

Instinct

An adult animated anthology where true animal instincts explode into darkly comic chaos across three wild tales per episode – sea, air, and land – all framed by a salty tardigrade who missed his rocket to Mars.

Michael Craig
Pilotcomedy@gmail.com
323-459-3766

WHY THIS SERIES NOW

In a world where comedy feels increasingly divisive, **INSTINCT** sidesteps politics and culture by focusing on nature's insanity and sharp, tragicomic storytelling. The result is a bingeable, memeable series built for countless seasons.

SERIES PREMISE

INSTINCT is a half-hour, R-rated animated anthology built around a clean, repeatable engine:

One SEA story

One AIR story

One LAND story

Three vignettes per episode. Three animals. Three instincts colliding with the world. Anchoring each episode is **Todd**, a burnt-out tardigrade and failed astronaut who resumes teaching high school biology. He struggles to hang on while introducing each vignette, giving the anthology a perfect narrative thread. Will Todd ever make it to Mars?

TONE

BoJack Horseman meets classic Tom & Jerry, with a layer of Planet Earth narrated by a jaded, middle-aged asshole.

INSTINCT blends:

- Dark comedy
- Real facts
- Absurd violence
- Emotional pathos
- Bite-sized, emotionally satisfying stories

SAMPLE STORIES FROM THE PILOT

A pistol shrimp

Thrown into a brutal Queens fish tank, a pistol shrimp debates God versus simulation theory with his goby fish roommate and protector – until tragedy unleashes the devastating power of his claw.

Adélie penguins

Nest-building collides with grief and infidelity as a female penguin trades sex for rocks to fortify her nest, while her cuckolded, emotionally unavailable mate stands idly by. Is their relationship salvageable?

A honeybee colony

A beehive faces a murder hornet invasion while two nectared-out drone bees daydream and shoot the shit, oblivious to the massacre unfolding around them. Hope lies in one surviving drone – and a single baby pupa.

Each episode seamlessly blends real biology with bold, character-driven storytelling, weaving nature into the punchlines.

WHY IT WORKS

- Bingeable anthology format with clear engine
- Seamless expansion to short-form verticals
- Broad comedy with zero politics
- Real science = automatic virality and educational hook
- Endless seasons (infinite animals, infinite instincts)

Designed to spark memes, fan art, merchandise, discourse, and repeat viewing. Nature never runs out of material!

INSTINCT: *Built to survive. Wired to fail.*

Thank you for your consideration.

Mike Addiego

(writing as: Michael Craig)

EXT. KENNEDY SPACE CENTER - DAY

A CUTE TARDIGRADE, TODD, holds a press conference. He is dressed in a space suit and has his helmet tucked under his arm. Cameras flash and mics come inches from his face. A SPACE ROCKET looms in the background.

REPORTER (O.S.)

How does it feel to be the first
water bear headed to Mars?

TODD THE TARDIGRADE

I'm not a water bear. I'm a
tardigrade. And this is what I do -
travel the cosmic void while you
morons doomscroll your way through
life.

SECOND REPORTER (O.S.)

Is it true that you can withstand
extreme temperatures and
conditions?

TODD THE TARDIGRADE

Absolute zero to 300 degrees
Fahrenheit. Radiation,
dehydration, pressure. Can't kill
me. Next.

REPORTER (O.S.)

Will you miss your career as a high
school science teacher?

TODD THE TARDIGRADE

Are you... you're kidding, right?
Is that a serious question?

SECOND REPORTER (O.S.)

What were you teaching prior to
being selected for the mission?

The rocket fires up, getting ready to launch.

TODD THE TARDIGRADE

Animal instincts. Actually, we
just learned about the pistol
shrimp, *Alpheus randalli*. Did you
know that the snap from a pistol
shrimp's claw is louder than a gun
and hotter than the sun? I could
still take him, though.

REPORTER (O.S.)

Um, your rocket's leaving.

TODD THE TARDIGRADE
Shit! Shit! Guys, wait up!

Todd, helmet in tow, waddles after his rocket. It takes off.
Todd watches it fly away.

TITLE CARD OVER BLACK: INSTINCT

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - ESTABLISHING

Busy concrete jungle. Car horns, yelling pedestrians, faint
hip-hop beats. Sunlight illuminates the 4th floor window of
a tenement high-rise.

SUPER: PART 1: THE PISTOL SHRIMP (SEA)

SUPER: QUEENS, NY, 1999

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Teenager's room. A fish tank.

INT. FISH TANK - DAY

Standard saltwater aquarium setup. TWO CRABS hang out at the
bottom of the tank.

A STARFISH is nearby, as well as TWO CLOWNFISH (a male and a
female) and an intimidating HAWKFISH.

A stupid LAWNMOWER BLENNY swims by, sucking up algae.

CRAB #1
Bored.

MALE CLOWNFISH
Oh my god, the coral turned a shade
darker this morning! We almost
match now, look!

CRAB #2
Hey, who gives a shit?

FEMALE CLOWNFISH
I think you look beautiful.

The aquarium lid is removed.

