# **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.

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| **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.

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| **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.* |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Table 3-1: Ornament** |
| Peacock-feathered cloak |
| Leggings of knotted silk |
| Pressed petals of the scarlet glass-flower |
| Anything else you can imagine |

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| **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.

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| **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 |

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| **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 |