

Hi everyone welcome to this week's episode of no such thing as a fish we have another very special guest for you today and that guest is our very good friend Lucy Porter. You will remember Lucy from previous episodes on fish I know you'll love her she's so smart she's so funny in fact she's got a stand-up show that is touring at this very moment which is called wake up call and really I'll be honest the best way to find out about that is to google Lucy Porter wake up call and you'll find all the dates but she's doing the whole of the UK it's definitely a show that's worth going to see she also has a podcast called fingers on buzzers it's all about quizzing and she does that with my very good old friend Jenny Ryan it's a brilliant podcast so listen to that and she has a radio for stand-up special called Lucy Porter's lucky dip which is going out at 11.30 on March the 15th it'll probably be on the BBC sounds app after that so again google Lucy Porter's lucky dip and you'll find that and apart from that just enjoy the show so nothing more to say apart from on with the podcast on with the show oh hi Andy I've been here the whole time

hello and welcome to another episode of no such thing as a fish a weekly podcast coming to you from the QI offices in Covent Garden my name is Dan Shriver I am sitting here with Andrew Hunter Murray James Harkin and Lucy Porter and once again we have gathered around the microphones with our four favorite facts from the last seven days and in a particular order here we go starting with fact number one and that is my fact my fact this week is that it took the creator of the Rubik's Cube a month to solve it the first time he tried that is mad a month of really trying as well it's so crazy you I would have thought after about 20 or 30 days you would just make a new one if you didn't make one this doesn't work so yeah invented 1974 he was a professor and he just had this idea what if I could make something that was static on the inside but fluid on the outside and that's what gave him the idea and he had a bash it it's later been worked out quite a famous number if you know Rubik's Cubes that 43 quintillion is the number of permutations that you can make on the Rubik's Cube and so luckily he got there within a month yeah it's pretty good well I'll tell you what's weird his prototype wasn't three by three his prototype was two by two so I've got that took him a month that's the thing well I'm curious to know if this is the one that took him a month because this is okay so Dan's showing us an image and it's like four wooden blocks that have got various colors and numbers on it and they're held together almost by bits of wire yeah there's a wire meshing inside and he took a month to do a Rubik's Cube that one's piss easy yeah it's clever enough to make that you're clever enough to solve it yes yeah you can do a Rubik's Cube James I can I think you can Lucy well I yeah my children are obsessed with them we've got hundreds in the house and all those weird what you know there's like weird different shaped ones and mirror ones where there's absolutely no colors on it and stuff so this is a long way of me saying I should be and I have at one point been wait a second because James you know I don't want to do this one why not because that one's tough because it's got like Dan's mixing up one from the transport museum I'd rather do the one with the colors but the other thing is about the Rubik's Cube is that I find that when you're under pressure it's almost impossible yes because you do it kind of with muscle memory yes and then as soon as you start thinking about it you can't really do it at all yeah I made a terrible decision when because I did learn to do it when my kids got into it and then I decided we were doing a live podcast recording of

fingers on buzzers and I said oh I see what'll be fun I'll solve a Rubik's Cube while we do this round and it took about 15 minutes is there an algorithm basically it's like a set pattern of moves that will help you work on the side you're working on so but layers that's the key yeah exactly layers not side so you can see at the moment that I've done the bottom layer right the top layer right and then you do the middle one then you do the top one I remember when we went on the only connect and they asked you for facts about yourself and my fact was that I could do a Rubik's Cube in less than a minute and the team that we were playing with apparently one of them said that he could do three Rubik's Cubes in 30 seconds they decided they weren't going to use that fact made you look pretty foolish but it's it's huge the speed cubing because we had to get a timer so that we could record my kids times and also my kids said oh can we have some cube lube and that's the moment that I was like I'm sorry well as a mother you've got to worry could we have some cube lube is there a brand is it a specifically sold lube there is one of the best cube lube we didn't get good cube lube so it's called cube lube yeah yeah yeah we got dodgy cube lube and it's allowed as well it's it's allowed in competition yeah yeah you're like chalk on your hands if you're an athlete yes well there's just a piece about the you know there are so many cubes the world that's why I've been silent for the last three minutes but by the time I've edited this it'll be about 20 seconds but the and it just listed the GAN 356 iCarry the MoU RS3M Maglev the GAN 11M Pro and it's all there's there's kind of fever of cubing yeah the World Cube Association it's so they corrupt millions and millions of dollars change hands so 1981 the top-selling book in America was a book that was called the Simple Solution to Rubik's Cube sold six million copies and it was the number one book of the year it was massive guy called James G. Norris he was a professor he did it as a pamphlet for his university and then someone saw it said can you expand that into a like 64 page book so it wasn't that big it was double the expansion of the pamphlet and so he published it and in it he gives categories of what you're labeled as as a cuber if you manage to do it in certain times so this is 1981 20 minutes if you did it in that time you were a whiz 10 minutes you were a speed demon five minutes you were an expert and three minutes you were an emcee the master of the cube oh that's what I am yeah you're a master of the cube well in the 80s it's actually been updated since 2013 you're now adult were you James if you take longer than 60 seconds I do I take probably about a minute and a half okay I'm afraid you don't even qualify as a whiz whereas a whiz was 20 minutes it's now 60 seconds speed demon has gone from 10 minutes to 40 seconds oh my god an expert has gone from 5 minutes to 15 to 25 seconds and the master of the cube which is now called world champion from 3 minutes to 3 to 5 seconds that's amazing the difference isn't it I can't even pick it up within 3 seconds my old arthritic fingers because I remember you know I remember the original crates in the 80s I'm old enough for that and it was but it was one of those things that boys would learn to do and this is a terrible sexist generalization but it did tend to be boys would learn to do it thinking it will really impress the girls and all girls just went meh I found that I've never ever pressed a girl with a Rubik's cube I impressed the QI's accountant once with a few Rubik's cubes tricks but he wasn't my type I did because I brought mine in today so I did sit on the tube doing it and people don't look at you with admiration really it's pity honey we'll just have to get up at the next stop is she gonna do it the craze just is unbelievable the 80s craze so it was the UK toy of the

