

A detailed illustration of Gotrek Gurnisson, a large, grey-skinned Ork. He has a tall, spiky orange mohawk and a thick, braided orange beard. He wears black eyepatches and a gold chain around his neck. He is holding a large, ornate sword with a dark blade and a hilt decorated with gold and red patterns. He wears grey armor with gold accents and a large gold ring on his finger.

**WARHAMMER®**  
THE END TIMES

# GOTREK & FELIX REMEMBERERS

A STORY OF THE DOOM OF GOTREK GURNISSON  
DAVID GUYMER

# GOTREK & FELIX: REMEMBERERS

David Guymer

*This story takes place in Winter 2526, between the events of Kinslayer and Slayer.*

Felix had never witnessed an aurora so far south. The Winds of Magic boiled across the broken sky in waves of blue, purple and green, visible wherever the clouds were rent by thunder. The light storm rolled across the swollen body of the Urskoy, and shimmered in the hundreds of silted pools that pocked the surrounding tidal flats. The air was thick and dry with the smell of salt.

The floods were seasonal – a confluence of circumstance arising from the thawing of the oblast, rainfall and the rising tide in Altwasser Bay. It was a small thing, but it was heartening to find that some natural order still held even as the world around it was picked to pieces by Chaos. It grounded him when the sky turned molten and ran like old fat in a skillet. The stars moved, the world turned, winter became spring, but some things he could still recognise and find heart.

The Empire.

It had taken him a year, but he was home.

Felix shrugged his rag of red cloak over one shoulder and brought up his sword. A Kurgan warrior squelched through the thick mud towards him. The warrior's armour was bullhide, layered with leather and furs. He brought up his sword, a long Kislevite-style *koncerz* made serrated by long misuse as a hacking weapon. His young, disarmingly smooth face wore a quixotic spiralling eye tattoo in woad over the left side, mouth split by a war cry that Felix didn't hear over the pound of thunder.

They were getting younger all the time.

The northman's sword struck Felix's guard. There was an explosion of thunder, an echo of steel, colours swimming through the blades as the Kurgan warrior's slid down the angle of Karaghul. An offhand twist of the shoulder sent the northman stumbling across Felix's body, opening up his back and side. Felix fought against the mud's downward pull, drove his stance a foot sideways across the Kurgan's fall, then reversed his grip on his runesword and plunged the weapon through the thick hide over the warrior's lower back. The youth stiffened as though struck by lightning and crashed facedown into the soft mud.

Felix withdrew his sword, steadied his stance as much as he could, then turned back to check on the others.

Fighting was spread out over half a league of the tidal flats, as far back as the ford where the Urskoy met the Talabec in a froth of gemstone shallows and rippling colour. The flats were littered with rubble. Felix doubted whether even a dwarf could build a structure strong enough to stand on this ground, and he assumed that what he was seeing was the remnants of the Auric Bastion, the quasi-magical barrier that had once stretched from the Sea of Claws to the Worlds Edge Mountains, and that had, for a time, held the hordes of Chaos in abeyance at the Empire's gates. Now its ruined foundations provided cover for greatcoated bow kossars as they traded fire with their Kurgan counterparts. Warriors with axes and spears battled between the man-sized hunks of polished basalt. The aurora rendered their armaments weird and magical, the mud reducing Kurgan and Kislevite to the same brute, warring savage.

To the south, a twist of black smoke hung pinned against the sky like a warning. Bechafen

possibly, but it was impossible to be certain.

To the west, deeper into the Empire's heartlands, the scattered Chaos rearguard thickened towards a distance that held what looked like a mighty host. They glittered under the aurora like marbles scattered across black felt, thousands upon thousands, filling the wide flats and the woods beyond. More than enough to crush Felix and his small band of survivors if they chose to. If they *cared* to. Towering siege engines jagged the forested horizon, dark spikes silhouetted between sheets of lightning.

It was like being trapped behind the underbite of some titanic monster.

'No place like home, is there, Empire?'

The Kislevite, Kolya, regarded him from a stand of rubble with what could only be called a sardonic tilt of his Kurgan composite bow. Horsehair and coloured ribbons fluttered from its recurved tips. The aurora picked out the simple colours of the hennaed horse tattoo on the bare muscle of his left arm.

Felix grunted in reply. He had never managed to like the man. It didn't help that he had never really tried.

Kolya grinned, aimed at a point over Felix's shoulder, and fired.

