

Legends From Eglion

The Ressurrection of Aladrin Rykar

By R. Popynick

Introduction

"Oh? Hello! Who me? I'm Halkin, a storyteller nowadays, but i once saved the world! You don't believe me?! I'm offended, i know i just look like an old hunk of metal in robes but trust me, I'm a hero. You've heard of Aladrin Rykar right? You know the Ancient evil guy who got ressurected one hundred and fifty years ago and threw the whole balance of the world out of wack? probably not, he's not as cool as me. Wait you have? okay fine, do you know the whole story though? Well sit down, I'll make you some tea. Alright, you ready?

Hmmm, Let's see. I've never told this one before, so i suppose i'll start from the very beginning. Mind you, this first bit is word of mouth from my friends before they died; Anyway's back to the story. It all started with a piece of jerky, as any good tale should. Just kidding! or maybe not. I suppose it really starts with, Gavin DeGray. A farmboy, and pretty decent ranger; from what i hear he was a really good guy too. Gavin was from one of the small Hamlet's surrounding Enslas. You know THE Enslas, Holy Capital of the Empire of Aistoria. You see, Gavin was a young kid with big dreams, much like any kid from a small village, but one day he decided to actually chase those dreams. As for how that turned out for him, Well, I'll leave it up to you. Hope you're ready for an absolute epic.

Leaving Home, A New Friend

"*Sure is hot today*" Gavin thinks to himself before taking a sip from his canteen, "*good thing i found a few trees to sit under out here in the hills.*" He lets his head rest against the tree he's sitting against and his gaze drifts upward toward the late morning sky. "well time to get moving again, final stretch now, i should be able to make Port Klok by sundown," he says to himself gathering his belongings, and getting up. Port Klok is a town on the southern peninsula of the Aistorian continent nuzzled away in the forest along the coast north of Edoron, and the world tree it's built into. It functions as the main source of trade, and commerce between Occul and the rest of the kingdom. Gavin, decided to travel to Occul, A place he was well acquainted with, Due to his childhood friend Zutuk's Father telling them of his travels, and adventures when he was a younger man. "*I'm gonna miss mom and pop and Zutuk and everyone else from the village*" he thinks to himself whilst admiring the countryside. His viewing of the scenery is abruptly cut short as he bumps into something about waist height and incredibly solid, as he tumbles forward over it, he thinks, "*is that a beard?*" adjusting for the fall, landing on his shoulder, he rolls to his feet and is met with a long blonde beard that flows down from average looking dwarven features, which are slightly hidden, by a dingey looking helmet.

Gavin had never met a dwarf before, and it shows in his face, he stands staring, awkwardly, for a brief moment before speaking up "sorry i wasn't watching where i was going." The dwarf was wearing a chainmail shirt, and coif, his head adorned with the poorly maintained mail helmet. He carried a greataxe, which was currently blade down in the dirt. On the ground at his feet sat a pack with the top open, he speaks up in his deep grumbly voice " Nay, i was the one sat in the middle of the road" he says while gesturing his hand in dismissal. Gavin replies "guessing you we're digging in your pack for something" and gestures at the pack on the ground. "Aye, I've misplaced my dagger, and I've got a piece of jerky stuck in my teeth" he says followed by dwarvish curses under his breath "*gilthok*" he murmurs, as he goes back to digging through the pack. Gavin, without hesitation, pulls his dagger from it's sheathe and leans in to hand it to the dwarf, the dwarf looks up and says "AH thank FEMUS!" as he grabs the dagger and immediately begins digging away at a corner of his gum. "Names Vorlen" he says after pulling the dagger away, a small piece of chewed jerky on the end "You're headed to Port Klok too I'd wager, seeing as there's nothing else down this road." The last village before Port Klok was 10 miles back at this point. Gavin nods in response, "I'm travelling to Occul to make a name for myself in the jungles there." "Well, my legs might be small, but i make good company" Vorlen replies,

