

# Human Nobility

The Duke of Brackenwold and the noble houses which rule all of Dolmenwood.

## FACTION OVERVIEW

### House Brackenwold and Its Vassals

The entirety of Dolmenwood—along with the lands to the south, east, and west—falls under the dominion of the Duke of Brackenwold. Certain regions of the Wood fall within the traditional domains of one of the noble houses, that swear fealty to the duke: the human houses Guillefer, Harrowmoor, Hogwarsh, Nodlock, and Mulbreck (discussed here) and the longhorn houses Malbleat, Murkin, and Ramius (see *Goat-Lords*, p58).

### Supplanted Earlier Folk of Dolmenwood

The noble houses of Dolmenwood and the common folk who serve them migrated to Dolmenwood from a land to the southeast some 1,200 years ago (see *History*, p16). A highly organised and militaristic people, they quickly supplanted the rustic folk who had inhabited Dolmenwood before them, replacing pagan worship with their monotheistic faith—the Church of the One True God (see p46).

### The Dreaming Nobles of House Guillefer

The nobles of House Guillefer share rulership on a sporadically rotating basis. Those who are off-duty spend their days in enchanted slumber, dallying for years and decades in the lands of dream. Even when awake, they are dreamy and aloof, favouring poetry and quiet contemplation over politics and intrigue. It takes much to move them to action.

It is thus that the villages within their domain have drifted out of their control. The Drune control Odd (hex 1403), Ygraine rules Meagre's Reach (hex 1703), and Blackeswell (hex 1604) is high-forgotten and virtually independent.

### House Harrowmoor Harried by Atanuwë

The northernmost lands of House Harrowmoor sit now within the accursed Nagwood—the festering dominion of beast Atanuwë. The wicked servants of Atanuwë have recently begun to venture ever further afield, with skirmishes occurring in the woods close to Harrowmoor Keep and the town of Prigwort. Lady Harrowmoor is overseeing the establishment of a fortified garrison in Prigwort, as a precaution against the war she fears is brewing.

### The Lax Rule of Baron Hogwarsh

Under the rule of the current Baron Hogwarsh, the Barony of the High Wold is growing wild and lawless. The roadways are no longer safe and local people whisper fearfully of war brewing among the goat-lords.

### Fungal Deterioration of House Mulbreck

Formerly a Lady of upstanding morals and loyal ally of the duke, Lady Mulbreck is now a recluse. Within the decaying walls of her chateau, her family hides an unsettling secret: they are addicted to psychedelic fungus that riddles their home, addling their minds and infiltrating their bodies. Lord Nodlock, believed dead by the outside world, is secretly imprisoned in the dungeons—now a fungus-riddled monstrosity.

### Lord Nodlock a Lackey of Lord Ramius

Ruler of a small dominion sandwiched between the larger realms of the goat-lords Murkin and Ramius, the cowardly Lord Nodlock has become embroiled in their rivalry. His grovelling at the feet of Lord Ramius is all that saves his realm from attack by Lord Murkin.

## THE HUMAN NOBILITY'S SCHEMES

### Maintain Lordship of Dolmenwood

The political machinery of the duchy has one primary aim: to maintain (and ideally expand) its dominion. To this end, borders are fortified, revolutions and political intrigues are stifled, and enemies are dispatched.

### Expel the Nag-Lord

The beast Atanuwë has long been a thorn in the side of the Dukes of Brackenwold, with its unlicensed occupation of the northern Wood. The harrying of mid-Dolmenwood by Atanuwë's forces, in recent years, has inspired Duke Thespian's ire and increased his sense of urgency to act.

### Reclaim the Wild Lands to the North

The haunted and disputed lands beyond Dolmenwood—the Table Downs and the Northern Scratch—never fell within the dominion of the Duchy, but have always lingered on its periphery, like delectable pastries just out of arm's reach. Many a duke has laid plans to claim them.

