

Kingdom Hearts: Hall of Abandon: Part Three

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Sora has seemingly lost his memory can Riku and the others find it?

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1 - One Winged Angel

--{All worlds begin in darkness, and all so end. The heart is no different. Darkness sprouts within it, grows, consumes it. Such is its nature. In the end, every heart returns to the darkness whence it came. You see, darkness is the heart's true essence.}--

-Ansem (Xenahort's Heartless)

Part Three of The Hall of Abandon

Kairi... my sister?

Riku stood numbly in the dark void of the room.

"I just can't believe it."

He lifted his chin and gazed ahead at the red haired boy who had revealed himself as Riku's brother.

"But, Adam, if you're my brother, then why are you trying to kill us?"

Adam removed his sunglasses, revealing eyes that saw many years of emptiness.

"Because I have lost something dear to me. I am desperately trying to find it and I don't want you to get in the way."

Riku thought for a moment.

"Why can't we help you? Why side with the darkness? You can come with us and we can help you find what you lost."

Adam's features contorted slightly.

"You can't help!" Adam shouted. "What I seek is only something that I myself can find, no one else!"

Riku hesitated at the sudden outburst.

"But, what is it that you have lost exactly?"

Adam's temper subsided.

"My heart."

"... you are, a Heartless."

Adam frowned.

"No, I'd hate to be one of those wretched things."

Riku pondered.

"Then what are you?"

Adam ground his teeth frustratedly.

"I'm still me. I am only missing half of my heart. And it's been like this for ever since I can remember."

Adam squared up with Riku.

"Now enough small talk. I just wanted to tell you the truth before you die. Goodbye Brother."

He summoned a portal of darkness and began to back through it. Riku charged after Adam, but he knew he couldn't catch him. Suddenly a dark figure in black hooded robes appeared behind Adam in the portal and pushed him away from it.

"Hey!" he turned to see the portal disappear. He tried to summon another, but none came.

Riku hesitated.

Organization 13? I thought they were all dead?

He caught up with Adam who frantically dodged an incoming attack. He pulled out another Keyblade and began an assault on Riku with his key and Sora's Kingdom Key. Riku blocked an attack and dodged

another, and slashed Way to Dawn at Adam's mid-section. Adam, without thinking tried to block Riku's strike with Sora's Keyblade, only to have it knocked out of his hands and fly thirty feet away. He growled angrily and ran towards it. Riku raced him to get it but could see that he was losing. He dived, struck Adam's legs out from under him, and rolled over to the Keyblade, picking it up. Adam stumbled and fell at Riku's feet. He quickly recovered and leaped away before Riku could strike him.

"I'm gonna kill you for that!"

He started forward, but paused midstep. He held his hands spread wide as an immense dark fire engulfed his body.

"Let's see how you like this, Brother!"

Something large and dark began to issue from the ground like a large cloud of steam. It rose and hovered above the shadowy floor before turning opaque and white. It morphed and adjusted into a humanoid shape. Seconds later, it solidified, revealing a menacing sight. Before Riku, a good eight feet tall, was a large human like creature with a pointed head and a single white seraph wing sprouting from its back in its hands was a long pole, ending in a sharp, curved blade. Riku stepped back and looked at Adam who waved at him, smiling.

"Ciao!"

He disappeared, leaving Riku and Sora alone with the strange enemy.

2 - Rift of Remembrance

Kairi pounded a fist on the door, but to no avail.

"Why does this always happen!"

She rotated to face Arona and Ichigo, who both shrugged.

"Well," started Ichigo, "Now what are we supposed to do?"

Kairi slid her back down the face of the door and sat at its base. She closed her eyes, resting her hand on the cool marble floor.

Why must we always be separated?

She felt a small tremor vibrate from the floor to her hand, and waited as it grew in intensity to a dull roar.

"What's going on?" asked Arona.

