

DIRTY JOB

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FADE IN:

EXT. FACTORY - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Cartoon rendering of a Depression-era factory running half a dozen smokestacks at full power. Sign reads "Worldwide Whoozits and Whatzits."

An instrumental version of Churchill's "Whistle While You Work" plays.

One of the smokestacks sputters.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

A small army of WORKERS (20s to 50s) in coveralls and gray hardhats work away at their stations in six distinct Product Lines within the cavernous space. Their FOREMAN (50) in a white hardhat watches over them from a large control panel.

A beefy Worker on Line Two whistles along with the tune as he positions several controls, pulls a large lever.

He jumps when the machine bucks, gauges go haywire, and steam pours from the pipes. He rings a bell twice.

The Foreman checks his second rows of gauges. Inputs all in the green: Water, Oil, Electricity, Beer, Pretzels. Output gauge for Product sinks to zero while Waste gyrates wildly.

The Foreman slams Line Two's big red emergency-stop button. A panel opens next to it uncovering "Are you sure?" with "Yes" and "No" buttons. He exhales, reluctantly pushes "Yes." A SIREN blares briefly as Line Two grinds to a halt.

He beckons to a lanky, gray-hatted CUSTODIAN (20) who rushes over. Foreman points to the vibrating Waste gauge. The Custodian gulps, points to his chest. Foreman scowls, nods forcefully, points at a circular hatch in the floor.

The Custodian hangs his head, shuffles to the hatch, opens it, and descends the ladder within.

INT. STEAM TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS

A labyrinth of pipes large and small. The Custodian glumly raps the large "Waste: Number Two" pipe with a wrench. The pipe responds with a hollow sound, so he moves on.

Here, the music is Tchaikovsky's "Marche Slave."

Custodian raps the pipe again, moves on after another hollow sound. The third rap gets no response at all. He lines up to hit the pipe again, but a hollow sound comes from further down the pipe. Then another even further down.

He follows the sounds down the pipe until it turns downward through the floor. The Custodian sighs, pries open a manhole cover, gags, coughs, and waves uselessly at the odor.

He uses a handkerchief as a make-shift gasmask, looks around, spots a large "Break Glass in Case of Emergency" case.

INT. SEWER - DAY

The Custodian, in hipwaders and big rubber gloves, carries a shovel gingerly through ankle-deep sludge. O.S. toilet flush. Custodian dodges as a glop of fresh sewage drops from above.

Ripples in the sludge slide back the way the Custodian came. He comes to what should be an opening, but it's packed with mud and sticks.

A pair of beady eyes look on from a dark crevice in the wall.

Custodian stabs at the blockage with the shovel. He stops mid-step when a loud STEAM WHISTLE blows O.S., shoulders his shovel, heads back toward the steam tunnels and factory.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

Many Workers mill around tables and a water cooler. The room is filled with indistinct banter and laughter.

The music here is still "Whistle While You Work."

The Custodian arrives without his rubber gear, but he picked up a few hovering flies. Workers hold their noses, give him a wide berth. He hangs his head, exits.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

The Foreman stands meekly before a MANAGER (55) in a three-piece suit and a black hardhat. Manager points angrily at the Line Two gauge for Product sitting a zero "\$/HOUR".

Foreman spots the Custodian shuffling along, seethes until flush, points emphatically at the Custodian then the hatch.

The Custodian sighs, climbs down the ladder.

INT. STEAM TUNNELS - DAY

The Custodian lugs a jackhammer with its pneumatic line trailing out of frame as Mills' "Music Box Dancer" plays.

Custodian looks directly at the camera, furrows his brows.

Rossini's "William Tell Overture" plays.

The Custodian smiles, picks up the pace.

INT. SEWER - DAY

The frustrated Custodian attacks the blockage - which now has new boards nailed on top - with his jackhammer in sync with the music. He doesn't make much progress across a series of shots before the O.S. steam whistle stops him mid-step.

The beady eyes continue to watch from the dark crevice.

LATER

Custodian bores several holes in the newly reinforced blockage with a hand-drill, slips sticks of dynamite into them as Holt's "Mars, Bringer of War" plays ominously.

INT. STEAM TUNNELS - DAY

The Custodian stands half-crouched, fingers in ears, eyes closed, as the O.S. dynamite fuses HISS.

Somehow, the hissing gets louder. REVEAL: the dynamite sticks, fuses still lit, have been built into a tiny log cabin behind the Custodian.

His eyes bulge, he tries to run, but BOOM!

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Custodian shoots up through the hatch on a plume of flame.

The music here is still "Whistle While You Work."

The Custodian flails helplessly as he almost but not quite reaches the ceiling, then begins to fall. More flailing.

Oblivious Foreman consults a wrist watch. Just before the Custodian impacts, Foreman pulls the steam whistle. TOOT. Custodian's fall screeches to a halt. He rolls over to a standing position on the floor, brushes off soot.

Custodian faces the steam whistle, holds up an "I have an idea" finger, smiles deviously while wringing his hands.

LATER

The Custodian stands on the top rung of the hatch's ladder, holds up five fingers, points to his wrist where he'd have a watch if he could afford one, holds up five fingers again, then makes two tugs downward.

The Foreman nods, and the Custodian climbs down.

INT. SEWER - DAY

The Custodian - standing in knee-deep sludge - leans heavily into a prybar to remove new steel plates from the blockage.

Stravinsky's "Sacrificial Dance" plays.

He stops the moment the steam whistle blows O.S., walks away with a pathetic attempt at nonchalance.

Once he is out of frame, the beady eyes from the crevice emerge as a BEAVER who surveys the damage.

Custodian leaps into frame, grabs the Beaver, loses his grip when tail-slapped in the face. Custodian chases the Beaver, losing his handkerchief-mask in the process, with near-misses as the Beaver runs between his legs or over his head.

The Beaver dives back into the crevice. Custodian thrusts his arm deep inside. CHOMP!

Custodian pulls his hand out of the thick glove, pulls out the glove with both hands, Beaver still attached. He grabs the Beaver by the tail, and it thrashes about helplessly.

LATER

Beaver stands in a cage, chewing its nails nervously, next to Custodian whaling away at the blockage with a sledgehammer. After each blow, the Custodian gives the Beaver a smug smile.

Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture" plays.

The Beaver chitters, on its knees, forepaws clasped, begging.

Custodian reached the final layer of the blockage: a brick wall. He lines up a swing of the sledgehammer. Beaver shakes its head. Custodian nods condescendingly. Music crescendos.

With one mighty swing, the bricks collapse into a pile, creating a cloud of dust. The cloud clears, and behind the wall stands a SEWER MONSTER - a nine-foot-tall half-man/half-fish creature covered in scales. And sludge.

The Beaver covers its eyes. The Custodian piles the bricks up again in desperate haste.

The Sewer Monster ROARS as the music reaches its trademark cannon blast. Bricks fly in all directions.

Sewer Monster chases the Custodian back toward the factory.

INT. STEAM TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS

Sewer Monster bites at the Custodian each time the music reaches a cannon blast.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Custodian's attempt to close the hatch fails, Sewer Monster leaps into view, Workers run in every direction. The Sewer Monster picks a Worker at random and gives chase.

As "1812 Overture" concludes, the Foreman gets in the Sewer Monster's way, holds up a "Stop!" hand.

The Sewer Monster skids to a halt with a confused look on its face. The Foreman scowls, points angrily at a cabinet labeled "Safety."

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

The Sewer Monster, now wearing a gray hardhat, continues to chase Workers to and fro as "Whistle While You Work" plays.

FADE OUT.