Thrall and Soulless awaiting you; then move to the Knot.
 -  Have all your Dwarves repair the Knot at once, and then put your troops inside it.

THE GREAT LIBRARY

Toss aside your offensive playbook, because this mission is pure *defense!* Your troops have passed through a World Knot to Covenant in an effort to recover the Total Codex from the Great Library. You must defend the Great Library from four brutal waves of Undead attacks before your Journeyman will find the Codex. Then you must escort the Journeyman back to the World Knot, where the book, the Journeyman, and your remaining troops will whisk away to safety.



Mission Objective Defend the Great Library from the awesome Undead onslaught, and then escort the Journeyman to the World Knot.

YOUR GUYS

This is all you get. You may read it and weep after you see what the enemy's gonna throw at you:



Berserks



Dwarves (2)



Bowmen

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

The Undead are ready to throw it all at you, and they've brought a good portion of their units to do the job, including, for the first time in *Myth II*, Fetch. Here's what you'll face:



Ghols



Thrall



Fetch



Soulless



Wights

LAY OF THE LAND

Just about the entire mission takes place in one spot on the map—the area in front of the Great Library. (Figure 5.7 gives you the big picture.) This is a reasonable defensive position: it's raised above the surrounding terrain and, with the Library behind your troops, you won't have to watch your back. That said, there are still five broad stairways that leave you open to 180 degrees of attack.

The other redeeming feature of your position is that you have excellent sight lines and will be able to see the waves of attack ahead of time. The World Knot isn't

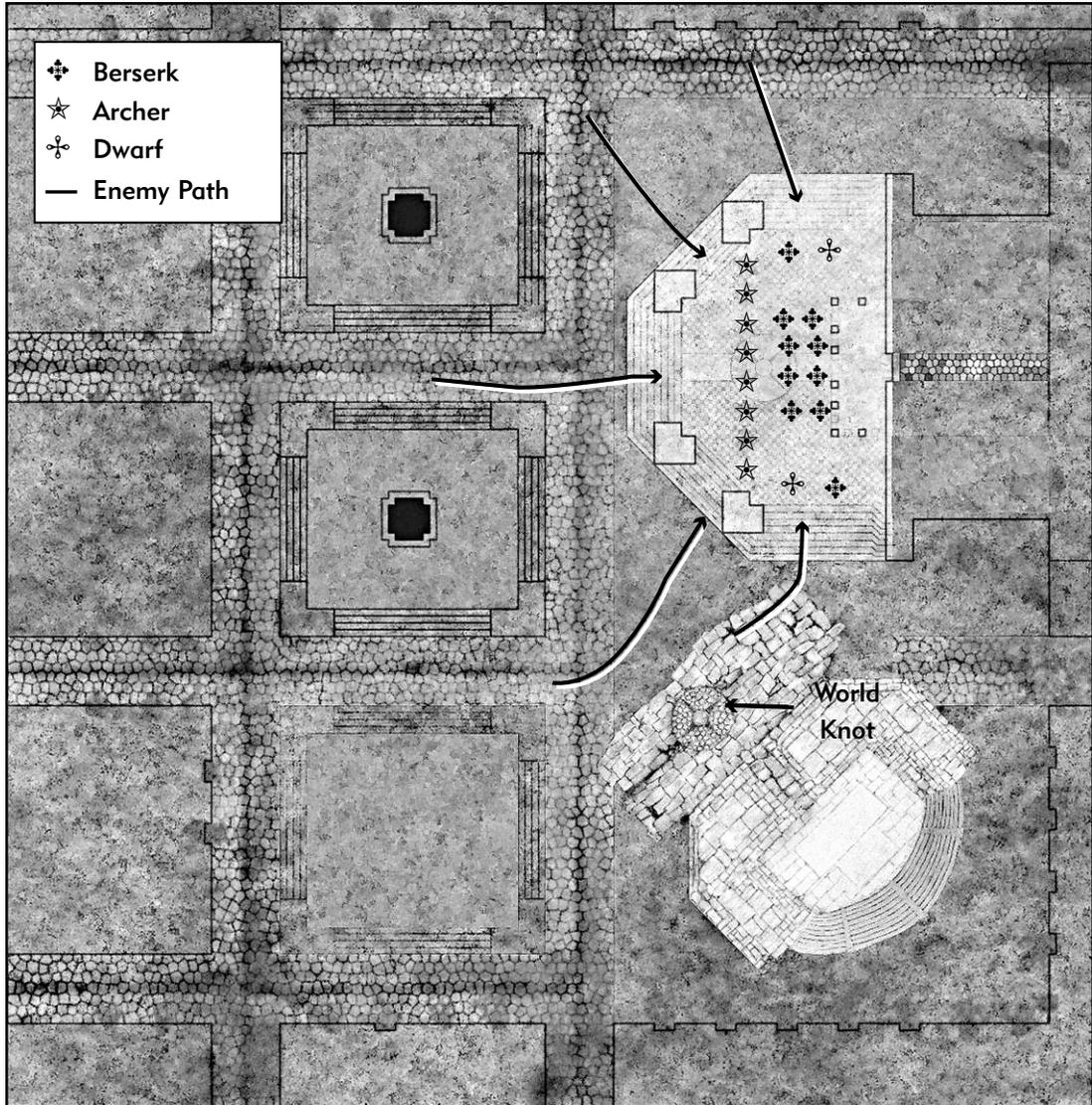


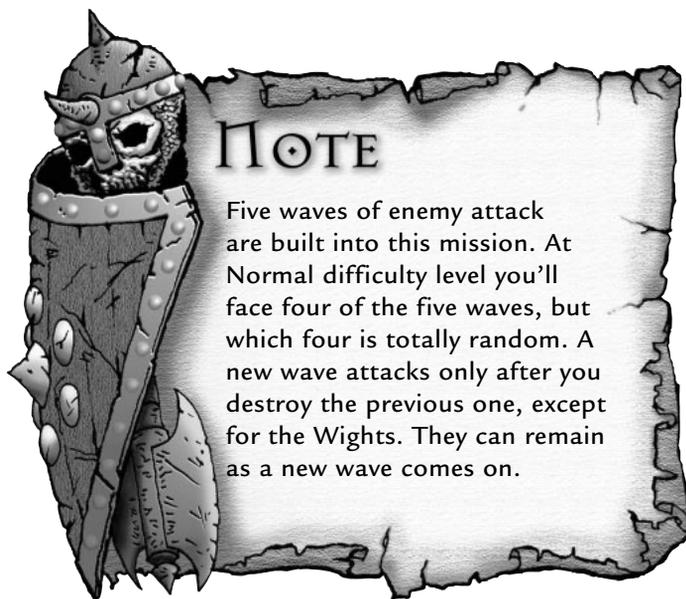
FIGURE 5.7 Remember the Alamo! You'll need to stay put outside the Library and fend off multiple waves of Undead.

far, but you can't exit through it until the Journeyman has the Total Codex, and by then you will have defeated most of the enemy already.



BATTLE PLANS

You begin this mission when the Journeyman enters the Great Library. After he goes inside, take the time to group your Bowmen into one group and your Berserks into two groups. Truth be known, many times when I play this mission the only group I consistently call up is the Bowmen, and that's usually to get them to form a line so they don't shoot one another accidentally in the heat of battle. Place your Dwarves on either side of the front line of Bowmen, as Figure 5.8 shows.



NOTE

Five waves of enemy attack are built into this mission. At Normal difficulty level you'll face four of the five waves, but which four is totally random. A new wave attacks only after you destroy the previous one, except for the Wights. They can remain as a new wave comes on.

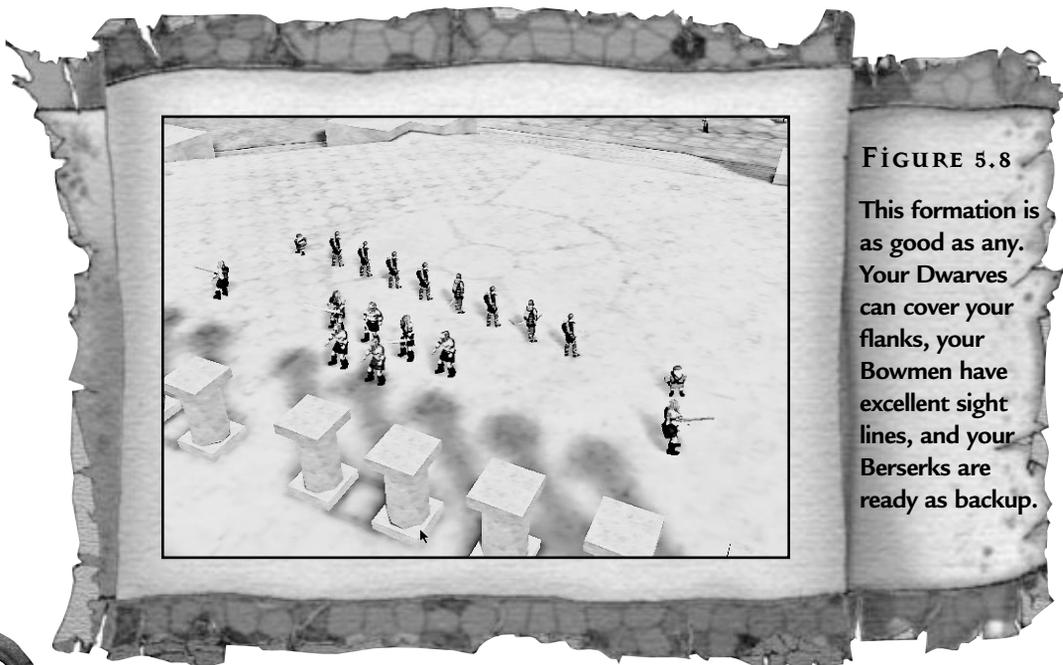


FIGURE 5.8

This formation is as good as any. Your Dwarves can cover your flanks, your Bowmen have excellent sight lines, and your Berserks are ready as backup.



There's no way to know which four of the five waves of enemies you'll face, but it really won't change how you play this mission: Keep the formation with a long line of Bowmen out front, a Dwarf and one Berserk on each flank, and the rest of your Berserks just behind your Bowmen ready to come forward and help at any time. You may have to regroup your units into this basic defensive posture after each wave of attack, but it's well worth it. The basic formation in Figure 5.8 can fend off any attack wave.

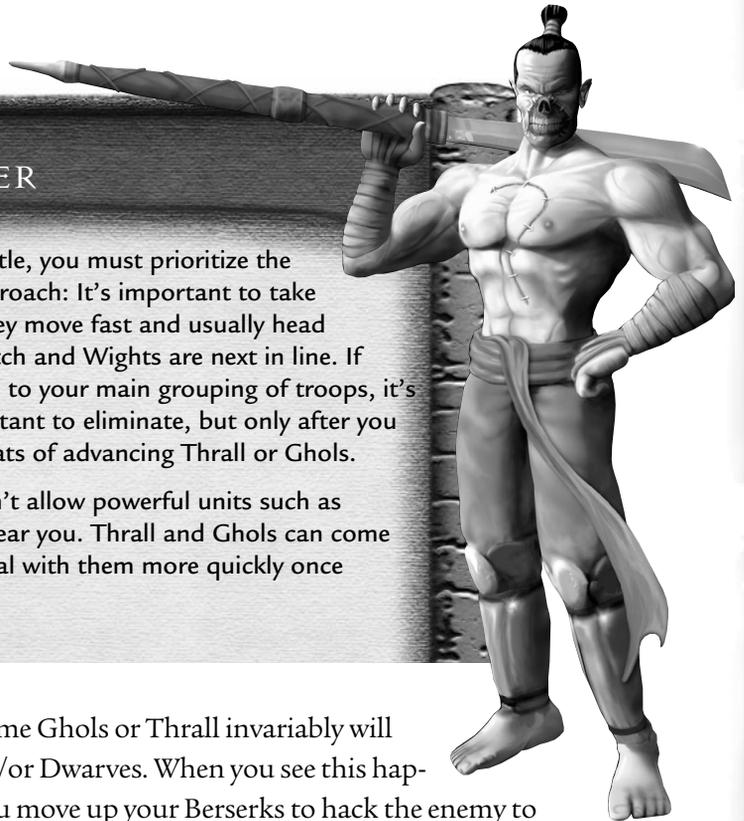
LEGENDARY CHANGES

At the **Legendary** difficulty level, you must face *all five waves* of Undead attackers.

DEFENSIVE ORDER

When fighting a defensive battle, you must prioritize the units you'll attack as they approach: It's important to take out Ghols quickly, because they move fast and usually head straight for your Bowmen. Fetch and Wights are next in line. If either of these units gets close to your main grouping of troops, it's game over. Soulless are important to eliminate, but only after you neutralize the immediate threats of advancing Thrall or Ghols.

The rule of thumb is this: Don't allow powerful units such as Wights and Fetch anywhere near you. Thrall and Ghols can come much closer, but you must deal with them more quickly once they're on top of you.



During an attack wave, some Ghols or Thrall invariably will get close to your Bowmen and/or Dwarves. When you see this happening, it's imperative that you move up your Berserks to hack the enemy to pieces. Protecting your long-range weapons (Dwarves and Bowmen) is key to winning this level.



After you destroy the last attack wave, the Journeyman will emerge from the Library and announce that you must escort him to the World Knot. Some Soulless and two pairs of Ghols guard the Knot, but they aren't particularly aggressive. Simply run your remaining Berserks at them to finish them off. Now move your troops into the World Knot to claim victory (Figure 5.9).



FIGURE 5.9

Move your troops into the World Knot to claim victory.



BLOW BY BLOW



Get into a defensive formation with your Bowmen in a line in front, your Dwarves on the flanks, and your Berserks behind as backup.



Use your Dwarves and Bowmen first, always! Resort to hand-to-hand combat with your Berserks only at the last minute.



Regroup your formation after every wave of attackers.



After you destroy the fourth wave of attackers, escort the Journeyman to the World Knot, being sure to eliminate the remaining enemy forces guarding it.



Once they're in the World Knot, your troops, the Journeyman, and the Total Codex will transport back to Madrigal.

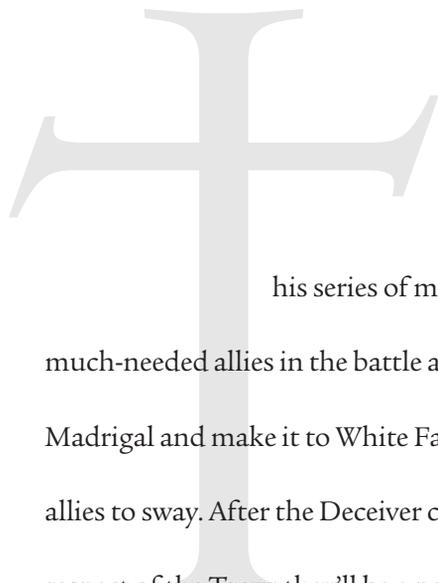




CHAPTER

6

ALLIES



his series of missions chronicles King Alric's efforts to obtain much-needed allies in the battle against Soulblighter. First, Alric must escape from Madrigal and make it to White Falls, but after that the Deceiver is first on the list of allies to sway. After the Deceiver comes aboard, you must enter a contest to win the respect of the Trow: they'll be a powerful ally if you can convince them to join the cause against Soulblighter.

GATE OF STORMS

Things look bleak, indeed, for the forces of light. Madrigal is under siege from Soulblighter's forces and, as the mission begins, already will have fallen to the Myrkridia swarming in and around it. You must find a way to get King Alric and as many troops as possible to the ship that waits to ferry you away from this nightmare.

Mission Objective Get Alric to the *Vigilance*, waiting at the docks.



YOUR GUYS

This is the first time in *Myth II* that you get your hands on an Avatara—King Alric. He has a few tricks up his sleeve, but only a few, so you must be resourceful. Here's what you get:

-  Warriors
-  Dwarves
-  Bowmen (Flaming Arrows)
-  Avatara (Alric)

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

If you like lots of Myrkridia hacking and slashing at your troops, then you've arrived at the right mission. Prepare to face off against a relentless onslaught of these nasty creatures through most of this mission. This is what you'll face:

-  Myrkridia
-  Fetch
-  Soulless

LAY OF THE LAND

Sure, there's a ship waiting for you: the ocean may not be frozen, but that doesn't mean the ground isn't. This map contains snow, and plenty of it (Figure 6.1), so expect your Explosive-Bottle misfire rate to go through the roof. A fair number of structures line the main north-south road, but they provide little protection if you follow the road to the ship.

Many groups of Myrkridia and Fetch/Soulless run around on this map, so stay on the lookout for action. Three groups of reinforcements (two groups of Warriors, one group of Bowmen and a Dwarf) await you, as well.

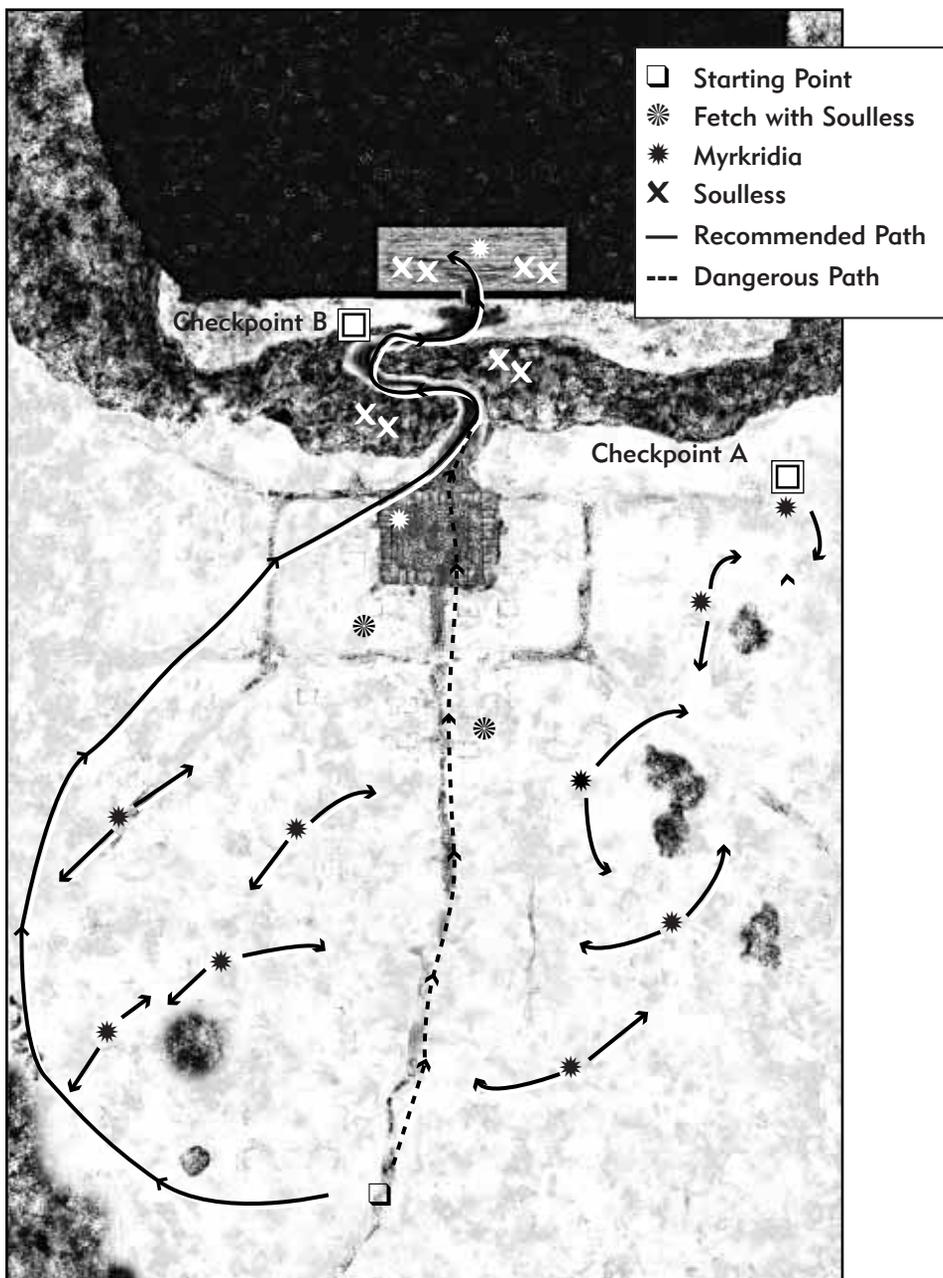


FIGURE 6.1 Get Alric to the ship at the top of the map, or it's all over.



BATTLE PLANS

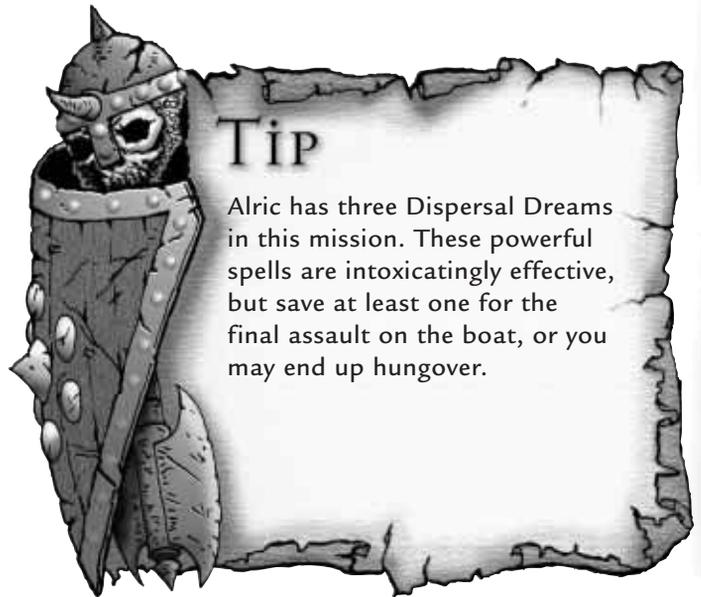
The mission opens with ghastly scenes of Myrkridia literally shredding your units in the Town Square. All this carnage provides a taste of what you'll face as you attempt to reach the ship, and it ain't pretty.

First, get your troops off the main road. Move your contingent quickly to the lower-right corner of the map, where the Myrkridia will attack in smaller bunches.

Take the time to move your troops in one group. That is, your units will incline to separate because they move at different speeds, but keep them close together. If you let your Bowmen fall behind your Warriors, they're ripe for the picking if a pack of Myrkridia happen by. Once you get your troops into this area, get ready to move them up the right side of the map and prepare for serious fighting.

This entire map crawls with Myrkridia, usually in clumps of two or three, but a couple of larger groups wander around, as well. The Myrkridia are your major obstacle as you fight your way to the ship, and you must handle them with utmost caution. Whenever possible, use your Bowmen and Dwarves to thin out the Myrkridia before they can get close enough to attack: this can be dangerous, however, because if the Myrkridia reach your Bowmen, they'll shred them in seconds (Figure 6.2).

As you move your troops up the right side of the map, manage them carefully as waves of enemies close in on your position. Anytime you see a group of five or more Myrkridia in close proximity, consider using a Dispersal Dream to take them all out at once.



TIP

Alric has three Dispersal Dreams in this mission. These powerful spells are intoxicatingly effective, but save at least one for the final assault on the boat, or you may end up hungover.



FIGURE 6.2

Watch your Bowmen carefully, or they'll be mincemeat for Myrkridia.

It's not unusual to lose most of your forces as you work your way up the right side of the map, so don't fret; just keep moving. Chances are you'll acquire at least a couple of small groups of reinforcements along the way.

When you reach Checkpoint A (refer to Figure 6.1), make a run for the ship with Alric. When Alric makes it to Checkpoint B (again, refer to Figure 6.1), use his last remaining Dispersal Dream (you did save one, right?) to take out the troops on the *Vigilance* deck. After the Dream does its work, move Alric aboard the ship and claim victory.

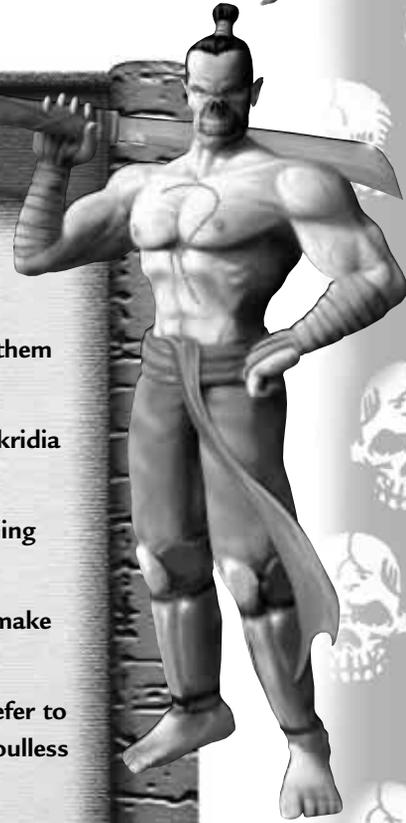
LEGENDARY CHANGES

You'll face more enemies at Legendary skill level, but there are no strategic differences.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Move your troops to the lower-right corner of the map.
-  Don't let your troops drift apart as they move; keep them together.
-  Move up the left side of the map, taking out the Myrkridia as they approach.
-  Use your Bowmen and Dwarves to thin out approaching Myrkridia before your Warriors engage them.
-  When you reach Checkpoint A (refer to Figure 6.1), make a run for the ship.
-  When you arrive at Checkpoint B with Alric (again, refer to Figure 6.1), use a Dispersal Dream to take out the Soulless and Myrkridia on the ship.
-  Move Alric onto the ship.



LANDING AT WHITE FALLS

After being driven from Madrigal with your tail between your legs, it's painful to consider the battles still ahead. Now you must land the ship at White Falls and capture the fort there. Unfortunately, a pair of cannons will bombard the ship in an effort to destroy it—and King Alric. Running the gauntlet of enemy troops guarding the beachhead at White Falls won't be easy, but you must, if you want to disable the cannons before time runs out. And time *will* run out. This mission is on a 12-minute timer at Normal level, but you'll have less time at the Heroic and Legendary levels.



Mission Objective Punch through beachfront defenses, find the enemy cannons, and then destroy them.

YOUR GUYS

You have a healthy complement of troops for this mission, but use them wisely or the Undead on the beach will kick sand in your face and make you cry. Here's what you get:

-  Berserks
-  Bowmen
-  Dwarves
-  Journeyman

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

The enemy has plenty of troops to thwart your attack on the fort. This is what you'll face:

-  Ghol
-  Soulless
-  Thrall
-  Fetch
-  Wights

LAY OF THE LAND

You start this level knee-deep in water, under fire from cannons in the fort. The beach is an excellent open area for your Bowmen and Dwarves; however, you're unlikely to start a fire on the sandy surface. The defensive positions just beyond the beachfront pose the most serious obstacle to your success. Every fortification contains Soulless, as Figure 6.3 shows; so don't go rushing into any dangerous crossfire attacks. The fort itself has three entrances. Each poses unique problems, but the side entrances are slightly less well-defended.

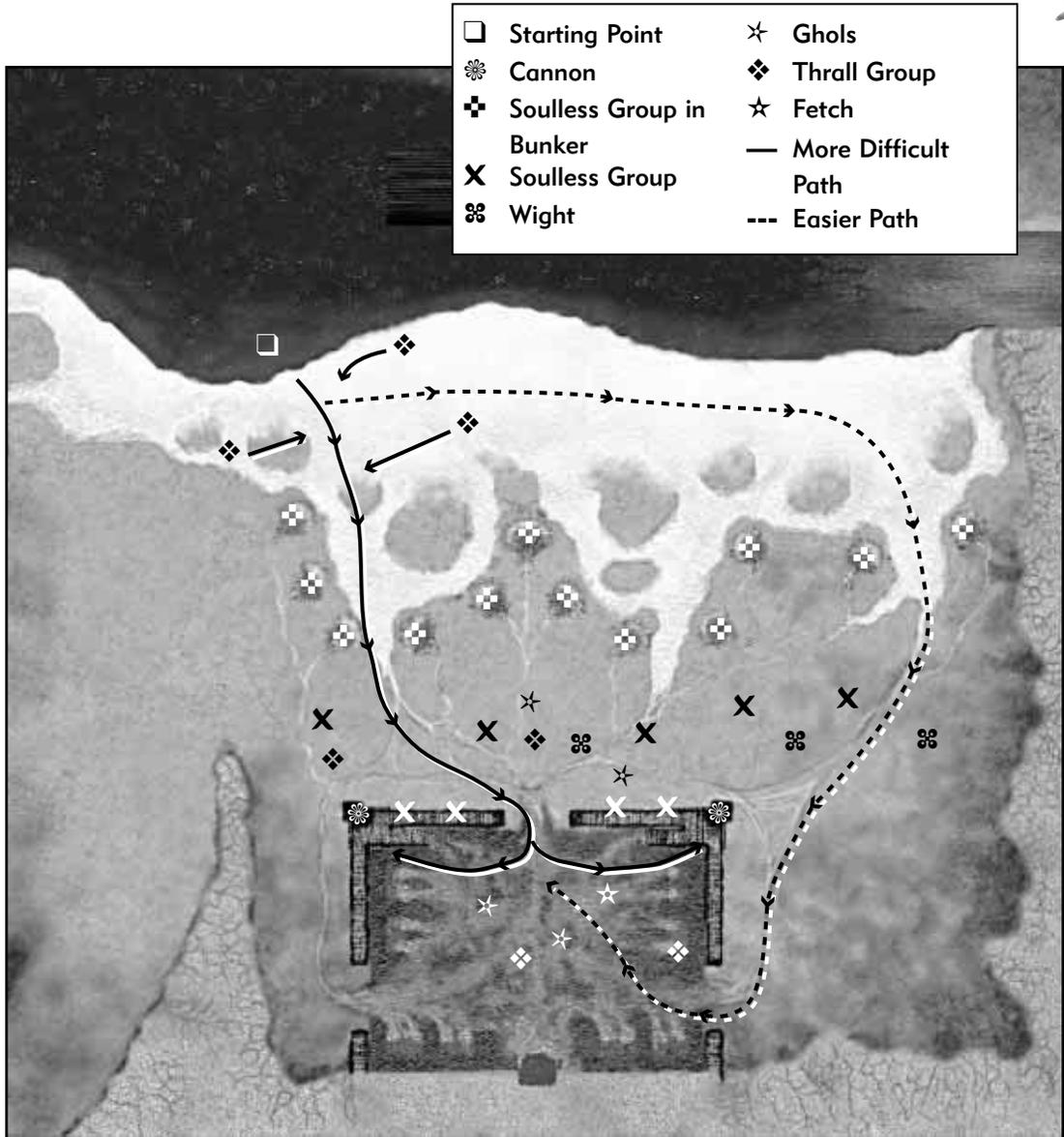


FIGURE 6.3 Be wary of the plethora of Soulless hunkered down in the beachfront fortifications on this map.



