There I was, crouched in my garden, picking habaneras, when I noticed it - an ant, crawling innocently up the stalk towards a leaf, unaware of the small wolf spider that was perched just above and behind it, watching with spider-y evil intent.

And as the ant reached the leaf, pow-zam! The wolf spider danced down the stalk and had the poor insect in its grip in what seemed an instant. A bite, a flurry of moving legs, and the ant was incapacitated, poisoned, cocooned, and ready for dinner.

The death of this ant is a metaphor for the Browns-Bears preseason game.

Who cares about the passing of a single ant? Well, the ant, I guess. And maybe its family, if it has a little ant wife and ant kids waiting back home for daddy to walk in with a juicy habanera chunk, a walk he will never make.

And who cares about the 4th preseason game? Well, the players, I guess. And maybe their agents and girlfriends and jewelry store creditors.

But that's really about it. 'Tis meaningless in the grand scope of things.

So I'll not bother you with a recap regarding this particular dead ant of the sporting world.

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Stats

Dead ant, dead ant, dead ant dead ant dead ant dead ant dead aaaannnnnnnnnt.

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Game Balls

Craig Robertson - Quick, active, really interesting player.

Josh Cribbs - I stated a couple weeks ago that if Cribbs were to make the roster, he'd have to do it via his value at WR since he may now lack the speed to be an elite returner. He showed again this week that he does have enough value at that position to warrant a roster spot (and more field time).

Adonis Thomas - Got an honorable mention for his running and receiving, got the game ball for his blocking efforts for Lewis late in the game. Please please please make the Practice Squad.

Brandon Jackson - I completely retract my statement from last week that you might be the odd RB out. That should've been Hardesty.

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Honorable Mention

Emmanuel Stephens - Improved run defense, does seem to get quality penetration.

Johnson Bademosi - Made some more plays this week.

Trevin Wade - Helluva find. Even when he got beat on the TD, he had good coverage.

LJ Fort - Aggressive and effective play. Along with Robertson, part of an exciting, quick group of Linebackers that will most assuredly suffer growing pains this year.

Brian Schaefering - Not sure why he got cut, was nothing but solid all throughout the Preseason.

Tashaun Gipson- A pick and some nice hard hits, outplayed David Sims in this one (and got himself a roster spot for his troubles).

Hall of Shame

Colt McCoy - This game further evidenced his weaknesses and the reason that he has now entered the likely permanent "backup" stage of his career. But even his pick was a better thrown ball than almost anything he tossed last year, so I think he probably deserves his roster spot.

Josh Gordon - I thought you were supposed to have good hands?

Thad Lewis - Missed way too many open receivers.

James-Michael Johnson - For getting hurt. You're not allowed to get hurt. Why do you disobey?

Jeff Shugarts - Almost got Thad Lewis killed by whiffing on a block during his time at LT.

Pat Shurmur - You impersonating "the angry coach" still doesn't give me the impression that you're doing a better job.

Special Teams - Sloppy, horrible play. Just freakin' ugly.

Chris Tabor - You are the coach of that squad. And why are you test-driving Rod Windsor on the punt team when he's never played that before and his failure could get your starting Punter injured?

Rod Windsor - I don't care if you've never done that before in live action or not - you don't get pushed around like that.

Oniel Cousins - He's still here.

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Regarding The Cuts

The following gentlemen were waived or had their contracts terminated:

Evan Moore, TE; Seneca Wallace, QB; Dominic Alford, OL; Ronnie Cameron, DL; Josh Cooper, WR; Stanley Daniels, OL; James Dockery, DB; Garth Gerhart, OL; William Green, DL; Dan Gronkowski, TE; Benjamin Jacobs, LB; Ernest Owusu, DL; Brian Schaefering, DL; Jarrod Shaw, OL; Jeff Shugarts, OL; Brad Smelley, FB; Quinton Spears, LB; Adonis Thomas, RB; Kiante Tripp, DL; Rod Windsor, WR.

In addition, David Sims, S, was traded to Philly for a conditional pick and Scott Fujita was added to the Suspended list.

