

= Yu Narukami =

Yu Narukami ( ??? , Narukami Y? ) is a fictional character introduced in Atlus 's role @-@ playing game Shin Megami Tensei : Persona 4 . As the protagonist of the game , Yu is a silent character whose thoughts and actions are decided by the player . He appears as a high school student who moves to Inaba to live with his uncle and cousin while his parents are busy working . Shortly after arriving to Inaba , Yu starts investigating a murder case alongside his school mates and explores an alternate dimension where he obtains a power known as " Persona " to confront the " Shadows " , the creatures who have murdered the first victims . Yu has also appeared in other works related to Persona 4 , including an anime adaptation called Persona 4 : The Animation , a manga version , and several sequels and spin @-@ offs to the game . For these works , Yu received his own characterization and development in the stories . He has been voiced by Daisuke Namikawa in Japanese and Johnny Yong Bosch in English .

The protagonist of Persona 4 was designed by Shigenori Soejima who aimed to create an ambiguous character who could appeal to most players by way of reflecting several feelings towards them and through his mannerisms . For the anime , director Seiji Kishi expressed difficulties in giving the character emotions without damaging what the original staff created . Nevertheless , Yu 's characterization in the anime has been a subject of praise due to his portrayal as a mostly silent teenager whose few lines are related to the plot and in some cases , a source of comedy .

= = Character creation and traits = =

Character designer Shigenori Soejima made Yu with the idea that his entire personality be decided and portrayed by the player 's in @-@ game actions and decisions . As a result , he wanted Yu to look more ambiguous than Makoto Yuki , the protagonist of Shin Megami Tensei : Persona 3 . Soejima compared Yu to the Blue Ranger from the Power Rangers franchise as such character tends to stand silent to follow the orders from his leader . His character design stayed relatively similar to its initial conception , with his tone and facial expressions changing the most . The feature Soejima focused on most was his eyes : he thought that having his eyes under the fringe of his hair would make him " look cool . " The collar of his school uniform was made to stand a bit taller than other characters ' . In order to emphasize his being from a city , Yu was given a distinct , stylish haircut to contrast with other citizens of Inaba , a small town Yu moves to in the game . While designing the character , Soejima noted " the main character needs to be well @-@ rounded enough to be likeable , but also needs that extra little something to make him stand out from the rest of the cast . " He made a " baby face " sketch of the character so that he and the staff could discover Yu 's " special something " and discuss what would make him stand out as the protagonist .

Yu 's voice acting has been handled by Daisuke Namikawa in Japanese and Johnny Yong Bosch in English . Bosch felt uneasy about voicing Yu due to the fact he also voiced another character from the game , Tohru Adachi . However , when he initially learned that the protagonist would have very few lines , his worry evaporated . It was first planned that Yu 's voice actor for the anime would be recast , because he and Adachi would begin to interact several more times . However , in the end Bosch remained as the voice of Yu to avoid disappointing the game players . In order to solve the problem of having both of his characters sound too similar , he decided to speak in a lower register for Yu .

= = Differences in adaptations = =

In the initial Persona 4 game , the main player @-@ controlled character is known simply as the " Protagonist " or " Hero " , whose name is decided by the player . The name " Yu Narukami " was first given to the character in the 2011 anime adaptation , Persona 4 : The Animation , and has since been used in official games where the character is unable to be named by the player , beginning with Persona 4 Arena . Prior to this , he was given the name of S?ji Seta in the game 's manga adaptation . In an interview , game director Katsura Hashino drew attention to the way in which the

Protagonist remains silent and emotionless throughout the game . This leaves the player to interpret the Protagonist 's emotional reactions subjectively at any particular point . Hashino elaborated on this particular character trait becoming an obstacle for Persona 4 : The Animation 's director Seiji Kishi , since the character would undoubtedly have to speak and show some level of emotion . In the same interview , Kishi admitted the difficulty of transitioning the silent Protagonist into the anime without destroying what Hashino had already established .

A unique gesture of Yu 's in the anime occurs when he unbuttons his school jacket when summoning a Persona for the first time . Kishi noted this as being a " key " moment of " opening something that was closed . " However , he refrained from explaining its deeper meaning , leaving it instead as something for the viewers to ponder and hence helping them enjoy the adaptation much more . Another aspect made possible in the anime was Yu 's cool and composed nature during battle scenes . Hashino elaborated that it was possible to create such an attitude by having the fighting solely done by the Personas , thus establishing Yu as an emotionally strong character ? something which " would have lost its significance if he was given a weapon . "

= = Appearances = =

= = = In Persona 4 = = =

In Persona 4 , Yu Narukami is a high school student who moves to the countryside of Inaba to live with his uncle Ryotaro Dojima and cousin Nanako Dojima for a year as a result of his parents working abroad , and attends Yasogami High School where he meets most of the game 's cast . Upon learning of the Midnight Channel 's connection with the murders in Inaba , Yu gains access to the TV world , where he investigates the case alongside his friends and is appointed as their leader as a result of his experience . There he awakens his initial Persona , Izanagi ( ???? ) , a swordsman wearing a black coat , which he uses to fight embodiments of humans ' negative feelings , the Shadows .

