



5E THE SANCTUM OF SHE'KAR

FIFTH EDITION COMPATIBLE

Enter a haunted crypt and destroy an undead warlock in this 4th-level adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game

The Sanctum of She'Kar

The Sanctum of She'Kar is intended for four characters with an average party level (APL) of 4. Characters who complete this adventure should earn enough experience to reach approximately halfway to 5th-level. Local caravans have been going missing and the characters must track down the undead monster behind it.. This campaign takes place in Arden, although it can be set in your own world. Any party composition should be able to finish the adventure with intelligent play.

Background

Many years ago, the warlock She'kar led a crusade of devastation across the land. In the name of his fiendish patron, he razed villages, destroyed temples, and summoned minions from the depths of the abyss to spread malice and hate across the land. His desire for power blinded him to the evils he was unleashing on the world, and it wasn't until his waning years that he saw the error of his ways.

But a pact is not easily broken, nor is it done without consequence. She'kar used what power he had left to banish his patron's dark minions from this world and seal himself away in a dark crypt where he hoped no one, not even his former patron could find him. Alas, though he found freedom in life, in death he found only slavery and servitude. His soul was not his own, and once he shuffled off his mortal coil, he was risen into undeath, forced to serve his patron once more.

Character Hooks

A Friend in Need. A merchant acquaintance was with the missing caravan. Upon hearing of this, the party sets out to find their lost friend.

Troubles on the Road. This isn't the first caravan to go missing. The city has put out a 500 Gold Piece bounty on the head whoever is responsible. The party is out to collect it.

A Holy Cause. The party was contacted by members of the local temple. They believe a dark power is at work and the caravans are connected. They seek to destroy whatever evils are responsible. The party has offered their services in this endeavor.

Missing in the Night

You head north west of the city following the road until it breaks off into the hills. An old shortcut that can shave a day or so off a trip has now become a dangerous undertaking. The caravan you're after supposedly went this way but never arrived at the pass into The Empty Lands. After a few hours of travel, you come upon the remains of a battle. Clearly, this is where the caravan was waylaid.

The characters come across an overturned wagon. Blood stains the road and rocks nearby. The stench of death is overwhelming. The horses pulling the wagon lay rotting in the sun, their throats torn out by something vicious. The characters can make a DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check to determine that the wounds were inflicted by claws that caused temporary paralysis.

If the characters make a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check, they discover a severed claw-like hand rotting underneath some of the debris. A DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals it belonged to a ghoul of some kind.

Bloody drag marks lead away from the scene up into the hills. Following them takes a few hours, but they lead to a large hillside. Nestled among the rocks, the characters can locate the entrance to a crypt-like underground structure with a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The door is heavy stone and requires a combined Strength of 30 to pry open.



1. The Entrance

You slowly descend into a chamber 25 feet wide by 30 feet long. Four stone pillars stand in the corners of the room and a large fountain dominates the center. At the far end, you see a large stone door flanked by two statues of humans, their faces twisted in agony.

The fountain contains a petrifying agent. It appears to be water until someone drinks from it or touches it with their bare skin. If the liquid touches their bare skin, they must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw, or they begin to turn to stone and are restrained until the end of their next turn, when it must repeat the saving throw. The effect ends if the second save is successful; otherwise they are petrified for 24 hours. If they drink the liquid instead, the DC is 20 instead of 14. There is a snake-shaped ring at the bottom of the fountain that can be found with a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. It is a *ring of gorgon's mercy* and it allows a person to automatically resist the effects of a petrification effect once per day. Alternatively, if placed on a petrified person, it will reverse the effects, however, the ring will then crumble to dust.

The statues are **Enchanted Statues**. They wait for someone to either get petrified by the fountain or try to open the door. When defeated, they crumble to dust and each one leaves behind half of a key. The key can be used to unlock the door and nullify the petrifying magic in it.

The door itself is made of magical stone. Anyone who touches it with their bare skin must make the same save as if they touched the liquid in the fountain or else suffer the same effects.

2. The Hall of the Hero

This room is a circular chamber 25 feet in diameter. Four stone pillars stand in the corners of the room and a large statue of a knight stands in a victorious pose in the center. To your left, a stone door bars the way forward.

The statue is actually a petrified **Knight**. He is a lawful good human who was turned to stone centuries ago while trying to defeat she'kar. As a punishment, he was left here as part of the puzzle the party must solve to proceed.