lifting his great axe and holstering it on his back "besides the Edoron forest isn't much further and the world tree attracts, and provides for all type of beast and bandit." He finishes. "I've never met a dwarf before, names Gavin, and i wouldn't mind the chat along the way. where are you from?" Asks Gavin, as they both resume walking down the road together. "Khemrey" Vorlen replies. "Isn't that to the north inside the mountain under the Oradale world tree?" Gavin asks in response. "Aye, my uncle is an Upper Noble there, and helped my father open a smithy" Answers Vorlen in a proud voice "My father made me this axe before i set out to explore the world" he points to the axe on his back with his thumb. At first glance you might not notice the fine craftsmanship of the weapon, but it's definitely a step up from every other axe Gavin had ever seen "sure looks sharp, what have you fought with it?" he asks "A few bandits, a cave bear, i even managed to clear a goblin cave my first day after leaving home." Vorlen replies " A whole cave? I had to track down a few goblins for my village but i can't imagine a whole cave of the vile little bastards." Gavin shutters at the thought "You carry yourself like a decent enough ranger but you're scared of a few goblins?" Vorlen laughs, perhaps a little to loud to be joking. Gavin isn't phased by the comment however. As he glanced over at the dwarf laughing, he noticed the archer positioned atop the hill with an Arrow knocked "MOVE!" Shouts Gavin as he pushes Vorlen and quickly steps back drawing his bow from his back, and knocking an arrow to fire in response.

Gavin's push is ineffective against Vorlen "WHAT'D YOU DO THAT FOR?" he yells, and turns toward Gavin just as an arrow thuds in the dirt between them. "OI! WHO'S SHOOTING ARROWS AT ME" he Shouts, as he then turns seeing the archer positioned on the hill, as well as two men in light leather armor with swords running down the hill about thirty or so feet out. "We'll see who's scared now, Vorlen was it," says gavin as he lets loose the arrow which flies true, and finds it's home square in the chest of the archer, who promptly goes limp, and folds backwards "Alright kid, you're not bad." Says Vorlen readying his axe, and securing his helmet, which shifted slightly, due to poor fit when Gavin pushed him. One of the men reaches Vorlen, and goes to swing downward while charging at him underestimating the Dwarf's agility, as he simply steps to the side avoiding the swing. Vorlen takes full advantage of the bandit having left himself open by swinging his greataxe at the leg nearest him. The pained pilferer is quickly liberated of his leg and sent tumbling to the ground, letting out a scream followed by muffled cries through bitten lips, as he grasps at what remains of his left leg. Just as Vorlen dispatches his opponent, the other highwayman reaches Gavin, and

with a shoulder tackle pushes him to the ground just as he was knocking another arrow. Gavin is too nimble to be down long however, and using the momentum from the shove, he tucks his bow to his chest, and rolls over his back. straightening it quickly as his shoulders touch the ground, to propel himself slightly higher, and landing on his feet he goes to reach for the dagger on his belt out of reflex. Sadly, he handed it to Vorlen who never returned it. Just as Gavin thinks he's about to get slashed, his dagger imbeds itself in the side of the mans head. His eye's roll back, and he collapses at Gavins feet. "You're not the only one who can aim." The Pair worked well in dispatching the crooks, and they both know it. "Aye, but what would you have done about the bowman?" Gavin retorts. Vorlen raises the head of his axe to his chest so that one head covers his face, one his chest, and says mockingly "shield" while raising his other arm out to the side. Gavin laughs, "I think i'd probably die of laughter if i saw that running at me," he says while placing his bow on his back, he leans down. With a swift jerk, and the squelch of flesh, his dagger is returned to its sheathe. Vorlen steps over to the first man who is now laying on his back only managing shallow breaths, And with a much louder sound, divides his head into two portions. The duo avail themselves of the few coins the highwaymen had most likely lifted from unsuspecting travellers, and continue on their way while poking fun at each other. A normal day on the road as adventurers.

