

= Zero ( Drakengard ) =

Zero ( ?? , Zero ) is the main protagonist and playable character of the 2013 action role @-@ playing game Drakengard 3 , the third main entry in the Drakengard series , developed by Access Games and published by Square Enix . She also appeared in the arcade game Lord of Vermilion III . Zero is an Intoner , one of a race of god @-@ like beings who control magic through their singing abilities . In trying to destroy the flower which gave birth to her powers and tried to use her to destroy humanity , she sets out to kill clones spawned by the flower to carry out its mission , referred to as her sisters .

Zero was created by Taro Yoko , the game 's director and co @-@ writer , and designed by Kimihiko Fujisaka . Yoko wanted an unusual type of protagonist that had not been featured very often in games . Fujisaka crafted her to emulate the dark tones of the series , although he also added features to create a feminine vibe , such as the flower in her eye . Despite being criticized for her characterization and personality , she has also been praised for her interactions with the other characters and for standing out among video game protagonists . Fans of the Drakengard series in Japan have also received her positively .

= = Creation and design = =

Zero was conceived by Taro Yoko , the director and co @-@ writer of Drakengard 3 . While conceiving her , Yoko thought it would be interesting to do a character who had worked in a brothel , as the concept had not been often explored and the Drakengard series offered an opportunity for such a protagonist to be created . This sexual aspect of the character was generally conveyed through dialogue rather than cutscenes . One of the earlier ideas for Zero 's role in the game was to have her as a schoolgirl with a cellphone in a contemporary setting , but this was quickly decided against . Eventually , Yoko decided to create more female characters for Zero to interact with : one of the reasons behind this was that all other possible choices for the game had been rejected . Her number @-@ based name , along with the names of all her sisters , were meant to make it easier for players to identify and distinguish them . Yoko helped write her dialogue to complement the game 's unusual situations , such as rude conversations between her and the disciples during moments of carnage . Multiple aspects of Zero 's character and worldview were incorporated into the game 's theme song " This Silence is Mine " by composers Keiichi Okabe and Onitsuka Chihiro . The choice of Zero 's voice actress was an important part of her design , as the team wanted to both have a good performance and surprise the audience : Maaya Uchida , normally known for gentler female roles in anime and video games , was chosen for the role .

Zero was designed by Kimihiko Fujisaka , a designer who had worked on each entry in the Drakengard series . His original design was meant to emulate her status as a god @-@ like being , and have a more elaborate and heroic appearance , but as the game 's atmosphere was finalized , Fujisaka redesigned her with some unaesthetic elements , taking direct influence from the game atmosphere : this was the main reason behind adding her prosthetic arm . The original creation of the arm was a pure accident on Fujisaka 's part . Her color palette was intended as a reverse of Caim , the protagonist of Drakengard . Other aspects of her design evoked the color and design for the Goddess of the Seal , a key character in the earlier Drakengard games . She went through two redesigns before Yoko was satisfied . Her final design , along with the flower in her eye , emphasized her sexuality . She originally had no flower in her design , but Fujisaka wanted to add an aspect of femininity to her appearance . The decision to place it in her eye was to add originality to the character : while the game 's producer Takamata Shiba originally feared it was too much of a risk in conjunction with her gender , Yoko approved of the design . After Zero was finalized , Yoko decided on more female characters , and told Fujisaka to " think Puella Magi Madoka Magica " while designing them . Elements of her design were incorporated into the other Intoners . Her design , along with the rest of the main characters , was inspired by modern clothing styles and fashion in contrast to the " medieval " inspiration of previous games .

= = Fictional biography = =

In Zero 's prequel novella , " A Rain to End and a Flower to Begin " , it is revealed that Zero was abused by her mother and sold into prostitution . Eventually escaping , she grew to live by killing and stealing , with the killing eventually becoming an unconscious instinct . Eventually , she was weakened by a deadly disease and was caught and imprisoned , dying from her illness there . Upon dying , she was revived and turned into an Intoner by a magical flower intent on destroying mankind . Learning the flower 's plans for her , Zero tried to kill herself , but the flower kept her alive , and spawned five clones as a safety measure : these clones were Zero 's " sisters " , who were modeled after five rebels Zero was imprisoned with . The sisters eventually took control of the land from the native warlords . Eventually , Zero decides to kill her sisters , then herself to rid the world of the flower . In the prequel manga Drag @-@ On Dragoon 3 : Utahime Five , told from the point of view of the other Intoners , it is revealed that she is directly responsible for the creation of the Disciples , used by her in an attempt to destroy the Intoners .

By the events of Drakengard 3 , Zero had forged a partnership with the dragon Michael : as dragons are the only beings that can destroy Intoners , Michael would help Zero kill her sisters , then kill her to finish off the flower . Their first attempt to take down all the Intoners ends in disaster , with Zero losing her arm and Michael being wounded and forced to reincarnate as the child dragon Mikhail . During their second attempt , they attack each one individually : after killing one , Zero takes on their disciple , a servant created to magnify the Intoners ' powers , who each help in battle and act as a personal harem . Before facing One , Zero reverts her disciples to their original bird forms , releasing them from their servitude . During the battle , both One and Mikhail are killed , then Zero is killed by a male clone of One created as a fail @-@ safe in the event of Zero 's victory .

