

THE M.I.C GALA

A naive governor's assistant uncovers the truth about an annual "charity" auction when she learns that the catalog is actually full of military-grade weapons.

FADE IN:

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

A BANNER over the threshold of an elegant ballroom reads:  
*"The 63rd Annual Magnus Intercorp Charity Gala & Auction."*

PAN DOWN: Elderly GOVERNORS and their young ASSISTANTS  
mingle, dressed to the nines in TUXEDOS and EXPENSIVE GOWNS.

Standing at the bar is MADISON (26), an assistant wearing a  
slim crimson dress and high heels. She's pretty, with thick  
black hair and innocent eyes. She stirs her drink nervously,  
looks around, takes a deep breath:

MADISON  
(to herself)  
You belong here. Act like it.

She smiles at the first person she sees: AUSTIN (40s) a  
haggard man on the corner of the bar, staring into the void  
of his drink. His tuxedo could use some tidying.

MADISON (CONT'D)  
Hi, I'm Madison. Madison Gracewood.  
I work in Governor Givens' office.  
It's beautiful in here, isn't it?  
So exciting!

AUSTIN  
Yea... thrilling.

MADISON  
I hear Magnus does amazing work,  
especially in poorer communities.  
It'd be nice to see some of the  
money raised tonight go toward--

Austin chuckles, cutting her off. He sucks back his drink and  
signals for another.

MADISON (CONT'D)  
What's so funny?

AUSTIN  
The status quo, kiddo. The sooner  
you get with it, the less soul  
sucking it gets.

The BARTENDER arrives with a bottle of whiskey.

MADISON  
So... who do you work for?

Austin nods across the room to GOVERNOR RAY MCCARTHY (60s), a bombastic, red-faced man with a cowboy hat and TWO PISTOLS on his waist, enthraling his colleagues in a gripping story.

McCarthy DRAWS AND SHOOTS ACROSS THE ROOM, shattering the bottle in the Bartender's hand as he fills Austin's drink. Nobody seems to care. In fact, they smile and clap politely.

MADISON (CONT'D)

Governor McCarthy. I hear he's...  
fun.

AUSTIN

(sarcastically)  
He's a blast.

MCCARTHY

(from across the room)  
Austin! Giddy up! Show's startin'!

Austin swirls and tosses back his drink, sighs:

AUSTIN

Huh, I was hoping the shards would  
kill me.

Madison watches in shock as he slinks away.

EXT. FIELD OUTSIDE OF BALLROOM - NIGHT

Rows of chairs arranged in front of a grand stage. A LARGE, SILK TARP CONCEALS THE FIRST BIG ITEM. Governors and their Assistants file into their seats.

Madison sits next to GOVERNOR MERCY GIVENS (60s) an intimidating woman in a pink power suit and pearl necklace. The golden bracelets on her wrists jingle like sleigh bells.

GIVENS

Here, you'll need this.

Givens hands Madison a TABLET:

In the TOP LEFT, in green numbers, is \$40.1 Billion. In the TOP RIGHT is a SHOPPING CART ICON. Across the MIDDLE reads "*The M.I.C Auction - 2025.*"

The main screen is full of sliders, corresponding to different state-funded programs: Education, Healthcare, Police, etc. ALL THE OTHER ASSISTANTS HAVE SIMILAR TABLETS.

GIVENS (CONT'D)

This is all the state's money, all synced to the auction house. Move the sliders right to put money into something; left to take money out.

MADISON

If I take money out, where does it go?

A greedy grin stretches across Givens' face. A flashy AUCTIONEER (30s) in a perfectly-pressed tux takes the stage:

AUCTIONEER

Ladies, gentlemen, dis-tin-guished guests! Are YOU ready to get this show on the road!?

The audience erupts in applause. Madison claps quietly.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

Then without fur-ther-a-do!  
Tonight's first item up for bid!

He pulls the tarp, revealing an ARTILLERY TRUCK with a GIANT MISSILE labeled P.O.N.Y. ready to launch.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

The PONY Yankee Doodle road to town on! Magnus' own Peacekeeper Omnistrike Napalm-Yielding Rocket! Bidding opens at \$6 million.

GIVENS

(in awe, teary eyed)  
God bless America.

Paddles fly up!

GIVENS (CONT'D)

(to Madison)  
Raise taxes. One-quarter percent.  
(raising her paddle)  
Seven-five!

AUCTIONEER

7.5 to Ms. Wisconsin! Do I have eight?... Eight! To the handsome man from Michigan.

MADISON

(to Givens)  
What are you talking about? I can't just raise taxes!

GIVENS

For heaven's sake.