year in 1980 and then again in 1981 as if they just thought we're gonna go to the cube again yeah nothing better so Dan you were mentioning the books that sold on very well so at one point in 1982 I think it was four or five different books on the New York Times bestsellers list for Rubik's cube books there was a boy called Patrick Bossert who was 13 years old and wrote a book called you can do the cube and sold nearly a million copies of it he was the youngest ever author on the New York Times bestseller list and it kind of came from nowhere right like Dan says it was invented in 1974 and this was 1980 in 1981 though it was absolutely huge I looked on the newspaper archives and the first mention of it it doesn't even call it the Rubik's cube it calls it the Hungarian magic cube this was in 1979 this was in the Observer and they said that at first most people tried to take the cube apart but that is not the object and it said if you even get one face done of the cube in 20 minutes then you've done well and it says but there are several people brackets well at least three that are able to solve the cube in less than five minutes right Dan you mentioned that there are 43 quintillion different states that you can have the newspaper said and this was in 1979 at one per microsecond a computer would take around 3000 million years just to count up the number of states and in 2022 we got the first ever quintillion per second computer so today a computer could reach it in just under a minute I think what's extraordinary the numbers are so bamboozlingly big it's about like those I remember reading an interview with Erno Rubik where he was talking about the fact that he'd invented more kinds of Rubik's cubes now and there was a snake Rubik's cube that he'd invented did you buy that Lucy I did have a Rubik's snake which sounds a bit dodgy now why did they call it a snake or the Rubik's tube sorry very nice but he said that and this one has potentially even more permutations and the guy writing the article just went once you've hit 43 quintillion I'm not impressed anymore but what's interesting I so very randomly day before yesterday I bumped into a Rubik's cube Guinness world record holder who's a guy called George he holds two records one which he's just done which I'm not allowed to reveal I got secrets Rubik's cube goss I'll tell you guys after the show the other one is that he has the most Rubik's cubes solved while riding on a skateboard or I think like an hour or something he did like 500 of them just going around a skate park quick question then yeah did he have on him a bag of 500 Rubik's cubes which he then had to get out of the skateboard no yeah yeah yeah yeah it wasn't like Santa yeah he was what he was was he had people stationed around the skate park so he'd hand the solved one to the person they would mix it back up and he'd grab a new one traveling around so they mix them back up again and so he used the same one yeah it feels kind of pointless it's a like a punishment for the gods actually yeah it's a sepien isn't it yeah that's right so he demonstrated one thing I found amazing which is to do with the bamboozling numbers if I took this right now and I mix this up to give to him to solve whatever I've just done here is a combination that he will have never seen yeah in his life every combination is unique because of the 43 quintillion I think what's extraordinary like when it started getting big there was a big concern that is this thing solvable so there was a world fair that he was taken to and he's not a particular he's quite a philosophical guy is quite sort of very serious and he wasn't the best ambassador of what this item was but they needed him there to prove it could be solved otherwise it was the Americans wasn't it yeah they got sent to an American toy company and they thought this is a good toy but it probably can't

actually be done and I think they sent an executive to Budapest to meet Rubik it's like if you can solve this we'll make it and we'll manufacture it and we'll distribute it and then they sold 150 million in the next three years but they sold it thanks to the most famous Hungarian at the time so Rubik obviously couldn't really do all the press and stuff such a great question I'm going Zha Zha Gabor but I can't imagine was it absolutely Zha Zha Gabor, Zha Zha Gabor and Rubik's cube that is not a Venn diagram, amazing right so this is the earliest mention of the actual phrase Rubik's cube I could find this was from 1980 and Zha Zha Gabor had put on a party for the Rubik's cube where she invited all of her Hollywood friends with a buffet of Hungarian delicacies it said but it didn't say what I suppose goulash but I'm not sure what else was there and yet that was she was hired by the ideal toy corporation to promote the to promote the Rubik's cube as she said even if you can't solve it the cube feels so good in your hands it may replace worry beads oh nice like the original fidget spinner or like those new poppers that I mean that is true if you do just play with the Rubik's cube even if you don't solve it it is fun to play with isn't it yeah yeah well especially if you've got cube lube because then it really oh it flies through your hand I saw an interview with him from quite early and he said that children are better than adults solving it which would you agree with that Lucy yeah my own anecdotal experience with Bear the Hand that was Rubik saying that he had a couple of reasons why he thought that kids would be better more nimble wrists I think purely physical terms smaller hands so you know yeah I suppose fearless like I always think with technology my kids will just pick up anything and go blah blah blah whereas I am hovering and I think I overthink it a bit so maybe there's a sort of yeah I think over thinking is kind of one thing he said so he said it requires a certain innocence that children had because adults will try out a pattern and it doesn't quite work out and they'll just never do that again whereas kids will keep trying things and the thing is with the Rubik's cube is it is all algorithms and it's just repeating things again and again and again and so kids are good at that he also said that kids and I think this is probably quite true is certain kids anyway will get very absorbed with one thing and won't let anything else distract them they'll just kind of concentrate on it and do it and the other thing he said is that kids have good visual memory and that is true children can have much better visual and until around 10 or 11 or 12 they have almost idyllic memories that they can just remember things really well do you say anything about the wrist? He didn't mention nimble fingers it's weird because I know Rubik was Hungarian in 1981 the spokesman at the Hungarian Embassy in London said the cube is our secret weapon to pacify the west.

