

Chapter -50

Question #6: *Where are your parents?*

“My mom died of an opioid overdose and my dad was stabbed to death in jail,” I said.

“I think both my parents are still alive,” Bee answered.

“Wait, really?” Panda said. “I was certain you had a grim upbringing and your dark past had molded you into the person you are today.”

“That’s actually very mean,” she replied. “My childhood was nice and my parents are good people.”

“So why *all this*?” he asked, gesturing to her entire body.

“Panda, people can be weird without having undergone trauma,” I explained.

“I prefer the term ‘neurodivergent’,” Bee said.

“Wait, is this a trick question again?” I wondered.

“Maybe the trick is that there is no trick,” she guessed.

“So, literally then?”

“My parents are probably at home, making do with a generator or something.”

I shrugged. “Let’s try answering it literally then.”

“Our answer is: My parents are at home—”

“And mine are dead and buried.”

Correct!

We were unable to verify the location of either of your parents, due to your statuses as entities outside the System’s rules.

“Huh, another one of those...”

“I guess it helps that they default to ‘correct’ when they can’t confirm your answers,” Panda said, though there was a slightly-sour note to his voice.

Question #7: *What’s a robots favorite snacks?*

“Wait... is that a dad joke question?”

“Our answer is: Computer chips!” Bee yelled excitedly.

Panda groaned.

Correct!

While a robot’s favorite snack is computer chips, the System’s favorite snack is suffering.

Question #8: Return *true* if the given non-negative number is 1 or 2 more than a multiple of 20, such that the following results are achieved:

more20(20) → *false*

more20(21) → *true*

more20(22) → *true*

The glass divider to the front seats suddenly became a whiteboard and a black marker pen landed on the seat between us. The question was also written on the board.

“What the fuck is this question!?” I exclaimed.

“What language?” Bee asked.

You may decide.

“Java then.”

“You understand that question?”

“It’s a programming question,” she replied.

“You know programming??”

“Of course.”

Panda shook his head. “Go figure that I got stuck with the moron.”

Bee scribbled a few numbers, words, and a strange collection of symbols:

```
public boolean more20 (int n) {  
    return n % 20 == 1 ||  
           n % 20 == 2;  
}
```

“This is our answer.”

Correct!

There are several ways to answer this logic puzzle, but this one works and is succinct.

“Damn, nice work! I would’ve been completely lost on that one.”

“She’s really carrying this whole thing,” Panda remarked, while giving me a look.

“I don’t like that you’re implying I’m dumb all the time,” I told him.

“Yeah, it’s really not very nice,” Bee agreed.

Question #9: *Which insect shorted out an early supercomputer and inspired the term ‘computer bug’?*

A: *Moth*

B: *Roach*

C: *Fly*

D: *Japanese Beetle*

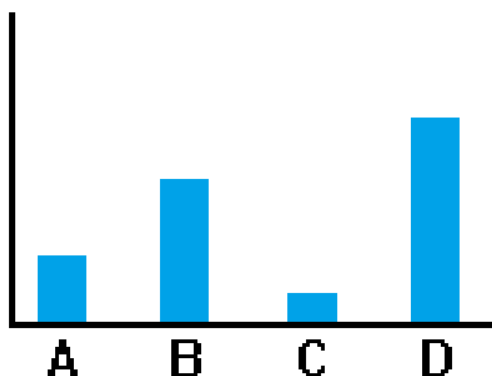
“Hm, probably a roach,” I said. “Those bastards get everywhere.”

“Definitely not a fly,” Panda muttered.

“I think I know the answer,” Bee said. “But let’s try to ‘Ask the Audience’.”

You have chosen to ‘Ask the Audience’.

Here is the results of their votes:



“That was fast,” I remarked, looking at the graph that’d appeared on the whiteboard in front of us.

“I don’t know if we can trust them,” Bee said. She had no doubt also seen the message left by the ghosts on the glass earlier.

“Maybe they want us to think that we can’t trust them.”

“Or maybe,” Panda started, “they want us to think that’s what they want us to think.”

“So the answer is C?”

“No, it’s obviously A.”

“I don’t understand your logic,” I told him.

“It’s okay, Gambit, I was fairly sure it was a moth anyway,” Bee said in Panda’s defense.

