

= Kratos (God of War) =

Kratos , the " Ghost of Sparta " , is a video game character from Sony Santa Monica 's God of War series , which is loosely based on Greek mythology . Kratos first appeared in the 2005 video game God of War , which led to the development of six additional games featuring the character as the protagonist . Another installment is in development , which will take the character to Norse mythology . Kratos also appears as the protagonist of the God of War comic series and novels . The character was voiced by Terrence C. Carson from 2005 to 2013 , with Christopher Judge taking over the role in the upcoming God of War . Antony Del Rio voiced the character as a child in God of War : Ghost of Sparta .

In the series , Kratos embarks on a series of often forced adventures in attempts to avert disaster or to change his fate . He is usually portrayed as being oblivious to all else , often engaging in morally ambiguous activities and performing acts of extreme violence . He is a Spartan warrior who becomes the " Ghost of Sparta " after accidentally killing his family on behalf of Ares ' trickery . He becomes the God of War after killing Ares , and is eventually revealed to be a demigod and the son of Zeus , who betrays Kratos . Each adventure forms part of a saga with vengeance as a central theme , providing additional information about Kratos ' origins and his relationships with his family and the gods .

The God of War franchise is a flagship title for the PlayStation brand and Kratos is one of its most popular characters . The character has been well received by critics and has become a video game icon , a relative newcomer among more established franchise characters , such as Mario , Sonic the Hedgehog , and Lara Croft . The character is now associated with other products and has had various cameos in PlayStation games outside of the God of War series .

= = Concept and design = =

God of War creator and game director David Jaffe attempted to create a character that looked brutal , but did not resemble a typical traditional Greek hero . The character would not wear traditional armor as Jaffe wanted him to be individualistic . Although the idea of using a fully masked character was approved , the concept was abandoned as the design seemed soulless and lacked a defined personality . Some models included unconventional elements , such as portraying him carrying an infant on his back , while others had excessive detail , such as hair and other " flowing things " .

Charlie Wen , director of visual development on God of War and God of War II , is responsible for designing Kratos . Wen said that his direction for designing Kratos was as much influenced by similarly themed films as it was by pop culture , which led him to sketch a series of images of Kratos on napkins at a restaurant , introducing the idea of the double @-@ chained blades and eventually Kratos ' iconic design . Double @-@ chained blades were chosen as Kratos ' signature weapon because they emphasized the character 's animal nature while also allowing combat to remain fluid . Jaffe said of the final version of the character , " [Kratos] may not totally feel at home in Ancient Greece from a costume standpoint , I think he achieves the greater purpose which is to give players a character who they can play who really does just let them go nuts and unleash the nasty fantasies that they have in their head . "

Kratos ' most noticeable feature is his ash @-@ white complexion , a story development which earns him the title " Ghost of Sparta . " Other distinctive features include a scar across his right eye , and a large , red tattoo that threads from his left eye , circles his left torso , and ends at his left shoulder . The tattoo was originally blue , but was changed late in production . The scar is eventually revealed to be the result of a childhood encounter with the Olympian God , Ares , while the tattoo is a tribute to his dead brother Deimos , who had similar birth markings . Other changes that occur during the course of the series include the temporary addition of divine armor when Kratos is the God of War , an abdominal scar , ability @-@ enhancing armor such as an epaulet called the Golden Fleece (all God of War II) , and the Boots of Hermes (God of War III) . According to an early God of War script , the character is 6 feet 6 inches (1 @.@ 98 m) to 6 feet 7

inches (2 @. @ 01 m) .

Kratos ' appearance can be altered in bonus play ; completing the game at certain levels of difficulty and in challenge modes will unlock bonus costumes . Several costumes were available exclusively via pre @-@ order and other promotions (e.g. God of War III , which features three costumes based on early sketches of the character) from the PlayStation Store . Although many bonus costumes are consistent with story themes , others are humorous or farcical ? such as the female costume " Athena " and the " Spud of War " . 26 bonus costumes are available for use throughout the series and two are available in two games respectively (" God of War Armor " in God of War II and Ghost of Sparta , and " Deimos " in Ghost of Sparta and God of War III) .