HAWKFISH

Let's go! Gather around for
prayer!

All of the aquatic creatures convene.

ALL CREATURES

Thank you, Lord E, for the bounty
we are about to receive. We pledge
to abide by your laws and wishes,
and continue to practice kindness
and empathy in our search for
universal truth.

A giant hand lowers a pail to the top of the tank.

FEMALE CLOWNFISH

That's not food!

CRAB #1

Watch out!

The hand dumps the contents of the pail into the tank. The
force mixes with the bottom sand and gravel, causing a large
cloud. Everyone protects their eyes and waits for the cloud
to dissipate. And when it does...

A RED AND WHITE PISTOL SHRIMP

Stares at everyone. They stare back.

He is young and terrified. He has a claw on his right side
that is half the size of his entire body. The lawnmower
blenny resumes sucking algae. The hawkfish approaches.

HAWKFISH

What are you?

PISTOL SHRIMP

I... I think I'm a shrimp.

CRAB #1

A what? What's your name?

PISTOL SHRIMP

Alphi.

The hawkfish violently pushes Alphi away.

HAWKFISH

Well listen here, shrimp. We got a
nice thing going on. Good little
ecosystem. And you will officially
fuck that up.

FEMALE CLOWNFISH
But he was sent from the lord.

The crabs descend upon Alphi.

CRAB #2
Bullshit. That look like something
the lord made? It's a test!

ALPHI
Please. I... I don't know how I
got here. I'll keep to myself.

CRAB #2
(inspecting Alphi's claw)
Yea? What's wit dat?

ALPHI
I don't know. I was born with it.

The crabs corner Alphi.

CRAB #2
Well I don't like it. You like it,
Hawk?

HAWKFISH
Nah. Looks dangerous.

The hawkfish nods to the crabs.

CRAB #1
Sorry, chief. Gotta protect our
own. Hope you understand.

Crab #1 holds Alphi down.

ALPHI
What? No! Wait! No, please!

Crab #2 snips off Alphi's claw with his own.

Alphi WAILS in pain, which seems to reverb not only through
the tank, but throughout Queens.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FISH TANK - NIGHT

All is quiet except for the water filter. A nightlight
shines in the distance.

The fish and crabs are asleep. The lawnmower blenny snores, attached to the side of the tank.

Alphi stirs beneath the gravel. He slowly emerges and looks around. He sidles up next to the lawnmower blenny and tries to lick the algae off of the tank but it's gross.

Quietly continuing on, he passes the requisite deep sea diver ornament and comes across his detached claw. He retrieves it and heads back to his home. Before entering...

HAWKFISH

Psst, hey kid.

Alphi looks up.

HAWKFISH

You hungry?

Alphi nods.

HAWKFISH

Yea? Then eat my shit.

The hawkfish turns around and takes a massive dump, then swims away. Alphi retreats and buries himself in the gravel.

The excrement gently lands right beside his dwelling. After a moment, Alphi's good claw pulls the excrement inside.

INT. FISH TANK - NEXT DAY

The lawnmower blenny sucks algae off of the glass. Up above, the male clownfish mourns the female clownfish, who is floating belly up.

MALE CLOWNFISH

(choking back tears)

She was the only one who understood me.

STARFISH

Hey, happens to all of us. Why don't you grow a pair?

The male clownfish suddenly sprouts breasts and eyelashes.

CRAB #2

Ha! Wrong pair, asshole!

MALE CLOWNFISH

I will now be known as Kati!

STARFISH

Whoa! You see that shit?

KATI defiantly swims away. The top of the tank moves.

CRAB #1

Food!

HAWKFISH

Let's go, gather 'round!

All of the creatures congregate and recite their prayer.
Alphi sticks his head out of the gravel to watch.

ALL CREATURES

Thank you, Lord E, for the bounty
we are about to receive. We pledge
to abide by your laws and wishes,
and continue to practice kindness
and empathy in our search for
universal truth.

Another bucket hovers over them. Kati looks up while
checking out her reflection in the glass.

KATI

Again? This is fucking bullshit.

Another creature is dumped into the tank. When the cloud
clears, we see TONY, a cute little GOBY FISH.

HAWKFISH

Who the fuck are you?

TONY

I'm Tony, who the fuck are you?

HAWKFISH

(to crabs)

Handle this.

The crabs descend upon Tony. Kati's interest is piqued, as
is Alphi's, who peers from under his sand dwelling.

CRAB #2

Amma dice you up, bitch.

TONY

Yea, you think?

Crab #1 tries to hold Tony down.

CRAB #1
Sorry about this, chief. Just
following orders.

Tony inhales water until he puffs up, then turns around and
swats at the crabs with his sharp tail. He darts away.

CRAB #2
Ahh! Yo, what the hell, bro!

Tony hides behind some coral. He's on the lookout for
predators when he detects Alphi behind him.

TONY
Looks like you got the right idea.
Gotta keep a low profile around
here, am I right? I'm Tony.

ALPHI
I'm Alphi.

Alphi sticks his head fully out of his enclosure.

TONY
Not likin' the odds, kid.