Around this central timeline , various " branches " appear , caused by " singularities " , namely Zero , her sisters and the Disciples . During her progression through these branches , Zero is monitored by Accord , one of a race called Records charged with monitoring and recording history . In the second branch , while going to kill her sister Three , Zero witnesses the flower driving her sisters insane , with Three dying from poisons in the forest and One being murdered by an unhinged Two . In the ensuing battle , the disciples and Two are killed , then Mikhail is poisoned . Zero uses the flower to form a " pact " with Mikhail , resurrecting him . In the third branch , Mikhail is regressed by the Intoners to a childlike form incapable of properly defending Zero , and Zero 's disciples are killed when Two self @-@ destructs . When Mikhail is killed by One 's dragon , Zero and One do battle and One is killed . Mentally unbalanced by the event , Zero sets off to find another dragon , but it is hinted that she fails .

In the fourth branch , Zero manages to kill all of her sisters and absorb their powers , managing to take down One with help from Accord . After absorbing all their powers , she and Mikhail are transported to another world and Mikhail destroys the monster Zero transforms into . With this , the flower 's magic is sealed away , although Accord speculates that Zero might have survived and would reappear in some form . In the novel Drag @-@ On Dragoon 3 Story Side , a novel detailing the events leading into Drakengard , a combination of events from other branches occurs . During the final confrontation with One , Mikhail is poisoned and Zero forms a pact with Mikhail to save him . After killing One , One 's clone kills Zero .

= = Reception = =

Zero has received a mixed to positive reaction from western video game critics . GamesRadar 's Becky Cunningham praised Tara Platt 's performance in the role , and that her relationship with Mikhail helped humanize her . GameSpot 's Heidi Kemps found Zero entertaining despite her negative portrayal , enjoying the points where she breaks the fourth wall to critique the game 's puzzles and finding that she " related to [ Zero ] as the game progressed , which is not something I typically feel for antihero characters . " Eurogamer 's Chris Schilling found that Zero 's presence turned the game into " a jet @-@ black comedy " , comparing her favorably to Jordan Belfort : while both unlikable characters , there was " something magnetic about their horribleness " . Destructoid 's

Chris Carter commended Drakengard 3 and Zero , saying " [ he ] was drawn into [ Drakengard 3 's ] world and its cast of characters , and I wanted to see Zero 's journey through from start to finish . " This view was shared by Will Borger of Gaming Bolt , who called story , characters , world , and in particular Zero , the reasons for playing the game . In addition , he felt that players would find themselves relating to her more as the story progressed .

Jim Sterling of The Escapist wrote that Zero 's portrayal , especially her sexual empowerment and the fact that she had dominance over the male characters , was " refreshing " . Capsule Computers ' Travis Bruno commented that Zero is " largely the villain of the series " , but that he felt the need to see her journey through to its end . Ron Duwell of Techno Buffalo , while commenting on the quality of the design of the characters , claimed that Zero was " the best looking of the bunch with her acrobatic kicks and sword slashes being pulled off without a hitch . " Geoff Thew of Hardcore Gamer complimented the character , calling her actions , attitudes and language " a nicely self @-@ contained example of how [ Drakengard 3 ] plays with juxtaposition . " Mike Splechta of GameZone agreed , stating " the character designs were fantastic . I loved Zero 's look in particular ; her white flowy dress only serves as a contrast to her violent behavior since it gets drenched in blood the more you tear enemies apart with her weapons . " RPGFan 's Derek Heemsbergen referred to Zero as " foul @-@ mouthed butcher " , although he was generally positive about her story and her interactions with Mikhail and the disciples , calling the latter " strange and often hilarious " . Andrew Barker , in an analysis of the game for RPGFan , referred to her as " violence personified " , noting how the game gradually justified her actions . She was also noted , alongside One , as being the only Intoner who had no real need for a disciple . In a final note , he said that he only felt comfortable with Zero during the game 's fourth branch , where her motives were revealed . Anime News Network 's Todd Ciolek described her as a conscious mockery of standard action @-@ game protagonists , referring to her as " murderous , foul @-@ mouthed , impulsive , abusive , and all but impossible to like . "

In contrast , Kimberley Wallace of Game Informer was not as enthusiastic , saying that while Zero had some good one @-@ liners , " the better efforts are buried in a lot of bad party banter . " RPGamer 's Michael Cunningham found Zero to be an " angry , vulgar woman [ ... ] impatient , aggressive , and easily irritated " , and that the lack of explanation behind Zero 's actions negatively affected the plot . IGN 's Meghan Sullivan was also fairly negative , saying that Zero 's character , interactions and motivation were badly let down by poor writing . USGamer 's Kat Bailey was generally unenthusiastic about Zero 's general attitude and portrayal , saying that she was " characterized in large part by her apparent love of killing and her aggressive bitchiness toward her companion dragon " . Roger Hargreaves for Metro agreed , finding Zero to be a " thoroughly unpleasant and unlikeable main character . " Crunchyroll 's Nate Ming was highly critical of Zero , calling her " a ruthless , backstabbing , front @-@ stabbing , cold @-@ hearted bitch " , and said that she would be the villain in any other game .

The character has been positively received by series fans in Japan . In a popularity contest for the characters of Drakengard 3 , Zero came in as the fourth most popular character of the game , with her dragon Mikhail taking first place . In the 2014 Dengeki PlayStation Awards , Zero was placed as the fourth best character of 2013 . Beyond the Drakengard universe , both Zero had her dragon Mikhail appeared in the second sequel to the arcade game Lord of Vermilion .

= = = Game quotes = = =