A girl asked the guy she loves, "Am I pretty?" and he said, "No." She asked again, "Do you like me?" again, he answered, "No." She tried again and asked, "Do you want to be with me forever?" once more, he said, "No." Lastly, she asked, "Would you cry if I walk away?" he answered, "No." She'd heard enough and started to leave. As she walked away crying, he grabbed her arm ever so gently and told her to stay. He said, "You are not pretty, you are the most beautiful person I've ever laid eyes on. I do not like you; rather I love you with my whole heart. I do not want to be with you forever, but I need to be with you until the end of time. And if you ever walk away, I will die..."

-Anonymous

The longer the Tom Izzo pursuit goes on with the Cavs the more I think Izzo needs either Michigan State or the Cavaliers to tell him how pretty he is. Izzo more and more seems to be the guy who needs to be pursued and wooed and told just how important he is on a semi-regular basis.

And the longer he drags out his decision of whether to stay at MSU or come to Cleveland the more likely he is to hear what he longs to hear from everyone involved.

The guy hasn't coached an NBA game and I'm already sick of him. And I'm talking "The Housewives of New York City" sick of him.

Shake yourself coach. Make a call on which high-paying job you prefer and move on. Come to Cleveland or stay in East Lansing, it's to the point where I don't care. In fact, the longer you drag it out the more I hope you stay at Michigan State. That's not a defense mechanism to shield my psyche from your potential declination of the Cavs offer. It's more the way you're playing your hand and the fact that I can't, off the top of my head anyway, name the last college coach who succeeded in the NBA and I can't think of any convincing reasons that Izzo would be the guy to change all that.

Izzo hasn't coached NBA players in the NBA. He hasn't even coached NBA players in international competition like Coach Eye Chart from Duke has successfully done. He gets talented kids to buy in to his approach at the college level. He's been extremely successful doing that but the leverage he has in college wouldn't be there for him in the NBA. Ask P.J. Carlesimo if that "In Your Face" approach flies at the professional level. Ask John Calipari how easy it is to utilize collegiate motivational tactics on guys making three times the amount of money you are.

The Cavaliers have offered to double his Michigan State salary and load his contract up with perks and incentives. They've told Izzo that he's beautiful in their eyes. And it's really a no-risk situation for the coach because even if he falls flat on his face in the NBA he'll be set for life. Not to mention the fact that he'll doubtlessly have multiple offers to return to the college game should he fail in the NBA.

No, this appears to be more about vanity and ego and needing to feel special and wanted. But out of fairness to the Cavaliers and to the kids at Michigan State there's a question Izzo needs to answer post haste: Izzu or ain't you?

Leverage

We're about to see how smart five members of the Cleveland Browns really are this week. Last

week the Browns formally notified Abe Elam, D'Qwell Jackson, Matt Roth, Lawrence Vickers and Jerome Harrison that they were reserving the right to rescind their tendered offers in favor of offers that give each player a 10% increase over their 2009 base salaries. For four of the players that could lead to a salary for 2010 that's $1million less than their tenders.

That's a lot of cake to leave on the table out of principle. Jackson, Roth and Elam are apparently quite bent over the possibility of not getting long tem deals. Whether they are bent enough to sit out a season is another story.

Vickers and Harrison are vital components to the Browns' offense. I'd imagine the Browns will get a deal done with both before it gets uglier. Elam was disappointing last season after coming over from the Jets in the Draft day deal that netted the Jets Mark Sanchez while Jackson was hurt early in the season (and has never been what you'd consider impactful at the LB position) and Roth was signed off the Miami scrap heap and played well in half a season in Cleveland.

Personally I have no issue with how the Browns are proceeding in the case of these five guys. The Browns hold all the cards and the players simply are at the mercy of the organization for this season. If Jackson, Roth and Elam want to hit the big pay day down the road they'd be best served signing their tenders and proving their worth on the field. Were we talking about guys who weren't ineffective, hurt or recently released by another club things might be different. But it appears Mike Holmgren is setting a tone in Cleveland that it's not the inmates running the asylum and that contracts will be earned and not simply handed out.

This is a 5-11 team with or without guys like Elam, Roth and Jackson. There's really no urgency to sign guys like that to long term deals when they either replaceable or haven't played up to their potential anyway. Yes. Roth played well last season after being acquired from Miami. But guys like Roth and Jackson are a dime a dozen. They may have been better than the other LBs on the roster at the end of the year but they aren't looked upon as cornerstones to a strong defense. They're just guys. And if you can go 4-12 with Jackson and Elam and you can get a Matt Roth off waivers during the season then what's to say you won't be just fine doing the same thing without them as we head into the 2010 season?

Play football boys. If you play well the money will find you. It always has and always will.

Signs of Life

This was a tough week for Indians fans to get their heads around.

I mean, we did lose Tribe poster boy Lou Marson to a demotion to Triple-A Columbus but we also saw the Tribe win four straight. And included in those four straight wins was a Justin Masterson masterpiece and the powerful debut of rookie catching sensation Carlos Santana.

What the Marson demotion and the Santana promotion ultimately mean is this team is better but I have to work harder for 'Wrap' content.

What it also means is that the Tribe front office is full of crap. Up until Santana was promoted for Friday's game against Washington we were told his call-up was not imminent and that his major league debut would be delayed until his defensive skills improved.

Well, apparently he got a whole lot better blocking balls in the dirt, throwing runners out and calling a game in the past week because he's here now.

More likely than Santana suddenly improving was that Marson's extended period of suck and the team's fading fortunes (not to mention averting an issue with Santana's service time by waiting until now) made the promotion much more necessary.

Santana looked just fine behind the dish Friday and Saturday. He coaxed 7+ innings of excellent pitching out of Jake Westbrook while also throwing out Nyjer Morgan trying to steal on Friday and then he called a complete game from Fausto Carmona on Saturday night while he went 2-4 with a double, a home run and three RBI.

On Friday night Santana recognized the fact that Westbrook's changeup was devastating the Nationals hitters. So he called for it over and over. And if it was actually the bench that recognized the fact that Westbrook's changeup was so good and they called for it, well, what's

the difference in what kind of game the 24-year old catcher calls anyway?

If history has taught us anything it's that if you can't give fans quality baseball and more wins than losses than you damn well need to give them hope. And Santana represents that hope to Tribe fans who are dying to see this team get back to the point where they can, at best, contend in the AL Central and , at worst, not be a pathetic joke.

It also didn't suck that Santana got the call in time to face the Nationals' Stephen Strasburg in a game that ultimately ended the Indians win streak at four. It didn't suck in terms of attendance at Progressive Field or in terms of their head-to-head matchup. Santana didn't look nearly as overmatched against the Nats' phenom as did some other hitters in the Tribe lineup early on and the kid looks like he belongs right where he is in regard to competing in general and in the third spot in the batting order.

He'll have his share of ups and downs as he adjusts to the major league grind and quality of competition. But he's got the look of a big league hitter. He might want to learn not to step in front of a guy the size of Adam Dunn to back up a throw, but you have to like what you've seen thus far.

As for Strasburg? Damn. Wish I had a couple points on that kid's future income. 100mph+ fastball, a changeup at 92mph that Jeremy Sowers would kill to call his fastball, a pretty 12-6 curveball that will need to get sharper lest it become a favor to hitters who are looking for it or can stay back to hit it, etc.

That kid looks to be the real deal too. Most impressive is he doesn't go out there and just throw. He sets hitters up, mixes his pitches well and also works the entire strike zone. If he stays healthy he's going to rack up a few Cy Young awards to go with his strikeout records.