= = Role in the God of War series = =

= = = Backstory and comics (past) = = =

Throughout the series , Kratos is portrayed as an antihero , often performing questionable actions . Although backstory is seen in the original God of War , Kratos ' childhood is revealed in Ghost of Sparta and the birth of his daughter is explored in the God of War comic series . In Ghost of Sparta , it is revealed that an oracle had foretold that the demise of Olympus would not happen by the hands of the Titans ? imprisoned after the Great War ? but rather by a mortal , a marked warrior . The Olympians Zeus and Ares believed this warrior to be Deimos , Kratos ' younger brother , who had strange birthmarks . Ares interrupted the childhood training of Kratos and Deimos in Sparta and kidnapped Deimos . Kratos attempted to stop Ares , but Ares swept him aside and scarred him across his right eye . Taken to Death 's Domain , Deimos was imprisoned and tortured for many years by the god of death , Thanatos . Believing Deimos to be dead , Kratos marked himself with a red tattoo , identical to his brother 's birthmark , to honor his sibling .

Through flashbacks in the comic series written by Marv Wolfman , Kratos meets his wife Lysandra and they have a daughter named Calliope . Upon birth , Calliope was stricken with the plague . In order to save his daughter , Kratos was granted a quest to find the Ambrosia of Asclepius , an elixir with magical healing properties . Five of the gods entered into a wager with Ares : each chose a champion to search for the Ambrosia with Ares ' champion being Kratos . Kratos overcame all obstacles , including , among others , Hades ' champion the Barbarian Prince Alrik , who eventually became the Barbarian King , and saved his daughter .

Via flashbacks in God of War , it is revealed that Kratos became the youngest captain of Sparta 's army (also shown in the comics) , but had a thirst for power . When Kratos was faced with total defeat at the hands of a barbarian horde led by the Barbarian King , the Spartan called to the Olympian god Ares for aid . Kratos was given the Blades of Chaos , destroyed his enemies , and blindly followed Ares , killing hundreds in his name . After Ares tricked Kratos into murdering his wife Lysandra and daughter Calliope in a temple dedicated to Athena , the Spartan was shocked out of his bloodlust and renounced service to Ares . As the temple burned , a village oracle cursed Kratos and condemned him to wear the " mark of his terrible deed " ; the ashes of his family , which turn his skin white , earning him the title " Ghost of Sparta " .

= = = Ascension , Chains of Olympus , and God of War = = =

In Ascension , it is revealed that because Kratos renounced Ares , it broke his blood oath to the god and as such , Kratos was imprisoned and tortured by the three Furies . He was helped by the oath keeper Orkos and eventually overcame and killed the Furies . In order to completely be free of Ares ' oath , Kratos was forced to kill Orkos , who begged Kratos to do so . Although free of his oath to the god , he was flooded with memories of killing his family . He then vowed to serve the other gods in order to receive forgiveness and relief from the nightmares of his past deeds , but he was openly defiant .

In Chains of Olympus , Kratos is reluctant to help the gods when Helios was kidnapped , and

openly abandoned them when Persephone offered him a chance to be reunited with his daughter . Kratos , however , was forced to reverse his decision when Persephone used the Titan Atlas in a bid to destroy the world and in turn , the spirit of Calliope . Knowing that while intervention would save Calliope , it would separate him from his family forever , a bitter Kratos killed Persephone , imprisoned Atlas , and freed Helios .

By the time of God of War , Kratos had been serving the gods for ten years and had grown tired of his service and nightmares . When he confronted his patron Athena , she advised him that if he killed the rampaging Ares , the gods would forgive his sins . With this selfish motive , he again agreed , and after finding and using Pandora 's Box , he was successful . Despite being freed of Ares ' influence , including the Blades of Chaos , Kratos was forgiven , but was not relieved of his nightmares . A dissatisfied and despairing Kratos tried to commit suicide , but was saved by Athena , who guided him to Olympus . Awarded the Blades of Athena , Kratos became the new God of War .

