

# **A PARTING AND A MEETING: STORY**

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A Parting and a Meeting: Story by W. D. Howells

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**W. D. HOWELLS**

**A PARTING AND A  
MEETING: STORY**





Page 19.

"BURTON DROPPED THE REINS ALTOGETHER."

A PARTING AND A MEETING

Story

*Like a Child*

BY

W. D. HOWELLS

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## ILLUSTRATIONS

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- "BURTON DROPPED THE REINS ALTOGETHER"  
"ER" . . . . . *Frontispiece*
- "GIVE TO HIM THAT ASKEETH" . . . . . *Facing p. 40*
- "SHE TRIED THE SPRING OF THE FLOOR" . . . . . " 60



## A PARTING AND A MEETING

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### I

THEY drove along in the old chaise, with the top down, under the bright forenoon sun. The June warmth had a hint of summer heat in it, but a light wind blew cool in their faces out of the northwest. It had rained over night, and the earth seemed washed as clean as the sky. Where the woods were cut away from the smoothly packed road, the laurel was coming in bloom; where the trees closed upon it the pine tufts purred, and the birch leaves sang in the breeze, so near that she had to put up

her hand to keep a bough from switching her in the face, now and then; the horse made snatches at the foliage, and from time to time champed thoughtfully on his bit, as if he fancied he might have caught a leaf in his mouth.

The young man held the lax rein in one hand, while he held closely in the other the hand of the young girl beside him. She seemed more conscious of what the horse was doing than he, and she returned his long gaze with eyes that made little flights of anxiety away from his, to the right and the left, and then settled back to the joy of dwelling on his face. It was the thin, aquiline face of New England; the cheek-bones were high, and touched with a color that kept itself pure, though his long hands were a country brown; his eyes were blue, and his hair pale yellow. His looks had no aquiline fierceness from

his profile, but only a gentle intensity, unless it might better be called a mild rapture.

The girl beside him sat pulled away into the corner of the chaise, and yet drawn towards him in a tender droop. Her face was somewhat narrow, and that made the corners of her pretty mouth show far into her cheeks. Her nose was tilted a little above it, but it was straight and fine from the tip upward; her eyes were set rather near together, and her forehead had the hair drawn low on it, and close to her mobile brows. A wide-fronted scoop-bonnet flared round her little head, with ribbons that fell to the waist of her very high-waisted green silk dress, made in the fashion of seventy years ago, with a skirt ending in closely-gathered ruffles a foot deep. The young man wore a blue coat with brass buttons, tight