



The Janitor's Handbook

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The Janitor's Handbook is not a manual—it's a revelation. Written from the quiet hours of a man who cleans hallways long after the world has gone home, this book transforms ordinary work into a sacred calling. With poetic reflection and hard-earned wisdom, Brian Korn lifts the mop and bucket into symbols of patience, excellence, and prayer. He writes about tools, time, morale, dust, and devotion—not as chores, but as gateways to peace and purpose. Behind every shining floor is a philosophy: that cleanliness is not just the absence of dirt, but the presence of care. From baking soda and prayer to silence and hidden ministry, *The Janitor's Handbook* will change how you see your work, your surroundings, and yourself.

Chapter One: The Calling of Cleanliness

There is a moment, every evening, when the building exhales. The last footsteps fade down the corridor, the hum of conversation dissolves, and the lights settle into their gentle electric hush. That is when my shift begins. It is not the start of the night; it is the restoration of order. The day leaves behind its evidence—crumbs of hurry, fingerprints of ambition, small traces of living and striving—and I come not merely to remove them, but to reconcile them. I do not see a mess; I see a memory. I do not see dirt; I see what life has left behind on its way through. The world calls it janitorial work. I call it the ministry of renewal.

It would be easy to think of cleaning as labor for the hands alone, but anyone who has done it long enough knows that the heart is involved too. To clean well, you must first care. You must believe that the condition of a place influences the condition of its people. Disorder breeds irritation; decay breeds discouragement. But order—true order, the kind born from diligence and reverence—gives peace. The Bible says, “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40, KJV). When I read that verse, I hear my job description written by the Holy Spirit Himself. God works through structure. He separated light from darkness, waters from dry land, chaos from creation. And so when I scrub a floor or polish a pane of glass until it catches the light, I am not simply maintaining a building—I am participating, in my small way, in the order of God.

There are those who confuse a janitor with a custodian or a maintenance worker, and though the titles may overlap, the spirit behind them does not. A maintenance worker fixes what is broken; a custodian preserves what is whole. A janitor, though, is entrusted with something deeper—the unseen harmony of the environment itself. We are the keepers of peace, the stewards of atmosphere, the quiet souls who arrive when others have gone home. The custodian may hold the keys, but the janitor holds the conscience of the building. It is not pride that drives me to say this; it is awareness. The environment a person enters each morning sets the tone for their entire day, and that tone, whether calm or chaotic, often depends on me.

This is why morale is not the responsibility of management alone. It is the unseen duty of the janitor. When people walk into a building that smells clean, looks orderly, and feels cared for, something inside them steadies. Their posture changes. Their mood lifts. The air itself becomes cooperative. I have learned that a janitor is as much a morale officer as he is a cleaner. The mop and the rag are tools, yes, but so are kindness, humor, and attentiveness. The secret of good morale is not in grand speeches but in small consistencies—floors that always shine, bathrooms that always smell fresh, and greetings that are always sincere.

I have found ways to lift the spirit of the building without saying a word. One day I placed a dry-erase board in a hallway and wrote a single word at the top: “Inspire.” I left a marker next to it. The next morning, tenants began adding their thoughts, quotes, and little drawings. Over time it became a conversation wall—a mirror of encouragement that changed daily. Another time, when several tenants wanted to display flyers or announcements, I set up a glass display cabinet near the entrance so they could share their news. When the garage became crowded, I made personalized parking signs for the ones who needed them most. None of these were in my job description, but they were written somewhere deeper—in my understanding that people flourish where they feel noticed.

The morale of a workplace depends not on the size of the paycheck, but on the condition of the space. A cluttered building creates a cluttered spirit. A building that sparkles, by contrast, lifts everyone who enters. The rule is simple: if it doesn’t sparkle, it’s substandard. The sparkle is not vanity—it is reassurance. It says, “Someone cares.” It tells the tired mind that the world still runs on attention and effort. A streak-free window can restore faith in unseen diligence. A polished floor can remind a discouraged worker that beauty survives routine.

There are nights when fatigue whispers that it’s enough to do the minimum. The quick wipe-down, the “good enough” bathroom, the shortcut that nobody will ever notice. And sometimes, I’ve taken it. I’ve walked away from a restroom knowing I could have done better. And though no one else said a word, I felt it inside—that quiet conviction that cleanliness and conscience cannot be separated. The next

night, I do it right. Not because someone told me to, but because the work itself deserves it. My standard is not perfection—it is peace. Peace with my own sense of duty, peace with the Lord who gave me hands and health to serve.

I believe cleanliness carries a spiritual charge. A clean space invites clarity. A well-ordered environment welcomes wisdom. Even prayer feels easier in a place that's been tended with care. And when I pray for the people in my building—as I often do—I ask not only for their safety and success, but for their joy. I pray for the workers to have peace, for their families to be well, for the clients they serve to be blessed. When you clean a place with that kind of spirit, the building itself seems to respond. The air feels softer. The light seems kinder. It's as though the walls remember the prayer.

Some people spend their lives chasing titles, but I am content to keep keys. A janitor with faith and attention can change an atmosphere faster than a manager with a memo. My tools are simple—brooms, sprays, rags, and faith—but through them I keep balance in motion. The Lord knows who does the unseen work, and He honors it. “Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” (Colossians 3:23, KJV). That verse has followed me through every corridor I've cleaned. It reminds me that I do not work for applause. I work for the One who sees in secret.

In time, every janitor learns to listen. Buildings speak. They groan, hum, and sigh. They have their own rhythm—the way pipes rattle when water begins to flow, the faint whine of the elevator as it climbs or descends, the thump in the garage that tells me someone has come in after hours. I know these sounds the way a shepherd knows his flock. When something changes, I notice. That attentiveness—physical, moral, and spiritual—is the foundation of this entire profession.

So when I say I am a janitor, I mean I am a keeper of peace, a guardian of morale, and a servant of order. I clean not just what is seen, but what is felt. I wipe away the day's weariness. I polish the dullness of discouragement. I make space for the next sunrise to begin on a clean foundation. To some, this is menial. To me, it is holy.

Morale Tips

A clean building is a happy building. Morale rises when people sense that someone has already cared for the space before they arrived. When you keep things bright and welcoming, you remind everyone that stability still exists.

Listen for what your clients need, even when they don't say it. Sometimes it's a small fix, sometimes it's a small gesture—a board to share ideas, a display for their notices, or a simple “good morning” when they walk in. Morale doesn't need management meetings; it needs consistency, attentiveness, and grace.

When you feel tired or unnoticed, remember that the peace of dozens of others depends on your faithfulness. The work you do quietly tonight will shape someone's mood tomorrow. That is power worth honoring.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, let the work of my hands reflect the order of Your creation.

Teach me to serve not only with strength but with joy.

Bless every person who walks these halls with peace, health, and encouragement.

May every room I clean invite Your presence, and every task I finish bring honor to You.

Let me be a keeper of light in places where no one looks, and let my work preach goodness without words.

Amen.

I have learned that dirt is not my enemy; it is my teacher. It reminds me that everything left unattended will return to dust. Floors collect footprints, not because they are flawed, but because they were meant to bear the weight of life. Soap and water become sacraments in my hands, agents of redemption for surfaces weary from use. I have scrubbed mirrors clouded by months of neglect until they shone

like truth itself—reminding me that the soul, too, must be polished daily if it wishes to reflect the light of God. “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10, KJV). How could any janitor not feel the sacred echo in those words?