BATTLE PLANS

The key to this mission lies in using your Bowmen effectively early on. As soon as the mission starts, two groups of Thrall approach. Resist the urge to use your Dwarves or Berserks; instead, use your Bowmen to take them out. This provides your Bowmen with the experience they'll need to dispose quickly of the Soulless farther up the beachhead. Move your troops onto the beach and put your Bowmen in a long line up front.

Each Bowman has a Flaming Arrow: these are key to your assault on the beach. Move up one Bowman to fire a Flaming Arrow at a bunker; then move your remaining Bowmen up to bombard the position with arrows. The resulting fire will disrupt the bunker Soulless to where your Bowmen can make short work of them (Figure 6.4). Use this technique to take out the six bunkers in front of you. If you're careful, you can take out all six bunkers systematically without sustaining many hits to your Bowmen.



FIGURE 6.4

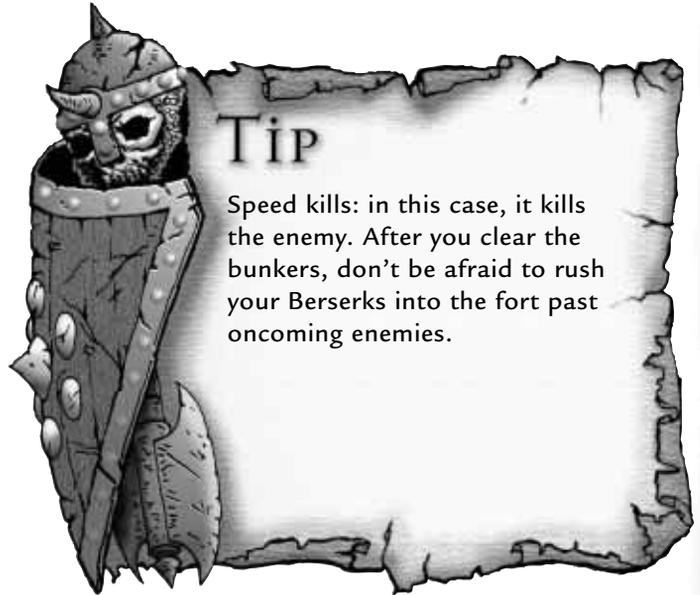
One carefully placed Flaming Arrow can disrupt an entire bunker area.



After you move up the beach and deal with the Soulless in the bunkers, take all your Berserks and run them toward the fort entrance. Be careful of the Fetch inside—one at each of the three entrances. You can run your Berserks straight into the fort, divide them into two groups, and run each group toward a separate cannon. The Berserks are fast enough easily to run past any enemy units to the cannons.

As the Berserks strive to meet the mission objectives, your Bowmen and Dwarves likewise should push toward the fort to back them up. This is a good chance for you to loose fire on the throngs of Thrall and Soulless near the fort.

An alternative strategy is to run the length of the beach, advance along the most lightly defended area, and enter the fort through its east entrance. This alternate path is, in fact, easier—you'll face fewer enemy units, initially—but it will take longer to reach the attack point. Weigh this strategy's pros and cons carefully (refer to Figure 6.3).



LEGENDARY CHANGES

Again, at **Legendary level**, there is less time and more enemy troops to deal with, and that's always a bad combination.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Use your Bowmen to take out the two groups of advancing Thrall right off the bat. This gives your Bowmen needed experience.
-  Move up the beach to your attack point.
-  Use one Flaming Arrow per bunker to disrupt the Soulless lying therein.
-  Use a long line of Bowmen to slice-and-dice the Soulless, bunker by bunker.
-  Move your Berserks into the fort posthaste.
-  In the keep, divide the Berserks and send each half to destroy the Ghol's manning a cannon.
-  Victory is at hand.



THROUGH THE ERMINE

You are en route to find the Deceiver, a Wolf Age Avatara rumored to still be alive in this country. You pitch your tents, eager to rest, but Undead forces have something else in mind. In this mission, you'll defend yourself against wave after wave of Wolves and Bre'Unor. To win you must pool your meager resources and defeat the onslaught before dawn.

Mission Objective Survive the night (destroy all enemies).



YOUR GUYS

You have only a select few units, so use them wisely to survive the night. Here's what's what:

-  Berserks
-  Journeymen (2)
-  Dwarves
-  Bowmen (Flaming Arrows)

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

This mission introduces two new units—the Bre'Unor and the Wolf. Both are annoying, but they're all you face in this mission.

-  Bre'Unor
-  Wolves

LAY OF THE LAND

This is an odd map (Figure 6.5). At first glance, it appears to offer little protection from the constant enemy attacks. But it has a few features conducive to establishing a solid defensive position. The river to the north, in particular, provides a natural barrier to back your troops against to eliminate the risk of attack from behind. If you move to the map's upper-right corner, you'll be near extra Mandrake Roots, which your Journeyman can make good use of.

BATTLE PLANS

Your only goal here is to survive the Undead minions' attacks, but that won't be easy. You have only a small contingent of units, but fortunately you have two Journeymen who can repair some of the inevitable damage.

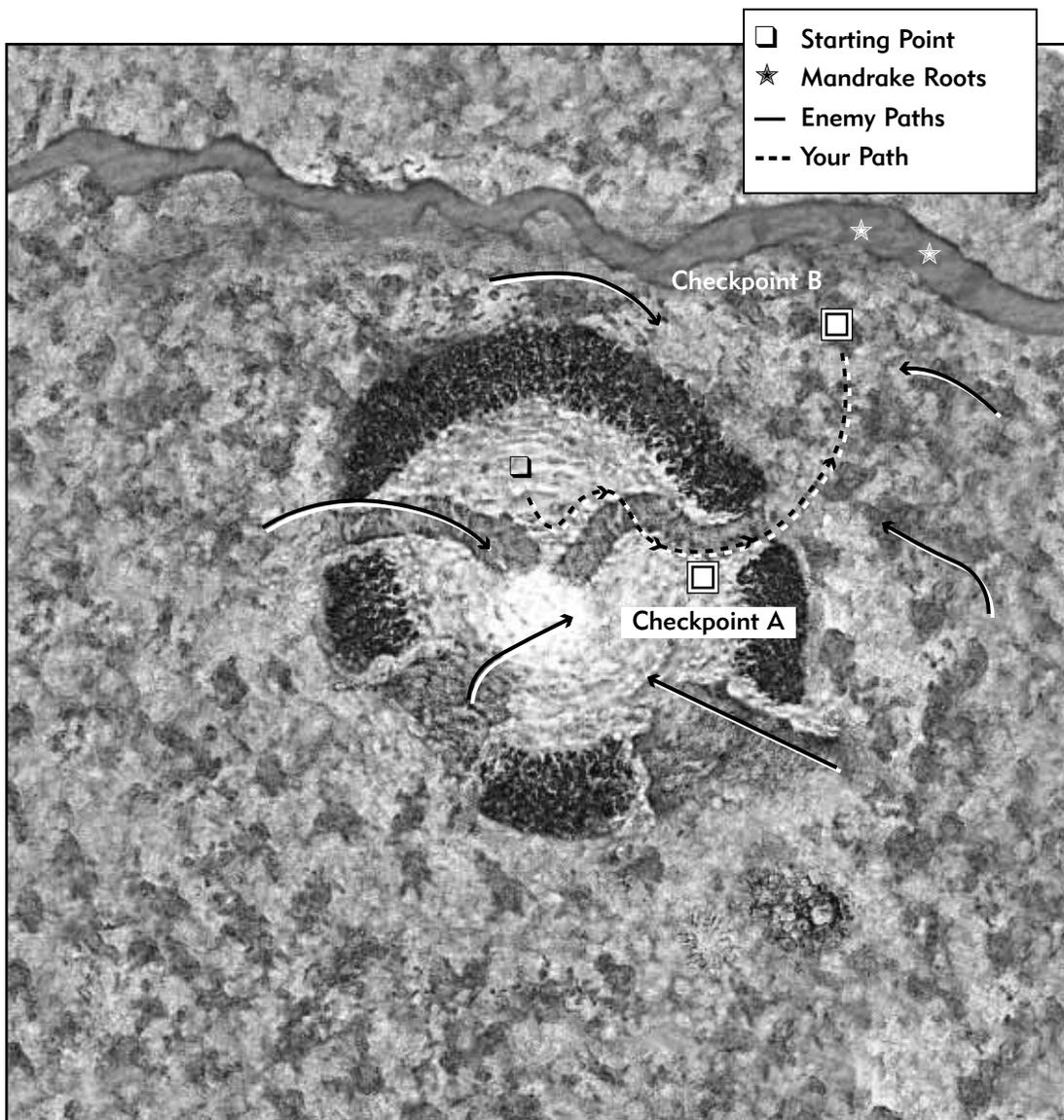


FIGURE 6.5 You'll find bonus Mandrake Roots in the map's upper-right corner.

First, destroy the Bre'Unor approaching from the shrine (use your Bowmen). Next, move your units toward the map's upper-right corner, stopping at Checkpoint A. There, you'll do battle with at least one wave of Wolves and Bre'Unor (Figure 6.6). This area provides an impassable area on one side and high ground on another,



exposing only two flanks. You can stay in this position until the attacks become too heavy (that's up to you); then move your troops to Checkpoint B, where you'll find extra Mandrake Roots for your Journeyman.

At this point, it's best just to hunker down and set up a defensive network; have your Bowmen and Dwarves do as much damage as possible to advancing enemy units before your Berserks go in to

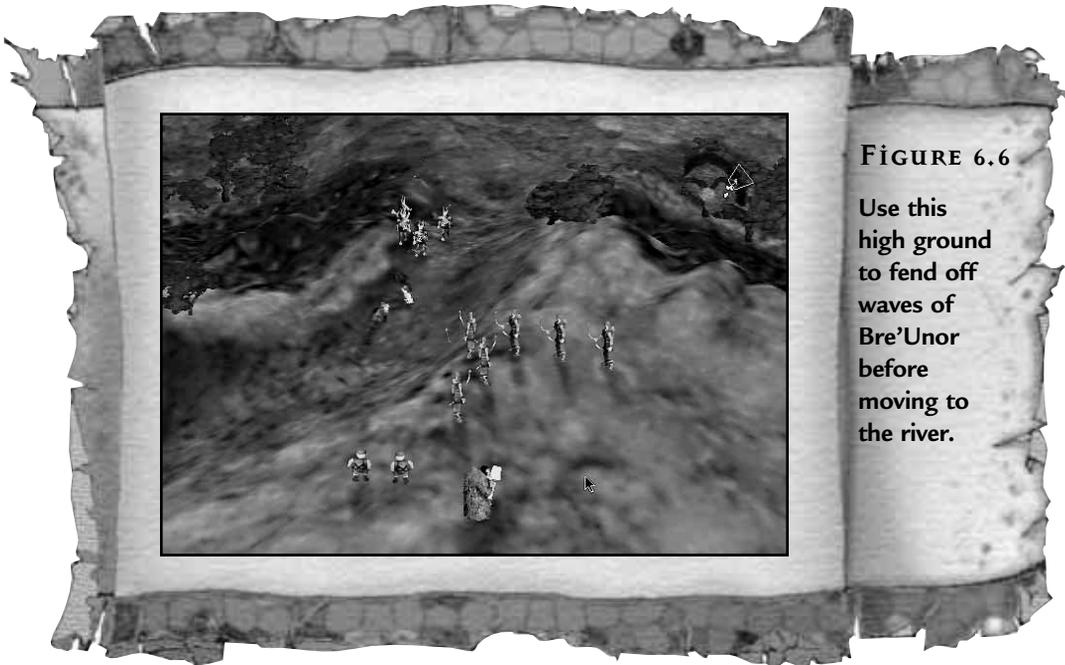
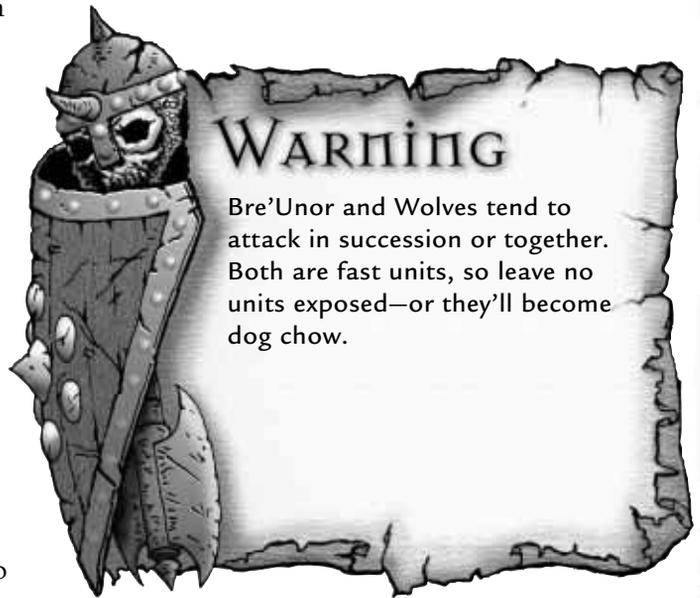


FIGURE 6.6

Use this high ground to fend off waves of Bre'Unor before moving to the river.



finish the job. It can be tough going, but you can stay in this area with the river at your back and fend off the remaining attacks. A word to the wise: use your Mandrake Roots to heal your troops before you release them. Any troops in the red zone need healing, *pronto!* You get no reinforcements in this mission!

LEGENDARY CHANGES

At Legendary skill level, you'll face more units—and from different directions.

Any enemy attack patterns you learned in the default skill level are now moot.

BLOW BY BLOW

-  **Take out the Bre'Unor approaching you right off the bat.**
-  **Move to Checkpoint A.**
-  **Defend at Checkpoint A until you need more Mandrake Roots; then move to Checkpoint B.**
-  **Heal your injured troops and defend, using Bowmen and Dwarves to buffer your Berserks.**
-  **After stemming the last tide of Undead attacks, you win.**





THE STAIR OF GRIEF

Winter's icy fingers have taken hold. The rivers are frozen, but you must find a way to stop the massive onslaught of Soulblihter's minions in these mountainous passes. Again, you have only a few meager units with which to deal a deathblow to enemy forces, but if you work it carefully, you can succeed.

Mission Objectives Ambush the enemy troops as they approach the pass. Rendezvous with the Journeyman and his forces. Destroy all enemy units.

YOUR GUYS

Your Dwarves are by far your most important units in this mission, so protect them with your life. Here's what else you get:

-  Dwarves
-  Bowmen
-  Berserks
-  Journeyman (not controllable)

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

In this mission you meet up with not only more Thrall than you can shake a stick at, but wave after wave of horrid Mauls. Look out!

-  Thrall
-  Mauls
-  Soulless

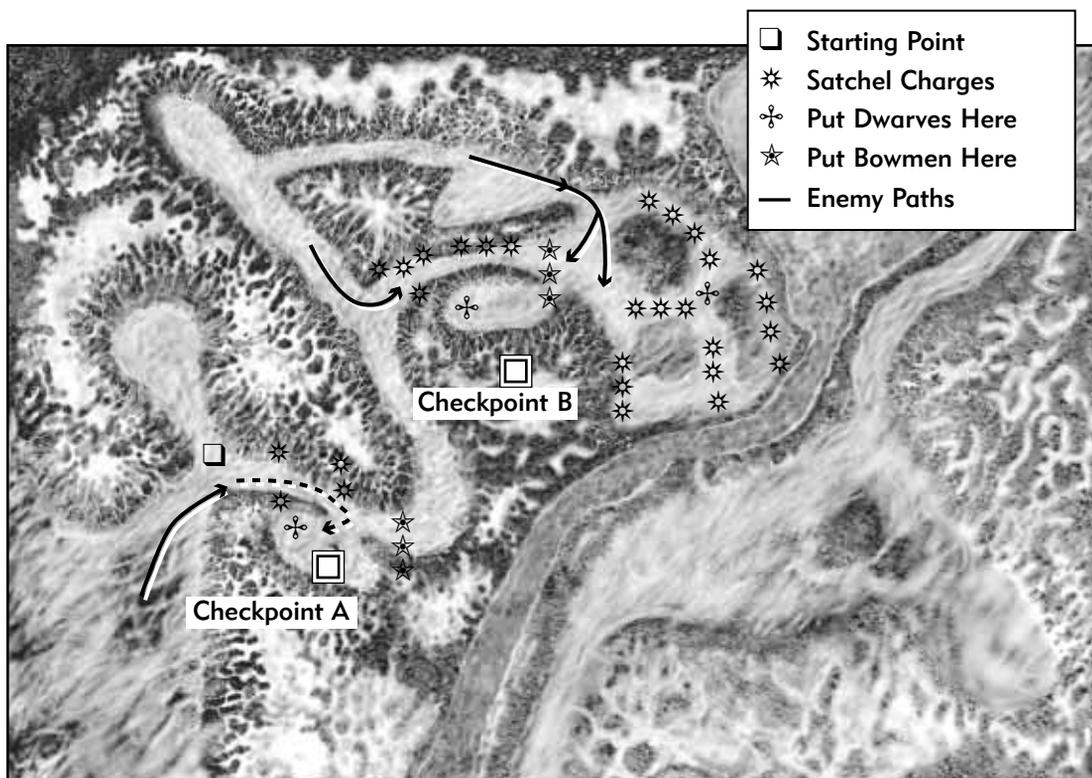


FIGURE 6.7 You'll have to take advantage of the Satchel Charges that have been placed in the narrow canyons throughout this map.

LAY OF THE LAND

All the action in this unique map takes place in narrow canyons you can negotiate only via narrow passes—lined with Satchel Charges, in many areas (Figure 6.7). This helps immeasurably when groups of Mauls bear down on you in the mission's final stages. But you must have a Dwarf to set the Satchel Charges off! And beware: in this snowy environment, your Explosive Bottles won't detonate as regularly as you've become used to.



FIGURE 6.8

From atop this bluff, your Dwarves can rain Explosive Bottles down on the Undead horde.

BATTLE PLANS

Start by moving your troops quickly to Area A. Put your Dwarves atop the bluff here, so they can bombard any enemy units moving through the pass (Figure 6.8). It will be a slaughter, but don't get cocky: the waves of Mauls that come through later on will have you shaking in your boots.

Take out the first waves of Thrall, but try not to detonate the last set of Satchel Charges. They're more useful against the Maul. Position your Bowmen at the end of the pass so they can pick away methodically at any units the Dwarves don't destroy.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

More, more, more! Again, there are simply more enemy units in **Legendary mode**. The extra **Soulless** make the mission even more difficult.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  **Position your Dwarves on the bluff in Area A.**
-  **Set up your Bowmen at the end of the canyon.**
-  **Put a Dwarf on the bluff in Area B.**
-  **Lay a licking on enemy troops that come through the passes.**
-  **Lure enemy units into the fields of Satchel Charges.**
-  **Save your Satchel Charges for the waves of Mauls.**
-  **Get your units to the Journeyman and mop up stray enemy units.**



After a couple of waves of Mauls, you'll get access to another map area (we'll call it Area B). There you have only one Dwarf, but the same principle applies, so place him on the bluff overlooking the pass and get ready to rock and roll. Now you must manage advancing enemy troops on two fronts, so keep your cool and don't get pre-occupied with one area.

You'll destroy several more waves of Mauls and Thrall before you get access to Area C. This area comes with a few Berserks, a Dwarf, and the Journeyman. Notice that these canyons are lined with copious amounts of Satchel Charges, so send a Berserk to lure enemy troops to these areas, as your Dwarf waits in ambush. (Refer to Figure 6.7 to find these areas.)



In the end, you must destroy all advancing troops and get your own troops to the Journeyman. The hard part is destroying the advancing troops; once that's done, you're in the clear. As you move your troops from Area A to B or C, you'll alert a few Soulless. Simply run by these units on your way to the Journeyman.

THE DECEIVER

The Deceiver is close, but you must reach him ahead of Soulblighter's forces. You have only a small group of Berserks—a cruel snub from the powers of light—and they must make their way through waves of Undead and bands of Warlocks bent on destroying you. Get out your ninja boots: this mission requires more stealth than brawn.

Mission Objectives Search the hills and get the Staff to the Deceiver before Soulblighter's forces kill him.

YOUR GUYS

You have only a small group of Berserks for this mission, so get ready to run.

 Berserks

 Deceiver

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

Two elements in this mission want to see you dead, but they're not allied: confronting them with one another can buy you time. Here's what you're up against.

 Mauls

 Soulless

 Warlocks

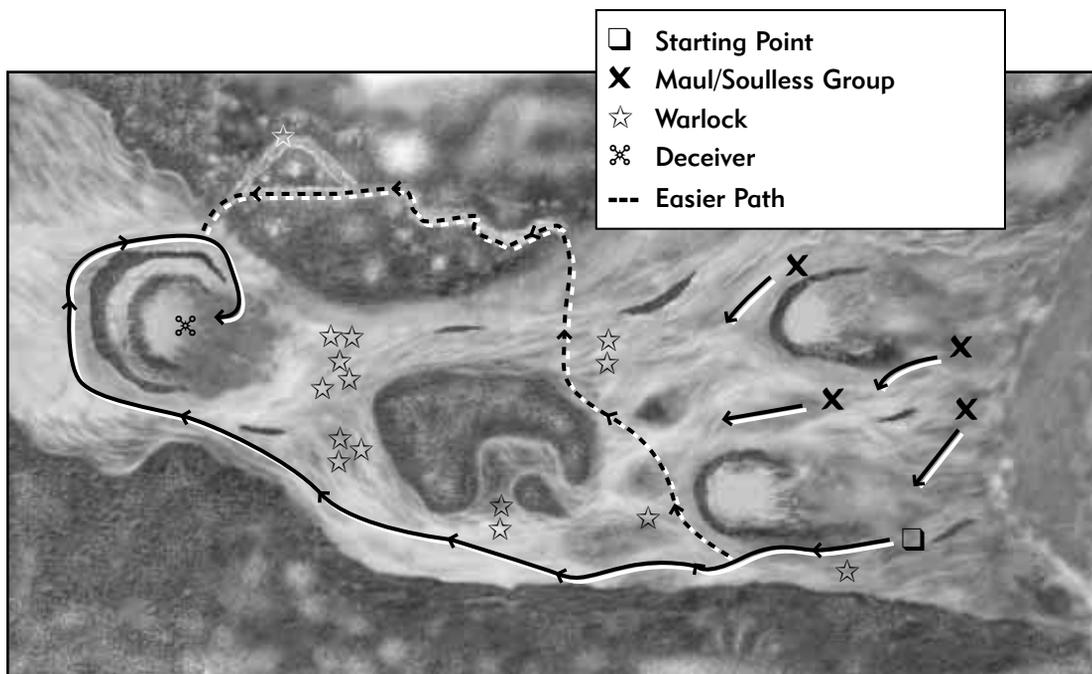


FIGURE 6.9 The Deceiver waits in a culvert near the upper-left corner of the map.

LAY OF THE LAND

This is another snow-covered map of narrow passes and dead ends, so refer to Figure 6.9 to find your way across the wasteland. Throngs of enemy forces await you. Many will battle one another if they get close enough, so using your speedy Berserks to lure the enemies into sight of each other is key. The Deceiver waits in a culvert in the map's upper-left corner.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

Legendary level offers more enemy units to do the job. Enemies are in different positions, and Warlocks will use Confusion Spells on you. Good luck!



BATTLE PLANS

Pick up the Staff with one of your Berserks, and then run straight forward as fast as you can (refer to Figure 6.9). This mission is all about stealth and diversion. In many ways, it's not unlike a football game: you'll hand off the Staff from Berserk to Berserk as you make your way to the Deceiver.

Two forces want to kill you here—Soulblighter's army and the Warlocks, who defend the Deceiver. Fortunately, these forces also want to destroy each other; tricking them into fighting one another will buy you time to sneak past and reach the Deceiver.

When a Warlock hurls his fireball(s) at you, you'll have to take the hit, because fireballs will track you over land. Fortunately, fireballs won't go over steep hills or crevasses, so you can use some of the crevasse features of this map to your advantage. To minimize the damage, run one unit toward the attack to detonate the fireball before it can reach your main group (Figure 6.10). This way you can sneak by without losing all your Berserks.



FIGURE 6.10

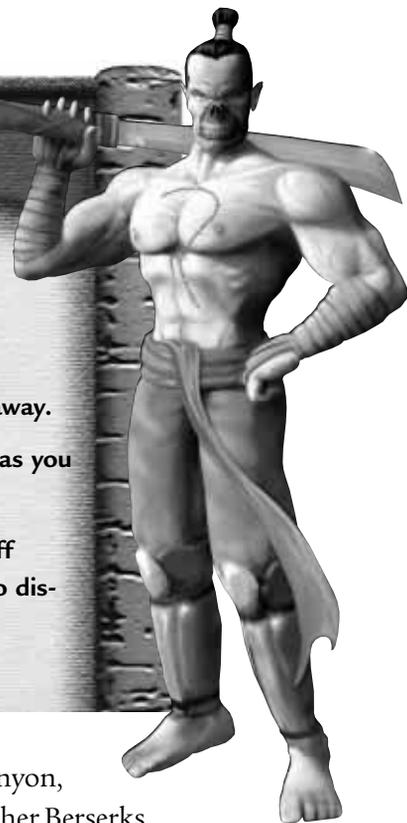
Don't let the Warlocks' attack hit your main group of Berserks.

Always sacrifice one unit to prevent the fireballs from destroying everyone.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  **Pick up the Staff and run forward. (See Figure 6.9.)**
-  **Avoid direct hits to your main group. Use decoy Berserks to prevent a disaster.**
-  **In Area A, run one Berserk east to lure the Warlocks away.**
-  **Sneak your units behind the Warlocks and run as fast as you can up the Deceiver's area.**
-  **When the coast is clear, run your Berserk with the Staff down to the Deceiver. Send your remaining Berserks to distract advancing enemy forces.**



As you arrive at Area A, run a Berserk up the right side of the canyon, and then due east. This will attract the Warlocks away from your other Berserks, who will sneak past behind them. You may take a hit or two from the Warlocks, but once you're behind them, you're free and clear. Don't be afraid to sacrifice a Berserk or two if it means you can get the Berserk with the Staff behind enemy lines.

Move your Berserks up behind the Deceiver's culvert. Then wait for an opportunity to run the Staff down to the Deceiver. Remember, you need only get the Staff to the Deceiver, so even if a group of Mauls pursues you as you approach him, don't give up! Once you get the Staff to the Deceiver, victory is at hand.



WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE

The Deceiver believes the Trow will be willing to help the forces of light, but the Trow aren't so sure: if you can defeat them in a game of their own devising, they'll fight for the forces of light for one year. It's capture-the-flag, except you have six flags to capture. You must control four of the six flags at the end of 12 minutes. Otherwise...

Mission Objectives Control four or more flags when the 12-minute time limit ends. If you lose all your units, you lose. If you can control all six flags, you win automatically.

YOUR GUYS

Berserks and Bowmen are the order of the day in this mission. Here's what you get:

-  Berserks
-  Bowmen
-  Deceiver (uncontrollable)

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

You're not going up against Soulblighter's forces, per se, but the enemy is still the enemy. Here's what you'll face:

-  Trow
-  Ghols

LAY OF THE LAND

The six flags lie scattered across the map in a circular fashion (Figure 6.11). Obstacles run the gamut from ancient city walls to a river of blood; you must take numerous geographical considerations into account. There are several areas of high

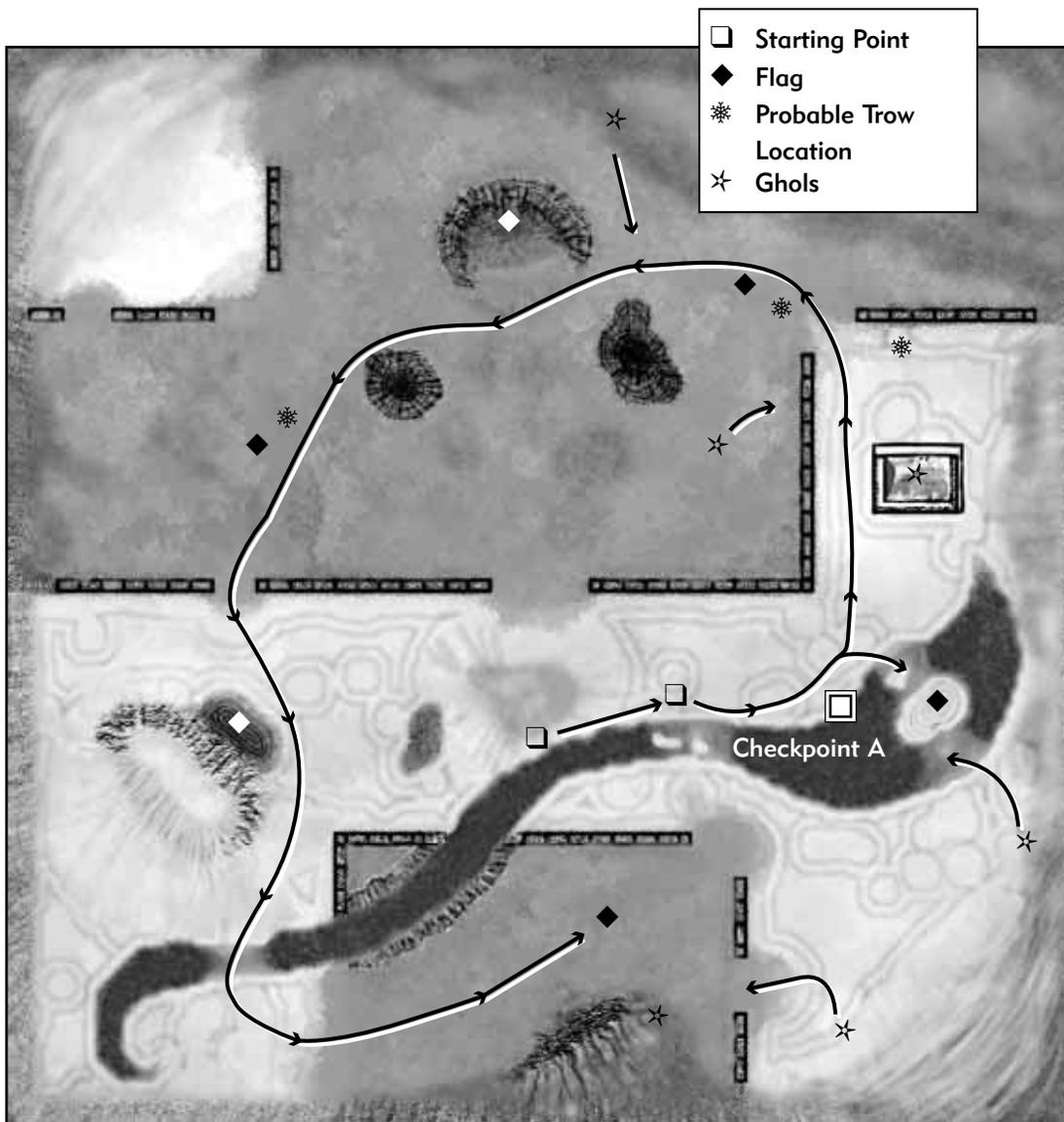


FIGURE 6.11 Taking the flags counterclockwise is as good a way as any to tackle this mission.

ground where your Bowmen can gain an advantage over an approaching Trow or group of Ghols.



