You could divide this game into three parts: the section in which the Tribe jumped out to a 1-0 lead, the section in which they fought to a well-worn draw at 1-1, and then the section in which Texas outscored Cleveland 11-0 over the remainder of the game. Guess which piece was the longest? Guess which was the shortest? Justin Masterson and Hector Ambriz combined to be the second and third-most unfortunate boobs in the stadium last night, and Buff thinks he knows why.

FINAL	1	2	3
Indians (33-50)	1	0	0
Rangers (49-34)	0	1	0

W: C.J. Wilson (7-4) L: Masterson (3-Huff)

So, what you're telling me is, there's still a chance.

1) Wheel of Misfortune

The baseball season is long. Really long. It's hard to express just how long the baseball season is. The only things longer are the NBA Playoffs and a "Twilight" movie. It's really long.

Over the course of such a beast, players have to come up with numerous ways to keep themselves engaged. Tampa Bay relievers make "TB" logos in the dirt with various media (sunflower seeds, gum squares, tar balls, Carrot Top). Players hold spitting contests. Welsh Scrabble is popular, because you don't need the vowels and can chuck those tiles at the shirtless fan in the fifth row.

The Indians are no different, and I have found through my soon-to-be-patented investigative journalistic method known as "Compleat Fabrication" that the players use a pair of roulette-style wheels to determine under what handicap a player must perform.

For example, in the first inning, Justin Masterson spun "Melba toast" and "pants," meaning that

he had to stuff the former into the latter. Melba toast is not a very threatening substance, but if you move awkwardly, it can break into inedible shards and cause a lot of discomfort. The same goes even if you're not trying to eat it. In any event, this explains how Masterson, despite inducing four mundane ground balls, still gave up a single because in trying to field his position, he was uncomfortably stabbed by a crusty sheet and was unable to complete the play.

The second inning yielded "ice cubes" and "shirt," so while Masterson was still adjusting, he gave up a first-pitch homer to Josh Hamilton (406 feet the other way, this is a strong dood) and went three balls to Nel Cruz before settling down and getting three more groundouts, pausing only to walk Matt Treanor on four pitches after the last cube slipped down his back and under his belt.

In the third, the "peanut butter" and "shoes" combination did not faze him much, as he got two more grounders and a swinging K.

Through three innings, Masterson had given up 2 hits: 1 a homer to an MVP candidate and 1 a Melba-induced grounder back to himself. He had induced 8 groundouts and none in the air, balancing a walk with a strikeout.

Alas, Masterson's luck ran out in the 4th, as he drew "live boll weevils" and "hat." Uncomfortable from the get-go, Masterson hit Vlad Guerrero with his first pitch. As a weevil bit his ear, Masterson gave up a single to Hamilton; one up the nose resulted in a 3-0 count to Cruz, but with a mighty, forceful blow, Masterson was able to expel the pest and get Cruz to fly out. After an intentional walk, the intimidated weevils gave Masterson a break for a strikeout, then collectively sheared a path through his scalp (Masterson does not actually have "hair," a result of his last start in which the unfortunate pitcher spun "hot asphalt"), causing him to give up a two-run double to Andres Blanco, which is probably impossible in a non-weevil situation. Still smarting, Masterson hit Julio Borbon on an 0-2 pitch and got Joaquin Arias to fly out.

In the fifth, the fortuitous "sesame seed" and "wristband" combo caused only momentary trouble as a pitch was wafted for a passed ball, but this only set the stage for Trevor Crowe's temporary cut-rate heroics to gun down Guerrero at the plate trying to score from second on a single.

And then we are reminded, as always, that it's all fun and games until someone spins "live

weasel" and "pants."

2) Did I mention how long the season is?

Poor Hector Ambriz. Let's just hope they take "coked-up Gila Monster" off the wheel in time for tonight's game.

3) More seriously

That was terrible.

4) The best Cleveland pitcher of the night!

… was the one with the WHIP of 2.00 and the ERA of 9.00 for the game. He held Texas hitters to a .400/.400/1.000 batting line.

5) Memo to Anderson Hernandez

We are no longer available.
Sincerely, The Bull's Horns

Jayson Nix hit his third homer in five ABs in the top of the first to stake Cleveland to a one-run lead it would hold for nearly an inning and a half.

Of the five hits by Cleveland, Nix had two.

6) On the other hand

The Indians managed to give up infield singles to pitcher, third base, shortstop and second base last night.

On a scale of one to crummy, I give that a “coked-up Gila Monster in the pants.”

7) A moment of serious reflection

The game was stopped for 15 minutes after a fan, reaching for a foul ball in the upper deck, lost his balance and fell about 30 feet to the concourse below.

All reports are that the fan was able to move his limbs and was conscious when removed from the stadium, but that’s still scary.

8) Back to my regularly-scheduled vitriol

Michael Brantley … what is it that you do well, anyway?

I was impressed at the 10-pitch AB to lead off the game. Sure, he flied out, but Wilson is a good pitcher (3.24 ERA … for TEXAS) and the lefty-on-lefty matchup does not favor Brantley. He hung in well and set the stage for Nix’ homer in the next PA.

But he managed to reach base one time on a single, and was picked off first. Note that this was the second time he’s reached base and first actual hit since being called back up (12 AB, 13 PA).

Well, *I'M* inspired. How 'bout you?

9) For example

Jhonny Peralta is inspired! Sure, in his last 10 games he has 7 hits in 39 AB and sports a brisk .179/.220/.231 batting line, but … hey, he's only a … um … corner infielder … trade target … experienced non-Replacement asset … um …

Goddammit.

10) Nice hose!

Trevor Crowe!