Wow there was even a cartoon did you guys see the cartoon Rubik's cube it's a sentient Rubik's cube that is an alien yeah so great and it was a Rubik's cube that was completely useless if it was out of position so and that could happen quite easily if a passing pigeon knocked it it would just sort of go and it would become useless but if it was in its right sold state it was this powerful sentient thing could he change could he solve himself or did he require he required yeah so it's called Rubik the amazing cube and has and there's I love it his IMDB page has you know goofs one of the goofs is even in its sold state the colours of Rubik are often in the wrong position white is always a cross from yellow correct yeah yeah yeah and so it says in many of its sold states the colours are

sitting next to each other that shouldn't be so yeah what a blue thing but yeah but it was it was actually it was not a long lasting series but it was very much praised because the yeah but it was such a long lasting form but it was the family that the when trusted with the sentient cube was a Latino family and that was not shown on TV really back then it was so it was a very progressive show it was seen as you know it's nice to see a family who aren't white it's the leads in a cartoon bring it back it's what I'm saying they didn't announce a film in 2010 which I'm not sure did they ever saw the light of day with loads of them didn't they lots of them they did loads of toys and they made one or two like battleships they made battleships got made but they also announced Ridley Scott's monopoly which I don't think happened unless I really missed it but they're about to do Tetris as a big series oh yeah a big Netflix series about Tetris and it's a I think guess who would be a very good yeah you know he's very easily recognizable character do you think like a mystery did the suspect wear a hat the weirdest follow-up to knives out yeah operation that'd be another good one great one operation yeah grueling harrowing medical it's his funny bone get the tweezers stop the podcast stop the podcast hi everybody just wanted to let you know we are sponsored this week by Gusto the old Italian cobbler turned meal preparation company who will send you everything you need to create incredible home-cooked meals that's absolutely right there are easy to follow recipe cards which allow you to cook the perfectly proportioned fresh ingredients there are 250 recipes a month that you can choose from have them delivered to your door any day of the week and make wonderful quality meals mama Mia so you get pre-packaged amounts it means that food waste which is a real problem in the world at the moment is helped thanks to the people at Gusto exactly and if you would like to try it then you can get 60% off your first box and 25% of all boxes for the first two months all you need to do is go to [Gusto.co.uk](https://gusto.co.uk) and use the code FISH that's right so go to Gusto G-O-U-S-T-O.co.uk and use the code FISH and you'll get 60% off your first box and 25% of all boxes for two months okay I'm with the podcast okay it is time for fact number two and that is Lucy it is this fact on at least three occasions in the last 16 years the government of Shanghai has tried and failed to stop people wearing pyjamas outdoors which seems I mean famously Chinese authorities are so laissez-faire aren't they they've tried and failed is quite interesting it doesn't say much for the all-powerful machinery of the state you can't even stop people wearing pyjamas out I don't think they've sent the army in I think they've just disapprovingly said you shouldn't do this well I haven't really tried then I think yeah there's been several attempts because it's it's quite a big thing particularly in Shanghai for people to wear pyjamas out and about and it's they think it's partly because in the early 20th century it was a real status symbol to be able to afford imported pyjamas so people would take to the streets in their fire and we're going look I can afford these and slippers and they've got little teddy bears on them or whatever and so it was sort of a status symbol and then it's just become a thing and I mean I'm all into it because I wear pyjamas at all times I'm doing a tour at the moment in which I wear pyjamas so I'm very much on the side on stage yes yes yes because I decided during lockdown there's nothing you can't like if I do a zoom and the other person is wearing something smart I think you absolute loser why would you dress up to have a meeting in your own home especially now you think if they're not wearing three layers and a blanket you think oh showing off you can afford heating so what you're doing then is possibly what they're doing

in China as well which is you've got daytime pyjamas and then you'll go home and you probably have nighttime pyjamas that you wear right this is what they do in China so these aren't the pyjamas they're waking up in and just going out onto the street they'll get out of their pyjamas to put on some pyjamas to then go out into the street yeah they are the day wear pyjamas I can't say that for everyone but that's for a lot of people to be honest I would try and get away with going oh no these are my fancy pyjamas why have they got egg stains all day no no definitely didn't sleep in these definitely didn't they have you ever done a school run or anything in your pyjamas Lucy well do you know I was on them five live the other day because the Prime Minister's wife had gone and done the school run in her slippers except they were like five hundred pounds and five live phoned me up and said oh for our breakfast show tomorrow do you want to do a you know phoning about should you be allowed to wear slippers on the school run and of course I'm desperate to rent my tour so I said yes but the great thing was nobody cared and it was one of those it was lovely when you're part of a sort of supposedly controversial phoning that is not at all controversial did people just phone in and say I don't care yeah they just said well you can wear what you want this is a tantrum do you know the most amazing radio phoning I've ever heard I was in a cab on the way somewhere it was quite a long journey this is 2020 and it was if we get a new royal yacht right yeah should Prince Andrew be allowed to go on it okay yeah it's not going to be a new royal yacht that's just not no and people had such strong opinions this must have been in the first two months of 2020 it was yeah yeah the events overtook that one how do you stand on what should Prince Andrew be allowed on the royal yacht loud um oh god he's actually thinking about it it's a tricky one isn't it because it's a it's a taxpayer funded yacht yeah you know if they're buying their own yacht they can do what they like on it I guess yeah but if we're if I'm paying for this yacht yeah I think I am actually angry about it I think I shouldn't be allowed to go on it what if he's not allowed to come above decks what if he's only allowed in the I think he should be allowed to be in steerage that's fine that's more work you can't keep him like hidden in a basement you don't want to get on that yacht and then discover Andrew down there oh god no they used to use sign language on the old royal yacht did they yeah well because they wanted to keep it quiet for the royals so they had this complicated system of like waving at each other so not typical BSL sign language no sorry they had a specific like a royal yacht based hand language like the people on Ryanair when they need a new tin of Pringles they have a special sign that they make do they yeah yeah the um attendance they have a secret sign language code amazing whatever they've run out of and notice it now next time you've got a flight yeah yeah do they make the shape of a hyperbolic paraboloid for a Pringle I don't know I'm not party to the code but I just I know that that's so good like bookmakers bookmakers yes like tic tac yeah oh nice I can get us back to pajamas go on the other thing they did on the royal yacht was I think they wore soft sole shoes the crew so they weren't stamping around the decks and presumably infuriating princess Margaret or something so they they had a specific you know yeah everything was well speaking of pajamas oh yeah they did used to be outdoor things didn't they hey well they originated in like Persia Ottoman Empire and they were just basically loose fit trousers which you would tie around the waist they were taken by the colonial british and they realized that actually were quite nice to sleep in so that's how they became

