

# Qiliria Tallrene

## and the Secret History of Roksunay

**Q**iliria Tallrene is a complicated villain that cannot be simply defeated through brute force. Any attempt to oppose her will require the party to gather a large amount of information and likely a powerful team of allies. While plenty of information will be provided in the borough guides, this document will serve as a useful reference piece that enumerates the finer points of Qiliria's backstory, motivations, powers, and plans.

You should feel free to adapt Qiliria to your own settings and narratives however you see fit. If you'd rather make her a dragon in disguise, a secret good guy, or someone with a more straightforward origin, the rest of Ancora Bay and its web of intrigue should still broadly function as designed. This document simply lists *one* canonical explanation of her origins and abilities.

Though this document is thorough, the specifics can be summarized as follows:

- For centuries, the Transom Empire used transference magic to heal their citizens by offloading their diseases onto the dark elves. Dark elf populations dwindled.
- Qiliria (a dark elf) sought revenge for this crime and rebelled against the Empire.
- After convincing the king to aid her, she teamed up with the Gatherers to summon the comet that caused the Calamity. She had hoped it would open a gate to the Dee'p, but instead it created a permanent link to the Plane of Water.
- Qiliria returned underground, and decided to bide her time until she could become more powerful. She took advantage of her dark elven brethren to find a powerful artifact that gave her immense power.
- With the **Neverlight Amulet**, she was able to easily rise through the ranks of the Corian Fleet, which she plans to use as her personal defense force.
- She re-established contact with the Gatherers and plans to use them to help her summon another comet to Roksunay. She hopes to finally succeed in finally opening a door to the Dee'p, bringing darkness to Roksunay.
- The Gatherers—under Qiliria's orders—have been kidnapping halflings to harvest their fingers for necromantic magic. After having their fingers removed, the halflings will be used to aid in their ritual magic.

### Qiliria's Origins

Qiliria Tallrene was born in an age of decay and misery amongst her dark elven brethren. Though the dark elves had once built thriving underground metropolises to rival even the greatest cities of the Transom Empire, their peoples were now on the verge of extinction. Dark elves are naturally a hardy race, but over the past few centuries, they had become increasingly beset by seemingly inexplicable bouts of terrible illnesses. Failed pregnancies and the sudden onset of severe illnesses became commonplace. The biologically diverse subterranean kingdoms, once dominated by the dark elves, started to fall into anarchy.

Over time, brave scouts ventured aboveground in search of answers. Though it was not easy, they were able to gradually piece together a coherent story: the Transom elves were wielding transference<sup>1</sup> magic to "bequeath" maladies on the dark elves. The great Transom magi hadn't mastered the curative arts at all, but were simply offloading the gravest of diseases to any unlucky dark elf that happened to be chosen by their counterbalanced magic. Complicated medical rituals could grant Transom citizens good health, but the nature of this transference magic required an equal response: for every man, woman, or child healed, one random dark elf would fall ill.

Qiliria was 50 years old—young for an elf—when her people made this discovery. She had lost her parents to presumed transferred diseases, and she now swore vengeance. She inspired teams of allies to form raiding parties, wreaking havoc on Transom cities by cover of night. The dissidents she commanded struck at medical clinics first and foremost, killing the Transom magi responsible for inflicting such grievous harm on her people.

Attacking infirmaries and other medical facilities struck fear into the hearts of Transom citizens. Clearly, only a heartless, wicked villain would make themselves known through such wantonly immoral acts. Of course, Qiliria and her dark elven kin saw it differently: they were simply restoring a fairer balance to the health of all in Roksunay. The dark elves had their means of treating maladies (typically through moderately potent alchemical mixtures), and it was criminal that the Transom elves were solving their problems by simply dumping diseases on their subterranean relatives.

At the time, it is important to note that Qiliria had no profound powers. She had some limited abilities common to most dark elves—a great lifespan, superior senses, and a minor capacity to manipulate shadows—but nothing of the sort she currently wields.

1. Described in greater detail in Ancora Bay  
03 - The Sinking Slums

# The Secret History of Roksunay

After considerable damage was dealt to Transom cities, Qiliria was eventually captured and brought to King Artamian to face justice. There was relief amongst the public, who were all certain that she would be put to death for her grievous crimes. Instead, the fair king listened to Qiliria's side of the story. To Qiliria's great surprise, he seemed utterly oblivious to the exact nature of Transom medical techniques. Aghast at the immorality of these arcane procedures, he swore to Qiliria they would find a better solution.

Coincidentally, King Artamian's newly appointed archmage had some promising ideas of his own. The previous archmage, a disobedient academic named Ydith, had recently feld the elven capital to pursue dangerous lines of research into the nature of transference magic. As such, King Artamian hired a druid mystic with unorthodox beliefs and unconventional wisdom to see if he might fare better. This new appointee—who simply referred to himself as "Fallen Star"—had a unique idea to solve their dark elf problem: if the Transom Empire could find a new group of people on whom to heap their health impediments, they would no longer face riots. Fallen Star, a researcher of the cosmos, theorized that there might be large groups of bizarre creatures in the skies above Roksunay—strangers from the stars—who might be better vessels for Transom ailments.