BATTLE PLANS

It's easy to get your butt kicked all over the map in this mission if you divide your forces. *You must keep your forces together* as you circumnavigate the map. Move all your forces to Checkpoint A. There you'll see a Trow either at the flag or wandering north of it. Ignore the Trow, for now; instead, get some experience for your Berserks by killing some Ghols.

When your Berserks have a little experience, it's Trow-hunting time: move your troops north until you see a Trow; then have your Bowmen remove as many hit points from the Trow as possible, from as far away as possible. The more damage you can do from a distance, the better it is when your Berserks finally face the Trow.

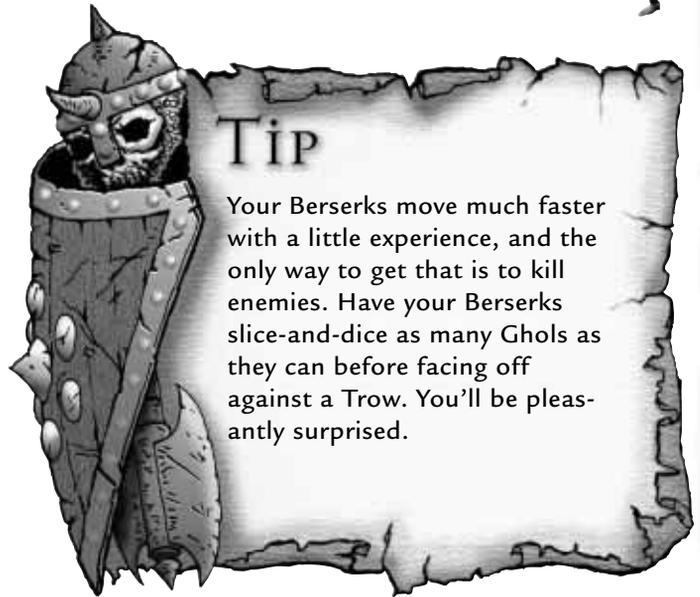


FIGURE 6.12

To defeat a Trow, all you need to do is surround him.



When the Trow gets angry enough to attack you, *quickly* surround him with Berserks (Figure 6.12). If you attack the Trow with a long line of Berserks, the Trow will kick the crud out of you in no time. As this attack is underway, keep your Bowmen firing at the Trow: every little bit counts.

After you kill the first Trow, you'll probably confront either another Trow or a group of Ghols right away. The Ghols are Berserk fodder; they'll puree them in no time. It's not the Ghols you have to worry about: it's the Trow. If you can kill two of the three Trow and still have six Berserks and six Bowmen, you'll have no trouble putting the last nail in the coffin. The Ghols play spoiler in this mission, but the Trow are your real concern. Defeat them and your victory is in the bag.

Keep moving around the map *as a group*. Don't let your units get too far from one another. If you leave any units behind to protect a flag, leave Berserks, not Bowmen. A pair of Berserks can take out a group of Ghols, but Bowmen will die quickly.

You need only four of the six flags at 12 minutes to win, so don't get greedy and risk losing units. Take it one flag at a time, circling the map counterclockwise (refer to Figure 6.11), and you'll have no difficulty.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

An extra Trow will pair with another Trow in this mission. Avoid them or be vanquished.

BLOW BY BLOW

-  Move all your troops to Checkpoint A.
-  Have your Berserks take out some Ghols to gain experience.
-  Move north to take on a Trow.
-  Have your Bowmen deal as much damage as they can to the Trow before sending your Berserks to confront him.
-  Surround the Trow. Don't attack in a line.
-  Keep moving counterclockwise around the map, grabbing flags and killing Trow.





CHAPTER
7

MUIRTHEMNE



Although Muirthemne is of no particular strategic value, King Alric has made its capture a priority. The Ibis Crown deep beneath this ancient city is the real prize. But entering Muirthemne won't be easy, and finding and retrieving the Ibis Crown is a challenge for the ages. Further, defending Muirthemne from the monstrous attacks of the Myrkridian Giants will test you to your limits.

WALLS OF MUIRTHEMNE

King Alric has decided the best course of action in the fight against Soulbrighter is to attack and capture the city of Muirthemne. This city is defended not only by a seemingly endless supply of Myrkridia, but also by two large cannons that bombard your positions constantly as you approach the fortified walls. You must get past the cannon fire and the Myrkridia and have your Dwarven Mortar punch a hole in the city walls. Then you need only deal with the Shade that awaits you inside the city itself.

Mission Objective Find a weakness in the city wall, blast through it with your Dwarven Mortar, and eliminate the forces guarding the city.



YOUR GUYS

Now that you've convinced the Trow to join your cause, you get to use them. Here's how your forces stack up:



Trow



Dwarven Mortar

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

As with most missions, some nasty opponents are waiting for you, including a new unit—the dreaded Shade. Here's what else you're up against:



Shade



Myrkridia



Fetch



Ghols



Cannons

LAY OF THE LAND

This map is composed of flat desert plains bordering the city of Muirthemne (Figure 7.1). It's a nightmare to negotiate, given the constant cannon fire and advancing Myrkridia. As you move toward the city wall, use the cover provided by the few slabs of rock dotting the landscape.

The city wall is vulnerable to mortar attack in only two places, so don't go attacking just any old spot. Also, two turrets house the Ghols that manage the three cannons.

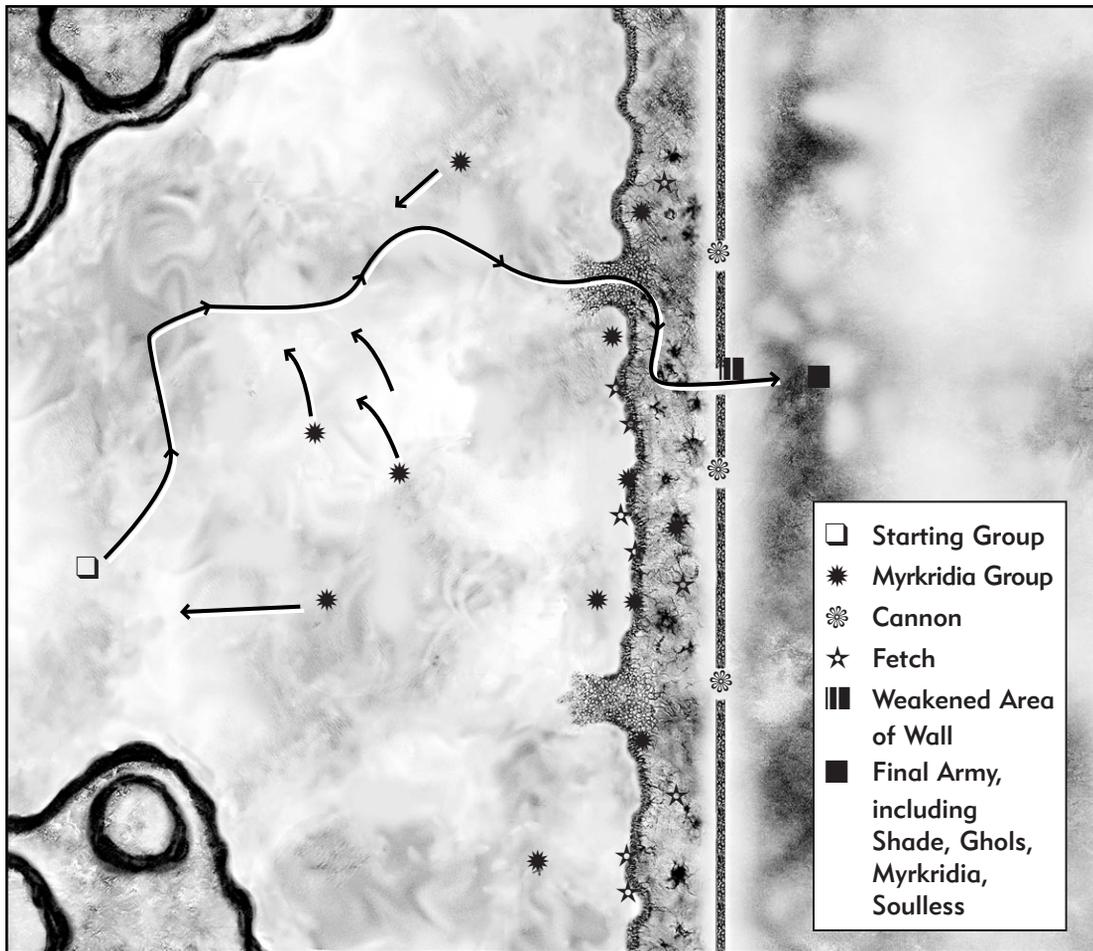


FIGURE 7.1 Be ready to confront a wave of Fetch and Myrkridia when you get close to the wall.

BATTLE PLANS

Soon after the mission begins, four Dwarven Mortar parachute in behind your four Trow. Move your Trow up to the slabs of rock ahead (Checkpoint A) and get your Dwarven Mortar ready for action.

As soon as the Trow move forward, several groups of Myrkridia will advance on your position. If you use your Dwarves carefully, you can dispose of at least half the Myrkridia with mortar rounds, leaving your Trow to mop up the rest. When the

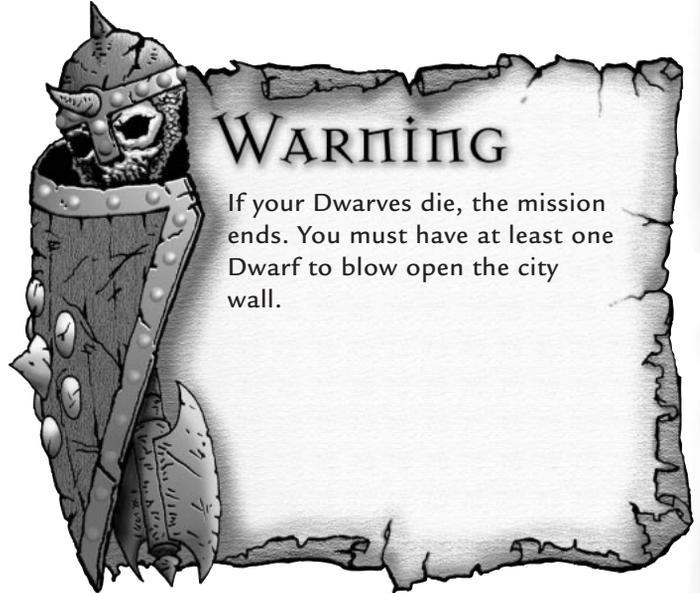
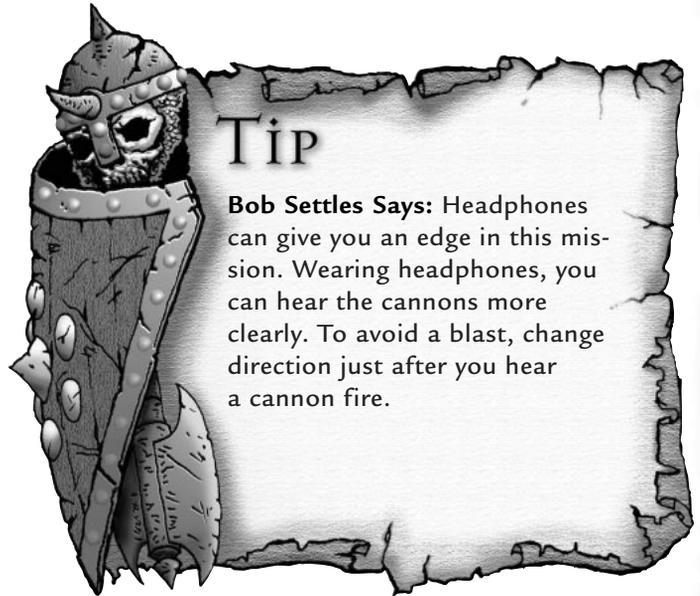


coast is clear, move your Dwarves to the slab to protect them from incoming cannon fire.

Follow the path shown in Figure 7.1, taking care to keep your units behind rock slabs as you approach the city wall. When you reach Checkpoint B, several larger groups of Myrkridia will attack. Use your Dwarven Mortar to take out (or damage) as many as possible before they reach your position. When the Myrkridia get close enough, use your Trow to pummel them into mulch.

At Checkpoint C, you're almost at the ramp to the city wall, and things heat up accordingly. Move your Dwarves up to mortar the enemy units near the wall, and keep your Trow close by to back them up. Your mortars can take out the cannons simply by targeting them: a pile of explosive cannonballs sits near the cannon, and if a nearby explosion triggers them, the entire area will go up with a bang.

Expect Fetch to arrive on the scene soon after you reach the ramp. If you can get a mortar shell close to them, you'll kill them all at once. This isn't always possible, however, so run a Trow up to





take them out. After you clear out the considerable numbers of Fetch and Myrkridia that come after you outside the wall, set up your Dwarves to use their mortars on the vulnerable portion of city wall (Figure 7.2). It usually takes eight hits to create a passable entrance to Muirthemne.

But your problems aren't over, yet.

Once you blow open the city walls, you still must eliminate the forces behind them. Unfortunately, those forces include a Shade.

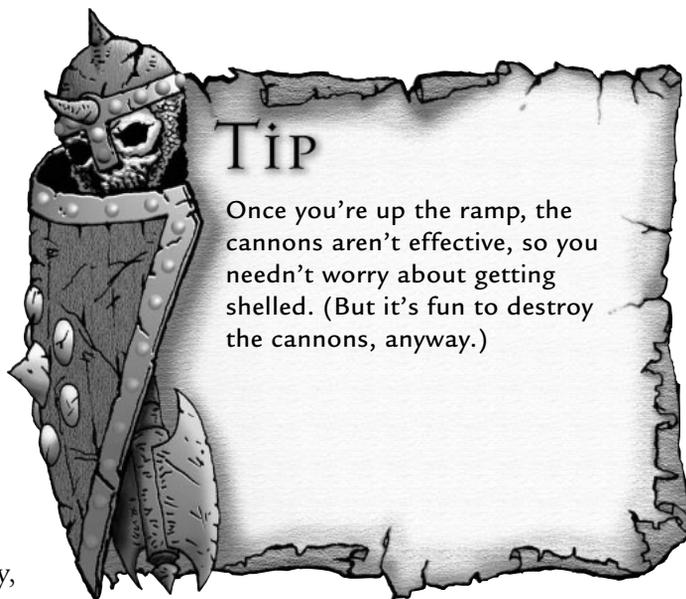


FIGURE 7.2

It takes about eight mortar hits to blow open the walls to Muirthemne.



Shades are roughly equal to an Avatara, and they possess a Dream similar to the Dispersal Dream. In short, they're just plain mean.

Have your Dwarves to get off as many mortar shells as possible before they get popped by the Shade. If you play your cards right, you can take out three groups of Myrkridia and two groups of Fetch before bringing in your Trow. Send at least one Trow after the Shade, and the other two (or three) to clean up the remaining enemies. When all the enemies are dead, you win!

LEGENDARY CHANGES

There are more enemies at this level, and one extra wave of Myrkridia and Fetch rush out when the wall comes down .

BLOW BY BLOW

-  **Move your Trow to Checkpoint A.**
-  **Use your Dwarves to take out the advancing Myrkridia.**
-  **Move to Checkpoint B, and get ready for more Myrkridia. Again, have your Dwarves deal the damage as much as possible.**
-  **Keep idle units behind rock slabs to protect them from cannon fire.**
-  **Move to Checkpoint C. Then use your Dwarves to shell enemy troops along the wall.**
-  **Take out the troops along the wall with Dwarves and Trow.**
-  **Use your Dwarves to blow a hole in the wall.**
-  **Kill the remaining enemies inside the city.**





THE IBIS CROWN

Alric says that when the Ibis Crown is recovered the power it gives its new owner will be vast, indeed. According to rumor, the crown lies buried deep in the catacombs beneath Muirthemne. Your troops are going in to find it.

Mission Objective Search the catacombs below Muirthemne for the Ibis Crown. One of your Journeymen must live to recover it.

YOUR GUYS

You're lightly equipped for the task at hand, but your three Journeymen, with their six Mandrake Roots each, will help heal your wounds. Here's what's what:



Journeymen



Dwarves



Bowmen



Berserks

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

Your enemies in this mission are ghosts, but their attacks are no less real for their ethereal nature. Here's what you'll see.



Bowmen (ghosts)



Myrkridia (ghosts)



Berserks (ghosts)



Dwarves (ghosts)



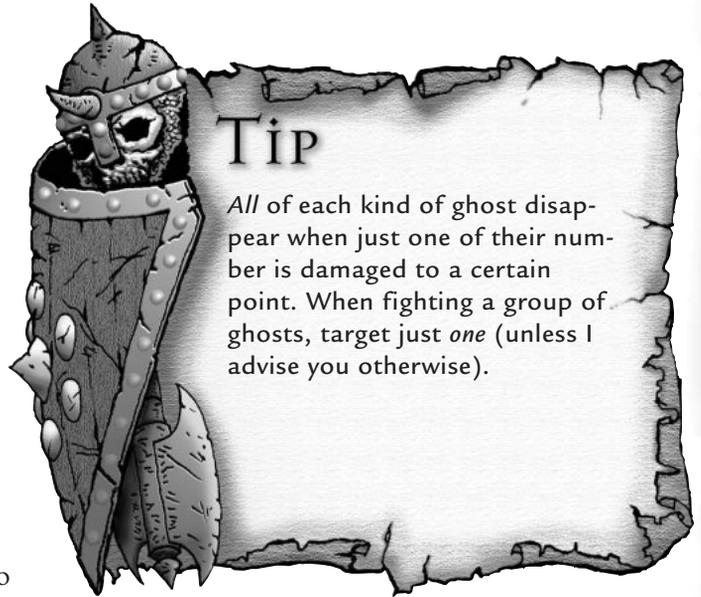
LAY OF THE LAND

This mission takes place in a large underground network of tunnels and rooms. The more direct route to the crown is best, so follow the path shown in Figure 7.3. Appearing and disappearing ghosts populate this map. Some will damage you, others will move about harmlessly, and yet others will help you in your cause. Try not to get lost in this level, or you could end up in a world of hurt.

BATTLE PLANS

Singular among all the levels in *Myth II: Soulblighter*, “The Ibis Crown” is downright creepy! Your enemies are ghosts, and they behave like it, appearing and disappearing without warning. But despite their nebulous form, they can do very *real* damage to your units, so don’t underestimate them. Some ghosts are neutral—friendly, even—and that can be confusing. But don’t worry, we’ll get through it together.

As this mission begins, a group of Bowmen and Myrkridia appears before your troops, but do nothing: Berserks soon materialize and take them out. You may end up having to fight one or two Myrkridia, but nothing more. Descend the ramp and head left (refer to Figure 7.3). As you reach the cusp of the next room (Room A in Figure 7.3), a group of four Bowmen appear and open fire, but if you wait a few seconds a pair of Myrkridia show up and kill them. Then you must kill the two Myrkridia.



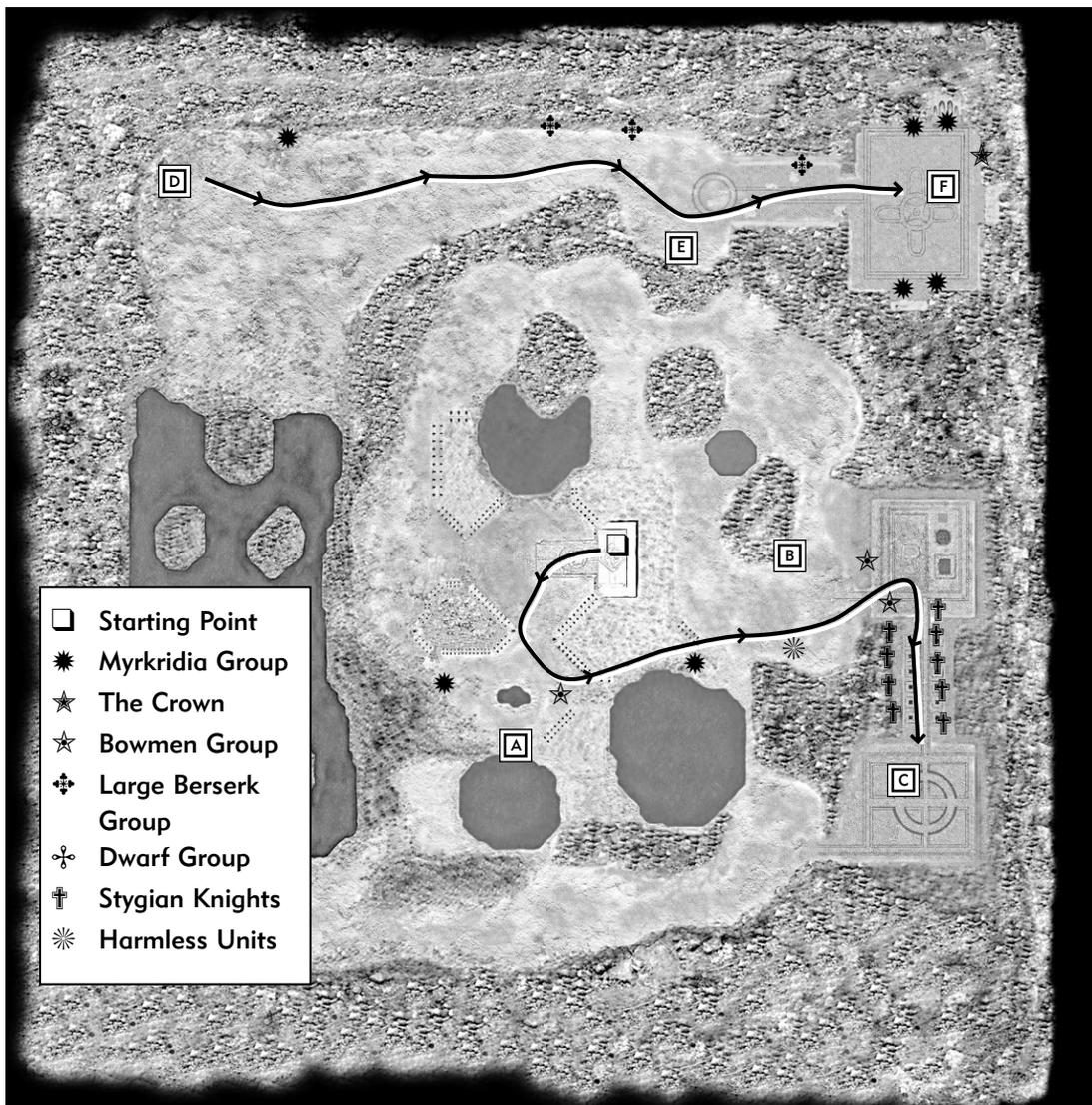


FIGURE 7.3 There are ghosts about, so follow this path carefully.

As you make your way through Room A and on to Room B, you'll encounter two groups of Myrkridia; one group approaches from behind and the other from ahead. Both groups disappear when you damage one of their number badly enough: your Dwarves are excellent for this. After snuffing the Myrkridia, proceed to Room B.

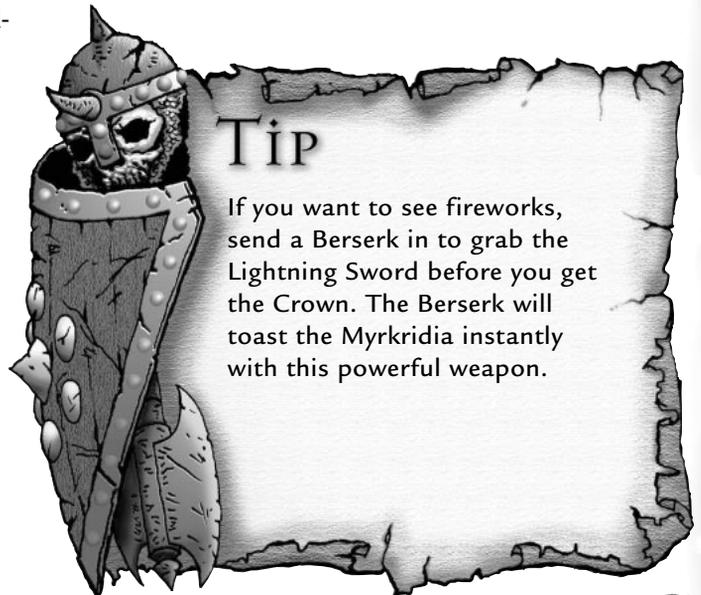


FIGURE 7.4

Getting rid of the ghost Dwarves can be tricky, but some anticipatory aiming goes a long way.

Along the way Myrkridia materialize ahead, moving away from you. They're harmless; ignore them.

As you enter room B, two groups of Bowmen open fire from either side of the entrance, but the more pressing issue is the four Dwarves coming straight at you. Have your Dwarves throw Exploding Bottles where the advancing enemy Dwarves *will* be when the bottles land, and you'll take them out in one shot without



TIP

If you want to see fireworks, send a Berserk in to grab the Lightning Sword before you get the Crown. The Berserk will toast the Myrkridia instantly with this powerful weapon.



risk of retaliation (Figure 7.4). When the Dwarves are toast, move in with your Berserks and hack up those Bowmen.

From Room B, proceed to an area guarded by a semicircle of Myrkridia. Do nothing, just wait. A group of Dwarves comes from behind and lays Satchel Charges behind the Myrkridia, blowing them sky-high!

In the next room a long hallway leads to Room C. It's guarded by Stygian Knights—tough customers—and you probably don't want to fight them. Good news! You don't have to. To get past the Stygian Knights, walk your units one at a time down the middle of the hallway. Do this and the Stygians won't budge. Deviate by even an angstrom, and you'll be in for a fun fight that probably will kill you. When you get to Room C, hop into the circle to teleport to Area D.

You're in the home stretch: When you proceed from area D you'll confront Myrkridia and Bowmen. You must fight to take out both groups. Two large groups of Berserks appear and disappear as they move between Room F and Area D. If you avoid them, you won't have to fight them. Simply move your units to Area E and leave them there until the Berserks have passed.

Only a single Journeyman need work his way through Room F's mess of Myrkridia to the Ibis Crown in the middle of the room. The key is to not let the Myrkridia touch him. They won't bother your Journeyman unless they bump him, so avoid contact. Once you've grabbed the crown, it's over!

LEGENDARY CHANGES

You have fewer units and meaner enemies when you play at the Legendary skill level.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Watch the initial battle unfold before you, but don't get involved unless you're attacked.
-  Follow the path shown in Figure 7.3.
-  In Room A, wait for two Myrkridia to take out the Bowmen for you.
-  In Room B, your Dwarf must toss some Explosive Bottles at just right time to take out enemy Dwarves without taking a hit.
-  Wait for the Dwarves to take out the semicircle of Myrkridia.
-  Move down the hallway one by one to Room C, and then hop in the teleporter.
-  Move quickly to Area E, and then sneak a Journeyman into Room F to pick up the Ibis Crown.



REDEMPTION

The forces of light have reclaimed the Ibis Crown for King Alric, and the celebrations have gone on for hours inside Muirthemne's walls. Word of the crown's capture has spread, however: scores of Myrkridia (large and small) and Soulless prepare to besiege the city. You must muster your troops—and your wits—if you're to stop the Undead onslaught.

Mission Objective Defend Muirthemne from enemy attack. Allow no enemy to enter the city.



YOUR GUYS

You have a terrific arsenal of units for this mission. Too bad you must use them all to win. Here's what's what:

-  Mortar Dwarves (Heroes)
-  Trow
-  Bowmen with Flaming Arrows (on Turrets)
-  Berserks
-  Heron Guards

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

This mission gives you your first look at the Myrkridia Giants, and you'll wish you'd never met them. Here's what you're up against:

-  Ghols
-  Myrkridia
-  Myrkridian Giants
-  Soulless

LAY OF THE LAND

This map's defining feature is the city wall (Figure 7.5). It has three weak spots vulnerable to entry by the enemy, but you have three turrets (complete with Bowmen) from which to damage the enemy before they penetrate the wall. Use well both the wall and the ramps leading to it to emerge victorious.

