

CRUSHING WAKE

Rec. LVL 10

Terrain

Sand & pier are on water level, grass is 5ft up, shack's roof is 10ft up, rocks and house roofs are 15ft up. Standing on floating boards takes a DC 10 **Acrobatics** check.

Watcher on the Wake

Wa'ahurgishnel, the **Watcher on the Wake**, is an **Aboleth**. They have enthralled the inhabitants of this small island (6 **Commoners**), and every time they consume one of these eager thralls alive as a Bonus Action, they regain 2d10+4 HP. They have lured the players here to ensnare them.

Setup: It's a Setup

The party has been invited to investigate a "lost treasure" on the island.

- DC 12 **Investigate** or **Persuasion** check shows no one had seen the island's inhabitants for months since one came to deliver the message.
- DC 15 **Arcana** or **Religion** indicates ancient myths of wise ancients who exacted cruel sacrifices for their knowledge once lived in the sea.
- DC 13 **Nature** of **Survival** suggests the local wildlife avoids the waters near the island, yet there's always fish visible in the waters...
- DC 16 **Insight** check gets a general bad feeling about this offer.
- The party can travel to the island by means of a ferry for 5sp.

Phase 1: Meeting of the Mindless

The island is eerily calm as the inhabitants greet the party.

- They present a strange golden amulet with a tentacle motif and central eye to the party and indicate they found it in the nearby hills—a DC 13 **Investigate** indicates it came from the water, and a DC 16 **Religion** indicates a connection to **Aboleths**.
- The amulet is cursed: if any party member has it when the encounter starts, they suffer the effects of **Bane** and cannot drop the amulet.
- The commoners try to lull the party into a sense of normalcy/distraction.

- When the time is ripe, the **Watcher** begins probing the PCs' minds telepathically, trying to turn them against one another with greed.
- Once the party shows any indication of fighting back or realizing the plan, the **Watcher** emerges and initiative is rolled—phase progresses +1 at the end of each round.

Crushing Waves

Any creature starting their turn in newly arrived water makes a DC 18 Strength save; on failure they suffer 4d10 Bludgeoning damage & are knocked prone, halved & standing on success.

Phase 2+: Deep Rising

The **Watcher** springs their trap and collapses the island.

- The **Watcher** will telepathically direct the **Commoners** to restrain, distract, and deceive the PCs—they're disposed of when no longer useful (see: **Watcher on the Wake**).
- The **Watcher** prefers to disable the PCs and take them alive for their grander designs, but they're content to kill them and use their corpses instead.
- The **Watcher** has researched the party extensively and will use their history against them.

Watcher's Lair & Legendary Actions

The **Watcher** gains the usual **Aboleth** Legendary & Lair Actions in addition to the following Lair Actions:

- *Retract the Wave*: -1 phase.
- *Wave Surge*: +1 phase.
- *Blood from the Wake*: the **Watcher** may "pop" any of its enthralled **Commoners** standing in the water for 3d10+6 HP, their bodies exploding like gore-filled pinatas.