

49 — System-Enforced Reconciliation?

I couldn't believe what I was seeing, as Imu showed me the list of requirements for my next evolution. Not only were the requirements absurdly arduous and hyper-specific, but they also went against all my careful planning for my settlement and its beautiful people.

“You colluded with the System to make these!” I complained to Imu.

“As if I had that kind of power,” he remarked humourlessly. “Besides, these requirements were more-or-less set in stone since the beginning.”

“Then why didn't you tell me!?”

“Well, our genius System decided to make it impossible for me to reveal stuff, so...”

I let out a trilling croak sigh. I couldn't believe it, as I stared at the words that floated in the air, which had startled the many non-minions people who had taken up residence in my city, nay, Capital, as of late. They were eagerly murmuring amongst each other, wondering what they were seeing.

“Can *they* read this?” I wondered out loud.

“Of course not.”

“Phew...”

The revelation of what I was required to undertake would no doubt spark a second rebellion if my minions found out.

[*Evolution Requirements*]

Capital => Nation

- *Have at least ten species thriving with your territory* -
- *Create a lasting peace between Toadkin and Frogkind* -
- *Evolve a Lord to King after one is chosen by popular vote, as decided upon by the denizens of your territory* -
- *Have three generations of Royalty born under your King's lineage* -
 - *Defeat the Crusade of the Church of Light* -
 - *Spread the Toaddom religion to neighbouring nations* -
- *Create a National Diet of elected citizens to advise the King on laws and governance, such that the will of people is included in his rule* -

- *Takeover three cities of Castle Town rank or higher, either through warfare or diplomacy*
-
- *Make at least ten million Toaken in profit from sales within or without your territory* -
- *Find a Relic of Divine Power* -
- *Conjure a National Guardian by combining a Rare Animal with a Divine Relic and infusing it with your essence* -
- *Build a Graveyard and evolve a Gravekeeper* -

“How am I even supposed to facilitate peace-talks between Toads and Frogs, when *we* are so evolved and they’re still hopping around in ponds and whatnot!?”

“Well, actually, a few Frogs have already naturally evolved into humanoids.”

“What!? When!?”

“Ages ago. They beat Toads by a few centuries at least.”

“Nonsense! That cannot be!”

Imu looked poised to argue back, but then it hit me:

“...It was those damned princesses and wizards! They turned the frogs into princes, didn’t they!?”

“I’m not sure that’s how it went, but let’s just say some wizards were no doubt involved. Your kind would never have hopped out of the ponds and gained sentience otherwise.”

“You take that back!”

“What’s the big deal anyway,” Imu said. “Toads and Frogs are basically the same.”

“Ah! I can’t believe what I’m hearing!” I replied. “All this time you’ve been a vile specist, who treats all other species like scum!”

“At the risk of repeating myself: *look who’s talking...*”

“I refuse to follow this sick demand of a clearly-twisted System!”

“Don’t you want to evolve?”

“I, erm, screw this!”

“You don’t mean that.”

“I most definitely do! Watch me!” I told him, then began hopping away.

Imu quickly ran over to me and jumped on my back, holding on tight.

“Toad! You have to evolve! I don’t want to be stuck like this forever! Please!”

“Absolutely not!” I cried and leapt from the ground, taking the chubby fairy with me as I sailed across my city, many of the non-minions looking up as I flew across the sky, before plummeting back down into the eastern district, with all its industry of war and disparate living conditions.

As though led there by the scheming hand of Fate, we happened to land directly in front of a weird looking minion.

Minion! I ordered. *Get this fat fairy off my back!*

The Minion did not move a hair, but just continued staringly dumbfounded at us.

“What’s wrong with you!” I yelled at him, using my voice. “Get this chubby bastard off me!”

It took the Minion another second of hesitation before he moved towards me, but by then Imu had already gotten off by himself and was laughing hysterically. He swiped his hand through the air and a blob of shadow appeared beside him, bring Goldie to his side from wherever she had been waiting in the city.

“What’s so funny!?” I yelled in anger, feeling very mocked. And in front of a minion no less!

“Look at *him!* Like, really look!”

I turned towards the Minion that Imu was pointed at, then narrowed my eyes.

WARNING: *Activating unrestricted God-like Appraisal!*

“NO!! You goddamn idi—!”