BATTLE PLANS

After the Myrkridian Giants blows open the city's main gate, you'll get control over your units. Quickly move your Dwarf up to the new entrance to lay down Satchel

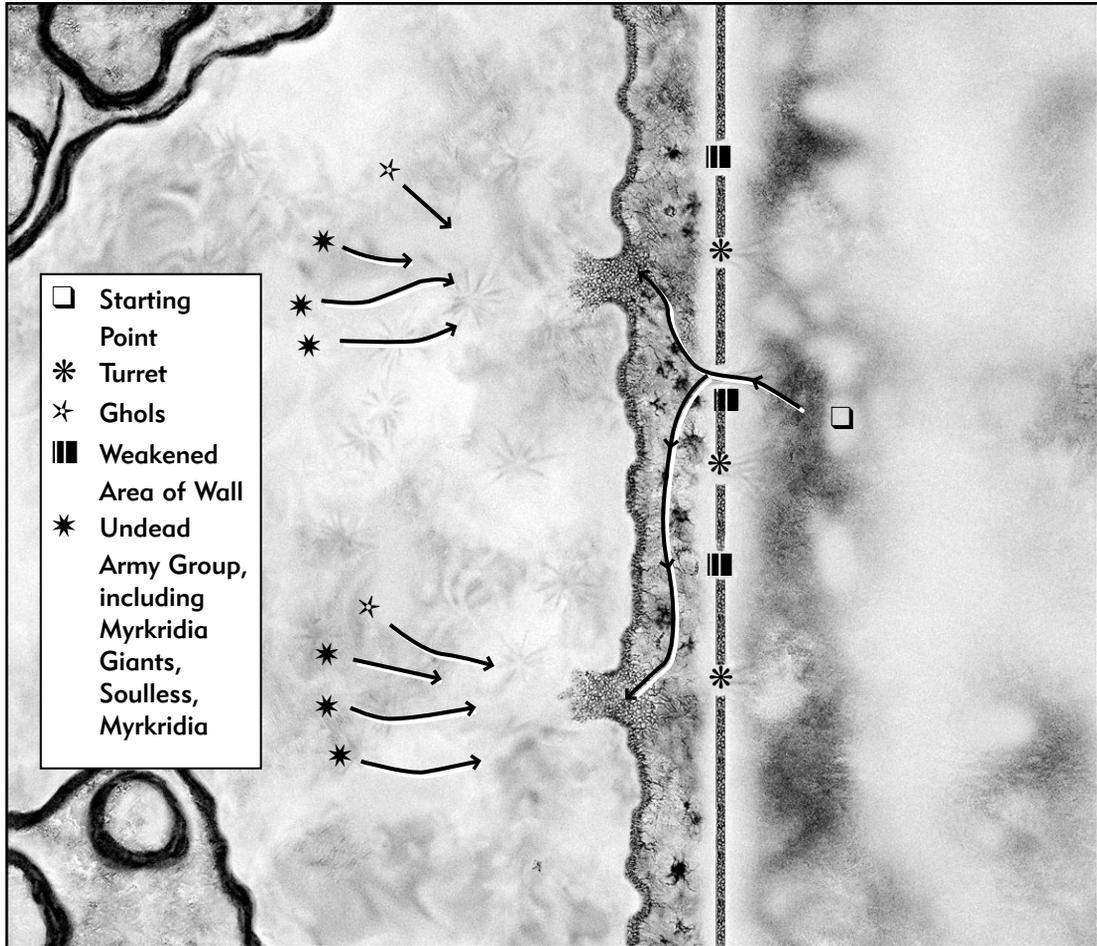


FIGURE 7.5 The wall provides less protection than you might think. It may be worth abandoning it.

Charges. A pile of Myrkridia is on the way and you must hold off this initial attack until reinforcements arrive. The best way to do that is to maximize use of your Mortar Dwarf. Pound the Myrkridia coming through the gate with as many

LEGENDARY CHANGES

More enemies come your way at the *Legendary* skill level.



Mortars as you can. Keep your Mortar Dwarf to one side of the gate so the Myrkridia can't see him until it's too late.

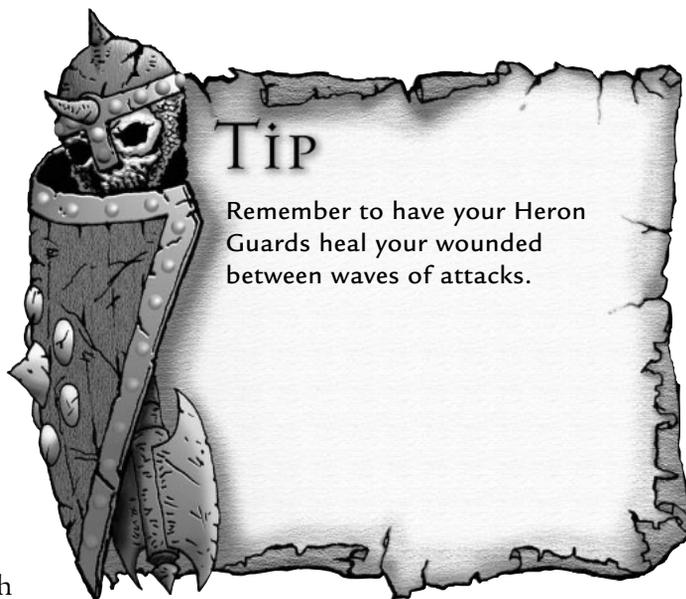
There are three entry points along the wall, but only two ramps allow the enemy to approach. It's easier to defend two ramps than three gates along the wall, so move your troops out in front of the wall. Try positioning all your Bowmen in a long line near the southernmost ramp, along with a Trow and a pair of Berserks: if you're careful, not much is likely to get past (Figure 7.6).

At the north ramp, bunch your Berserks and Heron Guards to support your Dwarves. You may want to bring the Bowmen off the turrets so you can use their Flaming Arrows on the ramps as an extra defense. You'll face many waves of attacks. Usually a Myrkridian Giant leads these, throwing exploding skulls when it encounters your forces. Myrkridian Giants are intimidating, but they're no match for your Trow or a group of Berserks. Once you've destroyed all the enemy units, you win.



WARNING

Beware the Myrkridian Giants' attack: it can be deadly. Try not expose groups of units to this attack.



TIP

Remember to have your Heron Guards heal your wounded between waves of attacks.



FIGURE 7.6

Carefully managed, this unlikely defense can repel many an attack.

BLOW BY BLOW

-  Have your Mortar Dwarf take out as many Myrkridia as he can.
-  Move your troops outside the city wall.
-  Move your Bowmen and Trow to the south ramp.
-  Move your Berserks, Heron Guards, and Dwarves to the north ramp.
-  Bring up the Bowmen from the turrets for support.
-  Fend off all attacks to win.

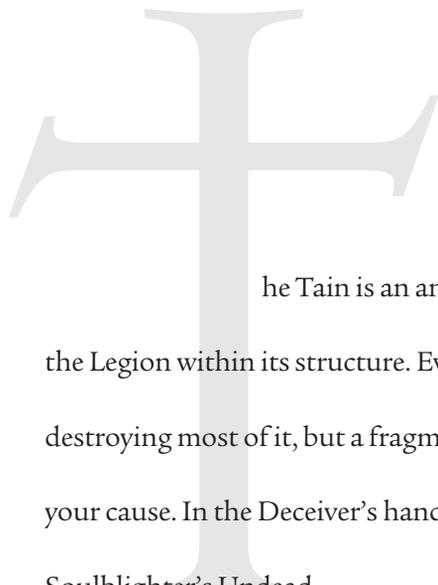




CHAPTER

8

THE TAIN



The Tain is an ancient artifact used during the Great War to trap the Legion within its structure. Eventually, the Legion found its way out of the Tain, destroying most of it, but a fragment remains. Obtaining the Shard is critical to your cause. In the Deceiver's hands, it may turn the tide of this new war against Soulblihter's Undead.

RELIC

Now that the Deceiver is on your side, you must help him get to an important ancient relic—the Tain Shard. The Shard will enable the Deceiver to defeat the Summoner and cut off Soulblihter's access to the Myrkridia. To win, you need only get the Deceiver to the Shard; you needn't destroy every enemy unit on the map.

Mission Objective Have the Deceiver retrieve the Tain Shard.

YOUR GUYS

The Deceiver is by far your most important unit in this mission. His ability to convert enemy units to your cause is critical. Here's everything you get:



Deceiver



Heron Guards



 Dwarves

 Bowmen

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

This map is crawling with many very nasty Undead creatures, including a Myrkridian Giant. You'll also face these guys:

 Soulless

 Myrkridia

 Myrkridian Giants

 Fetch

 Mauls

LAY OF THE LAND

Water, specifically rivers, dominates this map, and prevents you from following a more desirable path to the Tain Shard. Your troops can cross the river systems in only a few areas, so you're pretty much stuck with the route delineated here. You're also stuck facing off against various groups of Undead.

Carved into the rock of a raised flat hill in the lower-central portion of the map is an interesting idol with burning eyes. A pack of pesky Soulless guards this same hill, however, so avoid loitering nearby for long.

BATTLE PLANS

As this mission begins, the Deceiver shows off his Binding Dream, which turns enemy units to your side. In this case one of two Mauls becomes yours to use for the rest of the mission. It's always a good idea to let the Deceiver's mana recover before you move forward on this map. You never know when you may need to use his Binding Dream. Once your mana has recovered, move your units to Checkpoint A, where you'll find yourself face to face with a group of Maul and Soulless. Use your



Dwarves to blast the Mauls as they approach, and your Deceiver's Binding Dream to convert another Maul to your side. Have your Heron Guards mop up any remaining Mauls while your Bowmen take out the Soulless.

After dealing with the first wave of Mauls, head south (see Figure 8.1), but prepare to meet up with

LEGENDARY CHANGES

The Legendary skill level is very difficult for this mission. You'll face more enemies en route to the Shard, and more when you arrive.

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| □ Starting Point | ✱ Fetch/Soulless/Mauls | ✱ Myrkridia |
| ✕ Soulless | ▼ Large Myrkridia | ⊠ Tain Shard |
| ○ Enemy Unit Group | ✱ Myrkridia Group | --- Distraction Path |
| ★ Mandrake Root | | |

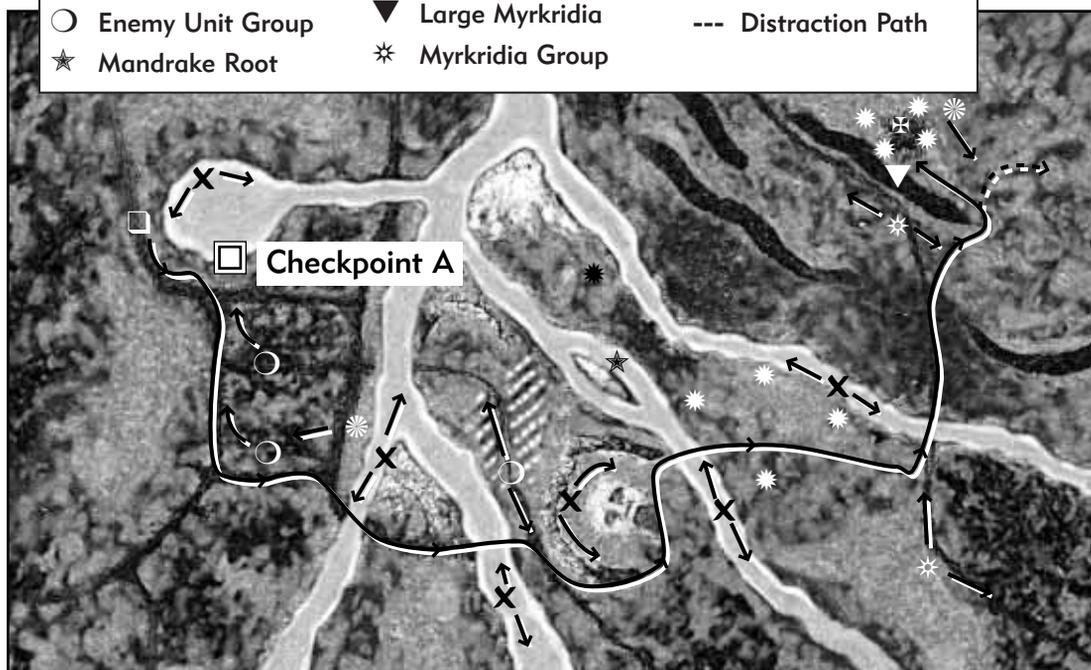


FIGURE 8.1 The extensive river system will frustrate you in this mission. Only a handful of crossing points exist.



another group of Mauls very quickly. Having disposed of the second group, heal your troops and head toward the first river crossing. A group of Mauls, Soulless, and a Fetch wanders around the general area; dispose of them before moving on. You *can* sneak by this group, but usually they end up attacking you from the rear later on, so take them out now. Again, have your Deceiver use his Binding Dream on a Maul, or the Fetch.

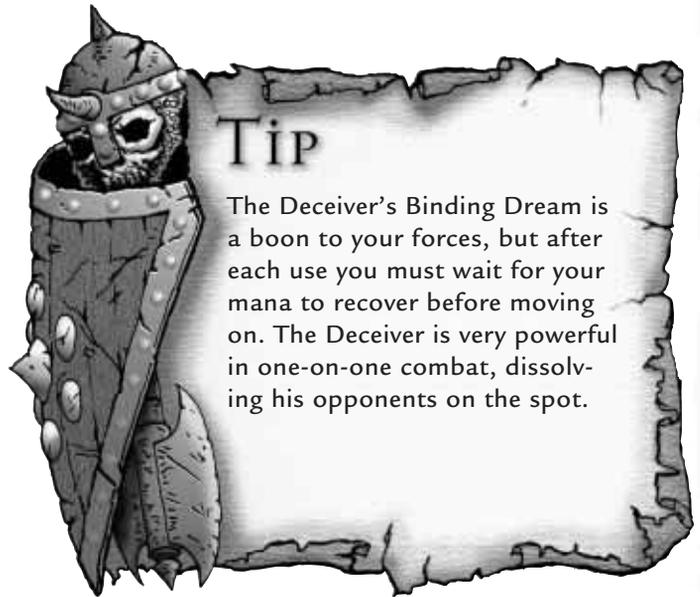


FIGURE 8.2

Use the Deceiver's Binding Dream whenever you can in this level.



Cross the river and take out the Soulless no doubt creeping up on you (they patrol the river). Then continue due east to the bridge. This bridge is a great opportunity for your Dwarves to earn their keep. Have them lay Satchel Charges on the bridge before the group of Mauls patrolling on the far side come by. When the Mauls start across the bridge, time your Exploding Bottle throw so most of the Mauls get smoked. After the explosions die down, you can have the Deceiver take control of any of the surviving Mauls.

On the other side of the bridge, you'll come to a hill with several Soulless on a counterclockwise patrol. It can be difficult to sneak past these Soulless. I recommend you use your Bowmen to take them out before they have a chance to damage your other troops. Proceed due east to the next river crossing, where you must take out yet another group of patrolling Soulless.

In this area, you can gather fresh units. Several lone Myrkridia roam around just waiting to be subjected to the Binding Dream. Take the Deceiver out and capture the Myrkridia one at a time



NOTE

Only certain (living) units can be converted by the Deceiver's Binding Dream. In this mission, Soulless and the Myrkridian Giants are both unconvertible.



TIP

A Mandrake Plant lies near the center of the map. Hack it up and it will yield two roots.



(Figure 8.3), then proceed to the next river crossing. There, you'll face a group of four Myrkridia. After disposing of them, proceed across yet another river (east).

You're almost there, but first you must deal with the small group of Myrkridia patrolling ahead as you cross the river. Move up the path until you can see the group of Myrkridia, Soulless, and a Fetch, and get ready for the fun.

To win this mission, you need only get the Deceiver to the Shard; indeed, even with your forces intact you'll have trouble defeating all the enemies lurking in the Shard area. Run a group of units northeast to distract the Myrkridia and Myrkridian Giants while the Deceiver makes a run for the Shard.





BLOW BY BLOW

-  Get used to using the Deceiver's Binding Dream.
-  Follow the path on the map to reach the Tain Shard.
-  After each encounter with a group of enemies, have the Deceiver wait until his mana bar recovers before moving on.
-  When you get to the area with lone wandering Myrkridia, use the Binding Dream to convert as many as possible to your cause.
-  When you finally reach the Tain Shard, you must divert enemy guard units from the artifact so you can sneak the Deceiver in.
-  When the Deceiver touches the Shard, you win.



THE SUMMONER

The Summoner resides within the Tain, where he's single-handedly resurrecting a race of Myrkridia. The Deceiver must find and destroy the Summoner inside the Tain's strange universe. After you destroy the Summoner, Soulblighter loses access to the vast hordes of Myrkridia trapped in the Tain's bizarre environment.

Mission Objective The Tain is filled with obstacles and traps. You'll need Dwarves and the Deceiver to get through, so keep them alive. Find and kill the Summoner.



YOUR GUYS

The Deceiver was able to bring a decent cross-section of units with him. Here's what you get:

-  Deceiver (with Binding Dream)
-  Bowmen
-  Dwarves
-  Heron Guard

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

This is the first level since the original Myth game where you've had to face Lightning Towers and Spiders. Here's what else you're up against:

-  Myrkridia
-  Summoner
-  Spiders
-  Lightning Towers

LAY OF THE LAND

The Tain is a bizarre area with many odd structures, but it's not that much unlike other cave levels. This map includes Gates into which you must drop Gate Keys to gain access to areas beyond. Another important area features four Lightning Towers that will crush your entire force unless you pass through the area properly (see Figure 8.4). Watch for Spider swarms; they can pass over most terrain, so don't think they can't climb over a steep wall at your flank and attack.



- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| □ Starting Point | ✿ Gate Lock | ☆ Myrkridia Group with Fetch |
| ⊛ Magic Crystal | ★ Gate Key | ✿ Myrkridia Group |
| ✿ Lightning Tower | ○ Summoner | ☆ Spiders |
| ▬ Gate | | |

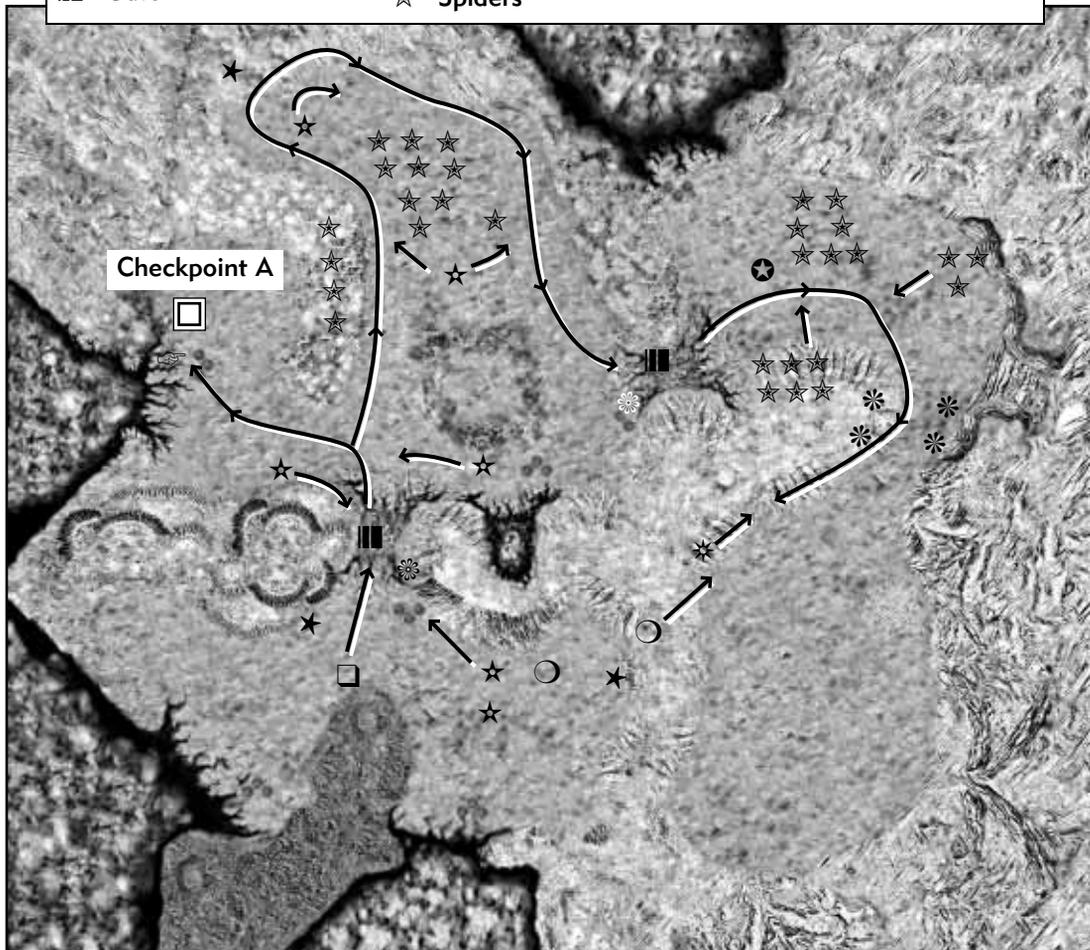


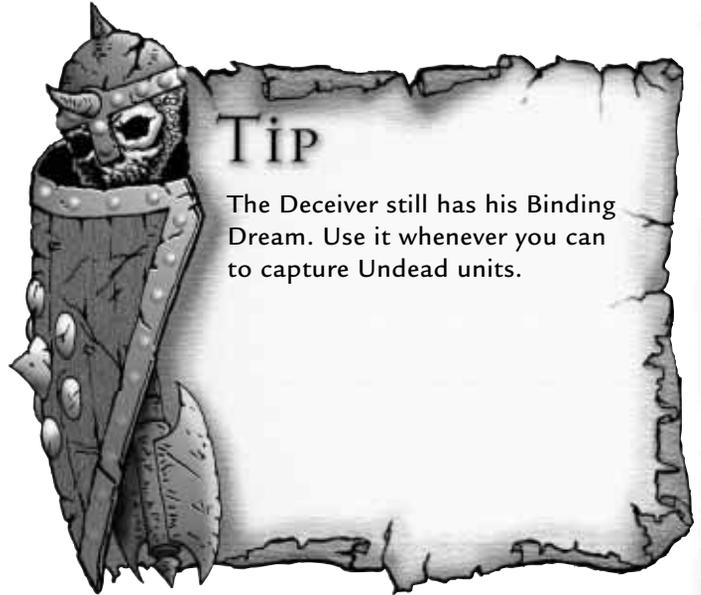
FIGURE 8.4 You can lose all your troops very quickly in a couple of areas, so take your time on this map.



BATTLE PLANS

Your first objective is to get the two nearby Gate Keys into the Gate Lock (see Figure 8.4). Dwarves must pick up the keys, and then drop them into the Gate Lock. (This happens automatically when the Dwarf nears the Gate Lock.) There's a Gate Key near your starting point, and another just east of there. When you go after the east key you must battle a group of Myrkridia and a pair of Fetch. Have your Bowmen deal with the Fetch while your Heron Guards slice-and-dice the Myrkridia.

Have a Dwarf grab the Gate Key and drop it into the Lock. This will open the Gate to the north, but don't run up the ramp just yet. Take one unit (preferably a converted Myrkridia) and run up the ramp until you see the two groups of Myrkridia and Fetch to the left and right. As you do this, have your Dwarves lay Satchel Charges on the ramp. Get the attention of the two groups of Undead and have them follow you down the ramp and into your Satchel trap (Figure 8.5). You should be able to do substantial damage to the first wave of units down the ramp, making it easy to deal with those that remain.



LEGENDARY CHANGES

As you might expect, there's more of everything (including anguish) when you play the Legendary skill level.



FIGURE 8.5

You might as well use Satchel Charges to take out these Myrkridia.

After clearing the area near the ramp, head north. The next area is loaded with Spiders and a group of Myrkridia (with a Fetch). If you just let the Undead group travel around here, the Fetch will eliminate many of the Spiders for you. Eventually, though, you must face the music, and when you do you'll deal with just the Myrkridia and Fetch. After destroying them, move your units into a tight group, with Heron Guards, Deceiver, and converted Myrkridia guarding your Bowmen and Dwarves as they take out attacking Spiders. These are easy to kill, but numerous.

Move north to claim the Gate Key you need to open the next Gate. It's guarded by, you guessed it, Myrkridia and a Fetch. Take them out. Then have a Dwarf pick up the key. If you haven't picked up the Gate Key in Area A, get that key now, as well. Drop the Gate Keys into the Lock and watch the Gate open.

You must move north from the Gate to get the magic item, which will protect the Deceiver from enemy Lightning Towers later on. Swarms (and I mean *swarms*) of Spiders protect the magic item, and you'll have to fight very carefully to emerge without losses. If you've managed to acquire a Fetch, it will go a long way toward helping you get through this.



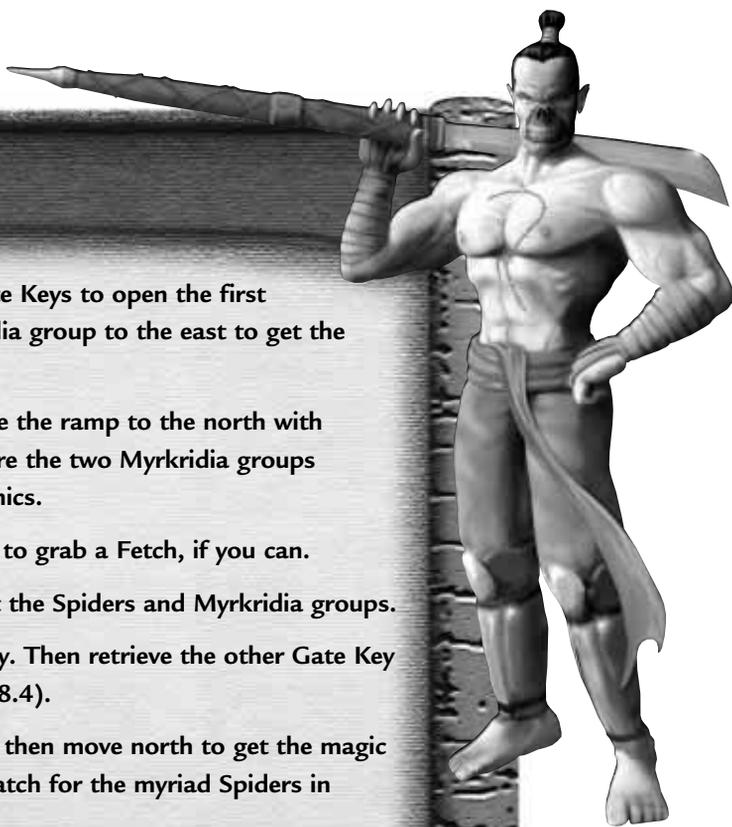
After the Deceiver picks up the magic item, he can act as a “lightning rod” to withstand/absorb Lightning Tower attacks as your other troops pass unharmed (Figure 8.6). Move your troops past the Lightning Tower, where they’ll battle the Summoner. To take him out, you must get the Deceiver close enough to dissolve him. The problem is, anytime a unit gets close to the Summoner, he simply teleports the unit away. It’s tricky, so save your game before the showdown.

When the Summoner dies, the mission is yours.



FIGURE 8.6

Once the Deceiver has the magic item, he can stand in the Lightning Towers’ line of fire and absorb the damage.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Grab the two nearby Gate Keys to open the first Gate. Defeat the Myrkridia group to the east to get the second Gate Key.
-  After the Gate opens, line the ramp to the north with Satchel Charges. Then lure the two Myrkridia groups down for some pyrotechnics.
-  Use your Binding Dream to grab a Fetch, if you can.
-  Move north and take out the Spiders and Myrkridia groups.
-  Pick up the next Gate Key. Then retrieve the other Gate Key from Area A (see Figure 8.4).
-  Open the next Gate, and then move north to get the magic item for the Deceiver. Watch for the myriad Spiders in the area.
-  Once the Deceiver has the magic item, move him into position to absorb the Lightning Towers' punishment so your troops can pass.
-  Move south to meet the Summoner. Destroy him with Bowmen or the Deceiver.



A MURDER OF CROWS

Your overzealous Deceiver may have gotten your troops imprisoned in Soulblighter's camp. With most of your troops held in caves and makeshift cells, you must find a way to free your army and upset whatever heinous plans are afoot. Be careful of cells with Wights in them: open one of these, and you'll surely be destroyed by a flurry of Pus Packets.

Mission Objective Many prisoners are scattered around Soulblighter's camp. Release the other prisoner, including the Deceiver.

YOUR GUYS

You have a decent army in this mission. Unfortunately, it's scattered in prisons throughout the map. Here's what you get:

-  Deceiver (no Binding Dream)
-  Dwarves
-  Berserks
-  Bowmen
-  Heron Guard

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

Soulblighter has lots of help in his camp. Here's what you'll face:

-  Soulblighter
-  Ghols
-  Myrkridia
-  Mauls



Soulless



Wights

LAY OF THE LAND

This is a straightforward, outdoor prison map with no oddities. Although your troops start out in three enclosed prison cells, the remaining prison cells are actually caves in the level's canyon walls. Each cave cell usually contains your troops, but one or two contain groups of Wights that will explode as soon as you free them. Therefore, approach a new cell with a single unit. It is randomly determined each time you play as to where the prisoners are, so check out every cell you can.

From this level you can access the secret level ("Limbs, Heads, and Smoking Craters"). To access it, exit the map from the upper-right corner rather than follow the Deceiver out the lower right.

BATTLE PLANS

You begin the mission with control of only five Bowmen in an open cell. Two nearby cells (locked) contain five Berserks each. The early challenge is to release the Berserks without losing your Bowmen.

Move your Bowmen out of their cell to Checkpoint A in Figure 8.7. From there, the Bowmen will have time to take out the Mauls that approach singly across the open space. After killing the Mauls, release the nearest Berserks and move to release the other Berserks.

After releasing all the Berserks, you must take out two groups of Ghol's just outside the prison area. Your Berserks will make quick work of them, so attack head-on. Move your troops down to the first cave, ready to take out the Maul and Soulless waiting there. This cave should contain a pair of Dwarves. Open the cave by targeting the bars blocking the entrance (Figure 8.8).

