A US man says he swiped his debit card at a service station to buy a packet of cigarettes and was charged more than 29 quadrillion dollars. The man checked his account online a few hours after the purchase and saw the 17-digit number — a stunning $US23,148,855,308,184,500 (twenty-three quadrillion, one hundred forty-eight trillion, eight hundred fifty-five billion, three hundred eight million, one hundred eighty-four thousand, five hundred dollars) or $A29.14 thousand trillion. The bank corrected the error the next day.

An American writer who failed to find a publisher for his novel is putting the book on Twitter — 140 characters at a time. The San Francisco-based novelist began “Tweeting” his first book, The French Revolution, on the micro-blogging service this week. He said it would take about 3700 “Tweets” to transmit all of the 480,000 characters in his book.

Men have long known it’s best to play it cool during courtship, but camels appear to have taken the advice literally. Research from the University of Queensland has found the key to a bull’s reproductive success could be a lowered body temperature. The research found male camels have the ability to drop their body temperature, which may help them last longer in rutting displays.

Couples living together before marrying stand a higher chance of divorce than those who wait until they are engaged or married before shacking up, research in the Journal of Family Psychology has found. It also found couples who lived together before marrying had lower marriage satisfaction. More than 70 per cent of couples in the US live together before marrying.