

THE ORIGINAL HERO

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On December 28, 1922, Stan Lee went to work for the company that would later be known as *Marvel Comics*. Years later, in the early '60s, he was given an assignment to create a series that rivaled DC Comics' *Justice League of America*. With the encouragement of his wife Joan, and artist/co-creator Jack Kirby, the *Fantastic Four* was born in November of 1961.

That group of superheroes from New York introduced the world into a new era, the beginning of *Marvel*.

We grew up watching a hero in red, white and blue with an impenetrable shield to protect us, and a normal boy that was bit by a spider that awarded him powers. *Marvel* heroes inspire people to push past barriers and strive for what's right, even if it may seem impossible.

Personally, growing up watching *Marvel* was something that inspired me. Watching brave heroes that strive for what's right and defeating those who aim to destroy the light in the world, it gave me hope when I was young and naïve. It taught me a sense of justice, and that you can kick your brother's butt in your mother's robes. From naïve little kids to soon-to-be adults, we have enjoyed and remembered the *Marvel* characters that Stan Lee brought to us.

"WE ALL GREW UP WITH GIANTS AND OGRES AND WITCHES. WELL, YOU GET A LITTLE BIT OLDER AND YOU'RE TOO OLD TO READ FAIRY TALES. BUT I DON'T THINK YOU EVER OUTGROW YOUR LOVE FOR THOSE KIND OF THINGS, THINGS THAT ARE BIGGER THAN LIFE AND MAGICAL AND VERY IMAGINATIVE," LEE SAID.

"AND NOW, UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN, MAY THE BLESSINGS OF ASGARD BE SHOW-ERED UPON YOU!" –STAN LEE

The Human Torch scorched a path through the fantasy world, his team of superheroes trudged through the ashes, leaving their mark that would forever be ingrained. Their battles between Dr. Victor Von Doom and the *Fantastic Four* embarked the beginning of the *Marvel* superheroes and villains. Following the success of the *Fantastic Four*, Stan Lee began creating more superheroes to protect the world from the otherworldly doom. Popular characters like *Spider-Man*, the *X-Men*, *Hulk*, and *Thor*. But with every superhero, there must be a villain that seeks to destroy them. But they couldn't be superheroes with the super villains that seek their destruction. Everybody remembers *Doctor Doom* with his mechanical

tentacles. And I definitely remember *Venom*, who left me with many sleepless nights as a child. I could connect with the sibling rivalry between Thor and Loki of Asgard, though a little less violent than them.

The thrilling movies that make us sit at the edge of our seats, eager for end, would never have been on screen for us to watch if Stan Lee had not put pen to paper. The movies that star our favorite superheroes and villains began as sketches on paper, and 63 of *Marvel* superheroes and villains

made it onto the screens you watch today. The well-known *Captain America* began as a 2-D drawing in a book that our parents bought for 99 cents. Now he stars in many *Marvel* movies, such as the last *Avengers-Endgame*. *Venom*, the villain that starred in the *Marvel* comic series *Spider-Man*, was in theatres as the hero that saved the world from *Riot*- another Alien Symbiote. The transformations that proceeded from paper to screen supported many young minds full of creativity that were waiting to put pen to paper and change the world.

Lee passed away on November 12, 2018 in Los Angeles, California. He inspired so many people to draw and find hope in the darkest moments with the heroes he illustrated. His death roused many emotions in the hearts of the many fans who waited anxiously on the sidelines. Like the heroes in his comics, he fought to the bitter end until his heart couldn't fight any longer, but he was the original hero. We appreciate that joy and hope your creations have brought us. Thank you Stan Lee.

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The Fantastic Four (1961)

Iron Man, X-Men (1963)

Black Panther (1966)

1922

The Hulk, Spider Man, Thor (1962)

The Inhumans (1965)

Falcon (1969)