pajamas but Coco Chanel thought that we should wear them down the beach and they became really fashionable people wearing pajamas down the beach in the 1920s and 30s really yeah there was a place

called I don't know how to pronounce it it's in France so it's J U A N so is it Juan Juan LePan

I think it is Juan LePan I think it's Juan LePan I've seen it and not been able to pronounce it but I'm going

with Gutsden it feels like Juan LePan feels like the nice way to say it right but it was called pajama land in English and pajama palace in French because there was so many people in pajamas on the beach in that town I think it does come and go as a fashion yeah and there's pockets of it I remember being in Cardiff for quite a long time and there was one area of Cardiff where everybody went out in their pajamas all the time is that right really pajamas or or the ones they slept in I think those are the ones they slept in but it's a fine line between leisure wear but the um there's been shall I tell you about the various attempts to shut down uh pajama wearing in oh yeah so in the 1990s there was an education campaign and they put signs up in Shanghai saying

please don't wear your pajamas 2008 the rickson neighborhood in northeast Shanghai had a public campaign saying don't wear your pajamas but then 2020 in Suzhan city which is near to Shanghai there was a social media post entitled exposing uncivilized behavior increasing the quality of residents and the local government put out various pictures of people who were engaged in antisocial behavior including seven people in pajamas and they used facial recognition technology to find out who they were and put their names up and which what you need there is you need pajamas that have got some sort of balaclava a sleep mask but yeah it does seem extraordinary I think around the Shanghai World Expo in 2010 as well there was quite a campaign to stop people wearing their pajamas yeah that was a big one wasn't it they the government at that one hired sort of 500 members of the public who volunteered to sort of stand at bus stops and just just if someone in pajamas came along go hey that looks daggy you need a change out of that might do you know what kind of pajamas James Bond wears or what he wears to bed

it surely doesn't wear anything I mean because I don't think pajamas are sexy are they can they be sexy well great point because they're obviously fancy silk pajamas which might be sexy or there are sort of grubby cotton ones which might not be or might be but pajamas aren't sexy because they cling it's like you get static unless it's proper yeah yeah that's a problem all the balloons in the house so Anthony Horowitz is a thriller writer he writes you know lots and lots and lots of books and he for a while was the um he wrote James Bond sequels he was the official sanctioned estate's choice for and he wrote a couple of Bond books and one of them was called Trigamortis right and he wanted to great name and in the start of the book in pretty much the opening chapter Anthony Horowitz wrote a description of Bond jumping out of bed naked and he sent

this off to the flaming estate and they got back in touch they said you can't have that because it's official Bond canon in one of the books I can't remember which one it is I think it's you only live twice or something Bond wears a bed jacket which is oh my gosh it's maybe the least sexy item of clothing you could possibly imagine it's kind of buttons up to the neck and it goes down to the knees and I think it's like a sort of wee willy winky night shirt style so he just rewrote it not saying that Bond was naked he just didn't he didn't describe the bed jacket because he thought that would be a way of destroying the character Bond undid the top button of his night

jacket on hung up his nightcap on the side you just imagine a little packet of Renny's in the bucket oh there's a hanky in there how long has that been in there for interestingly for a very long time the the classic trouser pajama with the the the jacket button up kind of thing yeah for a long time worn by men and that changed during World War one this is where women started wearing it this

