

= Roxas ( Kingdom Hearts ) =

Roxas ( Japanese : ロ克萨斯 , Hepburn : Rokusasu ) is a fictional character from Square Enix 's video game franchise Kingdom Hearts . First revealed during the final scenes of the 2004 title Kingdom Hearts : Chain of Memories , Roxas is a " Nobody " , a being created when the series ' main character Sora briefly loses his heart during the first game of the series . Kingdom Hearts II reveals that Roxas is a member of Organization XIII , a group of Nobodies who needed Roxas as he could wield the Keyblade , a weapon that allows him to capture hearts . As a member of the organization , Roxas bears the title " Key of Destiny " ( キーオブデスティニー , Meguriau Kagi , lit . " Serendipitous Key " ) . He is also the protagonist of the video game Kingdom Hearts 358 / 2 Days , which revolves around his origins . In the Japanese games , Roxas is voiced by K?ki Uchiyama , while Jesse McCartney takes the role in the English versions .

Since his first cameo in the series , director Tetsuya Nomura has stated that Roxas is an important character to the series , and that in order to explain his back story in more detail than done in Kingdom Hearts II , Kingdom Hearts 358 / 2 Days was created . Since his introduction in Kingdom Hearts II , Roxas has received positive critical response from video game publications with most of them focusing on his development in 358 / 2 Days . Various types of merchandising have been released based on his character .

= = Characteristics = =

Roxas is depicted as a spiky blond @-@ haired teenager with blue eyes . As a civilian he wears a white jacket along with a black jacket and white trousers . As a member of Organization XIII , Roxas wears a black coat that covers most of his body including his hood along with the other members . His weapon is the Keyblade known as Kingdom Key ( キングダムキー , Kingudamu Ch?n , Kingdom Chain ) , resembling a classic skeleton key , with a long silver keychain extending from the hilt , and a Mickey Mouse token on the end of the keychain , but the player is able to modify it during Kingdom Hearts 358 / 2 Days using different keychains . Roxas also becomes able to dual @-@ wield Keyblades after leaving the Organization , and exclusively uses the Oathkeeper ( オースキーパー , Yakusoku no Omamori , lit . " Oath 's Charm " ) , whose shaft displays two hearts , and its handle bears two angel wings , and the Oblivion ( オブリビオン , Sugisarishi Omoide , lit . " Passing Memories " ) .

Roxas ' personality significantly changes across the series due to the fact that when first introduced , he appears with fake memories that make him believe he is a common teenager and spends most of his time with his friends . When learning that he is Sora 's Nobody and remembering his past , Roxas gives up his existence so that Sora could continue existing , but still expresses happiness for his fate . During his time in the Organization , Roxas develops a calmed personality based on the experiences he has as a result of having no memories of a previous life unlike other Nobodies .

= = Appearances = =

Roxas ' first appearances were cameos in " Another Side , Another Story " , a bonus trailer found in Kingdom Hearts , and in the ending of Kingdom Hearts : Chain of Memories . In Kingdom Hearts II , Roxas is introduced as a boy living in a digital replica of a city called Twilight Town . Unaware of the virtual nature of the city , Roxas begins to dream about the adventures of Sora , the series ' protagonist . He later encounters Axel , a member of Organization XIII who was given orders to rescue him , and Naminé , a Nobody who tells him he is Sora 's other half . Shortly after meeting , Ansem the Wise , the creator of the virtual world , Roxas learns the nature of Twilight Town as well as that Ansem erased his memory , and implanted false ones to make Roxas unaware of his past and then make him merge with Sora . Ansem leads Roxas to an old mansion where once reaching an asleep Sora , Roxas rejoins with him , allowing Sora to wake up . Sora later learns that Roxas is his Nobody , created during the events of the first game after Sora briefly turned into a Heartless . Xemnas brought Roxas to Organization XIII as he could wield the Keyblade , a weapon which would

help them to capture hearts . Roxas later betrayed the Organization and encountered one of Sora 's friends , Riku , who captured him to help Sora wake up . Roxas makes two appearances near the end of the game . The first is in a mental battle with Sora depicted as a cut @-@ scene , and the second is with Naminé , who has merged with her other self , Kairi . In the re @-@ released version of the title , Kingdom Hearts II Final Mix , Roxas ' fight against Sora was expanded , making him a boss character . The battle was meant to be interactive in Kingdom Hearts II , but time constraints imposed from creating fights for the other Organization XIII members prevented inclusion . With the opportunity to include the fight , Nomura 's team worked hard to make it entertaining for players . Additional scenes regarding Roxas ' past were added to the game to add to the mystery around him .

