If there was a silver lining in Cleveland's 111-87 loss to the Miami Heat at the Q on Friday night, it was this: if you had weekend plans, they needn't have been delayed by seeing this game all the way through. For all intents and purposes it was over three-and-a-half minutes in, as the visiting Heat burst out to an 11-0 lead and was never threatened afterward in moving to 24-7 with their fifth consecutive victory, all on the road and all by double digits. Cleveland, losers of three of four, fell to 11-17 on the season.

Miami, one of the best defensive teams in the NBA, set the tone immediately by suffocating the Cavaliers right from the tip. Cleveland missed its first six shots, committed two early turnovers and didn't get the ball into the basket until nearly four minutes had expired. That bucket, a short hook by Semih Erden, made it 11-2. The Heat promptly took off on a 10-0 run to make it 21-2 with 5:20 left, and viewers were free to turn the channel, head down to the bar or do whatever it is people do when they're not watching the Cavaliers get curb-stomped at home.

The Heat isn't just proficient at stopping people, though. They're also the highest-scoring team in the Association and they rained firepower down on the Cavaliers Friday night, particularly from long range. Miami ripped cord to the tune of 14-of-21 from three-point territory, a grim flashback to the grim 2010-11 season when Cleveland couldn't guard anyone from downtown. Mario Chalmers was the crucial triggerman; the Alaskan hit 4-of-6 from beyond the arc including several daggers during the decisive first half.

Leading the way overall was LeBron James, who once again showed why he's the most gifted player in the world… especially when he's up against a bad opponent in February. LeBron bullied his former team for a game-high 28, including a gratuitous 16 in the third period as Miami stretched its lead as many as 34. Preening, strutting and alley oop-dunking, stuffing Kyrie Irving's layup attempt and bombing up heat-checks with Cleveland hopelessly beaten, LeBron was right in his comfort zone.

Dwayne Wade chipped in with 22 points on ten shots, an efficient offensive performance augmented by his constant harassment of Alonzo Gee on the other end; Gee, the homeless man's Corey Maggett, attempted to draw shooting fouls on Wade all night and wound up with a 4-of-14 night. Chris Bosh added 16 points and 12 rebounds, Chalmers struck for 14 and Cleveland State's Norris Cole (shorn of his flattop) tallied 10 off the bench. With Anderson Varejao in street clothes, the Heat whacked the Cavaliers 44-35 on the boards.

While Miami did pretty much whatever it wanted, Cleveland was simply stifled. The Cavaliers shot 39.5 percent, but it's hard to say they actually played poorly; easy to say they were just overmatched by what is almost certainly the best team in basketball right now. Miami has won five straight on the road by an average margin of 18.8 points and has embarrassed likely playoff qualifiers Atlanta and Indiana on this trip. Kyrie Irving led the Cavaliers with 17 points but shot just 5-of-15. Tristan Thompson had 12 points and 6 rebounds (I was going to call them "garbage-time numbers" until I realized the entire game consisted of garbage time.)

Anyway...

Seemingly overshadowing the entire occasion was LeBron's comments Thursday about possibly coming back to Cleveland at some point in the future. The airwaves and forums were abuzz Friday: just the way the kid from Akron wants it.

Would I "take him back?" (As if I have a say in the matter.) Hell yes. I'm sure I said otherwise right after Game Five. I don't care. Of course I'd like him to return in, say, 2014-PARTICULARLY if he wins a ring or two in Miami. If we're just talking here, I'd rather have a LeBron who knows how to win it all than this Greg Norman version that's emerged in the last few years. Cleveland won't be a title contender any time soon, so what the hell?

Yeah, he's obnoxious, impossibly vain and has been awful in some very big games the last two seasons. But it's not as if he's killed anyone. I don't think there was malice in the way he chose to make his exit; just a massive amount of obtuseness, a miscalculation that has not turned out very well for him.

Adrian Wojnarowski's latest jeremiad stated that LeBron never wanted to be hated in Cleveland . I find that very easy to believe. I don't think LeBron wants to be hated anywhere. This is no Laimbeer or Barkley, relishing the booing of road crowds. LeBron wants to hear oohs and ah's, not chants of derision.

And this is his home, after all. He isn't Bernie, the man of the people, but he's as Akron as WNIR and Swenson's. (I'm talking about the Old Western Reserve in general; not Cleveland in particular.)You think he wants to spend his summers in freaking Miami? He wants to post up on his big-ass spread out in Bath Township and listen to the cicadas. It's a nice place to live for him; he just didn't want to play here. That doesn't mean he ever wanted to be vilified and mocked here, though. Not in his home.

Do I think he would really come back? Ah, who the **** knows with this drama queen. It is kind of fun to talk about it, though.

Would Dan Gilbert go for it? Does the Pope poop in the woods? He'd meet LeBron halfway at least. Man didn't get rich by turning down money.

Next: Sunday at 6:00 when possible relief arrives in the form of the 10-20 Sacramento Kings, losers of four straight.