is according to a professor at the University of Glasgow called Lucy Whitmore who talked about the fact that zeppelin raids meant that whenever you heard the alarm and you needed to run out of your house it got to a point where you became quite conscious of what you were wearing you would come out and you're nighty you might look a bit disheveled and also it's not the most practical thing to be running around in a nighty so so to begin with this at the start of it it would be people would leave very nice looking jackets in a very good spot so that as the raid was happening and they would grab it and go out and look fashionable there was an old lady who suggested leading leaving an emergency to pay by the door as well so you could grab that on the way out and then eventually people started wearing women rather started wearing pajamas and the popular color was dark blue because if you're outside you obviously don't want any zeppelin news come on you don't want to give away i i guess if you're being bombed you want to do everything to stop yourself from being seen right is that also why you need the two-page to stop the bold yeah light reflecting back up yeah dan widley i found the same zeppelin based first world war fact in it i was i went to the library did a bit of research on this one and i've got a there are a couple of books about the history of underclothes and i sat there looking like a dirty old man sitting in the library or you did have your penis out you should never have a hoder cube lose on the uh but almost every page of the book had a a line drawing of some corset or some some girdle or something and i just i was quickly flipping the three lines i'm just here for the pajamas actually i want the least sexy stuff do you know what though anyone looking at that would go that is the most adorable thing if that's how you're getting your kicks i'm looking at line drawings of ladies bed again it's just it's not andrew tate is it let's be honest and what did you find anything extra on the on the underclothes because they were the onesy was sort of invented in that period as well wasn't it we know Winston Churchill used to love wearing a onesy and that was a world war one he called his lake a bilus siren siren siren suits yeah they had slumber suits i think that was later i've only just realized he meant siren suit because of the air raid sirens i was thinking that he would sit on a rock and sing imagine if he had a lovely singing voice we'd have really heard him sing so i wanted to meet them on the beaches we will seduce them on the beaches um most men claim not to wear anything to bed but you're doubting them okay interesting i am doubting them i think photographers have a reputation of being a bit cozy and a bit comfy and a bit you know yes i think there is a sense that men want to be thought of as being tough and rugged and like i don't wear anything to bed even if it's minus four in the house or whatever is there not and now listen i know nothing of the male anatomy i'll put that right out there but is there not do things not get a bit twisted and i would imagine discomfort if you slept completely naked as a man do things not is it not nice all right that's okay is it all right okay good to know good to know thanks for that yeah um never been woken up by that situation never twisted anything or anything it's got a trap under the bed again honey you're gonna have to fold in the fiber game again oh if you tried to leap out for an air raid and you've got it

i feel like that was the one of the weirdest moments ever on our podcast where you had three guys sitting here picturing ourselves naked in bed the poor listeners now of course the mental images please send in your fan art okay it is time for fact number three and that is andy my fact is the flow of the amazon is so big that even a hundred miles into the atlantic you could drink over the side of your ship and the water would still be fresh amazing that's incredible i love it i should tell where i got this fact first of all it's from a guy called thomas puyo on twitter and um i thought that i couldn't believe it when i first read it and so i did a bit more you know looking and some sources say the water's going to be a bit brackish you know it might not be totally sparkling evian style fresh but it would definitely be noticeably less salty so you would not be able to see south america if you were a hundred miles out and you would still get water that was so much less salty if you were let's say you were sailing across the ocean before you knew where you were you could keep tasting the water and as it got less and less salty you could almost find your way to the one incredible idea yeah to navigate your way yeah well sailors must have worked that out yeah because they're very wise there'll be some

sort of sailor you know sailor rhyme like if the water tastes nice if the water tastes nice brazil you'll be in a trice if the water tastes salty then your compass is faulty really there you go um it's so every single day the water that we're talking about that sort of pushes out into the atlantic it's 17 billion metric tons of water that flows out it's hard to work out what that is what that equates to if you were getting fresh water in new york city that's the daily amount for nine years that would be used nine years worth of fresh water in new york city is what goes out daily holy moly atlantic they should move new york yeah i don't know if that's practical but it's weird that we can't somehow harvest it it's just going into it's just disappearing what becoming salty i think it is useful yeah it goes into the water cycle and eventually you know rains down on us yeah but we could use the planet alive no i don't think i think we've done enough mucking around actually maybe we should just make the amazon i actually disagree i think a

huge pike yes the amazon that just takes it all the way to new york brilliant not new york but somewhere that needs fresh water there's lots of places where they don't have water yeah somewhere

closer yeah exactly like new orleans yeah there you go new orleans i can't see you're not working i'm just saying it's a bit of a waste that's 17 billion metric tons it's a waste i really don't think it's a waste donald trump listening to this it's going to be diverted to his golf courses yeah anyway the amazon it's big it's big it blows my mind in fact my mate's got a new brazilian girlfriend and he was saying you know you go to brazil it's just massive mate it's just massive the thing i always find interesting about the amazon is that you can't build bridges yeah because it's too because the width of it varies so much and it's sort of so soft crumbly at the edges so it would have to be such a massive bridge yeah yeah so what they just go across on boats and stuff yeah yeah yeah so and there's yeah i think they've built one now there is one but it's right up it's sort of it's over a tributary right it's the rio negra which is uh which is a tributary of the amazon but it's before it joins the river proper yeah basically so there are no bridges across the amazon amazon and yeah like you say lucy it's during the wet season the amazon is 190 kilometers wide that it's widest that's wide it's really wide imagine from here to stoke yeah maybe stafford somewhere in fact my electric car wouldn't be able to drive if there was a

bridge

that went over that there they would have to be a charging point on that bridge otherwise they wouldn't be able to get that wide that is insane i like that the amazon river is part of effectively an amazon river sandwich it's the it's the meat of of a sandwich in that go on well this is a tortured metaphor i know what you're talking about and even i'm struggling well there's a there's a river below it the hamster and there's a river above it oh is there well there's more there's more water above the amazon river in the clouds above the actual amazon itself the clouds kind of follow the shape of the river yeah i believe so yeah that's clever it's water vapor stream isn't it yeah it's amazing yeah i think it's 20 billion tons 20 billion metric tons of water yeah and that's incredible more water than is actually in the in the river itself they say yes isn't it something like every tree in a like a big tree in the amazon perspires or transpires or whatever it is a thousand liters of water in a day yeah that's right one tree sweats it out yeah one tree and then underneath you've got the the hamster yes so secret underground river it's the you you can only get to it if you defeat an Aztec boss on the final level so yeah so under the amazon there is a sort of aquifer that is even wider even bigger even bolder even brasher it's amazon 2 the revenge and it's yeah the river hamster named after the um strictly winner this year obviously oh not abu hamster it's got a big hook in it yeah range of hamster yeah and it's very it's quite recently discovered isn't it so hamster was the name of the head of the team that discovered it and um it's very low down 4000 meters below the river itself wow super slow moving to the point where you can't really call it a river like it's it's not flowing it moves at one millimeter an hour yeah that's flowing i relate to this river very very slow low down if you drop something in it you'll be reunited with it quite quickly you won't be swept away suddenly you gave a boost it would be quite low stakes didn't it the giant amazon leech which you find in the amazon river do you think it's longer or shorter than the world's longest cattail now i actually know the length of the leech but i have no idea but that's the difficulty of this quiz question you actually need two quite arcane bits of knowledge to even make a guess i think the longest cattail is not that long really well this is domestic cat okay thank you okay very great because i oh right here here we go i think the leech is about a forearm i think it's about 18 inches okay the like the biggest giant leech yeah yeah so is the cats the longest ever cattail longer shorter than 18 inches i'd say cat this gives it away a bit it's a fern dale cat fern dale well now you've made it too easy and actually i don't want to submit an answer anymore is it exactly the same length well andy is spot on with the 18 inches for the amazon leech um and the longest cattail according to Guinness is 17 inches do you think that the giant amazon leech is longer or shorter than the height of the world's tallest donut right so it's good now we know we've got 18 inches yeah put the donut down flat