As the rumbling grew in intensity, Kairi felt a strange sensation on her back. She stood up and faced the wall. Where she had been sitting, a small crack began to extend from the bottom of the wall upward.

"Kairi! Get away from the wall!"

She ran back from the wall to her friends. As she did so the wall began to cave inward, the floor crumbling behind her. Kairi ran hard but tripped on a rock that jutted from the ground. She fell to the ground extending an arm. Arona lunged forward.

"Kairi!"

Kairi clung desperately to the edge of the floor, which had ceased its disintegration. Piles of Keyblades toppled into the yawning abyss of darkness as Kairi tried to pull herself up. Arona grabbed at her hand and tried to pull but it began to slip. Ichigo caught up with them and began to help. Slowly, they towed Kairi up, millimeter by millimeter, their shoes sometimes sliding forward frightfully. Suddenly, a section of the floor that Ichigo was standing on began to crumble, and she slid downward, luckily managing to get hold of the edge to avoid falling into the gaping crevasse.

"NO!" she yelled.

Arona's hands began to sweat from the effort of trying to pull Kairi up alone. She could feel herself grow weak, her grip loosen.

"I...I... can't..."

Suddenly a strong arm reached past her and gripped Kairi's wrist. Together, she and the mysterious stranger slowly hauled Kairi over the ledge and onto the ground. Arona collapsed next to her, and hugged her tightly.

Ichigo struggled to find a foothold and heave herself onto the cool marble, but no footholds seemed sturdy enough to hold her weight. She grimaced with the effort and looked over to see Xurik approaching Arona to help. She strained with intense effort, but her arms began to weaken greatly, one arm losing its grip completely and falling to her side while she hung for dear life with her other.

"...please...help..."

When she could hold on no longer she closed her eyes and loosened her fingers.

Abruptly someone seized her arm with a firm grip and began to bring her up.

A tear slid down her cheek.

"Thank you...Xurik."

As she was raised onto the stone floor, a woman's voice spoke.

"Who's Xurik? Don't you remember who I am?"

Recognizing the voice, Ichigo's eyes shot open and focused on her rescuer.

"Larxene!? What are you doing...? How did you find us!?"

Sure enough standing before her in long black robes, was a tall slender woman with short blonde hair and emerald green eyes. She crouched down close to Ichigo, smiling.

"Did you miss me?"

Ichigo cried out in joy and embraced her friend, who awkwardly hugged her back.

After a second or two of this happy reunion, Ichigo got to her feet and brushed herself off. Looking over she saw Kairi with her Keyblade drawn. Xurik and Arona stood behind her

"Kairi? Whats wrong?"

"What's Organization 13 doing here? Aren't you supposed to be dead?"

Ichigo Stepped in front of Larxene, facing Kairi.

"She's not that way anymore! When she-"

Larxene put a hand on her shoulder.

"Allow me, I know that I have some explaining to do."

Ichigo hesitated, then nodded and moved aside.

Larxene stepped forward watching Kairi who was still holding her weapon.

"Several years ago I worked for Organization 13. I didn't know who I was, or where I had come from, because all the memories of my past life were tron away when I became a Nobody." she paused and began to pace, taking a deep breath,"I was put in charge of several missions, and on one of these, I was introduced to Ichigo." She paused again, gesturing to the black haired girl. "It was durng that same visit that I found out that my other half had been Ichigo's best friend, but their world was overrun by Heartless and I was killed and born as a Nobody. I was angry and confused, I wanted revenge. But for some reason I couldn't let myself hurt the girl..."

She looked at the ground morosely.

I travelled back to our base, and was given different orders. We were to set a trap for your friends, Sora and Riku. Namine, your Nobody, was under our control at the time, and was told to break apart Sora and Riku's memories."

Kairi lowered the Keyblade, intrigued at what Larxene had to say.

