

## Shipyard

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**A local importer believes his warehouse will be the object of a Sahuagin raid, but does not want to say why he believes this.**

The prevalence of smugglers in port and trade cities means that most companies keep to themselves. It is rare for them to seek outside help, and suspicious when they do. Jakob Forstner understands this as he speaks to the party. The request is to protect his shipyard warehouse until a recent shipment is able to be moved. It is unlikely that the location would ever be targeted, owing to its location and population. But something in Forstner's eyes suggests he knows trouble is coming.

What he refuses to tell the adventurers is precisely *what* they are protecting. Not the warehouse, but a specific item inside. Forstner's alliance with a certain morally-gray group of scavengers led to him procuring an idol to a sea god. These relics are priceless to the Sahuagin and are never without protection. They will attempt to reclaim it. He not only needs their attempts to fail, but also for any information on the situation to remain limited to his own company. An independent group of adventurers is his best and only option.

### Describing the shipyard...

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The cobbled stone of city streets brings you to a shipyard. Pavement transitions into sea-stained wooden planks, connecting unevenly like a now-aged afterthought to the initial brick construction. A wooden slope descends into the gently undulating blue water, flanked on either side by longer walkways. One side bears a loading platform with two cranes and the expected assortment of crates, barrels, and ropes. The other circles around a small warehouse, extending into two more piers and another crane mechanism.

Light reflects off of the waves, dancing and dazzling, as your boots thunk across the dock. The picturesque ocean is decorated with silhouettes of ships, some moving in and out of port, and others casting nets into the bay. You could get lost in the sight but are quickly awakened by another dock worker stomping past you. Many more rush across the planks and pavement. The bustle of movement and

idle chatter harmonizes with the soft crashes of waves that spray the air with a cooling mist of salt and the smell of sea life.

While many workers remain, sunset brings a quieter atmosphere to the shipyard. Each clique of workers tends to their own tasks, only paying an occasional glance to the armed visitors on their docks.

As a pair of laborers approaches, lighting lanterns as they go, a portion of their conversation catches your attention.

"No fish today. Not even one. Almost a mile in every direction, none of the fishermen had even a single catch." His partner returns only a grunt of uninterested acknowledgment, but his words hang in your mind. You turn back to the water and notice... nothing. No lights. The ships are still visible in the distance but none are illuminated or moving. You rise from your seat, searching for any further sign. As another lantern is lit, its glow exposes a group of shadows approaching in the water. Beside them, another larger, writhing mass begins to rise.

### The Tidal Mound

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The mound is not a singular creature, but rather a golem-like swarm of fish and ocean life. They thrash chaotically within the shape, Sahuagin magic holding them together and commanding their movement. It breaches the ocean's surface, water rolling off to reveal thousands of eyes, mouths, and scales glittering in the light. Branching tendrils of the same aquatic legion rise with the form, reaching and whipping at its surroundings.

The tidal mound is an amalgamation of the shambling mound and roper creatures, with some extras. The shambling mound formed its base (AC, HP, ability scores, etc.), with the addition of a roper's tendrils. This required combining their mechanics. An increased number of attacks meant lowering the initial Tendril damage, and the Reel then leads into an Engulf rather than a simple Bite.

Finally, it has a swarm's resistances and immunities and a modified version of the ettin's 'Two-Headed' ability.

This encounter, description, and monster were written by me, Troy McConnell. If you enjoyed them, you can support my work and gain exclusive bonuses on my [Patreon](#). Until next time!