= Terra (Kingdom Hearts) =

Terra (Japanese : ?? , Hepburn : Tera) is a fictional character from Square Enix 's video game franchise Kingdom Hearts . He was introduced in Kingdom Hearts Birth by Sleep as one of the three protagonists . He had a cameo appearance in a secret ending of Kingdom Hearts II and its re @-@ release Kingdom Hearts II Final Mix ; the later game included an optional boss fight against the Lingering Will (?????? , Todomarishi Shinen) , a hollow armor containing Terra 's mind . In Birth by Sleep , Terra appears as one of the apprentices from Master Eraqus who trains him alongside his friends Aqua and Ventus to become masters of the Keyblade weapon . When Master Xehanort disappears , Terra is sent to find him and also tame the growing darkness within himself .

Terra 's character was designed by the director series Tetsuya Nomura when preparing the secret endings of Kingdom Hearts II and Kingdom Hearts II Final Mix . He was developed to be reminiscent to the Xehanort featured in previous titles as well as having a connection with Riku , one of the series ' main characters . Ry?tar? Okiayu has done the voice of Terra in Japanese and Jason Dohring in the English version . Video game publications gave mixed responses to Terra 's character , with many noting his similarity to the Final Fantasy VII character Zack Fair and later commenting on his naive portrayal in Birth by Sleep .

= = Appearances = =

Terra first made cameos in the secret endings of Kingdom Hearts II and Kingdom Hearts II Final Mix which depicted events from Birth by Sleep . Additionally , the Lingering Will , an armor containing Terra 's will , appears in Kingdom Hearts II : Final Mix as an optional boss in the world Keyblade Graveyard . The Lingering Will fights the game 's protagonist Sora upon sensing Sora 's Keyblade and mistaking Sora for Xehanort and acknowledges Sora as a Keyblade Master afterward .

In the prequel Kingdom Hearts Birth by Sleep , Terra is a trainee from Master Eraqus alongside Aqua and Ventus , developing a strong sibling @-@ like bond with both of them . One day , Terra participates with Aqua in an exam to become Keyblade Masters . Terra fails to pass the test as Eraqus detects darkness in his heart , which he disapproves . Eraqus later informs Terra and Aqua about the appearance of creatures known as the Unversed and the disappearance of Master Xehanort . He orders both of them to eliminate the Unversed and find Xehanort . During his search for the missing Xehanort , he interacts with several Disney characters for information on his whereabouts as he faces his inner darkness . When finding Xehanort , Terra is requested by him to kill Vanitas , a figure made from Ventus 's darkness and source of all the Unversed . Xehanort later makes Terra return to the Land of Departure to stop Eraqus from killing Ventus . Unwilling to let Ventus die , Terra rescues him and confronts Eraqus . As the battle finishes , both Terra and Eraqus apologize to each other for their actions , but Eraqus is then killed by Xehanort . Realizing Xehanort 's true nature , Terra goes to the Keyblade Graveyard where he reunites with Ventus and Aqua , and prepares to face Xehanort . There , Ventus tells Aqua and him that Xehanort plans to use him and Vanitas to create the legendary ? @-@ blade to help him in his plans which caused Eraqus to try to kill him . The three are then confronted by Xehanort and Vanitas and proceed to fight . When Ventus and Aqua are wounded in battle , Terra attacks Xehanort alone and unleashes the darkness in his heart , allowing Xehanort to take over his body . However , Terra 's mind persists in his discarded armor , becoming the Lingering Will , and continues to fight Xehanort , knocking him out . The Lingering Will remains in the Keyblade Graveyard , while Terra 's heart has an internal struggle with Xehanort 's in his original body when Xehanort battles Aqua . This results in Xehanort stabbing himself to stop Terra , but Terra 's presence remains within Xehanort , swearing to stop him .

While Terra does not appear in Kingdom Hearts Re : coded , aside from the Lingering Will making a cameo in the opening , he is mentioned by King Mickey , who is searching for the Birth by Sleep protagonists . Terra briefly appears in Kingdom Hearts 3D : Dream Drop Distance during Sora 's dream , where Sora 's friends , Riku and Kairi , are transformed into Terra and Aqua . Terra also appears when Sora declares his pride in being connected to many Keyblade wielders .

A vision of Terra makes an appearance in Kingdom Hearts 0 @.@ 2 Birth by Sleep : A fragmentary passage , a part of Kingdom Hearts HD 2 @.@ 8 Final Chapter Prologue . He appears to Aqua as she laments not being able to reverse time to spend one more night with her friends . While she is shocked at his appearance , thinking that he did not make it out of the Realm of Darkness , she resolves to continue her journey .

Terra 's role from Birth by Sleep is reprised in Tomoko Tanemaki 's light novels of the game . Additionally , the final chapter shows the Lingering Will fighting Sora from Kingdom Hearts II Final Mix .