The next area to has two exits. Both must be blocked before you alert the units inside to your presence. As soon as the units inside the enclosure (Area B in Figure 8.7) know you're there, they'll send a "runner" Ghol (always white) off to alert Soulblighter. You must kill this Ghol! Use at least one Berserk and your Bowmen to



☆ Ghol Group	✕ Soulless/Maul Group	● Cave
⌘ Deceiver	✱ Myrkridia	◆ Runner Ghol
☆ Maul	✱ Lay Satchel Charges here	☆ Soulbliighter
† Stygian Knight		

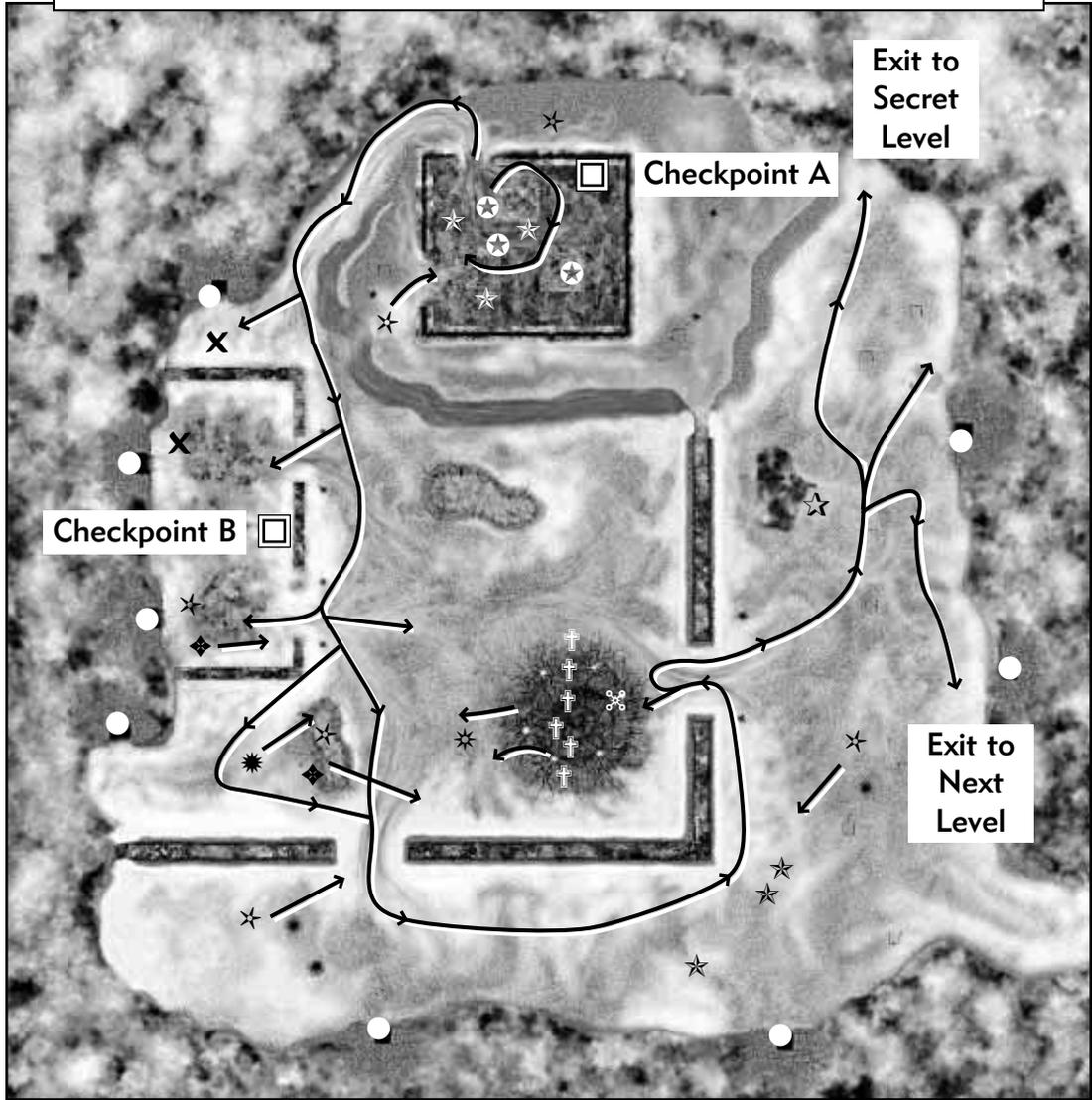


FIGURE 8.7: One of this map's two exits leads to a secret level.



FIGURE 8.8

Target the cave's bars to release the captives.

ensure the Ghol doesn't get away. You can handle the remaining enemy units fairly easily.

Two caves lie inside Area B. One usually contains Berserks, and the other is chock-full of Mandrake Roots and Satchel Charges. Open both and retrieve what you can. Your next task is to defeat the Stygian Knights defending the Elemental Claw holding the Deceiver. To do this, simply lay



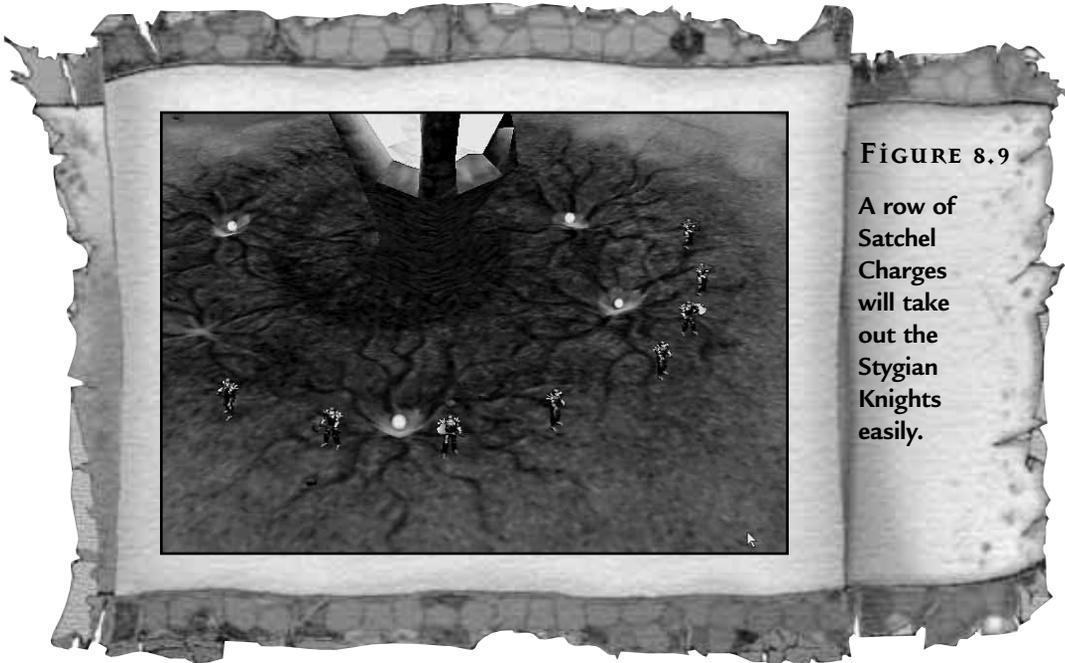
TIP

One cave yields a Heron Guard, eventually. Return to the cave in Area B and collect Mandrake Roots so you can heal your battered warriors.



Satchel Charges along the path the Stygian Knights are likely to take as they pursue you. When the Stygian Knights go after your Dwarves, run for it. Then turn and blow up the Satchel Charges as the Stygian Knights run over them (see Figure 8.9). This should take out all but a pair of the Knights.

Continue south, and then east. The two caves at the bottom of the map hold a crystal a Dwarf can pick up and take to the





BLOW BY BLOW

- 
-  Move your Bowmen to Area A and take out the Mauls as they approach one at a time.
 -  Release the Berserks. Then kill off the two Ghol groups around the enclosure.
 -  Move down to the first cave and open it (three Dwarves should be waiting).
 -  Block both exits in Area B and eliminate enemies, making sure the “runner” Ghol doesn’t escape.
 -  Lay down a small field of Satchel Charges to take out the Stygian Knights guarding the Elemental Claw.
 -  Move through the bottom of the map and pick up the crystal from one of the two caves.
 -  Return the crystal to the Elemental Claw to release the Deceiver.
 -  Sweep the remainder of the map for enemies. Then exit to either the next level or the secret level.

Elemental Claw. This releases the Deceiver, who will engage in a mini-battle with Soulblighter. When this is finished, you need only sweep the area of remaining Undead forces, and then exit to the level of your choice.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

There are more enemy troops and more “runner” Ghols to contend with at the Legendary skill level. Also, the crystal is in the cave closest to Soulblighter.



LIMBS, HEADS, AND SMOKING CRATERS (SECRET LEVEL)

This is one of two secret levels in *Myth II*, but it's the only one important to the story. Satchel Charges and Wights literally cover this level. As you might expect, there's a strong possibility this mission will become an explosive situation. Despite its difficulty, "Limbs, Heads, and Smoking Craters" is a lot of fun, so enjoy it.

Mission Objective Destroy Soulbrighter's stockpiled weapons of mass destruction—munitions shacks, Satchel Charges, even Wights. You'll need your Dwarven explosives experts, so keep at least one alive.

YOUR GUYS

This is a fun mission and you have a strong force, but you must be smart to make them last. Here's what you get:

-  Berserks
-  Dwarves
-  Bowmen
-  Heron Guard

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

Soulbrighter has it all here, but the weapons' power is also their weakness. Try to hit Wights when they're near other enemy troops. Here's what you're up against.

-  Soulless
-  Wights
-  Mauls
-  Fetch



LAY OF THE LAND

This otherwise straightforward map is crawling with enemies, including several groups that approach from your rear early on. The desert landscape is good for your Exploding Bottles, but not so good for your Flaming Arrows. You must destroy three main areas, as well as all enemy units (Areas A, B, and C in Figure 8.10).

BATTLE PLANS

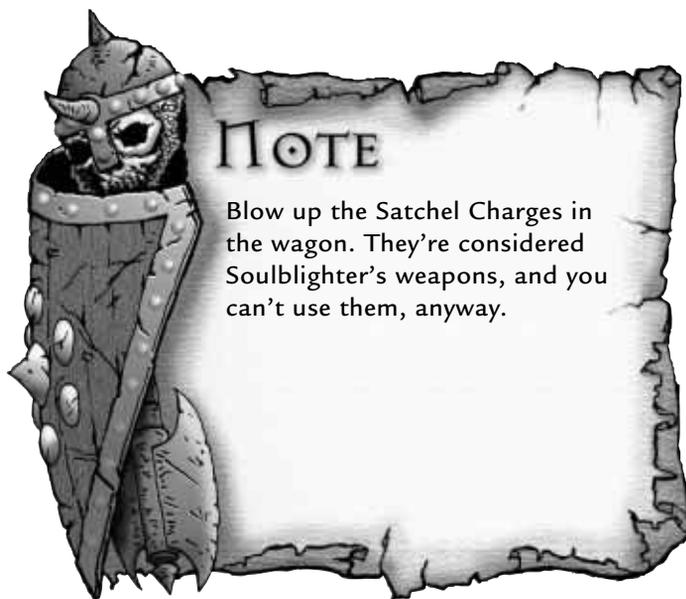
This mission is full of Satchel Charges and Wights—that is, things that go *boom*. First, move to a raised area left of where your units enter and lay Satchel Charges

before the enemy arrives. Two groups of enemies come at you right off the bat—one along the raised road you're on, and another out of the plains below (Figure 8.10). Deal with the group coming straight at you by detonating the Satchel Charges when the Mauls and Soulless are over them.

Take out the entire group below simply by hitting one of the Wights before they spread out. (Use your Bowmen for this.)

After you've dispensed with those units, you'll be tempted to move forward toward the Satchel Charge cache, but that's a bad idea: another group of enemies is coming up behind you. Deal with this group as you did the earlier one, having your Bowmen target the Fetch when they get close enough.

Now move your units to Area D and make a long line of Bowmen. Put a Dwarf on either end of the line, much like you did in the "Great Library" mission. If you



NOTE
Blow up the Satchel Charges in the wagon. They're considered Soulblighter's weapons, and you can't use them, anyway.



□ Starting Point	* Lay Satchel Charges here	■ Building
○ Enemy Army	✕ Soulless	☆ Ghols
⊗ Wights		★ Satchel Charge Cache

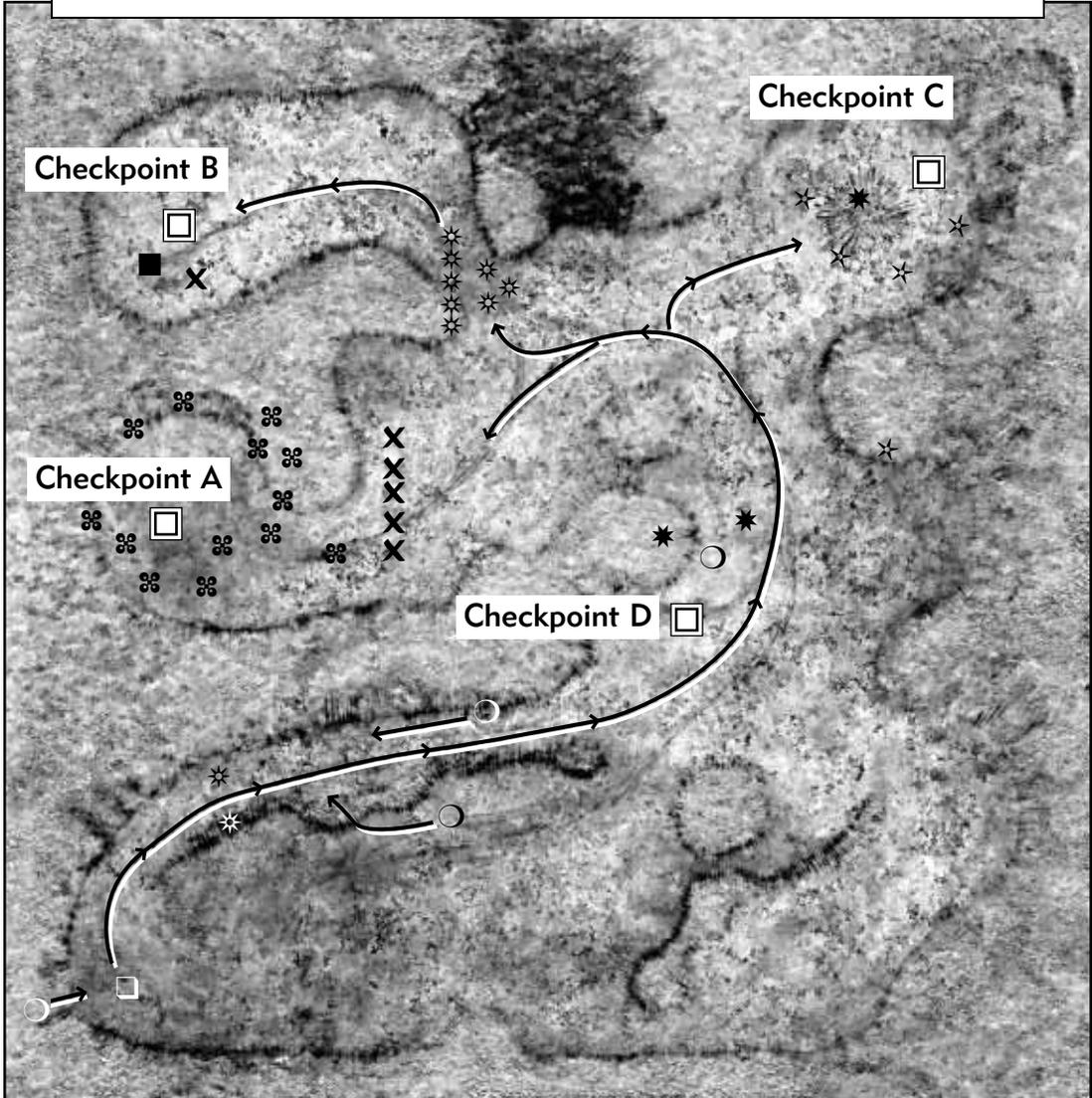


FIGURE 8.10 This level is fun, but that doesn't mean it's easy.



back these units up with Berserks, you can take out all the forces guarding the Satchel Cache with relative ease.

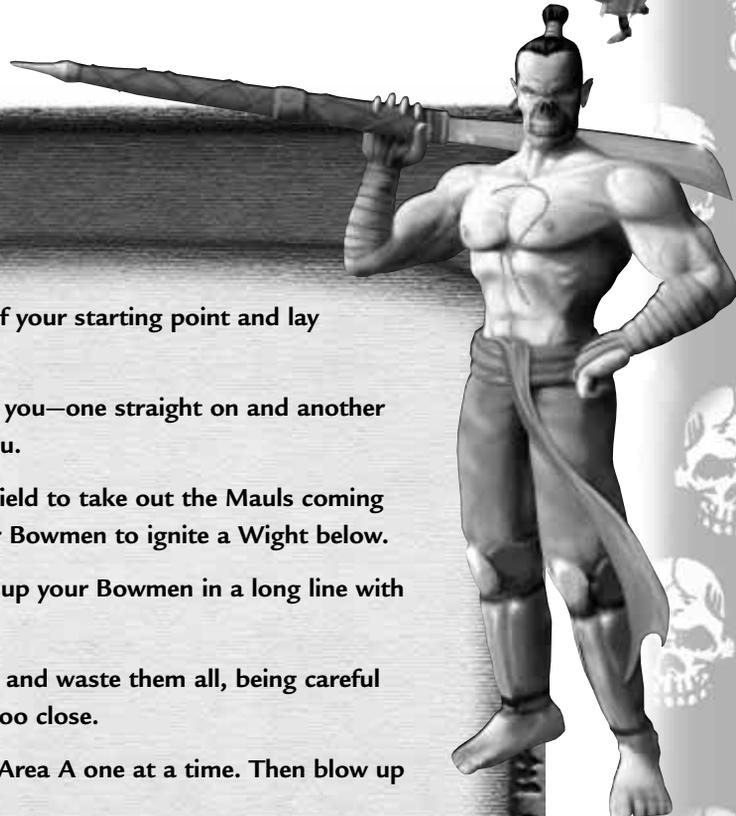
Grab all your Bowmen and a few Berserks and head to Area A; stop when the line of Soulless comes into view. You'll notice there's a line of Soulless with many Wights wandering around behind them. You'll be tempted to target a Wight and move in your Bowmen, but if you do you'll get shredded instantly. The best way to approach the Soulless is to place all your Bowmen fairly close to Soulless range, target one, and then move your Bowmen back after they shoot. Repeat until all the Soulless are dead: you won't have taken a single hit. Then smoke the Wights and watch the fireworks.



Now you must set a trap for the numbers of Undead training in and around Area B. Have your Dwarves grab all the Satchel Charges from the cache and string them in a long line, two by two. Then position *all* your units at the very back of the line so the Undead must follow it to reach you. Run a Berserk up into the camp to provoke the Undead, and then wait until you can see the whites of their eyes to blow 'em sky high.

Area B houses a Satchel Charge cache and a building you must destroy. A group of Soulless guards sits atop its roof. Have your Bowmen distract them while you send in a Dwarf to blow up the building. To blow it up, simply Control-click inside the doorway—but make a run for it as soon as you throw the bottle, because it's a big explosion.

Area C in Figure 8.10 is lightly guarded by Ghols. Move in slowly, and then simply toss an Exploding Bottle into the pile of Satchel Charges. You've completed the secret level!



BLOW BY BLOW

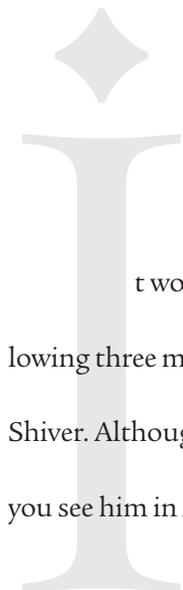
-  Set up on the bluff left of your starting point and lay Satchel Charges.
-  Two groups will come at you—one straight on and another from the plains below you.
-  Use the Satchel Charge field to take out the Mauls coming straight at you, and your Bowmen to ignite a Wight below.
-  Move to Area D and set up your Bowmen in a long line with Dwarves at each end.
-  Provoke the enemy units and waste them all, being careful not to let the Fetch get too close.
-  Take out the Soulless in Area A one at a time. Then blow up the Wights.
-  Lay a long line of Satchel Charges outside Area B (see Figure 8.10). Then provoke the Undead toward it.
-  Detonate the long line of Satchel Charges and solve all your problems.
-  Blow up the building in Area B by tossing a bottle through the door.
-  Blow up the Satchel Charges in Area C, but keep an eye out for Ghols.



CHAPTER

9

HUNTING SOULBLIGHTER



It won't be long until your final confrontation with Soulblighter. The following three missions pit you against the full fury of his forces, including his ally, Shiver. Although you'll face Soulblighter in "Twice Born," it won't be the last time you see him in *Myth II: Soulblighter*. That treat awaits you in Chapter 10.

THE WALL

Alric and nearly 3,000 troops have traveled from Muirthemne to face Soulblighter. Shiver's army has intercepted them a couple of hours' march downstream from the dam. If the enemy blows the dam, Alric's forces won't stand a chance. Defend the dam at all costs.

Mission Objective Alric's forces are downstream. Don't let the enemy blow the dam and drown them.

YOUR GUYS

You're amply equipped to deal with the Undead minions, but you must be tactically sharp. Here's what you get:

-  Warlocks
-  Dwarves
-  Bowmen



 Berserks

 Heron Guards

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

Soulblighter throws a lot at you, including some troops you'd really rather not fight. Your enemies are thus:

 Bowmen

 Mauls

 Fetch

 Ghols (with Satchel Charges)

 Thrall

 Wights

LAY OF THE LAND

This map's dominant feature is the dam where you begin the mission (Figure 9.1). You must protect it at all costs, so never venture far from it. The river flowing from the dam is deep. A constant stream of Thrall and Wights lumber out of it hoping to detonate themselves at the base of the dam, so keep at least four Bowmen on the dam to fend off these sneaky attacks.

BATTLE PLANS

Start this mission by stacking your units on the side of the dam where the Undead will attack first. The first wave of Undead attackers can approach from either side of the dam: it's a random occurrence. To get a heads-up on which side the attack will come from, send a Berserk scout deep down each side of the dam to warn you. When you know which side the attack's coming from, move your Warlocks and Dwarves to the side of the dam facing the attack and prepare for the carnage.



□ Dam/Starting Point	◆ Thrall and Wights
★ Main Army	--- Scout Berserk
⊗ Hidden Wights	— Enemy Path

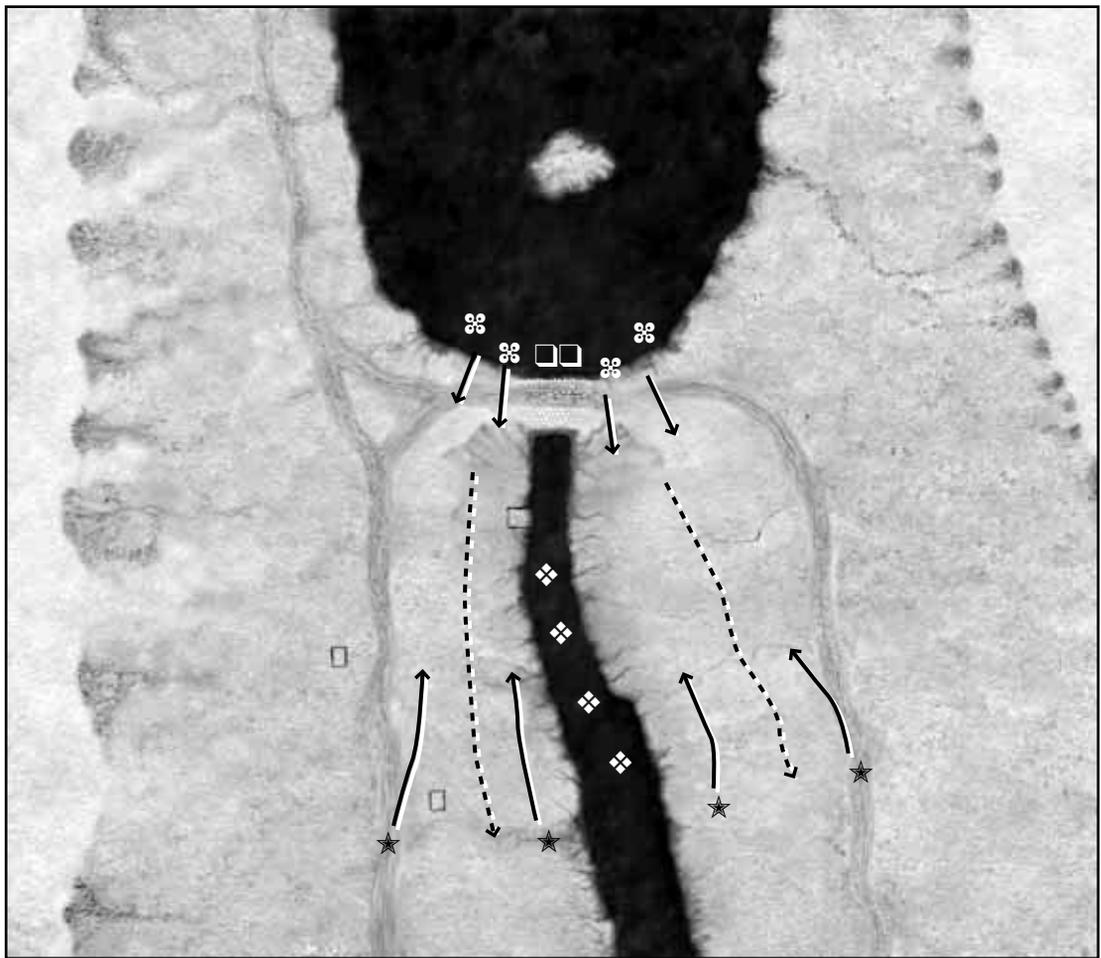


FIGURE 9.1 Watch out for Wights coming up through the river.



Dealing effectively with the first wave of attacks is critical to winning this mission. Position your troops as shown in Figure 9.2—Dwarves on the ridge and Warlocks next to them. When the Maul and Ghols get close, the Warlock's Fireballs and Dwarves' Explosive Bottles together should stop the entire force before it can get close to the dam. As the bloodfest rages at the bottom of the dam, move your Berserks (you only need three or four) to intercept approaching enemy Bowmen.



FIGURE 9.2

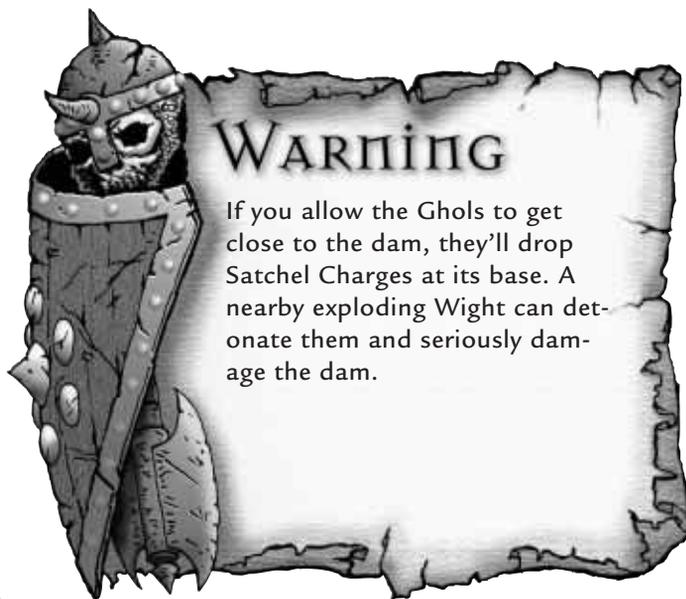
This is an effective way to face the first wave of attackers.



After you wipe out the Maul and Ghols, the first wave will appear to be over—but it isn't. A Fetch and a large group of Thrall will approach along the same route. I suggest using four Bowmen to take out the Fetch while your Warlocks pummel the Thrall with a pair of Fireballs. Don't wait around admiring your work for too long, though: another wave of attackers (just like the first) approaches from the other side in a few seconds. Boogie on over to the other side of the dam with your Dwarves and Warlocks to fend off the new attackers.

You can deal with the second wave of attackers as you did the first, except now waves of Thrall and Wights are moving up the river toward the dam. Your Bowmen on the dam should make quick work of them. As you finish off the second wave, pay attention to the water behind the dam: Wights lurk in the depths (Figure 9.3). After you clear up the second wave of attackers, Wights approach from the rear.

Two more major waves of attackers come from the two sides of the dam; thankfully, the fourth comprises only Ghols. These attacks, together with the Wights coming from up the river and from the reservoir behind you, push your tactical skills to the limit. However, if you can keep your cool and not lose your Warlocks



LEGENDARY CHANGES

The waves of attacks are more numerous at the Legendary skill level, and they come more quickly and include more bad guys. As if this level weren't hard enough...



FIGURE 9.3

Beware of Wights emerging to attack from the water behind you.

and Dwarves, you stand a good chance of winning handily. Note that your Heron Guards in this mission have plenty of Mandrake Roots to heal your damaged troops, so use them.

After you defeat the four waves of attacks, you need keep only your Bowmen on the dam and slice up any Wights/Thrall that come to spoil your party. When the last enemy unit is dead, you win.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Send a Berserk deep down each side of the dam to scout.
-  When it's clear which side of the dam the enemy's first attack will come from, move your Dwarves and Warlocks into position on that side.
-  Use your Warlock's Fireball (or Confusion) attack and your Dwarves to foil the Ghol's attempts at dropping Satchel Charges near the base of the dam.
-  Have your Berserks take out the enemy Bowmen.
-  After killing the Maul and Ghols, be wary of the Fetch approaching from the same side.
-  Move your key units to the opposite side of the dam to prepare for the next attack.
-  Watch for Wights approaching from behind.
-  Keep at least four Bowmen on the dam to take out Wights approaching from up the river.



SHIVER

Alric has yet to destroy Shiver. The Deceiver is eager to get a taste of Shiver's blood, so Alric has chosen five men of the strongest character to accompany the Deceiver into the canyons where Shiver hides, where they will hunt her down and kill her once and for all.

Mission Objective Shiver and her forces are trapped in the canyons. Destroy her.



YOUR GUYS

This mission gives you only a few units, but what units! They're all heroes, and here's how they lie:

-  Warlock (Hero)
-  Heron Guards (Heroes)
-  Bowman (Hero)
-  Dwarf (Hero)
-  Deceiver (Binding Dream available)

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

This level is packed with Undead, but fortunately they're relatively easy to kill. Here's what you're up against.

-  Thrall (in huge bunches)
-  Soulless
-  Myrkridia
-  Shiver
-  Shade

LAY OF THE LAND

Numerous canyons wind through this desert landscape. They're wide enough that you can see what's coming in time to prepare your defense. Perhaps the coolest part of this map is the Easter Egg for the Warlock in the upper-left corner of the map (see Figure 9.4). This magical item allows the Warlock four extra-fast, devastating Fireball attacks.



- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| □ Starting Point | ★ Warlock's Magic Item |
| ✱ Myrkridia Group | ❖ Thrall Group |
| ✕ Soulless Group | |

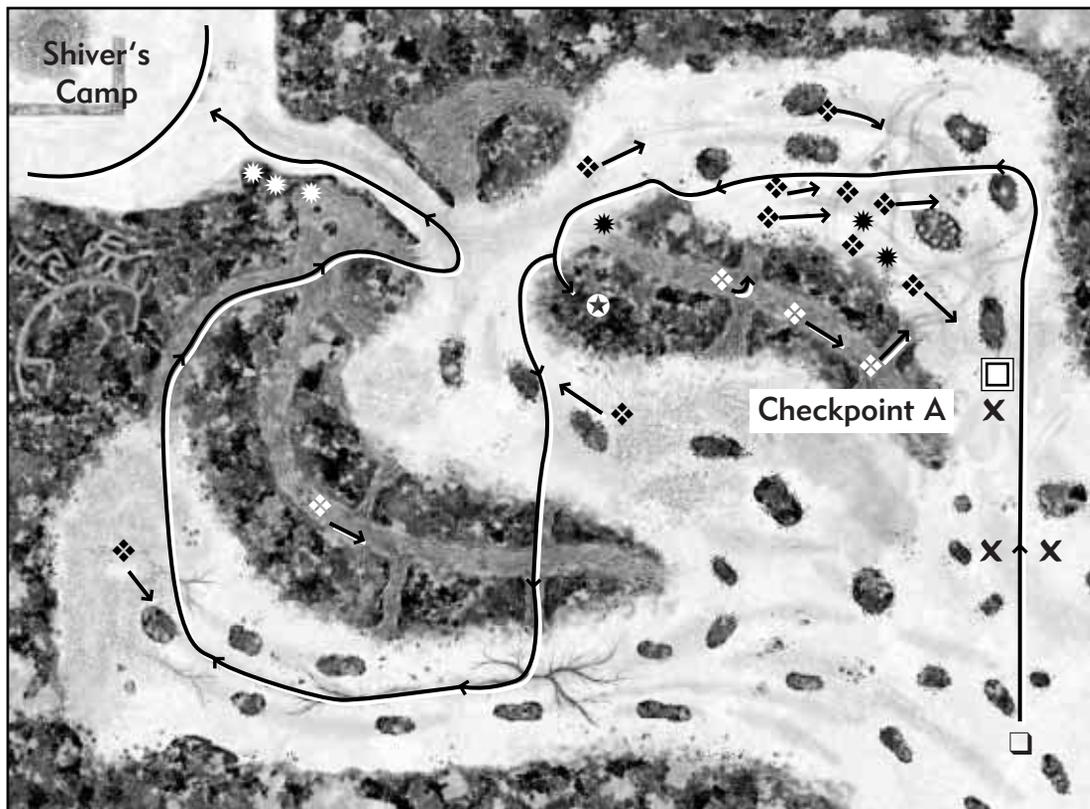


FIGURE 9.4 There's an Easter Egg for the Warlock in the map's upper-left corner.

BATTLE PLANS

As the mission begins, Shiver launches her Whisper Dream on the Deceiver. As soon as you gain control of your units, attack Shiver using your Warlock's Fireball attack to get her off your back. Although you may be tempted simply to follow Shiver up to



her camp, to defeat the level you must kill all the Thrall, Soulless, and Myrkridia wandering the map. The route shown in Figure 9.4 takes you through the level in such a way that the enemy hordes are manageable but you can still grab the Warlock's Magic Item.

Head north slowly, taking out groups of Soulless perched atop the hills as you go. Your Bowman is a Hero unit, so he fires *very* quickly and accurately, and can take out four Soulless by himself. For even more fun, use your Warlock's Fireball attack, as well (Figure 9.5). Continue this way toward the map's upper-right corner.

At Area A, you'll start experiencing attacks from small groups of Myrkridia and huge groups of Thrall. Use the Deceiver's Binding Dream to capture as many Myrkridia as you can. It has no effect on the Thrall. Bummer. When the Thrall and Myrkridia come at you, stay put and use your Dwarf and Warlock to blow the pants off of anything that gets close. You shouldn't have to engage in any hand-to-hand combat; if any units get close, use the Deceiver to dissolve them.

Wave after wave of Thrall will besiege you (to see just how many, check out Figure 9.4), mingled with the odd small group of Myrkridia. Don't hesitate to fall back if the Thrall get too close. All your units can outrun the Thrall, and your Dwarf and Warlock can continue lobbing Explosive Bottles and Fireballs at the advancing enemy, even if they're running away. After a few long minutes of intense fighting, the battle will end and you can move on.

Move across the top of the map toward the Magic Item, keeping alert for small bands of Myrkridia that may remain at large. When you reach the item, you'll notice it's on a tall, inaccessible hill. Not to worry: simply click your Warlock to get the item,

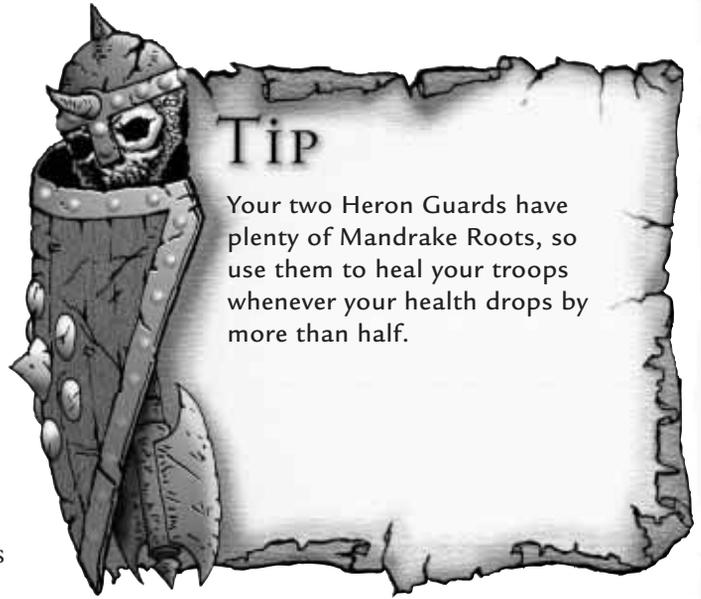


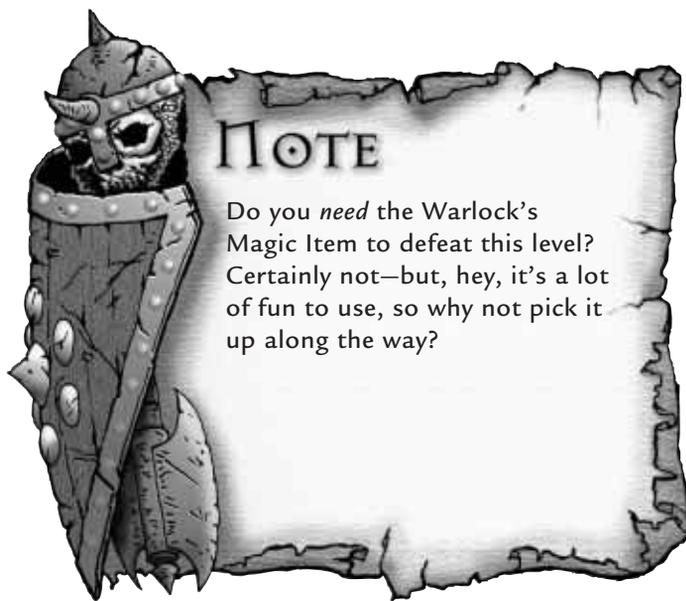


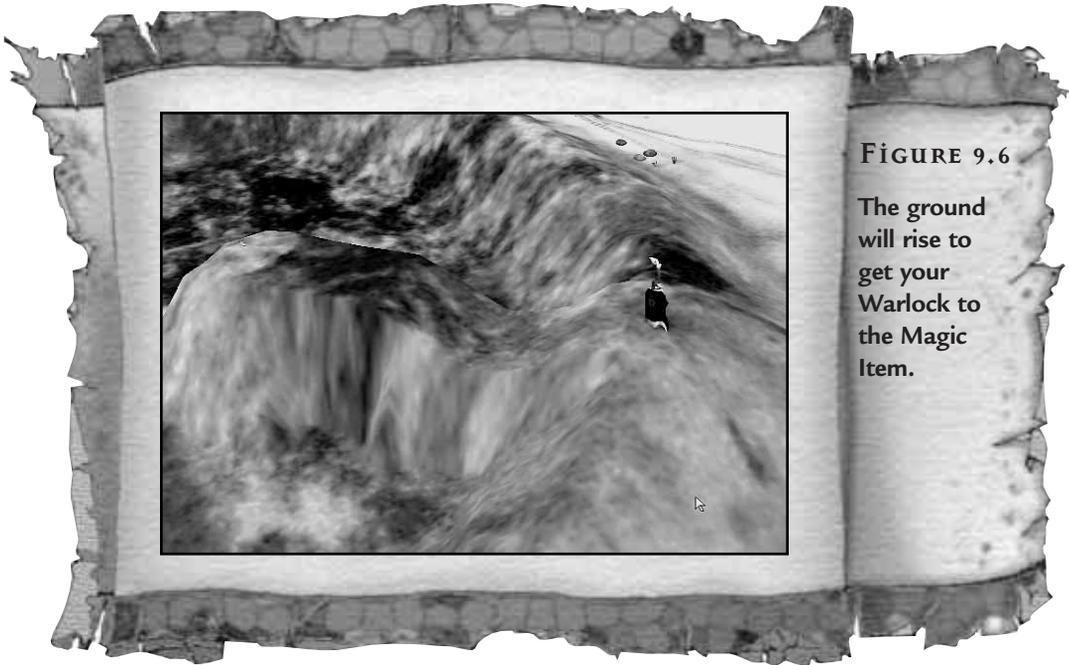
FIGURE 9.5

The Warlock's Fireball attack works wonders against small groups of Soulless.

and a bridge will ascend out of the ground to meet the Warlock's feet (Figure 9.6). This item gives the Warlock four special Fireball charges, faster and more explosive than a regular Fireball. Enjoy!

The rest of this mission is an exercise in killing the odd bunch of Thrall and/or Myrkridia, but with both the Magic Item and your Deceiver's Binding Dream, you should have no trouble making your way to Shiver. Once you do,

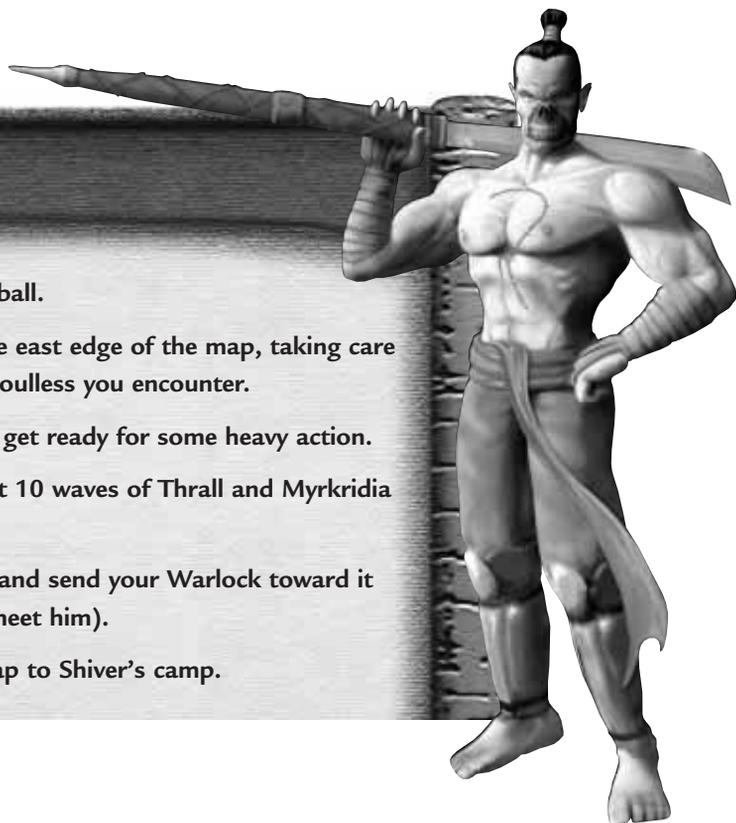




the game switches to autopilot: yes, the Deceiver is supposed to die, even though you win the mission. As you cover the last bit of ground to Shiver's camp, heal any units that may have taken damage during your journey. An unused Mandrake Root is a wasted Mandrake Root.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

If you thought there were a lot of enemies at the Normal skill level...



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Attack Shiver with a Fireball.
-  Move slowly north on the east edge of the map, taking care to kill all the groups of Soulless you encounter.
-  When you reach Area A, get ready for some heavy action.
-  You must destroy at least 10 waves of Thrall and Myrkridia at Area A.
-  Move to the Magic Item and send your Warlock toward it (the ground will rise to meet him).
-  Continue through the map to Shiver's camp.

TWICE BORN

Alric finally has cleared a path between his forces and Soulblighter. Now the confrontation can truly begin. Alric will lead his troops across the river against the Soulblighter's vast army in an effort to destroy him at last.

Mission Objective Soulblighter is across the river. Kill him.

YOUR GUYS

There are many, many friendly units in this mission, but you control only a select few. Here's what you get:

-  Alric (with Lightning Sword)
-  Bowmen
-  Dwarves



 Berserks

 Heron Guards

SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

You'll finally get to see what players of the original *Myth* never did—the Mahir. This nasty unit debuts in this mission. Here's everything you're up against:

 Mahir

 Thrall

 Wights

 Soulless

 Myrkridia

 Soulblighter

 Fetch

LAY OF THE LAND

Your path on this map (Figure 9.7) is fairly straight and true. You need only cross the river and head up toward Soulblighter to finish the level. The problem is the passel of enemy troops you'll encounter along the way. The Undead use the river as they typically do: count on finding plenty of Thrall and Wights in the deeper areas.

BATTLE PLANS

Alric has the Lightning Sword (Balmung) in this mission, which will help you to fend off the numerous waves of vicious attacking Myrkridia. Start by sending one Berserk into the river. This triggers the first waves of Myrkridia to attack. Send Alric into the water to meet them head-on with his sword, but keep your Berserks on the riverbank for backup.



□ Starting Point	❖ Thrall Group
* Myrkridia Group	⊗ Wights
☆ Soulblighter	☼ Mahir
	★ Fetch

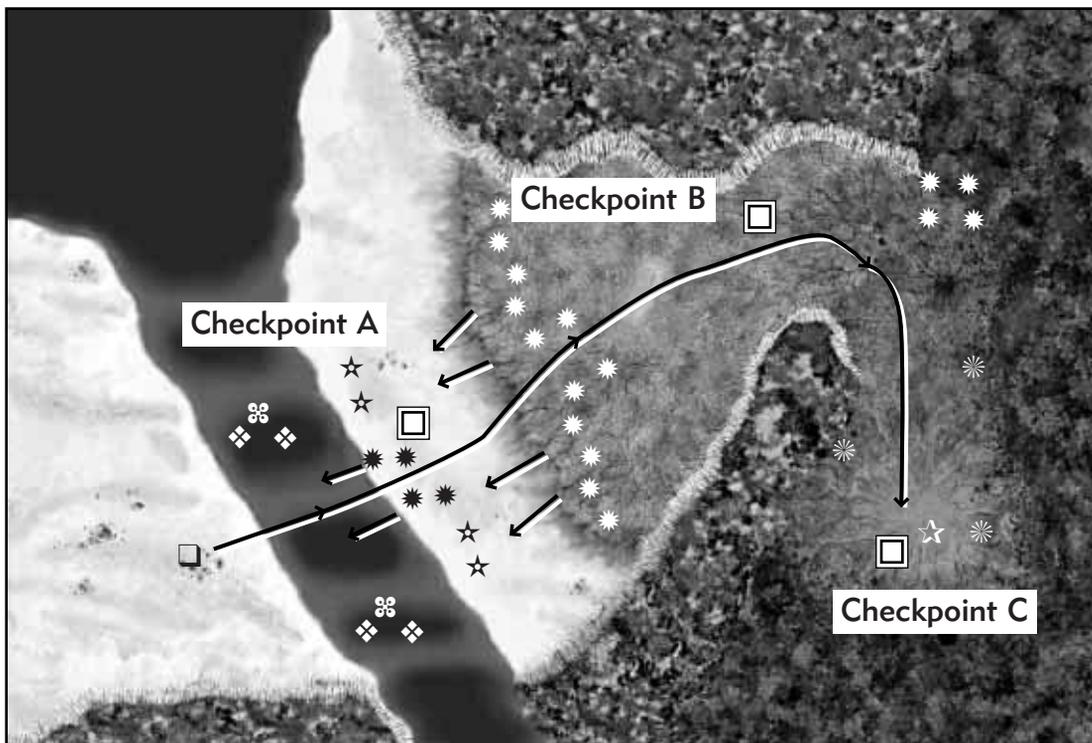


FIGURE 9.7 There are plenty of Thrall in the river, so beware.

If you play your cards right, Alric should be able to take out the Myrkridia single-handedly. Don't worry about him taking too many hits; you can always heal him later. When the Myrkridia are dead, send your Berserks and Alric across the river. This triggers the Thrall on either side of the ford to attack. Send your Berserks back to your starting point and let Alric finish off all the Thrall with his sword (Figure 9.8). When the Thrall are gone, use your Bowmen to take out the Fetch on the other side of the river; then move up to Area A.

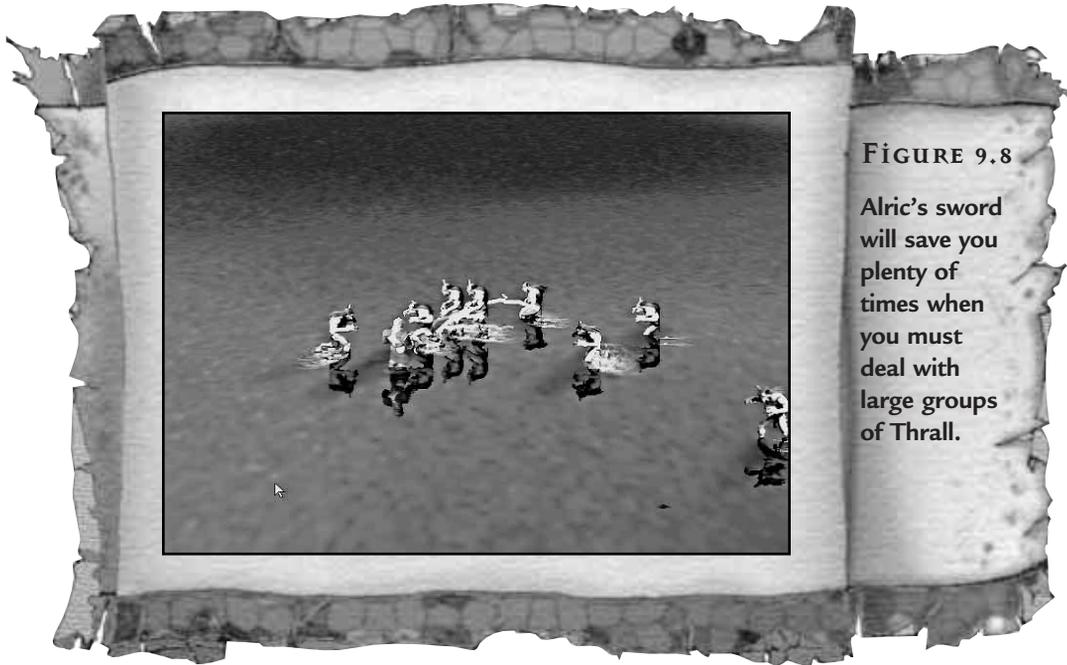


FIGURE 9.8

Alric's sword will save you plenty of times when you must deal with large groups of Thrall.

Move up the beach until you lose control of Alric. Alric and Soulblighter engage in a brief discussion, and then Soulblighter sends scores of Myrkridia right at you. Dive in with Alric and try to kill as many as you can before they reach your troops. Have your Berserks and Heron Guards join forces to deal with the Myrkridia that get past Alric.

If you survive the Myrkridia attacks, send your troops up the beach to Area B. There, Soulblighter will treat you to yet another Myrkridia onslaught. Again, use Alric as much as you can to take out these enemies; fortunately, there aren't nearly as many as there were in Area A.

As you move toward Soulblighter in Area C, you'll notice strange circular shadows moving along the ground toward you. These shadows are the Mahir. One-on-one, they can't be defeated: always confront them with at least two units at a time. A Mahir in shadow form can be attacked using your Dwarves' Explosive Bottles; when the Mahir comes out of the shadows for an attack. (You'll face it most often in this form, as shown in Figure 9.9, it appears as a black skeleton.)



FIGURE 9.9

Always have more than one unit nearby to deal with the Mahir.

When you reach Soulblighter, he'll taunt you (nothing new). Because a ring of fire protects him, you can't go after him without sustaining fatal damage on the way. Soulblighter is immune to arrows, and your Dwarves can't get close enough to attack even from a distance. You must force Soulblighter to leave his protective circle, and your Bowmen have just the answer: fire Flaming Arrows into the area around Soulblighter (three usually will do). As the fires grow, Soulblighter is forced to exit the circle and do battle with Alric. Or lure him out by taking forces around him. He will exit to attack. Get Soulblighter out of the circle, and victory is yours.

LEGENDARY CHANGES

More Fetch, Thrall, Wights, Mahir, and Myrkridia await you, if you dare to challenge the Legendary skill level.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Send one Berserk across the river to get the ball rolling.
-  Send Alric into the water to attack the Myrkridia head-on with his Lightning Sword.
-  Send Alric and some Berserks across the river to provoke the Thrall beneath the surface to come out and play.
-  Cross the river with your troops, making sure to have your Bowmen eliminate the Fetch first.
-  Have Alric crush the throngs of Myrkridia in Area A.
-  Move to Area B. Again, have Alric take out the Myrkridia.
-  Move to Soulblighter, but watch out for the Mahir, your new enemy.
-  Use Flaming Arrows to force Soulblighter from his protective circle.





CHAPTER
10

THE FINAL
CONFRONTATION



his is what you've been waiting for—the real deal, the ultimate battle, the *pièce de résistance* of the *Myth II* gaming meal. You must fight through many an obstacle to earn the right to face off against the evil one, but it must be done, and you're the one to do it!

THE FORGE

Soulblighter has set a spell in motion that will snuff the world as you know it, so make your efforts count. You must crush Soulblighter for once and for all in this mission, but take care as you journey toward his position: his minions guard him well.

Mission Objective Unless he's stopped, Soulblighter will shatter the Cloudspine. Alric must confront and kill him.

YOUR GUYS

This is it. You must take this group of units to the toppermost of the poppermost and crush Soulblighter at last. Here's what you get:

-  Alric (no fancy sword this time)
-  Heron Guards
-  Bowmen
-  Dwarves



SOULBLIGHTER'S SCUM

You face more Undead troops in this level than in any other, and believe me, they'll challenge you to the max. This is what you're up against:

 Soulblighter

 Soulless

 Thrall

 Myrkridia

 Fetch

LAY OF THE LAND

There's only one way to get through this map, and that's the long way around. Get ready for a long haul. Scores of enemies lurk everywhere on this map, so expect resistance at every turn. To see where the chips actually fall, check out Figure 10.1.

Save as many troops as you can for the end, because once you get to Soulblighter, your troops (sans Alric) will have to fend off yet another attack. Don't worry about the lava—it won't hurt you—but the volcanic eruptions will throw rocks onto your troops. Normally these eruptions cause little trouble, but they can kill any of your troops already near death.

BATTLE PLANS

As the mission begins, you face a large group of onrushing Thrall. Using your Dwarves and Bowmen to deal with these forces gives them quick and easy experience for later. The key to this first battle is to not lose any units while getting the experience you need to buff up their abilities. Line your units up in the formation shown in Figure 10.2.

After eliminating the Thrall at the startpoint, move under the rock bridge to Area A, where your first real test takes place. Scores of Thrall, Myrkridia, and Soulless roam here. You'll be tempted to use one of Alric's Dispersal Dreams (you

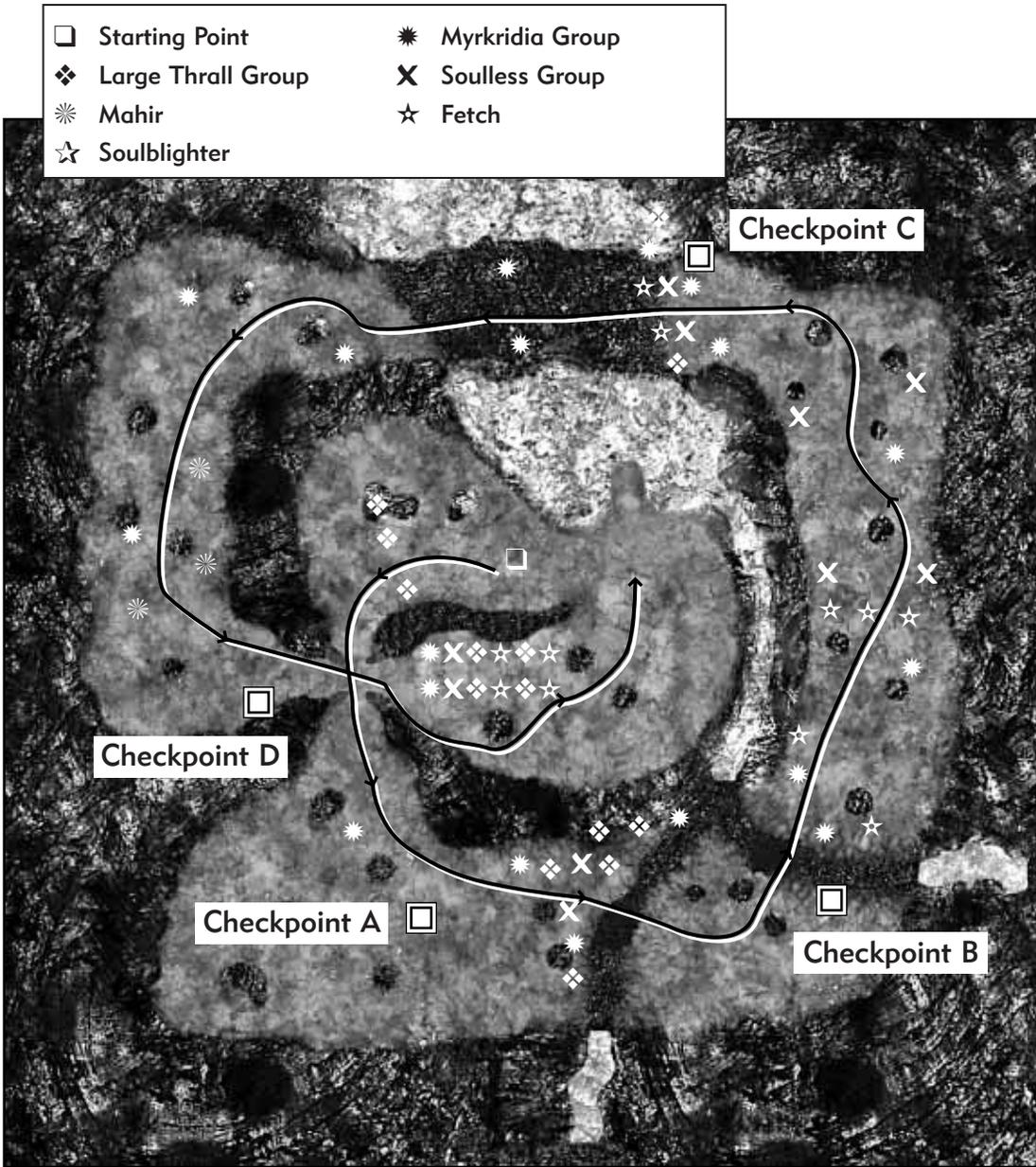


FIGURE 10.1 There's only one way to get to Soulblighter—the long way.

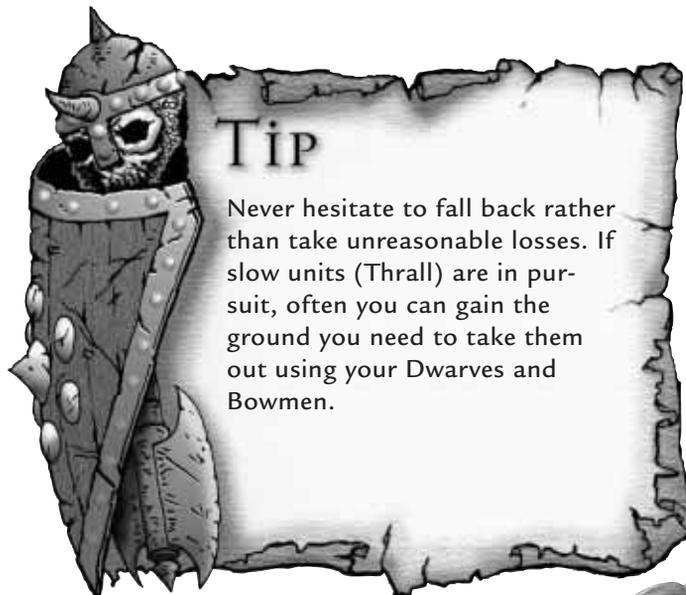


FIGURE 10.2

Use this first bunch of Thrall to gain experience for your Bowmen and Dwarves.

get only three), and, in this instance, I must agree: this situation is as good as any. When most of the enemy units are together, use the Dream and watch the enemy go up in puffs of blue smoke (Figure 10.3). Despite this weapon's great effectiveness, you'll still need to clean up a few units, but don't use another Dream. Do it the old-fashioned way—with your hands.

As you near Area B, you'll encounter two groups of



TIP

Never hesitate to fall back rather than take unreasonable losses. If slow units (Thrall) are in pursuit, often you can gain the ground you need to take them out using your Dwarves and Bowmen.