Givens grabs the tablet. She scrolls to a slider labeled "Middle Class Taxes," set at 5.5%. She ups it to 5.75%. The number in the top left ticks up to \$42 Billion.

AUCTIONEER  
I've got 9! Do I have 10?

GIVENS  
(to Madison)  
Half a percent.

Givens raises her paddle high! Madison hits the "+" button - 6.00% tax -- \$43 Billion.

AUCTIONEER  
I have 10! 11? 11! Oh, 12!

GIVENS  
(to Madison)  
Two percent!  
(standing, shouting)  
15 million!

A hush comes over the crowd as Madison painfully raises taxes to 7.5% -- \$45 Billion.

AUCTIONEER  
Ms. Wisconsin! A generous offer! 15 going once? Twice? Sold to the lovely lady in pink!

Givens leaps gleefully to the stage, jingling all the way.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)  
You must have known that this first item came with a *special surprise??*

GIVENS  
(cheeky)  
I may have peeked at the catalog.

The Auctioneer pulls a RED BUTTON from behind his back.

AUCTIONEER  
Fire at will, Madam Governor!

Givens slams the button, launching the rocket! It takes off in a cloud of smoke as a PUNK ROCK rendition of "The Yankee Doodle Boy" plays from MASSIVE SPEAKERS around the field.

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)  
Everyone! Eyes on the big screen!

A nearby JUMBOTRON shows a LIVE FEED FROM THE ROCKET'S NOSE.

EXT. LOWER ATMOSPHERE - NIGHT

The rocket soars by. A small speaker on the side keeps the song going as the chorus of *The Yankee Doodle Boy* starts.

EXT. MIDDLE EASTERN SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

The rocket whistles out of the sky on cue with: "*I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy, A Yankee Doodle, do or die!*" **KA-BOOM!**

FLAMING CHILDREN run from the schoolhouse like ants under a magnifying glass.

EXT. FIELD OUTSIDE OF BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

Fireworks in the distance. A ticker on the Jumbotron reads: "*Hamas responsible for Schoolhouse Drone Strike, US Intelligence Says.*"

The Auctioneer, now dressed like a U.S.O. Showgirl, marches across the stage. Governors stomp, clap, and sing along:

ALL GOVERNORS  
(singing)  
*A real live nephew of my Uncle Sam!  
Born on the Fourth of July!*

Madison slides down in her chair, mortified.

BEGIN MONTAGE -- THE "CHARITY" AUCTION (*Yankee Doodle Dandy* still playing loud and proud).

-- MS. OHIO (70s) hops into the cockpit of her new STEALTH BOMBER. Madison regretfully defunds "Medicare and Medicaid".

-- The Auctioneer wheels MR. GEORGIA (90s) onto the stage to inspect his 10-foot IRON MECH SUIT with MACHINE GUN ARMS. Madison can't even look as she drains "Social Security".

-- Madison tearfully defunds "S.N.A.P Benefits" as Givens snaps her paddle over her knee in anger, having lost to:

-- Governor McCarthy fires his new MINI-GUN into the sky, screaming in-time and at the top of his lungs:

MCCARTHY  
*I'm that Yankee Doodle Boy!*

END MONTAGE & SONG

INT. BALLROOM - BAR - NIGHT

Madison crashes into the bar. She reaches over, grabs a bottle of VODKA and pours herself a stiff drink. She sucks it back, pours another. Drink. Pour. Repeat.

Austin, sitting in his same corner seat, taps his glass:

AUSTIN

I mean... while you're at it.

Madison fills his glass, hand shaking, spilling some.

MADISON

What just happened in there?

AUSTIN

Same thing that always happens. They spend all the money on things that blow up and catch fire.

MADISON

I thought Magnus was a charity event! I thought we'd be buying art and sculptures! I thought we were raising money for... I don't know... the homeless!

AUSTIN

Magnus is a weapons manufacturer. They make Lockheed Martin look like G.I Joe. But our bosses can't just tell everyone they're buying Napalm Missiles and Mech Suits. So they call it a charity. The annual M.I.C. It's happened every year since Eisenhower left office.

MADISON

How does this not bother you?

AUSTIN

I was like you once. Ready to fix everything wrong with the "greatest country on Earth." And then I learned how foolish that sounded, because...

(pointing to the field)

...that's what's wrong with the greatest country on Earth, and there's not a damn thing you, or I, or anybody else can do about it.

GIVENS (O.C.)

There you are!

Givens grabs Madison, spins her around. Everyone is walking back into the Ballroom.

GIVENS (CONT'D)

I wanted to discuss our bidding strategy for the second half. If I lose to that wretch McCarthy again--

Madison yanks her arm away, scowling at Givens, who looks her up and down inquisitively. She can tell Madison is upset.

