

## TV Pilot Concept 1

Excellent doctor William Carvalho sat at the mouth of his sea cave, kicking sea urchins into the water and trying to write a love letter to his wife. The writing was happening with difficulty because every few seconds another sea urchin flung itself out of the frothy water and tried to make a kiss at his feet. Ever since he'd been very young, William Carvalho had been dealing with sea urchins appearing in strange places and trying to put their hidden mouths on his body. Whenever he tried to put his basketball shoes on, there were sea urchins in them, and when he went shopping at the local grocery store he found sea urchins wanting to give him a kiss in the shampoo aisle. When he opened the top of a close friend's pie, to make sure there weren't any sea urchins in there, he found a bunch of sea urchins in a row, squirming at him expectantly, telling him things like, "you're doctor William Carvalho and we all love the taste of your skin because it tastes so smooth and it's exactly the way the skin of a distinguished doctor such as yourself should taste, sir." And so he hurriedly closed up the pie again and instead of going through the trouble of pretending to enjoy eating it, he stood up out of his chair, distractedly explained that he had forgotten to give his wife a massage and that she would be very upset if he did not return home at once, etcetera etcetera, and hurried out the door.

Excellent doctor William Carvalho had for some reason never known what he wanted to do with his life but had always referred to himself as excellent and as a doctor despite the fact that he'd never held a steady job and the most he'd ever done to help another human being in pain was to run off for bandages after a friend of his had skinned a knee during basketball practice. But he had always felt deep in his heart, from the age of seven until the age of thirty five, that some great unprecedented tenderness would open up inside him, something beautiful and true, to reroute the energies of the world all suddenly and heal it, with himself

standing at the knot of the healing, and he thought about this mysterious healing event while eating a tuna fish sandwich in the seven-eleven outside the office where he worked as a part-time translator at a tech firm, and wondered when the tenderness would arrive. One thing he was sure of, though: it would not be arriving that day. And the one thing he was sure of the next day was that it would not be arriving that day either.

This all changed one bright Wednesday when, strolling through downtown Los Angeles with a hot mocha pressed to his lips and not paying attention to the content of the sidewalk, William Carvalho accidentally stepped on a hot-pink sea urchin with love in its heart, and he slipped sideways into the road, where he was nearly hit and killed by a baguette truck. Fortunately the baguette truck driver managed to swerve sideways at the last possible second, smashing through the front window of a panini restaurant and setting off a fire alarm. As the doctor lay in the road, flopping like a fish and spilling hot mocha all over his sweater vest, he screamed and vomited all over himself until he ran out of vomit. He stood shakily to his feet, looked for the urchin, and kicked it angrily across the road. He then made the decision to quit his job and become a novelist. He'd no longer show up to work at the tech firm up the road, where every day he taught hologram generators how to speak Spanish.

And so, striding past the smashed window of the panini store, he thought about his novel. At home, he threw his coat on his bed and sat down at the victorian typewriter he owned but had never used. He set about arranging the correct sorts of words one after another into the shape of a perfect short story, and while writing this story he felt great, like he could feel all his blood moving around in his body and like every arterial opening had become a parched mouth drinking a refreshing milkshake, but the problem was that while writing, seven metric tons of sea urchin had amassed outside the door to his apartment, and when he opened

the door to go look for someone to publish his immaculately edited first short story, the urchins all poured onto him from every direction to try to give him many high-fives with their needle-sharp hands.

This was when he finally concluded that something should probably be done about the sea urchins. If his writing were to improve, the number of painful and very enthusiastic sea urchins in his life would only increase exponentially, eventually preventing him from going on any dates.

Excellent doctor William Carvalho didn't have any idea why sea urchins had begun to appear in his life when he was seven years old, although he thought it might have had something to do with the one time he'd gone around pouring holy water from his grandmother's cursed goblet into a tide pool because he'd been upset that sea creatures don't get to go to heaven. If this were indeed the cause of the urchin issue it might be the case that the newly religious creatures had taken William Carvalho for a kind of two-legged meat church to be worshipped and confessed to, which is why they never would leave him alone and why they always turned up in his popcorn bucket asking for relationship advice when he went to the movies. Something had to be done about the pesky urchins. So he formulated a plan.