People often imagine that cleaning is mindless work, but the truth is, it demands more attention than most professions. A distracted worker may leave a smudge, a streak, a residue invisible to hurried eyes but glaring to the trained. I can tell, by the sheen of a countertop, whether the cleaner was too strong or the rag too wet. I can sense, even before I bend down, whether the floor has been mopped with dirty water or clean. The spirit of the room testifies. The air feels heavy when corners are neglected, lighter when every surface has been tended with care. Cleanliness is not only seen; it is felt. It changes the spirit of a place. Does God not move most freely where things are in order?

Some nights, I am the last one left in the building. Everyone else has gone home—the officers, the clerks, the managers. The silence becomes thick and holy. I hear the elevator cables groan like tired lungs, and the soft rumble of the HVAC becomes a hymn of constancy. I sweep through corridors where flags hang in still air, and I feel the strange honor of tending to a place where serious things are done by day. To clean where law is upheld, where justice is spoken, where the machinery of a nation breathes—that is no small calling. I am the unseen keeper of its peace. If cleanliness is next to godliness, then order is next to justice.

There are rules I have come to live by. One of them is this: *If it doesn't sparkle, it's substandard.* Some might call that perfectionism, but I call it respect. Respect for the people who will walk these halls tomorrow, for the eyes that will glance into these mirrors, for the hands that will rest on these desks. A janitor who does not take pride in his work has no business holding the key to any door. For what is a key, if not trust made tangible? I hold keys to rooms of power, and yet I enter them only to serve. I clean what others soil, and I leave without a trace. There is humility in that—a kind that polishes the soul more than any brass handle.

Over time, I began to realize that a building is alive. It breathes through vents, it speaks through creaks and clanks, it weeps through leaks in the roof. Every night it tells me stories through sound—the slow drip of a pipe, the whisper of a loose door hinge, the echo of a late-closing elevator. I can tell when someone's still inside, when a door has been left ajar, when a storm outside has pressed its mood into the windows. These things are not coincidences; they are relationships. A good janitor listens to the building as a shepherd listens to his flock. He knows which parts are healthy and which parts are in pain.

Baking soda, I discovered, can sanctify a room in a way few chemicals can. When I sprinkle it over carpet before vacuuming, it doesn't just remove odor—it changes the spirit of the space. It makes the room feel lighter, truer, almost reborn. And live plants—they breathe goodness into the air, unlike the plastic kind that only gather dust and mimic life without possessing it. The living respond to life. A true janitor surrounds himself with what breathes, not what merely decorates.

But the greatest lesson I have learned is that morale is more important than polish. If the people who occupy a place feel disheartened, no amount of wax will make the floors shine with life. A clean room without hope is just an empty shell. I have seen offices where everything gleamed but no one smiled—and others where the floors were scuffed, yet laughter lingered in the air. So I clean not only for the eyes, but for the spirit of those who enter. A janitor's truest work is invisible: to preserve peace, to maintain morale, to make others feel that the world is still worth tidying.

When the night ends and I hang my keys on the hook, I sometimes wonder—who will clean the earth itself when all men are done? Who will wipe the tears from the walls of history, or sweep the ashes of time? Perhaps that is why God made janitors: to remind the world that restoration is still possible, that decay is never final, and that somewhere, someone still cares enough to make it right. To be a janitor is to believe that every stain can be lifted, that no filth is permanent, and that holiness begins with a rag and a willing heart.

And so I continue, night after night, to wash the world in small portions. It is slow, humble work, but it is the closest thing to prayer I know. For as I clean these rooms, God cleans me. The more faithfully I polish the visible, the more He purifies the unseen. I do not clean for wages, though wages come. I clean because I must. Because to restore order in a disordered world is the work of the redeemed. And when I leave a place shining—silent, fragrant, and ready for a new day—I hear a still, small voice within me whisper, “*Well done.*”

Chapter Two: The Discipline of Order

There is a rhythm to cleanliness that few ever perceive. To most, order is the absence of chaos. To me, it is a song. Every motion, every sequence of movement—broom, rag, water, step—is a verse in a quiet hymn of restoration. A lazy janitor rushes through his tasks as though escaping them. A disciplined janitor enters his work as though entering prayer. For work without order is vanity, but order without discipline is illusion. I have found that to keep a building clean, I must first keep my own soul in order. Without inward discipline, outward tidiness becomes nothing more than performance.

I begin each night's work the same way—by standing still. I let the noise of the day drain out of me. I look around the room before I touch anything. I listen to what it needs. Sometimes it speaks in stains, sometimes in scent, sometimes in silence. The mop bucket sits there like an altar. The broom, the vacuum, the rags—these are my instruments, my tools of renewal. But I must approach them with calm mind and clean intention. If I rush, I spill. If I resent, I miss. If I complain, I lose the quiet that allows me to see. Order begins within. How can I restore peace to a place if I bring chaos in my heart?

The discipline of order is not about perfectionism; it is about alignment. The floor must align with the wall, the mop stroke with the light, the man with his calling. I wipe in straight lines because crooked strokes produce crooked thoughts. When my supplies are neatly arranged, my spirit feels whole. When they are scattered, I feel fragmented. Is that not true of the human condition? We scatter our priorities, we misplace our peace, and then wonder why nothing seems clean anymore. I have come to believe that cleaning a room is a form of confession. Each stain confronted is a truth faced. Each mess restored is a wrong forgiven.

Some nights, I am tempted to cut corners. The temptation always begins with a whisper: "No one will notice." But that is the voice of decay, not diligence. If I skip one task tonight, I'll skip two tomorrow. Dust multiplies where excuses take root. That is how neglect begins—not in laziness, but in justification. And so I push myself to do what I would be proud to have inspected by angels. For though men may never

see my labor, God does. As it is written, *“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men”* (Colossians 3:23, KJV). That verse is the truest job description a janitor will ever need.

I have learned to see discipline not as a burden, but as a freedom. The disciplined man is never frantic, because he has already chosen his order. He knows where everything goes, and everything knows his hand. My vacuum cords are coiled the same way every night. My bottles are labeled and placed by height and use. My rags are sorted—blue for sinks, orange for desks, and green for toilets. Some might call that obsessive; I call it worship. When my tools are in order, my thoughts follow. When my thoughts are in order, my life obeys. Order is not oppression. It is liberty arranged by wisdom.

Cleaning teaches time itself. I have learned that if I start one task too early, it ruins the next. The floor must be swept before it is mopped, the dust wiped before the vacuum hums, the chemicals given time to dwell before they can lift the grime. Every step has its season. The impatient man destroys what patience could perfect. How many lives have been ruined by rushing what required soaking? Even bleach takes time to whiten. Even prayer takes silence to deepen. There are no shortcuts to purity, not in marble floors and not in human hearts.

I greet people by name because names restore dignity. I smile because cleanliness begins in spirit. When morale falters, dirt multiplies faster. A bright word can do more than a bottle of disinfectant. A kind tone can polish the air itself. What good is a spotless desk if the heart sitting behind it festers?

Sometimes I think the greatest disorder of our time is spiritual clutter. Too many voices, too many screens, too little stillness. The janitor’s life, if lived rightly, is an antidote to that chaos. My routine is my monastery. My nightly rounds are a liturgy of motion and purpose. When I fill the mop bucket, I think of baptism. When I sweep the hall, I think of pilgrimage. When I wipe a mirror, I think of the soul reflecting its Maker. And when I finish, standing in a room that smells of lemon and effort, I whisper a quiet prayer: *“Lord, keep my inner world this clean.”*

True order requires love. Not the kind of love that feels, but the kind that acts. Love for one's work, one's coworkers, one's Creator. A janitor who does not love will grow bitter, but a janitor who loves will grow holy. For love turns duty into joy. When I find a forgotten smudge, I smile. It gives me something to restore. When I notice a crooked frame, I straighten it as if adjusting the world. These small corrections are acts of mercy. They say, "This place still matters." And in a world that forgets meaning, that message is sacred.