= = Creation and development = =

Although Terra , Ventus and Aqua first appeared in the ending of Kingdom Hearts II wearing armor , director Tetsuya Nomura still had not designed their real look , having only thought about their story . Despite not revealing their identities , Nomura still said that they are characters from the past from the Kingdom Hearts series . Following the release of the Kingdom Hearts II Final Mix , Nomura revealed a connection between them and the game 's villain Xemnas but wanted to leave it up to people 's imaginations as he still could not reveal his identity . Terra 's face was first shown in the 2006 Tokyo Game Show in which he was described as an avenger of Xehanort . Nomura also confirmed that Lingering Will was connected with Terra . He also stated that his name means " earth " from Latin , following the " land " theme Riku represents as well as connecting him with the other main characters ' names from the series . In October 2007 , Nomura was asked if the Lingering Will was actually Terra due to their similarities , but he responded it was still uncertain . When asked about what was the Will 's true nature after being revealed to contain Terra 's memories , Nomura stated it was not a Heartless . Nomura expressed that the fans liked the inclusion of the Will 's battle due to his challenging difficulty , which led the staff to design another hard boss character for Birth by Sleep .

From the three protagonists from Birth by Sleep , Terra 's design was the only which was decided how should it be from the start , with Nomura stating he would be designed younger than shown in previous games . Japanese @-@ inspired designs were incorporated into Terra 's outfit based on the " master and apprentice " relationship featured in the game . Nomura had troubles designing Terra 's , Ventus 's and Aqua 's armors due how they would be able to summon them . Therefore , an " X " was added to their clothes as a mean to activate the armors as well as due to the fact it was one of the game 's keywords . Ever since development of Birth by Sleep started , the staff already decided that the three stories would be told in separate scenarios with Terra 's story being the first one written . Terra 's conversation with Riku was written by Nomura early on development wishing to explain the reason for Riku 's ability to use the Keyblade , and he requested the staff in charge to make it into the game . The staff also wanted emphasize the lack of coincidences in the series , leading to the interaction between the three scenarios . Nomura recommended players to first play as Terra in Birth by Sleep in order to understand the story better . His gameplay was also described by Nomura as " heavy " in comparison to Ventus 's and Aqua 's .

To expand the connection between Terra and Riku , scenes foreshadowing future events involving Riku from Terra 's perspective were added to the game , though Nomura has stated that these foreshadows are not of a precognitive nature . Nomura expects that in future games , the connection between both of them would be expanded . Ry?tar? Okiayu was chosen as Terra 's Japanese voice actor as the staff wanted one actor similar to Chikao ?tsuka , Xehanort 's voice actor , and Akio ?tsuka , Xehanort 's voice actor while using Terra 's body . The staff found Chikao 's was a dry sort of voice , Akio 's a deep resonating sort of voice , and liked how Okiayu bore elements from both actors .

= = Reception = =

When Terra 's character was first revealed , 1UP.com 's Jeremy Parish found him to be very similar to Zack Fair from Final Fantasy VII to the point where he wondered whether he would actually be

Zack . However , when considering Terra 's weapon being a Keyblade in contrast to all the other Final Fantasy characters shown in previous Kingdom Hearts games , he thought he may not be Zack . Amanda L. Kondolojy from Cheat Code Central found there have been various speculations regarding the similarities between Terra and Zack , but thought it would not be strange considering the existence of Nobodies in the series . Selecting Terra for a demo of Birth by Sleep IGN 's Ryan Clements agreed with Parish , finding only minor differences between their outfits .

Terra 's role in Birth by Sleep has received mixed critics with Adam Ghigiino from PALGN criticizing his naive personality when finding the three protagonists unappealing . VideoGamer.com writer Emily Gera stated that players may know little about them due to their role in Kingdom Hearts II , but with Birth by Sleep , players will able to know about them . Writing for GamesRadar , Crhis Antista commented that he did not understand the importance of him and the other characters being briefly featured in Kingdom Hearts II , although it could be explained once the player finishes Birth by Sleep . PlayStation LifeStyle 's Thomas Williams found the trio as welcome additions to the franchise , finding their stories enjoyable even though the three travel to the same worlds . X @-@ Play found Terra to be very similar to Riku due to his personality and vulnerability to evil 's allure . Kevin VanOrd of GameSpot criticized Jason Dohring 's work as Terra 's English voice actor , saying he " can 't express angst , excitement , sincerity , or any other emotion " , affecting the storyline . VanOrd also pointed this out when Terra interacts with Disney characters , finding the latters ' voice actors to be " uniformly excellent and absolutely comparable to the original source . " Bob Miur from Destructoid compared Terra 's storyline with the film Star Wars : Episode III ? Revenge of the Sith due to the struggles he faces , and found that gamers familiar to the series may realize that his fate in the game " won 't turn out to be very pretty . " Miur also commented on Dohring 's work , praising how he makes Terra " tortured and conflicted " , but still criticizing the result . UGO Networks listed Terra 's Helmet nineteenth on their list of " The Coolest Helmets and Headgear in Video Games " , stating " For a minute , but only a minute , the two @-@ horned helmet will get you feeling like the Keyblade is a viable weapon . " In a Famitsu poll , Terra was voted as the fifth most popular Kingdom Hearts character .