

Escape from Arcadia

Sam Rikon

BOY - WILL DEVARY

GIRL - KAYLA

VOICE - NATALIE

MOM - DANAYA

DRAGON KING - DEXTER

SD - WILL MANNING

EXT: SUBURBS: DAY

A modern-day car drives through an overly saturated suburb. The entire neighborhood resembles a 1980s urban paradise.

A young BOY and his MOM peek out the car window, seeing a woman in a neon aerobics outfit walking her Pomeranian.

She waves at them, but they just ignore her and drive into their new driveway. They get out of the car, walk to the doorway, open the door with a key, and go inside. The house is barren, and boxes and dust are everywhere. Everything is desaturated and greyish.

INT: HOUSE: DAY

MOM

Here we are, home sweet home!

BOY

For you, maybe!

MOM

Oh, don't be like that. This place is a new opportunity!

The mom sees a dead rat on the floor. a few flies circle it

MOM

It's just a fixer upper. No big issue.

The BOY walks around, picking up a family photo out of one of the boxes and looks at his dead dad. He smirks.

BOY

Dad wouldn't want us to live in this shithole. It's like this town is trapped in the 1980s! Couldn't we get something a bit more.....

He looks outside the window and sees some people promoting Ronald Reagan by handing out political fliers in front of a booth with the president's face plastered on it.

BOY

Modern?

MOM

Speaking of modern, guess what I just found!

BOY (unamused)

What?

The MOM hands him an old handheld video game console. On the back it says: 8 BIT KID. No company, no information about where it is from. Nothing.

The console itself is neon orange and in the shape of a game boy with a small screen and blue buttons with green labels. It looks clunky and retro, but in a weird way, sort of endearing.

BOY

This is modern?

MOM

As modern as this town, I guess. Here, you can't have a game console without a game!

She hands him a game cartridge with the words ESCAPE FROM ARCADIA printed on it. The cartridge is bright green and blank except for the words ESCAPE FROM ARCADIA on it. The only other text is the bright red words "TWO PLAYERS ONLY."

The console and the game are brighter and more saturated than the world around them

BOY

Thanks mom, but I think I'll pass.

MOM

Come on, you loved video games when you were little. You used to play them with-

BOY (sternly)

Don't mention him.

MOM

Ok.

INT: BOY'S ROOM: NIGHT

The boy is seemingly fast asleep, the covers draped over his head however, this couldn't be further from the truth.

As it turns out, BOY is playing the game underneath the covers. The beeps and other electronic sounds emanate from the old machine.

Then, out of nowhere, the boy hears an ominous hum. It gets louder and louder. He also notices a variety of colored pixels enveloping his body.

INT: VIDEO GAME: DAY

Before he has time to scream, the boy EVAPORATES AND REAPPEARS IN A VORTEX OF COLORS AND PIXELS.

After passing through the digital swirl of sights and sounds, he lands flat on his face in a solid green room. This game world is more saturated than the real world.

The walls are solid green, the floor is solid green, and the ceiling is solid green. The boy gets up, confused.

BOY

Where the hell am I?

He walks around this small, liminal room, which is surprisingly brightly lit. He walks up to a wall and touches it. It starts to glitch.

BOY

Holy-

Just as he is about to swear, the wall pops out of existence revealing another room with a small paper map.

INT: NEW ROOM: DAY

He picks up the map and suddenly the rooms that surround him turn into a massive maze. The map disappears and the 8 BIT KID in his pocket starts to glow and vibrate.

He pulls it out and it turns into a sword. But like everything else in this world, it is pixelated. A loud, digitized voice says:

VOICE

Player two joined your game.

BOY

Player two?

Suddenly, a pig-headed CAVEPERSON tackles him onto the ground and is about to club his skull in. BOY pleads for his life.

BOY

No-no-no! please don't!

He cowers in fear, when suddenly, the pig creature takes off her mask to reveal a young GIRL wearing tribal makeup and animal furs.

She is human, about the young man's age, and not pixelated like the world around her.

GIRL

You're not a monster? Sorry for attacking you, it's just that.....I haven't seen another human in decades!

~~The boy is stunned and in silence.~~

GIRL

You need my help.

BOY

With what?

GIRL

Getting the hell out of here.

~~Another moment of awkward silence~~

GIRL

You can stay here and die or come with me and gain experience points.

She yanks him up and she tosses him a heavy shield (which causes him to topple over), and the film enters a montage. As these two intrepid adventurers fight through the game pixelated neon blue text appears telling them how many points they have won

-BOY throwing a spear with a rope attached over a chasm in a cave environment. The cave environment is rocky and cavernous. Both BOY and GIRL then climb on the rope and make it to the other side. +15 DEXTERITY

-the GIRL and BOY swing their blades at bats, surprisingly in an epic fashion. After that, BOY and GIRL traverse a maze, running into some blue spider monsters with ten eyes and both hack them all in half with the BOY'S sword and GIRL'S battle axe. +30 COMBAT.

