

imperative as part of the necessary setting of her worldly affairs in order.

The site of the tall villa, its garden, and the house in the side street behind it—also Mrs Copley's property—had long been a Naboth's vineyard to the directors of the building company responsible for erection of the neighbouring and towering, rawly red-brick constructions advertised as 'high-class residential flats.' Offers had been made her more than once, in the last twelve months, and as often rejected. But another and financially handsomer one had reached her, through the intermediary of her lawyers, about ten days back. The blank tedium of her waiting was then at its most disheartening and worst. She felt quite terribly out of conceit with the poor tall villa and disposed to give it a slap. For it seemed to her rather tragically vowed to lost delights. It had witnessed the birth, growth, and mysterious consummation of the most daring, most poetic, most inspiring effort of her life. Had seen the tide of her deepest emotion at the flood; and now saw it slowly, mournfully ebbing. When the last offer for the house arrived she had doubted any second rising of that splendid tide; and the