

# THE BEGINNING OF AN END

Archie Andrews died as he lived—helping his friends, and showing the bravery and heart that we all hope is inside each of us.

The climactic finale of *LIFE WITH ARCHIE*, which you are about to read, is an ending—but not the end for the character who's brought joy to millions around the world for almost 75 years. But it does signal the final chapter of one of the company's most critically-acclaimed series in *LIFE WITH ARCHIE*. Archie's heroic sacrifice in the face of a danger that many have faced in reality reiterates his role as a true everyman at any age. Archie is one of us—and one of the best, giving us all something to strive for.

While the ending is far from a happy affair, it does allow us—and in Riverdale, his own friends—the chance to celebrate the character and friend that we've come to know for all our lives. From the funny to the poignant, the issue not only presents Archie as a hero, but also shows us how the many important people that have filled his life see him: a friend, husband, teammate and colleague. Sometimes it's through absence that we truly realize how important something or someone is, as the last chapter of this story shows.

This ending also provides a rare opportunity in terms of characters with this kind of pop culture longevity—a chance to look back, to the beginning. Here, we meet Archie co-founder John L. Goldwater, who wanted to tell a story about an everyman teenager caught up in an ongoing, teenage love triangle. With those notes and more, he tasked young cartoonist Bob Montana with bringing his vision to life. Thus, Archie was born and comics—and entertainment—would never be the same.





(ANOTHER)  
**NEW**  
BEGINNING:

# THE STATE OF THE UNION

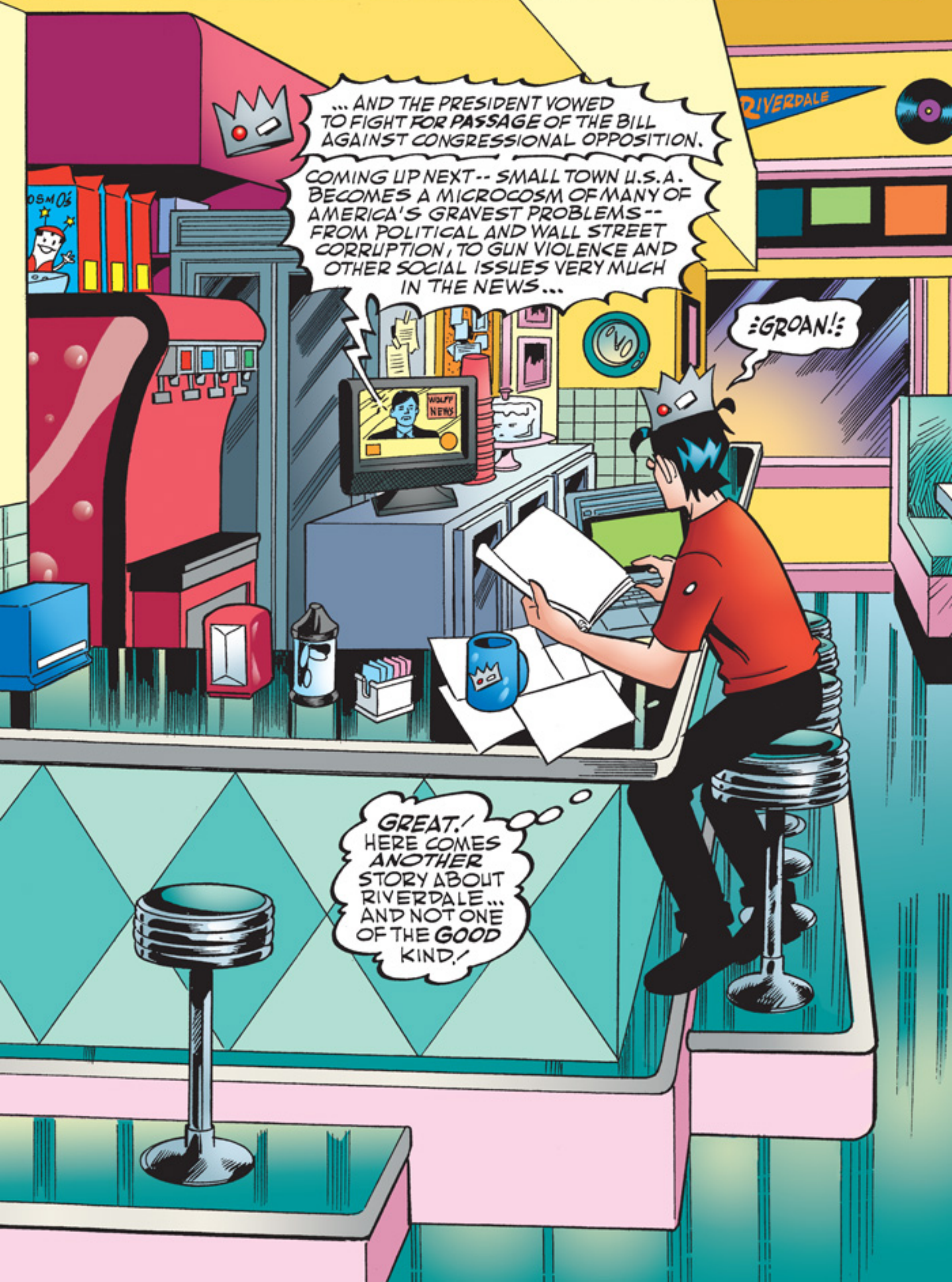
PART  
**1**

... AND THE PRESIDENT VOWED  
TO FIGHT FOR PASSAGE OF THE BILL  
AGAINST CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION.

