

# DRAGON AGE™



## FACES OF THEDAS: TALLIS

The deadly and witty elf assassin called Tallis is an exciting new addition to the world of *Dragon Age*, debuting simultaneously in the original web series, *Dragon Age: Redemption*, written by and starring Felicia Day, and the *Dragon Age II* downloadable content, *Mark of the Assassin*. Felicia Day created the character of Tallis and portrays her in both projects. Now, with this short DLC for the *Dragon Age* tabletop roleplaying game, GMs can import this intriguing character into their own campaigns.

Is Tallis an ally or a rival? Is she out to aid or thwart your campaign's PCs? Does she spark a new adventure or add complexity to one already underway? In the dynamic stories of the *Dragon Age* RPG, anything's possible.

The following pages give you background lore and game statistics for Tallis so you can use her in your campaign. We also present a short interview with Felicia Day, spotlighting her creation and portrayal of Tallis, so you can get a clearer idea of how to play the part in your own RPG adventures. What's here builds

on, but does not spoil, the various projects in which Tallis appears. For more information, enjoy *Mark of the Assassin* and *Redemption*.

If you are new to the pen and paper *Dragon Age* RPG, check out the [free \*Dragon Age\* Quickstart Guide PDF](#).

## FELICIA DAY TALKS TALLIS

Felicia Day created Tallis, wrote the script for *Dragon Age: Redemption*, and portrayed Tallis both in the web series and DLC featuring the character. Who better to give us some tips on understanding Tallis and playing the part? Whether you're setting out to create your own character in the *Dragon Age* world or planning to include Tallis herself in your campaign, Day's experience is a great guide.

"Before them I was nothing. I was a slave. My parents sold me into it. The Qunari gave me refuge, a purpose, and a name: Tallis."

—Tallis, *Dragon Age: Redemption*

**Question:** Did you create a lot of background lore for Tallis? What was your inspiration or aim for her as a fictional character? What's her history in the world of *Dragon Age*?

**Felicia Day:** My inspiration for Tallis came mostly from the urban fantasy and high fantasy books I read. Authors like Jim Butcher and Ilona Andrews and Brent Weeks, Brandon Sanderson, Rachel Caine, et al, inspired me with interesting and relatable female characters. I read a lot. :)

Basically I wanted Tallis to be a strong female protagonist who didn't have to apologize for who she was or what she did. She uses humor as a defense mechanism. She uses her wit to keep the upper hand and people from getting close. I also wanted her to be relatable, the voice of the viewer seeing a fantasy world through her eyes.

I created quite a backstory around her, especially around the history of how she came to be an elf in service to the Qun. I was particularly interested in the way elves function in the *Dragon Age* universe; they are essentially trapped between worlds, with little freedom to define themselves. Not to spoil anything, but her childhood background is from the Tevinter Imperium, where elves are legally enslaved. The fact that she's trying to have the most freedom she can in a strictly confining world was a very interesting conflict for me.

**Q:** How much do you need to know about a character before you're ready to play the part? Where does the writing process end and the performance process begin?

**FD:** The more you know about your character the easier it is to write and play the part. However it's using two parts of the brain. Letting go of the writer brain and thinking of the character in a human way is a huge step in the process, but also the hardest. As a writer you're master of all; if a line doesn't work, you can rewrite it, a moment clunky, you can change it. As an actor you take what is given to you and have to rationalize why that line or moment would come from you as a human being. You think emotionally and treat the script as truth, add your personality to the template of the words. Surprisingly, when I put that acting hat on I discovered things about the character that I never thought of while writing, so it's really interesting.

**Q:** How did the lore of Thedas inform your creation and portrayal of Tallis? How is she like or unlike an archetypal *Dragon Age* elf or rogue?

**FD:** The lore of *Dragon Age* was sacrosanct to me. I studied the world for a few months before I ever put pen to paper. Sometimes we couldn't get all the physical details exact because of budget and scope of a web series, but I tried to portray all the characters as if they were playable characters in the game, the stories as if they could be pulled from side-quests in the game. Tallis's point of view is unique from what we've seen before, in that other races living under the way of the Qun haven't been featured. Learning more about the Qun lore, how a non-zealot could function in that very strict society, was immensely interesting to me. She's highly practical, with her self-interest at the forefront, [and while] her morality changes based on her overall goals, deep inside she's good-aligned, even though she tries to fight it.

**Q:** What does Tallis want? Why might she join with (or oppose!) adventurers on further quests throughout Thedas?

**FD:** Tallis wants to preserve her own freedom to exist as she wants to and she will change her immediate agenda based on that overall agenda. She has a hard time following orders or doing things other people's way (including her superiors'). But deep down inside I think she's much more spiritual than she lets on. She *does* believe in the Qun as the only way an elf can exist in Thedas society to the fullest. The egalitarian nature of the Qun society is fairest to her, so even though there are downsides that she will readily admit to, it is the best she can do and she'll defend their way of life over others.

