He changed THE WORLD FOREVER

With a mixture of grief and celebration, the world farewells one of history's most inspirational leaders, the man they called Madiba.

Though he had been in decline for many months and there was little doubt that his days were numbered, when word came on Dec. 5 that Nelson Mandela had died aged 95 at his home in Johannesburg, surrounded by loved ones, those who revered the great South African leader—which is to say not only his countrymen but also millions of admirers around the globe—felt a shock of recognition that the world was now a smaller place.

Beyond his courage, his patience and his relentless determination to create a just society, Mandela had a humility and compassion that touched hearts of all political persuasions. He was, eulogised his old friend Archbishop Desmond Tutu, “a magician who had turned South Africa, a poisonous caterpillar, into a beautiful butterfly.”

Tenacious, optimistic, peace-loving Mandela was incarcerated for 27 years during his fight to end the apartheid system. “If there are dreams about a beautiful South Africa,” he once said, “there are also roads that lead to their goal. Two of these roads could be named goodness and forgiveness.”

A member of the Xhosa-speaking Thembu, Mandela was one of 13 children born to a sub-chief with four wives, who served as counsellor to the Thembu royal family. Aged only 9 when his father died, Mandela became a ward of the high chief, who let the boy watch him conduct tribal business. The council was democratic, a key lesson for young Mandela. Ultimately that became his vision for his country—a new world—as he said in his 1994 inaugural speech, with “justice for all... peace for all... work, bread, water and salt for all.”

That wasn’t the way of life elsewhere in South Africa. As a young lawyer in Johannesburg, he had been exposed to the system of apartheid, or “apartriness”: blacks and “coloureds” (people of mixed race) were not allowed to vote, own property, marry whites or take jobs reserved for whites.

The “steady accumulation of a thousand slights,”

Photographed by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

Our nation has lost its greatest son

—Jacob Zuma
Who: "Farewell."

This key post-coup one of the most influential, courageous and profoundly good human beings is a shining example of the best of Africa, said US President Barack Obama of Mandela in 1990.
a thousand indignities," he would write in his 1994 memoir, *Long Walk to Freedom*, "produced in me an anger, a rebelliousness, a desire to fight."

Joining the fledgling African National Congress (ANC), he organised demonstrations and general strikes. When the government outlawed the ANC in 1960, Mandela went underground to lead a militant armed operation. This Mandela, according to his close associate Oliver Tambo, was "quickly stung to bitterness and retaliation." After incriminating documents and bomb-making equipment were found at an ANC hideout in 1963, Mandela was tried for sabotage. He told the court that his dream of a democratic and free society "is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

He almost did. Sent at 45 to Robben Island, prisoner 466/64 lived in a bare cell measuring 2.4m by 2.1m. "You have no idea," he said, "of the cruelty of man against man until you have been in a South African prison with black prisoners and white wardens." Prohibited from speaking to other prisoners, Mandela trained his spirit to hew a new path: "Make the brain dominate the blood."

For 18 years, Mandela was incarcerated in Robben Island Prison, where he contracted tuberculosis due to the poor living conditions. In 1969, his firstborn son, Thembi, died in a car accident, but Mandela was not permitted to attend the funeral (he'd also been forbidden to attend his mother's funeral a year earlier). He kept his mind busy, finishing a University of London law degree, and he never gave up on his dream of a unified South Africa. "One day there will be a new world, when all of us will live in happiness and peace," he wrote to his daughter Makaziwe from prison in 1969. "That world will be created by you and me, by our friends and countrymen."

An iconic and powerful symbol of black resistance, Mandela was offered release in 1985 by then President P. W. Botha, if he "unconditionally rejected violence as a political weapon," but Mandela, who had been incarcerated at Pollsmoor Prison since 1982, refused. "What freedom am I being offered while the organisation of the people [ANC] remains banned?" he said in a statement at the time. "Only free men can negotiate."

