The new software forces me to write an intro that is at least eighty words, or else I would simply show you the iconic photo of the rabbit with a pancake on its head . In fact, the rabbit's name was Oolong, and its owner practised the art of balancing many other objects on its head, such as waffles, tea cups, film cannisters, bread, fruit, and the skeletal remains of Raffy Perez' talent. Why would I talk about Oolong the rabbit? Because even as a rabbit, with a pancake, who is dead, Oolong put up more fight yesterday than the Cleveland Indians.

FINAL

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R

H

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Royals (17-25)

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Indians (15-24)

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W: Hochevar (4-2) L: Talbot (5-3)

In the immortal words of Mark Titus, “I have no immortal words!”

1) Good Morning songs

Sometimes my sons have trouble getting up in the morning, especially when it's still dark outside. The older one takes a "zero hour" class, which actually meets before school starts, so three times a week, he actually has to get up extra early. Truth be told, he's pretty good about getting up now, but there were times in the past when he was not. And the younger son … well, he either jumps up or doesn't move at all. His current medication has "drowsiness" as one of the listed side-effects, but really, once you get him going, he has no trouble.

So, you know, I like to start the day on a positive note: I mean, sure, you can go in and shout, "Get your bleeping bleep out of bed!" or do some sort of ersatz drill sergeant thing and by golly, they'll get out of bed, but they'll think you're insane and will be in a bad mood and who needs that in the morning? Heck, *I* don't like getting up. It's better to start with something light, something cheery, something like … "The Good Morning Song."

My Dad used to sing "The Good Morning Song," which is silly and harmless, although my sister really hated it. Just hated it. She would jump out the window and run to the neighbors and call Child Protective Services and then Dad would sing THEM "The Good Morning Song" and either they'd be sympathetic and sing along and then my sister would have to bury her head in a bucket of sand until they left, or they agreed with her that, yes, "The Good Morning Song" is really something to be avoided and would fine my father $50 and tell him to pick up the garbage at Alice's Restaurant. Anyway, it goes like this:

Good morning, good morning,
You've slept the whole night through,
Good morning, good morning,
To yoooooooooooou

I have since embellished "The Good Morning Song" with a bridge section:

Good morning to your fingers,
Good morning to your toes,

Good morning to your kneecaps,
Good morning to your nose
(repeat original verse)

Any two-syllable body part can be used for the first and third lines, but not many body parts rhyme, so “toes” and “nose” are pretty static. It helps if you grab each body part as you sing it, which becomes especially effective when the two-syllable body part is something like “kidneys” or “ribcage” or “earlobes.” Also, you can change the elongated “yoooooooou” to “you and you and you and you …” while tickling various parts of the ostensibly-sleeping child.

Of course, one can get rather tired of “The Good Morning Song,” so there is the alternative, “Get Out of Bed,” sung to the tune of “Smile, Darn Ya, Smile” from one of the old cartoons back when they were in black and white and everyone sort of bobbed up and down and they hadn’t invented humor yet.

Get out of bed,
You’ve got to get your little body out of bed,
Get out of bed,
You’ve got to get your little body out of bed

There’s a followup, but I can’t remember it right now. The nice thing about this song is that you can change the “little body” to progressively less patient things. For example, on the second time you need to sing, you can change “little body” to “little buttocks.” On the third singing, change “little buttocks” to “stinking carcass.” For my family, this usually causes enough incredulous mirth that the boys get up. One can imagine Rahm Emanuel’s children hearing something a bit more risque’.

Anyway, the next time Mitch Talbot needs to pitch a day game, someone needs to sing him one of these songs, because he pitched like he was still asleep.