So the discipline of order becomes, in the end, the discipline of devotion. The more I perfect my craft, the more my craft perfects me. Cleanliness becomes conscience. Order becomes prayer. Discipline becomes peace. The mop and broom, once mere tools, have become my companions in sanctity. Together we declare, night after night, that chaos does not win. The Lord reigns still, even in the janitor's closet.

And when I walk out into the dawn, the building glistening behind me, I feel as though I have rehearsed a truth the world has forgotten—that Heaven itself will be spotless when we arrive, not because angels never spill, but because love never stops cleaning.

Chapter Three – The Spirit of the Building

There comes a night in every janitor’s life when you realize you don’t just work in a building—you *know* it, like a captain knows his ship. You know how it breathes when it’s resting and how it hums when it’s awake. You know the tone of every vent, the rhythm of every flickering light, and the particular scent each suite carries—coffee and toner in one, citrus cleaner and quiet paperwork in another. You can tell the difference between the sound of the elevator settling and the faint thump of a door left ajar. You notice the change in air pressure when someone enters, even if they try to be silent. The walls speak in small ways—the hum of the ducts, the moan of the pipes, the faint tick of a thermostat clicking over—and you understand them all. I can tell when my building is empty, and I can tell when it isn’t. It’s not intuition; it’s familiarity—the kind earned only by time, care, and listening.

That may sound strange to people who’ve never cleaned after hours. But there’s a point, somewhere around the thousandth mopped floor, when you begin to feel it. You start to hear the building talk back. It’s not with words, of course—more like the creak of metal settling, or the tiny electrical hum behind the walls. But you know what it’s saying. Every janitor learns the dialect of their domain. A building has moods. It can sulk, it can relax, it can even pout when you’ve been away too long.

You learn to recognize the sigh of the air conditioner like an old friend’s breath. You can tell when an elevator door is closing a second too slow, or when the garage is pretending to be empty but isn’t. You know the exact rhythm of the lights warming up, the gentle flick-flick-flick before they stretch fully awake. You become the building’s physician and its priest. You know when it’s healthy, when it’s weary, when it needs a little more attention.

Most people never notice these things. They rush through the day surrounded by order they didn’t earn—trash cans already emptied, fingerprints already erased, carpets already restored to their pre-human innocence. They never think about who maintains the invisible covenant between chaos and calm. But you do. You live in that space between what was dirty and what is clean, what was broken and what is whole. You work in the twilight hour between humanity’s mess and God’s mercy.

And that is no small thing.

Sometimes I think cleaning is like confession. The building comes to you each night weighed down by the sins of the day—coffee stains, shoe prints, paper towels that missed the bin—and you, patient and faithful, absolve it. You restore it to grace. You take what others left behind and make it new again. The garbage bag becomes your chalice, the mop your holy water, the rag your hymn. It’s an odd sort of liturgy, but it works.

You may think I exaggerate, but is it really exaggeration to see holiness in order? Think of creation itself. “And the earth was without form, and void.” (Genesis 1:2 KJV) God didn’t leave it that way. He cleaned it up. He separated light from darkness. He made divisions—sky above, waters below. He gave shape to the formless and meaning to the meaningless. Every night, in a small but honest way, the janitor does the same.

We restore the world to the way it *ought* to be.

You can always tell when a janitor loves his building. There’s a tenderness in how he shuts the doors. He doesn’t slam; he clicks. He doesn’t rush the mop; he glides it, like a dance. He knows which lights to leave on for the night—one here, one there—so that the building won’t be afraid of the dark. He’s like a shepherd tucking in his flock. You might think buildings don’t care about such things, but I’ve seen a hallway stay cleaner longer when treated with respect. Coincidence? Maybe. But I like to think gratitude lingers in tile.

People think we janitors work in solitude, but that’s not quite true. We have company—the building itself, yes, but also something higher. The Holy Spirit walks with us, unseen but felt. You feel His approval in the rhythm of your motions, in the peace that follows your work. You feel Him in the silence that isn’t empty but alive. There are nights when the quiet becomes a kind of choir, and the faint buzz of the exit signs sings the same truth your heart already knows: order is divine.

And yet, there's a mystery to it too. Sometimes the building feels sad. Heavy. You can sense it in the air, in the way the vents moan or the lights hesitate. Maybe it's picking up the weight of all the human hearts that struggled within it that day. Maybe it's weary from absorbing people's anger, stress, and loneliness. So you do what you can. You empty the trash as though it's full of sorrow. You clean the restrooms as though you're wiping away tears. You vacuum the halls as though you're smoothing out the creases in a worried soul.

Does that sound overly poetic? Perhaps. But tell me—if we don't see the poetry in our labor, who will?

A janitor's work is never just mechanical. It's relational. Every squeaky hinge and flickering bulb is a conversation. Every door that won't close right is a cry for help. Every new stain is a confession. You learn to respond with grace, not complaint. You don't scold the mess; you redeem it. You make things whole again.

And when you really listen, the building teaches you. It teaches patience—because dust always returns. It teaches humility—because no one sees you. It teaches forgiveness—because every day's effort is undone by tomorrow's footsteps. But isn't that what grace is? The willingness to restore again and again, knowing the mess will return, but choosing to love the space anyway.

There are nights when I stop and simply look. The hall is spotless, the glass gleams, the faint smell of disinfectant lingers like incense. And I whisper, *it is good*. Those three words are enough. That's Genesis language, janitor language, God's language. Because creation never ended—it just needed a crew to maintain it.

So I keep listening to my building. When it groans, I tighten its bolts. When it sweats, I air it out. When it cries in leaks or creaks, I comfort it with mops and wrenches and patience. And when it glows at night under the soft buzz of fluorescent halos, I know I'm standing in a small cathedral built of labor, silence, and faith.

The Spirit of the building is not something you find—it's something that finds you.

One day, long after I'm gone, another janitor will walk these same halls. Maybe he'll hear the same hums, the same sighs, the same rhythm of pipes and vents. Maybe he'll even feel what I felt—the sense that the building remembers him, somehow, even before he arrived. And if he does, I hope he realizes what I did long ago:

He's not alone.

He never was.

And the building?

It's alive because someone loved it enough to listen.

Chapter Four – The Morale of Cleanliness

Cleanliness by itself does not lift the human spirit. I've learned that over the years. A shining floor can be cold. A spotless mirror can reflect indifference. A polished doorknob can turn in a hand that still feels unseen. No, it isn't *the cleaning* that restores morale—it's the spirit behind it, the heart that performs it, and the prayer that follows it.

A janitor who only cleans is half awake to his calling. But a janitor who listens, prays, and observes begins to understand that every space carries a mood, and every person inside it carries a need. And those needs—though unspoken—are what you serve when you clean.

I can tell you, for instance, the difference between a building that's merely maintained and one that's cared for. In the first, you can feel the checklist: efficient, professional, soulless. In the second, there's a softness in the air, a sense of calm that rests in the corners like light. That peace doesn't come from disinfectant—it comes from intention. It comes from the quiet prayer that says, "Lord, let those who enter here feel peace. Let the weary find rest."

I've learned to clean while praying, and pray while cleaning. Sometimes aloud, sometimes not. But always in awareness. When I'm wiping a countertop, I think of the people who will place their hands there tomorrow—tired hands, anxious hands, hands that type or sign or hold coffee in weary mornings. I pray those hands find steadiness. When I vacuum a hallway, I pray that whoever walks that path will find clarity in their thoughts. When I scrub a restroom, I ask that those who enter it will leave lighter, as if some small burden has been rinsed away with the water.