I nodded. “Then, our answer is: A – A Moth.”

Correct!

A moth is the right answer.

“Phew.”

Question #10: *In addition to his career as an astrologer and ‘prophet’, Nostradamus published a 1555 treatise that included a section on what?*

A: *Training parrots to talk*

B: *Cheating at card games*

C: *Digging graves*

D: *Making jams and jellies*

“Why do I get the feeling that these last two were ripped straight from ‘*Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*’...”

Estimated time until arrival:

1 minute

The Taxi had noticeably picked up a lot of speed and was shooting down the road. In actuality, we’d probably only been driving for 15 minutes, way short of the 40-minute duration we’d been told at the beginning. Somehow it felt like a deliberate mistake to trip us up.

“I don’t know the answer to this one!” Bee announced worriedly. “And we just used up our last lifeline!”

“Don’t worry, you still have three lives,” Panda said.

Failing to answer correctly will result in you getting a different question and losing 1 of your lives.

“Actually, scratch that, do worry!” Panda said. “We’re running out of time!”

“What do we do!?” Bee asked, panicking suddenly. I realized she was bad with deadlines and working under pressure.

But then I cleared my throat dramatically. “I know the answer.”

“Yeah, yeah, and the moon is made of cheese,” Panda scoffed.

“Our answer is: D,” I said confidently.

Correct!

His recipe for Cherry Jelly is quite delicious.

“See, told you I knew it.”

Bee grabbed my hand excitedly and swung it up-and-down. “We did it! Yay!”

“Too bad we won’t end up being millionaires though.”

“I thought you rejected Capitalism,” Panda commented.

“That was only because I was poor.”

The Taxi came to a stop, and the cold mist around us died down, as did the hands pressing themselves against the windows and glass divider.

Congratulations!

You have reached your destination and answered all 10 questions correctly without losing a single life.

You may want to exit the vehicle.

Then the Taxi began to rumble, as our seatbelts popped loose and the doors flung open.

“Get out, quick!” Panda said.

I grabbed him by the arm and hurried out of my side, just as Bee leapt out of hers.

A second later the Taxi blew up, leaving behind a glowing wisp and sending chunks of the sentient vehicle raining down around us. We were in the middle of an asphalt road jammed full of vehicles, with a familiar and ominous track of *something* having dragged its body through the road. The track was a lot bigger than the one that’d been left behind by the Humanbus, and that was when I remembered that Downtown Castleburg had a metro that was connected to Madeville for some reason...

Around us were tall office buildings, the wide road we were in the middle of, sizeable pedestrian paths on the sides of it, and an offramp to the highway heading west to Madeville and east towards Boston. There were a lot of shops around as well, hugging the office buildings. Further north was where the rich of Castleburg lived, such as the Mayor, but the Police Station wasn’t far from where we were.

An achievement appeared, alongside a gooey brownish-black raisin the size of an orange and a dinner-plate-sized coin.

Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement! ^x
<i>‘Who Wants to Survive the Ride?’</i> Completed a Taxi’s mini-game.
<i>You’re not as dumb as you look, but you can always use more brains. Fret not, however, the Taxi doesn’t need its own anymore, so you can have it.</i>
<i>Since you also didn’t lose a single life, we have added a bonus reward.</i>
Reward: <i>‘Taxi Brain’ & 50x ‘GAME Coins’</i>

“I got a level from that,” Bee said. She was already back on her feet and inspecting the Leftovers from the Taxi. “It dropped 100 Game Coins. Let’s split them again.”

I stood up as well, wiping a bit of Taxi gunk from my hair. The rest of its spattered mess had failed to stick to my carapace suit, which was pretty handy, as I was sure it wasn’t the last time I’d get showered in viscera and gore.

Before I could suggest that we head for the Police Station, a familiar-and-annoying voice reappeared.

Players of Castleburg and Madeville, as well as the environs that I won’t waste the time naming.

Although we are still more than a day ahead of schedule, it is now time to introduce you to aforementioned systems that have finally been activated in the **GREAT GAME.**

That’s right, up until now, you have merely been partaking in the **Tutorial, with the **WEAPONLUTION EVENT** serving as your exam to test how much you’ve learnt.**

The real **GAME starts now.**