I was already suffering from the effects of sun stroke when my brain imploded. That's why I wasn't certain that what I had just seen was real. I turned to my friend Don, who was at yesterday's Tribe game with me, and asked for confirmation. "Yes" Don confirmed "that just happened." And "no, I've never seen that before."

It was that high school play that never worked. Not even in high school. Maybe freshman ball, but definitely not varsity. You know the play. Runners on 1st and 3rd, less than two outs. In high school, there's always a meeting between the infielders where they come up with a plan of action in the event that the runner on 1st attempts to steal 2nd. It's kind of comical because in high school, the runner ALWAYS attempts to steal second, and the plan is ALWAYS the same. The defense pretty much concedes the steal. The second baseman covers the bag, and the short stop fields the throw from the catcher right behind the mound in an attempt to catch the runner on third going home, which he never tries to do because he already knows "the plan".

The runner on third already knows "the plan" and isn't fooled because it's the exact same plan that his team employs when faced with the same situation. It's always the same, and it's always performed with great gusto, as it should be.

You might not know "the plan" if you haven't watched high school baseball because this never happens on the major league level. Now, I've spent a lot of time researching exactly why MLB teams don't automatically steal second when they have men on 1st and 3rd, thereby forcing the defense to huddle on the infield that hatch "the plan" and I've figured it out.

The reason, and try to stay with me here, is because major league baseball players are good at

baseball. Major league baseball players actually have the ability to throw the ball from home to second and back home in less time than it would take Bob Wickman to run a 5K. High school ballplayers...not so much.

This isn't to say that all high school ballplayers are bad. Not at all. Just most of them. There are obviously some really good players. But there are usually just a few per team. The rest of the players ability usually ranged from slightly worse to slightly better than, well, me. And if you want to know whether I could throw the ball from home to second and back home in less time than it would take Bob Wickman to score from 3rd, I would say that no, I could not. Not a chance in hell. Bob would be halfway to the dugout while I was fielding the throw at the plate. On the second hop. And I was average. Half of the players were even worse than that.

That in a nutshell is why "the plan" was necessary in high school, and unimaginable in the majors. And that's why what happened in the first inning of yesterday's game against the Reds was ridiculous, making me question whether the rapture had actually happened and I somehow didn't notice.

With Shin Soo Choo on 3rd, Travis Buck on 1st, and one out, Manny Acta* decided to pull the old high school play out of his "magic bag of baseball plays that always work in 2011" and send Buck on the steal. I'm sure if the Reds knew how it would turn out (and how in the world could they?) they would have gathered behind the mound and devised "the plan". But they didn't.

**Manny Acta. How about this guy? This is the same guy who on Friday night, in the opening game of the series, coming off two consecutive losses, in the eighth inning of a tie game, decided to send up a pinch hitter who had never before played in a major league baseball game to bat for the designated hitter. Yeah, the designated hitter. The guy who is the best hitter of anyone not already playing the field. That's why he's the designated hitter. It's the only thing he can do. But instead, Acta sent up a 24 year old latino slappy named Zeke to make his MLB debut in front of a crowd of over 30,000 and ordered him to drag bunt. Which he did.*

Did it work? Of course it worked. It worked perfectly. Haven't you been paying attention this year? There was never a doubt that it would work perfectly.

By the way, that Ezequiel Carrera guy who is playing center field and won Friday's game with a

drag bunt...yeah, we got him from Seattle for Russell Branyan. I know, right? And that's not all, we also got 22 year old short stop Juan Diaz in the deal. Apparently, Russell Branyan, who was just released by the Mariners, was worth more than one player.

For those of you scoring at home, that's Shin Soo Choo, Asdrubal Cabrera, and Zeke Carrera for Ben Broussard, Eduardo Perez, and Russell Branyan.

That's Mark Shapiro's Ivy League Tongue 3 – Seattle Mariners 0

Imagine if Shapiro was a baseball man who knew how to build a team.

Much more of this and MLB will be making a Stepien Rule between the Mariners and Indians.

So, when the opportunity presented itself on Sunday, Acta sent Travis Buck to steal second, which he did. Either perfectly or horribly, I'm not sure which. All I know is that he didn't make it to second. At least not right away. Red's catcher Ramon Hernandez fired a bullet to Brandon Phillips at second base. The ball got there so far ahead of Buck* that Buck stopped and started running back to first.

**This doesn't happen in high school.*

At the same time as this was happening, Choo broke for home. Phillips, being a major league baseball player, decided to throw home instead of tagging Buck because, you know, he didn't want Choo to score. And, being a major league baseball player, he possessed the means to prevent it. His throw got back to Hernandez in what would have been plenty of time to nail Choo.*

**This doesn't happen in high school either.*

Choo, wisely recognizing that he is playing in the major leagues, retreated back to third. The catcher, Ramon Hernandez, in an attempt to get Choo, fired the ball all the way to the wall in left field.* Choo scored, Buck scored, 4-1 Indians. Game and Series.

**This happens in high school all the time.*

Not only did the high school play work, it worked better than it works in high school. This is ridiculous. I couldn't believe what I'd seen. The crowd was going nuts. My kid was ecstatic (mostly because he gets excited when everyone else gets excited. He was also a big fan of Joey Votto's home run because there were some Reds fans around us clapping.) My wife, who spent most of the game trying to prevent my kid from eating popcorn he'd dropped on the ground, probably didn't care too much, but she was happy for me.

And then my head imploded.

And I was left to wonder, is there any way that this happens if Corky Miller* was still alive?

**It has nothing to do with anything, but my kid has a stuffed bear named Corky, named for Corky Miller. Last year, I was watching the Tribe play the Reds on TV. The kid walks in trailing the bear, who to this point was cleverly named "bear", behind him. Corky's at the plate. Underwood says his name. My kid repeats it.*

And that's the true story of how my kid ended up with a stuffed bear named for a 35 year old journeyman catcher with an awesome mustache who never even played for Cleveland. I feel like you should know these things.

My twitter [illegible] The Power Of Fan [illegible]