

THE MADNESS OF CHARTRULEAN  
A Gardeka Story

S1:E04SC  
"STORY COMPENDIUM 3: THE TORCH OF ACEDIA"

Written by

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## STORY COMPENDIUM: THE TORCH OF ACEDIA

KING STARBRINGER

I was raised on the belief that history is made up of the biographies of great men, and that I was destined to be one of them. I spent my life attempting to live up to this expectation before realizing it was all naught but a delusion fabricated by narcissists. Men like my father, who let the blood of the Jhardekai run in the streets, turning a blind eye to the purge. Entire communities were utterly ravaged by Maldoro's watchmen while I, blind to this reality, relished in all the comforts of privilege, dreaming of the perfect empire I was set to inherit. I felt deceived the day I learned that my legacy was soaked in the blood of so-called undesirables.

On my father's deathbed, I promised him through gritted teeth that I would not carry the torch of acedia. My legacy would be the restoration of balance to the power between common law and Jhardeho law, and I would end that long war. Despite my brazen oath, however, I hardly knew where to start. And ran away to Idrica to find perspective. But it was the woman I met amidst the stacks of the library who truly opened my eyes. Hona, my wife. All the same, it's a strange event to wake up and suddenly be able to see the bars of a gilded cage. As was her story, the only way to escape that cage is to die. But the pride of men like me stands in the way of truly being able to accept our own mortality.

The arrival of the Rau on Arcas, and the events surrounding it, felt like an opportunity.

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## KING STARBRINGER (CONT'D)

A chance for the Starbringer dynasty to bow out with grace, with the continuation of my bloodline bearing the name my daughter inherits. I wanted it to be positive. To set the stage for a future for my children, and their children. A future of hope. That is my wife's legacy.

But a stain is a stain. And after everything that happened, the failure of the Starbringer dynasty will forever haunt Arcas. No more galas, no songs to sing anyone's praises, no trophies. It ended just how it began; as a mechanical genuflect to the hidden powers that pull the reins of destiny.

As much pride as I must swallow to accept it, the Starbringer name has run its course. In Yoba's words, I must gain control of the narrative. But sometimes surrendering control is the only option one has. It certainly makes for an interesting epilogue, if nothing else. Or at least I hope it does. You tell me.