GIRL

Not bad!

BOY

Thanks!

-The BOY and GIRL are opening a treasure chest that glows bright gold. The chest itself is dark brown and has a bronze-colored latch. + 100 GOLD

EXT: FOREST: NIGHT

GIRL and BOY are sitting in the middle of a digital forest, roasting video game rats on an open fire. The fire is, of course, pixelated.

BOY

Man, this rat on a stick is delicious! How do you get it so tender?

He takes a bite and savors it.

GIRL

Years of experience.

BOY

Huh. Have I seen you before, in the real world?

GIRL

Nope! I've been stuck in this pixel piece of shit for 30-something years. I keep track of it on my time rock, a rock that keeps my time.

She pulls out a rock with thirty scratches etched into it. like how a prisoner would mark their cell.

BOY

What has your life been like here?

GIRL

Chaotic, every day was a rush to survive. But then I figured out the ropes, and now I can go years without wasting lives.

BOY

Lives?

GIRL

You can only get hit 4 times, then you lose a life.

BOY

What happens when you lose all your lives?

GIRL points to a skeleton on the ground, clutching an empty treasure chest.

GIRL

Game over

BOY

We need to beat this game and get out of here

Before they can continue, they both feel a buzzing in their pockets. They both pull out an 8-bit kid and press "A." A massive screen gets projected onto the air.

On it, we see their weapons and their XP. It is represented by a big bar at the bottom with the word EXPERIENCE on it.

The GIRL smiles proudly

GIRL

We have enough experience to defeat the final boss.

BOY

Let's rock!

INT: MAZE: DAY

Both the boy and the girl are face to face with a massive gold door. On it, there are engravings of warriors in shining armor being eaten by HORRIBLE BEASTS .

BOY

We are not the first.

GIRL (confidently)

But we will be the last.

Our heroes bravely step into the massive throne room, treasures and 8-bit magic surround them.

Just as they are busy observing all the majesty, a giant 8-bit dragon comes out of nowhere and starts to spit fire at them! The dragon is bright red with a white underbelly and an array of unholy horns arranged around its head like a crown from hell.

DRAGON GOD

How dare you enter the domain of the DRAGON GOD!? For your insolence, you shall be blessed by your death by my flame! I admire your camaraderie, but it does not matter now. PERISH, FEEBLE HUMANS!

An epic fight starts. The BOY and GIRL dodge the dragon's fire. The girl shoots an arrow into the dragon's eye, stunning it. it starts to flash white, signaling that it is stunned.

The boy's 8 BIT KID starts to aggressively vibrate in the boy's pocket, he pulls it out and it turns into a massive sword.

The girl pulls out hers and it turns into a massive axe.

As the two rush towards the dragon, metal music starts to play signaling the glory of the moment.

In slow motion they both leap towards the dragon.

As their blades sink into the flesh of the unholy digital creature, it explodes into a million red and yellow pixels.

INT: BOY'S ROOM: DAY

The BOY wakes up, like nothing ever happened. His room seems to be normal. Shades cover his window.

He runs downstairs and sees that his house is the same. He goes to see his mom. Sitting in the living room, watching TV

BOY

Mom?

MOM

Yes, dear?

The boy hugs his mom lovingly, now grateful for his life and house. The world is now saturated and cheery, as opposed to gloomy and desaturated like before.

BOY

I love you.

The MOM is very confused, but always willing to accept a hug from her son.

MOM

What's wrong, dear? You act like you haven't seen me in years!

BOY

Never mind that, I'm just glad to be here to be with you! What year is it?

MOM

2024, the same as when you went to bed last night.

The boy smiles as he sees the girl outside listening to music on her phone, her headphone cords make the setup look like a Walkman. He smiles

EXT: NEIGHBORHOOD: DAY

The boy is taking his garbage out, the background being blurred out, just as he is about to drop the trash into the can, he sees the GIRL from the game in his front yard.

He drops everything and goes to hug her. They run up to each other and talk about everything.

BOY

time. I- So, you were my neighbor the whole

GIRL

Just shut up and hug me.

She holds him in her arms, and as the two friends hug, we pan out to reveal the small 1980s neighborhood is now a futuristic city, a cyber utopia, the skylight neon purple

A floating robot is walking a dog and a flying car soar overhead. The city itself is tall and sleek. A flying car soars into the camera, ending our intrepid adventure. Before the credits roll, golden text spells out.....

CONRATULATIONS, YOU GOT THE GOOD ENDING!

