July 19th, 2015
Subject: Orphan Works Bill

To Whom It May Concern,

I am doing my best to be civil about this, but this orphan works bill that's being proposed is... well... it's trash. All that it does is give the little guy a little more freedom when it comes to making fanart, and it gives the big guys (like Google, or Disney, or whoever) everything WE have ever done (I guess they can't come up with any good ideas anymore?)... not to mention we have to basically pay to claim what's already ours! It's asinine.

I have spent more time on art than I care to think about. My whole life has been deticated to art. I create art; I sculpt, draw and paint. I look at other people's art, I learn from art, I watch tutorials, I engage in art communities online and I go to arts and craft shows. It is a huge passion for me. I enjoy putting my works up for others to see and enjoy. This goes for all artists of all skill levels and types. But one thing we do not like at all, is when someone takes our work for their own and PROFITS ON IT. Especially, HUGE multi-million dollar companies that are more than able to HIRE US or at least pay us for rights. This bill is just a huge slap in the face for individual artists who have put so much effort into their artistic journeys... the large companies have NO right to take what we've worked on for so hard. They can afford it. If they want to use our ideas and art so much, then they ought to give us something for it.

And, in case no one at the copyright office has noticed, money is very tight for most people right now. Who can afford to have every single piece of art they have ever done registered so that no one else can profit on it? We have to already cough up money for stupidly high student loans, raised taxes, inflation Obamacare, and now you want MORE money from us? Employers haven't even increased their wages while everything else goes up! Where, oh where,
is all of this money supposed to be coming from?!

The worst part about this bill is that no one there seems to realise what actually goes into making a piece of art. Years of trial and error, learning techniques, frustration, sheer joy, love.... not to mention money. To have huge companies swoop in and take everything will destroy online communities and online marketplaces, and the little guy can't even say "no, stop" because they won't 'have the rights' to something they made. These companies CAN afford to hire us. They CAN afford to pay for royalties or rights. But they don't want to! They just assume that artists just pop out art like chickens lay eggs. It takes SO much for artists to be artists! These big companies see what we as individual artists are creating. They see what we do on a daily basis, and we upload it for others to enjoy, but THEY WANT IT AS THEIR OWN. They see us as fruit that's simply ripe for picking... well, NO, it doesn't work that way! Please support artists that you enjoy! They will be able to make more art that way! And let me include this: A LOT of artists have ridiculously high student loans to pay and they can't or it's hard to...
These companies should HIRE US for a decent wage and see what we can really do! They should NOT take what little we have!

Ok, so if I've been sort of vague or unclear, think of it like this: Let's say you like to make cheese. You started off with store-bought milk and other ingredients and old pots and pans. You learned how to make decent cheese from these less-than-average items. You paid a hefty bill to go to Cheese Making School. Eventually, from years of trial and error, you figured out exactly what kind of milk you need, how long you need to cook, how long you need to age, and so forth. You bought goats, you bought cows, you have expanded your kitchen over the years to make more cheeses. Maybe you even put in a cellar to age your cheeses. You have to care for said goats and cows and keep breeding them (no babies=no milk). You've put your everything into your cheese. Everyone really enjoys your cheese, so you quit your day job to make your cheese business. You are the only employee of your cheese business. All marketing, animal husbandry, sanitation, cheese-making, research, customer service falls on YOU. But you are always fired up about it and never miss a beat; this is your dream. Your baby. Well, now, BigCheese Co. sees your online presence, they see how awesome and loved you are. They envy what you have. BigCheese wants to

generate more money and excitement about their product, but their ideas and product are stale and unappealing... even though they have no problem with cash flow. BigCheese watches their margins and... hmm... they don't want to spend any more money than they have to... How can they get your audience's attention? How can they get into your spotlight? Oh, with lawyers and businessmen! You, as a small, humble cheese-maker, have no interest in these things, so you just don't know. BigCheese goes to Congress and begs. "Oh," BigCheese says, "LittleCheese can have my ideas for free if I can have theirs for free!!! And everyone will have to pay a tiny fee if they don't want their cheese eaten as soon as it's made." So, great Congress approves it. BigCheese comes in and takes your recipies and copies your kitchen, your aging set up, and even your logo. They begin marketing their new line of "LittleCheese Co. Cheddar."

Customers that could be yours (if you had the coverage and the span to advertise to everyone) are now buying this copied cheese. You continue to try to make cheese, but as soon as it's done, someone from BigCheese stops by and snatches your batch. They tell you it's because you didn't pay the 'small fee'. But you're a small business, you don't have a lot of money to throw around... but you give it a shot. Your pay the small fee and try to sell your cheese like before. But no one buys, your audience has left. Would-be customers think your item is a knock off of BigCheese. You are forced to struggle and eventually quit on your cheese business.

I really don't want to lose everything I've made and I know my fellow artists don't either. We don't want to see our work used and abused... artists should retain the rights to their work as it is our livelyhoods. This is ridiculous.

Thank you for reading, and please think of how this affects everyone.
-Me