The Story

Yorick Alibaster, Isabella Clair Marx, Magnus, Asra, Floy, and Halifax begin their search for the Thrice Crowned King, the One Eyed Bard, and the night hag Mul.

The Thrice Crowned King seeks the Black Blade of Khas, carried by the One Eyed Bard.

The One Eyed Bard seeks the night hag Mul.

Let’s go back in time a bit. Vecna was, at one point, a powerful human king—probably the most powerful that ever lived. He used his power to conquer most of the known world, which caught the attention of the Shards. Hera’rontan, Creation, thought him a ripe candidate for experimentation. So, Creation implanted within Vecna the powers of the Shards, which would lay dormant until their activation. Vecna continued his conquests until his second in command, the vampire king Khas, thought to overthrow him. Khas severed Vecna’s left hand and gauged out one of his eyes. Vecna destroyed Khas, but the trauma had already begun the process of awakening Vecna’s dormant powers. The color began to drain from mirrors, and, within a few days, nothing showed at all. At that moment, when Vecna looked into the blank mirror, he awoke, and something went horribly wrong. The powers that Creation implanted within Vecna increased exponentially and erratically, and Vecna ascended to deity-hood, overcome by evil power. Vecna used his evil powers to complete his conquests of the known world, bathing the continents in corrupt power. The Shards, distraught that their attempts to create one of their kind failed, realized that Vecna could not remain on the Material Plane. They sentenced him to be banished in the prison plane of Ravenloft, forever trapped.

Vecna was not stopped, however. His servants still remained on the Material Plane, and through them, Vecna hatched his plots for return.

Much later, Hera’rontan created the elan Fairfox. Fairfox was an illusion brought to life, a soulless creation made to look and act like its creator—and he did, for a while. Fairfox’s illusionary base was feeble, however, and a slight imbalance in Shard powers injected into him caused immediate deterioration. Fairfox was created with his awakening process already begun to the dismay of Creation. Fairfox’s manner seemed stable, however. Hera’rontan kept Fairfox with him, not knowing of the catastrophe to come.

Creation began again, this time starting with an elf base. When the powers were injected into the elf, however, the soul shriveled and died, leaving only a desiccated husk. This gave Hera’rontan an idea—Fairfox had successfully been implanted with the Shards, and being an animate illusion, he had no soul. Creation began experiments to remove the soul from the equation. He first experimented on elves, however those experiments yielded only corrupt, hungry beings. He then turned his gaze to the race of man, a weak, short lived race—but full of potential. Although his first experiment with the humans ended in the disaster of Vecna, Hera’rontan had not then thought of removing the soul. His next experiments focused on the removal of the soul from a living human. Those experiments seemed successful, resulting in the creation of reproducible human elans—immortal beings living with only a powerful sentience and no soul. His next step was to successfully inject the power of the Shards into an elan. With the help of Herya’rosintilya, Knowledge, he found a specific human—the living legacy of Vanya Tarimel, Isabella Clair Marx, his tragic creation.

After the reconstruction in the wake of Saigon’s Landing Vanya Tarimel passed her powers in a dormant state to a small human child. Vanya believed in the potential of humans, and invested in them her power. The power of the Parmasinta lay dormant in Vanya’s chosen line of humans—passed down by the first daughter of each generation. Creation found Isabella Marx, the first-born daughter of the fifty-first generation of Vanya’s Legacy, and used her as a vessel. The dormant power of the Book of Ages would act as a buffer between the sentience of the soulless body and the volatile powers of the Shards—in theory, Isabella would be able to successfully hold the power of the Shards. After her fabrication, Hera’rontan treasured her. Fairfox, however, ever the quiet observer, began to feel jealous. He had begun to love Isabella, but Hera’rontan kept her to himself, teaching her and perfecting her. The deterioration of his sentience had escalated and reached a point of climax, causing him to awaken the same way that Vecna did—with the degradation of images in mirrors, to the point of utter blackness. Fairfox’s awakening came not with the ascension of Vecna, but with a tremendous release of destructive energy. He destroyed the laboratory of Hera’rontan and captured the lesser Shards he was working with. The burst of energy was caused by an extreme imbalance in Fairfox—the powers of Chaos outweighed all others by a millionth of a percent, but from that millionth they expanded and took over his whole being. He was overtaken with rage and jealousy, and swore to bring suffering upon his creator and all his creations—especially his jewel, Isabella. Hera’rontan protected Isabella from the blast and hid her back in her home town after wiping her memory.

Fairfox found her before long, however, and set his life to her suffering. Over the many years of her life, Fairfox brought despair upon her whenever he could until his death by Isabella’s companion many years later.

After his death, his sentience was trapped in the inner sanctum of the laboratory, forever imprisoned in the nothingness it sulked in—a far worse fate than any Hell. His imprisonment was ended, however, the day the bard Jeffers came to the sanctum for the third time. On that day, Fairfox’s sentience found a new home—the body of the Dread Pirate Jeffers, whose mind became imprisoned deep within his own body. With his newfound body, Fairfox, now the One Eyed Bard, swore to bring Hell upon the ones who killed him—and continue his quest to bring Hell to Isabella’s life.

During this, Vecna, the banished deity of the Shards, began to hatch his plot for return. His servants Lelisef Il-Nealysurial and Duke Yamador wove grand plots and set the plans in action—ending in the creation of a grand gate to Ravenloft opening in Erresea. The one thing the evil god could not know was that these plots were never his own, for long before the gate’s creation, Naa’roleith, Chaos, began to write his grand story.

