

Spotlight



April 7, 2017

Archie Comics set the bar pretty high for subversive takes on their iconic characters beginning a few years back with the zombie-filled *Afterlife with Archie*. Now it seems everyone's getting in on the action. There's a socially satirical *Flintstones*, a gay, Southern-Gothic playwright version of *Snagglepuss* is in the works, and we have an apocalyptic Scooby-Doo. Surprisingly these are meeting with much fanfare from critics and the public alike.

While I wouldn't go as far as suggesting that Keith Giffen and J. M. DeMatteis's *Scooby Apocalypse* is as great as *Afterlife with Archie*, it is nonetheless pretty darn good.

Looking at the cover, the most pressing concern is the hipster version of Shaggy. It's one thing to be subversive but it's quite another to completely ignore the appeal of the original. Shaggy, I thought, used to be appealing for his total lack of awareness, not one to be caught up in dressing cool or current trends. This one has a hipster beard (complete with styled moustache), earlobe plugs, tattoos, and skinny jeans.

I can't say I ever came to accept this artistic decision, but I will say that the writing itself was good enough that I at least temporarily forgot about it. It's a bit of an origin story explaining how the gang all get together, as well as how Scooby gained his ability to talk (however rudimentary). But the larger story is a sci-fi end-of-times story, complete with monsters and mind-controlling nanites (microscopic robots).

If it's not perfect, it *is* a lot of fun. In this most important way, it is very true to the source material.

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