COMING UP NEXT-- SMALL TOWN U.S.A.  
BECOMES A MICROCOSM OF MANY OF  
AMERICA'S GRAVEST PROBLEMS--  
FROM POLITICAL AND WALL STREET  
CORRUPTION, TO GUN VIOLENCE AND  
OTHER SOCIAL ISSUES VERY MUCH  
IN THE NEWS...

==GROAN!==

GREAT!  
HERE COMES  
ANOTHER  
STORY ABOUT  
RIVERDALE...  
AND NOT ONE  
OF THE GOOD  
KIND!





ESPECIALLY SINCE  
PART OF THE STORY'S  
GONNA BE ABOUT  
WHAT **FRED MIRTH'S**  
DISAPPEARANCE  
HAS DONE TO  
THE TOWN...

AND  
ME!



I DON'T MIND SO MUCH THAT FRED'S  
GONE... BUT HE'S CLEANED OUT HIS  
CORPORATE ASSETS AND TOOK ALL  
HIS MONEY WITH HIM. / AND SINCE  
THE CHOCKLIT SHOPPE  
CHAIN'S ONE OF THEM...



... I'M LEFT HOLDING THE BAG!  
A BAG WHICH DOESN'T HAVE  
ANY MONEY IN IT... BUT IS  
JUST FULL OF OTHER  
GOOD STUFF!



LIKE LAWSUITS...  
BANKRUPTCY...  
POVERTY...



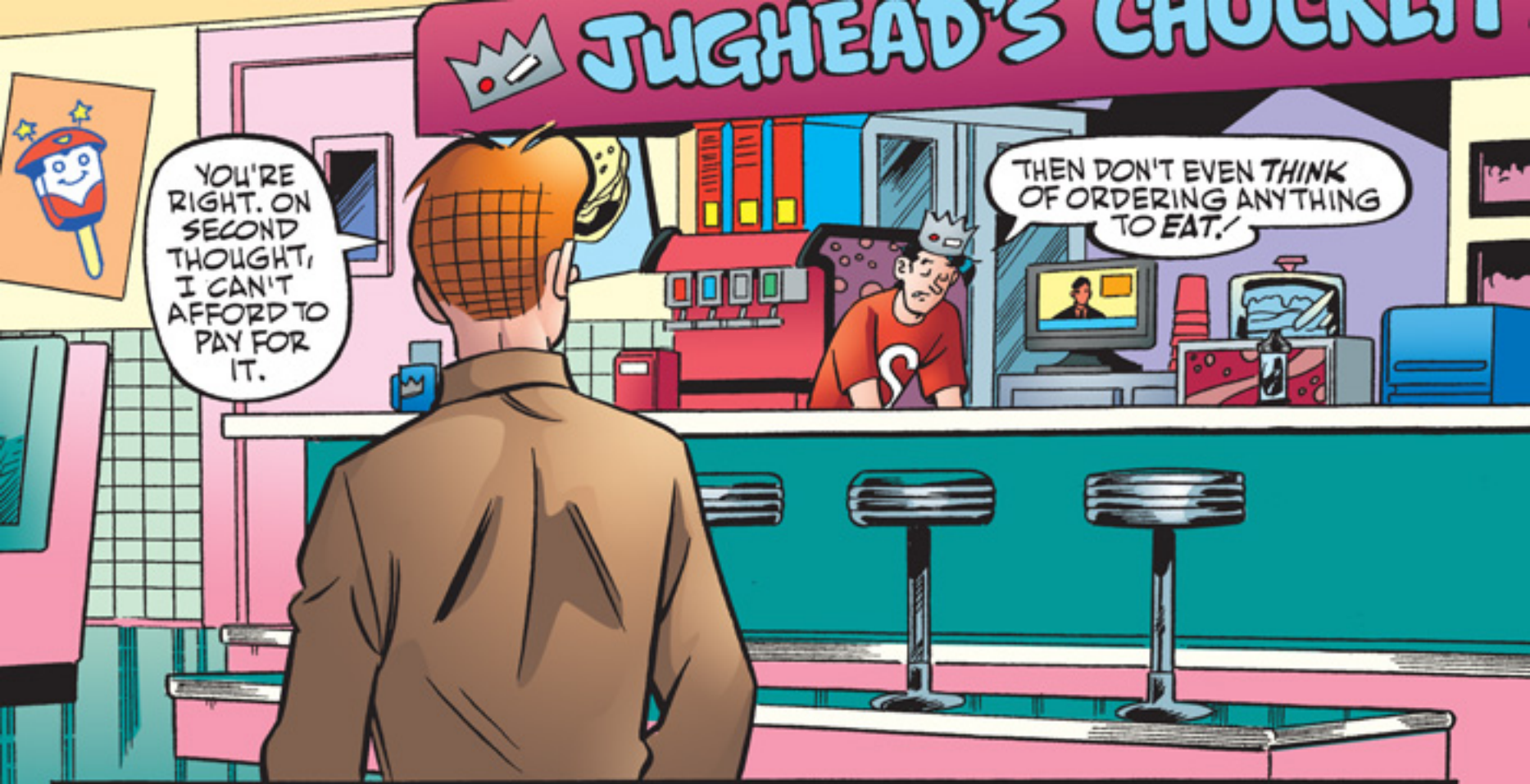
HEY, JUGHEAD!  
A PENNY FOR  
YOUR THOUGHTS,  
PAL?