The statue has an AC of 17, 18 hit points, and a damage threshold of 5. If the statue is destroyed, the party finds a bloody human skeleton among the debris. Searching through the debris yields a key that can unlock the next door.

If the party places the *ring of gorgon's mercy* on the statue's finger, it reverses the petrification curse and the knight collapses. If healed at least 1 hit point or if someone succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check, he regains consciousness. He thanks the party profusely for their help and offers them the key to the next room before slowly making his way out of the dungeon. Alternatively, the key can be found by making a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check and searching the knight's body.

The door itself is magical like the previous one, though less insidious. If someone touches the door with their bare skin, they suddenly hear a screaming sound coming from the statue behind them. This only lasts as long as they maintain contact with the door. Once the statue has been destroyed or the Knight freed, this effect no longer occurs.



3. The Fool's Library

Beyond the doorway lies a 15 foot wide by 25 foot long room with vaulted ceilings. The sides of the room are lined with bookcases and a large armoire stands at the far end of the room. Two small tables stand in the center of the room.

This whole room is a giant trap. The tables are **Mimics** that attack as soon as someone touches them, or once the party opens the armoire. The books on the walls are all inscribed with a random spell glyph. Each time a character tries to read one, roll 1d6 and consult the table below to see which spell is cast. The spell originates in the square the person reading the book is in and targets as many characters as possible. If it has a save, the DC is 12.

- *fog cloud*
- *color spray*
- *sleep*
- *magic missile*
- *thunderwave*
- *burning hands*

The armoire contains the following:

- Two *Potions of Healing*
- One scroll of *fog cloud*
- One scroll of *color spray*
- One scroll of *sleep*
- One scroll of *magic missile*
- One scroll of *thunderwave*
- One scroll of *burning hands*
- One book with *explosive runes* inscribed in it. Anyone who reads it causes a 20 foot radius explosion. Each creature caught in it must make a *DC 14 Dexterity saving throw*. They take 5d8 lightning damage on a failed save and half as much on a successful one.

4. The False Door & Shrine

The door at the end of the hall outside this room is false and locked. Opening it requires a DC 14 Dexterity (Slight of Hand) check. thieves' tools grant advantage on this roll. When opened, anyone looking through it sees a room full of treasure. As soon as someone passes through the door, the illusion fades and the doorway turns into a wall. The person who entered the doorway is transported back to the Hall of the Hero and turned into a statue where the Knight once stood.

This 15 foot by 20 foot room is divided in half by thick curtains. In the center of the room, where the curtains part, you see a rug on the stone floor that leads up to an altar with a bowl on it. Two pillars of stone stand to either side of you.

The rug is a **rug of smothering**. Beneath it is a 10 foot deep pit with spikes at the bottom. The first person to step on the rug must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw with disadvantage as the Rug of Smothering tries to force them into the pit. If they succeed, they land in a space adjacent to the pit. If they fail, they fall in and take 2d6 piercing damage.

If the rug of smothering fails to drop someone into the pit, it will instead try to smother them. If it succeeds in dropping someone into the pit, it will instead engage the rest of the party smothering whoever seems weakest.

The bowl on the altar has an inscription in Elvish that reads "Drink and wash away your cares". If anyone drinks from it, they must immediately make a DC 14 Charisma saving throw. If they fail, they are affected by a *calm emotions* spell for the next hour. During this time, they feel no emotions whatsoever, roll initiative with disadvantage, and have a passive perception of 10. Every time they take damage, they can attempt the save again.



5. The Undead Workshop

This 25 foot by 20 foot room is lit by a fireplace to your right. To your left, boxes and shelving hold supplies of an alchemical nature. At the far end of the room, you see two wooden tables. Both appear to have something on them, however, they are covered by dusty white sheets so you are unable to discern precisely what they are.

Both tables have **ghasts** on them. As soon as the party enters the room, both rise up and attack. The ghasts fight intelligently. They focus on anyone not currently paralyzed by a claw attack.

The alchemical supplies can be searched to reveal the following:

- One vial of alchemist's fire
- One vial of acid
- One thunderstone

The fireplace in the room is not lit by a conventional fire, but by a *continual flame* spell, meaning the fire itself is harmless. Anyone who searches the fireplace can make a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discover a pull chain in the chimney portion of the fireplace. Tugging on it has no immediate effect in this room, however, it unlocks the first gate leading into the next area.