Sheesh! these two are a tough pair huh? not as tough as me ofcourse, I'd have had those bandits clucking like chickens. No like i'd actually turn them into chickens, mechanical ones too, It's HILARIOUS! I'll have to show you some time. Hmm, i know! When my friend gets here i'll turn into a chicken, and have HIM tell you the rest of the story, Genius! Oh, right i forgot to tell you i had company coming. Don't worry they'll be awhile yet, it's a long voyage to Vurough from Aistoria after all. I think you'll like him. Anyway enough about that, where were we, Ah yes right!

The newly forged duo made their way down the road sometimes talking, sometimes not, for two more hours through the hills that make up about half of the southern portion of Aistoria, before reaching the forest that makes up the rest. The World tree in the distance towers over the forest. "It really does touch the clouds, that's incredible!" Gavin exclaims "If you think that ones big, you should see the Oradale world tree." States Vorlen, unimpressed having grown up directly under a world tree." "That hardly counts, it's on top of the tallest mountain on the continent!" Gavin exclaims once again. As they make their way

in to the forest they grow more observant of their surroundings, so as not to be more easily surprised than earlier. Another half hour goes by, Vorlen is the first to break the silence "How long you been on the road?" he asks, inquisitively "you don't seem too green, but you mentioned a village earlier" "Aye, I'm from a hamlet outside Enslas, i left home a few weeks ago" Answers Gavin. "Holy *gilthok* boy, you are green!" Vorlen exclaims "You made the decsion to leave home now? have you not heard whats going on around the world?" "What do you mean?" Gavin asks, confused "Clerics the world over are going *bonkerth*, apparently ressurection magic has completely stopped working, everywhere" Vorlen says, seriously "I don't plan on dying anytime soon," Gavin says, in a tone of confidence. In a much more grim tone of voice, "you don't get it do you? The gods. people are saying they've forsaken this realm." " Aye, and I'm actually a bugbear wearing human skin, This is the Holy Kingdom Of Aistoria, The godking Thuldir would never forsake a kingdom he helped build, And what of Femus the god of flames. He forged the dwarves in his forge, or something like that didn't he? do you think he would forsake the dwarves?" Says Gavin in disbelief. "Well the church in Enslas says they still have contact with the gods, but they won't say aynytthing else." Vorlen says "It sure seems like they're hiding something at least." "We're still at peace all over the world, it's been that way for almost half a Millenia, aside from the occasional border territory skirmish, or wandering dragon. Seems to me that's the gods protection enough" Gavin continues, wanting to believe that the gods that built the world which he just set out to see haven't forsaken him. "Gods don't protect us from dragons, It's heros and legends that those tales belong too" Vorlen Grumbles in response. "My grandfather was a Dwarven hero, who led a massive Bullete extermination force in the tunnel collapse of 437, 45 years ago." He states in pride "Warrior blood flows in my veins stronger than my fathers, we warriors give thanks to the gods, as they tasked US with it's defense" Vorlen hits his chest with his fist, making a thud, and jingle on his chainmail. "Hmm, I never thought of it like that, but didn't you just say they've forsaken you?" Gavin asks, confused again. "I never said i want to believe it! I'm with you on this one" Vorlen clarifies "My uncle told me he'd heard some nobles saying the Zenthari are involved." "You mean that shadow organization that are said to have nobles all over the world in their pockets?" Asks Gavin in response . Vorlen "Aye, that's the one" while stroking the braid in the middle of his long blonde beard "They've apparently been showing up in places all over Aistoria, leaving a trail of bodies, both dead, and undead wherever they go" vorlen finishes. Gavin's skin crawls as he pictures a corpse walking, "I've heard tales of

undead, but i haven't been unfortunante enough to see one" He says, still bothered by the idea "I'll just have to hope my bow, and short sword can take down an undead." "A few shamblers are nothing to fear, but i find it strange that an ancient organization that has mostly been under the radar, and never done anything to gain attention would be messing up this late in the game" The pair continue down the road for some time, all the while discussing different rumours, beasts, and sharing some tales of their individual exploits. Two more hours pass, walking in mixed conversation, and silence.

