The Steelers won the Superbowl. No matter how much I pinch myself, there is no waking up from this nightmare.

Within the last 6 years, both the Steelers and the Ravens have won Superbowls. And people in NE Ohio still go to church on Sundays! I don't get it. That's like thanking your doctor for being extra-rough during a prostate exam. Personally, I prefer to worship only those that have brought me happiness over the course of time (my deity *du jour* is Jim Tressel). But in my NFL universe, the demons reign supreme, diddling their toothless sisters whilst twirling their yeller hankies.

And now the far-reaching ill effects of this travesty are being felt in my own home.

I fear for my children.

My ex-wife and I divorced in early November. She had some flaws (and by " *some*
" I mean "
squadrons
"). But at least I could say that she was a Browns fan. Her parents are Browns fans. She grew up a Browns fan. The entire time I courted, dated, lived with, and was married to her – she was a Browns fan. We co-habitated for 8 years, so by the end of our tenure, she was so inundated with Browns rhetoric that she must have known the entire 2001 backup offensive line by osmosis. Our

two children were both brought home from the hospital in Browns onesies, for Tressel's sake.

Shortly after the divorce was final, she started dating again. And her morals have obviously sunk to the point where she could settle for a Steelers fan. Hey, if that’s all you can get, then you have my pity. I myself prefer to date individuals that bathe, but que sera sera.

Little did I know...

5 pm - Sunday, February 5th 2006: The Ex shows up at my domicile to get the children for the night. She is taking them to a kid-friendly Superbowl party. She is meeting her boyfriend there.

She is wearing a Steelers sweatshirt.

I gag on my cerveza. "What the hell is that?" I ask.

Boyfriend is a Steelers fan, she replies.

"But you are a Browns fan!" I screech. "No Browns fan roots for the Steelers **ever**, asterisk, unless they are playing the Ravens, and then they just root for everyone on the field to die!"

Silence. Even the ball boys?, she asks.

"Yes, even the ball boys!"

But this is like trying to explain molecular genetics to a fish. Broad never was very bright. She doesn't seem to grasp why her past Browns affiliation should have any effect on her current Steelers affiliation. She just doesn't want her boyfriend to get mad. Broad always was a follower of whatever anyone else told her. I once convinced her that vampires were real.

(Sadly, that is not a joke.)

Knowing her, it is only a matter of time before she's knitting "*One For The Thumb*" throw pillows and darning black 'n' yeller puppy socks. She'll cook
Terry Bradshaw Meatloaf
and
Hines Ward Pork Chops
. My girls will be wearing
Big Ben Knows What Time It Is
T-shirts when I pick them up from daycare.

And this is the crux of my fear.

Honestly, I am ambivalent about what the Ex does. She could convert to a radical Islamic movement and help rob a bank with a machine gun for all I care. But my children are involved.

They spend half their time with this spineless bimbo. They are young, both pre-K. They are impressionable, unformed. What is to become of them if they spend excessive time with Mommy Steelers Fan and her anally-born boyfriend?

I have dreams for my girls. Now, they are being dashed before my eyes. Instead of graduating from Brown, they'll be failing out of Harold's Big School of Tractor Repair. Now instead of climbing Mt. Everest, they'll be climbing Yinzer Hill to admire the strip mine while picking at their navel lint. I'll be walking them down the aisle at the *Wal-Mart Drive-In Chapel* when they turn 15 because they're pregnant again and at least this guy's not in jail (at least she thinks it might be his). My grandchildren will have three ears and an extra foot growing out of their shoulder. My Father's Day cards will reek of Iron City Beer.

The destiny of my children is now in serious jeopardy. Each night I pray to Tressel to save my poor daughters. I am afraid.

The Steelers Superbowl victory was not just a terribly played

and officiated game, the kind of horribly unsatisfying travesty that is unworthy of a preseason contest played in Japan, much less the championship game of the country's premiere sport. It was worse - oh - much, much worse. It may have long term effects on an entire generation of children, twisting and dementing these poor innocents like mercury in their corn flakes. Left and right, our youth will be corrupted into piteously grotesque shadows of their former selves.

And these children will someday grow up to rule the world.

Weep for the future.