I'LL TAKE IT. / THESE DAYS,  
EVERY CENT COUNTS. /





# JUGHEAD'S CHUCKLE!



YOU'RE RIGHT. ON SECOND THOUGHT, I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY FOR IT.

THEN DON'T EVEN THINK OF ORDERING ANYTHING TO EAT!

SO WHAT'S THE WORD ON YOUR SITUATION?

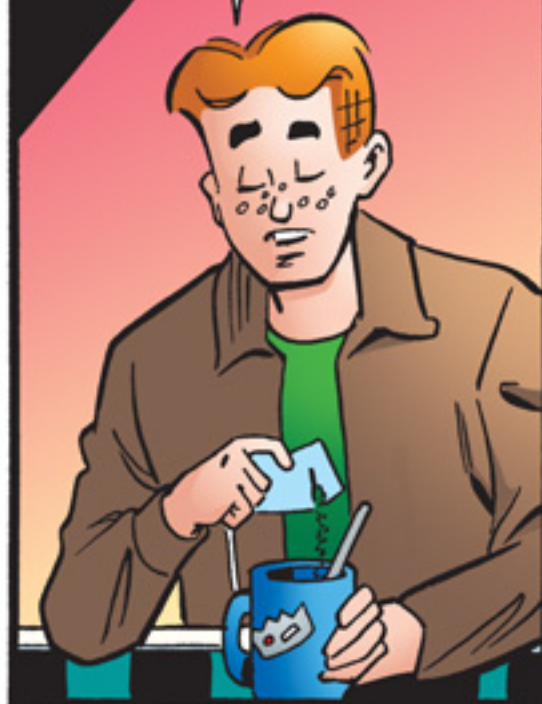
IT AIN'T GOOD, BROTHER. MIRTH LOOTED BILLIONS FROM THE CORPORATION, LEAVING ZIP...

...AND ALL KINDS OF LEGAL HASSLES FOR US POOR SUCKERS LEFT BEHIND!

I FEEL FOR YOU, JUG. EVERYBODY WARNED ME ABOUT FRED WHEN HE OFFERED ME THE JOB RUNNING MIRTH MUSIC...

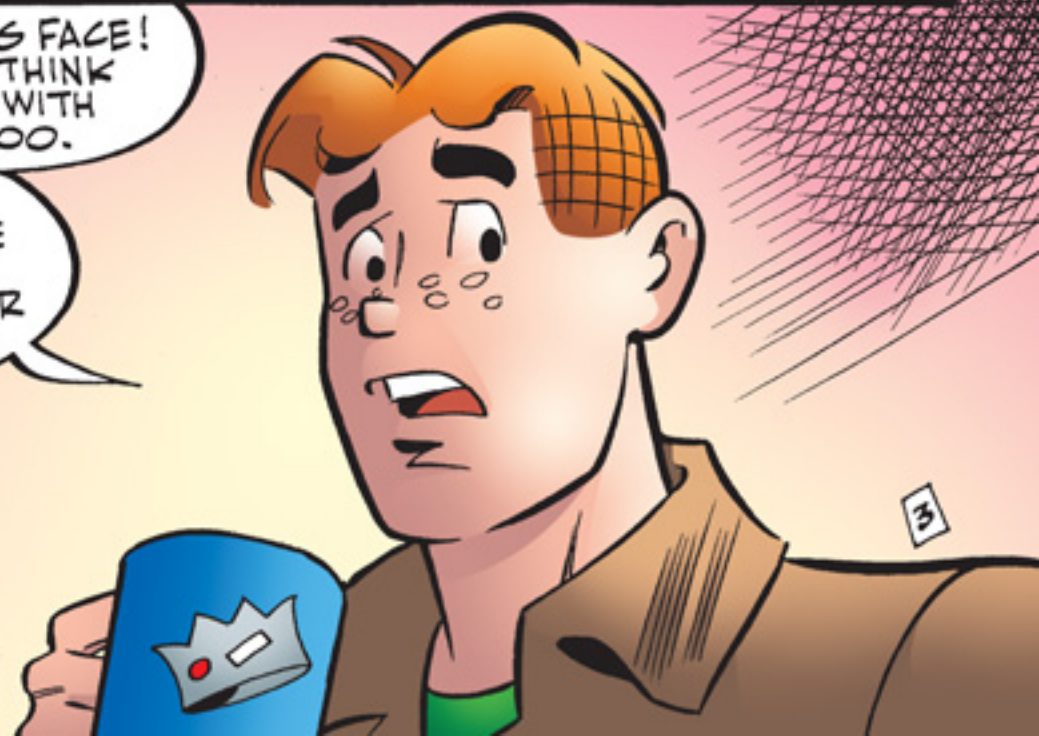
I MEAN, I KNOW HE HATES MY FATHER-IN-LAW, BUT I NEVER WOULD'VE GUESSED HE WAS SETTING ME UP LIKE HE DID.

