Seldom in the world of baseball does the dismissal of a bullpen coach make waves of any kind. Compared to the guys in the dugout and on the field, it's not a high-profile position. Some casual baseball fans might not even know who the bullpen coach of their team is. But then there's the curious case of the Cleveland Indians and the man who was their bullpen coach up until this week, Luis Isaac. Erik Cassano talks about his recent firing in his latest.

Seldom in the world of baseball does the dismissal of a bullpen coach make waves of any kind. Bullpen coaches are stationed somewhere behind the outfield wall during games at many ballparks. Compared to the guys in the dugout and on the field, it's not a high-profile position. Some casual baseball fans might not even know who the bullpen coach of their team is.

But then there's the curious case of the Cleveland Indians and the man who was their bullpen coach up until this week, Luis Isaac.

Tribe fans don't get the press that other famously-devoted fan bases, like those of the Red Sox and Cubs, receive -- but they can be every but as obsessive-compulsive. Combine that with a bullpen coach who was employed in some fashion by the Indians for 44 years, a coach who became linked to the beloved 1995 team by serving as mentor and interpreter for the likes of Julian Tavarez
and Jose Mesa, and you have a uncommonly-close bond between a fan base and its uncommonly-famous bullpen coach.

So it wasn't much of a surprise that Isaac's firing was met with flame and fume from fans, directed at Eric Wedge and Mark Shapiro, a manager-GM tandem known for preferring subordinates who toe the company line.

At least one report says it's possible Isaac might have been viewed by Wedge and pitching coach Carl Willis as a disruptive force in the club's rank and file, if not an outright threat to authority. Some Latin pitchers, in particular, might have circumvented Willis' tutelage to seek advice from Isaac.

That's speculation for now, but it's easy to envision a Latin pitcher such as Fausto Carmona
, Rafael Perez or Rafael
Betancourt
seeking advice from Isaac, not because they don't trust Willis, but because Isaac is a native Spanish-speaker like them, a coach who has been in the game for decades and is well-respected. It's not too much of a stretch to think that Isaac could become something of a father figure to young Latin American ballplayers getting used to life in a new country and culture.

It would be a shame if Isaac was dismissed just because he was disturbing the organizational flow chart. But it's the Indians, after all. When your team is run by lawyers and MBAs, it does tend to take on a corporate flavor.

Wedge's words on the matter say little.

"I thought we needed a different dynamic in that role. It's something I thought about for a long time," Wedge told reporters.

The phrase "different dynamic" sounds almost sinister in its corporate-speak vagueness. It's left to the reader to decide what Wedge means. Does he mean a younger coach with fresh ideas? Does he mean a company yes-man from the minor leagues? Does he mean a guy who will say "Ask Carl" every time a pitcher comes to him for advice?

Maybe Wedge wants a bullpen coach who catches warm-up pitches, obeys his superiors and keeps his mouth shut otherwise. Maybe Wedge is that much of a control freak. But, as in most conflicts, there are two sides to every story. So if we're going to speculate about all the ways Wedge, Shapiro and Willis might be the bad guys here, we have to at least consider Isaac's culpability.

Perhaps Isaac developed a case of lone-wolf syndrome sitting in the bullpen every game, detached from most of the other coaches. Maybe the bullpen had become his domain, the pitchers within became his subjects and he didn't want Wedge and the dugout crew getting too involved with how he ran things behind the center field fence. If that's the case, Wedge would be more justified in taking a hardline stance.

It's not unrealistic considering that Isaac was the bullpen coach for Mike Hargrove

, Charlie Manuel and Joel Skinner before Wedge came aboard. If Isaac had developed an "I was here before you and I'll be here after you" mentality, that could have been potentially damaging to the team.

It's also possible that all the perceived backstage bickering is just the product of our overactive imaginations as fans and media members, and Wedge just wanted someone new. It's not like the Indians didn't get enough mileage out of Isaac's coaching career. When a guy has been with an organization for more than four decades, more that 30 years of which he spent coaching, maybe it's just time for a change.

It's a shame Isaac's Indians tenure came to such an unceremonious end, at the hands of a manager who is already on thin ice with regard to fan acceptance, a manager already known for hanging "uncoachable" tags on Brandon Phillips and Milton Bradley, and having them shipped elsewhere.

In that light, the firing of Isaac looks like another Orwellian move by Wedge, an attempt to surgically remove free thinkers and replace them with easily-governed robots in his dystopian clubhouse society. But chances are, Wedge is far more practical than that.

Assistant coaches get hired and fired all the time. No one gets into professional coaching for the job security. What makes Isaac's dismissal different is that he vastly beat the odds, stayed employed by the same team for 44 years and became a high-profile bullpen coach -- which is an oxymoron in 99 percent of baseball.

Perhaps the fact that many Tribe fans are outraged by Isaac's dismissal is one of the greatest tributes that he could be paid. It means we have recognized him as something of an institution in Cleveland.

For a guy who has spent his summers with pads strapped to his shins, kneeling in dirt, catching practice pitches while concealed behind a door in the outfield fence, it is the most unlikely of outcomes.