ARTISTA SPEAKS OUT

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Based on the Case Study by Arnie Lutzker
INT. STUDIO - DAY

JOYCE MILLER, a woman in her thirties, dressed smartly in a navy blue suit, sits in a chair, smiling broadly.

JOYCE
Artista Wrights is widow to the famous filmmaker Federico Bellini. Her new book, "That’s Not My Dead Husband’s Movie" is an international bestseller. Welcome Artista.

Widen to reveal ARTISTA WRIGHTS, a platinum blond in her late thirties who could easily be mistaken for Donatella Versace. She is holding a copy of her book.

ARTISTA
(In a thick Italian accent)
Thank you. It’s a good to be here.

JOYCE
Some history for those who haven't read the book: In 1990, your husband’s film “Hidden,” the story of an Italian family that hid gypsies from the fascists was nominated for the Best Foreign Film Academy Award. The film lost that year, really didn’t come close to winning... at all, but it established your husband as a major talent. The two of you were the toast of the Hollywood community. What happened after that?

ARTISTA
Well after that he a die.

JOYCE
Oh, yes. Yes, he did.

ARTISTA
My husband he was a little bit a wild...

CUT TO:
EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - NIGHT

FEDERICO BELLINI is riding a motorcycle through the hills. Artista is holding on to dear life behind him. The words “Dramatic Recreation” flash across the screen.

ARTISTA (V.O.)
...that’s why I love him. One night we are riding the motorbike through the Hollywood Hills and I say, “Federico slow down you are going too fast!” And he say a, “What?” Because the wind it is so loud and then he crash and die. I was thrown from bike to safety.

Federico loses control of the bike. Artista is thrown to safety in an overly dramatic fashion. She looks off screen towards where the bike crashed and covers her head as we hear an explosion.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO – DAY

Artista looks off to the side as if seeing the crash all over again. After a moment, she turns back to Joyce.

ARTISTA (cont’d)
After he a die, the film “Hidden” was bought by FOXXY films. Then it die too.

JOYCE
How do you mean?

ARTISTA
I tell you this all before show.
(Sighing)
My husband he do the “work for hire” to get the film made. When FOXXY Films buy it they say they own and do whatever they want. The original film was done in black and white. They add color. The original film is drama. They add comedy.

JOYCE
But did these few alterations really
(making quote symbol)
"change" the film?

ARTISTA
I bring you a two stills from the movie. First from one my husband make.

INSERT SHOT: A black and white photo of two priests sitting at a table. Underneath the picture are the words, “Still from original version of ‘Hidden’.”

ARTISTA (cont’d)
Next from film they make.

INSERT SHOT: Another picture slides in next to it. This is in color and shows two clowns sitting in the exact same position. Underneath this picture are the words, “Still from digitally remastered version of ‘Hidden’.”

ARTISTA (cont’d)
This version is still called a film by Federico Bellini.

JOYCE
I see. What about
(making quote symbol)
"content"? Did they change any of the actual-
(making quote symbol)
"story"?

ARTISTA
Again, I tell you this before show. FOXXY Films it want to make it enjoyable to all audiences so they alter parts so other countries relate to it. For example, for Irish version they add a jig with fiddle and drums; in German version they cut out part about work camps. I bring in two clips, one from original movie, one from French version to show how different they make it. This is the last scene of the film.

JOYCE
(To camera)
The last scene of the film, "Hidden".

ARTISTA
Original and French.

JOYCE
(To camera)
Original and French.

Artista looks at Joyce not sure why she had to repeat her.

CUT TO:

EXT. A WALL - DAY

Two men in overcoats are standing in front of a wall. The picture is in black and white. Underneath the picture are the words, “Original version of ‘Hidden’.” The following subtitles accompany the actors’ speech in Italian.

MAN 1
I only wish I could have saved more of them.

MAN 2
You did all you could.

MAN 1
You’re right. I guess both of us should enjoy the open space while we can.

Man 2 smiles at Man 1.

CUT TO:

EXT. A FRENCH WALL - DAY

The two men are standing outside with the Eiffel Tower in the background. Man 1 is now wearing a beret and Man 2 carries a baguette. The picture is in brilliant color. Underneath the picture are the words, “French version of ‘Hidden’.” The following subtitles accompany the actors dubbed speech in French:

MAN 1
I only wish I could have saved more of them.

MAN 2
You are bound to lose one or two croissants in a batch.

MAN 1
Would you like to join me for a café au lait?

Man 1 and Man 2 share a hearty laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO - DAY

JOYCE
Artista, what are you hoping to accomplish with the publication of your book?

ARTISTA
I want the film restored to how my husband he make it: the color in black and white, no speech dubbed, and no, and I mean this, no clowns.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE AFRICAN JUNGLE - DAY

There is a jeep parked next to a bush. A man, RUPERT BURNER, is in a khaki shirt and khaki shorts a la The Croc Hunter. Behind him, two local guides point guns at the bush. We see the Joyce standing off to the side with a microphone. She is wearing a similar outfit as before which is hardly suitable to the terrain.

JOYCE (V.O.)
I caught up with Rupert Burner, president of FOXXY Films, on safari, to get his side of the story.

The words, “Rupert Burner, President of FOXXY Films,” appear under the picture.
RUPERT BURNER
(To Joyce, in a thick Australian accent)
FOXXY films did wonders for that film. You know I even added some World War II footage from my special collection. I didn’t have to do that.

JOYCE
But adding to the film, doesn’t that violate Bellini’s rights?

RUPERT BURNER
What about the audience’s rights? Huh? To see a good film? The fact is, thanks to us, “Hidden” is seen across the world. There is a soap opera based on it and a Saturday morning cartoon. We’re also developing technology where we can digitally insert famous actors into the parts. Imagine how much bigger “Hidden” will be with Bruce Willis and Brad Pitt?

JOYCE
But is that ethically-

Rupert holds up his finger. The bush in front of him shakes.

RUPERT BURNER
Shhh! There he is. The red-whiskered mountain lion. Very dyañ-gerous.

Rupert hands a spear to our Joyce, who holds it awkwardly.

RUPERT BURNER
Cover me while I try and crawl inside and work him like a puppet.

Rupert enters the bush. The Joyce looks to the camera.

JOYCE
Right.

(To the camera)
Join us next week when I’ll be talking up close and personal with some of today’s hottest celebrities who just can’t seem to help but spill their guts to me and... to you.

RUPERT (O.S.)
Look, look at the size of this thing!

Our Joyce points the spear in the general direction of Rupert while motioning with her hand for the camera to cut off the transmission. We hear Rupert struggling with the animal in the background.

FADE TO BLACK.