First, they smell it, the sea water, the smoke of chimneys, then they hear the deck bell of a ship, followed by the managerie of people talking, then barely, through the dense trees, and brush, they see the stone walls of Port Klok, standing about 25 feet tall, wrapping all the way around, and extending out into the water aways. Gavin feels an overwhelming wave of excitment hit him "Finally made it!" he exclaims to Vorlen, who affirms by saying "no trouble in the forest either, i told you the gods haven't forsaken us." "I believe im the one who said that," Gavin says. "i know, i just wanted to beat you to it," vorlen replies, grinning. "Are all dwarves witty, or did you're uncle kick you out in fear you might piss off another noble, and get beheaded?" Gavin says, jokingly. Vorlen looks at him intensely for a moment before erupting into hearty laughter "You know what boy, i like you. I don't have any plans past this, just here to visit an old friend. You need an axe to help cut your way through the jungles of Occul, I'm your dwarf!" "I'd be honored to have you sir dwarf" Gavin says, only a little mockingly "but on the condition you start using my name, and not call me boy anymore" "Aye, them's fair terms. I have a good feeling about this partnership..." a brief pause before saying "...Gavin."

Port Klok - Arrival

Before the pair, stands a fifteen foot tall portcullis, and in front center of

the portcullis stands a well armored guardsman, bearing the isignia of Aistoria on his chest, and shield. He raises his hand as the two approach, "State yer business!" he commands, before lowering his hand back to his side. Atop the wall, two archers peer down on Gavin and Vorlen. Gavin speaks up in response "We're travellers seeking passage to Occul." The soldier looks them up and down for a second, "You look well armed for travellers," he states, "none the less, i have orders to allow anyone to pass provided they are not wanted by the Empire, names?" he asks in an authoritative tone of voice. "I'm Gavin Degrey, and this is my friend Vorlen," Gavin replies. " Alright, never heard of you so..." he pauses, and turns around to face the gate and shouts "OPEN THE GATE!" A brief moment passes before the sound of wooden gears, and chains rattling, rasie over the background noise of the city beyond the portcullis. The Metal gate begins to raise, and stops just high enough for most humanoids to be able to pass underneath. "Proceed" the guardsmen states in his tone of authority, and steps over to the side of the road. The streets are abuzz with different races of people, mostly elves, humans, and orcs with the occasional Dragonborn or Tabaxi standing out from the other bald skinned races. The dragonborns in the crowds are easy to spot as they tower of the rest, standing on average eight feet tall, and they're called dragonborn for a reason. Bearing, scales, claws, as well as the head of a dragon atop their otherwise human-like body. "So those are dragonborn," Gavin gavin states in partial awe "You've never met a dragonborn either," Vorlen asks, rhetorically "Excellent natural fighters, the whole of the race. No need for gear weighing you down when you've got scales and claws" as the pair continue down the muddied cobble road toawrds the center of town, Vorlen stops "Ay, Gavin. Go find us a nice inn to stay tonight, here's my part," he looses a small pouch from his belt, and throws it to Gavin, "I'm going to see my friend briefly 'fore the sun sets completely. He turns and heads left down a side road, leaving Gavin alone, in a completely unfamiliar city.

How considerate of Vorlen huh? maybe he had faith in the kid, can't really say for sure, I wasn't there after all. though that does sound like Vorlen. Oh, right sorry, haha i get carried away sometimes, but that's part of what makes me so awesome, trust me. I'll try not to stop the story again until my friend arrives, and i turn into a mechanical chicken for you. Let's see now, Gavin can see that the road opens up into a market, and decides to continue down that way. Nearing the market, his senses are assaulted with all manner of stimuli, The smell of different meats being roasted by street vendors, diffent voices blending together into the song that makes up the day life of any bustling city, and a nearby bard playing a