HE ONLY HIRED ME SO I'D BE ONE OF THE PEOPLE WHO LOST THEIR JOBS...



...JUST TO RUB IT IN MR. LODGE'S FACE! WHICH IS ENOUGH TO MAKE US THINK HE'S GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH RONNIE'S PROBLEMS, TOO.

DUDE, WHY WOULD SOMEONE GO THROUGH ALL THAT TROUBLE FOR REVENGE?





**ARCHIE**  
*Marries*  
**BETTY**

WELCOME to RIVERDALE

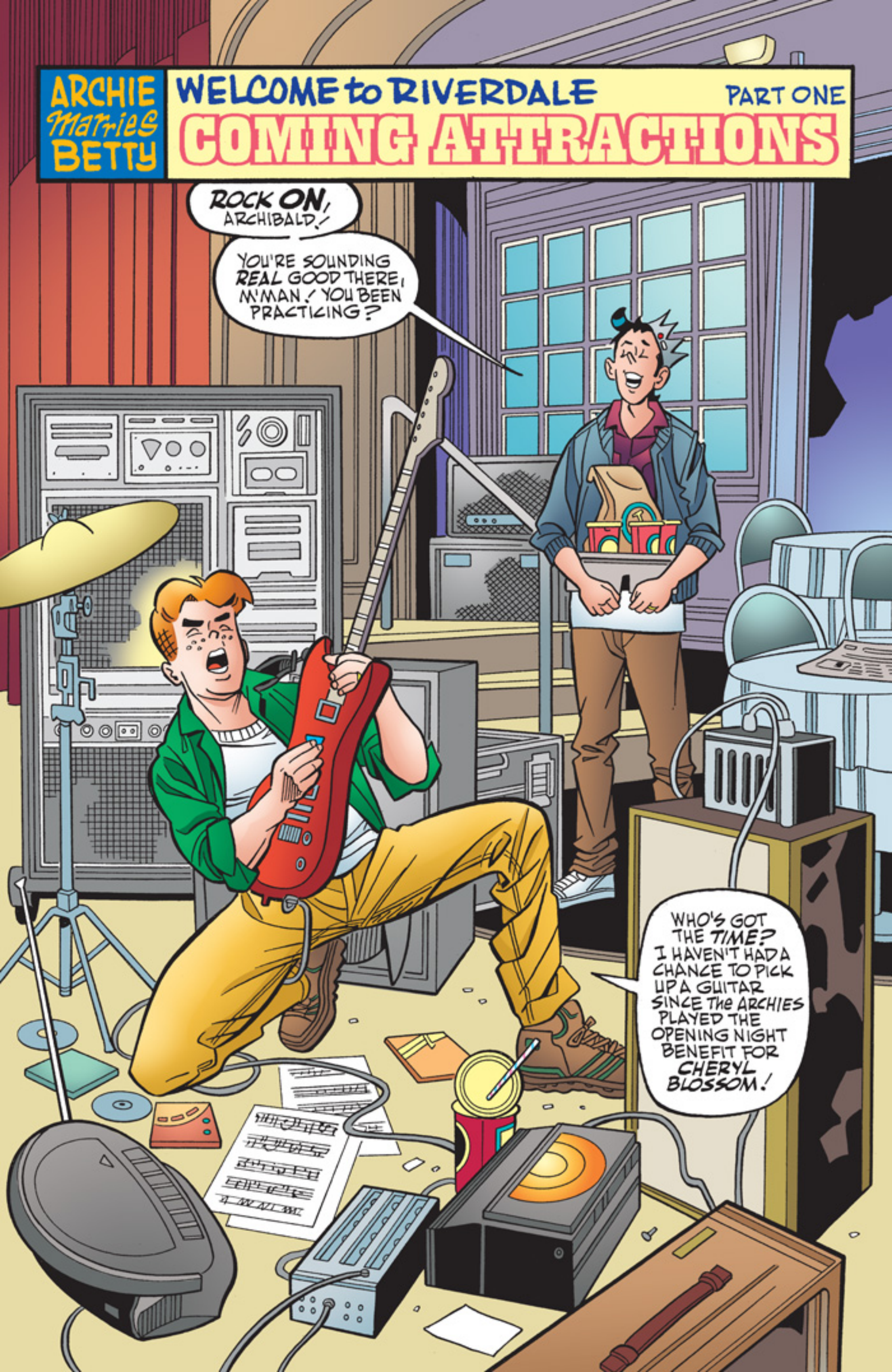
PART ONE

# COMING ATTRACTIONS

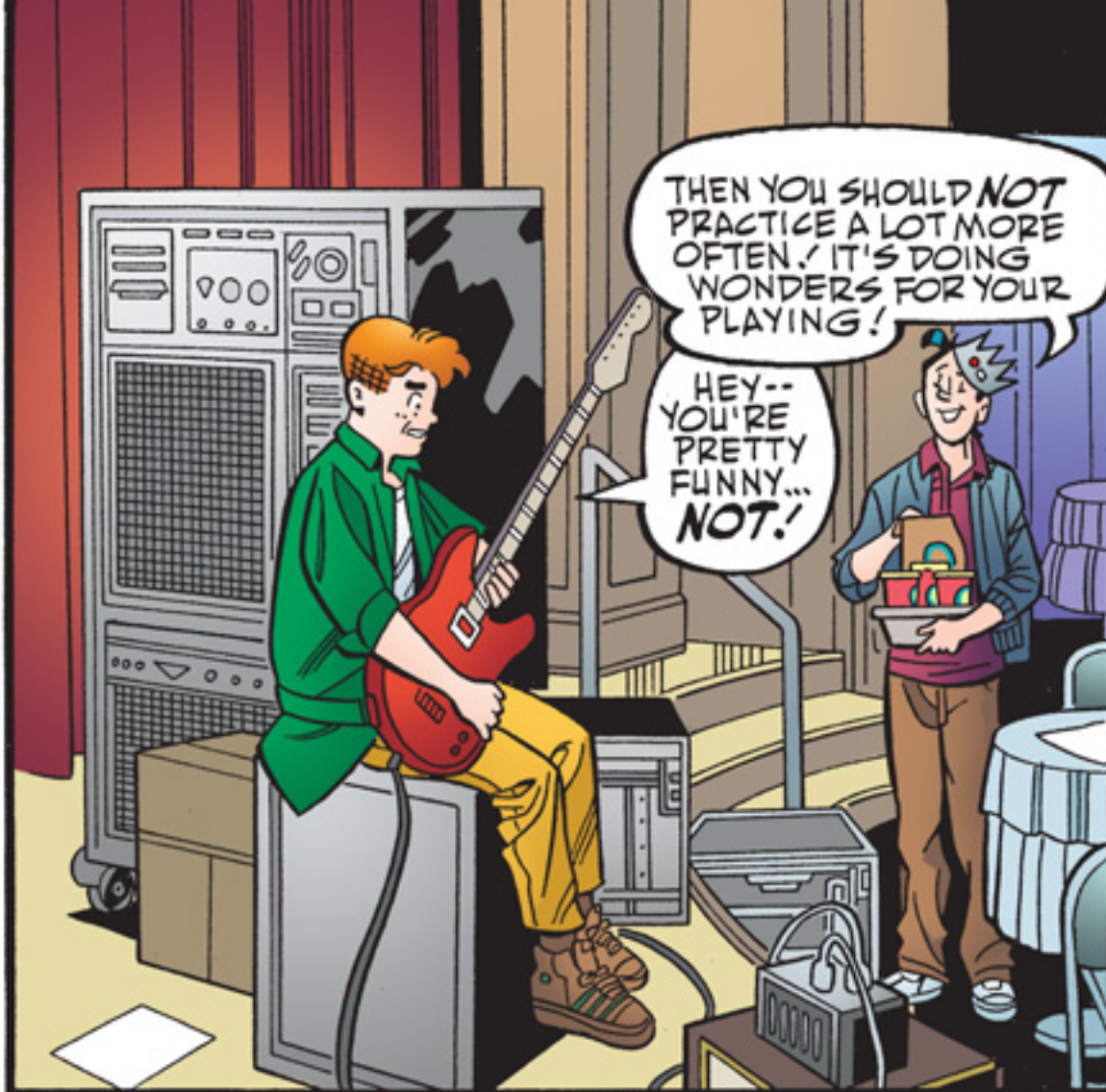
ROCK ON,  
ARCHIBALD!

YOU'RE SOUNDING  
REAL GOOD THERE,  
M'MAN! YOU BEEN  
PRACTIZING?

WHO'S GOT  
THE TIME?  
I HAVEN'T HAD A  
CHANCE TO PICK  
UP A GUITAR  
SINCE THE ARCHIES  
PLAYED THE  
OPENING NIGHT  
BENEFIT FOR  
**CHERYL  
BLOSSOM!**







THEN YOU SHOULD NOT PRACTICE A LOT MORE OFTEN. IT'S DOING WONDERS FOR YOUR PLAYING!

HEY-- YOU'RE PRETTY FUNNY... NOT!



WHAT'S LIFE WITHOUT WITTY REPORTEER BETWEEN BUDDIES?

I DO MISS PLAYING...

IT'S RELAXING TO GET LOST IN THE MUSIC, Y'KNOW?



I'M A DRUMMER. I'M TOO NOISY TO RELAX. BUT I DO GET THAT RUSH FROM COOKING!

OH, MAN... STILL NO NEWS ON THE SHOOTER, huh?

NOPE. HE GOT AWAY IN ALL THE CONFUSION AND PANIC AFTER THE SHOOTING.



AND NONE OF THE SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS GOT A CLEAR SHOT OF HIM EITHER. HE WAS WEARING A CAP WITH A WIDE BRIM AND THE POLICE THINK HE WAS ALSO IN DISGUISE.

mmm...



YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT THE SOUTHPORT MALL? IT'S BIG NEWS IN NEW YORK, BUT YOU GOTTA BE LIVING IT HERE.