### Root Out the Drune

Once allied against the Cold Prince (see *History*, p16), the uneasy affiliation between the Drune and the duchy has soured to a truce and, in the last century, putrefied into outright animosity. The Church—ever zealous in its hostility toward other sects—is behind this gradual drift in attitude among the Dukes, but the sentiment is cemented in Duke Thespian's heart: the Drune are idolaters and their clawing after power in Dolmenwood must be halted.



## ENCLAVES OF THE HUMAN NOBILITY

**Nodding Castle (0210):** A moated keep that is the home of Lord Nodlock.

**The Town of High-Hankle (0512):** Capital of the High Wold and seat of Baron Hogwarsh.

**Fort Vulgar (0604):** A fortified outpost overlooking the shores of Lake Longmere. Ruled by Sir Osric the Gaunt—vassal of the duke.

**Derodand Manor (0704):** A secluded manor in the deep woods, on the borders of the corrupted Nagwood. Home of Lady Haeroth, great-aunt of Lady Harrowmoor.

**The Hamlet of Swinescombe (0912):** A small swine-herding community on the southern edge of Dolmenwood, within the domain of Baron Hogwarsh.

**Harrowmoor Keep (1105):** A fortified castle atop the cliffs of the Groaning Loch. Seat of House Harrowmoor.

**The Town of Prigwort (1106):** Famed brewing town, under the protection and rule of Lady Harrowmoor.

**The Woodcutters' Encampment (1109):** Rustic village of woods-folk, under the rule of House Mulbreck, via their representative, the Oistace.

**Bogwitt Manor (1210):** An ornate but decaying chateau, home of Lady Mulbreck.

**Hall of Sleep (1304):** The dreamy, red-wood manor of House Guillefer.

**The City of Castle Brackenwold (1508):** Capital of the Duchy of Brackenwold and seat of the duke.

**The Village of Blackeswell (1604):** Nigh-forgotten village of once-prosperous traders deep in the fungal woods of Mulchgrove. Though notionally ruled by House Guillefer, the nobles of that house pay no attention to Blackeswell.

TODO: Illustration



## MEMBERS AND ORGANISATION

All inhabitants of Dolmenwood are regarded as subjects of the duke, thus the membership of this faction is, in theory, vast. In practice, however, not all beings that creep beneath the forest's eaves care one whit for the word of Duke Thespian III. The following people and groups represent the practical membership of this faction.

### Noble Houses

The heads of the noble houses, their extended families, servants, and private soldieries.

### Knights

Each noble house (naturally including the ducal house Brackenwold) is served by a number of knights, themselves regarded as members of the lower nobility.

### Soldiery

The armies of the duchy are sizeable and well-disciplined. The duke's longbowmen have especial renown.

### Peasant Militias

The decree of the duke or his vassals is to be obeyed unquestioningly by any of his subjects. Should the need arise, the ducal army could be swiftly doubled in size by conscripting able folk from among the peasantry.

## DUKE THESPIAN III OF BRACKENWOLD



A troubled man of 60 years, worn down by a life of discretion and statecraft. Dresses in robes of deep blue and exquisitely embroidered tunics. Wears a neatly trimmed beard and a golden crown bedecked with rubies and shards of unicorn horn. The duke lives in the shadow of the great deeds of his father, Duke Argibald IV, a beloved military leader of who died serving the Church in its distant wars.

**Demeanour (Lawful):** Even-tempered, magnanimous, stern, carefully elegant. Perpetually furrows his brow.

**Speech:** Measured, sonorous. Woldish, Old Woldish, Caprice, Liturgic.

**Desires:** To earn renown to rival his father's. To be the duke who brings the uncivilised lands to the north of Dolmenwood under the wing of the duchy. To retire to a life of hunting, away from courtly intrigue. To see his deceased daughter Persimone once more.

**Possessions:** The *amulet of St Faxis* (kept hidden on his person)—a silver, hand-shaped amulet that grants a +2 bonus to all saving throws and the ability to activate an *anti-magic shell* (per the magic-user spell) once per day. The *armour of king Hadryg*—an heirloom suit of *plate mail* +3.

