

## People are like mashed potatoes

The six years I have been living here in town has been great and rich with new impressions for me, even the rugged dress code, goatee and all. My four years living on a sailboat in the Caribbean gave me a slower body clock and settled down my nervous internal system. Commuting and later as a job driving a truck on the Interstate was an eye opener. It brought back my old shaky nerves. Kamikaze kids in rice rockets believing they are inside a computer game. Pet owners with lap dogs actually have their dogs sitting in their lap. Is it too much to ask for, to put the pet in the back seat while operating a potential canon ball ? When I am about my business and hovering around on my path I am often thinking of my friend John Conner. I met him one evening at the library and later we shared some pitchers of beer. In between flushing down pints he broke it down to me. You see, he has quite extraordinary opinions and I am not sure about the source. He checked into the General Hospital for a small but urgent surgery and died on the operating table. He was never the same man again after he woke up at the morgue ten hours later. Sometimes he claims he is an alien with a green origin and really - since I desperately try to cut him off in our nightly discussions - I think he is just enjoying his paranormal status. He has tried several times to describe the facial expression of the night nurse to me, even mimed slowly. But I never really picture that solid frozen horror she must have gone through. He is always right too you know, that bastard, talking loud and telling while growing a red nose from all the pitchers he is drinking. With his upper baldness he will soon look like a clown. I cannot wait to see that. Even with his burlesque manner he undoubtedly has the right opinions about everything. Although it takes a while to digest them. He sees people, life in the universe, micro cosmos, nature vibes and other stuff differently. Lately when we go separate ways early in the mornings after the last call, he says:

"Sleep is the best of both worlds man. Yo' get to be alive an' unconscious... an' I'm gonna be both soon."

He dumps questions on me and I do not know if they are statements or not. With his straight face he hides jokes too, like the other day he told me:

"Hey Stan, have yo' notice the ones that only buy one roll of toilet paper. Are they trying to cut down or what? "

To be honest, you cannot answer that, can you?

"Frankenstein rules." he says. Brought to life by a heavenly light with Abbey Norm's brain (read Abnormal). Even though he has seen all the Frankenstein movies several times, his lower lip always wobbles when the posse shows up. I personally think he is taking it a bit too far. So are his points of view. For example, the drivers with pets; he says that it proves that small dog owners are lazy people. No need to walk the dog, they just open the window and squeeze it. A punishment for the young dangerous drivers is a wild plane ride by an experienced combat pilot... in a Cessna without any safety belts. Now that is something extreme to add to the X-games, goatee or not. About water shortage, he says the chlorine level in pipe water here is so bad that it is hazardous to swim in. So what does he do you wonder? He has 10,000 plastic bottles in his basement already labeled as - Crisp Steroid Soda. At the next water shortage he will bottle up his swimming pool and rent a shelf at Safeway. Yeah, my buddy has ideas and opinions alright. Like the other night when we were shooting pool and the breeze over some pitchers. He does not like couch potatoes. They are lazy people with no respect for their own soul's temple.

"Getting liquored up in their underwear watching TV and have opinions on the news. Somebody with a self-made body shaped like a dollop of mashed potato, or a fluffy cloud, is an airhead. They should be put on a sword swallower's diet. Pins and needles for six weeks. Why let 'em vote? " he says, and continues:

"To vote is a privilege that should be earned, right, an' not a granted thing. Old Germany an' today's California are two scary examples. That's how idiots get their vote heard." To make sure I understood him I asked:

"So Cumulus clouds an' today's average citizen are alike huh? "

He nodded while emptying his glass and ordering a new pitcher with the other hand. In my next column I will tell you more about the opinions of my friend John Conner.

Your man in the zone  
*Stanley Mintras*