lute and reciting tales of old. most curiously of all though, theres is an old man in rags, upon a wooden crate, shouting furiously at passer's by "THE GODS ARE DEAD" he shouts into the crowd, they ignore him, too busy with the hum-drum of their own lives to listen to a mad-man shouting blaspheme. The old man notices Gavin staring, he quickly averts his gaze and attempts to blend into the crowd, but it's too late. "YOU THERE, COME CLOSER! PLEASE!" the man yells excitedly "*this IS a good oppurtunity to hear more about what me and Vorlen were talking about*" Gavin thinks "*I'll hear the old man out*" he makes his way towards the old man, who steps down from his box as he approaches "My lad, you look like you've travelled far" the old man gestures at Gavin's clothes which are dirtied from weeks of travel "Come, come. I know an Inn in town which travellers frequent, my niece works there!" Gavin nods, "i was just coming to the market to ask about such a place, thank you" he says, surprised "Everyone else may call me Mad Albert nowadays, but i know the look of a traveller hungry for adventure" the old man replies, beginning down the road to his right from the corner that his makeshift podium was positioned at "A long time ago i was a paladin in Devotion to Igges." now that he's closer to the old codger and thinking about it, the man is definitley old, but his shoulders, and arms are sizeable, and toned for his age, Gavin also recognizes the name "Isn't he the god of battle," he says. "And men" the old man finishes quickly " Igges the god of battle and men, husband of Ejuna Goddess of creation and women. Together they created the Human, Elven, and Alven Races." "*Alve's are just wive's tales used to scare children*" Gavin thinks to himself "*Maybe the old man really is mad*" As Gavin think this to himself the old man continues."but you don't believe in fairy tales do you boy?" He laughs as if he's only joking, but he sounded serious about the Alve's. Gavin dismisses it in his head "You said you're niece works at an Inn nearby?" The man raises his arm, and points ahead to a building, just across an intersection at the end of the road, running alongside the market they've been following for a few minutes. "there's the place, It's run by an elf named Sam, He's a mysterious air about him, but he's always been good to my niece and I, Put us up in extra quarters once my knees couldn't handle the stress of battle anymore" "I thought paladin's didn't feel age once they take their oath?" Gavin inquires, remebering tales of a paladin of devotion that Zutuk's father would tell stories of travelling with, he made it seem like they were best friends, and would know about such a thing. "It's only after you reach a certain point in your development as a devotee that you attain such power, unfotunately my sister, and her husband we're killed while on Occul for business by a wandering orc tribe, when i heard, i came here immediately to take

over care of my niece" he says in a mouthful "Wouldn't that make you an oathbreaker then?" Gavin ask's confused, knowing that oath breakers suffer much greater consequences than this old man obviously has. "I begged Igges for release from my oath for days" the man says in a solemn tone "After nearly four days, I was gifted with a vision of my chains to Igges breaking, if i fulfilled one last mission, and now that mission has ended" he says quite happily, before piping up one more time "but nevermind that right now! Come, let's go inside," he gestures at the Inn as they approach. The building looks outlandish to Gavin, the railing enclosing the porch is carved on the ends into spirals, with bits coming off that almost look like the sprouts of leave's forming, as are the the tops of the windows. The break in the railing for the three steps onto the porch, is ended with two wooden pillars that are carved into matching thin spiral patterns, wrapping all the way around into two more spirals of the same type from the railing, and windows. The corner of the roof is of similar design. "*whole thing looks like it was grown out of the dirt under it*" the building definitely doesn't fit in with the local architecture. The old man leads Gavin up onto the porch, and through the open door of the Inn, the Elvish architecture following them inside, the bar beams are similar to the pillars outside, the well polished bar-counter standing out from the rest of the woodwork, a second level dining area sits above the bar, and wraps around the inner right side above the larger dining area they we're now standing in, the room is surprisingly quiet given that it's about dinner time. Only a few patrons at different table's, and quiet voices coming from the second floor. Against the right wall under the second level dining area sits a piano, which is obviously enchanted, as it's playing a soothing medley, accompanied by a floating lute, and hand drum. Gavin can't help but gawk at his suuroundings as he makes his way through center of the tavern, he's only ever seen the Inn in his home village. This is exactly the type of thing Gavin set out to see!

