



# Stan Lee – The Man Who Gave us Superheros

*In his final years, like many seniors, Lee needed his own superhero*

Stan Lee, the legendary writer and man credited with much of the Marvel comic book characters died at the age of 95 in California on November 12, 2018. World-renowned for his fantastic characters and beloved by comic-book fans everywhere, the last few months of Lee's life left him in need of his own superhero.

## A Long and Storied Career

Born Stanley Martin Lieber in 1922, his career spanned over 70 years and he received his first break in 1939 when he became a gofer making \$8/week at the new Timely Comics, which would eventually become Marvel Comics. When the editor quit Timely, Stan was named interim editor at the age of 19 and would go on to be their creative leader for decades.

The 19-year old Stanley Lieber made his comic-book debut with the title "Captain America Foils the Traitor's Revenge" in 1941 under the pseudonym Stan Lee. Years later, he admitted that he was so embarrassed at how comic books were received by society, that he used a pen name so no one would connect him to lowly comics when he eventually wrote the Great American Novel. He eventually changed his legal name to Stan Lee.

Collaborating with others are Marvel – especially Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko – Lee co-created some of today's most popular fictional characters, including Spider-Man, Iron Man, Thor, the Fantastic Four, the Hulk, the X-Men, Black Panther and Ant-Man.

Then in 2009, Walt Disney Co. bought Marvel Entertainment for \$4 billion, and since that time, most of the most successful superhero films have featured the Marvel characters that Lee helped bring to life.

## Not a Superhero Ending

Over Lee's career, he enjoyed enormous success, and he was quite active right up until his death. But the last 18 months of his life were anything but super.

In the summer of 2017, Stan lost his wife of 69 years from stroke-related complications. Joan was 95. And less than 8 months later, there were news reports that Stan was in a nasty battle for his care and estate with his 67-year old daughter.

Then on February 13, 2018, Stan signed a declaration in the presence of his attorney attesting to the fact that Lee and his late wife had created a trust for their daughter because she had trouble managing her affairs. But the declaration did not paint a flattering picture of his daughter, especially the part that read:

"It is not uncommon for J.C. to charge, in any given month, \$20,000 to \$40,000 on credit cards, sometimes more."

And Lee further attested that he often disagreed with his daughter, she was constantly demanding changes to her trust and that she "typically yells and screams at me and cries hysterically if I do not capitulate."

Lee further stated that he has not capitulated to her demands because they "would greatly increase the likelihood of my greatest fear: that after my death, she will become homeless and destitute."

If you ever suspect abuse of any kind – be a Superhero.

The declaration further goes into details about other people in his daughter's life that had bad intentions and were trying to take advantage of her and him in order to gain control over Lee's assets, which were estimated to be between \$50 and \$70 million.

A few days after the declaration was notarized, Lee changed his mind – or someone did it for him.

And then in June of 2018, it was reported that the Los Angeles Police Department had been investigating reports of elder abuse against Lee.

## **Elder Abuse in the U.S.**

According to the CDC:

"Elder abuse is a significant public health problem. Each year, hundreds of thousands of adults over the age of 60 are abused, neglected, or financially exploited. Elder abuse, including neglect and exploitation, is experienced by 1 out of every 10 people, ages 60 and older, who live at home. This statistic is likely an underestimate because many victims are unable or afraid to disclose or report the violence."

## **If You Suspect Elder Abuse**

- If you know someone is in immediate danger, call the police or 9-1-1.
- If the danger is not immediate, but you suspect that abuse has occurred or is occurring, it is your responsibility to tell someone – a doctor, a friend or a family member you trust.
- Or call the Eldercare Locator help line at 1-800-677-1116 and specially trained operators will refer you to a local agency that can help.

## **Be A Superhero**

We don't know the real details as it relates to Stan Lee's challenges late in life. But we do know that he created some of the most fantastical superheroes we've ever seen.