You can't boost morale with mop strokes alone. You have to understand what kind of morale your people need. That takes listening.

A janitor listens differently. You listen for laughter drifting from an office, for the rhythm of teamwork in motion, for the hopeful murmur of people chasing tomorrow's goals. You notice the small signs of life and effort—the coffee mugs left

behind after a productive meeting, the scribbled notes of new ideas forming on whiteboards. You can feel when the building is alive with purpose, when people are striving, learning, growing. You begin to read the emotional weather of the place—not to judge it, but to harmonize with it. And when you care enough, you adjust your work to strengthen that goodness—to polish the brightness that’s already there, and to make the atmosphere just a little lighter, a little kinder, for everyone inside.

If morale is low, you clean brighter, and pray harder. Maybe that means leaving a touch of lemon scent in the air—something that says *fresh start*. Maybe leaving the toilet paper roll folded in origami. If morale is high, you clean softer, as though you’re tending a thriving garden. You move quietly, protectively, making sure nothing breaks the peace.

Sometimes you boost morale by being seen. A nod in the hallway, a smile that says, “I’m glad you’re here.” Other times, you boost it by being invisible—by letting people believe that the world just *is* this orderly, this dependable, this cared for. You become the unseen reassurance that life still makes sense.

I’ve often thought that morale is like air: you only notice it when it’s bad. But maybe that’s not just a feeling—it’s physics. In quantum terms, every person, every thought, every word releases energy into the field around them. Atoms are not solid things; they are vibrations, frequencies, waves of possibility. So when people argue, or when fear fills a meeting room, those vibrations linger. The molecules in the air seem to carry the memory of tension. The fluorescent lights hum a little sharper. The very space feels “collapsed” into a lower state of being.

That’s why a building can feel heavy. It’s not imagination—it’s interference. The human heart leaves quantum footprints. Energy, once released, remains until it’s redirected. And that’s where the janitor steps in, not just as a cleaner of surfaces, but as a calibrator of resonance. When you open a window, you’re not only refreshing oxygen—you’re resetting the frequency. When you let light in, you’re

flooding the room with photons that reorient the particles, scattering the residue of stress and restoring coherence to the field.

Prayer does this too. It shifts the quantum field, not through force but through harmony. You can feel it happen: the static fades, the room softens, the space seems to “remember” peace again. Even the pace of your movements matters. When you clean with gentleness, you are literally guiding the particles toward order. When you move with respect, the atoms follow suit. It’s as if creation itself recognizes the difference between aggression and care.

So yes, a good janitor doesn’t just clean the floor; he cleans the frequency. He resets the building’s waveform back to peace. He restores coherence to chaos, balance to interference. And when he’s done, the entire place hums differently—not louder, just truer. The air feels new because, in a very real sense, it *is*.

That’s why I love sprinkling baking soda on the carpet before vacuuming. It doesn’t just clean—it changes the air itself. There’s something about the way it freshens, the way it softens the mood. When the room feels right, you can sense it before you see it. It’s like the difference between a house and a home.

The secret is empathy. You have to care deeply about people who may never know your name. You must watch and learn—what frustrates them, what cheers them, what gives them peace. Maybe the receptionist always keeps a small plant by her desk because it reminds her of home—so you make sure her area smells clean and bright, not chemical and sharp. Maybe the manager comes in early every morning before anyone else—so you keep the lobby light on for him, just one soft bulb so he doesn’t walk into darkness. Those details matter. Those are morale decisions.

You can tell when your work is lifting spirits. People start greeting you more warmly, even if they can’t explain why. The air feels less tense. Meetings end with laughter again. Someone brings in donuts for the staff. These are small signs, but they’re real. That’s the fruit of a janitor’s hidden ministry: the renewal of hope through order.

Every night, before I leave, I take one last walk through the building. I move quietly, like a shepherd checking his flock. I look into every suite—not to inspect, but to *sense*. Does the place feel peaceful? Is the energy calm? Does the air itself seem to smile? If not, I don't rush out. I linger. I adjust a chair, open a vent, whisper a prayer. Because I don't want to just clean this place—I want it to *breathe again*.

Morale is not something you install. It's something you nurture. And the janitor, more than anyone, has the privilege of tending it at its roots. We hold the keys not only to doors, but to atmosphere. We are the first to arrive, the last to leave, and the only ones who see the building when it's most honest—when it's empty, quiet, and waiting for the next day's life to begin.

In those hours, you come to know the place more deeply than anyone else ever will. You see what people throw away—the remnants of their days, the silent stories they'll never tell. Crumpled notes from meetings that didn't go as planned. Coffee cups stained with effort. Wilted flowers from someone's desk. A forgotten photo torn and left behind. These things are not garbage; they are traces of humanity. You handle them with respect because you understand: this is sacred material. A person's trash is their unguarded truth. It reveals their struggles, their hopes, their habits, their private exhaustion. And yet, that knowledge is not yours to speak of—it's yours to protect.

That's part of the responsibility, too. To guard the unseen dignity of the people you serve. To treat their refuse with reverence. To empty a bin not as a gesture of disposal, but as an act of compassion. What others discard, you redeem. You are entrusted with their fragments, and in tending to them, you help renew the spirit of the place itself.

A building is like a garden. The people are the flowers, but the janitor is the soil-keeper. If the soil is rich—clean, balanced, watered with prayer—then everything that grows there will flourish.

So I've made it my rule: never let a space remain merely clean. Let it feel *cared for*. Let it hum with peace. Let every polished surface, every faint scent of freshness, every soft light whisper a silent message to those who enter:

You are valued. You are safe. You are home.

Chapter Five – The Living Order

A building, when it's well kept, becomes more than walls and wiring—it becomes a living companion. At night, when the world outside grows quiet, mine wakes into a kind of gentle awareness. I can feel it the moment I step inside. The air greets me with recognition, like an old friend who's been waiting. The lights hum softly in greeting. Even the floors seem to welcome the rhythm of my steps. There's no heaviness here—only stillness, peace, and readiness for renewal.

And then there are the plants—my green companions, scattered across the building like steady candles of life. I know each one by memory: their leaves, their favorite spots, even their preferences for how much light they like. Some thrive best where they can feel the air move gently around them; others prefer stillness and quiet corners. When I rotate them around the building every few weeks, the whole place feels renewed, as though the energy of the building itself has stretched and smiled.

My relationship with the plants is simple and joyful. They speak, not in words, but in gestures—tiny adjustments, hints of color, the faint lean of a stem, the slight wilting that says, “I need water.” I understand them, and they understand me. It's not work; it's friendship. They like to hear music while I water them. There is a calm connection between us. It's one of the purest forms of communication there is: silent, honest, and alive.

But life inside the building doesn't end with plants. On the balcony outside the children's dentist's office are some bird feeders – an idea the dentist was kind enough to allow. Every night I make sure the feeder is filled, and by day the balcony becomes a scene of cheerful commotion. Children and elderly visitors alike stop to watch. The kids point excitedly at the sparrows, and the older women smile, remembering gardens of their own. The birds have become part of the building's family—tiny visitors that bring joy to all who look through the windows.

At night, I feel that pulse in other ways. The hum of the air units, the sound of the elevator, the quiet murmur of the building settling—all of it feels alive, familiar, almost musical. I know every sound and when it's supposed to happen. A car door

closing in the garage, the gentle thud of the elevator stopping—each has its place in the nightly rhythm. It's not noise; it's conversation.