He languished behind bars for a further five years—he was moved to Victor Verster Prison in 1988—during which time Botha suffered a
Mandela and his co-accused raised their fists after being sentenced to life imprisonment for treason in 1964.

"The only thing my father bestowed upon me at birth was a name, Rolihlahla. In Xhosa, it means 'pulling the branch of a tree,' but its colloquial meaning was more accurately 'troublemaker,'" the acknowledged peacemaker once said.

"Our march to freedom is irreversible," Mandela said supporters with Winnie after his release from prison in 1990. He worked with white President de Klerk, who believed apartheid was unsustainable, to power. In a historic period that had seen the fall of the Berlin Wall, Mandela was released in an event that was televised around the world.

As the world's most famous prisoner made his way towards the gates of Victor Verster Prison near Paarl on the Western Cape of South Africa on Feb. 11, 1990, Mandela was puzzled by the scene before him. Having been set free by President de Klerk, Mandela saw a throng of thousands, including photographers, journalists and well-wishers, by the prison gates. "I had truly not expected such a scene; I was astounded and a little bit alarmed," he later recalled. "At most, I had imagined that there would be several dozen people, mainly the warders and their families."

But as he edged, hand in hand with his wife, Winnie Mandela, closer to freedom, the greater significance of the horde became clear: "When I was among the crowd I raised my right fist, and there was a roar. As I finally walked through those gates ... I felt—even at the age of 71—that my life was beginning anew."

And so began the dawning of a new nation. Working with white President de Klerk, he urged blacks and whites to seek reconciliation. Four years later, voting for the first time, South Africa's 18 million black people made Mandela...
1994
Whitney Houston, a staunch supporter of the fight against apartheid, met up with Mandela during a South African concert tour.

Mandela and Queen Elizabeth II rode in a carriage along the Mall, London, on the first full day of his state visit to Britain.

2011
Michelle Obama visited Mandela's home in Houghton, South Africa.

ANC. “I could not give up my life in the struggle,” he wrote in his memoir. They divorced in 1958. Their daughter, Makaziwe survives, but Mandela outlived both their sons. Thembekile had died in the car crash in 1969 and Makgatho died of an AIDS-related illness in 2005.

With his second marriage, to Winnie Madikizela in 1958, Mandela found a soul mate, but in 1991 she was convicted of complicity in the kidnapping and assault of a 14-year-old activist murdered by her bodyguards. Mandela ended their marriage in 1996. He found love again two years later with Graca Machel, now 67, widow of Mozambique president Samora Machel. Both Graca and Winnie were by his side in hospital as he took his last breath. Mandela was humble to the end. “I was not a messiah,” he would say, “but an ordinary man who became a leader because of extraordinary circumstances.”

Those who loved Mandela knew better. When his 7-year-old goddaughter, Helena Inzerillo, was informed of his passing by her dad, Jerry Inzerillo, CEO of IMG Artists, her reaction was a flame in the dark. “Don’t be sad,” the little girl responded. “We now have to follow his example.”

By Jill Smolowe, Tom Gliatto and Michael Crooks
"What made Nelson Mandela great is precisely what made him human."
— South African President Jacob Zuma

"He really was like a magician with a magic wand turning us into this glorious, multicoloured rainbow people."
— Nobel Peace Laureate Desmond Tutu

"I pray that the late president’s example will inspire generations of South Africans to put justice and the common good at the forefront of their political aspirations."
— Pope Francis

"He bore his burdens with dignity and grace, and our world is a better off because of his example."
— Reverend的重要

"We were just reminded of what an extraordinary and inspiring man Nelson Mandela was. Our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family."
— Prince William

"He taught us forgiveness on a grand scale."
— Anna Higgs, a white South African woman who lived near Mandela

"He worked tirelessly for the good of this country and his legacy is the peaceful South Africa we see today."
— The Queen

"I see no colour because of him."
— Nelson Mandela's wife, Winnie Mandela