

THE LAIR

by

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In a world where magic is written in code and power is measured in logic, there stands the grand citadel of learning known as the Cebu Institute of Technology University.

To the outside world, it is a school, but to those who walk its halls, it is a proving ground for the next generation of digital pioneers.

A new student arrives, fresh from high school, ready to master the arcane arts of Information Technology and earn a degree. But this is no ordinary education. The path to graduation is a legendary quest—a journey through seven great trials. Each trial is overseen by a formidable instructor, guardians of knowledge who test only the worthy.

To succeed, one must journey through realms of programming, conquer challenges of data, and command the very foundations of technology itself.

The greatest tests lie not in simple exams, but in **battles of wit and creativity** against the masters.

The first trial awaits. The quest for knowledge begins now.

Chapter 1 - THE FIRST TRIAL

The grand doors creak open. A faint glow of runes lights the stone chamber. At the far end, **Ma'am Cathy, Keeper of First Flames**, rises—robes flowing like ink, eyes sharp with wisdom.

MA'AM CATHY: “Welcome, initiates. Before you lies the foundation of all magic in this citadel. The language of logic. The symbols of creation. Many falter here, for without a strong beginning, no journey can be completed.”

The runes flicker, forming incomplete lines of code upon the walls. The chamber hums with expectation.

MA'AM CATHY: “Choose your champion. Each of you holds potential, but only one may face the First Trial today.”

CHOOSE YOUR CHARACTER:

1. **Iben Anoo** // to add character descriptions, skills.
2. **Gaille Amolong**

3. **Jamuel Bacus**
4. **Ilde Jan Figueras**
5. **Joseph Jimenez**

// to define available characters for player selection

// to list character names, descriptions, and skills for branching paths

// to set up initial character routes (story branches start here)

// to provide player choice options that trigger different narrative outcomes

// to mark character selection menu (game mechanic, not story text)

The chosen student steps forward. The chamber hums louder, the runes shifting to reflect their presence. Ma'am Cathy raises her staff, and the fragments scatter across the walls, forming shimmering puzzles of light and logic.

MA'AM CATHY: "Then face the First Trial. These runes are fragments of creation itself — incomplete, imperfect. To pass, you must restore them to order. But remember: the Trial does not measure only your skill. It measures restraint, wisdom, and focus."

The runes pulse in rhythm, glowing sequences drifting closer, demanding response.

PUZZLE 1:

SOLVE:

```
for (int i = 0; i < 5; i++)  
    printf("%d\n", i);
```

OUTCOME:

Choice 1: for (int i = 0; i < 5; i++) printf("%d\n", i); **The rune glows steady. The chamber hums approvingly. (+1 Logic)**

Choice 2: for (int i = 0; i < 5; i++); printf("%d\n", i); **The rune sparks violently; a backlash lashes at you. -1 HP**

PUZZLE 2:

SOLVE:

```
int recurse(int x) {  
    return recurse(x + 1);  
}
```

OUTCOME:

Choice 1: `int recurse(int x) { if (x == 0) return 1; return recurse(x + 1); }` **The rune stabilizes and fades calmly. (+1 Wisdom)**

Choice 2: Call it as-is (run it now). **The rune implodes with a sickening crunch. -1 HP and disorientation.**

PUZZLE 3:

SOLVE:

```
int x = 0;  
if (x = 1) {  
    printf("Success\n");  
}
```

OUTCOME:

Choice 1: `if (x == 1) { printf("Success\n"); }` **The rune fades peacefully, satisfied by either clarity or restraint. (+1 Logic)**

Choice 2: Leave it as-is and run it **he rune snarls and spits sparks — your logic falters. -1 HP.**

One by one, glowing sequences drift closer, challenging the initiate to respond. A simple loop missing its anchor. A tangled recursion without an exit. A false promise of truth hidden behind elegant syntax. The chamber waits to see how they will act.

At last, the student reaches out. The first rune stabilizes under their touch. The others follow, one by one, until the chamber fills with a steady, golden light. The Trial accepts the effort. The path is open.

If HP > 0 and at least 2 puzzles solved:

Ma'am Cathy nods, eyes alight with approval.

MA'AM CATHY: "Well done. The flame has taken root. But do not mistake a spark for a blaze. Greater trials await you beyond these doors."

If HP ≤ 0 or only 1 puzzle solved: The student staggers, barely holding their ground.

The chamber dims.

MA'AM CATHY: "You endure, but you walk a dangerous path. A careless coder is a dangerous mage. Remember this lesson."

REWARDS:

Trait Gained: Initiate of the Flame

Symbolizes mastery over the basics of programming logic.

+1 to **Logic** permanently.

Once per future trial, you may retry a failed puzzle (a "second chance").

NPCs acknowledge you as someone who has "kindled the first flame" — opens unique dialogue.

+1 Logic, +1 Wisdom (if solved correctly)

HP may decrease with mistakes.

Access unlocked → Second Trial: The Labyrinth of Data

//CHAPTER 2