**Family:** Three sons, five daughters (the eldest, Persimone, is deceased—she was sacrificed to the entity in the Oublette, see **p88**). Elderly mother, the Dowager Duchess.

## NOBLE / KNIGHTLY NAMES

d20	Male	Female	Surname
1	Afton	Abygail	Albrime
2	Albrith	Adelais	Baldericke
3	Arthur	Alienor	Brackenwold
4	Brandon	Amandine	Elfwit
5	Charle	Augustina	Flechette
6	Dacre	Bethany	Guillefer
7	Edwin	Emelda	Haeroth
8	Erick	Esther	Harrowmoor
9	Francois	Grace	Highgrime
10	Gawain	Lisabeth	Hogwarsh
11	Gondyw	Lucia	Ladriham
12	Jospher	Olivia	Mulbreck
13	Lyredon	Persephone	Nodlock
14	Medigord	Persimone	Offcester
15	Nash	Primace	Snape
16	Pieter	Roese	Symeswitt
17	Treeve	Sortia	Twinsor
18	Trevyn	Theodora	Underlow
19	Waylord	Therese	Waldermost
20	Wynne	Wilhemina	Woldeleigh

TODO: NPC portrait

**Servants:** A standing army, two dozen knights, a dozen personal guards, a court wizard (Paglimon the Perspicacious), groundsmen, cooks, butlers, librarians, scribes, etc.

**Location:** Castle Brackenwold (hex 1508).

**Combat stats:** Noble (see *Old-School Essentials*).

## DUCHESS OPHELIA OF BRACKENWOLD



A tall, unceasingly elegant woman in her mid-fifties, with a narrow jaw and long black hair. Dresses in robes of pale violet, dotted with pearls. Wears a silver crown adorned with leaf-shaped sapphires. The duchess was adopted into the Brackenwold family as a young child, brought back from a distant land by the elder Duke Brackenwold, her noble family slain in the wars waged by the Church.

**Demeanour (Lawful):** Demure, but with a calculating wit and a fierce temper (seldom seen). Artful—uses deception, flattery, and seduction to get others to reveal their hand. Brushes the air with her fingertips as she speaks.

**Speech:** Clear soprano, careful enunciation. Woldish, Old Woldish, Liturgic.

**Desires:** To visit the land of her birth in times of peace. Yearns to unravel the mystery around the death of her eldest daughter, Persimone. (The duchess is not privy to her true fate as a sacrifice to the entity in the Oubliette, see *p88*.)

**Possessions:** The *shieldmaiden's ring*—an obsidian-studded ring of platinum that grants the ability, once per day, to conjure a terrible, four-armed angelic being of shining steel (stats as bone golem—*OSE*) to serve for 6 turns.

**Family:** Three sons, five daughters (the eldest of whom, Persimone, is deceased—she was sacrificed to the entity in the Oubliette, see *p88*).

## LORD EDWIN GUILLEFER



A slight man, with lank blond hair, a mousy moustache, and a dusty, greyish complexion. Apparently in his thirties, he was actually born nigh 200 years ago—like all of his family, he has spent the majority of his adult life in magical slumber. Guillefer, a poet and harpist, is a friend of **Ygraine the Sorceress** (*pXXX*). He remains untroubled by the waxing of the Nag-Lord's influence in Dolmenwood, to the consternation of his neighbour, **Lady Harrowmoor** (*p66*).

**Demeanour (Neutral):** Contemplative, aloof, naive. Kind-hearted but absorbed in his artistic pursuits, with little interest in the troubles of the world.

**Speech:** Slow lilting, with frequent contemplative pauses. Favours old-fashioned turns of phrase. Woldish, Old Woldish, Liturgic.

**Desires:** To be left in peace. To visit the fabled fairy courts of the **Duke Who Cherishes Dreams** (*p31*), whom he has met in the dreamlands of his deep slumber.