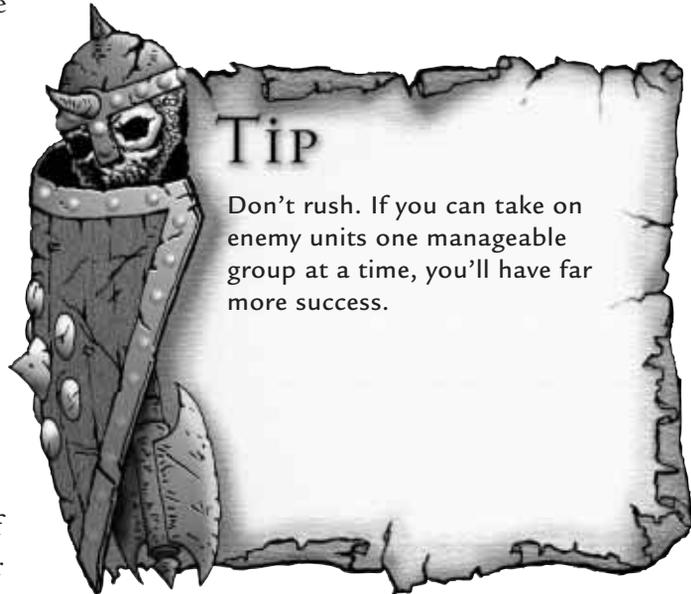


FIGURE
10.3

If you must,
use one of
Alric's three
Dispersal
Dreams in
Area A.

Myrkridia (each with a Fetch). Use your Dwarves to weaken the advancing Myrkridia, while your Heron Guards stand by to lend a hand when needed. Have your Bowmen target the Fetch quickly, or you'll be the main course at a barbecue.

Continue moving through to Area C. Along the way, you must contend with three Fetch, some Soulless (that come at you from the sides), and several small groups of Myrkridia. Move slowly, take your time, and deal with the enemies



TIP

Don't rush. If you can take on enemy units one manageable group at a time, you'll have far more success.



methodically. Remember, you need as many troops as possible at your disposal for the final confrontation.

At Area C, you'll find a second very large concentration of enemy troops, including Thrall, Soulless, Fetch, and a pile of Myrkridia (save your game here).

Fortunately, you can provoke the Myrkridia to attack in manageable stages, but you must use your Dwarves and Bowmen to perfection to avoid getting hacked to pieces. Another alternative for this area is the Dispersal Dream. Once the first group of Myrkridia are dead, the rest of the units stay fairly close together, and a Dream can take them all out at once.

Start working your way up to Area D. Between areas C and D, you'll encounter several small Myrkridia groups; when you approach Area D, several Mahir attack, as well. Stay in pairs with Heron Guards near Bowmen and Dwarves to protect against the Mahir. When you get to Area D, you'll see the rock bridge you passed under earlier in the mission. It makes an excellent defensive location, so sit tight for a while.

You'll battle numerous waves of attacking Thrall and Fetch on the other side of the bridge (Figure 10.4). More troubling, however, is a large group of Myrkridia. You might want to use your last (or next to last) Dispersal Dream at this point. If you have more than one Dream left, use both against this enemy onslaught. After you've wiped out the enemy units, you can move up to Soulblighter's position.

Soulblighter is guarded by Myrkridia and Soulless. Neither should pose much problem for you. After you destroy them, move Alric up to Soulblighter and watch the action. After speaking briefly with Soulblighter, Alric asks that you hold off the final enemy assault of Myrkridia, Fetch, and Soulless. Do this, and you'll be victorious!

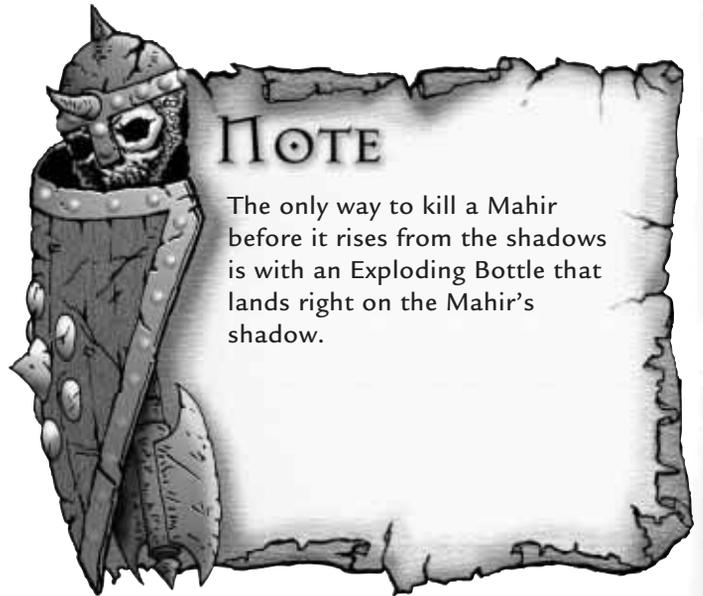




FIGURE
10.4

The bridge makes a good defensive position from which to fight.



BLOW BY BLOW

-  Build up your experience by taking out the first waves of Thrall with your Bowmen and Dwarves.
-  Move to Area A and take out the forces there. You may need to use a Dispersal Dream to help your cause: you confront many, many enemy units there.
-  Continue to Area B, where you're met by two groups of Myrkridia and Fetch.
-  Area C is the site of your next big battle. A Dispersal Dream may be in order here.
-  Between areas C and D, you must battle the elusive Mahir.
-  At Area D, stay on your side of the bridge and use the bottleneck to your advantage. This is a Dispersal Dream area, as well.
-  Take out the troops guarding Soulblighter. Then move Alric to Soulblighter.
-  Fend off one last wave of attack, and victory is yours.



A LONG-AWAITED DRINKING PARTY

Yes, yet another secret level lies tucked away within *Myth II: Soulblighter*, and now that you've finished the game I think it only proper to inform you of it. In Level 3, you'll notice several annoying amphibians in the upper-left corner of the map. If you kill off these creatures and go on to complete the level, you'll view a fantastic secret cutscene, *and* you'll be able to play the elusive "Deer Hunter" level (so-called by



the staff at Bungie). In this level, you get several units armed with muskets (Figure 10.5), and must kill all the deer on the map.

There's more, but that's all I'm saying. Enjoy!



FIGURE 10.5

The “Deer Hunter” level is elusive, indeed, but this Easter Egg exists!



HEAD TO HEAD—
MULTIPLAYER
TIPS FROM
GAMERS EXTREME

By Bob “CalBear” Colayco



You've mastered the single-player missions. Now another challenge awaits you. Whether you're matching wits with your friends and coworkers over a LAN or challenging players across the country over Bungie.net, you'll need a coherent game plan to master multiplayer *Myth II*.

This chapter will give you the foundation you need to create overall plans of action, as well as tips for specific situations you may come up against during a multiplayer session.

MULTIPLAYER BASICS

You probably realize by now that *Myth II* is unique among RTS (Real-Time Strategy) games in that you needn't gather resources to build up your army. Bungie has stripped away the economic model most other RTS games carry to deliver a fast-paced game that goes straight to the heart of the action.

As in the single-player missions, the troops you start a multiplayer match with are the only ones you can control for the duration of the game. Thus, you can't count on trying to overwhelm an opponent with numbers, as you might in other games. *Myth II*'s gaming model forces you to use your forces in the smartest, most efficient way you can. Keep in mind, though, that multiplayer missions almost always give you a mixed force of Light and Dark. Don't be surprised when you find yourself sending Warriors to fight alongside Thrall.

Because combat efficiency is vital, it's important to know exactly what your units can do. (Be sure to review Chapter 1.) But such knowledge is only half the



battle: skillful control of those units is the other half. Thankfully, *Myth II* includes a complex, yet intuitive play control system that allows immense power and flexibility in moving and placing troops.

In the following pages, we'll explore the fine points of unit control, including tactics for separating forces, formations, and using terrain to your advantage in a multiplayer match.

Myth II incorporates a variety of game types. In most RTS games, the object is simply to kill off your opponent. But because it matches players equally in terms of troop strength, *Myth II* provides other objectives for its multiplayer factions. Killing the most enemy troops becomes just one among many options. In this chapter you'll find tips for all possible game types.

Finally, for those new to online gaming, this chapter includes a short guide to online etiquette. When you're sitting alone in front of a computer screen, it's easy to forget that fellow players have feelings. Being good at any game means more than having great battlefield skills. It also means being a good sport and maintaining a friendly attitude.

CONTROLLING YOUR FORCES

What separates winners from losers in multiplayer *Myth II* is *control*. Players who can control their forces intelligently and coherently always will dominate those who can't.

What's a coherent way to move your troops? First, you must consider what happens when your forces separate, and learn to use formations to advantage. Using terrain features and recognizing just when to retreat from a fight also are important. Figure 11.1 shows how *not* to move your army around.

FORCE SEPARATION AND MOVEMENT

By now, you're probably familiar with the differences among the various units. Some fight only hand-to-hand, some shoot projectiles, and some can do both. Certain units can run faster than others. Numerous subtle and not-so-subtle features differentiate the plethora of units in *Myth II*. Therefore, it makes sense to separate your forces based on the roles you want to give them in battle.



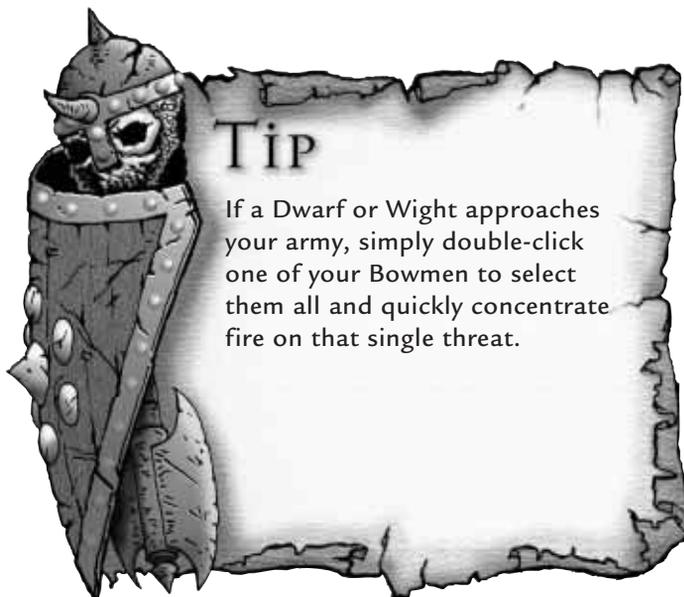
FIGURE II.1

This disorganized rabble is fresh meat for a Wight.

I find that using custom presets (Alt/Command + #) gives me an easy way to select from a mixed force of melee units (such as Warriors and Berserks) in the heat of battle. And remember that double-clicking on a unit during a confusing melee selects all onscreen units of that type.

You'll need to fill four primary roles on the *Myth II* battlefield:

-  Melee Units
-  Missile Units



Tip

If a Dwarf or Wight approaches your army, simply double-click one of your Bowmen to select them all and quickly concentrate fire on that single threat.



 Reconnaissance Units

 Special Units/Units of Mass Destruction

Melee units such as Thrall, Warriors, and Mauls obviously are your army's bread and butter. It's nice to try and kill everything with Bowmen and Dwarves, but melee units can easily run down and kill exposed Bowmen and Dwarves. If you have only a few melee units, consider placing them in a preset group for moving

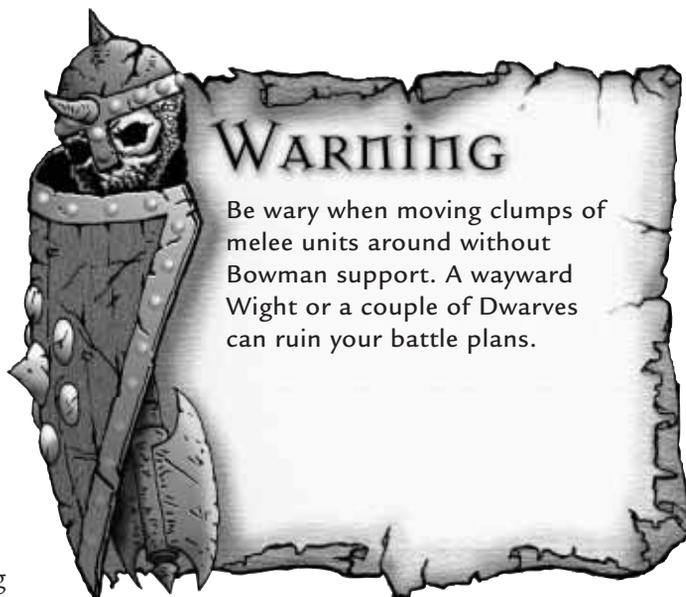


FIGURE 11.2

Trying to move Mauls and Berserks as one unit can be frustrating.



them about. Usually, though, it's best to group your melee units by type, and then again into smaller groups, if you still have too many of one kind (more than 10 or 15). If you group different melee types during long marches, the group's slower units will separate from the faster ones (Figure 11.2). This renders you vulnerable to an enemy wedge that can separate your army.

Always move and use missile units, such as Bowmen or Soulless, as a single force, unless two parts of the map need missile support. Never move them off alone; Bowmen and Soulless need melee units for support: they're easy pickings for enemy melee units if you leave them exposed.

Keep track of your opponents. Without good reconnaissance information, it's impossible to create an efficient plan of action. Recon units can be just about anything that can move quickly and scamper out of danger. Ghols make good recon units, because they're relatively cheap and move fast (Figure 11.3). Trow are also excellent for recon and fighting. In a multiplayer game with unit trading enabled, never trade away all your Ghols. Keep two or three around to run about. Don't lose



FIGURE 11.3

**A few Ghols
make a good
recon team.**



track of the units you choose for recon, whatever they are. They can always return to support your melee units if you need them.

Finally, there are the special units, or units of mass destruction. These include Dwarves, Wights, Fetch, and Warlocks. These can be as dangerous to your own army as they are to the enemy, so it's best just to let them float around the periphery of your troops, lending a hand against concentrated enemies when you need them. Protecting these units from a healthy distance often involves some delicate juggling.

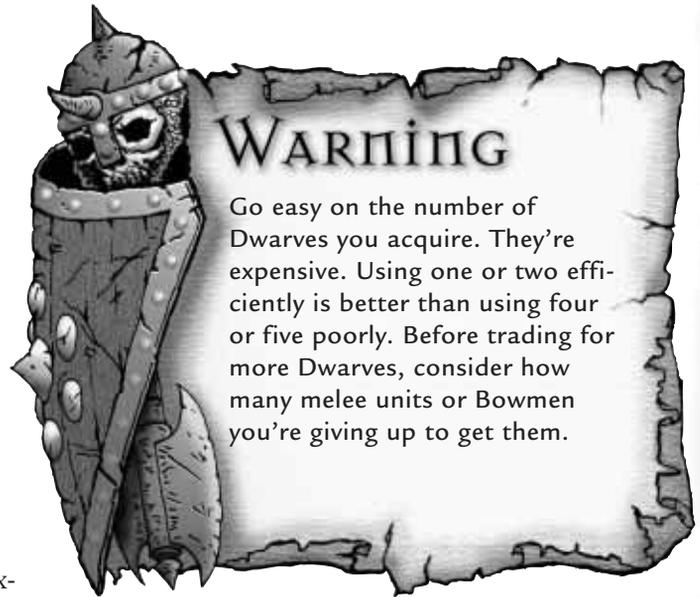
Maneuver your units of mass destruction to give them a clear shot, and avoid having them fire into large melees, endangering your own troops. If you're daring, have the Dwarves lob their bombs at the enemy's side of a fight to help out your troops.

FORMATIONS

Which formations you choose often will hinge on the unit types you're trying to organize. Also consider what you're trying to accomplish. In some cases, even formations that appear useless at first (such as box-and-circle) have terrific potential.

Depending on the situation, melee units can assume virtually the full spectrum of formations. Just before a fight, position your melee units in a single line, or, if possible, in encirclement formation, to improve combat efficiency. Your melee units can't attack if they're not adjacent to the enemy. Two or more rows of hand-to-hand fighters won't do you much good in that critical initial confrontation.

If you're unsure where the enemy is as you move across the map, using the V-shaped vanguard formation (Figure 11.4) will reduce your vulnerability to ambush, because half your units can quickly face either side. If you are attacked, half



WARNING

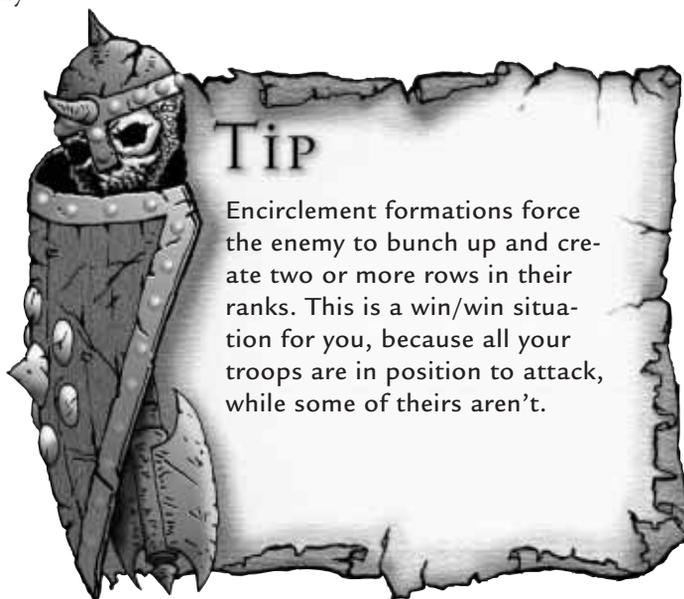
Go easy on the number of Dwarves you acquire. They're expensive. Using one or two efficiently is better than using four or five poorly. Before trading for more Dwarves, consider how many melee units or Bowmen you're giving up to get them.



FIGURE II.4
The V-shaped
vanguard
formation.

of your force can hold off the enemy as the other side of the V comes around to assist. It's better to be in vanguard than to walk in a long line abreast and get jumped from a 90-degree angle.

However, you want to move missile units in long line formation so they can fire their arrows/spears all at once. You don't want them perpendicular to enemy lines: only one or two will be in range at a time. Always adjust their positioning so they can hail opposing



Tip

Encirclement formations force the enemy to bunch up and create two or more rows in their ranks. This is a win/win situation for you, because all your troops are in position to attack, while some of theirs aren't.



forces with the full fusillade of arrows. The sight of a long line of Bowmen or Soulless will make an opponent think twice before charging. If that doesn't intimidate your foe, the shower of arrows will deter any half-hearted feint—but that can happen only when you position your missile units properly.

Formations are less an issue for recon and special units. Recon units shouldn't engage in combat on their own, anyway: their primary purpose is to move in close enough to gather information on the enemy. They can't do that if they die engaging your opponent.

As for special units, you'll generally group Dwarves, Warlocks, or Fetch in threes, at most, and there's no real formation you can make with so few troops. Have them float about the ranks and pitch in where they're needed. Wights should mean-der off to find a nice enemy formation to target. Keeping two or more Wights together is a bad idea; the death of one will set off the other, wasting its explosive power.

Avoid attaching Journeymen to a group, as well, except perhaps for valuable missile units and Dwarves, who may need quick healing.

You can also send Wights and Thrall to deep water where they'll be hidden, surprising an enemy.

USING THE TERRAIN

A given map's terrain features will affect everything from the troop types making up your army to the formations you'll use. There's no one ultimate army or ultimate game plan that works every time. The best players make adjustments depending on their objectives and what the playing field looks like.

On wide-open, flat terrain, such as desert maps, you'll need fewer Dwarves and more fast units. Slow, vulnerable Bowmen become suspect in large numbers because of the open terrain. Use quick units, such as Ghols and Berserks, whenever you can, and try to surround your enemy using flanking maneuvers. The same lightning-quick movements and attacks "Stormin' Norman" Schwarzkopf employed in the Gulf War will serve you well here. These unit types also work better in village or city map areas, where missile units will have difficulty gaining a clear line of sight.



If you prefer using Dwarves and missile units, maps with rolling hills and canyons will suit you better. Bowmen and Soulless also do best on maps with terrain features that provide elevated areas from which to fire. Soulless can go onto any terrain, and can reach hills and mountains that Bowmen can't.

Have your Dwarves lob their explosive concoctions into choke points and other areas that force the enemy to bunch up. On these maps, it's usually to your advantage to get a few extra missile units or special units of mass destruction and use fewer hand-to-hand units.

On maps with water features, exploit your undead units' ability to hide in deep water. A Wight hidden in deep water next to a well-traveled, shallower path gives a nasty surprise to a passing army. Soulless can float over deep water (Figure 11.5), giving them a spot from which to shoot safe from melee units. And Thrall can stay underwater, as well.





WHEN TO RUN

Perhaps your greatest “weapon” is living to fight another day. Never forget that your troops are limited, so don’t engage in a fight you can’t win. There are always exceptions—for example, small feints or distraction attacks calculated to fail to serve a greater purpose. But there’s never a good reason to sacrifice a large part of your army because you were caught unaware or out of position.

Anytime you’re not fighting a battle on your own terms, or you’re fighting an unplanned battle (Figure 11.6), it’s a good idea to pull back and regroup. Even when you stumble into a fight where you’re sure you can overmatch the enemy, you must remain wary: your opponent may be luring you into a trap.



FIGURE 11.6

This mob has no chance against that line of troops.

You’ll also want to retreat if your troops become disorganized and the opposing force remains in well-formed lines. Running a blob of your units into enemy formations is a recipe for disaster. Pull back, regroup, and try again. It’s better than gam-



bling that your blob can beat up the organized enemy. *Myth II* rewards commanders who use well-formed, well-thought-out battle groups.

Always resist the temptation to attack during a long game's opening minutes. If you're involved a large free-for-all, and you've engaged an opponent in the first minute, chances are you'll only beat up on each other and make it easier for the other players to win. You'll leave yourself with fewer units with which to make an impact in the endgame, where it matters. Use the opening minutes to scout around, evaluate the battlefield, and try to provoke other players to attack each other. This is critical if a long game (more than 12 minutes) has a time limit.

ADVANCED UNIT-SPECIFIC TIPS

You understand how to control your forces. Now it's time to learn specific ways to attack and defeat your enemies—particularly, using missile units and units of mass destruction.

Using melee units is pretty straightforward: run them in and they hack away. What's not as obvious is how best to position and use your Bowmen/Soulless and units of mass destruction such as Wights, Warlocks, and Dwarves. In fact, inexperienced players often find their missile units and Dwarves hurt themselves more than the enemy! This section offers keys to maximizing the effectiveness of these units, so you can avoid shooting yourself in the foot.

USING BOWMEN/SOULLESS

Missile units are arguably the most important units in *Myth II*. In theory, you could cause unlimited damage with these units and take none in return. You want to have as many of these as you can get in your multiplayer games.

Keep the following key ideas in mind when using missile units such as Bowmen and Soulless:



Missile troops need protection from fast-moving melee units.



 Your main targets are enemy units of mass destruction and infantry, *not* other bowmen.

 Location, location, location.

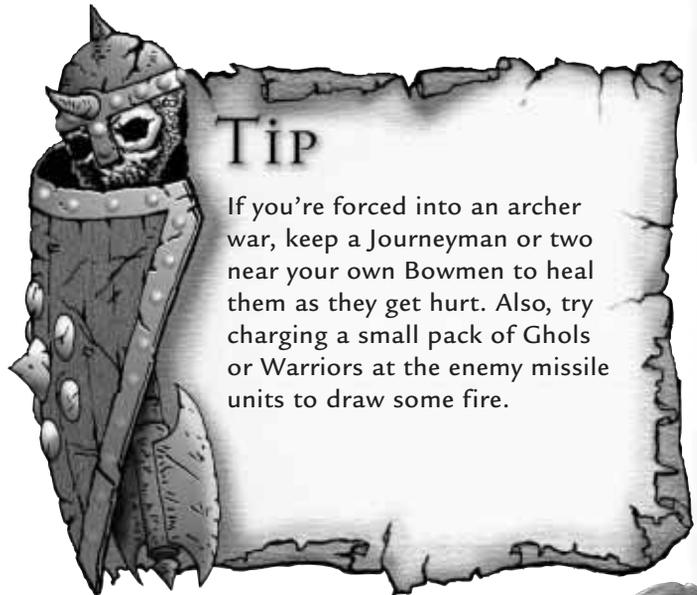
Protecting your missile units from melee units can be as simple as detaching a Warrior or a couple of Thrall to accompany your Bowmen wherever they go. *Myth II*'s Bowmen carry daggers to defend themselves, but only as a last resort. It's far better to have a few hand-to-hand units protect your missile units and give them a chance to run if they must.

Your missile units have the best range of any units in the game. Therefore, their primary targets should be Dwarves, Wights, Warlocks, and Fetch, if possible. Those units of mass destruction pose the greatest danger; once you eliminate them, your battle's half-won. When those are dead, your missile units should harass and weaken the enemy infantry. Maneuver and launch



WARNING

Don't get into pitched battles that pit your missile units against your opponent's. You both may end up losing all or most of your missile units, and thus the ability to dictate a battle.



TIP

If you're forced into an archer war, keep a Journeyman or two near your own Bowmen to heal them as they get hurt. Also, try charging a small pack of Ghol's or Warriors at the enemy missile units to draw some fire.



some cheap volleys at the enemy melee units whenever you can, while avoiding the enemy's own missile units.

Be thrifty with your Fire Arrows. Use them to herd enemy units into a juicy kill zone for your Dwarves and Warlocks. Don't use them simply to damage the enemy, because it probably won't work that well. In that case, you may as well shoot regular arrows.

Place your missile units carefully. If you have them fire from behind your melee units, you risk shooting your own troops in the back. Have your bowmen flank your main force. Look for an elevated area that provides a safe firing angle for your bowmen to support your hand-to-hand troops (Figure 11.7).



FIGURE 11.7

This is a good spot for your Bowmen in relation to the rest of your army.

USING UNITS THAT GO BOOM

It's tempting to go whole hog and load up your army with units that have high-destruction, high-payoff weapons—Dwarves, for example. But such units demand a lot of micromanaging, using valuable time better spent



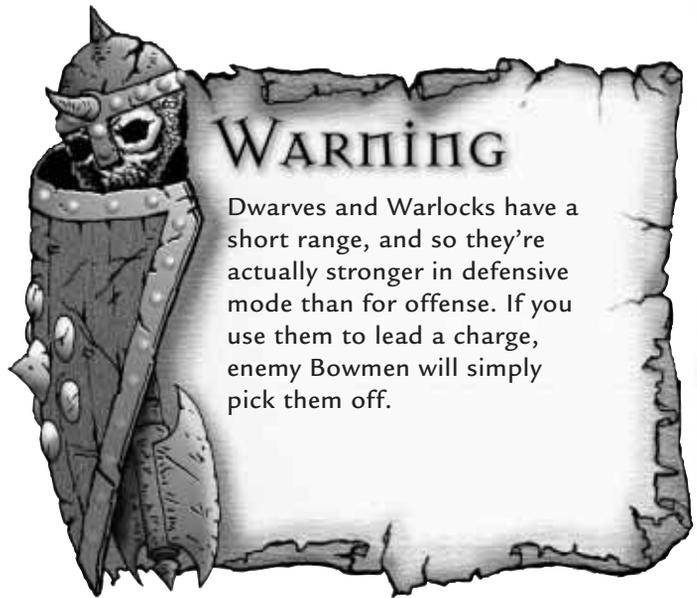
positioning your missile units. They're also extremely expensive compared to other units. Use fewer of these unit types, but use them well.

When using Wights and Dwarves and the like, remember their short range relative to Bowmen and Soulless. The units of mass destruction have relatively few hit points, as well, so keep them shielded from enemy missile units. If you insist on using them for offense, you must deal with enemy Bowmen somehow, either with diversions or by killing them outright. Only then can you bring your mass destruction units safely to bear.

Recon plays a major role in using your mass destruction units efficiently. Send your fast movers, such as Ghols, to move around the periphery of the enemy formations. When you spot a weak point or a stray detachment of melee units, then sneak in a Wight.

Here's nasty trick you can try: Have a Dwarf drop a Satchel Charge and make a Ghol pick it up.

Run the Ghol into a group of enemy troops. Have the Dwarf follow behind and aim





a bomb right where the Ghol dropped the Satchel Charge. The ensuing explosion will be extra-large, killing and maiming far more enemy troops than a Dwarven grenade alone. Keep a small detachment of Warriors or Thrall near the Dwarf to clean up what remains of the enemy force. And remember that Fetch lightning and Fire Arrows can detonate a Satchel Charge, as well.

Your Warlocks and Fetch need a clean line of sight to the enemy. Again, keep them to one side of your main force to avoid casualties due to friendly fire.

Your units of mass destruction are meant to provide support for your melee units. Remember that—or you'll just end up wasting your expensive Dwarves as they charge into inappropriate situations. Targets of opportunity are your special units' first order of business. Be patient, use diversions, and good situations will develop for your Warlocks and Dwarves.

ADVANCED TACTICAL MANEUVERING

Two essential maneuvering techniques to master are flanking and entrapment. Often, these can obliterate overly aggressive players (“newbie rushers”). They also work well against more careful, experienced opponents; just remember that patience is key in such situations. And because human players find it harder to keep track of multiple threats than the computer does, distraction attacks also play a recurring role.

FLANKING MANEUVERS

There are many aspects to a successful flanking maneuver, including picking the right units and using feints and other distractions to tie up the enemy's attention.

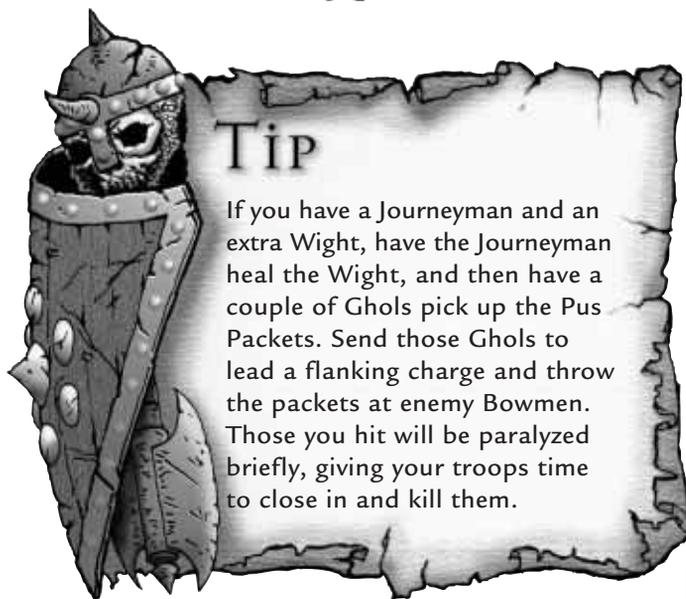
Flanking works best on fast units, such as Ghols or Berserks (Figure 11.8). Consider using Stygian Knights for a flanking maneuver against Bowmen. They don't have the best speed, but their arrow resistance makes them a logical choice. A Trow accompanied by Berserks is the ultimate flanking force, as it combines great speed with power.



