

Man of steel

Superman's death marks the end of an era

SUPERMAN DEAD

Doomsday is Culprit

By Anne Steyer
Daily Planet Reporter

Metropolis—No longer will bystanders hear someone cry, "It's a bird, it's a plane, it's, it's Superman!"

The world's greatest super hero has fallen — Superman, earth's Man of Steel, died Thursday, November 19.

He engaged in mortal combat with Doomsday, a mysterious menace and a nearly indestructible force who devastated much of Metropolis and surrounding areas.

Maxima, an alien member of the Justice League of America, established a telepathic link with the creature in pursuit.

His hate — death and bloodlust

personified," she said, "nothing more." Superman defeated Doomsday in a battle to the death, before succumbing to fatal wounds and dying in the arms of longtime friend Lois Lane, while Daily Planet photographer Jimmy Olsen looked on.

Surviving members of the Justice League of America, the peace-keeping superhero organization led by Superman, arrived too late to aid him in his battle with Doomsday.

JLA members Bloodwynd and Ice arrived as Superman died, after taking injured members of the JLA to receive medical treatment. Blue Beetle and Booster Gold, both current members of JLA's new team, were hospitalized

with extensive injuries after their encounter with the creature known as Doomsday.

Rescue teams, including government liaison Guardian, were unable to revive the fallen superhero, who was unofficially pronounced dead on the scene.

Funeral services are pending, but superheroes worldwide joined together to plan a memorial service for their fallen leader.

Government officials refuse to confirm or deny speculations that Doomsday was a government creation, masterminded by the genetic experts at the Cadmus Research Labs.

Deaths

Superman

Metropolis — Services are pending for Superman, age unknown, recently of Metropolis, who died November 19, 1992.

A few years ago, Superman discovered he was not a native of planet Earth. He was born on Krypton and was sent to Earth in a capsule. The details of his upbringing are unknown.

Past leader of the peace-keeping Justice League of America, Superman was a model citizen and a leading force in crime-fighting worldwide.

Special abilities included: speed faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, ability to leap tall buildings in a single bound, x-ray vision and both super hearing and super lung capacity.

Survivors are unknown.

By Anne Steyer
Staff Reporter

An era has ended: the arena of popular culture has been rocked and the world must bury its greatest superhero.

Superman, the cornerstone of Detective Comics, died Thursday, Nov. 19, of mortal wounds sustained in his battle with Doomsday, an evil creature of unknown whereabouts.

The man of steel was a mythical hero with superhuman strength created in 1934 by Jerome Siegel. He recruited neighbor and class-

mate Joe Shuster to pencil and ink his stories, and an American legend was born.

First published in June 1938, as the launch pad of Action Comics, a new line from DC, Superman was portrayed as an indestructible force of good.

Over the next 50 years, very little about Superman changed. He was faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, able to leap tall buildings in a single bound. He could fly, he had X-ray vision, hurricane-strength lung power and supersonic hearing. His strength

was matched by none. His costume was the signature red and blue with the gleaming yellow "S."

In 1986, the man of steel was revamped and made a little more — dare it be said — human. He was not quite so indestructible and he had moments of doubt and fear. But he was still a champion of good.

"He always has been a cosmic boy scout, a nice guy," said Brian Schur, owner of Cosmic Comics, "...and we all know where nice guys finish."

Over the decades, his history was revealed to his readers and — somewhat — to himself. Superman discovered he was not human but was born to scientists Jor-El and Lara on the doomed planet of Krypton. They sent him to Earth cocooned in a womb-like capsule.

He landed in Smallville, U.S.A., and was discovered by Mr. and Mrs. Kent. He lived a relatively calm and normal childhood as Clark Kent, living a hidden life as the crime-fighting Superman.

He continued his secret identity while, as an adult, employed at the Metropolis city newspaper, The Daily Planet.

It was there that he met Lois Lane, the determined investigative reporter, whom he would later fall in love with, reveal himself to and plan to marry.

It was in her arms that he spoke his final words and drew his final breath.

Within the DC universe, within the city of Metropolis and the world

of comic books, Superman is remembered as the Earth's greatest superhero. To the fictional characters of those worlds, his passing is a tremendous loss — equivalent to America's real life loss of FDR, JFK and John Wayne all at once.

To citizens of the real world, Superman's death is the end of an era, the passing of one of America's most celebrated icons of popular culture.

A worldwide institution, Superman has been involved in more than half a century of fighting crime, appearing in mediums as varied as novels, comic books, comic strips, radio shows, animated cartoons, movie serials, television series five feature films and a Broadway musical.

Superman was celebrated in songs from Laurie Anderson to Barbra Streisand, the Kinks to REM.

The Crash Test Dummies sang: "Superman never made any money/for saving the world from Solomon Grundy/and sometimes I despair the world will never see/another man like him."

Most likely, the world never will. All of this celebration of a single hero was catapulted into a phenomenal merchandising campaign. His image was imprinted on everything from mugs and posters to beach towels and bedroom sheets.

All this Superman mania had diminished in recent years, as other characters' stories took off. Comic book sales had dropped, and talk of another feature film met with jeers.

But with the massive media attention the impending death of Superman received, interest in the character resurged. Comic book collectors and Superman fans, together with all the people who had loved him in their childhood and those seeking a financial investment, bombarded comic book shops nationwide in search of Superman's final and fateful battle.

No one had enough copies. DC reported record sales and issued a second printing of Superman #75 the same day the first was released. DC has announced the release of a third printing due out today.

Schur said his three comic stores sold out of 1,200 copies in just under three hours. More than 900 of the second printing were sold in his stores, and those also have sold out.

Speculation is rampant about the fate and future of the man of steel. Customers in local comic stores already are anticipating his return.

"Superman is gone now, but how long is merely conjecture," Schur said, "I'd hazard a guess he'll be back sometime next year, as a revised character, a harder, nittier-grittier and darker Superman."

Speculation aside, and regardless of the fallen superhero's future, millions of people worldwide are mourning the passing of a popular icon, a figure who represented safety, security and the triumph of good in a world filled with injustice and evil.

The world mourns a Superman.

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