**Possessions:** The *harp of Lady Silver-So-Mirrored*—a fairy relic which, when played with skill, conjures low clouds and melancholic drizzle.

**Family:** Eleven sleeping relatives, including his wife and parents.

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**Servants:** A trio of female knights who serve her alone. Secretaries, ladies-in-waiting, handmaids, etc. Holds the **Bishop of Brackenwold** (*p49*) in her sway, tempering his zealous hatred of the witches.

**Location:** Castle Brackenwold (hex 1508).

**Combat stats:** Noble (see *Old-School Essentials*).

TODO: NPC portrait

**Servants:** A small guards (known as sleep-wardens), advisors who deal with the quotidian dealings of the House, groundsmen, cooks, butlers, librarians, etc. **Sadewyn Gallbucket** (*p73*), a witch high-priestesses, is in the employ of House Guillefer, in the guise of a lady's maid.

**Location:** The Hall of Sleep (hex 1304).

**Combat stats:** Noble (see *Old-School Essentials*).

## LADY THEATRICE HARROWMOOR



A towering, ungainly woman in her mid-30s, with sumptuous black locks and eyes of cool grey. Dresses in white, vaguely clerical robes.

Lady Harrowmoor is possessed of a great mind and is a renowned expert on the history of Dolmenwood. She thrives on quiet and solitude, but may offer hospitality to intellectuals, academics, or those of poetic spirit. All her thoughts are currently preoccupied by the recent disappearance of her daughter Violet (see hex 0906).

**Demeanour (Lawful):** Forbidding intellectual, pious and even-handed ruler. Her passionate side is revealed when discussing matters of history, religion, or politics.

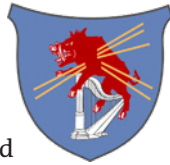
**Speech:** Punctilious, dwells on the abstract. Woldish, Old Woldish, Liturgic, Caprice, surprisingly eloquent Sylvan.

**Desires:** The return of her missing daughter, Violet. To brace the defences of mid-Dolmenwood against the coming of the Nag-Lord.

**Reward:** 1,000gp for the safe return of her daughter.

**Possessions:** The *pipe of the Forroth*—a long, wooden flute whose lilting tones can summon a telepathic, jelly-like entity from the depths of the Groaning Loch (see hex 1105). Communion with the entity can reveal secrets, but is perilous. (Lady Harrowmoor has resisted the temptation of communing with the Forroth on the matter of her missing daughter, but is coming close to doing so.)

## BARON SAGEWINE HOGWARSH



A lithe, dashing man in his mid-thirties, with a head of wayward golden ringlets and a neatly trimmed beard. Dresses in purple silk pantaloons and salmon doublets, with a fashionable neck ruff. Hogwarsh inherited lordship of the High Wold as a callow youth, following the untimely death of his father in a fencing mishap. He is known for his lax attitude to the law, being more interested in wine and debauchery than in the maintenance of order. He is friend of the goat-lord **Malbleat** (p60), who shares his taste for carousing.

**Demeanour (Neutral):** Amoral, hedonistic, self-centred, and utterly vain. Dismisses dissent with an arched brow and a charming smirk. Has a weakness for flattery and beautiful women.

**Speech:** Eloquent, chummy, laced with contemporary slang. Woldish, Old Woldish, Caprice, rusty Liturgic.

**Desires:** To recover the *Hanglehorn*—a lost heirloom of his house that was stolen by the infamous robber Dewidort of Smerne (see hex XXXX). To be recognised for his (genuine) skills as a composer and fencer.

**Family:** Doting mother, the dowager baroness, who resides with him in Castle Perigonne. Younger brother, the timorous Walter. A wide assortment of lovers, beaus, and fiancées—but no wife.

TODO: NPC portrait

**Family:** Husband. Three children, aged 6–12. (The youngest, Violet, is missing.) Elderly grandfather—the old Lord Harrowmoor—in his dotage.