<i>‘Fred Frogson’</i>	
Species:	<i>‘Frogkind’</i>
Level:	12/100
Age:	32
Gender:	Male
Weight:	68 kilos (74 with current equipment)
Relationship Status:	Involuntarily Single
Plane of Existence:	<i>‘The Mundane Realm’</i>
Continent:	<i>‘Malbia’</i>
Country of Origin:	<i>‘Lleman’</i>
Hometown:	<i>‘Lillebrünnr’</i>

Made From:	Rubbery skin; lean flesh; and moderately-dense bones, plus all the extra gubbins inside that no one really cares about when looking at you.
Dimensions:	1.6 m tall & 0.7 m wide
Best Friend:	No one. ' <i>Fred Frogson</i> ' is friendless.
Biggest Fear(s):	Toads, Salt, & Pigeons
Fetish(s):	Latex
Favourite Meal(s):	Fly Soup & Mosquito BBQ
Medical Problems:	Sore left wrist; Starving; Malnourished; & Hyperflexible ankles prone to sprains
Political Alignment:	Neoconservatism
Occupation:	Jobless Vagrant
Dream Occupation:	Rose-Gold Adventurer
Faction:	<i>'Frogkind for Governmentally-Enforced Marriages to Promote a Sustainable Birth-Rate of the Frogkind species'</i>
[ATTRIBUTES]	
Strength:	6
Dexterity:	15
Constitution:	5
Intelligence:	6
Wisdom:	4
Charisma:	4
[GEAR]	
<p><i>(Stash of Erotic Novels) x 3 kgs</i></p> <p><i>(Backpack) x 1.2 kgs</i></p> <p><i>(Simple Hemp Sandals) x 700 grams</i></p> <p><i>(Simple Linen Trousers) x 600 grams</i></p> <p><i>(Simple Linen Shirt) x 500 grams</i></p>	
[ABILITIES]	

<i>'Frog Reflexes' (Passive)</i>	<i>"Due to Fred Frogson's Frogkind heritage, he has a boost of +8 to his Dexterity Attribute."</i>
<i>'Repulsive' (Passive)</i>	<i>"Due to Fred Frogson's disgusting appearance, odour, and mannerisms, all potential partners find him repulsive."</i>
[SYSTEM ACHIEVEMENTS]	
<i>'Forever Alone'</i>	Awarded for living past the age of 30 without ever touching a potential partner <i>"Permanent reduction of -5 Charisma"</i>
[BACKSTORY]	
<p><i>Once upon a time, Fred Frogson was born to Carl and Melinda Frogson.</i></p> <p><i>Nothing much happened during his life as a shut-in living with his parents in Lillebrünnr, until suddenly the mountain exploded and Fred's parents finally decided to kick him out of their house, though their house also lay in ruins, which made it pretty straightforward. Fred's parents went on to live happily ever after.</i></p> <p><i>Fred Frogson is currently in Toad Town looking for a job so he can afford to eat and not rely on rainwater and grass for sustenance.</i></p>	

"Huh," Imu remarked. "I let the Appraisal run its course, but this guy really doesn't have a lot going for him, huh?"

"Don't speak about Fred like that!" I yelled, tears somehow streaming down below the bulbous eyes of my vessel. "He's just a misunderstood weirdo!"

"...He's a Frog too."

"Yeah, well! Frogs before Fairies!"

"...I'm below Frogs now?" Imu replied. He rolled his shoulders with a sigh. "Huh. I actually don't care how you view me. Now, get to making peace with your archenemies already."

"Fred!" I yelled, the Frogkind man startling with a ribbiting yelp.

"Yes, *weird-looking toad-machine?*"

"You can call me Toad!"

“I would rather not.”

“Listen here, Freddie,” I started, “We’re gonna get your life back on track, and show this System that it shouldn’t mess with us Amphibians and label us as scum, just because its perception of beauty is clearly specist!”

“Really?” he asked, looking up at my towering form. He was rather small. Even most Toadkin were a head above him, but, then again, it *was* a fitting contrast, as Toads also towered over Frogs.

“We’re gonna find you a wife, Fred. Mark my words!”

“*Ribbit!* It’s finally happening! Thank you God!”

“You’re welcome,” I replied, hopping closer to him. “But first, you’ve gotta get me in contact with the figureheads of your species.”

“Who would have thought that all it took to establish peace between Toads and Frogs was arranged marriages,” Imu remarked. “After all the fuss you made about your irreconcilable differences, I thought that maybe it would be more complicated than this.”

“It was always about the wives, Imu. Those slick Frogs used to steal ours and we used to steal theirs in turn,” I said.

“I suppose Frog women aren’t too bad on the eyes,” I added. Imu looked like he was about to throw up. “They’re not as bumpy and warty as Toad women,” I continued. “They’re really smooth, you know.”

“Please... no more...” he pleaded, a hand over his mouth.

It had only taken a few days after meeting Fred Frogson before I had met with the democratically-elected ruler of Frogkind: Lars Frogson, Fred’s older brother. He was the only of the roughly forty-eight bachelor Frogkind men who had a job and a steady girlfriend, and as such he was deemed the superior specimen to lead the rest out of their devastating singlehood.

After using my God-like Appraisal on Lars Frogson, I had figured out that all the Frogkind really sought were relationships, and thus I had scouted single human women across my settlement and propositioned them with the idea of blindly marrying men they had never met and who belonged to a different species.

The Frogkind men and human women had met in my Capital city at Viola’s Buffet, and, surprisingly, the women had seemed fairly interested in the men, despite the obvious lack of traits which made Toadkin males far more appealing, but then, who was I to question governmentally-organised-and-sponsored love?