GIVENS (CONT'D)

I understand you got your Masters in Applied Politics, yes? Suffolk? That must have cost a fortune.

Givens has the tablet. She clicks through screens until she finds MADISON'S PROFILE. She has \$78,578 in STUDENT DEBT.

Givens plays with the slider, bringing Madison's debt down to \$0 and all the way up again, plus more.

GIVENS (CONT'D)

See how easy it is? I can make it go up, or I can make it go down. You *would* like me to make it go down, wouldn't you?

MADISON

(gritting her teeth)  
Of course I would.

GIVENS

Perfect! Keep that mouth shut and those sliders moving, and you'll be out of debt faster than you can say "plausible deniability."

Givens presses the tablet into Madison's chest and leaves.

AUSTIN

See? Status quo isn't all that bad.

Madison grills Givens until she loses her in the crowd.

MADISON

The status quo can kiss my ass.

INT. BALLROOM - TABLE - SAME

Madison walks over to FOUR YOUNG ASSISTANTS (20s/30s) standing around a high-top table. She slams her tablet down:

MADISON

So, what did *your* bosses spend  
millions of taxpayer dollars on?

The Assistants exchange glances, not knowing what to say. A SKINNY MALE ASSISTANT (30s) with greasy hair speaks up:

SKINNY ASSISTANT

We know it's wrong, but what are we  
supposed to do? Overthrow the  
Governors?

Madison smiles ear to ear.

BEGIN MONTAGE - MADISON OVERTHROWS THE GOVERNORS as Paramore's 2024 rendition of *"Burning Down the House"* plays.

-- An OLDER ASSISTANT nods as Madison whispers in her ear.

-- Madison, talking to FOUR others, gestures toward her tablet, expressing how crazy everything is. They agree.

-- Austin looks back and forth between Madison and his drink.

-- Madison ushers Assistants into a BACK ROOM, making sure that nobody is watching.

INT. BACK ROOM - DAY - CONTINUING MONTAGE

-- Madison presses the SHOPPING CART icon, revealing DOZENS OF WEAPONS that Givens won at the auction. To the right of each item, in BIG RED LETTERS, is a button labeled: "Sell."

-- One by one, the Assistants open their respective shopping carts. Their fingers hover over the "Sell" button.

-- Madison climbs atop an overturned bucket. She raises her hand as if signaling her ASSISTANT ARMY to ready. They do.

-- Madison signals "Go!" and, in quick succession, thumbs slam their respective "sell" buttons!

-- SHOTS OF VARIOUS TABLETS -- STATE MONEY is going up, and up, and up!

-- Madison smiles in sync with "Burnin' down the house!"

END SONG & MONTAGE

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF BACK ROOM - LATER

Austin cracks the door and peeks inside. He sees Madison on the bucket, addressing her ASSISTANT ARMY:

INT. BACK ROOM - SAME

MADISON

The status quo ends today!

ALL ASSISTANTS

Yea!

MADISON

It's time we stop spending money on things that blow up and catch fire, and start spending money on things people actually need!

ALL ASSISTANTS

Yea!

MADISON

Tablets ready!

Everyone readies their tablet like a weapon:

With each PUBLIC PROGRAM Madison yells, her Assistant Army cheers and moves that slider all the way right. In doing so, all of their "state money" drops precipitously.

MADISON (CONT'D)

Universal healthcare!....

Affordable education!....

Public utilities!....

The police!

A collective moan deflates the room...

MADISON (CONT'D)

Better training and education to ensure fair and unbiased policing!

ALL ASSISTANTS

Yea!

EXT. FIELD OUTSIDE BALLROOM - NIGHT

Governors in their seats, mingling amongst themselves. There isn't an Assistant in sight. Givens looks over her shoulder, sneering, searching for Madison as...

...The Auctioneer walks slowly to the stage, worry on his face. He looks upon the crowd. He gulps... then taps the mic:

AUCTIONEER

Hi. Welcome back. I'm afraid I have a bit of bad news. I've just been informed that... well... other than the gentleman from Texas... none of you have any money.

Silence... then... COMPLETE PANDEMONIUM!

MCCARTHY

YeeHaw! Ya' hear that, losers!?  
Everythin' up there is mine now!

MS. OHIO (O.C.)

But how? Where'd all our money go?

Givens looks toward the Ballroom, rage in her eyes.

INT. BALLROOM - BAR - LATER

Madison sips vodka and mingles with the other Assistants.

GIVENS (O.C.)

You've ruined everything!