The building and I have an understanding. I care for it, and it, in return, offers peace. There's a resonance between us, an invisible harmony that deepens the longer I work here. When I walk through the halls, I can sense the morale of the space—not in any dramatic way, but in the lightness of the air, the balance of scent and sound, the quiet contentment that rests on everything that's tended well.

The presence of life—plants, birds, even the subtle awareness of the building itself—creates something sacred. Cleanliness alone is not enough; the real goal is vitality. A clean room can still feel empty, but a room filled with life, even softly, feels complete. The living order is not a task to be performed—it's a friendship to be maintained.

I think often of the verse in Genesis: “And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.” (Genesis 2:15, KJV). That command lives on in every act of care, every quiet gesture toward beauty. The garden, for me, is this building. My work is not to control it, but to keep it alive—to tend, refresh, and bless the space so others can feel peace when they enter.

Before I leave for the night, I take one last slow walk through the halls. The plants rest in their corners, content. The air smells fresh and calm. Outside, the bird feeders hang quietly, waiting for morning visitors. Everything feels balanced, alive, and good.

That's the living order: when every corner hums with gratitude, when every small thing breathes in cooperation with the whole, when even the quiet of night feels like a prayer answered.

Chapter Six – Morale Projects

Initiative is the soul of excellence. You can mop a floor perfectly, polish a doorknob until it gleams like gold, and still never lift the spirit of a place if you don't take initiative. Initiative means you see a need before anyone points it out, and you step into it willingly—not for praise, not for pay, but because you care. It's a quiet kind of leadership. It's the difference between someone who clocks in and someone who takes ownership.

Sometimes you have to take risks. Not foolish risks that threaten your job or your integrity, but little leaps of faith—creative gestures that tell people, “*This building is alive. Somebody here cares.*” The truth is, if the worst thing that can happen is that someone tells you to undo what you've done, then it's worth doing. Because most of the time, they won't tell you to undo it—they'll thank you for having done it.

Taking initiative is how beauty begins. It's the way a janitor becomes an artist. You begin to look at walls and corners and see possibility. You begin to sense morale as something tangible, something that can be cleaned, repaired, and raised up just like a window or a floor. And so, over the years, I've made it my quiet habit to create what I call *morale projects* throughout the building—small acts of goodness meant to brighten the hearts of those who work here.

The Inspiration Board

It started with a plain dry-erase board I mounted on the wall near the restroom in the common area. I wrote across the top: “*Inspire us. Leave a joyful note.*” Below it, I left a few colored markers—red, blue, and green. Then I waited.

Within a day, someone wrote: “Today is a good day to smile.” Another wrote: “Jesus loves you more than you know.” Over time, the board became like a public diary of encouragement. Notes appeared in all kinds of handwriting—some thoughtful, some playful. Occasionally a sour message would appear, but I'd simply wipe it away with my hand, and the white surface would shine again, ready for more kindness.

It reminded me of what the Bible says: “*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good*” (Romans 12:21 KJV). That’s what morale work really is—erasing the bitterness of life and leaving space for something better. The board taught me that morale is like a dry-erase surface. It needs maintenance, forgiveness, and a fresh start now and then.

The Wisdom Cards

Another idea came to me one night while cleaning. I began printing small cards with beautiful images on one side—scenes of nature, sunlight, calm waters—and on the other, I printed short sayings about wisdom, peace, and gratitude. Then I placed them discreetly in one of the upstairs bathrooms.

It was an experiment. I didn’t know if anyone would notice, but people did. The idea was simple: *they come for relief, but they leave with revelation*. There’s something tender about giving someone a moment of reflection in a place they least expect it. A bathroom is where people pause—away from phones, away from meetings. It’s a quiet minute where a gentle word can reach them.

That’s how the cards work. They remind people that goodness can be found anywhere, even in the humblest corners of life. They remind me, too, that inspiration isn’t bound by place—it can live wherever someone dares to plant it.

The Children’s Dentist Prayer Book

Down the hall, the children’s dentist invited me to place a prayer book in their waiting area—a bright little notebook with a colorful cover and plenty of blank pages inside. Patients and parents could write their prayers, their thanks, or even stories of small miracles.

When I read the entries, I pray over each one personally and mark it to show it has been prayed for. Some are simple—“Please help my mom feel better.” Some are profound—“Thank You for saving my son.”

There's something deeply moving about these small written prayers. It's as if each page becomes a window into a soul. I think of what Scripture says: "*The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*" (James 5:16 KJV). Even a janitor can help carry the burdens of others before God. Sometimes morale work is not about brightness or cheer—it's about unseen compassion.

The Risk Project: Reserved Parking Signs

Now here's where risk comes in. When the building filled up—every office occupied—the tenants began asking for reserved parking spaces. It wasn't in my job description to solve that problem, but I saw a need. So, I made personalized parking signs for each tenant, laminated them, and posted them myself—without waiting for permission.

I figured the worst that could happen was someone telling me to take them down. But that never happened. The signs are still there to this day.

That's what I mean by initiative. Sometimes you just do what obviously needs to be done. You take the small risk, because order is better than confusion, and people appreciate care. "*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*" (Ecclesiastes 9:10 KJV).

The Garage Display Case

Another day, a few tenants mentioned they wished there was a place to post flyers and notices. I went out, bought a display case with my own money, and mounted it in the parking garage right next to the elevator. Now, while people wait for the elevator, they can look through the glass and see community notices, positive sayings, or what I call "Weekly Meditations."

I keep the key and update it regularly. Sometimes tenants give me their flyers to post; other times, I fill it with encouraging thoughts, poems, or reminders to breathe and be thankful. It's not fancy—but it's something. It's a moment of beauty before they step back into their day.

The Principle of Initiative

Each of these projects came from the same conviction: you cannot wait for permission to care. True morale work is self-funded, self-inspired, and self-started. Sometimes that means buying your own supplies. Sometimes it means risking that someone might not understand. But the tenants—the people you serve—are your true audience.

The property manager and company matter, of course, but the tenants are the life of the building. They are your ministry. If they need parking signs, a place to post messages, a prayer book, or even a simple word of encouragement, give it to them. Because what you offer in love will never be wasted.

When you take initiative, you're not just keeping the building clean—you're keeping its heart alive. You're turning hallways into hallways of hope. You're proving that a janitor can be a shepherd of morale.

As I walk these halls late at night, I sometimes pause at the Inspiration Board, reading the notes left behind. I think of all the unseen people who wrote them—people with worries, deadlines, families, faith. And I realize that in some small way, this building has learned to breathe a little deeper.

And maybe that's what morale really is: the building itself learning how to breathe.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” —Matthew 5:16 (KJV)

Chapter Seven — The Tools of Cleanliness

This chapter is all based on my own personal experience. I'm not saying this is the only way to clean, or even that it's the way you *should* clean. Every building, every boss, and every janitor has their own system. You might not even be *allowed* to do things the way I do them, so always check with your employer first. What I'm sharing here is what I've found works best—the methods, tools, and products that actually get things clean, not halfway clean, not “technically clean,” but *clean-clean*. The kind of clean that makes you proud to walk away from your work knowing it shines.

One of the first things I learned early on is that I prefer to buy some of my own cleaning chemicals. Not because I have to, but because I want to. I like cleaning products—the way they smell, the way they work, the way the surfaces look afterward. I've found that many company-provided cleaners are either cheap, weak, or just plain useless. So yes, I spend my own money. I'd rather do that than half-do a job with something that doesn't work. For me, that's not a waste of money—it's a matter of pride.

Let's start with glass cleaner.

