

FADE IN:

EXT. BAD BOYZ ARCADE - DAY

THROUGH A NEWS CAMERA --

The muscular, ruggedly attractive JOHN SEGALE (40s), cigarette angled sharply out of his lips, enjoys a moment of zen.

Red and blue lights bathe his face as he stands motionless, the sounds of yelling, the whirr of helicopter blades, the screech of vehicles fading into the background.

John snaps back to reality and hefts his enormous six shooter.

JOHN
(to camera)
What am I gonna do?

REPORTER (O.S.)
You're going to go in there and get her back, aren't you? Get her back, and kill Damien Kempler.

John's grin is made lopsided by his cigarette.

JOHN
Damn right I am.

He turns and paces quickly towards the building, pushing a protesting cop out of the way as the Reporter steps in front of the camera.

REPORTER
Once again, John Segale, the no-rules police detective that we're all rooting for--

INT. BAD BOYZ ARCADE - DAY

The police officer follows John as he strides up to the entrance of the arcade.

OFFICER
Not following the rules on this could be danger-

SLAM!

The officer pounds on the newly closed door as John locks it from inside.

He glances around the dust-covered arcade. 80s stuff. Miss Pac-man, Contra, even Donkey Kong. None of them on. The place hasn't seen customers in a long time.

Past the row of standing games is a dimly lit stairwell. John starts quickly towards it. He stops just shy of an Asteroids game, leans down, and sticks his finger in the quarter return slot.

Bingo! He smiles at the quarter in his hand.

HENCHMAN (O.S.)
Drop it, Segale.

John turns to face the Henchman, who levels a gun on him. Lightning quick, his hand goes to his hip --

BLAM!

The Henchman's gun flies from his hand. He gapes, as much in shock as in pain.

John strides towards the Henchman, covering the ground in huge swinging steps. Half-way there, he flips the quarter up, sending it in a lazy arc towards the Henchman --

The quarter spins through the air...

John draws his hand back as he closes the distance to the Henchman, whose gasp continues...

John unleashes a full-on haymaker, just as the quarter drops in front of the Henchman's face...

-- WHAM!

John's punch connects, sending the Henchman flying backwards. He lands on the ground like a sack of potatoes, an image of an eagle with a quarter sized circle around it pressed into his forehead.

John shakes his bleeding fist absent-mindedly.

JOHN
Tails. You lose.

He turns and strides past the Donkey Kong machine to the bottom of the stairs.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

John enters the bottom of the stairwell.

At the top of the long flight of stairs stands DAMIEN KEMPLER (late 20s), thinly muscular with angular features and stubble, a high-tech, modern pistol in his right hand and the beautiful PAULINE KANEL (30s), bound and gagged, in his left.

With a yell, he opens fire. John ducks back out into

INT. BAD BOYZ ARCADE - DAY

As bullets tear pieces off of the door frame. He waits, calm, for the shooting to stop.

After a moment, silence.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Damien holds still, his gun leveled at the doorway. John's voice floats out of the dark room.

JOHN (O.S.)
Gonna need to do better than that,
Kempler.

Pauline squeaks as Damien pushes her forcefully down into a wheeled office chair behind them.

Hearing the scuffle, John cautiously leans out to check the hallway. No sign of Damien or Pauline. John begins to ascend the steps.

WHOOSH!

A barrel flies off the landing, bouncing down the stairs at high speed, Damien appearing behind it.

John dives back out the door as Damien opens fire with his gun, hitting the barrel --

INT. BAD BOYZ ARCADE - DAY

-- which explodes into a fireball. John lands hard on the ground, sitting up to pat out the fires on his legs.

DAMIEN (O.S.)
That better?

JOHN
Here I come, asshole.

John pulls himself to his feet and charges into the

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Damien hurls another barrel down the stairs and draws his gun.

John begins to sprint up the stairs, opening fire on Damien. Damien returns fire.

The barrel reaches John, and he leaps over it, placing one foot on the wall to push off higher, firing at Damien --

Damien is hit in the meat of his left arm, firing a last two shots as he falls backwards with a cry of pain...

The barrel explodes behind John as he is still in the air --

John lands hard on the stairs. He looks down at his left leg, which is seriously burned, then hurries into the

INT. UPPER FLOOR ROOM - DAY

No sign of Damien but some blood on the floor. An empty chair with no Pauline. John looks up. A ladder leads up into the attic.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

The attic is spacious. Damien stands with his gun trained on the trapdoor with the ladder. Pauline stands, still bound and gagged, behind a large wooden desk.

John's voice floats up from below.

JOHN (O.S.)

You think I'm gonna come up there?

Pauline desperately tries to speak through the gag in a series of "Mmmms". Damien glances at her.