= = = Comics (present) , Ghost of Sparta , and Betrayal = = =

The comic series also shows Kratos ' present search for the Ambrosia of Asclepius . This time , he plans to destroy the Ambrosia to prevent the worshipers of Ares from resurrecting their former master . In this quest , Kratos overcame several enemies , including the Chaos Giant Gyges , before destroying the Ambrosia . Still haunted by the visions of his mortal past in Ghost of Sparta , and against the advice of Athena , Kratos embarked on a quest to find his mother , Callisto , in the city of Atlantis . Callisto attempted to reveal the identity of Kratos ' father before being transformed against her will into a beast that Kratos was forced to kill . Before dying , Callisto advised Kratos to search for his brother Deimos in Sparta . Kratos first freed the Titan Thera from imprisonment , which caused the destruction of Atlantis . In Sparta , Kratos learned of Deimos ' location : the Domain of Death . He found and freed Deimos , who remained hostile toward his brother . After a skirmish between the siblings , Thanatos attacked Deimos , but after being rescued by Kratos , the pair joined forces to battle their foe . Although Thanatos killed Deimos , the god was in turn killed by Kratos . Kratos then returned to Olympus , enraged at the gods . In Betrayal , Kratos had been shunned by the other gods and decided to lead his Spartan army to overrun Greece . He was falsely accused of murdering Argos , and he killed Ceryx , the son of Hermes , for interfering in his search for the true assassin , who escaped .

= = = God of War II = = =

Kratos then joined the Spartan army in Rhodes , intent on destruction . Zeus , however , weakened Kratos and tricked him into abandoning his godly powers into the Blade of Olympus , which Zeus used to kill Kratos . Although he overcame all obstacles , Kratos was stunned at Zeus ' betrayal and swore revenge as he died . Kratos fell into the Underworld , but was rescued by the Titan Gaia . Banished to Tartarus with the other surviving Titans after the First Great War , Gaia and her brethren seek the death of Zeus . Kratos , fueled by anger at his betrayal , agreed to aid the Titans and was instructed to find the Sisters of Fate , who are capable of returning him to the moment of Zeus ' treachery . Kratos became determined and utterly ruthless ? in the pursuit of his goal he wounded a Titan , killed several Greek heroes without hesitation , and deliberately sacrificed two scholars . All three of the Sisters of Fate were killed when they opposed Kratos , who was prepared to kill Zeus in a final confrontation . Zeus was only saved when Athena intervened and sacrificed herself for him ; only then does Kratos show remorse . He learned from a dying Athena that Zeus is in fact his father , a fact Zeus kept secret because he wished to avoid a repetition of what he did to his own father , Cronos . Kratos rejected any notion of a relationship and vowed to kill Zeus and destroy Olympus . Encouraged by Gaia , Kratos used the power of the Fates to retrieve the Titans before their defeat in the Great War , and with their assistance , stormed Mount Olympus .