From my experience, *any* kind of glass cleaner you have to mix with water will leave streaks. Always. It doesn't matter how you wipe it or how careful you are—those diluted cleaners streak like crazy. I can't stand streaks. I remember when I worked at Arby's for a while, they required us to use this so-called “approved” glass cleaner that was so bad it made the glass look worse after you wiped it. You could honestly skip cleaning altogether and end up with a better result. That's how I learned that any glass cleaner that needs to be mixed or diluted is basically just a bottle of problems.

The two glass cleaners I trust are the Original Windex (blue) and another one in an aerosol bottle called World's Best Glass Cleaner. The Windex has ammonia, and the other one doesn't, but they both perform almost equally well. The Windex cuts through real dirt and grime, such as on entry windows, while the World's Best

version is perfect for things like bathroom mirrors. Both leave your windows and mirrors clear, crisp, and streak-free.

When it comes to what you wipe with—use *new paper towels*. Not cloth towels, not rags, not “reusable microfiber.” Even clean-looking cloths often have residue left on them from detergent, lint, or old use, and that residue transfers right back to your mirror. So use new paper towels each time. They absorb better, they leave no trace, and the glass ends up sparkling.

And remember: *never dilute your glass cleaner with water*. Ever.

Now, for regular disinfectant cleaner, I use whatever my company provides. It’s the all-purpose spray for sinks, counters, desks, and just about everything else that needs a wipe-down. It does the job well enough, and it’s safe for most surfaces. But for floors—that’s another story.

I’ve tried the floor cleaner my company provides. It’s fine, but it’s nothing special. It comes in a big jug, labeled something like “industrial floor cleaner,” and it does the job... but then I tried Pine-Sol. Pine-Sol works *better*. It smells cleaner, cuts through dirt better, and leaves the room feeling and smelling fresh. The only warning I’d give is that it’s strong—both in cleaning power and smell. Some people love that scent, others can’t stand it. So be thoughtful about who’s in the building and whether they’re sensitive to it. The same goes for bleach. I only use bleach occasionally for special jobs. When I do, I dilute it with water and use it sparingly. And I *never* carry bleach on my cart. Why? Because it drips. You roll your cart over carpet, and those tiny drips will bleach little white spots right into it. Always store bleach safely in your closet and only use it when absolutely necessary. Some companies forbid bleach entirely—always check first.

For shining chrome, faucets, and metal fixtures, I use glass cleaner again. It makes the metal sparkle. My motto is simple:

If it doesn’t sparkle, it’s substandard.

You can’t call something clean unless it sparkles. A dull faucet or spotted mirror

doesn't say "clean," it says "forgotten." A little glass cleaner and paper towel on chrome will make it gleam like it was just installed.

Now, for stainless steel, I recommend the *oil-based* cleaner—not the water-based kind. I've tried both, and the difference is night and day. The oil-based cleaner gives the surface that deep, rich shine and leaves it looking new. The water-based kind, on the other hand, might as well just be plain water. Honestly, I've had tap water do a better job. Oil-based is the only way to go.

And speaking of cleaners, let's talk about those labels you see on bottles: "*Heavy Duty*," "*Industrial Strength*," or "*Commercial Grade*." Sounds impressive, doesn't it? Makes you think you're buying something powerful enough to melt grime on sight. But here's the truth—in my experience, those phrases usually mean the exact *opposite*.

"Industrial strength" often just means the original formula watered down and rebranded for bulk use. I once looked at the back of a big "industrial cleaner" bottle. The ingredients read: 96% water, 4% citric acid.

Let's pause and think about that for a second.

Citric acid? You mean like... lemon juice?

So, you're basically buying a gallon of expensive lemon water. Probably costs \$59.95 a jug, too.

(pssst... you could do the same thing yourself with a bucket of water and a squirt of lemon juice—there's your "industrial strength" cleaner for sixty bucks less.)

That's how ridiculous it gets sometimes. They water it down, label it "heavy duty," and sell it for twice the price. But a good janitor knows better. You learn by feel—by what actually cuts through grime, what doesn't leave streaks, what makes chrome glow, and what truly makes a place feel *clean*.

So take these notes for what they are: experience talking. Every surface tells a story, and every product has its personality. Find the ones that tell yours truthfully.

Now, when it comes to toilets and sinks—the thrones and fountains of

civilization—there’s no substitute for the classics: Ajax or Comet powder with bleach. I’ve tried them all, and nothing comes close. I personally prefer Ajax because it turns the water a beautiful shade of blue, almost like it’s showing you that something sacred is happening beneath the surface. You sprinkle it in, let it fizz for a moment, and suddenly the porcelain wakes up—it’s alive again. That color isn’t just cosmetic; it’s a sign of chemistry at work, a tiny blue baptism for your sink and toilet. And when you meet a stain that laughs in the face of every cleaner you’ve got—one of those stubborn brown mineral marks that refuses to budge—there’s only one true weapon: the pumice stone. Gently, respectfully, you scrub with it, and it erases years of neglect in seconds without hurting the porcelain. It’s oddly satisfying, too—watching that surface return to its original purity. Isn’t it strange how a simple rock can do what gallons of fancy liquid can’t? Maybe cleanliness, like holiness, is sometimes best achieved through something rough yet honest.



Cleaned with a pumice stone.

Now, when it comes to polishing wood, stick to the classics. I recommend Old English or Pledge—the originals. Not the off-brands, not the dollar-store versions. Those look the same, smell the same, even *promise* the same—but wood knows the difference. Wood is alive in its own way. It has grain, breathes with humidity, and reacts to oil. The original Pledge and Old English were designed for that kind of material. The knockoffs just coat the surface; they don’t feed it. And that’s what real polish does—it feeds the wood.

If I'm being honest, dusting is probably my weak point. It's not that I don't care—it's just that dust hides. It hides in places you wouldn't think to look. The top of a doorframe, behind a monitor, on the light fixtures, under a picture frame—dust is sneaky like that. My boss, without fail, can walk into a room and immediately spot something I missed. And he's right. Every time. So let this be a word of advice: don't forget the dusting.

Look up, down, and all around. Check window sills, table legs, the tops of partitions, and ceiling corners for cobwebs. Dust first, *then* vacuum, because that dust you just stirred up is going to settle on the floor—and that's where the vacuum comes in.

Before you vacuum, there's a little trick that changes the entire feel of a room: sprinkle baking soda on the carpet. Just a light dusting, nothing crazy. You can use plain baking soda or the scented kind—those “carpet fresh” powders you see at the store. It's the same base ingredient, just with fragrance added. Either way, you sprinkle it, let it sit for 10-15 minutes, and then vacuum.

Now, what's interesting is that baking soda doesn't leave any visible change. You won't *see* a difference when you're done. But you'll *feel* it. The air feels crisper. The room feels somehow cleaner—not just physically, but energetically. It's hard to describe, but you walk in afterward and you just know something is right. The air feels lighter, fresher, and the space itself breathes easier.

There's real science behind that feeling, too. Baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) is a natural neutralizer. On a molecular level, it absorbs and binds with acids and odor-causing molecules in the air and carpet fibers, balancing the pH of the environment. Many odors are acidic in nature—sweat, food residues, organic decay—and baking soda neutralizes them instead of just masking them. It also increases ionization in the air slightly, similar to how fresh rain feels when it clears the atmosphere. That's why the air feels “new” after you've vacuumed with it—it's not just your imagination; the chemistry has actually shifted.

So yes—baking soda isn't about what you *see*. It's about what you *feel*. It doesn't just clean the floor; it restores the atmosphere.

And while we're on the subject of air—let's talk about Lysol.

