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FROM FLUID FABLES

TRANSLATED BY COLE SWENSEN

On the slopes of Mount Lhahjahti in Pedhjukistan, the spirit is much more visible than the body because its aura radiates very strongly. The size and the intensity of the color vary considerably from person to person. And since a good aura adds a lot to one's seductive capital, it's not at all rare, in the weeks before summer vacation, to see young people frequenting libraries, haunting museums, and sitting in on philosophy seminars in order to shine out more brilliantly on the beaches of Pedhjukistan.

One thousand and thirty-four official experiments in telekinesis (the movement of an object by the force of thought alone) carried out in 1958 in the underground laboratories of Novosibirsk (Soviet Union) under the direction of Professor Boris Nicolaief Bloudjine have conclusively proved that fingers are an extremely efficient way of moving a matchstick.

On the planet Sitara, there are five sexes—maka, fitu, jipu, giminis and gojo. The makas lay the eggs, the fitus make them genetically active, the jipus make them fertile, the giminis sit on them until they hatch, and the gojos feed the larvae until they can live on their own. It's not really all that complicated except in cases of divorce.

Roberto Catanese of San Patamino (Sicily) was condemned to prison for life in February 1978 for having transformed the celebrated recipe for mozzarella pizza into Sicilian pizza by adding pieces of real Sicilians.

It was on February 13, 1967 at precisely 5:30 in the evening that John Klondenberg of Critchy Gulch (Utah) began to list all numbers in their alphabetical order. He started, of course, with eight, and as of this moment, he's at eighty billion seven thousand and two (80,000,007,002), and, already, he can hardly wait to get to zero.

Intensive research at the Iowa Disney University has shown that the number of neurons active in the human brain is inversely proportionate to something, and further extensive research is focused on discovering exactly what.

In Outato, the capital of Bazouchistan, after innumerable social reforms, equality has finally been established between female beings and male beings. Only the milking of the bulls remains, at times, a problem.

The people of Okolo, a city whose fortifications are useless because it's so far back in a lost valley somewhere in northern India, have no temples, no altars, and not even a name for God. When they absolutely must invoke him, they're forced to resort to whistling.

The philosophically-minded people of the troglydidic city of Johlitu are perfectly aware that one can never know for certain what another really means by “blue,” and yet they manage, despite it all, to gaze up at the sky together—and thoroughly enjoy it.

The inhabitants of the island of Sanapagrata (Indonesia) always tell the truth. On the neighboring island of Pagranasata, they always lie, while the people on Natagrapasa sometimes lie and sometimes tell the truth. The Portuguese missionaries soon got tired of the guess-work and ran them all through with swords.