Givens stomps up and SLAPS Madison in the face. Her head whips sideways. Madison holds, stunned for a split second... Then... a smile. She looks at Givens and holds up the tablet:

MADISON

Oh yea?

She drops and CRUSHES the tablet with her heel. ALL THE ASSISTANTS DO THE SAME. Givens watches, shocked, powerless.

GIVENS

(through her teeth)  
I will grind you into nothing.

Givens storms off. Madison sips her drink, then calls:

MADISON

Governor Givens!

Givens whips around, hate in her eyes:

MADISON (CONT'D)

God bless America.

Givens huffs and storms outside.

INT. BALLROOM - BAR - MINUTES LATER

Madison sipping her drink and laughing with other Assistants:

SMASH! The wall behind them crumbles, revealing all the Governors -- armed to the teeth!

McCarthy and Givens lead the assault. He spins up his Mini-Gun; she draws one of his pistols, cocks it, aims at Madison.

ALL THE OTHER GOVERNORS arm their weapons. The assistants are about to get toasted when...

...Austin steps in front of Madison, tablet at the ready.

MCCARTHY

Whoa there, gunslinger.

Austin starts raising all his sliders. With each one, McCarthy reacts like he's been shot:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Ah, god! No! Ah! Gah! Ugh!

Austin drops the tablet. McCarthy watches it fall in SLOW MOTION. It bounces, the screen cracks. McCarthy finally "dies" when Austin crushes it with his foot.

GIVENS

(Kicking McCarthy)

Jesus Christ. Give me that!

Givens throws the pistol at McCarthy and picks up the Mini-gun. She spins it up, finger on the trigger...

AUCTIONEER (O.C.)

No, no, no, no, no!

The Auctioneer slides up to Givens, grabs the gun:

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)

That doesn't belong to you anymore.

GIVENS & MCCARTHY

What?!

The Auctioneer and Givens play tug-of-war with the Mini-Gun.

AUCTIONEER

(struggling)

In fact, none of this belongs to any of you anymore.

ALL GOVERNORS

WHAT!?

The Auctioneer tears the Mini-Gun from Givens' hands:

AUCTIONEER

(winded)

You all sold it back to us. And we've already sold them again.

ALL GOVERNORS

(Booming)

TO WHO!

AUCTIONEER

People with money. And they paid for -- Every. Last. Bullet.

AUCTION HOUSE WORKERS emerge and confiscate all the weapons, including McCarthy's pistols.

MCCARTHY

Hey!

Governors hug and weep like they've just lost a child. Givens falls to her knees, sobbing:

GIVENS

Nooo! It was beautiful! It was all so beautiful!

*"The Yankee Doodle Boy"* fades in and plays us out:

AUSTIN

*So... that's* how you got the money back. Just one question? Who do you think bought everything?

Madison looks upon the crying governors and smiles:

MADISON

Hopefully someone who needs it.

EXT. SKY ABOVE FIELD - SAME

A STEALTH BOMBER flies by with a banner: *"The 63rd Annual Magnus Intercorp Charity Gala & Auction."*

The banner peels off, revealing another that reads:

*"The 63rd Annual Military Industrial Complex Gala & Auction"*

FADE TO BLACK - *"The Yankee Doodle Boy"* gets softer...

EXT. SNOWY ROAD - DAY

Quiet. Desolate -- then -- the low rumble of flatbed trucks approaching in the distance.

TEXT: *\*Classified\** - Russia - 3 to 5 business days later.

A truck stops. The door opens. Fur boots land in the snow.

PAN UP on boots, pants, puffy jacket -- the DRIVER removes their fur cap and sunglasses... It's MADISON!

She struts up to her COMRADE (40s). They lock forearms.

COMRADE  
(in Russian)  
*Good work, Agent Gazmanov.*

MADISON  
(in fluent Russian)  
*Americans and their weapons.*

Madison spits into the snow. They walk away laughing.

PAN UP: a long line of FLATBED TRUCKS carrying all the weapons from the M.I.C Gala.

The screen crackles, as if a VINTAGE PROJECTOR FILM REEL has just ended, revealing a BLANK CANVAS

\*Footsteps fade in\* -- A HANDSOME 1950's-style SPOKESMAN enters from screen left. He looks directly into the camera:

SPOKESMAN  
Every year, misappropriated funds allow deadly weapons to fall into enemy hands. We can stop them, but only with your help. Donate to Magnus Intercorp today. The fight for freedom depends on it.

The Spokesman smiles -- the MAGNUS INTERCORP LOGO appears behind him as "*The Yankee Doodle Boy*" crescendos:

*"I'm that Yankee Doodle boy!"*

CUT TO BLACK

*"This film was paid for and sponsored by the Military Industrial Complex."*

THE END