**Q:** Any advice for players and GMs trying to get into character as Tallis? Any guidance on her style, methods, or demeanor?

**FD:** Tallis fights dirty. I always expect her to get the first blow in, start a fight as a distraction, throw another player in the way of a sword, etc. All with a smirk. She breaks the rules and doesn't apologize for it. Chaotic Good for sure :)



## BACKGROUND

"I may be Qunari but I was raised an elf."

—Tallis, *Dragon Age: Redemption*

She was born a city elf. In what remains of the debauched and once-vast Tevinter Imperium, elves may be legally enslaved. Her parents sold her into servitude to escape debt, fatten their pockets, or simply be rid of her. Perhaps it was easy for them, perhaps it wasn't—the result was the same. She was a slave-elf, bound to service in the sordid empire of Tevinter, where hope for a slave is scant.

Salvation came with the Qun. She converted to its ways and became, thus, a Qunari. She joined the Qun as a Viddithari but her superiors quickly recognized her potential. The religious order called the Ben'Hassrath drew her into its strict ranks, where Qunari serve as something akin to spiritual counselors and overseers of behavior.

They gave her the name Tallis. Like all Qunari designations, it is both name and title. It means "to solve."

She hasn't always been, and may not always be, Tallis. Her name is her function, and she has been Athlok—a common laborer—in addition to an often cunning, often violent solution to the problems of the Qunari. But she isn't perfect. She's slipped and fallen down the ranks of the Qun once already, from Tallis to Athlok, and she may yet slip or soar in the future.

As Tallis, she has tangled with templars and mages and monsters. Though she once dwelt within the bounds of the Tevinter Imperium, she has also made a name for herself in the Free Marches, where she had dealings with the Champion of Kirkwall.

Through all of her adventures, she has never forgotten the lessons of her past. She is a rare creature and her unique perspective gives her an edge she knows how to use well, in battle or in conversation. She covers her pains and smothers her fears with her wit, but she is no fool. She fights dirty, but is not without honor.

Despite the poise and order of the Qun, however, Tallis's future is as difficult to predict as her past has been to survive. Who knows where she may reenter the history of the Dragon Age again?

## FURTHER ADVENTURES

Tallis is a great character for instigating new adventures... or complicating ones already underway. As a dynamic and driven character backed by the power of the Qunari, you have lots of options when it comes to involving Tallis in your own at-home game adventures. Her missions typically come from the Qunari and, as Tallis, her task is to solve problems. Yet solving one



problem often leads to another. Working for the Qunari often means meddling in the affairs of outsiders, as their chaotic interactions are a common source of Qunari problems. The Qun says that struggle is an illusion, but Tallis is often surrounded by those who seem deaf to the Qun.

If the Player Characters in your campaign are new adventurers, perhaps a low-level Tallis happens upon them and asks for their help to complete a dangerous mission early in her career, when she's Tallis the first time. Perhaps she needs local guides to accompany her into some monster-infested territory. Maybe she wants people who know the ins and outs of area power struggles to help her get close to a target of assassination—whether she admits this is her goal or not.

If your PCs are already well-established heroes, she might come looking for them directly, as part of some important mission. (This is essentially the premise for Tallis's team-up with Hawke in *Mark of the Assassin*.) Your PCs might already have a relationship with Qunari or even a Qunari in the party, naturally enriching or complicating their social dynamic with Tallis. Maybe their reputations precede them in Thedas?

Also consider carefully the difference between what the *players* know of Tallis and what their *characters* are likely to know. She's not in the business of legendary heroics or grand fame—she's an assassin in the employ of a foreign culture. Use that to your adventure's advantage by challenging the players to portray their characters as if they know little or nothing about Tallis.

In game terms, a successful **TN 13 Cunning (Qun) test** tells a character that "Tallis" is a Qunari title for members of the Ben'Hassrath, a quasi-religious order of spiritual counselors and social police. Success with a 5 or 6 on the Dragon Die recognizes Tallis specifically as a Qunari assassin. Anything more than that requires the **Contacts Talent** and a **Communication (Persuasion) test**—start at **TN 18** and modify the difficulty if

the meeting takes place after a notorious local adventure of Tallis's (e.g., if the PCs are around Kirkwall) or for other reasonable factors, such as:

CIRCUMSTANCE	TN MODIFIER
PC is from Tevinter	TN -1
PC is a city elf	TN -1
PC is a Qunari	TN -2

Alternately, Tallis could already be closely tied to the history or fate of the PCs in your campaign's version of Thedas. You might decide that your campaign is set early in Tallis's career and play some kind of prequel story about her early adventures in which the PCs make a major impact on her life. Maybe Tallis and a PC share a common history as slaves, as Qunari—or even as Qunari with the role of Tallis in common!

