In Cassano's latest, he analyzes the ramifications of the season ending injury to LeCharles Bentley, and also examines the curse that seems to be hanging over this town. A somber but solid read, as Browns fans look to recoup and recover from this latest shocking blow this morning.

Visit the Papa Cass weblog at http://papacass.blogspot.com/

It appears LeCharles Bentley has ruptured the patellar tendon in his left knee. Bye bye 2006 season. Bye bye ability to stop teams like the Steelers and Ravens from relentlessly blitzing up the middle. Bye bye Charlie Frye in the pocket. Bye bye effective between-the-tackles running game.

With this loss, the Browns are now dramatically downgraded from possible fringe playoff contender to likely AFC dreg. Only the loss of Charlie Frye would have hurt this offense more.

The onus is now on the defense to pickup the slack for what is a mortally wounded offensive unit.

And to think, we still have two weeks of training camp and four exhibition games to go before the season even begins. Plenty of time for the freak injuries to mount. Plenty of time for Frye to break something.

I've noticed something about this curse we have hanging around town. When it comes to the Indians and Cavaliers, the curse toys with us. It dangles the carrot, then yanks it away. Its methods of torment are far more cerebral.

The Indians are riding high in 2005, in the gutter in 2006. We get to wait on pins and needles for a week while LeBron says nothing about his contract extension, then when he finally does sign, it's for fewer years than was offered.

That kind of torture is the equivalent of captors who kick in the cell door at all hours of the day and night for sporadic interrogation sessions, trying to disrupt the prisoner's sense of routine and normalcy.

With the Browns, the torture is far more straightforward and savage, like frequent floggings. Most of the time it comes in the form of severe injuries (Bentley, Braylon Edwards) or team leaders who appear to be losing their grip on sanity (Butch Davis, John Collins).

To use a nature documentary analogy, when it comes to the Indians and Cavs, the curse toys with us the way a cat toys with a mouse before it moves in for the kill, pawing at it and harassing it.

With the Browns, the curse strikes like a snake eating an unfortuate rodent. It clamps on our throats before we even have a chance to hope and waits for the life to quickly wriggle out of every season before it even starts.

We thought the Browns' productive offseason was a harbinger of better things to come. But in Cleveland, "better things to come" is just surviving to play next week.