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Indians: So you're in the World Series.

Tigers: Yep. I'm thrilled.

Indians: I'll bet. Say, I remember the World Series. Wasn't too long ago I was there. Orel, Manny, Omar ... those were the days.

Tigers: Yep. Too bad you didn't win one. So, what's up? I don't see you talking much baseball anymore.

Indians: (quietly reeling from the "you didn't win one" comment) Huh? ... Oh, yeah. Well, see, the thing is, I've found a new focus. I've learned that this baseball thing really isn't about baseball. It's all about this new idea called "market."

Tigers: Market?

Indians: Yeah, market.

Tigers: Like where you go to buy groceries?

Indians: No, see, the whole point is that instead of shelling out the money to win, you simply use your market size as a constant justification for why you can't win. That way, whenever something goes wrong, you are held blameless. It's the market's fault.

Tigers: (looking confused). Uh ... well, I thought the whole point of the game was to win. I mean, I was losing for 20 years, and now I feel great.

Indians: That's what I used to think, too. But, man, all that winning really takes serious spending. And all for what? A title you might or might not win?

Tigers: I still don't understand. I mean, I'm going to be going out there next week trying like crazy to win a title.

Indians: OK, how do I explain this? You remember how you dumped Travis Fryman on the Diamondbacks a few years ago?

Tigers: Yeah, we didn't want to pay him a huge increase in free agency, so...

Indians: No, man! Then you're held accountable. It's the market. The market couldn't sustain a contract of that magnitude while maintaining short-term competitive assurances and long-term financial flexibility within the organization.

Tigers: Why are you busting out the legalese? It's freaking me out.

Indians: That's how you gotta talk. If you use all that financial, legal mumbo-jumbo, it makes it sound all official for the fans and stuff. How are they going to question you? They wouldn't know the inner working of a baseball organization from the inner workings of a particle accelerator.

Tigers: I don't like where this is going. Where's the Tribe I've known for so long? I'd kick your ass for 10 years, you'd kick my ass for 10 years, it was great. We were rivals, our fans would pour beer on each other, it was kind of like football.

Indians: Those days are gone now. It's a new century, a time for new thoughts and ideas.

Tigers: And a new way to lie to people....

Indians: I'm telling you, man. This is the new wave. The Brewers, the Royals, those guys are really onto something with their small-market blues. I decided about five years ago that I was sick of trying to chase rainbows like World Series titles. I wanted something more substantial, more attainable.

Tigers: So you went on welfare.

Indians: Man, screw you! You'll see. If you don't get on the boat now, you're going to miss it. And then what are you going to do?

Tigers: (muttering) ... Polish my World Series rings ...

Indians: What?

Tigers: Nothing. Look man, I have to go. It's been nice hanging, but I have a lot of work to do for next week. So I'll catch you around, maybe in March.

Indians: (as the Tigers get up and leave) Enjoy the pressure of being a champion next year! And all those Series bonuses you'll have to pay out.

Tigers: Yeah ... that's cool, man. Uh, I'll figure out a way. Later.