FIGURE 11.8

Pus Packet-carrying Ghols lead a flanking charge.

The usual flanking objective is to take out enemy missile units. This is more difficult against human players, because they'll tend to be more careful with their missile units. Therefore, you'll need a diversion. Choose a small detachment of melee units to charge the opposite side of the enemy line. Or use your own Bowmen to attack away from the enemy Bowmen. Whatever you do, your goal is to divert your opponent's attention



TIP

If you have a Journeyman and an extra Wight, have the Journeyman heal the Wight, and then have a couple of Ghols pick up the Pus Packets. Send those Ghols to lead a flanking charge and throw the packets at enemy Bowmen. Those you hit will be paralyzed briefly, giving your troops time to close in and kill them.



from his or her missile units just as your flanking troops come into view on enemy radar. It takes practice and good timing to get this right.

You also can just use your flankers to keep enemy missile units occupied while you attack the rest of the opposing force. Distracting enemy Bowmen or Soulless this way gives your Dwarves or Warlocks a golden opportunity to move in closer and attack the enemy infantry. This gives your opponent an awkward choice: ignore the flankers and shoot your Dwarves/Warlocks (and risk losing Bowmen), or deal with the flankers while explosives decimate the infantry.

Finally, consider distracting enemy missile units as you bring up your own bowmen to kill opposing Dwarves/Warlocks/Fetch. This is probably the safest option to experiment with.

ENTRAPMENT TECHNIQUES

If you've succeeded in taking out enemy missile units, you're well on your way to victory. Now how can you best exploit your missile unit advantage? The answer: bait your enemy into charging with his or her remaining infantry. The formation involved is simple, as Figure 11.9 shows.

First, line up your Bowmen or Soulless facing the enemy, in the center of your formation. Place your melee units to left and right, preferably with the fastest ones on the outer edges and the slowest (such as Thrall) nearest the center, with your bowmen. When that's set up, keep picking away at the enemy. Aggressive or desperate human opponents usually will try to charge your missile units. If they're patient enough not to charge, be content to pick away at them from a distance, making sure to hit any Dwarves or Wights you may have missed. Chances are, though, your enemy will grow irritated and make a desperate run at your missile units. If this happens, you're in business. Retreat them straight back, and have your left and right flanks close in and surround the enemy infantry (Figure 11.10). Perfect!



FIGURE 11.9

This is how it looks when you start.



FIGURE 11.10

This is how it should look when you're done.



MULTIPLAYER GAME TYPES

As I mentioned earlier, *Myth II* includes a huge variety of multiplayer game types. All are played fairly extensively, and not all have killing the enemy as a mission objective. Often the key to winning these games is to avoid getting caught up in the battle and remain aware of your goal.

ASSASSIN

Objective Protect helpless units—“the Baron,” Dwarves, animals, even a target dummy—as you try to kill the other players’ Barons. Those who assassinate the most targets in the end win.

Therefore, keep that Baron protected! There are two schools of thought here. One says you should hide your Baron in an obscure corner with minimal protection as you try to keep your forces between him and the enemy. The other says to keep the Baron close to your troops for maximum protection. Be aware of the pros and cons for both: If you choose the former, you risk a stray enemy detachment finding and killing him. The latter makes it no mystery where to find him.

Remember, the objective is simply to kill the single target. Therefore, doing so is worth it even if it costs you dearly in troops (this becomes less true as more players are involved in the game). For the sake of offense, load up on Bowmen and let fly from a distance as soon as your target comes in view. Consider sending Dwarves to run in with one or two suicide bombs.

If enemy melee units close in on your Baron, protect him using the circle formation.

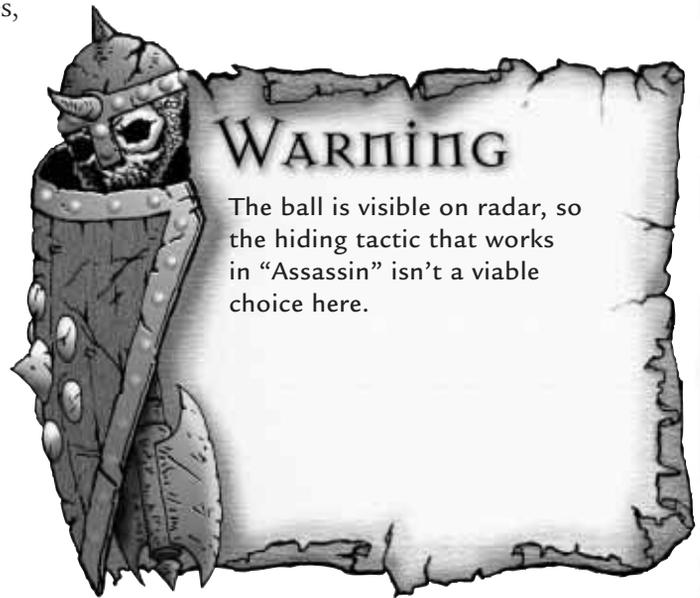


BALLS ON PARADE

Objective Every team gets a ball to move around. If you lose it, you’re out of contention.



As in most of these game types, playing defensively from the outset often is better than a mindless attack. Lay low for a bit, keep your forces (and ball) together, and engage in battles only you can win easily. Let the other players duke it out when you can. Try to engage superior forces during battles with two or more other players. Use fast-moving Ghols to dribble the balls around and away from danger.



BODY COUNT

Objective As the name suggests, the player or team to kill the most units wins.

But this doesn't mean you should be reckless. Recon is crucial; look for exposed flanks or vulnerable areas to take potshots at, and avoid a full-on battle, at least in the opening minutes. Seek other players locked up in battle and use them as a diversion as you kill off units from either side. Bowmen and Dwarves are good choices, and Warlocks, if they're available. If unit trading is on, try to cut down on the number of Thrall. A well-placed Dwarven grenade can kill vast numbers of them easily, so trade out for the sturdier Warriors.

CAPTURES

Objective Several movable balls lie scattered around the map. The player or team with the most balls when time runs out wins.

This resembles "Balls on Parade," but usually there are more balls than teams, and no team "possesses" a ball. Again, strike only when you have a clear advantage, and



when you gain a new ball, move it to a more defensible position. It's all about patience.

Load up with speedy units that can flank and reach distant balls quickly. You'll still need Bowmen for long-distance support and to defend of your stash of balls at the end.

FLAG RALLY

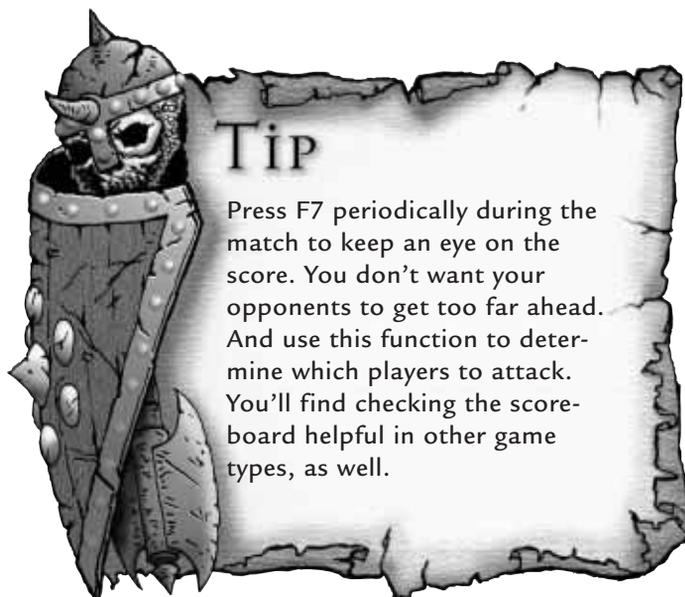
Objective A number of immobile flags are placed around the map. The first player or team to touch every flag wins.

Load up on fast movers, so you can touch all the flags as quickly as possible. Try setting up two squads: One, full of fast-moving melee units with a couple of missile units for support, will be your roving squad that moves about to touch the flags. The other can comprise a mix of missile units, Dwarves, and melee units. This team can foil the other players by finding an easily defensible flag or two and setting up camp there. If you find many flags are being defended, concentrate your forces and go after them one at a time instead of spreading yourself thin.

HUNTING

Objective This game's object is to kill off as many animals as you can. The player or team with the most kills wins.

Of course, killing enemy units will inhibit their ability to hunt... Just don't get carried away and forget to hunt the animals. Large numbers of Dwarves or units of mass





destruction are unnecessary. Use your melee units to herd the animals into a kill zone for your missile units.

KING OF THE HILL/LAST MAN ON THE HILL

Objective In “King of the Hill,” you must hold control of the flag on the hill for as long as you can. The winner is the player or team who has held control the longest when time runs out, regardless of how many units they have left.

It’s just like the game you played as a kid (or still are playing!). The map has a centralized, easily defensible flag. The player who spends the most time on the flag wins the game.

“Last Man on the Hill” is a variation of this, but the winner is the one holding the flag during the game’s last five seconds.

Obviously, in “King of the Hill” you want to get up there quickly and knock off whoever gets up the hill first. Don’t be too hasty, though. It’s easy for Dwarves and missile units to rain hot death on those who advance too recklessly.

A common strategy in “Last Man on the Hill” is to wait until the game’s final minutes or even seconds before launching an attack. If you’re on the hill and see a fresh opponent charging up near the end of the game, try sending out your remaining melee units a few at a time to engage the charging army. This may slow them enough for you to hang on to the end.

SCAVENGER HUNT

Objective Several balls lie scattered about the map. The first to touch all the balls wins.

This game is almost like “Flag Rally,” so similar tactics will work, with perhaps more Bowmen/Soulless and Dwarves for defense. You need only touch each ball once, but unlike “Flag Rally,” the targets here are movable.

Confrontation with the enemy is inevitable. Take the nearest, easiest-to-grab balls first and move them to an easily defensible position. Then gather most of your forces and attack aggressively before your opponents can do the same to you.



STAMPEDE!

Objective You begin in charge of a herd of pigs (this can be chickens, Wolves, or Wights, also), as well as an army. Your job is to herd as many of your pigs as you can into the target area, and prevent your enemies from herding their pigs into *their* target areas.

Often this is played in teams, because each team gets a huge army to control. One player, the captain, assigns troops to the team's various subcommanders. If you create a game like this, be sure to allow two or three minutes for players to organize.

Assign each player on your team specific roles—for example, “You go south, I’ll take north.” One player can “baby-sit” the safe area and prevent any pigs from entering. Send a couple of recon units to locate the greatest concentration of enemy pigs. If you can take them out when they’re all bunched up, as when they’re in the pen at the start (Figure 11.11), you’ll need to get fewer pigs of your own into the safe area to win.



FIGURE 11.11

Herd of pigs +
Dwarven
grenade =
bacon.



Winning teams are those with the best communication. Keep talking, and ask for help when you need it. Two commanders in a battle against one enemy commander usually will win because of their better micromanagement. Remember to use the whiteboard to communicate locations.

STEAL THE BACON

Objective There's only one ball on the map. The player or team who holds it at the end of the time limit wins.

If you get control of the ball first, dribble it to a defensible spot, such as a hill or canyon overlook. From there, employ standard defensive techniques (Bowmen and Dwarves overlooking the choke point) and sit tight.

If you're on offense, try to let other players bloody their noses attacking the "bacon holder" before you try your own hand. Remember, the *last* team with the ball wins, so be patient, and avoid conflicts with non-bacon holders.

TERRITORIES

Objective Several immobile flags are placed around the map. The team or player who controls most of them when time is up is the winner.

Again, patience is key. Ultimately, the player with the largest army near the end usually wins. Avoid spreading yourself too thin in the beginning, and trade out extra Dwarves and Journeymen for Warriors and Ghols that can cover ground more quickly.

Don't commit yourself to big battles in the beginning. Instead, conserve your troops for a final push in the game's waning minutes. Remember to use the F7 key and keep a sharp eye on the scoreboard. Leave slower troops, such as Thrall, behind to defend the flags nearest your base, and use faster troops to vie for distant ones. As you gain territories, you can move slower troops closer to the front lines.



ONLINE ETIQUETTE

Games are always more fun when people can get along and enjoy themselves. People get online and play games such as *Myth II* at least partly to get away from the conflict and petty irritations of the real world; there's no point in introducing it to the online environment.

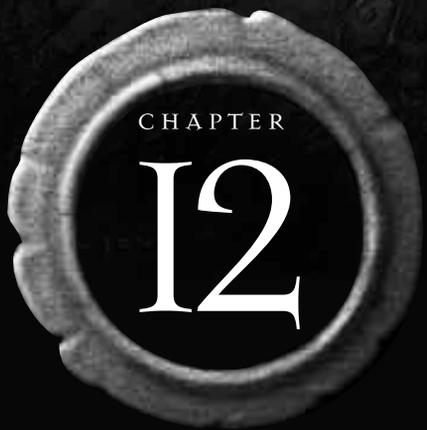
Most people have no intention of offending others, but it can happen inadvertently. Check out the following do's and don'ts.

-  **DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPS.** This can be irritating to read and is the print equivalent of shouting. Using caps for emphasis is OK, but you'll be singled out for a newbie if you leave everything in caps.
-  Good-natured ribbing is a part of any competition, but in general it's best to avoid trash talk. Because typed messages can't convey facial gestures and tone of voice, a simple dig is easy to misinterpret or blow out of proportion. At least be sure the other person is comfortable with you as a friend before you poke fun.
-  Win or lose, the classy move is to tell your opponents "good game"—"GG" for short—after a game. Do this regardless of whether you felt the game was good. Leaving abruptly or sputtering excuses for poor performance immediately after a game is rude.
-  If you're the game creator, don't start a game before the other players are ready. Even though the game can't start until all players click the Ready button, it's still polite to ask if everyone's ready, and then issue a countdown before starting. Also, don't change game settings unless everyone agrees; they picked your game based on what they saw before joining, and that's what they expect.
-  If you're the game creator, don't just quit out quickly at the end of a game. By doing so, you kick the other players out of the postgame stats screen and prevent them from checking their stats and saving film.
-  If you're joining a game, don't demand settings changes. If you're par-



ticular about game settings, consider making your own game.

-  When joining a game, be sure to click the Ready button as soon as possible and be ready to play. Nothing irritates more than someone joining and then immediately asking for a few minutes to leave the keyboard. If you're not ready, don't join yet!
-  Don't berate teammates when you lose, even if they were at fault. If you think feedback is necessary, provide positive pointers.
-  Be a gracious winner. Don't rub it in or give unwanted advice.
-  Yes, *Myth II* is a Mac/PC game, and some tournaments even split up into Mac and PC divisions, pitting the champions against one another. But leave the petty Mac/PC argument elsewhere. Most people find it tiresome and pointless.



BEHIND THE
SCENES WITH
MYTH II



yth: The Fallen Lords was a huge critical success, chosen as Game of the Year and Strategy Game of the Year by a number of major game magazines. Still, the bright lights at Bungie were dissatisfied. Like any great development team, they wanted to take the Myth engine to greater heights, providing heaps of great entertainment for loyal Myth fans along the way.

As with the original Myth project, I found myself hopping on an airplane to Chicago to find out first hand what went into creating the great sequel that is *Myth II: Soulblighter*. This chapter features interviews from the Bungie CEO, producer, lead programmer, lead artist, and even the sound studio that created *Myth II*'s haunting background acoustics.

MYTH II: A PO-BRAINER

First on my list of important Bungie folk to chat with was Alex Seropian, CEO and cofounder of Bungie Software. Second was Tuncer Deniz, producer of *Myth II*. Both gentlemen have many years of experience in the gaming industry, from game creation to journalism, so it's always interesting to hear what they have to say about their new products.

BART: *Myth: The Fallen Lords*, was very successful critically, but, although it sold well, it wasn't a blockbuster game commercially. For these reasons, did you ever doubt you'd do a sequel?





ALEX: *Myth* was a pretty large success for us. There were still some things at the end of *Myth* that we wanted to do, but we just ran out of time. *Myth* was a terrific product, but we knew we could do a lot better, so pretty much when the product [*Myth: The Fallen Lords*] was done we decided to move ahead with *Myth II*.

BART: What sorts of things did you aim to improve with *Myth II*?

ALEX: We had a lot of specific design goals for *Myth II*. Part of those things are enhancements to the engine as well as the gameplay. There were some things in the gameplay and artificial intelligence that made the game—the original—annoyingly difficult, and those were some of the things we wanted to enhance. In addition to that, we decided to touch basically every facet of the game. We wanted to make the music and sound better, the graphics—so we basically retouched every area of the *Myth* gaming experience.



FIGURE
12.1

Lead
Programmer
Jason Regier
and yours
truly examine
Myth II's
cutscenes.



BART: One of the knocks against *Myth* had to do with its difficulty. Some gamers found the game a little *too* challenging. Was this something you addressed specifically?

ALEX: Yeah, the feedback we got from many *Myth I* players was that the game was really hard. We got a few calls from people that couldn't even get past Level 1, and, granted, that was probably our fault, because we had played our game for over two years, and got used to playing it and probably lost perspective on how difficult it would be for the average gamer. So *Myth* really appealed to core gamers, because they really got a challenge.

In *Myth II*, we basically tried to increase the gap between Timid and Legendary levels. That means Timid is easier and Legendary is even harder, and there are three other skill levels in between Timid and Legendary for gamers to choose from. In addition to that, the way *Myth II* is set up lends itself more to a more logical strategy path, making it a lot easier to understand your ultimate goals for each mission. The challenges themselves are not easy, but you will *understand* what the goal is for each mission.

BART: *Myth I* was developed with an incredibly small team, by today's standards. How many people worked on *Myth II*? Was it a big leap to set development of *Myth II* in motion?

ALEX: That's a good question. First a little background. *Myth I* was created with four programmers and three artists over a two-year period, which is a gargantuan effort that's unheard of in this industry. Because the underlying engine was already developed, we decided that *Myth II* only needed two programmers, and we concentrated on art and level design by using four artists and two level designers.

BART: The animated cutscenes in *Myth* were very good, but I understand you're not using the same type of animation for *Myth II*'s cutscenes. The last time we talked, we discussed the merits of cel animation versus rendered animation. Did this issue come up again when you were considering the cutscenes in *Myth II*?

ALEX: *Myth* definitely has a different style to it, almost like a classic kind of look, and we just thought that rendered animation wouldn't look as good with it, so we went with cel animation. Some people liked it, some people didn't, and in the final analysis we decided that it looked a little more cartoon-like than we wanted. For



Myth II we decided to go with a Japanese company and have more of an anime style, more of a cutting-edge, rougher-edge look and feel to the animation.

Really, the reason we wanted to use cel animation over rendered animation is that we have a lot of characters running and moving around in cutscenes, and it's just not possible to get the kind of fluid motion we think is necessary out of rendered animation. It just looks more robotic and clunky than cel animation.

BART: What's cool about *Myth II* that'll make people want to go out and buy it after playing through *Myth I*?

TUNCER: *Myth I* was a great game. It was definitely very challenging, it had lots of excellent levels, and the graphics were outstanding. We decided going into *Myth II* that we wanted to create a sequel that was not just a rehash of the first game. Early on we tweaked the engine: one of the things we did was to make the terrain mesh four times finer, so you'll notice the terrain is more detailed and smoother. In addition, the characters have more frames of animation, so they move much more



FIGURE
12.2

The Baron is one of the interesting new characters who plays a role in *Myth II*.



smoothly. We've also been working with our sound designers to greatly enhance the sound quality throughout the game. Lastly, because the *Myth* engine was pretty much intact, we spent our time concentrating on really great level design, which will make *Myth II* a joy to play—not a rehashed sequel, but a new game.

THE GUTS

A few technical and artistic aspects of *Myth II* are worth exploring. I sought out Lead Programmer Jason Regier for inside information on how Bungie pushed the technological envelope with *Myth II*. Mark Bernal, lead artist for *Myth II*, and Tuncer Deniz, producer extraordinaire, put in their two cents.

BART: *Myth* is a unit game, because the landscapes are made with polygons, but the actual game units are sprites. Why did you stick with sprites over polygons in *Myth II*? Is it a performance issue?

TUNCER: Yes, it's definitely a performance issue. The reason we went with sprites for the characters is because in *Myth* you can have 100 units on the screen at the same time, and if they were all polygonal models, even those with the fastest home computers wouldn't be able to play the game.

BART: What was the biggest challenge in creating *Myth II*?

TUNCER: Basically, we had eight to nine months to create this sequel. Since we made a lot of changes to the engine, we couldn't just start creating new levels and monsters. A lot of time was spent in exploratory thought. For example, we made enhancements to the engine, we made the units a little smaller, and we had to develop the story line. The other part of it was that a lot of the people that worked on the first *Myth* have moved on to other Bungie projects, so there was a learning curve for many of the people that were new to the *Myth* universe.

BART: What challenges were involved in developing the graphics for *Myth II*?



FIGURE
12.3

Tuncer Deniz,
Jason Regier,
and Konrad
Sherinian dis-
cuss *Myth II*
gameplay
elements.

MARK: The biggest challenge was that there were many, many more models in *Myth II* than in *Myth I*. In *Myth I*, we were battling a lot in open fields, but in *Myth II*, there are many models (houses, windmills, fences). This was probably the biggest challenge. There are also indoor environments that posed a big challenge for the programmers, because units in these levels can be right beside each other, yet separated by a wall and can't see one another, so some programming changes were made to accommodate these differences.

BART: It's been mentioned that the units in *Myth II* are actually smaller. Did this have a big impact on the art department?

MARK: Oh yeah, we did every character over, not only just in the rendering, but also we animated them differently—actually, almost from the ground up—and the textures were changed on some of older characters.

BART: What differences were there from a programming standpoint between *Myth I* and *Myth II*?



FIGURE
12.4

The enhancements to the *Myth II* game engine allow for concepts such as the Drawbridge to come to life.

JASON: The *Myth* engine was changed greatly to allow the level designers a lot more freedom to make the levels they wanted to make. One of the things we wanted to do was to give the game a grander feeling, and to do that we made the terrain mesh four times more complex than before. This way you can have more grand vistas, and you can actually see ruts in roads and furrows in fields.

Also, *Myth* seemed to have a lifelessness about it, so we've added things like ambient life, towns—in fact, we've made towns bigger and included moving polygonal models such as windmills and drawbridges. With all these additions, the game's engine had to be modified to allow *Myth II* to run fast enough on today's average hardware.

BART: What kinds of things did you do to the overall engine and interface to make the game easier to play?

JASON: We redid a lot of the interface. One of the goals we had with *Myth II* is for the user to be able to play the game with just a mouse, so we added a control bar down at



the bottom, so that you can choose commands and formations. Also, we rewrote most of the camera movement code to make it easier to use. The cool thing about the interface changes that we made are that *Myth I* players won't even notice the changes, but new players will have a much easier time picking up the game.

THE SOUND GARDEN

For *Myth II*'s sound, Bungie stuck with a tried-and-true winning formula in Total Audio, a sound studio with an extensive background in advertising and computer games. (In fact, the guys at Total Audio did the sound effects for *Riven*, which speaks for itself.)

I visited the studio on the day the mission text for the first eight missions was being recorded. I learned that creating the sound for a game like *Myth II* is no small affair, and even the readings for the first eight levels had to be read and reread by the actor. The result is a professional reading that truly adds to the gaming experience. Marty O'Donnell and Mike Salvatori are cofounders of O'Donnell Salvatori Total Audio, a sound studio based in Chicago.

Although I visited Mike and Marty, the following interview was conducted via e-mail, and the answers are composites of what Total Audio's two principal players had to say.

BART: Tell us a little about your company.

MARTY & MIKE: We've been around since the early '80s, working on music and sound for commercials and film here in Chicago. A jingle we wrote that people seem to remember is "We are Flintstones Kids, 10 million strong and growing..." We've done work for McDonalds, Sears, Kellogg's, and many others over the years, but I've always been interested in games.

We got a chance to work on sound design for *Riven: The Sequel to Myst*, and that lead to our work with Bungie. There are several other projects in the works right now, including an RPG with over 100 different voice acting roles. I feel it's our job to create the total audio environment for each game in such a way that the player will be drawn completely into that world.



BART: Was there anything special about how you approached doing the sound for *Myth II*?

MARTY & MIKE: The approach to sound design on *Myth I* was unique, in the sense that Bungie didn't want any music during gameplay; therefore, we had to rely on other means to have audio create reality and emotion. We felt it worked so well that we didn't want to change that approach for *Myth II*. For me, sound makes it real and music makes you feel, and since we are able to set the emotional tone for each level using music in cutscenes and under the narrations, we can really concentrate on making the environments and action sound as real as possible.

BART: Was there any difference between *Myth I* and *Myth II* in terms of how you approached the sound?

MARTY & MIKE: We were limited by the number of sound channels we could use on *Myth I*. This time we have more channels, stereo ambient background sounds, 3D audio, real-time effects (with the SBLive), and some room for context-sensitive



FIGURE
12.5

Geoffrey
Charlton-
Perrin records
the introduc-
tory speeches
for *Myth II* at
the Total
Audio studios.



in-game music. The music during gameplay is kept to a minimum because we feel that, just as in a film score, music should only come in at appropriate times.

It's important to create music and sound effects in keeping with the style of the animation and the mythical world that Bungie has created. The actors are directed to be totally in character, and they take it very seriously. That's what makes those moments of comic relief successful. "Sorry about that."

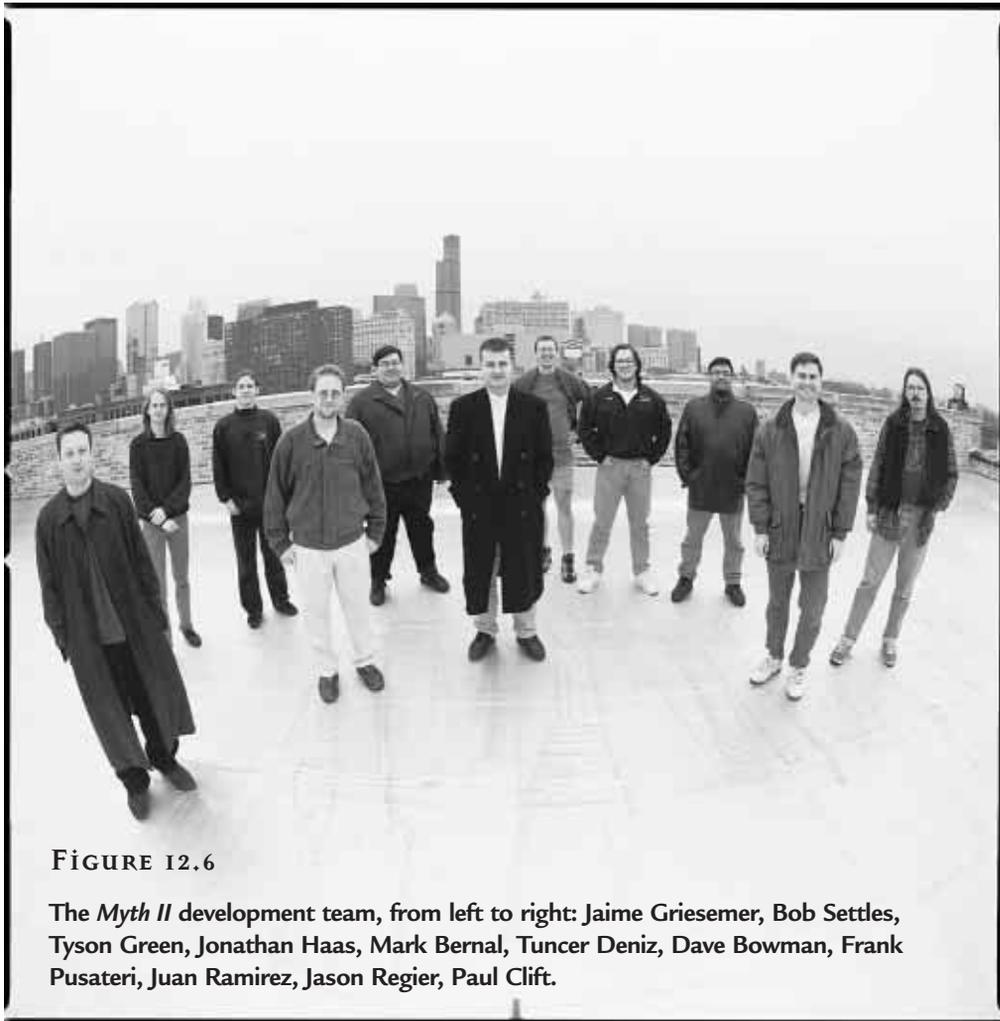


FIGURE 12.6

The *Myth II* development team, from left to right: Jaime Griesemer, Bob Settles, Tyson Green, Jonathan Haas, Mark Bernal, Tuncer Deniz, Dave Bowman, Frank Pusateri, Juan Ramirez, Jason Regier, Paul Clift.



BART: How did you do the ambient sounds? Do you have any interesting stories about how some of them were created?

MARTY & MIKE: The key for us is to have as much randomness in sound design as is found in nature. That's not possible yet, but we're getting closer. The audio loops are played back in random and shifting orders, and there are many individual sounds that get played randomly and at random times throughout any given area. It's fun just to sit back and hear what we've created played back differently each time.

Many sounds are taken directly from nature—wind, water, fire, etc., but many other sounds are completely fabricated. Crumpling paper can be made to sound like the Trow freezing in position; a strange bird call was pitched down, reversed, and morphed with a human yell to create an unearthly cry. I have a bundle of dry grape vines that has come in handy many times for all sorts of bone-crunching and skull-shattering sounds.

THE CONTINUING ADVENTURES OF SYBEX-MAN ...

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