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The bidding commenced at five dollars, which the blonde immediately raised to seven. Maggie leaned forward with parted lips, eyes aglow and small hands clinging to her wad of bills. She would let them go on for a little longer. Her time for action had not arrived.

Ten—fifteen—eighteen! The bidding continued and the fun became fast and furious. As their limit was reached, different competitors withdrew, until only the blonde and a fat, elderly man remained. Twenty—twenty-five! The fat man retired with a broad smile.

"Twenty-six!" yelled Maggie, anxious to enter the ring. The blonde turned with a contemptuous glance and promptly raised the bid to thirty. A four-dollar jump sounded crushing but Maggie quietly raised the amount and waited for her rival's snappy tones. The auctioneer leaned over and whispered a few words that were productive of good results and the price climbed to thirty-three. All eyes were centred on the two contestants and Maggie felt that she had never really lived before. In response to a questioning smile from the perspiring salesman she bowed her head and the bid sailed to thirty-five. After another whispered colloquy the fair one allowed forty, which Maggie promptly raised by two. The situation was growing desperate. Maggie had only a margin of six dollars now and something of the spirit of bluff quickened her natural sharpness. With an air of indifference she turned aside and began a desultory conversation with a portly Jewess who nudged her to go on. The auctioneer deigned to come down and whisper to her but Maggie seemed to have lost interest. In a sudden fit of jealousy, the blonde cried with an unmistakable air of finality, "Forty-five!"

Maggie's moment had come, but in a tone implying unlimited funds, she called smilingly, "Forty-eight!" and then, as if the issue were of small consequence, resumed the animated conversation with her new friend. The blonde had lapsed into sullen silence; the last shot had told and as music to her ears the hammer fell. Maggie Slattery handed her roll of bills to the beaming personage who took her address with a slight glance of surprise. The Hollow was not a piano-playing district.

"YOU really like it, Tim? You're not mad at me?" Maggie clasped one of Tim's soft hands in her own hard little fingers and edged closer to him as they inspected the piano which had arrived amid much excitement soon after supper. It almost filled the tiny parlour and the gold sofa, ousted from its aristocratic seclusion, had been moved to make way for the newcomer. The children were allowed in the room and the whole family stood grouped in speechless admiration. A knock sounded at their door as one of the neighbours arrived to compliment them upon their good fortune. Another came, and still another until every available chair was filled and the room crowded to suffocation. Susie Publicover, who played in a downtown eating-house, volunteered to give an exhibition and the charmed listeners hung wide-mouthed upon the jingling ragtimes that rattled from the keys of Slattery's piano. Slattery's piano! What music could be sweeter than those two words to the proud possessors! Their social position, which had of late become quite assailable, was now rendered immune and the Hollow lost no time in making ingratiating advances.

During the musical performance, Maggie tore herself from the room and in a short time returned, beaming, from the kitchen. The lemonade-



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