DAMIEN

I don't think you have a choice.
You're the hero, right?

JOHN (O.S.)

Between me and you?

DAMIEN

Even if you're an asshole.

INT. UPPER FLOOR ROOM - DAY

John has removed a peculiar looking grenade from his jacket and is staring up into the attic.

JOHN

I'm here to rescue the girl from
you.

DAMIEN (O.S.)

I'm the one that loves her.

JOHN

Got a funny way of showin' it.

He hefts the grenade.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Still, you wouldn't let her die,
right?

DAMIEN (O.S.)
Never.

John lobs the grenade upwards --

INT. ATTIC - DAY

The device seems to hang in the air for a long moment.

Realization sparks in Damien's eyes. He turns, dropping his gun, and hurls himself over the desk at Pauline, tackling her to the ground as the grenade explodes.

Instead of a fireball, the grenade propels long thin metal rods throughout the room. They slam into the walls and floor, quivering.

INT. UPPER FLOOR ROOM - DAY

John looks down. A rod sticks out of his right boot, clearly impaling his foot.

JOHN
Huh.

He leaps onto the ladder and climbs quickly into

INT. ATTIC - DAY

John comes up the ladder gun first and scans the room. No movement is visible from behind the heavy wooden desk.

He pulls himself up. As he stands, so does Damien, revealing himself behind the desk. He helps Pauline to her feet.

John, his gun trained on them, notes Damien's gun on the floor.

JOHN
Well well.

Pauline "Mmmms" emphatically.

DAMIEN
Don't.

More from Pauline. John gestures with his gun.

JOHN
 Why don't you take the gag off and
 let the lady have her say, huh?

Damien stares him down, then undoes the gag. Pauline takes a moment to suck in fresh air.

PAULINE
 John you've got to go --

John's eyes stay locked on Damien.

JOHN
 -- shush babe.

PAULINE
 I agreed to do this, to get you
 here. We love each other.

JOHN
 He's got you tied up --

PAULINE
 -- it's you.

BLAM!

John shoots Damien in the right foot. He cries out and falls to his knee.

Pauline cries out, struggling against the ropes that still bind her.

JOHN
 No. That's me.

PAULINE
 Stop! You win.

JOHN
 Not yet.

He drops his gun on the ground.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 On your feet, Kemppler.

PAULINE
 John.

JOHN
 Get up.

Damien stands.

They square off.

PAULINE
Damien. Please don't.

Damien ignores her, eyes locked on John.

DAMIEN
Not me. It's a game to you.

John slowly starts to circle left. Damien matches his movement.

DAMIEN (CONT'D)
You ever care about her?

JOHN
See, now you're really thinkin'
you're the hero.

Damien attacks. They fight, Damien with a measured and controlled form of martial arts and John with an out-and-out brawling style. Both are slowed down by their various wounds.

Pauline struggles against her ropes as John gains the upper hand in the fight.

JOHN (CONT'D)
A little young.

Damien responds with renewed energy, forcing John back.

DAMIEN
Little brash.

The fight continues, John more quickly gaining the upper hand.

Pauline gets her hands free and falls to the floor, grabbing at Damien's gun.

John viciously uppercuts Damien.

BLAM!

The shot enters John's back and explodes out his chest, ripping a chunk out of Damien's cheek before embedding itself in the wall. Blood splatters Damien's face.

John falls to his knees, awkwardly turning to face Pauline. Behind him, Damien slumps against the wall, shocked.

JOHN
Fuckin' bitch. That's not right.

Pauline locks eyes with John.

PAULINE
Are you okay, Damien?

DAMIEN

Shit...

She looks at him. He's okay. She looks back to John.

PAULINE

You forced him. You and those stupid cameras.

JOHN

You'd never understand. It's all a game for both of us.

PAULINE

-- he'll never be as strong as you.

JOHN

No shit.

John collapses forward, breathing shallow.

PAULINE

That's why it has to be him.

John watches blood ooze out of his mouth and run along the floorboards in front of him.

JOHN

Huh.

EXT. BAD BOYZ ARCADE - DAY

THROUGH A NEWS CAMERA --

Damien and Pauline, supporting each other, limp out of the arcade and into the sounds and flashing lights.

REPORTER

What -- Miss Kael, what is this?

PAULINE

Segale's dead. Damien's innocent.

A moment of silence.

REPORTER

So it's a happy ending for you?
The princess has been rescued?

PAULINE

Things will be different now.

The silence stretches.

REPORTER

I guess we were rooting for the wrong guy all along.

(MORE)

REPORTER (CONT'D)
What are youg going to do now,
Kemppler? Keep on fighting?

Damien stares back stupidly.

FADE OUT.

THE END.