= = = God of War III = = =

Although Kratos killed Poseidon , he was abandoned by Gaia when his first encounter with Zeus went poorly . Stranded in the Underworld and now betrayed by both the Olympians and Titans , Kratos learned from the spirit of Athena , who also provided the Blades of Exile , that he needed to find the Flame of Olympus , which is the key to defeating Zeus . Kratos murdered both Titans and gods , ignoring the warnings of his victims as he sought the Flame . Realizing the key to pacifying the Flame and reaching Pandora 's Box (engulfed by the Flame) is Pandora herself , Kratos came to care for Pandora , who reminded him of his lost daughter Calliope . Kratos showed humanity when he attempted to stop Pandora from sacrificing herself to quench the Flame , but reluctantly allowed the act when she said there was no other option . Finding the box empty , and driven berserk by Zeus ' mockery , Kratos attacked his father . Although Gaia interrupted and tried to kill Kratos and Zeus , she was destroyed by Kratos , who then apparently defeated Zeus . Zeus returned in spirit form and attacked Kratos , who retreated into his psyche . Kratos forgave himself for his past sins with the help of Lysandra . Pandora later appeared and told Kratos that hope would save him . Kratos was revived and easily destroyed Zeus . Athena confronted Kratos and demanded that he return the power of hope ; the contents of Pandora 's Box . In a selfless act , Kratos refused , stated his need for vengeance was gone , and impaled himself with the Blade of Olympus , which dispersed the power across the world for mankind 's use . Athena , disappointed with Kratos , removed the Blade and departed as Kratos collapsed next to the Blade of Olympus . The post @-@ credits scene showed a trail of blood leading away from the Blade with Kratos ' whereabouts unknown .

= = = Upcoming God of War = = =

Many years after the events of God of War III , Kratos has ended up in the world of Norse mythology . He now has a son and Kratos teaches the boy hunting and survival skills . A mentor and protector of his son , who seeks his father 's respect , Kratos must master the rage that has driven him for many years . He hopes to teach his son and make amends for his past . Since Kratos lost his infamous double @-@ chained blades in his climactic battle with Zeus , he now uses a magical battle axe . His attire and personality have also changed as he now sports a full beard and presents a calmer demeanor than the previous games .

= = Other appearances = =

= = = Guest appearances = = =

Kratos has been featured as a playable character in several PlayStation games outside of the God of War series . On August 21 , 2008 , Kratos was released as a downloadable character in Hot Shots Golf : Out of Bounds along with his Clubs of Chaos . As a pre @-@ order bonus for LittleBigPlanet from GameStop , customers received a Sackboy Kratos costume along with ones for Medusa and a Minotaur , as well as a God of War level sticker kit . These were later released for purchase on January 26 , 2009 . Kratos is a guest character in 2009 's Soulcalibur : Broken Destiny , which includes his own story mode . As a pre @-@ order bonus for ModNation Racers from GameStop , customers received a Kratos Mod along with his Kart of Chaos . These were later released for purchase on November 2 , 2010 . Kratos ' next guest appearance was in the PlayStation 3 version of 2011 's Mortal Kombat (and the PlayStation Vita version released in 2012) , which features his own fighting stage and arcade ladder mode . The character then appeared in the 2012 crossover fighting game , PlayStation All @-@ Stars Battle Royale , which includes two God of War inspired stages , several God of War items , as well as series antagonist Zeus , who was released as a downloadable character on March 19 , 2013 .

As part of the God of War franchise 's tenth anniversary , Kratos appeared in the PlayStation 3 , PlayStation 4 , and PlayStation Vita versions of Shovel Knight (released April 21 , 2015) , where he

is a secret boss battle . His next guest appearance brought him back to the world of LittleBigPlanet in LittleBigPlanet 3 as a new Sackboy costume in his Fear Kratos form , along with Sackboy costumes of Zeus , Hercules , Poseidon , and Athena , and a costume of Hades for new character Toggle . The costumes ' release coincided with the release of God of War III Remastered on PlayStation 4 in July 2015 . A costume of Kratos as well as God of War custom decorations were included in the " Crafted Edition " of Tearaway Unfolded , which released on PlayStation 4 on September 8 , 2015 . TC Carson provided Kratos ' voice in all of his guest appearances , except for LittleBigPlanet , ModNation Racers , LittleBigPlanet 3 , and Tearaway Unfolded where the character is only a costume , and in Shovel Knight which only has text dialogue .

