

The Fading of the Land, Solitaire Game

By Chris Sakkas. Heavily inspired by, and sometimes directly taken from, *The Azone Butterflies* <<http://gamepoems.gizmet.com/2010/04/game-poem-12-the-azone-butterflies/>>.

The Azone are a tribe who live on the edge of the world.

Khareef is the season of the fading of the land. Leaves turn to fire and fall from the trees and the young women and men of the village make their way to the edge of the jungle.

Stala is the name for both the jungle's edge and the ritual that the young warriors perform here. Upon the jungle's edge is an enormous brass bell. Striking this bell summons the beasts.

Shanri is the goddess of the Azone. Her name means 'The Great Enemy' and she sends the beasts. If she is not pleased with the Azone's strength and character she will destroy them.

Tyria are the butterfly warriors of the Azone whose battle garb is both exquisitely beautiful and destructive in combat. Balancing these two qualities is the mark of a mighty Tyria.

Tyrimins are the boys and girls who would be butterfly warriors. If they pass the test of Stala, they become Tyria and may take a lover. A Tyrimin with sublime battle raiment will have his or her pick of lovers.

You should have a sheet of paper and a pencil.

You should have ten tokens. These tokens may be rocks, iron nails, teeth, gemstones or wooden carvings.

The Tyrimin: Pick an option from Table 1. This is a word that describes you. Choose a name.

Table 1: Tyrimin

Loyal	Craven	Ambitious	Besotted
Short Fuse	Jealous	Exiled	Slave
Lonely	Lost	Sickly	Brooding
Feuding	Deluded	Orphan	Chieftain

The Trials: When you are ready to face a beast, strike the bell.

Divide your ten tokens between your two hands, assigning at least one token to each hand.

The sum of the tokens in your left hand is your Beauty. This represents how elaborate and ornate you have made your battle gear.

The sum of the tokens in your right hand is your Deadliness. This represents how deadly your gear makes you in combat.

When your tokens are in hand, roll on Table 2. This will reveal a word that describes the beast and the beast's Strength.

In a single sentence, describe what the creature looks like and how it approaches you from the jungle.

Reveal your tokens.

For every three Beauty, pick an option from Table 3-1.

For every three Deadliness, pick an option from Table 3-2.

Deadliness > Strength: You defeat the beast easily. You gain Blood equal to your Deadliness. You gain Glory equal to your Beauty. Write your Glory and Blood down on the sheet of white paper. Describe how you are victorious.

Deadliness < Strength: You lose the fight and are wounded. Do not mark down any points for this battle. Describe briefly how you are defeated. Write your wound on the paper, using one word to describe it. If you are wounded a second time, you will die.

Deadliness = Strength: You just barely defeat the beast. You are not wounded, but you only gain Blood (no Glory). Again narrate your victory, but write one word that describes what you lost during the fight. Are your clothes or weapons destroyed? Is your skin scarred? Did the beast die under an ill omen?

After the fight is over, pause for reflection. You may now strike the bell again.

The second round proceeds as the first.

The third round proceeds as the second.

If you have fought three beasts without dying, you must decide whether you wish to return to the village.

Table 2: The Beast

Roll	Strength	Word	Roll	Strength	Word
1	2	Talon	11	5	Tusk
2	4	Red	12	6	Blue
3	5	Howling	13	4	Grimacing
4	2	Woolly	14	5	Slimy
5	4	Hairy	15	9	Scaled
6	5	Tentacled	16	3	Barbed
7	2	Bronze	17	4	Rock
8	4	Razorwing	18	6	Many-headed
9	5	Cliff	19	7	Sea
10	3	Bloody	20	3	Clothed

If you prefer, you can roll twice – the first time to determine the Strength and the second time to determine the word.

Table 3-1: Ornament

Peacock-feathered cloak
Leggings of knotted silk

Pressed petals of the scarlet glass-flower
Anything else you can imagine

Table 3-2: Weaponry

Iron spear with obsidian hook-head
Elder brother's spiked and beaded chest-plate
Barbed net of thick vines
Bandoleer of darts, each dipped in a different poison
Anything else you can imagine

The Village: Total your Glory from each round. Consult Table 4-1. This word is a property of the woman or man you take as your Lover. Describe how you are received by the village.

The first duty of the Tyriá is to defend their people from the beasts of the jungle, and it is said that if they have not proven themselves to be capable enough warriors, then the wilderness itself will reclaim them.

Total your Blood from each round and consult Table 4-2. This is the fate of your village. Describe the celebrations if your tribe is safe, or the terror and sadness that befall your tribe.

Table 4-1: Lover

Final Glory	Word
2-3	Scowl
4-7	Mouse
8-10	Wart
11-12	Bitter
13	Dimple
14-15	Silver
16-18	Clear-eyed
19-22	Grace
23-27	Sun

Table 4-2: Village

Final Blood	Word
2-3	Ruin
4-8	Retreat
9-12	Mourning
13-14	Pain
15	Calm
16-17	Joy
18-21	Festival
22-26	Harvest
27	Safety