The Indians play as of late is seriously testing Buff and his emotional attachment to this team. That much is obvious from reading today's B-List. Buff also gives his thoughts on Jim Thome, and his once favorite player ... Cliff Lee. And it wouldn't be a B-List without a hysterical shot at someone on the team. Todays? "Todd Hollandsworth is hitting .227, suggesting that he should be a bench player. Or a minor-leaguer. Or a Roto-Rooter man."

*The phrase **tipping point** ... refers to that dramatic moment when something unique becomes common.* - Wikipedia

Permission to treat the witness as hostile, your Honor? - Any random *Law & Order* episode

1) You lost me there

My emotional investment in this team has at best been halved after yesterday's dispirited 11-0 throttling at the hands of Javier Vazquez and the White Sox. There have been too many times this season when the players do things that smack of lack of concentration (baserunning, defense) or effort (Grady to Jhonny this weekend) or fire (yesterday, Kansas City). The team is inertial. The front office is inertial. The coaching is inertial. The ownership is inertial. This team does not appear to sense any urgency or importance or emotional component, and it's hard to be the source while they're the sink. (Google search: source + sink)

I suppose it helps to have some background here: I check the GameCasts of day games obsessively over the course of the workday. I do quick checks of scores and situations when I make an excuse to pass by the room in which my home computer sits, even as my daughter needs has soap in her eye or my older son is smacking the younger one with the cat. I **care**.

Or, I *did*. Tonight, I'll probably flip on ESPN a couple times to check the score (the constant on-screen score is the greatest sports broadcasting invention since instant replay). Probably.

2) Hey, we had one of those!

Jim Thome hit his 450th career home run yesterday by stroking two over the wall. Unlike a lot of Indians fans, I still like Jim Thome. I mean, I want him to suck when he plays the Indians, but that is because I want all White Sox to suck against the Indians. I don't wish ill upon the guy, and to see him recover his form

doesn't bother me personally.
Anyway, Thome has 20 HR and is hitting .297/.429/.674 on the season. I don't think he can end the season at 1.103 OPS, but he's certainly capable of finishing over 1.000. Note that not only did we have one of those, we still do: Travis Hafner's numbers are quite comparable, except that Hafner can actually hit lefties (Thome has a .809 OPS against left-handers).
(On the other hand, with a 1.288 OPS against right-handed pitching, one might suggest that a righty pitching to Thome is foolhardy or retarded.)

3) La, la, la, I can't hear you!

Did you say Cliff Lee pitched yesterday? I didn't notice, la, la, la, I'm not listening, I'm not listening.

I have to admit, he was certainly equitable, giving up a home run to a left-hander (Thome), a right-hander (Konerko), and a fungus (Uribe, hitting .209 after a 2-for-4 outing).

Did I mention that Charlie Spikes was once my Favorite Player?

4) Does that sombrero fit, senor?

Ben Broussard took the coveted Richie Sexson Commemorative Golden Sombrero yesterday, striking out 4 times in 4 plate appearances.

5) How about the pumpkin suit?

I have a picture from my elder son's first

Halloween. At 7 months, he is dressed in an oversized one-piece suit that looks like a pumpkin, replete with the jack-o-lantern face on the front and a little headpiece that looks like a stem.

It is considerably more

attractive that Casey Blake's recent "hitting" streak, which includes four hitless games and a drop from .370 to .329 since May 18. Admittedly, I am biased.

6) Misleading

Statistics 102

Jason Davis has a 3.16 ERA, leading one to imagine that he is a valuable relief pitcher. Well, I suppose he did prevent an 11-0 shellacking from becoming a 14-0

bloodbath. (He struck out three guys to raise his K:BB ratio to 3:1; this could bode well, were he able to come in from the bullpen and get the first two guys he faces out rather than

waiting to settle into a groove.)

7) Perfectly Accurate Statistics 101

Gil Mota has a 5.64 ERA, leading one to imagine that he should be nowhere

near the setup role. This is entirely true. He struck out four guys without yielding a walk, which is good: he gave up a two-run bomb, which is less so. Oh, by the

way, Mota throws right-handed, and Thome hit the bomb. (See item 2)

Todd Hollandsworth is hitting .227, suggesting that he

should be a bench player. Or a minor-leaguer. Or a Roto-Rooter man.

8) Every silver lining surrounds a large black cloud

Let me say, I really appreciate Aaron Boone's effort yesterday. I have bad-mouthed Boone enough in the past and just

finished telling everyone I resent the lack of fire and effort, but Boone really went all-out to try to make a play and suffered a minor

concussion. I hope this remains a minor concern and I can get back to cursing at him, but in the meantime, thanks for the effort, we

noticed, and hope you can shake it off soon. The black cloud is in the form of Lou Merloni, hitting .133 and generally making

Ramon Vazquez look like a major-league ballplayer.