## TALLIS AND THEME

Tallis's tale is a milestone in the *Dragon Age* saga. Before her story, friction within the Qunari was largely hidden from characters outside that society. Through Tallis, we the audience come to understand a great deal more about the Qunari. If Tallis encounters your PCs, be prepared to reveal a bit about the Qunari through Tallis... or to have a witty response to deflect questions about them.

As Qunari culture smashes against Thedan culture, Tallis represents both the good and the bad things that result. On the one hand, she's gone from poverty to adventure, slavery to power, through a path of difficult training—she's made herself a vital part of something larger than herself. On the other hand, her vital role finds her embroiled in peril and bloodshed at every turn and she has not found the Qun to be as easy to fulfill as she might have hoped. Still, she knows that for many people, the Qun is actually an improvement over their previous lot in life. That can be difficult for natives of Thedas to accept.

## CREDITS



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TALLIS		LEVEL 1 ROGUE	
TALLIS'S STARTING STATISTICS.			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
2	COMMUNICATION* (DECEPTION)		
2	CONSTITUTION		
3	CUNNING		
3	DEXTERITY* (INITIATIVE, STEALTH)		
0	MAGIC		
2	PERCEPTION*		
1	STRENGTH		
2	WILLPOWER		
COMBAT RATINGS			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
15	30	13	3
ATTACKS			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
SHORT SWORDS	+3	1D6+3	
DAGGERS	+3	1D6+2	
POWERS			
<b>CLASS POWERS:</b> <i>Backstab and Rogue's Armor.</i>			
<b>TALENTS:</b> <i>Scouting (Novice).</i>			
<b>WEAPON GROUPS:</b> <i>Bows, Brawling, Light Blades, and Staves.</i>			
EQUIPMENT			
LIGHT LEATHER ARMOR, SHORT SWORDS, AND DAGGERS.			

Tales involving Tallis also often involve questions of loyalty and treachery. Without spoiling *Mark of the Assassin* or *Redemption*, it is enough to say that when assassins step on stage, treachery is often at work *somewhere*. Whether she's forming uneasy and fleeting alliances for the sake of solving the problems put before her, or she's cutting the throat of some murderous turncoat, Tallis can seldom truly trust those she must work with. Likewise, they should be wary of expecting her to be anything other than what she is – cunning, effective, tricky Tallis.

## RPG GAME STATS

Tallis is an experienced character when she first appears in *Mark of the Assassin* and *Redemption*, so we've included game stats for her at 10th level. Some players and GMs may want to speculate about Tallis's history during play, however, or include her in the early days of an archetypal *Dragon Age* RPG campaign, so we've included stats for a 1st-level Tallis, as well.

TALLIS		LEVEL 10 ROGUE	
TALLIS'S EXPERIENCED STATISTICS.			
ABILITIES (FOCUSES)			
4	COMMUNICATION* (DECEPTION, INVESTIGATION, PERSUASION)		
2	CONSTITUTION (RUNNING)		
5	CUNNING (ARCANE LORE, QUN)		
5	DEXTERITY* (ACROBATICS, LIGHT BLADES, INITIATIVE, STEALTH)		
0	MAGIC		
3	PERCEPTION* (SEEING)		
2	STRENGTH		
3	WILLPOWER (COURAGE)		
COMBAT RATINGS			
SPEED	HEALTH	DEFENSE	ARMOR RATING
17	84	15	3
ATTACKS			
WEAPON	ATTACK ROLL	DAMAGE	
SHORT SWORDS	+7	1D6+4	
DAGGERS	+7	1D6+3	
POWERS			
<b>FAVORED STUNTS:</b> <i>Pierce Armor (1 SP), Lightning Attack (2 SP), and That Makes Me Wonder (2 SP).</i>			
<b>CLASS POWERS:</b> <i>Backstab, Rogue's Armor, Bluff, Dirty Fighting, and Lethality.</i>			
<b>TALENTS:</b> <i>Assassin (Master), Scouting (Novice), Dual-Weapon Style (Journeyman), Thrown-Weapon Style (Journeyman).</i>			
<b>WEAPON GROUPS:</b> <i>Bows, Brawling, Light Blades, and Staves.</i>			
EQUIPMENT			
LIGHT LEATHER ARMOR, SHORT SWORDS, AND DAGGERS.			

Characters adapted from the *Dragon Age* video games to the *Dragon Age* RPG do not come out with identical abilities and statistics, obviously – each game focuses on a different style of play. Many of Tallis's standout abilities correspond well to Focuses and Talents in our game, for example, but not everything maps directly from *Dragon Age II* to the tabletop.

These statistics were crafted using **Set 1** and **Set 2** of the *Dragon Age* RPG. With those sets, and the 1st-level stats presented here, you can easily level up an alternate version of Tallis for use in your campaign.