Qiliria agreed to the plan and said that she would call off the attacks on the Empire if the plan succeeded. King Artamian acquiesced as well.

To enact the plan, Fallen Star would first have to summon the creatures to Roksunay, a process that he believed would be possible with enough focused ritual magic. The King created a task force of powerful mystics to build a secret underground spell focus, colossal and complex, to help amplify their collective magic. After months of practice and careful arcane engineering, Fallen Star, Qiliria, and the group of mystics (referred to as The Gatherers<sup>2</sup>) began to summon the starry beings to Roksunay.

But all was not as it seemed.

The plan had changed, and King Artamian was none the wiser. There was nothing moral about bringing a new population of beings to Roksunay only to be subjugated and implanted with diseases. The mere thought of keeping alien creatures in cages and treating them worse than dogs seemed despicable to Qiliria. She would not stand for it. And now that the Empire had failed her twice, she resorted to even more drastic measures. Fallen Star was a tricky mage, and much more powerful and devious than he let on. He regaled Qiliria with arcane potentials that she had never considered and that Fallen Star had never shared with the King. He *could* summon creatures from beyond the stars, but he could also do something much more violent.

Qiliria and Fallen Star worked with the Gatherers in private, helping them to retool their rituals. No longer would they summon individual creatures, but an entire astral body: a comet. The comet would pierce through Roksunay with such force that it would open (she thought!) a hole, a portal into the Dee'p, the realm of her God. Pandemonium would ensue, and the Transom Empire would fall. Darkness would fill the sky, and the oppressed creatures toiling away in cavernous cities would rule over the ashes of the old world.

Qiliria's plans had shifted from ridding her people of a great injustice to remaking the entire world just to suit them. By connecting the Dee'p to the terrestrial world, she could create a Roksunay befitting her people, one of shadow and chaos, where the weak-willed magi and their subjects would be powerless, but the dark elves could thrive. With the perfect geometry and the occultish magic of the Gatherers, she could pierce the heavens. A gate to rapture was in her grasp. The Dee'p would be brought to Roksunay.

Somehow, though, she miscalculated. Perhaps the mystical magics were simply less predictable than she had thought, or maybe someone betrayed her intentions. Perhaps Fallen Star was able to interfere, or maybe—more likely—everyone involved could not fully understand the infinitely complex arcane systems at play. Plans proceeded as Qiliria intended at first: the Gatherers amplified their magic, manipulated the arc of a passing comet, and pulled it toward Roksunay. The comet struck Mt. Keltrak, piercing a great hole in their plane of existence. But the comet did not in fact reach through into Dee'pak's domain, but into the Plane of Water, an endless sea that became dimensionally linked to Roksunay. Water began draining into Roksunay, flowing freely from a maelstrom on the Plane of Water and out into the crater punctured by the comet.

The rest is more or less history. King Artamian died from the shockwave, Fallen Star went into hiding, and Qiliria—disappointed with her grand vision unfulfilled—returned to the largely unaffected underground realm of the dark elves. The original Gatherers proliferated across the now flooded world, spreading the gospel of the Astral Father. The seas rose, people fled to the high ground, and a new world was born.

## After the Calamity

Qiliria had "won," in that there was no longer a Transom Empire to shackle her people to constant malady, but she had come so close to an even greater change to the natural order of Roksunay. The power of Gatherer magic was *so tempting*. She now knew that it was possible to crack the very fiber of Roksunay and remake it with extraplanar influence. But she cared not for water... What good was water? She wanted darkness: revenge on the world that had given her nothing even after she had forced it to bend to her will.

2. Indeed, these mystics were the original Gatherers, and it is from them that the gospel of the Astral Father began to spread 80 years ago.



## Ydith and Viriline

Ydith was a powerful practitioner of transference magic, and she believed that there were more efficient and less destructive ways to wield its power. She had sought the help of Viriline, a mysterious priestess, in a quest to more fully “dispose of” the negative attributes removed through the use of transference magic. Thought it was not Ydith’s primary goal, she had believed that with Viriline’s aid that they would be able to siphon off diseases from Transom citizens and thrust them into the Void, as opposed to on blameless dark elves.

The science was sound. Viriline was a devotee of Früggund, God of the Void, and with their combined magics, Ydith was certain they could simply capture bad energy (anything from physical pain and diseases to storms and madness), and deliver them unto the abyss. The tenuous equilibrium necessary for transference magic remained balanced, so the only limitations were the abilities of those conducting the rituals.

One of their greatest tests in this endeavor was to siphon some of the strength and rage of four colossal titans scattered around Roksunay. With Ydith’s studied wizardry and Viriline’s abyssal divinity, they were able to drain the titans of a portion of their power and redirect it into a single onyx cabochon. This became the **Neverlight Amulet**, the source of Qiliria’s power.