"Well when she did, they forgot everything that they knew. She then began to implant new, different memories into their hearts. We had to make sure it went as planned of course, but it couldn't work out. Namine began to trick us and slip bits and pieces of information to Sora and Riku, pieces that didn't seem to fit in with his other memories, and he began to doubt. During this time Sora had defeated about half of us in the castle, and we began to worry that our plan wouldn't work out. When I fought Sora, I made the decision to fake my death, for I knew that I had things that I still needed to do. After that, I once again found Ichigo and apologized for my outrage drng our previous meeting. I vowed that I would always be there watching silently, protecting her if needed. We've been friends ever since. I had requested that she not tell you, Sora, or Riku about me, but it's about time you found out. I want to apologize for my actions against Sora and Riku, I was only doing what I was told."

Kairi dismissed her Keybade and approached Larxene silently. She stopped in front of her.

"I accept your apology. I'm sorry for criticising you."

Larxene gazed at Kairi.

"It's undestandable why you did so."

Ichigo turned to look across the abyss where she almost met her fate. The wall had moved thirty or so feet from the edge and was partially destroyed.

"Larxene, could you do us a favor? My brother and Riku might be in trouble, could you help them?"

Larxene turned to her.

"Yeah I'll be back in a bit."

She nodded at Ichigo then created a portal of darkness. Larxene began to step through but hesitated.

"Kairi... I want you to know that you can trust me, I am somewhat in debt to Sora for my wrongdoings to him. I wish to repay it. He and Riku will be safe with me."

With that she covered her face with her hood and marched through the portal.

3 - The Key of Light

Riku leapt backward, away from the creature as it stretched its limbs, as if waking from a long sleep. The creature's eyes scanned its surroundings, and ultimately fell on Sora, who was watching it curiously. Hefting its large blade, the creature stepped forward and raised the blade above its head. Riku dashed forward to attack. The creature turned its head as he approached, and swiftly twisted its weapon downward to block Riku's attack at its abdomen. Riku, surprised at its speed, slashed yet again with Sora's Keyblade, only to be blocked once more. He hesitated and the creature quickly swept Riku's legs out from under him with the pole end of its weapon. Riku hit the floor and raised the keyblades above him, expecting another attack. The monster swung with all its might at Riku, who closed his eyes, bracing for the impact. The blade crashed loudly against the two Keyblades sending a clang echoing throughout the darkness. The vibrations of the strike rattled down Riku's arms violently. The creature raised its weapon again, but this time, struck with the opposite side, knocking the Keyblades out of Riku's hands. They rattled several yards away onto the shadowy floor. Riku opened his eyes in fright, gazing at the winged monster then looking over at the Keys, which were hopelessly far away for him to reach. Once more the beast reared back its obscene weapon to prepare for the final, obliterating strike. "Hmmm I don't think Sora will be needing this anymore."

Adam appeared from behind the beast and picked up the gold and silver Kingdom Key. The creature had paused to wait for his master's command. Riku tried to get to his feet but the monster kicked him back down onto the invisible floor pointing its weapon at Riku's neck.

Riku eyed Adam with malice.

"Give back the Keyblade!"

Adam paced before him, relishing the moment.

Suddenly there was a flash, and the keyblade was gone.

"What!?" he cried out, looking around for the missing weapon.

Without warning, three bolts of energy shot at Adam, who blocked them with his own Keyblade. He strafed to the side to dodge three more.

Riku looked for the source of the attack and saw, standing next to a black-robed figure, Sora, holding his Keyblade. The robed figure removed its hood, revealing a short haired blonde woman with two long antennae-like strands of hair traversing her head from front to back. When their eyes met the lady looked away guiltily. Sora stepped forward while a fierce expression crossed Adam's face.

"How did you summon the keyblade!? Didn't you lose your memory?"

Sora approached them, ignoring the beast that loomed over Riku.