HEY, AMBROSE. YEAH, THIS HIT PRETTY CLOSE TO HOME.





I MEAN, UP TILL NOW, CRIME IN RIVERDALE'S BEEN JAYWALKING AND LITTERING. THEN WE HAD THOSE BURGLARIES, AND NOW THIS, JUST ONE TOWN OVER.

I HEAR YOU! WHO LET THE REAL WORLD IN, HUH?



WELL, MAYBE YOUR HOME-TOWN SENATOR-ELECT WILL DO SOMETHING ABOUT GETTING GUNS BANNED.

KEVIN KELLER'S NOT LOOKING TO BAN GUNS, JUST KEEP 'EM OUTTA THE WRONG HANDS!



AND UNLESS YOU'RE A SOLDIER OR A COP... WHO NEEDS AN AUTOMATIC WEAPON?

MY DAD'S BEEN A HUNTER ALL OF HIS LIFE, AND HE SAYS UNLESS SOMEONE STARTS ARMING THE GAME, A SHOTGUN OR RIFLE IS ALL ANYONE NEEDS!



I HATE TO PUT A KIBOSH ON THE SMALL TALK, GUYS... BUT I GOTTA GET BACK TO NYC ASAP, SO... WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA?



RIGHT! OKAY... FIRST THING IS HIRING A SECURITY GUARD!



AND WE GOTTA FIND A BAND TO REPLACE CHEERLEADER FOR THE WEEKEND TEEN CONCERTS.



THEN I CALL THIS MEETING OF THE CHOWHOUSE PARTNERS TO ORDER!





oh,  
NO--!

**No!**







# THE DEATH OF Archie<sup>®</sup>

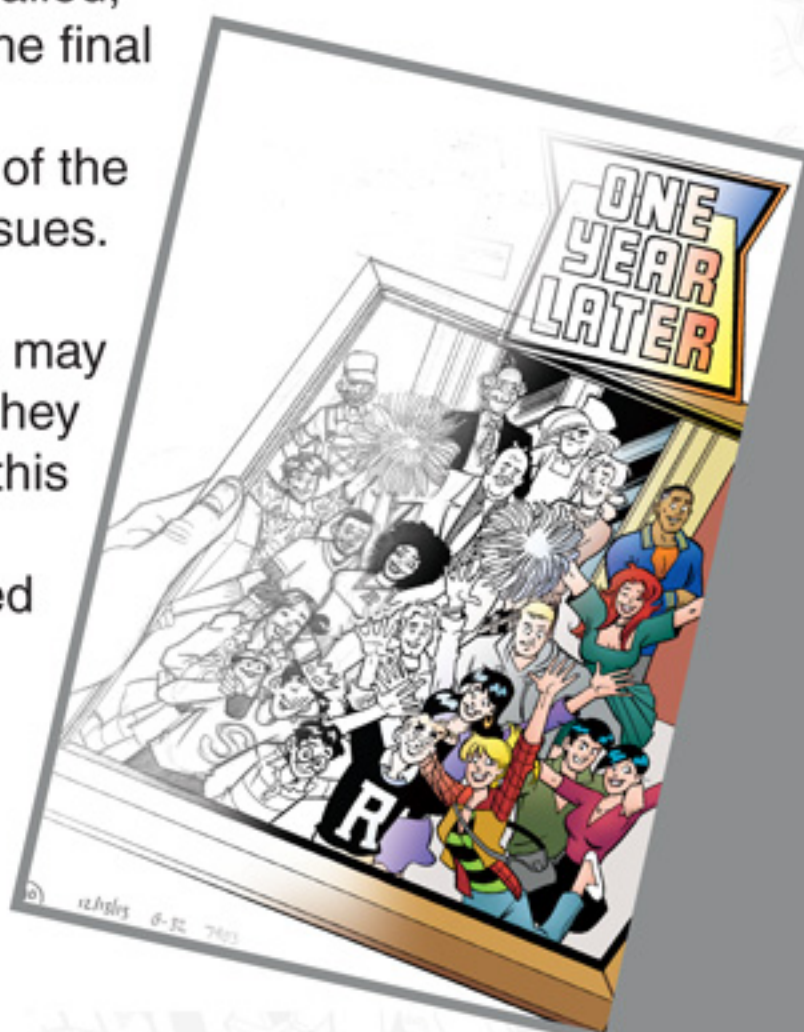
## A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES

Putting together the Death of Archie was no small task. It is thanks to the tireless work of our talented writer, artists and staff that we are able to present to you these two historic final issues of LIFE WITH ARCHIE. We hope that you've found them to be impactful and memorable. Here at Archie Comics, we always strive for excellence in each issue that we publish but, especially for a finale so under the microscope, we really wanted to go above and beyond in our presentation of this momentous event. In order to make this possible, there had to be many drafts and revisions of each page.

Fortunately, our intrepid artists were up to the task, and worked painstakingly on each page and panel, making every art revision asked of them until the perfect, finalized versions were reached. These next few pages will give you a detailed, insider's look at the art process behind the final issues of LIFE WITH ARCHIE and what important changes were made on some of the most significant pages of the two final issues.