**Servants:** 6 knights, a small personal guard, groundsmen, cooks, butlers, librarians, etc. A profusion of cats.

**Location:** Harrowmoor Keep (hex 1105).

**Combat stats:** Noble (see *Old-School Essentials*).

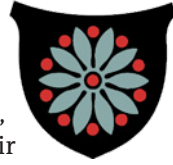
TODO: NPC portrait

**Servants:** Advisors, thugs, and assassins who do his bidding in secret. A standing army, a small personal guard, groundsmen, cooks, butlers, librarians, etc.

**Location:** Castle Perigonne, in High-Hankle (hex 0512).

**Combat stats:** Noble (see *Old-School Essentials*).

## LADY PULSEPHINE MULBRECK



A voluptuous noblewoman of 50 years old, with cascades of fastidiously curled silver hair and an awkward, slightly hunched posture. Lady Mulbreck—in addition to her husband and four of their eight sons—is addicted to the weird fungus that infests her home. Mycelia spread insidiously through her body, visible as a fine, violet lacework just beneath her skin.

**Demeanour (Neutral):** Sharp wit, piercing intelligence, remorseless cunning. The fungus that addles her mind has inflamed her appetites and eaten away at her conscience. (In former times, Lady Mulbreck was lawful.)

**Speech:** Sweet drivel, indignant roaring. Punctuated with fits of dry coughing. Woldish, Old Woldish, Liturgic.

**Desires:** To keep the fate of Lord Mulbreck utterly secret, in order to maintain her indulgent rule (she has essentially imprisoned him within her dungeons). To maintain control of the Falls of Nyf (hex 1112). Would pay 300gp for one of the moss-covered corpses from the caves at the Falls—discreetly delivered—which she covets as a delicacy.

**Possessions:** The *crown of Bogwitt* (locked in a concealed safe in her manor)—a gold circlet studded with purple tourmaline (worth 8,000gp).

**Family:** Her husband, Lord Mulbreck, imprisoned in the cellars of Bogwitt Manor, reduced by the fungal infestation to a bloated, lumbering monster. Eight sons, born as sets of identical twins.

TODO: NPC portrait

**Servants:** A small guard, wardens at the Falls of Nyf (hex 1112), groundsmen, cooks, butlers, librarians, etc.

**Location:** Bogwitt Manor (hex 1210).

**Combat stats:** Noble (see *Old-School Essentials*).

## LORD HARALD NODLOCK



A slovenly man in his mid-fifties, of prodigious girth and balding pate. Hunched and dishevelled beneath the weight of a heavy rust-red robe (which appears to be a hastily unhung tapestry) slung over his shoulders. Bulbous, goggling eyes stare quizzically. Though he would never admit it, Nodlock is a lackey of **Lord Ramius** (p61).

**Demeanour (Neutral):** Presents himself as battle-hardened and iron-willed, but is a coward and has never seen combat. Drunk at almost any time of day. Flies into a rage at any mention of his neighbour, the goat-lord **Murkin** (p61).

**Speech:** Gruff drawl, accompanied with frequent belching and spittle spray. (It is advisable not to sit too close to Lord Nodlock when he speaks.) Woldish, Old Woldish.

**Desires:** Nodlock is a simple man: he desires little beyond fine wine, fine food, and fine women, spiced with the occasional amusing execution.

**Possessions:** The *rod of the wyrd*—a melodramatically named heirloom of House Nodlock. What it lacks in occult power, the rod makes up for in mundane value: it is set with diamonds to the value of 10,000gp.

**Family:** Happily unmarried. Has many illegitimate children, but no heir.

TODO: NPC portrait

**Servants:** A retinue of sycophants and advisors who oversee the castle and borders during Nodlock's frequent alcohol-induced slumbers. A poorly trained standing army. Groundsmen, cooks, butlers, librarians, etc.

**Location:** Nodding Castle (hex 0210).

**Combat stats:** Noble (see *Old-School Essentials*).