"True, my memory had vanished, but there was something in my heart that I knew very well, friendship. The light of friendship can never be taken away, and so it guided me to the rest of my heart, and I found the Keyblade. All of the memories rushed over me, and I finally found my purpose, and that purpose is to find the perfect light, one that not even shadows can exist within, shadows like you."

Adam smiled strangely.

"This might be more difficult than I first thought. Oh well, there's always next time."

He looked at the creature, nodded, then vanished into the air.

Sora stepped forward angrily, then looked at the strange beast that threatened his friend. It had raised its weapon high into the air and was preparing to strike. Sora lunged forward and struck at the creature's abdomen. The strike hit home and the creature hesitated, looked at Sora, then vanished in a puff of smoke. He lowered his keyblade and offered his hand to Riku, who took it, and pulled himself up.

"Thanks, Sora."

Sora smiled, picked up Way to Dawn, and handed it to Riku.

"Let's go."

4 - Creation

Sora and Riku approached the blonde woman that stood hesitant before them, her eyes averted. Sora reached out a hand, "Hi! I'm Sora! What's your name?"

Riku glared at her, quietly summoning his keyblade.

"Larxene... what are *you* doing here? I thought you were dead!"

Larxene took a step backward with a pitiful glance towards Riku.

"What's wrong?" asked Sora, "Have you two met before?"

Riku continued to stare as he spoke.

"This... this *Nobody* tried to kill us both! You fought her and killed her, or so I thought."

Larxene lifted her gaze, "No! You don't understand! I-!"

"*She*," Riku cut her off, "and the rest of Organization XIII, had Namine tear apart our memories so they could attack us while we were weak!"

Larxene shuffled in her spot uncomfortably.

"Once we defeated her and several other members of the Organization, Namine changed your memories back by placing you in that capsule. Larxene can't be trusted, Sora, not after what she did to us."

Sora looked back and forth from Riku to Larxene. Suddenly memories that he'd never seen before flash across his mind, memories of people, things, and events he never remembered seeing. His mind wheeled at the sudden knowledge that flooded him.

"But, but why... did she help us just now?"

"Because I've changed!" she blurted, "I'm not the same as I was before! I met Ichigo and we became friends and I promised that I would help you out. I don't want you to hate me because of what I did in the past, however wrong it was. Please forgive me!"

Larxene dropped to her knees and buried her face in her hands sobbing. Sora and Riku looked at each other confused as to what they should do. Larxene removed her now wet face from her hands and looked at them, shocked, as tears continued to slide down her cheeks.

"What is this... feeling? What is happening to me?"

Without warning, Larxene began to float upward her body arching until her chest faced up to the invisible ceiling of the dark room, from which a large beam of light exploded, passing straight through Larxene's inert body. Her eyes glazed over as something began to descend through the ray, and, when Riku and Sora approached, they discerned it to be a large crystalline heart. Amazed, they looked on as it proceeded to enter her chest and in a bright flash of light she collapsed to the floor, breathing heavily.

The room was now encased in a myriad of colors and shapes as opposed to its once gloomy appearance. The pyramid in the center of the room now rotated slowly, its beam of light now altered into a beam of darkness. Larxene stood and shivered.

"How...is it... possible?" Emotions flowed through her like the rapids of a river. Happiness, anger, love, sorrow, jealousy, shock... all encased her in their warm embrace as Larxene shook with delight. All of these feelings she had lost for so long and in the blink of an eye they all coursed through her being.

Once more... she was *whole*.

5 - The Oath

Clink, clink, clink...

The mail slid over his shoulders, scraping the rough leather vest underneath.

He hung his sickle, Talon, at his side and made his way to the chamber door. The hall echoed with the pounding of his steel plated boots as he marched solemnly down the empty corridor.

They took my wife...

He turned left, his shoulder-length auburn hair swirling about his neck.

...my only child...

His violet eyes watered in sorrow as dark memories flooded his mind, creatures of evil, so immense, yet so determined.

...my people.