The arrow punched through the leather cheek guard of a Kurgan marauder, part of a mob half a dozen strong that had converged on the spot where the muscular dwarfish bulk of Gotrek Gurnisson spat and raged. The dwarf was rooted to his knees in mud, like a tree that had been hit by lightning, twisted by fire into this brutal inhuman form, scrawled with spiralling blue symbols and appeased with offerings of blood by some wild woodland cult. The shot warrior was spun and dropped just as the Slayer's massive axe swung towards his neck. Gotrek readjusted with a roar, turning the throat slash into a gut punch, delivered to the warrior on his left seconds after another arrow split the lamellar leather of the Kurgan's chest piece.

'You're doing that on purpose, you horse-loving—'

Whatever choice phrase the Slayer had intended to dedicate to the Kislevite disappeared under a long rumble of thunder.

A third warrior went down under a crashing backhand, blood spraying from his shattered face. The remainder fled, or tried to, the last finding his feet stuck. The warrior screamed. Gotrek bared his broken teeth, his upper body swelling as he swept his enormous axe overhead and, with a diagonal cut from rib to hip, hacked the man's legs from his torso. Gotrek's grin was terrible.

Felix looked away, sickened, and shook his head.

'Over here, rememberer!'

A residual tug of compulsion drew Felix towards that barked summons before he registered that it was no longer directed at him. Kolya winked, then braced one foot against the armoured chest of a human corpse and closed both hands around the Slayer's forearm. So massive was the dwarf's arm that the fingers of the Kislevite's hands didn't come close to meeting. He pulled. Gotrek swore, mud slurping hungrily around his calves. Thunder rolled.

'They're heading west on our road,' Felix yelled, shouting to be heard over the screams of earth and sky. 'An army of that size can only be marching on Talabheim.'

Gotrek's leg slid free. The Slayer growled, hawking up a gob of phlegm and spitting on the ground that had dared to trap him. At the same time, his thumb worked around the empty bruise-like socket of his eye, dislodging a gritty sludge of blood and silt.

'You are welcome,' said Kolya, wearing his sarcasm and his smile like a mail coat.

'Gotrek?' asked Felix.

'I'm not deaf, manling,' the Slayer roared over the thunder. 'Nor am I blind.'

'We have to do something.'

Gotrek snorted. 'Take on fifty thousand northmen at the least, with a handful of Ostermarkers thinner than their boot leather and that Kislevite rabble?'

'You are welcome,' Kolya said again.

Felix scowled and ignored him. Kislev was dead, but the Empire was still there to be saved. He wasn't fool enough to think that he could do it alone, but he didn't doubt that the power to make a difference was in his hands.

'It would be a mighty doom,' said Kolya, almost wistfully, looking back to the Urskoy ford and, perhaps, the once-mighty nation beyond.

Gotrek ground his teeth. His shoulders bulged and clenched, as though left warred with right.

*Do it*, Felix's mind urged.

It wasn't that he particularly wished to throw his life away, or those of his friends, nor even that the Slayer particularly deserved the glorious death he had sought for so long.

But he needed there to be something of his old companion left under the bitterness and the hate.

'Let the Talabheimers fret over Talabheim,' Gotrek growled, voice like flint. 'The End Times come for her. We're bound for Altdorf by the safest road.'

Felix hung his head.

There could be no doom for Gotrek Gurnisson. Not here, not yet, and no release for his rememberers. The Slayer had blood on his hands, and, more powerful than that, an oath to keep, to return Felix to his wife and – perhaps – his child.

Surrounded by the ruddy glow of his rune-axe the dwarf pointed north, downriver where the Kurgan rearguard was thinnest, and into the black-green mass of Ostland's Great Forest. Coming from an Empire man, it felt akin to a dwarf confessing a phobia of stone, but Felix had always hated forests.

The safest road.

It was relative, Felix was sure.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**David Guymer** is the author of the Gotrek & Felix novels *Kinslayer* and *City of the Damned*, along with the novella *Thorgrim* and a plethora of short stories set in the worlds of Warhammer and Warhammer 40,000. He is a freelance writer and occasional scientist based in the East Riding, and was a finalist in the 2014 David Gemmell Legend Awards for his novel *Headtaker*.

As the chaos of the End Times engulfs Kislev, Gotrek and Felix are reunited, battling the hordes of the Troll King alongside Ulrika, Snorri and Max. But when long-hidden secrets are revealed, these old friends will be torn apart, and not all of them will leave Kislev alive...



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