

Film Review: 'Man of Steel' is Strong, But Not Completely Heroic

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on June 14, 2013 - 4:35pm

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CHICAGO – Place the Superman legend into the hands of director Zack Snyder (“Watchmen”) and storyteller/producer Christopher Nolan (“Dark Knight”), and old Supes is bound for a makeover in “Man of Steel.” When it works, it’s adds to a legend’s richness. When it doesn’t, it is less than hero.



Rating: **3.5/5.0**

This film relates the Superman story once again, the “strange visitor” from the Planet Krypton. It adds some iconography, as the film lingers on Superman’s home planet before the explosion, and expands on his childhood years on earth. It focuses – as the second film in the Christopher Reeve Superman series did – on General Zod and his revenge upon Kal-El (Superman’s Kryptonian name) as they confront each other on our planet. And many factors are determined to get Kal to the Superman stage, including a moral dilemma of being both an outsider and potential protector of earth. Many of these narrative elements clashed in parts, and that clash is the like Kryptonite (to use a term) for the story, but there is also the rich addition of a “man and superman” psychology to an individual who, after all is said and done, is just a farm boy from Kansas.

The core of the planet Krypton is coming apart, and top scientist Jor-El (Russell Crowe) is pleading before the government council to enact an evacuation procedure. At the same time, a attempted government takeover occurs, as General Zod (Michael Shannon) seeks an overthrow and also takes Jor-El into custody. But the scientist escapes, and the attempted overthrow is a failure, with Zod and his associates sentenced to exile in the Phantom Zone, an outer space suspended animation.

Meanwhile, the core of the planet continues to implode. Jor-El and his wife Lara place their only son Kal-El in a rocket bound for earth, just before Krypton’s destruction. Once Kal lands on earth, he is adopted by Jonathan and Martha Kent (Kevin Costner and Diane Lane). Aware of his powers, the Kents raise the boy – now named Clark – and hides those powers from society, in order to find the right time to introduce them. It is only when the boy becomes a man (Henry Cavill), that the truth of these origins will begin the process of creating Superman, if only he can stop General Zod, newly freed from his exile.

“Man of Steel” opens everywhere June 14th. Featuring Henry Cavill, Amy Adams, Michael Shannon, Russell Crowe, Diane Lane, Kevin Costner, Harry Lennix, Richard Schiff and Lawrence Fishburne. Screenplay by David S. Goyer, from a story by Goyer and Christopher Nolan. Directed by Zach Synder. Rated PG-13.



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Can You Read His Mind?: Henry Cavill is Superman in 'The Man of Steel'

Photo credit: Warner Bros. Pictures



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