Yu also has the unique " Wild Card " ( ???? , Wairudo ) ability , which allows him to swap Personas for use in battle . This is tied with the Social Links ( Community ( ?????? , Komyuniti ) in Japan ) mechanic : each bond Yu makes with other characters grants him access to more and much stronger Personas , each named after one of the Major Arcana of the Tarot deck . Yu 's own Arcana is The Fool , representing the group as a whole and personified by Izanagi , which later becomes the Judgement , when the Investigation Team realizes that Taro Namatame is not responsible for his actions and begin to seek out the real culprit behind the Inaba events ( This bond is represented by the Persona Lucifer ( ????? , Rushif? ) in the anime ) . After closing the serial murder case , Yu learns he gained his powers from the goddess Izanami who had been posing as the Moel gas station attendant and aims to transform people into Shadows . Yu defeats Izanami by transforming Izanagi into Izanagi @-@ no @-@ Okami ( ?????? , Izanagi @-@ no @-@ ?kami ) , representing The World , thanks to the power he gained from his many friends through Social Links . He then returns to his hometown , saying farewell to his friends .

= = = In Persona 4 : Arena = = =

In the fighting game Persona 4 Arena , Yu returns to Inaba and goes to the TV World alongside his friends to investigate a fighting tournament promoted in the Midnight Channel . As the group is unable to find the mastermind behind the competition , the Investigation Team decides to search for him . He fights using Izanagi , though during its strongest attack it transforms in Izanagi @-@ no @-@ Okami . His moveset was balanced for the sequel to make him more versatile as a result of comments regarding his character being too strong in the first game . The author behind Arena 's manga , Aiyakyuu , said that Yu was his favorite character and that whenever he draws him he thinks " Yu is so cool ! " Aiyakyuu also mentioned having trouble making the fight scene between Yu and Akihiko Sanada from Persona 3 as " Both characters wouldn 't easily lose to anyone . "

## == Persona 4 adaptations ==

In the Persona 4 manga , he is named S?ji Seta ( ?? ?? , Seta S?ji ) and is depicted as a distant but otherwise friendly teenager due having to move frequently as a result of his parents ' changing careers . He is also a supporting character in the manga Persona 4 : The Magician with the name of Yu Narukami . In the events of The Animation , Yu faces his own Shadow that reveals his repressed fear of moving away from Inaba and losing his friends , a fact that Yu accepts and acknowledges as the truth , enabling him to best Margaret in combat so he can face Izanami 's true form . He later appears in Persona 4 : The Golden Animation , which focuses on new events not featured in the previous series , showcasing some slight differences in personality from that of the previous series . In the live stage production , he was portrayed by Toru Baba and his name was chosen by the audience .

## == Other games ==

Yu appears alongside Persona 3 's protagonist in the 2014 game , Persona Q : Shadow of the Labyrinth , in which he joins forces with the Persona 3 cast to escape the mysterious labyrinth that they have been trapped inside of , while at the same time working to restore the memories of the mysterious Zen and Rei . Yu will also appear in the upcoming rhythm game , Persona 4 : Dancing All Night , where his friend Rise Kujikawa asks for his help . Yu also appears in Square Enix 's arcade card game Lord of Vermilion Re : 2 as a summon spell .

## == Reception ==

Yu Narukami 's character has generally been well received . His role has been noted for allowing the player to build a unique " self " during the game while questioning their real @-@ life identity . Additionally , the protagonist 's relationships with his relatives with whom he starts living were praised for adding more variants to the relationships with these ones focusing on family relationships . Kotaku 's Jason Schreier got to call him " suave , handsome , and charming . He 's friends with everyone , all the girls want to be with him , and in general he 's just an all @-@ around badass . "

The character 's role in the anime adaptation of Persona 4 earned similar response . A reviewer from T.H.E.M. Anime Reviews commented that Yu " seems to be the aggregate of all the quirkiest possible choices you could make in the game , " making him likable character for his diverse scenes . When first watching the Persona 4 anime , Elliot Page from UK Anime Network noted that although Yu was not a silent character as in the video game , he had little dialogue and the pacing managed to make up for it . In a later review , Andy Hanley from the same site said he liked how the protagonist was handled , as the staff used his " blank state " to create comedic interactions . Briana Lawrence from the Fandom Post shared similar feelings , stating that the staff " somehow managed to give a silent protagonist a personality that 's not only believable , but likable . " Lawrence appreciated how the character was developed across the series thanks to all the bonds he forms into a " snarky , lovable main character who can keep a straight face while being kicked off a cliff . " While also commenting how Yu manages to reinforce both the comical and " spooky " elements of the plot , Blu @-@ ray 's Jeffrey Kauffman noted he " remains something of a cipher throughout the series " with the possibility of having the viewer relate with him .

In contrast to most reviewers , Richard Eisenbeis from Kotaku had mixed opinions about the character . Calling him " one of the oddest characters in any work of fiction ever " , Eisenbeis found that his lack of backstory made it difficult for the viewer to predict his actions . However , he noted that , as well as being entertaining to watch , by the series ' end , Yu had " become a character in his own right . " However , he criticised Yu 's characterization in Persona 4 Arena and its sequel for being a stereotypical lawful @-@ good hero and less than a bland compared to the new character Sho Minazuki and Rise 's development . Additionally , he was rated sixth in the category " Best Male Character " from the Newtype anime awards from 2012 .