The man continued down the hallway, pausing every now and then praying for a glimpse of life, but as far as he could see, there was no one.

He was alone.

His path led him to a pair of large oaken doors through which a chapel of immense proportions lie hidden, untouched for months. He stepped in and trodded down the aisle that led up to the altar. He remember as a child, how he would come to the church with his family running up and down the aisle with his best friends. He grimaced at the pallid whiteness of the chapels threshold, the stained glass windows' fading colors, and the dusty mahogany altar that rested at the apex of the staircase leading up to it. He climbed them, weary and downtrodden, passed the altar, and collapsed to his knees before a large statue of Nokarion, the goddess of Hope, Peace, and Harmony. Tears rushed down his face in torrents as he prayed silently to his idol.

Dear Heavenly Mother, wherever thou art. My soil is infertile with the invisible blood of my people, whose souls hath been purloined viciously from the earth. I ask thee now to lead me in the direction of my enemies, so that I may avenge mine sorrow heart. Please I pray to thee for guidance and counsel, for I am but lost in the wind with no sails to direct me. Please! Answer me here!

For several minutes, the chapel reverberated dimly with the violent sobbing that emanated from the man. When he was finished he rose to his feet and gazed, melancholy, into the face of the beautiful white marble statue.

Suddenly a light erupted before the statue, revealing within what appeared to be enormous monoliths of keys.

Syras grinned faintly, quietly thanked Nokarion, and stepped through the portal, drawing Talon from it's clasp.

6 - The Bonding

Riku and Sora stumbled out of the portal of darkness onto the marble floor, followed by Larxene, who leapt nimbly behind them. The two boys got up and brushed themselves off.

"Sora! Riku!" shouted familiar voices.

They turned just in time as Kairi and Ichigo embraced them in a loving death grip. Sora grinned.

"Gosh, I didn't think we were gone that long."

Separating the four friends watched each other for a long moment. Without warning, Kairi jumped on Sora and began to playfully beat his head with her fists.

"What did I tell you! We're supposed to stick together on this one!"

Sora ran around in circles trying to get her off until they eventually collapsed to the floor, exhausted.

"Geez! It won't happen again I promise!"

Everyone laughed hysterically, taking in the feeling of being reunited. Ichigo heard another laugh coming from outside the group and turned to see Larxene watching them with a smile on her lips. The laugh had a beautiful ring to it, and when Ichigo heard it, she was surprised. She hadn't heard that laugh since...

"Oh my gosh! Larxene! You got your heart back!"

They ran to each other and clinched each other tight, tears running down both of their faces. They giggled and danced happily, their laughs and tears bonding into a melody of sweet merriment. Larxene gazed at Ichigo as they separated from their embrace. Ichigo smiled broadly.

"How did this happen?"

"Well, first I apologized to Sora and Riku for what I did to them in Castle Oblivion. Then I began to beg for their forgiveness and I started crying. I couldn't control it, it was as if every emotion was flooding me at once. I just couldn't stop. How did you realize that I got my heart back?"

Ichigo looked back to make sure no one was listening.

"I knew because you laughed, and I hadn't heard that laugh since, well, you know, when the heartless destroyed our homeworld."

Larxene nodded solemnly.

"Well, now that we are fully reunited, I'm casting off my old name. I am now Arlene once more."

Ichigo grinned, grabbed Arlene's hand, and took her over to Sora, Riku, and Kairi.

Sora and Kairi were talking excitedly to themselves when Kairi noticed that Riku wasn't joining in the conversation. He seemed distracted.

"Riku? Is something wrong?"

Riku raised his gaze to meet hers.

"Do you remember anything from your childhood, Kairi? Like something that confuses you a little, and makes you wonder where you came from?"

Kairi, taken aback by the change in tone, thought long and hard.

"Well I don't really look like my mother. Why are you asking me this?"

Riku averted his gaze, unsure how to approach her with the truth. He eventually decided to just tell her.