When the Indians acquired Derek Lowe from Atlanta this past offseason for essentially nothing, covering just one-third of his salary and giving up a Single-A prospect of not a whole lot of consequence, they were hopeful that he would provide some value, both as a pitcher and as a trade candidate if the Indians were out of the hunt come July. Lowe appeared rejuvenated early in the season, even leading the league in ERA at 2.05 at one point. Since that time, he's been beyond awful and that trend continued tonight as Lowe was knocked around for seven runs in less than three innings and the Indians got blown out yet again, by a final score of 8-3.

The trouble for Lowe started early as the Indians and Royals took turns scoring runs over the first three innings. In the first inning, Lowe gave up a run on a single, a sac bunt, and another single. Neither single was hit very hard, but Lowe's pitching were up in the zone and lifeless. The Indians offense showed signs of life for the first time in five days, scoring two runs in the second to take a 2-1 lead. Four of the first five Indians reached, with Michael Brantley starting the inning with a single and then going to third on Carlos Santana's double. Following a Travis Hafner strikeout, Johnny Damon and Casey Kotchman hit back-to-back RBI singles to give the Indians their first lead in three games.

The lead was short-lived because Derek Lowe came back out of the dugout. With two outs and nobody on, Lowe gave up a single to Chris Getz, a double to Jarrod Dyson, walked Alex Gordon, and then gave up a two-run single to Alcides Escobar. The Royals would only manage those two runs and the Indians tied the game in the third on an Asdrubal Cabrera double, a groundout, and then a wild pitch.

That was the most competitive the game would get. In the third inning, Lowe gave up four runs and Josh Tomlin added another in relief. Billy Butler led off the inning with a single and moved to second on a one-out single from Salvador Perez. After Lowe walked Eric Hosmer to load the bases, he lost his footing on the mound and balked in a run. Lowe has looked very frustrated and flustered on the mound at times and the balk seemed to affect him because he promptly gave up a two-run double to Getz.

Josh Tomlin then entered the game. Tomlin, Thursday's scheduled starter, has apparently been taken out of the rotation as a side effect of his own struggles. Either that or the Indians didn't want to use a bullpen arm, but regardless, Tomlin had some struggles coming into the game in a relief role. After recording the second out of the inning, Tomlin gave up a RBI double to Gordon to make it a 7-3 game and the next batter tripled to push the lead to 8-3. Lowe wound up being charged with seven runs in 2.1 innings work with 10 baserunners allowed.

After the five-run outburst by the Royals, neither team seemed very concerned with playing the rest of the game. No runs were scored in the final five and a half innings and the Royals cruised to a blowout win over the Tribe. About the only notable thing that happened after the third inning was that Shin-Soo Choo picked up the "Golden Sombrero" for a four strikeout effort.

With the loss, the Indians freefall continues as they dropped to 50-53, six games behind the White Sox in the Central and more or less out of contention in the wild card race. Derek Lowe fell to 8-10 after starting the season 6-1. Luke Hochevar improved to 7-9 with his six innings of three-run ball.

Stat of the Night: Travis Hafner was 0-for-3. Since April, when he hit .295, Hafner is 27-for-132 (.205). At a salary of $13M, Hafner has made $288,888.89 per hit this season.

Player of the Game: Michael Brantley? He had two hits and played well in center field.

Tomorrow's Game: The Indians will send their ace, Zach McAllister, to the mound to try and stop this four-game skid. He'll face off against Luis Mendoza. First pitch at 8:10 p.m.