Naa’roleith is change—he revels in the ever-changing spirits of man and the infinite wilds of the maelstrom of life. He rejoices in colors and stories and the fantastical. He is the King in Yellow, and he once was approached by a young paladin, Ragnarok the Blood Crusader. The Blood Crusader called upon him not knowing his true identity. He called for the knowledge of the location of the Sword of Khas, the legendary weapon able to slay the immortal Vecna. Chaos gave him this information, however only for a price: Ragnarok must deliver him a hero.

Ragnarok was later imprisoned by Vecna after finding the Sword of Khas, turned to statuary in a graveyard. He, however, had born a son—Yorick Alibaster, the destined hero. Naa’roleith had his hero—the young paladin, son of a paladin. Now he just needed to set up his villain. For that, he waited. He waited until the exiled king Hadrian of Blue turned founder of the covenant chain died. In a vicious twist of irony, he used this man in his story as a way to bring back Vecna—the very being that Tapo had sought to destroy. Naa’roleith used Tapo to beguile Yorick, Isabella, and Jeffers into destroying the hand and the eye of Vecna—the only artifacts keeping the dark lord banished in Ravenloft. With their destruction, Vecna was free to return—but he wasn’t safe, yet. Where Naa’roleith’s story stands now, Tapo is in search of the Sword of Khas so that he can destroy the blade and allow Vecna to return safely to the Material Plane.

The blade, however, is in the unlikely hands of the One Eyed Bard, Fairfox.

Vecna’s return causes slight problems for Hera’rontan. Vecna, were he to return, would interfere with Isabella’s awakening and the balancing of Fairfox. Thus, the Shard gave charge to his third creation—an idea given life and form—charge to find the Sword of Khas and slay Vecna. The One Eyed Bard saw his opportunity to simultaneously spite Hera’rontan and to get his revenge on Yorick Alibaster for landing the blow that killed him last. He went to Ragnarok, father of Yorick, rescued from his stone prison, and took the location of the Sword of Khas from him, and slew him. He traveled to the hidden location and stole the sword. Still having his Shard powers, he knew of the night hag Mul now on the Material Plane and her valuable possession—the thorned blue gate into Isabella’s vulnerable mind—but he did not know of her location. He set out on his search for her.

The unfortunate night hag Mul got caught up in this web when Asra gave her a single blue rose—a part of Isabella’s mind, and access to the Shard’s powers as well as those of the Parmasinta. At that moment she became the attention of Hera’rombar, Law. Hera’rombar tasked her with the unbalancing of Isabella’s dormant Shard power through the blue rose. With a slight lawful bias, Isabella would balance out with the chaos of Fairfox when awakened.

As for why Isabella and Yorick search for the Thrice Crowned King, you need only to ask Mephistopheles, lord of the eighth circle of Hell. As a payment to him to pass through his realm, they needed to sign a contract promising to return the complete soul of Tapo, the Thrice Crowned King, to him within one year.

E2 is the one that allowed Vecna’s servants to be where they needed to be: At the Severence Conference in 263, he told Luthion to kill the people that would be replaced by worshipers of Vecna. At the time, E2 was not entirely set on bringing Vecna back—though he had some premonitions about it.

E2, seeing Ragnarok trying to kill Vecna, is the one who informed him of Chaos and the Sword of Khas. At this point, around 380, is E2 formulating to use the Sybyl Eye. E2 only informed Ragnarok of this because he himself could not get the information on the location of the Sword of Khas from the Shards. They would not tell him. His plan was to have Ragnarok get it, so that E2 could simply kill Ragnarok and take the knowledge.

E2, needing Ragnarok to be safe until the time was right to get the information, leaked the fact that Ragnarok was searching for the Sword to Vecna. Vecna petrified him.

Chaos, approached by Ragnarok, tell him the location of the Sword of Khas, but only if Ragnarok promises a hero. With Ragnarok’s deal, Chaos begins to draw a grand story. This is around 380. He sees the potential of Vecna as a villain and for Ragnarok’s son as a hero. While these two are the basis of his story, it soon expands—he notices E2. E2, already using Vecna, his predecessor, as a pawn to gain power. Chaos changes the main villain to E2. Chaos uses Tapo to lure E2 in—Tapo aids in the return of Vecna with the destruction of the Hand and Eye. By making E2 believe that he is playing Chaos, and not the other way around, it gives Chaos the advantage in the story. For Chaos cannot be bound and captured like the other Shards, which gives him total freedom during these events.

Chaos is playing the overgame—E2 is a piece in his game: the villain. He is allowing E2 to bring Vecna back to the material plane and to open the Sybyl Heart. He is providing multiple heroes to combat this, in fact:

Yorick: The hero of Ragnarok, Yorick is destined to keep the world safe during the events—the other heroes are more volatile.

Isabella: Chaos has mainly stayed away from Isabella, however he, along with the will of Law, is attempting to awaken her. He does this through Mul. Mul is controlled by Chaos. The awakening of Isabella will give heroes a powerful weapon against E2.

Tylis, Rose, exc.: As far as I know, they are going to be the heroes who release the Shards from their prison at the proper time, causing E2’s plan to crumble around him in one fell swoop. After their release, E2 will most likely still be alive—but Vecna’s armies and portals will still be open as well. The Parmasinta could be used to call the Wanderers, who can aid in the destruction of Vecna’s armies.