yeah so not the diameter not the realm this is how tall it goes i think the donut's taller yeah no i think it's still the leech yeah andy knows his stuff

tallest donut 16 inches tall it was quite wide in fairness right yeah but actually what's that foot no foot no heart i mean that's a tall that's a tall donut i could eat that i want the world's biggest donut to be a donut that i was like i couldn't eat that because it helps yeah you could make novelty donuts that big or like the ring road of a small town exactly oh this is a great quiz that's the end of it well i loved it i had a great time have you heard of the amazon tall tower observatory no this is a cool thing okay so this is and it's a really new thing as well actually so it's an observatory it's um but not a space observatory it's to observe is to look down

at the amazon and so it's in the middle of the rainforest and uh the trees are what are tall trees are about 80 to 100 meters aren't they like a good tall tree is up to you know that's a really tall tree 100 meters and the tower that's yeah i think the tallest ever tree is about 120 meters like the tallest ever measured you know but this tower is 325 meters okay it's a it's a tall it's about as tall as the eiffel tower which actually is really tall when you when you look at it the eiffel tower yeah well busting some myths today out me i never think of it as tall but actually if you i went there it's big the eiffel tower it's big you can see it from a long way away exactly and this is it's much thinner than the eiffel tower it's just one needle going up okay from the like it looks it looks mad this thing and it was up the eiffel tower once go in a restaurant and um we had a table next to the window it's really nice and it was over looking the bridge and what you would see is they have these guys playing you know we have three cups

and you have to hide the ball and just taking loads of money and then about every 20 minutes the police would turn up and they would leg it and then you could watch them go all the way down the river over the next bridge back over again and then back on the bridge and then start playing again and then the police would turn up it was like a cat and mouse of i really thought you were going to say that from your perspective on the eiffel tower you can see which carpet was under i just yelled that middle one that's what i was thinking your wife's down there looking up you've got a special cup ball sign language you've developed how are they doing it we have never been fucked before what's done that restaurant too we didn't get a window seat no well you need for what is the point are their tables with don't have window seats in the eiffel tower you've been just looking at a big piece of iron they really saw you coming was it on the ground floor was it i mean was it did you get the basement table is she a prince andrew so didn't know pizza express was it for us wow oh that's funny i didn't i didn't is the restaurant still going is there is there is a silver i think it's cold i wasn't even i didn't even get into the restaurant we need it we'll go together yeah i'd love that um so this tall tree oh yeah this observatory is 325 meters and it's it's actually it's one meter taller than the eiffel tower um and it's got 1500 steps up to it it takes about an hour to walk up to the top i don't i don't know if there's a lift actually and basically it's just to sniff sniff the breath of the forest you know that they're measuring all the chemicals in the air where there are forest fires you know they measure the concentrations and how dangerous that is and deforestation they can you know they can

tell things about that and the tree emissions and it's just i just think it's amazing imagine you go up you've forgotten your glasses okay it is time for our final fact of the show and that is james okay my fact this week is that while playing a psychiatric patient in one flew over the cuckoo's nest danie de vito ended up becoming a psychiatric patient himself was he was he going method um some people did go method we might get to that but de vito's problem really is quite sweet actually um he had recently um gotten together with rhea perlman the actor um the amazing rhea and cheers right just to put her head in your in your car and yeah uh and obviously they were filming or not obviously but they were filming a long way away from where she was uh three thousand

miles in fact and so he was really missed her and in order to deal with that separation he invented an imaginary friend to talk to at night and he became a little bit concerned about his mental health perhaps because they were making this film and there was a lot of it in the air

um uh and so he decided to see the doctor onset who was called dr brux and asked for his advice and dr brux said yeah don't worry about it as long as you're aware that it's an imaginary friend imaginary friend's perfectly normal thing to have it's no problem at all yeah but also that doctor the onset doctor was actually in the movie of course was he yeah so brux yeah so he but an amazing man because he owned the clinic in which they filmed it so it's no wonder they were all a little bit stir crazy because they were in an actual mental institution filming this very intense movie and he's the one who sort of checks in jack Nicholson's character McMurphy at the start of the film and interviews him and he I think I think I don't know if he was going to be in it but he was really insistent that everyone in the institution all the patients got involved with the film he was quite forward thinking you know he took lots of the patients on expeditions he took the white water rafting and he taught them kind of to rappel down cliffs and things like I mean like really because this was in the 70s they were filming it was pretty progressive at the time and I think about 90 inmates ended up involved in the film in some capacity or another yeah I must say I haven't seen the film it's pretty amazing yeah I've heard very good things about it so I will try and watch it and I started reading the book this week and got about a third of the way through but I think the book's amazing yeah yeah and apparently the film's even better so they're both I'll tell you what was even better was a stage production that was put on about 20 years ago 2004 I was in a stage production. Who were you? Were you the giant Native American? Yes that's me Chief Brompton that was me um well no do you know what though so we did this basically so it was Christian Slater from Heathers etc came over and was McMurphy so and it was amazing because it was