I don't know what happened to Lysol, but somewhere between here and China, and somewhere between now and twenty years ago, something changed. The old Lysol in the aerosol can used to *obliterate* bathroom odors. You could spray it once, and the smell was gone. Vanished. Nowadays, I can spray half a can, and it still doesn't eliminate the odor—it just floats there, pretending to help. Somewhere along the line, they weakened it or swapped out a key chemical. It still disinfects, but it doesn't *cleanse the air* like it used to.

So what do I recommend instead? Ozium.

Ozium spray—get it at Walmart, an auto parts store, anywhere they sell car accessories. That's the stuff that *actually* clears the air. It doesn't just add a scent; it chemically removes odors, purifying the air itself. You spray it once and the room resets. It's got a pleasant cinnamony-like smell. I use it especially in bathrooms, breakrooms, or anywhere that needs a total refresh.

As for daily freshness, the automatic air fresheners that spray every 30 minutes work well. I keep them in restrooms on the lowest setting, just enough to keep a steady light scent in the air. People always notice it when they walk in—they don't know what's different, but they *feel* it. It's the smell of care. It tells them someone is paying attention.

If you want something a little gentler for hallways or offices, those plug-in Wallflowers or Glade plug-ins do the trick, though you have to replace them regularly. They make the air inviting without being overwhelming.

Now, one more thing about plants—because plants are part of the building's soul too. They give life to a space, but sometimes they attract bugs. If you ever see gnats or mites around them, spray the leaves lightly with neem oil once every week or two. It's natural and safe. If you need something stronger, there's a green bottle of Raid—the one marked for plants—that's safe and effective. It kills the bugs instantly and won't hurt the plant.

And that brings us to the end of this chapter.

Cleaning isn't just about appearances. It's about presence.

When you dust, vacuum, polish, and freshen the air, you're not just maintaining a building—you're restoring its soul. Every surface remembers the care you give it. Every room carries the fingerprint of your effort. You might think no one notices, but they do. People walk into a clean room and breathe easier. They feel lighter, more focused, more peaceful.

That's what true janitorial work does—it heals the invisible.

The greatest compliment you'll ever get is silence. Not words. Not applause. Just the quiet sense that people walk into the building and *feel good*. That's when you know you've done your job.

So when you clean, clean with pride. Clean with excellence. Clean like you're erasing yesterday and preparing the world for tomorrow.

And above all—make it sparkle!

Chapter Eight — The Hidden Ministry

There is a work beneath the work—an unseen duty braided into every sweep and spray, every key turned and light switched off. Call it a priesthood of the ordinary. Call it a ministry without microphone or stage. I have come to believe that janitorial labor, done in secret unto the Lord, becomes intercession with a mop in its hands. It is the old story of hidden seed—buried, watered, forgotten, and then, in God’s time, revealed. “Thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:6, KJV). That promise does not need to be loud to be true. It only needs to be lived.

Most nights, when the building is honest—when the corridors stop pretending and the rooms breathe out the day—I take off my shoes at the end. The act is simple, but it is not small. I remember how the Lord spoke to Moses: “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5, KJV). Yes, it was holy ground because God was there; but I have come to know another kindness in the command. Bare feet are reverent, and they are also comfortable. The Lord was not only sanctifying that moment; He was making room for conversation. Sandals off, stone cool beneath the skin, no need to pretend strength. Just presence. Just God and a man who would be sent.

So after work, off-the-clock, I walk the hallway in socked feet, not to make a spectacle, but to make a sanctuary. At each door I pause, and I pray—quietly, deliberately, like placing a hand upon the lintel and tracing a blessing over unseen people. I pray for their families, their clients, their patients, their peace. I ask for wisdom for the decisions they’ll make tomorrow, and for strength to carry the burdens I will never see. And I add, as often as I remember, a request that tastes like childlike faith: “O God, may You grant such-and-such office a delightful miracle that wouldn’t have otherwise happened had I not asked right now.” I do not sign my name to what follows. I do not look for evidence. I will find out in eternity, and that will be enough.

There is a way to sweep that says, “I was here.” There is another way to sweep that says, “He is here.” The second is the aim. “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” (Colossians 3:23, KJV). Floors cleaned for the Lord are not merely clean; they are consecrated. Trash removed in love becomes an offering—one part service, one part silence. Even the bag cinched and carried down the quiet stair is a kind of prayer: Lord, take what is no longer needed; make room for what gives life. This is not metaphor to me; it is method. The broom can preach if the hand that holds it is humble.

Humility is the key that opens every lock in this calling. The building does not need my name; it needs my knees. “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” (Philippians 2:3, KJV). Lowliness does not mean timidity. It means love takes the lowest place and finds the Lord already seated there. It means the first work of every night is the hidden one—checking my heart for resentment, annoyance, hurry, pride. If I am to ask God for miracles at each threshold, I must not drag a spirit of complaint from one room to the next. The bucket does not sanctify the water; the heart does.

Time is a strange companion in this line of work. Some nights it seems to race ahead, mocking you with ticking hands and hurried minutes; other nights it waits quietly, like a faithful friend holding the door open until you’re done. I’ve learned that the clock is not my enemy—it only becomes one when I let impatience drive me. When I feel rushed, I pause. I slow my breathing, move with intention, and in that stillness the seconds begin to stretch, like the world is giving me room to finish well. It’s a small miracle that the slower I go, the faster the work seems to end. There’s peace hidden inside patience; and when you find it, even the ticking clock begins to sound like praise.

My “secret priesthood” is not a title; it is obedience in small things. It is wiping a fingerprint from glass as if I’m touching a soul. It is noticing the faint scent of a waiting room and deciding it should whisper welcome, not fatigue. It is choosing to believe that the Lord walks where I walk and listens where I listen, so I listen more. It is the courage to do the last pass after the last pass, not because someone will see,

but because Someone always does. Night by night, this becomes a rule of life: to bless without being observed; to intercede without being thanked; to serve without conclusion.

I have learned to bless the rooms not only in words, but in atmospheres. Open blinds just a little so the morning knows the way in. Align the chairs so conversations can begin without friction. Leave a note when a note helps, and leave silence when silence heals. Pray for prosperity without embarrassment, because prosperity in honest hands employs families and funds good work. Pray for satisfaction in the building, because contentment nourishes peace. Pray for favor, because favor opens doors I cannot. Then wipe the counter as if the prayer is settling into the grain.

Some will ask, “But what comes of all these prayers?” I will not know here, and that is part of the holiness. Faith tends the roots and lets God decide the harvest. I have my assignment: to pray; to labor; to leave the corridors better than I found them—cleaner, yes, but also kinder. The outcome is covenant territory, where the Lord reserves His sovereign right to surprise the faithful. If there is a ledger, it is in His hand, and His hand is generous.

The ritual remains steady and unremarkable to anyone watching—which is to say, it is perfect. Shoes off. Hall light softened. The building exhales. Door by door, the litany:

Bless this office, Lord—its work, its workers, its weary. Visit them with a mercy they did not know to request. Give breakthroughs where there have been blockages. Give laughter where there has been strain. Give a “delightful miracle,” a gift with Your fingerprints on it, that would not have been given had I not stood here and asked.

I move on, not to collect proof but to keep faith. I do not measure the sacred by what I feel; I measure it by Who was invited. The most ordinary rooms become sanctuaries when the Holy Spirit is welcomed to pass through before the day begins.

And then, the benediction that is also a craft: the final walk-through. Check the corners. Listen for the faint hum that shouldn't be humming. Test the doors—once, then again—because stewardship is a prayer in the language of diligence. Return the cart to its closet as if returning the Ark to its place, not because it is holy in itself, but because order honors the God of order. “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” (1 Corinthians 14:33, KJV). Peace looks, at midnight, like a lobby that breathes serenity and a hallway that keeps its promises.