Kingdom Hearts 358 / 2 Days , a prequel to Kingdom Hearts II , reveals Roxas ' life with Organization XIII . Unlike the other Organization members , Roxas lacks memories of his previous life . During Roxas ' time in the Organization , he is placed under Axel 's watch , and the two become friends . After Axel is sent to Castle Oblivion , Roxas is entrusted with Xion , another Keyblade wielder , whom he befriends . Roxas reacts to Sora 's memory restoration and starts questioning why he uses the Keyblade and doubt the Organization 's motives . When he discovers that Xion is a replica of Sora created by Xemnas , Roxas is compelled to defect from Organization XIII to find answers and meet Sora . After doing so , he encounters Xion , who tries to attack and absorb him so that she would become the " real " Sora ; however , the fight ends with Xion 's defeat who entrusts Roxas to free the hearts the Organization captured . The death of his friend , coupled with full knowledge of how deranged Xemnas truly is , inspires Roxas to defeat Xemnas and release the hearts he and Xion captured for the Organization . On his way , Roxas is confronted by Riku who knocks him unconscious in order to help Ansem and Naminé wake up Sora .

A virtual representation of Roxas appears as a boss character in the mobile phone game Kingdom Hearts coded , in which he confronts a virtual representation of Sora , he later appears in the ending as one of the people connected to Sora 's heart who may have a chance at returning one day . He makes a cameo appearance at the end of Kingdom Hearts Birth by Sleep , where he is shown with Xion and Axel eating sea @-@ salt ice cream in Twilight Town , as well as in Kingdom Hearts 3D : Dream Drop Distance where Roxas contacts both Axel and Sora through dreams . He also appears in Shiro Amano 's manga and Tomoko Kanemaki 's novels , which reprise his role in the video games . The book Kingdom Hearts : Another Report includes a novel called Roxas ? Somewhere in Time that retells Roxas ' days in the Organization with the exception of his befriending Xion .

= = Creation and development = =

After Roxas first made a cameo at the end of Kingdom Hearts : Chain of Memories , the director of the series , Tetsuya Nomura , was questioned about the character . However , he refrained from revealing too much detail about him and stated that he would become an important , playable character for the franchise . The developers wrote Roxas ' story in Kingdom Hearts II to add mixed feelings to the game in a short time frame . After receiving a positive fan response regarding Roxas ' sad scenario , Nomura concluded that it was well executed . He also stated that Roxas ' merging with Sora in the game was one of his most memorable scenes from the series . Nomura later commented that Roxas was one of the first characters created for Organization XIII , and was always intended to be the 13th member . The meaning of Roxas ' name was meant to be revealed in a scene in Kingdom Hearts II that shows the letters in the word " Sora " rearranged with the " X " added to expand the connection between the characters . This scene , however , was omitted as Nomura found it difficult to implement time @-@ wise . Since his debut in Kingdom Hearts II , Roxas has been voiced by K?ki Uchiyama in Japanese and by Jesse McCartney in the English versions .

After Kingdom Hearts II : Final Mix was released , Nomura wanted to expand Roxas ' role in the series to explain the events between his birth and his disappearance from Organization XIII . For Kingdom Hearts 358 / 2 Days , the staff thought that Roxas ' role as a member of the group would be a suitable theme for the plot . Roxas was chosen as the game 's protagonist as the staff thought that having a main character besides Sora would help to introduce gamers to the series ' first

Nintendo DS title . Co @-@ director Tomohiro Hasegawa explained that Roxas ' height was originally lower and as the game continued development , the staff decided to increase it . Nomura desired to portray Roxas ' activities different from Sora 's . In Sora 's games , he is on a journey around the worlds , while Roxas always returns to Organization XIII after each mission . The staff constructed Roxas ' interactions with the Disney characters to be different from Sora 's as the Organization was meant to be secret in the game 's story . Nomura told the writers that he wanted Roxas to learn something from each of his missions or just to have something to think about . Nomura later clarified that Roxas ' personality was different from the one portrayed in Kingdom Hearts II as he does not actively attempt to come into contact with other characters . With Kingdom Hearts 358 / 2 Days , Nomura wanted to reveal why Roxas left Organization XIII . Although Nomura found it to be a sad story it , he considered Zack Fair 's ending in Crisis Core : Final Fantasy VII more tragic . His last words in the game were also Nomura 's most significant ones from the title as he wanted it to connect to Kingdom Hearts II 's first scene , which is actually the same scene . Uchiyama expressed sadness when the game ended development as he would not play the character for a long time .