That means that the following bubble folks kept their jobs - at least for today:

Johnson Bademosi, CB; Oniel Cousins, Useless; LJ Fort, LB; Tashaun Gipson, S; John Greco, OL; Montario Hardesty, RB; Chris Ogbonnaya, RB; Scott Paxson, DL; Craig Robertson, LB; Brian Sanford, DL; Alex Smith, TE; Emmanuel Stephens, DE; Ray Ventrone, S; Usama Young, S.

Likely Practice Squad candidates are:

Ronnie Cameron, Josh Cooper, Garth Gerhart, Ernest Owusu, Brad Smelley, Adonis Thomas, and Kiante Tripp.

I was somewhat surprised by Paxson & Sanford over Schaefering & Cameron. And a little disappointed that it was Adonis Thomas - not Montario Hardesy - that was not included in the 4 man RB committee that will consist of Trent Richardson, Jackson, Hardesty, and Ogbonnaya (in that order). I felt Thomas offered a different dimension in the screen and short passing game, something that would make them a little more dangerous than Richardson and 3 guys that have similar qualities and are really unremarkable otherwise.

But since the Browns don't run screens, I suppose it's no big whoop.

I think a lot of people were holding a candle for Smelley because, well, he wasn't Owned Marecic. Which I can kind of see, but let's be honest, Smelley was probably a worse lead blocker than even the Big M. A better Receiver, sure, but you can't expect Heckert to go torpedoing his early to mid round picks, can you? That would be admitting error.

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Regarding The Future

The season is a long road, and one never knows what they'll see there. When looking at the Browns prospects for the 2012 season, I will gladly disregard their non-divisional schedule since that is such a crapshoot. But I cannot disregard their divisional opponents, which even if one falls by the wayside will still comprise a serious challenge.

This team is young. The QB is a rookie. Their star RB is of questionable health. Their WR's are an enigma wrapped in a mystery wrapped in a gordita. The line - on paper - should be good, but they haven't looked it. The Defense appears fast, but is also young, inexperienced, and doesn't show a solid ability to pressure the QB.

It doesn't bode well, at least not for the early part of the season.

I've been calling this a 6 win team all along, mainly since they were a 4 win team a season ago with many many winnable losses and they - on paper - improved at some key positions. But the illogical WoeIsMe in my head wants to stomp my feet and cry and claim that 3 wins would be a miracle.

I'll stick with 6.

There's a huge contingent of whipped curs out there (a nice tie-in for our "Dawgs" moniker) that will call 6 wins "wildly, irresponsibly optimistic". OK. That's fine. I can certainly see this team winning 3. I can even see them winning 1. But I still maintain that the Fake Game 2 optimism being replaced by Fake Game 3 sky-is-falling is reactionary to the point of self-pity.

I know many of you don't want to hear this because you're too busy shopping for reserve tear ducts, but there are plenty of bad teams out there, and Cleveland very likely won't be the worst.

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Regarding Whatever

***If you're a guy likely to get cut anyway, getting a season-ending injury in the 4th preseason game is like getting shot in the buttcheek during a war. Instead of getting cut, they often stash you on IR. It's a half-million dollar wound.

***I'm a little surprised that the Browns ended up keeping McCoy over Wallace. Yes, McCoy is slightly better, but it's highly debatable if he's worth the drama, the fan chanting, the inevitable Mary Kay Cabot fluff pieces (she was touting they should trade him for a 3rd round pick, as if

you could get that for 2 Colt McCoys and an autographed copy of the White Album).

For so many reasons, let's hope Weeden is decent.

***If they weren't drafted in the 2nd and 3rd round just 2 years ago by Tom Heckert, I think both McCoy and Hardesty would be out. As it is, Heckert certainly doesn't want to show new management that he made such mistakes on such high picks.

***Tyler Clutts is just so clearly better than Owned Marecic. Too bad he got traded to Houston. I'm sure Heckert regrets letting him slip through his fingers.

***The Browns were able to trade David Sims, who quite possibly might not have made the roster anyway, to the Eagles for a conditional pick. Sims made some plays, sure, but let us not forget that that Pick 6 he had only happened because the Receiver fell down. Otherwise, WR catches it and it's Sims fault. This is a win, people. Swapping an undrafted bubble player for a draft pick is a GOOD thing.

Only in Cleveland do we bemoan the loss of a marginal Safety like he's Troy Polamalu.

***Despite his poor punt blocking, I hope Rod Windsor catches on somewhere. He played well enough to make someone's roster.