If the party was searching for the bodies of the caravan traders, they can identify the corpses of the ghasts with a DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check as those they were looking for. Clearly someone twisted them into these monsters after their deaths.

6. Servants' Quarters

This 25 foot by 20 foot room is lit by a fireplace to your left. A table and stools lie at the far end of the room and two simple beds are off to your right. It appears to be some kind of living space.

This room is mostly empty. The beds each have a **skeleton** in them, and the boxes next to them are filled with four **oozing flesh blobs** each. As soon as someone disturbs either the beds or the boxes, the skeletons rise up and the blobs pour out and attack.

The fireplace in the room is not lit by a conventional fire, but by a *continual flame* spell, meaning the fire itself is harmless. Anyone who searches the fireplace can make a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discover a pull chain in the chimney portion of the fireplace. Tugging on it has no immediate effect in this room, however, it unlocks the second gate leading out of the next area.

7. The Forever Room

This 15 foot wide circular room has two entrances, both blocked off by metal portcullises. There is a large stone pillar in the center of the room. Looking down, you see the stone floor has been worn away as if by countless feet.

The gates are locked by default. In order to unlock them, the party needs to pull the hidden pull chains inside the fireplaces in the previous two rooms. The floor in this room is magical. Any attempt to walk forwards results in the floor moving beneath the person to counter whatever movements they make. In order to get through this room, a person needs to walk backwards. Doing so allows for free movement.

8. The Spoils of War

This small 10 foot by 15 foot room contains numerous barrels, crates and chests behind a thick metal portcullis.

This room is where She'kar keeps the items left behind when heroes fail to defeat his many traps, puzzles, and minions. Inside the different containers are the following:

- One silvered melee weapon (any type)
- One shield
- One suit of half plate
- 20d10 gp
- 2d10 pp
- Three *potions of healing*
- One *+1 weapon (any type)*



9. The Inner Sanctum

This room contains a large set of stone steps leading up to an altar, behind which stands a statue of some demonic entity nearly 40 feet high. At the top of the steps you see a decrepit figure, cloaked in flowing rotten robes, and holding a large staff of gnarled wood. It turns to face you. "So, you've made it this far I see." It hisses at you. "Come, let us see if you have what it takes to see things through!"

The creature is **She'kar the Forsaker**. Having broken his pact with his fiendish patron, he was raised from the dead to serve in undeath. Now, though he works to accomplish his master's plans, he secretly wishes for the sweet release of death. His sanctum was designed to make sure that anyone who reached him was strong enough to kill him once and for all.

Due to his condition, he is forced to fight with everything he has. He opens the fight by casting either *burning hands*, *fireball*, or *scorching ray*. He then uses his *eldritch blast* and raking swipe to attack the party. If things start to go badly for him, he will cast *invisibility* and try to flee (despite his desire for death, his undead enslavement forces him to try to survive.)

If the party slays him, he thanks them for freeing him with his final breath before crumbling to dust. He leaves behind his *staff of the corpse talker*. It is a rare magical item that requires attunement by someone who can cast arcane spells. It has 3 charges and regains 1d3 charges each night at sunset. The attuned wielder can spend 1 charge to cast *spare the dying*, 2 charges to cast *gentle repose*, and 3 charges to cast *speak with dead*.

Aftermath

As She'kar perishes, he thanks the characters for ending his torment and freeing him from the prison of undeath. He then crumbles to dust. With the undead warlock gone, the caravans will once again be safe to traverse the pass without fear of being attacked... at least not by the undead.

Enchanted Statue

Medium construct, lawful evil

Armor Class 18

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	5 (-3)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, petrified, poisoned

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

False Appearance. While the enchanted statue remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal statue.

Actions

Stone Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, or it begins to turn to stone and is restrained until the end of its next turn, when it must repeat the saving throw. The effect ends if the second save is successful; otherwise the target is petrified for 24 hours.

Oozing Flesh Blob

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 2

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

She'kar the Forsaker

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Intelligence +4, Charisma +5

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks that aren't silvered.

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhausted, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Shekar's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *detect magic*, *disguise self*, *mage armor*

Spellcasting. She'kar is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He regains his expended spell slots when he finishes a short or long rest. He knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *eldritch blast*, *mage hand* 1st-3rd level (2 3rd-level spell slots): *blindness/deafness*, *burning hands*, *command*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *hellish rebuke*, *invisibility*, *scorching ray*

Turn Resistance. She'kar has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Raking Swipe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

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