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A LOT OF SWEEPIN'

A monologue by L. Lewis Stout
From his 1971 play, "Dracula and Nixon"

Place: A large meeting hall. The floor is littered with confetti, deflated balloon and political signs.

Time: Moments after a political rally.

Character: An old Janitor in coveralls.

The Janitor enters pushing a rolling trash bin. He takes a push broom and dust pan from the bin and starts sweeping. He sees the audience.

JANITOR

Oh, hello, der, I didn't know anybody still there. I'd wait and come back later but I gotta...

(motions with his broom)

You don't mind? Good, I'll be through in little bit. I'm pretty quick with the broom, been at it for thirty-seven years, since I come from Sweden. Ya, dat a lotta sweepin' since Sweden. I come to find better country and I find it's me dat makes it better. Pretty good, no?

(he sweeps)

I just keep sweeping and sweeping and everyplace I do it, I gotta do it again, 'cause the stuff just keeps coming back. Every day they get a new bundle of the stuff to throw around.

(puts political signs in his trash bin)

My son, the smart one, he tells me the story they teach him in the school about the little Greek guy, called him Sissy Face. But he plenty tough, this Sissy Face, and he like me. He just doing what he was doing to feed all the kids he got. Then one of them Greek gods, who was always feelin' uppity because they lived forever and didn't pay taxes or nothing, gets a little bored just sittin' on the cloud and wants to have some fun, and to him having the fun is pushn' the little guy around. So he gets Sissy Face and tells him he gotta push this rock up this hill. The god, he figures to get a little fun out of watching an honest man doing the labor or something, you can never tell with some folk. Anyways, he tells Sissy Face that all he gotta do is push this rock or maybe even a boulder, up this hill and then he be finished, that all.

(He empties his dust pan into the bin)

Well Sissy Face looks at the boulder and then he looks at the hill and right away he knows this could take a lot of doing on his part and is not going to be easy no how.

Then Sissy Face, being a smart fellow, says that he is finished now, says thanks to the god for being a good guy and starts out to leave. But this god couldn't be put down so easy and he tells Sissy to start a pushin'. So Sissy, not seeing an out, the god being the bigger of the two, starts pushin'.

(He sweeps harder)

He pushes, and he pushes, and he gets red in the face, and the wise guy god he begins laughing and laughing and Sissy keeps huffin' and getting madder and madder with every huff. He straining at that boulder and getting it nearer the top and his face getting redder and the god he laughin' more and more and this realty make Sissy mad. Nobody likes to be made a fool of, so Sissy starts thinking, and just before he gets to the top he jumps away from the boulder and lets it roll down. He being ding donged afore he'd give the laughin' god the satisfaction of being able to push Sissy Face around. And oh boy was that god mad, and he made Sissy start pushing again, and Sissy, whenever he gets near the top he lets go that old boulder.

(empties dust pan)

Sissy got his pride. When my son he finish telling me this story I tell him that's just how it is with me. I got my pride too. I tell him I wouldn't let nobody tell me to sweep the junk and stuff around not for no \$152.50 a week, except that I got my pride. Cause no matter how much they make me sweep this place for them, and they gets mighty touchy, I know it's going to be dirty again tomorrow, and they ain't got nothing but a dirty floor again, and they gotta pay me all over again. They think they is pushing me around like Sissy Face, but not me, no sir, I got me pride.

Finished his sweeping, he puts the broom in the rolling bin and exits.

THE END