

**(For "Big News" 11-17-06)**

**UNITED ARTISTS**

By John Judy

**(Lights up on TOM CRUISE.)**

TOM

I'm gonna be a Hollywood mogul! Yes! I've done the research! I'm head of United Artists! Yes!

**(KATIE enters.)**

KATIE

Tom? You're making the baby cry, Tom. Is that bad?

TOM

Katie?! Give the baby the special vitamins! And take some yourself! Don't question me! I'm a mogul!

**(KATIE exits.)**

TOM

I'm not jumping on couches or sleeping with the lead singer of Matchbox Twenty! I'm a mogul!

**(The founders of United Artists, CHARLIE CHAPLIN, MARY PICKFORD, DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, and DW GRIFFITH enter.)**

PICKFORD

Oh, so were we, Tommy. So were we...

FAIRBANKS

At least we thought we were...

GRIFFITH

Back when we founded United Artists in 1919.

CHAPLIN

But we learned better. The hard way.

TOM

Mary Pickford! Douglas Fairbanks! DW Griffith! And Adolph Hitler!

CHAPLIN

I'm not Hitler, Tom. I'm Charlie Chaplin.

TOM

You killed the six million Jews! I've done the research!

FAIRBANKS

Tom, he's not Hitler. He's Chaplin. "The Little Tramp?"

PICKFORD

He actually mocked Hitler in "The Great Dictator."

GRIFFITH

Along with myself, he's considered one of the pioneering geniuses of cinema for films like "Modern Times" and "City Lights."

TOM

"Days of Thunder" made ten times the money of all your films put together! Now who's the genius? I am! I know!

CHAPLIN

Tom, you're making it difficult to remember why we came back to help you.

PICKFORD

He means you're being a dick.

FAIRBANKS

You see, Tom, we're actually sort of pleased that an actor is taking the reins of UA. It's what we'd always envisioned ourselves.

GRIFFITH

We just want you to avoid the pitfalls that led to it being taken out of our hands.

CHAPLIN

We were creative people, not businessmen. If we'd learned to work within our limitations United Artists might have worked out as we'd intended.

TOM

Limitations?! Limitations?! What are my limitations?!

FAIRBANKS

Well... I mean, if you believe the scuttlebutt...

PICKFORD

You're a closet queen with dyslexia and a religion most people laugh out of the room.

TOM

Shut up, Mary Pickford! I will sue you! I know! I am the number one box office star in the world!

CHAPLIN

So was I, Tommy... **(CHAPLIN exits.)**

TOM

I am the biggest action hero in the world!

FAIRBANKS

So was I, Mr. Cruise... **(FAIRBANKS exits.)**

TOM

I am America's sweet-heart!

PICKFORD

So was I... Dick-head! **(PICKFORD exits.)**

TOM

So what did you do?

GRIFFITH

I just moved the camera around and hated black people.

TOM

Can you be my publicist?

**(BLACKOUT.)**