Kingdom Hearts II : Final Mix 's secret ending features a character named Ventus that bears a striking resemblance to Roxas . Nomura commented that , despite how similar they are , Roxas and Ventus are not the same character . Additionally , he stated that by playing Kingdom Hearts Birth by Sleep , players will be able to distinguish Roxas from Ventus . In another interview , Nomura implied both characters are related , specifically to Sora , but he wanted fans to imagine reasons for such connection . The Kingdom Hearts Birth by Sleep Ultimania clarified the connection , stating that Roxas and Ventus look alike because Ventus ' heart entered Sora 's body and Roxas ' birth allowed Ventus ' heart to reside in Roxas . This also confirms the mystery about Roxas having a heart in contrast to other Nobodies which allows him to express emotions despite his lack of memories from a past , something that Nobodies use to show emotions .

= = Reception = =

Roxas has been featured in various types of merchandising published by Square Enix . An action figure was released as part of the Play Arts action figures series . Other items sold include plush , keychains and replicas of his necklace .

Roxas ' character has received a positive critical response by both fans and video game publications . During February 2010 , Roxas was twenty @-@ eighth in a Famitsu poll featuring the most popular video game characters from Japan . In another poll , Roxas was voted as the second most popular Kingdom Hearts character with his fight against Sora ranked as the best scene from the series . His fighting sequences from the first game 's secret ending were labelled by GameSpy as one of the best video game cinematic moments . While reviewing Kingdom Hearts II Jeff Haynes of IGN said that Roxas was a " likable kid " . Ron Fahey of Eurogamer took a similar stance , calling him a " likeable enough young chap who just happens to be troubled by memories and visions of people he doesn 't even know " . His playable position in the game was regarded as a transitional arc , being used to introduce the gameplay to players that are new to the franchise . Cavin Smith from PSXextreme also called Roxas a likable character and stated that the revelation regarding his existence in Kingdom Hearts II is " a shocker of a revelation for any RPG ! " The New York Times liked the fact that the player controls Roxas in Kingdom Hearts II 's introduction instead of the protagonist Sora , avoiding the continuation of Sora 's search for his friends . Additionally , he found the switch from Roxas ' story to Sora 's after a few hours " a little jarring " . Andrew Reiner from Game Informer emphasizes his role as a " troubled boy " , calling his story arc " an amazing chain of events " , particularly noting that the revelation of his nature as a Nobody creates a " devilish yet remarkable plot twist " which may impact the player in a way that he " may not want Sora back " . On the other hand , UGO Networks commented that due to the game 's initial focus on Roxas , gamers would have to wait until playing as Sora to experience the most exciting parts of the title .

Before Kingdom Hearts 358 / 2 Days was released , 1UP.com featured Roxas at the top of their " Why You Should Care About Kingdom Hearts 358 / 2 Days " feature , calling him " The darling of

fanfiction and doujinshi writers everywhere " , and commenting on what he does during his only year within Organization XIII . Roxas ' role as protagonist was labelled by G4TV as an attempt to " satiate the ravenous fanboy " due to the explanation from his background . While reviewing 358 / 2 Days , PALGN 's Adam Ghiggino praised Roxas ' development during the title , expressing that even gamers who did not like his character in Kingdom Hearts II would care about him as " he evolves from a self @-@ described ' zombie ' to a strong @-@ willed and interesting character " . Ghiggino especially noted his relation with Xion and Axel , which he found charming despite the fact that they repeatedly meet at the top of a clock tower in a large number scenes . A similar response was made by Game Informer , who commented that although such scenes were " dull " , Roxas ' relation with Xion and Axel was appealing and the game 's ending would make up for such moments . GamesRadar also commented that Roxas " starts off like a zombie , but rapidly develops a personality " during the title and joked about the numerous times he eats ice cream . His growth in the game was also labelled as one of the most enjoyable elements from the title . IGN agreed , calling Roxas ' friendship " heart @-@ aching " . On the other hand , 1UP.com mentioned that although Roxas ' relationship with Xion and Axel is appealing , some of his first missions feel like " lonely , sad affairs " . His maneuvers in the game were praised by GameSpot for being easy to learn despite how complex they look , while IGN liked the variation between all of them .

Due to his resemblance with Ventus , video game publications initially thought that Roxas would be one of the protagonists from Kingdom Hearts Birth by Sleep . However , when it was revealed that the two were different , publications still discussed how similar they were and if there was a connection between them .