Keep in mind that some of these images may have still gone under more revisions as they went on to the ink and color stages, but this is a close look at some of the motives behind the revisions for the initial penciled images.

We hope you enjoy this look behind the scenes of the Death of Archie.





ORIGINAL



In this first draft, a shadowy hand with a gun pointed directly at a fear-stricken Archie is visible.

A shocking image, yes, but it was still not quite as clear as it needed to be for such a hugely significant moment. In order to truly make this panel stand out, a few revisions were needed—especially revisions to the shooter's hand and the gun.

This action shot needed to be as clear and accurate as possible for maximum impact.

REVISED

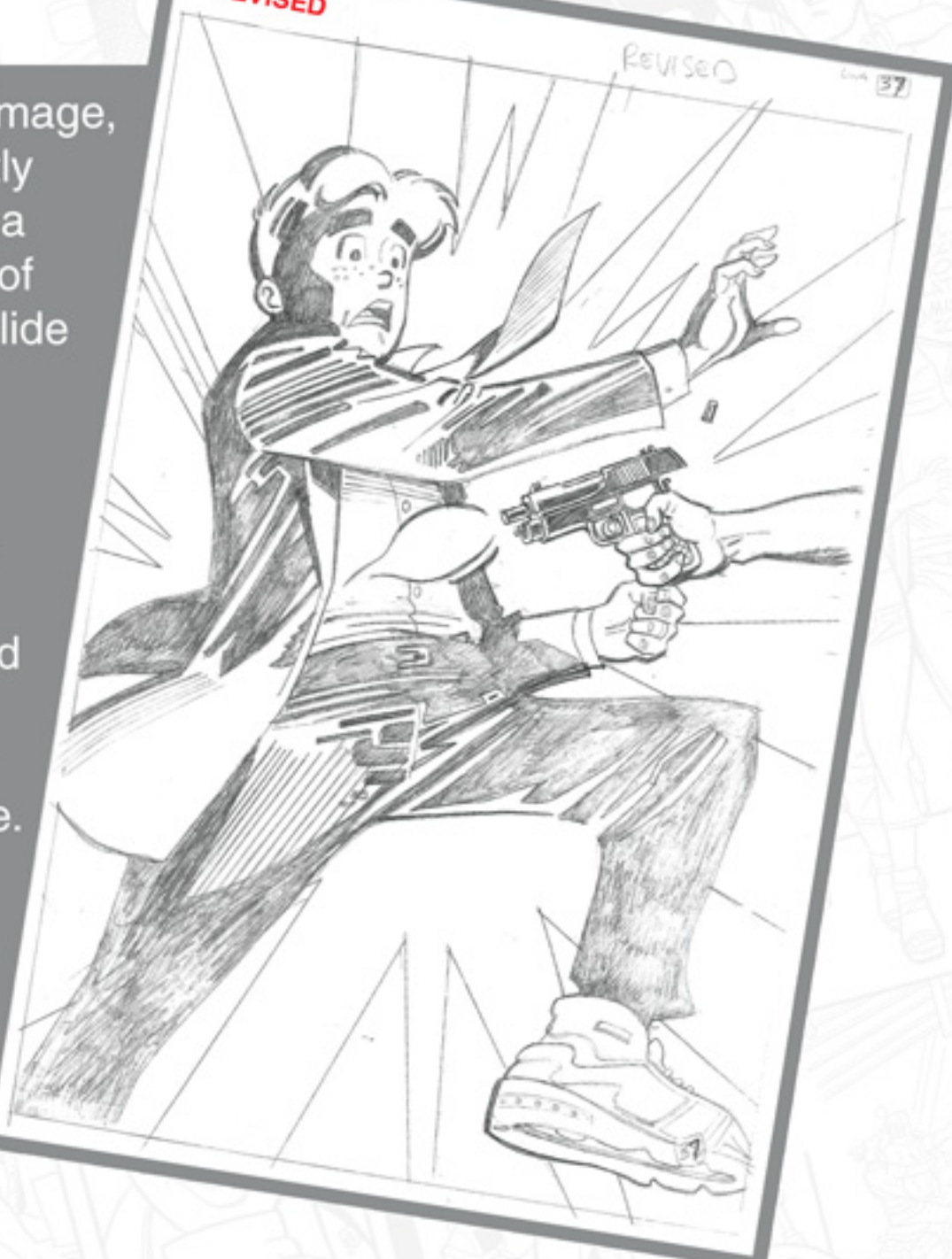
REVISED

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In this revised penciled image, we can now very distinctly view the gun—including a well-defined action shot of the gun recoil, with the slide kicking back for optimal accuracy.

We can also see a more distinct version of the shooter's arm, hands and fingers, with his index finger pulling the trigger as it blasts toward Archie.

A striking image from the get-go, this panel has now been made even more realistic.