ALPHI
They took my claw.

TONY
Damn. What do you do for food?

No response from Alphi.

TONY
You eat shit?

No response from Alphi.

TONY
Listen, I don't know, I got an
idea, hear me out.

ALPHI
Okay.

TONY
You make the house a little bigger,
I move in. I protect you from
douchebags and bring you back some
eats. Good?

ALPHI
Yea. That... that feels right.

The other fish and crabs yell in the distance.

FISH AND CRABS (O.S.)

Food!

TONY

Be back soon. Don't go nowheres.

Alphi watches Tony swim off.

MONTAGE OF TONY AND ALPHI'S MUTUAL SYMBIOSIS

Alphi painstakingly creates a bigger house for the two of them.

Tony returns and puts some food in front of a grateful Alphi.

Alphi eats while Tony keeps watch. He puffs up and scares away one of the crabs when he gets too close.

Alphi grooms Tony while he sleeps.

Tony lines up for food again. This time, others let him have first dibs. The hawkfish watches.

Tony uses Alphi as a pillow.

ALPHI

Tony? Do you believe in God?

TONY

I don't know. A guy I met in the last place I was, he thinks this is all a simulation. Why, wadda 'bout you?

ALPHI

I don't know. And it bothers me. Not knowing. This world is so messed up, I just wanna find out who's responsible.

The lawnmower blenny cruises by, sucking up algae.

LAWNMOWER BLENNY

Morons. Everyone knows Lord E is the great divinity.

The lawnmower blenny points beyond the cloudy glass. There appears to be a large silhouette of a human with outstretched hands. Below the silhouette is a blurry, large letter "E."

TONY

How you even know what an "E" is?

The lawnmower blenny pauses and gives Tony a look of disappointment and disgust.

LAWNMOWER BLENNY

Really? You're gonna be that guy?
Don't be that guy, man.

The lawnmower blenny methodically continues on.

TONY

Yo, that dude is whacked!

ALL CREATURES (O.S.)

Food!

TONY

You wanna come wit?

ALPHI

Nah, I'm good.

TONY

Alphi, you gotta leave the house
one a these days. Come on.

ALPHI

Just be careful.

Tony looks at him sympathetically.

TONY

Alright, kid. Be right back.
Don't go nowheres.

Tony swims away. Alphi makes some modifications to the house. He makes eye contact with the starfish, who shamefully looks away. Something's up.

ALL CREATURES (O.S.)

Thank you, lord E, for the...
(pause) Oh snap! Oh! He leakin'!

Alphi looks up. The severed, bloody front half of Tony's body gently floats down next to him.

ALPHI

NO!!! Tony!

Alphi cries. After a moment, the crabs and hawkfish appear.

HAWKFISH

Whoa, tough Tony. Tough break.

CRAB #2
Tough Tony took one for the team!

CRAB #1
(shrugging)
It's for the greater good, kid.

Alphi wipes his tears and addresses his foes. Nothing left but rage. He struggles to pull himself out of his house.

ALL CREATURES
(mocking)
Uh oh! Here he comes!

When Alphi is fully free from his domicile, WE SEE A NEW CLAW has formed. It is MASSIVE.

HAWKFISH
Look at this freak!

CRAB #2
Need another trim, hey kid?

Crab #2 backs Alphi into a corner of the tank. Alphi looks down at his new claw. He cocks his claw back like a gun.

ALPHI
Don't do it. I'm warning you.

CRAB #2
Get over here, bitch.

ALPHI
I said NO!!!

Alphi unleashes a BLAST from his claw. The force creates a DEAFENING FLASH and bubble that INCINERATES the crab and reverberates throughout the tank.

All marine life, except for Kati, who models her new appearance in the glass, look on in horror.

KATI
Oh my god, can you guys, like, keep it down please?

Alphi studies his claw.

HAWKFISH
Whoa, hey, hey, just relax, kid.

ALPHI
You killed my only friend in the world. Why?

HAWKFISH

Look, I'm sorry, okay? I didn't like his face.

ALPHI

What's it all for, anyway?

Alphi turns to the glass of the tank and cocks his claw again, unleashing another blast. The glass starts to crack.

HAWKFISH

Chill kid, I'm not trying to feel that. Cut it out.

LAWNMOWER BLENNY

I'm ready, Lord E! Take me to the promised land!

Alphi takes a final look at Tony's corpse. For a moment, Tony comes back to life and winks at Alphi.

TONY

Showtime, kid.

Tony dies again. Alphi regains his composure. All of the creatures stop and really look at him. Even Kati.

With a final deep breath, he unleashes one last BLAST. The tank SHATTERS. Everything and everyone comes pouring out.

Alphi lands next to the other dying creatures on the dirty floor. He looks up and sees LORD E. It is a poster of Eminem giving the finger with both of his hands.

ON ALPHI as he smiles and asphyxiates.

ALPHI

Lord E.

FADE OUT.

SFX - TOILET FLUSHING

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Todd the Tardigrade, our failed astronaut, navigates the hallway. Students and faculty whisper as he passes.