at that time there weren't that many Western shows with big Hollywood stars McMurphy being Jack Nicholson's role in the movie exactly yes the main guy and um and I played I played a nurse who had about two lines and I some of my friends came to see it and they said oh we just thought you were being modest because I said I'm playing a nurse who mumbled over the cookie's nest and I'm like oh we thought you were just being modest and you were playing nurse ratchet but you really were just a nurse who has two lines because Francis Barber was nurse ratchet and Mackenzie Crook was in it and wow Mackenzie Crook yeah yeah he played Billy the sort of little shy oh yeah that's a good that's a good role for him I can say yeah yeah and should we super quickly just say what the basic premise is just for anyone who hasn't seen it it's a bit confused oh god we should shouldn't we yeah it's it's Jack Nicholson is um god I it's been so yeah so yeah Jack Nicholson plays McMurphy who is this sort of tear away who is sent to this secure psychiatric facility at which nurse ratchet is this horrible nurse who sort of rules with the reign of terror over everybody and I think there is one nice nurse though isn't there who just has a couple of lines there is the star of the entire production is that nice nurse yeah um and then the um Indian chief oh spoilers are we worried about that I think it came out quite a long time ago yeah so anyway Jack Nicholson kind of creates this air of chaos and rebellion in the place and rebels against nurse ratchet and then the chief Brompton the Native American chief uh some others in with the pillow we should maybe say that Jack Nicholson's character suffers a lobotomy oh yes sorry yeah not just the chief Brompton wants to restore order in the hospital exactly it's a mercy killing basically yeah and the whole sort of thing is it's not hey we're not mad society's mad and who you know yeah all of that stuff and there's a bit of a book where McMurphy finds out that all the patients are allowed to leave if they want to they just don't he he's incredibly freaked out by says why don't you just go home you're allowed and he says well I'm I'm not ready to

and you know the person is so it's amazing anyway um it sounds like it was a very tense filming experience in lots of ways as well because you had a lot of big personalities you had um Ken Casey who wrote the book and then ended up hating the film never watched it once he once started watching it when it was just on tv and then he realized what filming was watching and changed channel and then so the director was Milos Forman and Jack Nicholson and Milos Forman

had a big disagreement about McMurphy's character and basically it's very ordered and then Jack Nicholson arrives and he turns the place upside down and Milos Forman wanted it to be more like it was already chaotic and then he arrives and he sort of draws the patients together and they become a team they had a big falling out over that and they would end up they ended up they were only talking to each other through the cinematographer so it would have to be kind of so can you tell Jack Nicholson to actually this way I mean it just sounds so tense but Danny DeVito as well because he like I mean I'm a huge fan of Danny DeVito and remembered him as Lou in Taxi the sort of doer dispatcher but he um when he was in Matilda they actually played Matilda said that actually although he was playing a horrible dad she but he actually became like a really lovely father figure to her and then you know in Mum Play with the Cookies next you could argue that he actually was playing a sort of psychiatric patient but he was taking care of his mental health what I'm saying is he's always the opposite of how he appears and actually in twins if you put him and Arnold Schwarzenegger together he's taller

what a film what a movie he was um inducted into the New Jersey Hall of Fame in 2010 so I thought I'd look at some other people who are in New Jersey Hall of Fame so you've got Buzz Aldrin Frank Sinatra oh okay do you have to be from New Jersey can I just ask well uh Thomas Edison is there born in Ohio okay Yogi Berra born in Missouri Harriet Tubman born in Maryland and Albert Einstein not even born in America so we've all got a shot at the New Jersey Hall of Fame proud son of New Jersey I think you have to have lived there for a while because um Einstein works in Princeton of course oh that's great on one for over yeah it was nearly defeated by the Cold War it didn't get turned into a film because of the Iron Curtain oh yeah you know this this is cool so I didn't know so the the book came out in the early 60s and um Michael Douglas no sorry Keck Kirk Douglas yeah bought the rights he was in the play he was in the first play version and then the film is actually based on the play not on the book which is maybe why Ken Casey hated the film but so Kirk Douglas was the initial McMurphy which is mad it's so strange for imagine now because it's so Jack Nicholson's role and then he bought the rights and he wrote to Milos Forman in Czechoslovakia and said got this great play got the rights to it think it should be a film I'll send you a copy of the book Milos Forman said great the book was then seized by

Czech customs in 1963 and it took more and Forman was really annoyed because Kirk Douglas said I'll

send you a book never sent the book rude Kirk Douglas was very annoyed because Milos Forman never

said thank you for the book rude it took a decade to sort out this misunderstanding between them the film was made in something like 1975 I think I mean yeah yeah it took a long time and eventually Kirk Douglas gave the rights to his son Michael who then said should we just try again with this book thing and we think that the sorry to interrupt do we think that the Czech customs didn't let the book go initially because they were worried that it was seditious or maybe it's not clear it's not