*"There was no question that we wanted to have art from the enormously talented Francesco Francavilla. From his fantastic variant cover for LIFE WITH ARCHIE #23 to his stunning artwork in AFTERLIFE WITH ARCHIE—both of these, in addition to this finale, were all ideas that came from the mind of the intrepid Jon Goldwater—it is clear how expertly he can depict a somber and striking scene, and this cover is no exception."*

*- Mike Pellerito  
(President, Archie Comics)*



*"Great! My first-ever **ARCHIE** cover and Archie's nowhere to be seen. This may be the saddest drawing I've ever done. I felt like doing a nice, cheerful **PUNISHER** cover afterwards. It always takes me several covers to figure out how I should draw a character or characters. Having my first ARCHIE cover be such an important one, filled with gravitas, did not help! Somehow I got it done. Godspeed, Waffle-head. Godspeed."*

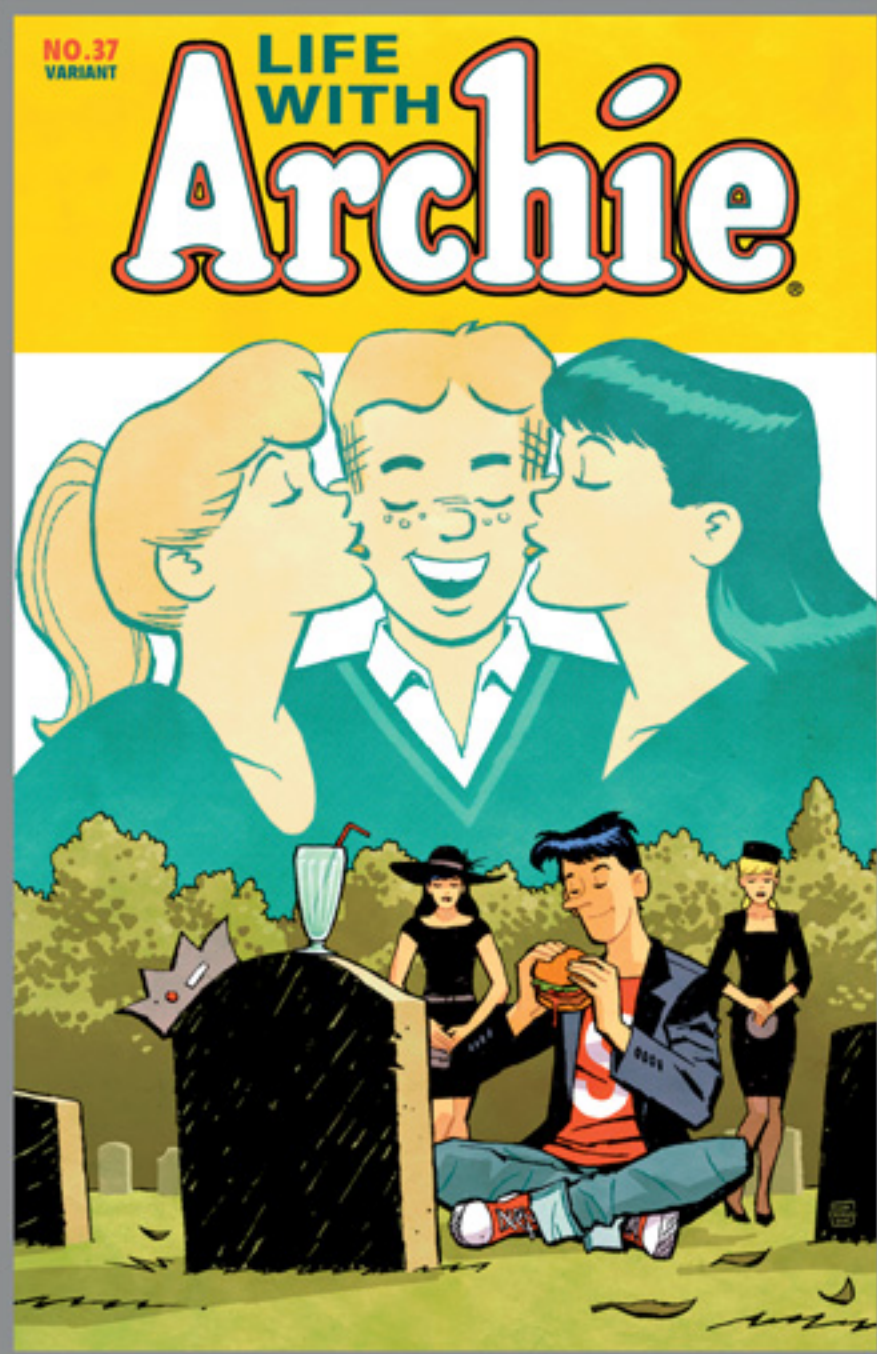
*- Adam Hughes*





*"Having Alex Ross do a cover for Archie was like a dream come true. His painted art is not only award-winning, but his images are so memorable it was a no-brainer that we wanted him to be a part of this historic finale. The final product is one that is sure to withstand the tests of time along with his many memorable covers."*

*- Mike Pellerito  
(President, Archie Comics)*



*"As a fan, it was important to me to balance the solemnity of the occasion with some of the humor and life that Archie Comics are known for. While the resting crown hat on the tombstone is a signal to move on and grow up, I thought Jughead would also try to celebrate his best friend's memory the only way he knows how: with a burger and malt shake. It's a quiet, private moment between friends. Pour one out for Archie Andrews!"*

*- Cliff Chiang*