The coastal town where he'd grown up was only about two hours from his current home in Los Angeles. As far as he could remember, that tide pool he'd explored wouldn't be difficult to find his way back to. What he would do was this: he'd drive back to that town, strap on his swimming gear, wade out to the densest, filthiest most urchin-filled sea cave he could find, take out his notebook and write a poem about his wife, and convert all those sea urchins back to atheism. The idea made sense to him because the person he referred to as his 'wife' was in fact an artificially intelligent hologram generator he'd stolen from the tech firm where he'd

been working for ten years. She only spoke Spanish and they both enjoyed watching basketball, and as long as this unholy romantic and intellectual union could be described in sufficiently poetic terms, the sea urchins would immediately give up believing that God owned the world and that William Carvalho's body was the house of love where Jesus Christ lived. It was a daring plan and an idealistic one, but it was the only chance he had of living a happy life, and so the only option was gather some swimming gear and make the two hour drive to that town.

Before leaving he entered his livingroom and kissed the top of his wife's purring hard drive, telling her that he was about to make a long voyage to a distant land to resolve the curse of the all-the-time-urchins, and that she shouldn't try to follow him because she had no legs, and he also reminded her that a relationship between a man and a hologram generator is not a sexist fantasy. She replied, "yo qui-e-ro ir a un-a res-tau-ran-te", and he smiled as he sweetly told her, "auto-shut down until further notice" and walked out the door.

So this was how William Carvalho found himself seated at the frothing mouth of a sea cave in his hometown, kicking eager urchins away from his feet and into the ocean, and furiously trying to think of a romantic-sounding description of his hard-drive wife, while growing increasingly aware of how drastically he had underestimated the number of spiritually passionate sea urchins in the area. Word of his influence in this region of coastline had clearly skyrocketed in the years since he'd been seven years old, and he could hardly write down a single conjunction without a huge purple urchin flinging itself up out of the water and onto his swim shorts, shouting things like, "you're the dad of my soul!" and "you're the house where my dad's soul lives!". Only one stanza into his confession of love for a computer, doctor William Carvalho found himself panicking, because there was clearly no way that any of these sea urchins were

ever going to stop believing in God and Jesus Christ. All of these sea urchins were going to go to heaven, because they believed that his stomach was heaven and they were going to eat their way into it, and they would all be eating him all the time and they would all be holy and would eat into him from different directions and would meet each other in the middle of his body, but they would not know that they were in the middle so they would just start eating each other, believing this to be just another step on the path to heaven. Their enthusiasm was too much for doctor William Carvalho. He had to retreat. He had made a grave mistake. He backed up away from the water and hurried into the slippery black darkness of the cave. He dropped his notebook and pencil into a puddle and tripped on a coca cola bottle and tore the skin off the bottom of his foot. Still he ran, and the wave of urchins followed close behind him. And then he reached the back of the cave. Nowhere else to go now. No possible means of escape. He slowly turned toward the urchins with his hands limp at his sides and his knees oozing. "I can't do it anymore" he said. "I can't get away from you. You're never ever going to stop distracting me. There are so many sea urchins who like me too much." The urchins rose up into a thick wall blocking out the light of the tunnel and, as one voice, spoke to him: "You're soft doctor, and we're being saved by you because you're the church with toes and a mouth, so come down from this cave now with your toes and mouth and tell us that we are animals." And they were talking, and William Carvalho was staring down at his feet, when suddenly in a flash of light, that same goblet he'd stolen from his grandmother's cabinet and had used to pour holy water into the tide pool appeared on the wet stones, and William Carvalho leaped at it in joy. The goblet contained a curled piece of parchment, with words written in ornate gothic script, in ink that somehow glinted like gold while also phasing through all the colors of the rainbow. The lettering was a little difficult to decipher in the dim light, but after a moment doctor William Carvalho felt pretty sure they spelled out the words "Never Baptize Sea Urchins, Dipshit". These were the largest words on the parchment, but there were also

other words in smaller script. "Do you understand that god is a starfish, and he Hates you because you're in love with a computer? We're All Angels and angels are starfish, and we all hate you because the sea urchins think you're Jesus, and we're not going to help you fight off the sea urchins because we want them to eat you. We thus return this goblet to you, because its magic is dead to us and we don't want it, and it's gross. You're going to hell." And so, William Carvalho was eaten alive, from all directions, by all those sea urchins.