

**A LIKELY  
STORY: FARCE**

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A Likely Story: Farce by W. D. Howells

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**W. D. HOWELLS**

**A LIKELY  
STORY: FARCE**



A LIKELY STORY

NO. 10



"THE MOST EXCITING PART."

# A LIKELY STORY

*Farce*

BY  
W. D. HOWELLS

ILLUSTRATED



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"THE MOST EXCITING PART OF IT" . . . *Frontispiece*  
MR. WELLING EXPLAINS . . . . . *Facing page 52*

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## A LIKELY STORY

### I

*MR. AND MRS. WILLIS CAMPBELL*

**M**RS. CAMPBELL: "Now this, I think, is the most exciting part of the whole affair, and the pleasantest." She is seated at breakfast in her cottage at Summering-by-the-Sea. A heap of letters of various stylish shapes, colors, and superscriptions lies beside her plate, and irregularly straggles about among the coffee-service. *Vis-à-vis* with her sits Mr. Campbell behind a newspaper. "How prompt they are! Why, I didn't expect to get half so many answers yet. But that shows that where people have nothing to do *but* attend to their social duties they are always prompt—even the men; women, of course, reply early anyway,

and you don't really care for them; but in town the men seem to put it off till the very last moment, and then some of them call when it's over to excuse themselves for not having come after accepting. It really makes you wish for a leisure class. It's only the drive and hurry of American life that make our men seem wanting in the *convenances*; and if they had the time, with their instinctive delicacy, they would be perfect: it would come from the heart: they're more truly polite now. Willis, just *look* at this!"

Campbell, behind his paper: "Look at what?"

Mrs. Campbell: "These replies. Why, I do believe that more than half the people have answered already, and the invitations only went out yesterday. That comes from putting on R. S. V. P. I knew I was right, and I shall always do it, I don't care what *you* say."

Campbell: "You didn't put on R. S. V. P. after all I said?" He looks round the edge of his paper at her.

Mrs. Campbell: "Yes, I did. The idea