The character has been parodied twice in The Simpsons franchise . He appeared as the " God of Wharf " on a billboard advertising a chowder restaurant in The Simpsons Game . He later appeared on the Guts of War II : Entrails of Intestinox kiosk at " E4 " ? a parody of the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) ? in The Simpsons television episode , " The Food Wife " . Kratos has also been parodied by Adult Swim 's clay @-@ mation television series , Robot Chicken . He was first parodied in season 5 , episode 15 , " The Core , The Thief , His Wife and Her Lover " , where it is shown how far Kratos (voiced by Brian Austin Green) will go to collect blood orbs . Sony later teamed up with Robot Chicken to produce a marketing campaign advertisement for PlayStation All @-@ Stars Battle Royale that parodied Kratos and other characters from the game .

= = = Novels and film = = =

Kratos is also the main character in novelizations of the game series by Matthew Stover and Robert E. Vardeman . The novels are a retelling of the games and offer deeper insights into their stories . The first novel , titled God of War , was published in May 2010 , and the second novel , titled God of War II , was published in February 2013 . A film adaptation of the original God of War was announced in 2005 , but has remained in development hell . In 2010 , Jaffe stated that the " script went out a year and a half ago to Daniel Craig who plays [James] Bond , but he turned it down . " He also said that another actor had since been signed to the role of Kratos , and that " this new person is pretty good , if that ends up true . " The film 's new writers , Patrick Melton and Marcus Dunstan , were announced in July 2012 , and in August 2012 , the writers stated that they plan to humanize Kratos and explore his past .

= = Cultural impact = =

= = = Merchandise and promotion = = =

Two series of action figures based on God of War II have been produced by the National Entertainment Collectibles Association (NECA) . The first set included two versions of Kratos ; one wielding the Blades of Athena , and the second wearing the Golden Fleece and holding a Gorgon 's head . The second set included a twelve @-@ inch figure that plays six game quotes . A second two @-@ figure set was also released , with Kratos wearing the God of War armor . In October 2009 , United Cutlery created a scaled replica of Kratos ' Blades of Chaos , which included a custom display stand with the God of War logo . Kratos was also featured in a line of action figures released by DC Unlimited and based on God of War III , which included the characters Zeus , Hades , and Hercules . Between February 1 , 2010 and March 31 , 2010 , 7 @-@ Eleven sold a limited @-@ edition Slurpee drink called " Kratos Fury " , in addition to four exclusive God of War III cups , which featured codes that could be used to access God of War III and Slurpee @-@ themed downloadable content on the Slurpee website .

Kratos ' visage has appeared on the PlayStation Portable Chains of Olympus exclusive bundle pack , and on the PlayStation 3 God of War III sweepstakes prize video game consoles . A limited @-@ edition 10 inches (250 mm) figurine of Kratos was the grand prize of a sweepstakes in a promotion for God of War Collection in November 2009 . A 6 inches (150 mm) figure of Kratos was included

in the God of War : Ascension ? Collector 's Edition . In June 2014 , a Kratos Pop ! Vinyl Figure was released . The same year , Sony partnered with Gaming Heads to produce a limited @-@ edition (500 units) life @-@ size bust of Kratos . It is 28 inches (710 mm) tall and sits upon a Greek @-@ inspired column . A " Fear Kratos " version of the bust was also produced (100 units) that year , based on the Fear Kratos costume from God of War III . In 2015 , Sony again partnered with Gaming Heads to produce a limited @-@ edition (1 @, @ 250 units) lunging Kratos statue . The statue is 19 inches (480 mm) tall and features Kratos wielding the Blades of Exile . For the God of War franchise 's tenth anniversary (March 2015) , Gaming Heads produced two limited @-@ edition " Kratos on the Throne " statues , depicting the final scene of the original God of War . Both statues are 29 inches (740 mm) tall and the Regular Edition (1 @, @ 250 units) features Kratos in his normal attire and the Exclusive Edition (500 units) features Kratos in his God of War armor . In November 2015 , Sony announced a new Kratos statue to be released the following month , which is also in celebration of God of War 's ten @-@ year anniversary . The limited edition (500 units) statue made of polystone was designed by Santa Monica and stands over 26 inches (660 mm) tall with details such as leather , cloth , and metal pieces .

