Good evening. I am twenty-two years old and as it stands I have no job, odds are I will never have a job, not because of the economy but because I have a mental disorder known as social anxiety disorder. My disorder makes it difficult to interact with others, I become anxious and over think everything, I can not judge how others feel about my actions so I tend to assume they think the worst of me. These thoughts will continue long after the interaction and usually cause me to be overcome with embarrassment, guilt, and anxiety for weeks, months, or years at a time. When put in a social work environment these thoughts and feelings can pile up until I have what is known as a panic attack.

It is because of my disorder that I have decided to become an online artist. After school I plan to draw commissions online for others for money or even sell my art; I want to be able to choose who I work for and what I draw. The Next Great Copyright Act will make it difficult, if not impossible, for me to do this though. There will be people who take my work without my knowledge and try to sell it themselves, they will claim that it is theirs and I will not be able to do anything about it. I will not be able to make money drawing freely, I will not be able to share my art with others without having to worry about a corporation or anyone else from taking it and using it for themselves.

My work, the work I put my heart and hours of my life into making, will no longer be mine. Just because it is on the internet does not make it any less mine. Just because I use the internet to spread my work does not mean that anyone can take it. And I am not the only person who this act threatens; there are many other artists out there who post their work to the internet everyday, artists who are trying to make a living by selling their works, who post their work to inspire and entertain others. If this act passes then not just me, but all of us, will be hurt by it.

Our works do not belong to the public or anyone else, they belong to us, and how they are used should be up to us and us alone. For some it is the only way they can get money, the only way they can bring attention to an issue, the only way they can express themselves. Please think carefully about just who is being effected by this act, please do not let it pass for me and people like me. Thank you.