

DUCHESS

THE STORY OF MY FIRST
NOVEL; HOW A NOVEL
IS WRITTEN

Duchess

**The story of my first novel;
How a novel is written**

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The Duchess

"The story of my first novel"

My first novel! Alas! for that first story of mine – the raven I sent out of my ark and never see again! Unlike the proverbial curse, it did *not* come home to roost, it stayed where I had sent it. The only thing I ever heard of it again was a polite letter from the editor in whose office it lay, telling me I could have it back if I enclosed stamps for the amount of twopence halfpenny, otherwise he should feel it his unpleasant duty to "consign it to the waste-paper basket."

I was only sixteen then, and it is a very long time ago; but I have always hated the words "waste-paper" ever since. I don't remember that I was either angry or indignant, but I *do* remember that I was both sad and sorry. At all events, I never sent that two-pence half-penny, so I conclude my first MS. went to light the fire of that heartless editor. So much comfort I may have bestowed on him, but he left me comfortless; and yet who can

say what good he may not have done me? Paths made too smooth leave the feet unprepared for rougher roads. To step always in the primrose ways is death to the higher desires. Yet oh, for the hours I spent over that poor rejected story, beautifying it (as I fondly, if erroneously, believed), adding a word here, a sentiment there! So conscientiously-minded was I, that even the headings of the chapters were scraps of poetry (so called) done all by myself. Well, never mind. I was very young then, and as they say upon the stage, I "meant well."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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