

Fri Feb 13, 2026 — “Midnight in the Rockfish Basement”

PCs: **Valaerys il'Tharandiir • Sharpe • Deputy Murk** (*Bran absent; Gynn absent*)

What led here

- The warehouse incident is still unresolved: **a town guard is dead**, confiscated cargo is in Watch custody, and the Black Hand want their property back.
- The party suspects a **precision shadow-killer** is operating in town, and that the chaos around the warehouse gave them cover.

Scene 1 — Setting the Meeting

- The party uses **Kip Skydrift** as a runner to request a discreet sit-down at the **Rowdy Rockfish**.
- The terms are strict: **midnight, in the basement**, neutral ground, no spectacle.

Scene 2 — Midnight Basement Talk

- The Crook's Nook proprietor meets the party under the Rockfish after hours. The conversation is careful: everyone wants to avoid “heat,” but everyone also wants leverage.
- The party probes whether the Black Hand can be pushed out of Otari without triggering reprisals.
- Yinyasmera frames the town's reality: a dead guardsman forces Captain Longsaddle's hand, and it also gives the Black Hand's enemies a perfect excuse to press harder.

Scene 3 — The Captain's Problem

- The party aligns on the bottleneck: **Longsaddle can't safely compromise** until the guard's death is understood.
- The meeting ends with a practical direction: gather proof—weapon, method, culprit—so Longsaddle can move from assumption to action.

Scene 4 — The Impound Dock Search (*late-night follow-through*)

- The party searches the impounded boat connected to the seized goods.
- They recover:
 - **Foreign coin**, including **three coins sharing the same unknown mint mark**.
 - An ornate “coin” that is **not currency**—a **wax-seal die / signet** used to mark shipping documents and cargo seals.
 - A strongbox with a **false-bottom compartment** containing a **ciphered document**, preserved using **citrus and ash**.

Scene 5 — The Codename Appears

- An envelope labeled “**Candle-Penny**.”
- The party's takeaway: **unclear**

Fri Feb 20, 2026 — “Same Cut, Different Heights”

PCs: **Valaerys il'Tharandiir • Sharpe • Deputy Murk • Bran Wills** (*Gynn absent*)

What led here

- The party needs hard proof about the guard's death to move Captain Longsaddle—and to stop the town from blaming the wrong faction.

Scene 1 — Captain Longsaddle Takes Statements

- Longsaddle questions the party about the warehouse night: where they were, what they saw, the ooze fight, the fleeing cart, and what they *didn't* see (notably, the dead guard's body wasn't clearly viewed in the moment).
- The Crook's Nook proprietor reiterates her line: **she doesn't kill watchmen**, and if something used her cover, she wants it found.

Scene 2 — Authorization: Examine the Bodies

- Longsaddle grants permission for the party to examine **both corpses**—the dead guard and the dead Black Hand operative—specifically to determine whether it was **one killer** or **two different causes**.

Scene 3 — The Mortuary Findings

- The party's examination produces the key result: the attacks are **effectively identical** in method.
- The throat wound is described as an unnerving, precise cut that goes **nearly all the way around the neck**.
- The impossible detail: the same "starting point" and angle appears on **two victims with nearly a four-foot height difference**, implying the attacker wasn't constrained by normal reach/stance (floating, unnatural positioning, or something stranger).
- The Black Hand operative's wound is partially obscured by other damage, but the overall pattern still matches closely enough to alarm everyone.

Scene 4 — A Public Panic (Unintended)

- In trying to get help quickly, the party's phrasing and certainty trigger **public alarm** in a crowded space—rumors spread fast, people bolt, and the town's anxiety spikes.

Scene 5 — Back Below: The Arena Contacts and the Crumbling Papers

- Returning to the lower levels, the party seeks help preserving **paper-thin, dust-ready documents** connected to the current threat.
- With assistance, **two fragile notes are restored** enough to be legible, while a **fourth is beyond saving**.

Scene 6 — The Code Words Persist

- The party revisits the recurring phrase set: **wick • tallow • green**.
- No clean meaning emerges yet—these are treated as **signal words / a breadcrumb** rather than a solved message.

Scene 7 — Otari's Ghost, Then the Steal

- The party returns to the lake-island refuge and speaks with **Otari Ilvashti's ghost**. He recounts his fall, his long survival in the dark, and the truth of the **Roseguard**—who they were, how they formed, and what they meant to him.
- As Otari prepares to finally rest, something vast and hungry manifests—an overwhelming shadow presence that **seizes Otari's spirit and drags him down**, leaving only his screams for help.
- The entity does **not** attack the party at that moment. It takes Otari.