Ydith and Viriline were never able to complete their goals to the extent that they wished. The Roksunay that they knew was annihilated. They were, however, high up in the Viriline’s mountaintop temple during the Calamity, protecting them from the initial blast. As a shockwave of destruction swept across the land, they exhausted all of their magical energy to transfer as much suffering as they could from the dying masses. The swirling echoes of agony, unfelt by those who lost their lives, still resonate in the Void to this day.

She needed to try again, but this time she needed to be more powerful. She needed to ensure no one could oppose her, that she would survive the impact, and that she could command armies to lead in the aftermath. She needed a team of mystics far greater than the original Gatherers. Most all, she needed to ensure that when the world was reborn anew, she would be able to rid it of weakness and rule as its master. Qiliria was strong, but not yet strong enough.

Luckily, she had been wise to pay attention while imprisoned by King Artamian. His loose-lipped spies had learned much of the research of his former archmage Ydith, who had been able to harness great magical power in an artifact she called the **Neverlight Amulet**.

After returning to her underground home, Qiliria was heralded as a hero. The flooded world above was of no consequence to the dark elves in their cavernous lairs. Qiliria had succeeded beyond their wildest dreams. Though their numbers had shrunk considerably, there was finally hope for the dark elves, free from unpredictable disease and the scourge of transference magic. Qiliria was given great authority to lead the dark elves into what they thought would be a new golden age.

Instead, Qiliria grew obsessed with finding the **Neverlight Amulet** and using it to usher in a new era of dark magic across Roksunay. She set her kin to work, at first scouring libraries, and eventually digging through ruins. The manpower simply wasn’t sufficient. It would take 10,000 years to dig through every decrepit temple and laboratory across the wide world of Roksunay.

Qiliria had to yet again resort to more unconventional means. She sought the aid of Vordsor, a mad cave creature with powerful psychic abilities. Vordsor agreed to help, but only if he was provided with ample “fuel” for his telepathic abilities: brains. He promised that with sufficient grey matter, he could tap into the minds of countless souls, both living and dead. He could scour the collective thoughts and memories of anyone on Roksunay. Desperately, Qiliria agreed. Though their numbers were few, scores of dark elves gave their lives so that Qiliria could fuel Vordsor’s psychic probes. Qiliria demanded, and they obeyed. And ultimately: it worked. Vordsor found the **Neverlight Amulet**, Qiliria went topside to recover it, and the artifact gave Qiliria the power she desperately desired.

## Qiliria’s Plan

With the powers granted to her by the **Neverlight Amulet**, the aid of the Corian Fleet, and the limited resistance likely to oppose her in the still recovering Roksunay, Qiliria feels confident that the time is right to enact her master stroke. She’s going to summon a second comet, and this time she will succeed in merging this world with the realm of shadow and chaos. She has sacrificed too much for the plan to fail now. With all of the pieces in place, most of what remains is organization.

The Gatherers of today have next to nothing in common with the Gatherers who aided her 80 years ago. Though a few of the original Gatherers still live, their teachings and their purpose have become twisted and distorted over the decades. Worship of the Astral Father is much more about self-improvement, justice, and freedom from tyranny. Those are *elements* of Qiliria's aims as well, but the direct goals of the Gatherers were once much more tangible. The "rebirth of Roksunay" was much less a metaphor about actualization, and much more a literal desire to reshape the world in flames and madness.

Organizing the Gatherers, reteaching the ritual magic required to summon a comet anew, and keeping their aims quiet in the meantime will be no easy feat. Qiliria will need dedicated allies and unerring discretion. Additionally, she believes she may need quite a bit more total magical resonance in order to perfect her ritual. The Gatherers have been re-upping their recruitment methods, both legitimate and duplicitous.

The Corian Fleet is largely Qiliria's contingency plan. If the various armed forces of the world learn of Qiliria's plans and try to confront her, she needs an adequate army to hold them back as she and the Gatherers work their ritual magic. If the Corian Fleet seems insufficient in the face of mounting pressure from Roksunay-wide resistance, she will attempt to make inroads with unallied forces: the dwarves, the Leukotheans, and the shima kame are all potential partners that Qiliria has identified as being optional targets of manipulation campaigns.

Meanwhile, she is enlisting the aid of necromancer Triles Moundfoot<sup>3</sup> to create an army of unwavering undead. Triles requires massive quantities of spell components to produce warriors out of skeletons and corpses, and the ingredient in shortest supply is halfling fingers. For whatever reason, halfling fingers are a necessary alchemical component in Triles's unconventional necromantic spellcasting. It is this portion of Qiliria's plan that necessitates the mass kidnappings of halflings from Ancora Bay's hillside. Once stripped of their precious fingers, the halflings are loaded onto Corian ships to sail east, where they will aid Qiliria in her second ritual.

Without adequate opposition, Qiliria *will* succeed. She will assemble a massive force of ritual mystics to the Gatherers' stronghold in the eastern seas, and together they will crack a hole in Roksunay, allowing for the merging of this world and the underworld. It is up to the newly arrived party of adventurers to save Roksunay from Qiliria and her schemes.