it's not clear why it was seized maybe they just wanted to read it I don't know if it was like the rubies cube but going in the opposite direction yeah I've no idea yeah I genuinely I don't know what the reason was I wonder Kessie was quite notorious as a LSD proponent he was quite famous with the counterculture of America at that point he had a bus that he used to take everyone on what a radical free thinker psychedelic bus oh my god multi-coloured bus oh we've got that we have those all the time we've got London buses are bright red that's what it represented he had they were called the merry pranksters and they used to and Tom Wolf wrote a whole book about this it was a non-fiction book about these guys who just would go around they used to do things like they would have people playing flutes on the top of the bus who feel buses where people have been playing the flute were they on LSD yeah probably just a public safety warning do not take acid on a London bus you really it's not a friendly environment to do that but it is possible it was the counterculture thing and his name was very much associated with that that's a good point I don't know if it was as possible it's interesting because he was an author already at this point Kessie before he wrote one flew over the cuckoo's nest and he was working on a book called zoo and in order to fund it he needed a job so he worked at a psychiatric ward in order to fund it and the book idea came to him when one night he was in there I think he was cleaning and he was on peyote and he was tripping and he saw a full-blown chief brumden there as a sort of vision just a psychedelic

what's peyote yeah sorry oh sorry is it like a cactus or something yeah it's like a cactus which you yeah say it's a drug sorry I know it is a word and I know it's a drug but I can't tell you the specifics come on I do this big old square sorry not to hurt peyote yeah um but he said he saw a full blown native american he said indian chief brum the solution the whole mothering key to the novel and that's how he wrote of the novel because in the novel he's the main like the narrator right the narrator sorry and in the movie not he's not and that's why kessie immediately hated it it wasn't told from the perspective of him he's a big character in it but he's he's not yeah yeah interestingly um the guy who got the role of chief brumden got it because michael douglas was sitting next to a used car dealer on a plane and the used car dealers dad was an acting agent who had a load of native american actors on his books and so and the thing about chief brumden is he's about eight feet tall in the thing and and so and michael douglas got a phone call saying i was just met the tallest native american guy you've ever seen and it was will something i can't remember his name who yeah but anyway he got the role was will samson will samson samson nice name for someone incredibly tall and he's got long hair wow oh my god it's perfect so this this movie was made in in an actual as we've said hospital uh that was originally it was called the oregon state mental hospital it's since been renamed as now oregon state hospital and it's a it's an interesting place in its own right it had a really controversial bit which was they found 5000 canisters of unclaimed human remains in there and this was yeah this was a lot of the patients who had been cremated but no one had to collect them and they they put out the list they found all the names of the people and a lot of relatives distant relatives came and reclaim them yeah and there was a there's a documentary called the library of dust that was made about it um it's tragic yeah yeah it was pretty it was pretty mad but also they had a railroad underneath the hospital specifically built one so that they could deliver items to different bits of the hospital but also to transport patients that they didn't want the members of the public to have to come across if they were visiting the hospital because they were worried something might go wrong dangerous dangerous you know all that sort of stuff and some of the tunnels possibly

are still there but you just walk them now or use bicycles it's just prince andrew and then oh my god yeah and then they had a horrible thing i found just horrible things about it unfortunately 1942 there was a mass poisoning by accident they were serving scrambled eggs and they accidentally and and 47 people died from this um they used instead of powdered milk they used sodium fluoride which is a poison you would use to kill cockroaches and that was accidentally added to the scrambled eggs in 47 i used to work as a um in a kitchen we had a Christmas party and instead of putting white sauce on the Christmas pudding they put garlic sauce on which is a very less problematic version of what you just said it's good to know you can relax haven't just said it's easily done yeah it's easily done gosh i want to use cube lube instead of instead of what twisted sideways didn't it should we just quickly mention louise flature who was she played nurse ratchet in the film and died last year sadly um but she was amazing and she i think she kept herself separate from the rest of the cast didn't she for a lot of the filming so that she could be an icy authority figure and did you do that when you were in the the play i'm always an icy authority in every situation i keep myself well didn't she also take all the clothes off though at one point yeah the end of filming wasn't it yeah she'd go look hey guys look at this all along i was fun it was her saying i'm fun that's right yeah she got she i think she had her underwear on i don't think she was fully naked maybe she was fully naked she wasn't that much fun i'm fun but i'm not like fun there must be a better way like bring in some cupcakes to grace yourself with their colleagues just wait till the end of this podcast but yeah she um there were two others so was an bancroft and angela landsbury were both offered the role but turned it down because they didn't want to appear so evil on screen wow this was in a no-bit tree of louise flature that i read um and also it said in this that she was repeatedly turned down from roles because she was five foot ten and in those days a lot of the leading men were much shorter than that and she couldn't play roles opposite people who were shorter or about the same height and actually in the nurses cap she'll be more than six foot you know and jack nilson is quite i think he's what a short guy but it really works for the authority for the sort of power struggle happening between them i just think she's brilliant she's on star trek that's right yeah she was a character on star trek oh yeah that's right wow um and she she said that she found her role so disturbing that she also couldn't watch the film it's star trek or yeah yeah aliens are scary yeah um did she as in as nurse ratchett she she found it really hard and she she just found it too disturbing to watch as a wow it is incredible actually the last time i watched it which was a couple of years ago the person i was watching it with sided with nurse ratchett which didn't make me think no hang on you've taken the wrong message there and she said no no no look the point is she's someone's got to keep order um yeah she's just doing a job she's just doing a job from where everyone's running the place it would be an absolute we may have one last thing just about ken cassey the author because he was a pretty amazing author um his method for a certain period when he was riding was to be completely off his head on drugs and he would write a crazy amount then in the morning he'd sober up and become his own editor so he'd sort of say okay what who let's see what the author's written and chop out all the junk and get down to the good meat of it wow that's clever yeah apart from presumably the first draft was absolute bullshit it just didn't make any sense at all and then you'd think but hang what if the editor was drunk as well but a different or i'll take different drugs the copy editor will be sober so that'll be fine yeah okay as long as the printer is sober it'll be fine okay that's it that is all of our facts thank you so much for

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