To my fellow janitors, custodians, caretakers of places and people: may you discover the joy of the hidden ministry. May you learn the weight of quiet authority—the kind that does not command, yet changes rooms. May your nightly routes become liturgies; your tools, instruments; your faithfulness, a door through which the Lord passes to visit those you serve. The world will not notice what heaven remembers. But heaven remembers.

I end as I began: with shoes in hand, heart at rest, and a small prayer on my lips for every soul who will cross this threshold tomorrow. Let the miracle be delightful, Lord. Let the work be blessed. Let the building shine.

Now the last light. The hush returns. I turn the key and tug to feel the certain catch. I test each handle down the line—locked, locked, locked. The alarm arms with its familiar, faithful tone. I step into the night air, and it greets me like a psalm. The work is finished for today; the ministry is not. I go home satisfied, quietly triumphant, hopeful enough to do it all again, and—God willing—better.

Every janitor has a line that should not be crossed—a sacred threshold between “the normal mess of mankind” and “why, Lord, why?” You can mop up footprints, you can handle overflowing trash cans, but every once in a while something happens in that restroom or breakroom that tests the very limits of your faith in humanity.

Let's start with my number one spiritual trial: **spitting in the urinal**.

Now listen, I get it—you've got something in your mouth. You don't want to swallow it. But why, in the name of all things sanitary, must you hock it right into the urinal like you're making a down payment on the plumbing? You know that little plastic screen sitting there? That thing's supposed to catch minty freshness, not DNA samples. When I walk in later and see a glob of spittle slowly floating like a lonely jellyfish trapped under a lemon-scented reef, my soul cries out. I've had to actually *wipe* the urinal screen with a disinfectant towel, eye to eye with the offender's ghost.

If janitors had a Ten Commandments, “Thou shalt not spit in the urinal” would be right under “Thou shalt not pee on the floor.”

And speaking of commandments—let's talk about **flushing**.

You wouldn't believe how many people just... walk away. Like it's somebody else's problem. Newsflash: it *is* somebody else's problem—me! So, I decided to fight back the only way I knew how: comedy. I made a little sticker that looked like a Las Vegas slot machine and put it above the urinal. It said: “*Maximum payout: \$20,000 for a Royal Flush!*”

Now, you'd be amazed. People actually started flushing. I'd hear it down the hall—*whoosh!*—like they were pulling a jackpot lever. Humor works, folks. It's the janitor's last defense against despair.

But then... there's *that other thing*. The unholy abomination. The one that makes me question the entire public education system.

Let's talk about **poopy toilet paper in the women's sanitary disposal**.

I shouldn't have to say this. This is America. We have toilets. We've perfected the flush. Other nations envy our plumbing. Yet, somehow, some women think that little metal box beside the toilet is a catch-all for everything that has ever left the human

body. No, ma'am. That box is for one very specific type of item, and it's not *that*. And when you open that lid expecting maybe a dainty wrapper or two, and instead are greeted with a horror that belongs in a medieval dungeon, you question your calling. You look up and say, "Lord, if this cup may pass from me..." But He doesn't let it pass. He lets you clean it. Because this, my friend, is sanctification through bleach.

But here's the truth underneath the laughter: every janitor has their pet peeves because we *care*.

We care about decency, about order, about civilization itself not collapsing into chaos. We're the last line between tidy harmony and total bathroom anarchy. And if we don't laugh about it, we'll lose our minds.

So, to my fellow janitors across the land—laugh. Laugh loud. Laugh while you mop, while you plunge, while you replace the mysterious urinal screen that has seen too much. Because laughter disinfects the soul better than Lysol ever could.

And next time you catch yourself getting angry about some ridiculous human habit—remember: every mop has its cross to bear.

(Appendix: Things Left Unmopped)

There are always a few corners left untouched, even after the best cleaning. The mop has its reach, the rag its limits, and the janitor his time. So this is the part I couldn't quite fit into the main book—not because it didn't belong, but because it lingered in the quiet places between paragraphs. These are the things left unmopped.

On Sacred Privacy and the Moral Duty of Trash

If the floors and mirrors are the body of a building, then the trash is its memory. It is the most intimate, unguarded part of human life—the evidence of what people wish forgotten. Inside a trash can are the confessions of a day: old receipts, coffee cups, wrappers from rushed lunches, the torn corner of a note never sent. These things tell stories more honestly than words ever do.

That is why a janitor must treat trash as sacred. It is not ours to interpret, nor to expose. When someone throws something away, they are entrusting it to silence. And we, the silent ones, are bound by honor to protect that trust. If ever the Lord gave a profession that practices discretion daily, it is ours. We handle the refuse of the world and must never become refuse ourselves.

I have seen in a bag of trash the faint dignity of a person who tried. A coffee cup with encouraging words scribbled on it. A child's drawing folded and thrown away but not forgotten by God. So I throw it out with gentleness. Because there is holiness even in disposal. Every trash bag tied with care becomes a small funeral for what once served its purpose. The world moves on, but I linger just long enough to say, "Thank you for what you were."

On Time, Patience, and the Clock

There's a peculiar law in janitorial work: the slower you go, the faster you finish. It makes no logical sense, yet it's true. Hurry scatters. Patience gathers.

When you rush, time becomes your adversary. Every tick of the clock feels like judgment. But when you slow down—intentionally, prayerfully—the seconds seem to stretch open like a door, and suddenly there’s enough. Enough time to breathe, enough time to notice, enough time to do the job right.

I’ve tested this many nights. When I felt behind, I would stop, breathe, and deliberately move slower. Almost miraculously, the work caught up to me. The building itself seemed to relax. The vacuum hums steadier, the mop glides easier, and even the clock seems to forget to count.

It’s a paradox, but it’s also a spiritual truth: time bends for the patient. The Lord Himself moves unhurried and still accomplishes all. Maybe what we call time is just the world’s way of measuring faith.

The impatient man ages quickly. The patient man grows wise. To him, the minutes become companions instead of tyrants. When you learn to master your own tempo, you discover the eternal in the ordinary.

So when I say “the more patience you have, the more time you have,” I mean it literally. Patience rewrites the rhythm of the night. It grants you ownership of every moment instead of slavery to it.

On What Was Left Unsaid

Some things never made it into the chapters—perhaps because they’re still being written in my life. I could have written more about the senses of the building: how its sounds reveal its health, how its scent betrays its mood, how the temperature of a room can whisper whether peace or tension lives there. I could have written about the unspoken relationships between the janitor and the unseen—the Lord, the angels, the lingering spirits of those who once passed through these halls. But maybe that’s for another time.

I could have written about how baking soda feels like prayer powder, absorbing the day’s heaviness and leaving behind lightness that can’t be seen but can be felt. Or

about how every doorknob I polish feels like I'm shining a small sun that someone else will soon grasp without knowing why it feels hopeful. But to explain these things too fully might remove their mystery, and janitors live by mystery.

The Blessing, the Laughter, and the Quiet Farewell

If you've read this far, you already understand that cleaning is not just about mops and mirrors—it's about mercy. Still, I hope you also found room to laugh. Because without laughter, holiness becomes heavy, and holiness is meant to be light.

Laughter, prayer, and patience are all detergents of the soul. They cleanse what neither bleach nor broom can touch.

So here is my blessing:

May you find joy in the unseen things.

May your patience stretch your time.

May your secret labors become your loudest prayers.

May your work sparkle, not for applause, but for peace.

And when the lights go out and the last door is locked, may you hear, as I sometimes do, the building whisper back—thank you.

Then, laugh softly to yourself, nod toward heaven, and step into the night.

Because though the shift is over, the ministry goes on.