

OBITUARIES: The Daily Planet

# MAN OF STEEL DIES DEFENDING CITY

By R. Lowell Stern

Special to the Daily Planet  
Superman, sole survivor of the doomed planet Krypton and our world's greatest champion for justice, died Tuesday on the streets of Metropolis, of injuries sustained in the defense of the city and her people. His exact age and place of residence remain unknown, though he is believed to have been in his early thirties and had long been associated in the public mind with this city.

A hero to the end, he died defending Metropolis from the monster known only as Doomsday, finally slaying that creature with his last ounce of strength. Despite valiant efforts at resuscitation, he could not be revived and was later pronounced dead by Doctor Jorge Sanchez of Metropolis General Hospital.

### A Heroic Presence

Superman made his first appearance in Metropolis nearly a decade ago, during a month-long celebration of the 250th anniversary of the city's founding. The then-unknown champion leapt into the skies over Metropolis International Airport before a crowd estimated at over half a million, exercising powers and abilities far beyond those of a mortal man, to prevent the crash of NASA's experimental space-plane, the Constitution. *Daily Planet* reporter Lois Lane, flying as a crew member of the space-plane, later filed her account of that ill-fated flight, referring to their mysterious rescuer as "Superman". In the week after the rescue of the Constitution, he returned to the city skies, attired in the striking red, blue, and yellow uniform which was soon to become known around the world.

Over the next month, Superman at times appeared to be everywhere in Metropolis at once. From halting bank robberies and defusing hostage situations to fighting fires and rescuing cats from trees, nothing seemed to escape his notice. And though he soon after turned his attention outward, and his remarkable powers to the service of all humanity, it was evident that Metropolis held a special place in his heart.



James Owen/Daily Planet

### The First of Many

As the first major costumed crime-fighter to operate openly since mid-century, Superman has been credited with inspiring a new generation of heroes, including the members of the original Justice League of America and its newer incarnation. Though never a member of the original League, he has aided them in combating a number of menaces and had recently joined the newly reorganized group. In a rare statement to the media, the Batman said that Superman's never-ending battle for truth and justice "set a standard for all of us in this line of work. He brought out the best in humanity, and never hesitated to oppose the worst, no matter what the risk to himself. I didn't always agree with the man, but I liked what he stood for."

"He was a man of great principle," said Diana of Themyscira, the Amazon Princess more popularly known as Wonder Woman. Once linked romantically to the Man of Steel, she discounted those reports as "the wishful thinking of press agents and reporters. I was very fond of Superman, but we were never lovers. He was the most respectable, and most respected, man I had ever met. In my travels around the world, I found that he was loved literally by millions.

And even those who did not love him respected him. We are all the poorer for his passing."

### Last Son of Krypton

Long considered the greatest living exponent of the American way, it was only in recent years that Superman discovered his ancestry was not of this world. This discovery was first revealed to the public during his first encounter with the cybernetic assassin Metallo. In an exclusive *Daily Planet* interview, he later confirmed that his genetic parents

had been inhabitants of a planet whose name was pronounced in somewhat similar manner to that of the element krypton.

According to Superman, the world of Krypton once orbited a star approximately fifty light-years from Earth. There, he explained, he had been conceived and placed within a birthing matrix, "a kind of artificial womb." Learning that Krypton was in danger of exploding in the equivalent of a thermonuclear ignition of the planet's core,

his natural father sent the matrix of the still-gestating Superman to Earth via what was described as a "hyper-light drive vehicle."

"By sending me away from Krypton," explained Superman, his father had saved his life and given him "the gift of humanity."

Though he never commented on his upbringing for the record, there can be little doubt that Superman was born and raised as an American, in the best sense of that word.

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