

"Very good, Jonah," the bald man says.

He speaks out a handful of thousand-dollar bills in front of you. There are ten of them.

"Now . . ." he says.

"The meaning is complex," you say. "I need to translate as I listen to the tape. Play the tape and I will translate it for you."

"Very well. It no longer matters that you know we have the tape. You came along at a very good time, you see. We found out you are the key U.S. agent on the case just about the time we found out that our computers would not be able to decode the whistling."

The bald man picks up an intercom and says a few words in Russian. A few moments later, the tall woman wheels in a cart on which is mounted a tape player, speakers, and some other instruments.