Destiny

Out from a curtain blocked doorway behind the counter, steps a tall slender elven man, his black hair has a white streak running through it on the right side, it's pulled back into a tail, the left side of his face is adorned with a scar running from under his eye to the corner of his jaw under the ear, he has three silver earrings hanging from his left lobe in a line, he carries with him a crate full of glass bottles. Alfred in a booming voice "Sam my friend how are you? I brought the one i've been talking about!" Gavin hears the comment, and his mind is immediately pulled from his surroundings to their conversation "*Is he talking about me?*" Sam sets the crate down on the bar counter "Alfred, i told you not to yell in the tavern" he says in a smooth even tone, his voice caresses the ear "I'm rather rattled from the hustle, and bustle of Vurough, i used my door to come here for some quiet, and to refill the stocks." He finishes. "You mages, and your portals. It's the travel that makes the destination worth visiting!" Alfred says gesturing towards the curtained door. "Yes, well this isn't the only tavern i run, and it's convenient to be able to restock so quickly" "Do you two know me?" Gavin interrupts, finally. he'd been holding it back while the two talked. "'Know you boy? My vision was about you" Gavin, stunned for a moment, can't manage anything other than "What?" "You boy! I was to find you! I was shown where i would see you. So i set up a crate every day for the last twenty-odd years yelling anything, and everything i could think of to draw attention. Becoming Mad Albert in the process" "*What the fuck is this guy talking about*" Gavin exclaims in his head "I'm sorry i think you got the wrong guy here. I'm just a kid from a Calchester, outside Enslas" "ENSLAS! the kids from Enslas, you hear that Sam! he really is the one Igges showed me." Albert sounds beyond enthusiastic. "He certainly does fit the image you've been painting for the last 20 years, I can see why you'd be excited," Sam agrees "*Great the elf thinks i'm some kind of chosen one too,*" "Look, i don't know whats going on here but i'm just some farmboy..." Gavin is cut short by a familiar voice "Sam is that you! I didn't see you in Enslas" Sam speaks up in a slightly excited tone, "Vorlen! How long has it been? seven, no eight years. Yes, sorry i've been in Vurough for the last few months, I'd heard from your uncle that you'd be passing through Enslas, and meant to have the barmaid prepare the royalty suite, alas i'd been too busy in Vurough dealing with other matters" Vorlen looks to Gavin "I had a feeling you'd find this place" Gavin, thankful to see Vorlen again "Aye, this old fellow was just telling me He'd seen me in some vision sent by Igges" Vorlen laughs heartily "Don't mind old Mad Albert, he's been talking about that vision forever." Albert cuts in, "Vorlen you know the lad, how'd you meet?" Gavin interrupting "This is all great, and good but can we

please talk about the vision a little more." Vorlen, strokes his braided beard, "you know, Albert, He does look a little like the kid you described, doesn't he?" "*oh not him too*" Gavin thinks to himself, "why does everyone keep saying that" Gavin asks rhetorically, rubbing his temples. At that moment, another unfamiliar voice, It's a woman's voice "Uncle! Why are you dressed in rags again! Have you been on that corner again--" she stops short as she sees Gavin "Who is this?" she asks, her tone gone from upset, to inquisitive. Gavin turns to see a fair-skinned woman, with short jet black hair the top tied back, most likely to keep it from her face, her slender nose protrudes lightly from between two emerald green eyes. In another time and place, Gavin may have been enamoured with her. Right now however, all he could think was "*please not her too.*" "This is my niece" Alfred says abruptly. Gavin looks confused. Vorlen butts in immediately after, "He looks to be struck by you Ellah." Gathering his thoughts quickly, "My name's Gavin, and yours?" he asks, hoping the name matches the face "Ellahne, my name's Ellahne." Gavin was already confused by everything going on, but to top it off he wasn't expecting the old man's niece to be a half-elf.

Alright, I know I said I wouldn't interrupt, but who wouldn't take a chance to laugh at that, Gavin's a little romantic, who'd'uh'thunk it? And being part of some kind of god prophecy, pretty cool huh? still not as cool as what I've got going on *one of Halkin's lidless glowing eyes fades out and in as if winking* It's not all talk, I swear!