2) Dept. of Henny Youngman

So I went to the doctor and said, “Doc! It hurts my stomach when I watch Raffy Perez pitch!” So he says, “Don’t watch him pitch!” (rimshot)

“But Doc!” I said. “Even if I don’t watch, I still read about it in the box score the next morning and it still hurts my stomach!” So he says, “Don’t read the box scores!” (rimshot)

“But Doc!” I said. “I’m a Cleveland Indians fan! I’ve got to find out how they did!” So he says, “Have you considered rooting for a professional baseball team instead?” (rimshot)

So I hit him over the head with his clipboard, stole all his oxycontin and dilaudid, went home and dosed up, passed out, and urinated on myself. I considered this a “net plus.” (rimshot)

3) Elementary statistics for gamblers

When I was a kid, I used to think that while playing the big lottery with the six numbers from 1 to 60 or something like that was pretty impossible to win: I mean, the odds got really big really fast. Even now I can’t realy grasp the odds against winning a Powerball-type lotto drawing, where six numbers from 1 to 60 (for example: I don’t know exactly how many numbers there are) would have raw odds of (1/60)*(1/59)*(1/58)*(1/57)*(1/56)*(1/55), which is about 1 chance in 277,000,000,000, and that’s WITHOUT the “Powerball” option. So if the payoff is anything less than a quarter-trillion dollars, odds are the state is going to make out okay. No, I figured the way to go was the sort of mini-game, where you picked THREE numbers and could win $500.

Well, look, that one should have been easy enough for me to calculate as soon as I could count to 1,000. There are 1,000 three-digit numbers. They are paying out $500 on $1 tickets. They are still making out okay.

And so, if you have the six through nine hitters in your lineup:

.197/.284/.424

.215/.277/.280
.152/.295/.266
.213/.278/.258

What are the chances that they reach base a grand total of zero times? I would have to say, “Pretty damn good.” And that’s what happened.

By the way, the #2 hitter hitting .182/.250/.182? Yeah, he didn’t reach base either, except on a fielder’s choice, so it LOOKS like he had value because he scored a run. Don’t be fooled! He did not.

For the curious, the chances that all four men would not reach base any times in three PA each is actually [(1-.284)(1-.277)*(1-.295)*(1-.278)]^3, or about 1.83%. The chance that none of them would get a hit was about 7.45%. So it was a bit unlikely after all.* ***Surprising, no****. Unlikely, yeah.*

4) Quote of the Day

I think that this situation absolutely requires a really futile … gesture be done on somebody's part.
-- Otter, “Animal House”

Shin-Soo Choo worked a pair of walks off Luke Hochevar. Hochevar walked two hitters, and both were Shin-Soo Choo. Along with a double, Choo reached base three times, stole a base, and scored a run. The Indians had six baserunners total, and half of them were Shin-Soos Choo. (It’s plural, like “attorneys general.”)

Also, Jhonny Peralta hit a two-run homer.

5) The validity of RBI as a measure of offensive value

Jhonny Peralta is third on the Indians with 17 RBI. Luis Valbuena is sixth with 9.

6) Statistics that hurt my eye

Grady Sizemore is 11th on the team in homers. He has zero.

Mark Grudzielanek has 23 hits. He has the same number of extra-base hits as Jason Donald, Steve Buffum, LeBron James, Antipope Clement III, and fictional cartoon character Gumby. In his defense, you can also say he has the same number as all of those people COMBINED.

The bullpen overall has an ERA of 4.35 despite a WHIP of 1.67. Only four players have an ERA higher than this mark, and one is Jamey Wright, whose 5.17 isn't that much higher. A second is in Clumbus (Joe Smiff). The other two are Raffy Perez and Kerry Wood. Perez has a ludicrous 2.73 WHIP: he would have nearly a 1.00 WHIP if he HAD NOT GIVEN UP ANY HITS. Kerry Wood would have a 1.50 WHIP … if HE had not given up ANY HITS. Instead he has a 3.60 WHIP, which is the baseball equivalent of Garo Ypremian's passer rating.

Of the nine men to make a relief appearance this season, THREE have stuck out more hitters than they have walked. THREE!

7) Is it over?

Yep.