= = = Reception = = =

Kratos ' character received positive response by video game publications . GameSpot regarded Kratos as a " sympathetic antihero " and a " badass " , and described him as endearing due to his unforgiving demeanor , but added that the slowly @-@ developing story offered players " no understanding [of him] " in the game 's early stages . IGN said he was ruthless , merciless and savage , noting the character 's main motive is vengeance and " all he desires is murder . " IGN also stated that in time the player would begin to " love and loathe Kratos and hate Ares . " GamePro said it was " Kratos ' tragic fall and brutal ascension to the peaks of Mount Olympus that made the original God of War so memorable . " PlayStation Universe said he was " certainly a unique character and a warrior to be reckoned with , " and that " this iconic PlayStation anti @-@ hero will surely not be forgotten . "

At the 2010 Spike Video Game Awards , Kratos was nominated for " Character of the Year " and awarded the " Biggest Badass " award . He was included in GameSpot 's " All Time Greatest Video Game Hero " contest and reached the " Elite Eight " round before losing to Mario . The 2011 Guinness World Records Gamer 's Edition lists Kratos as the ninth most popular video game character . In 2011 , Empire ranked him as the 15th @-@ greatest video game character . In 2012 , GamesRadar ranked Kratos , " one of PlayStation ? s most popular representatives , " as the eighteenth- " most memorable , influential , and badass " protagonist in games : " Being insanely violent isn ? t exactly an uncommon trait amongst game characters , but driven by a rage wrought from his guilt (slaughtered thousands , including ? oops ? his wife and daughter) Kratos kills with such convincing visceral aggression it elevates him way beyond the status of brain @-@ dead murder @-@ bot . " In 2010 , Game Guru said that " practically anyone , even if they hadn 't played any of the God of War games , would know about Kratos . "

Kratos has been included on several top video game character lists : GamesRadar listed him as one of the 25 best new characters of the decade , stating that while he appears at first to be a generic character , players eventually learn that he is both an " unstoppable force of nature " and a " broken , tragic man " . Knowing of the talks regarding a God of War film , both IGN and UGO Networks listed Kratos as a character who deserved his own movie . In 2008 , IGN listed him as one of the characters wanted for an " ultimate fighting " game , featuring characters from all consoles and all eras of gaming . He was included on the list of the best anti @-@ heroes by IGN in 2012 . In 2011 , Complex listed several of his finishing moves in their fifty " craziest fatalities in video games " list at 30th , 28th , 24th , 14th , and number @-@ one spots for his finishing moves on Hades , Hercules , Helios , the Hydra , and Poseidon , respectively . The " Dairy Bastard " alternate costume from the original God of War was included in UGO 's list of the " most stylin ' alternate costumes " . GameFront listed Kratos in 2011 as one of the top five video game characters with the " biggest daddy issues " . Complex ranked him as having the best fighting game cameos for his guest

appearances in *Soulcalibur : Broken Destiny* and *Mortal Kombat* in 2012 and as the sixth " most badass " video game character of all time in 2013 . Kratos ' *Blades of Chaos* were included on GameSpot 's " 15 Most Badass Swords in Video Game History " list .

On the other hand , Kratos ' character has also been given criticism . *Prince of Persia* producer Ben Mattes said in an interview that he considers Kratos " a supercool character , but it 's black and white ; his personality is pure rage , his dialogue is pure rage , his character design is pure rage ? it 's kind of easy . " Jeremy " Norm " Scott , creator of the comic strip *Hsu and Chan* , stated in *Electronic Gaming Monthly* that Kratos was average and " did not exist , except as an avatar for the player . " In 2009 , IGN listed Kratos as the sixth @-@ most overrated video game character . Cheat Code Central also listed Kratos as the sixth @-@ most overrated video game character in a 2011 top @-@ ten list .