



The Octopus: A California Story

Frank Norris

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Inspired by The Mussel Slough Tragedy, an 1880 dispute over land titles between California settlers and the Southern Pacific Railroad, Frank Norris' 1901 novel, "The Octopus: A California Story", is the first part in the unfinished trilogy, "The Epic of Wheat". The novel depicts the conflict between wheat farmers in the San Joaquin Valley and the Pacific and Southwestern railroad. When the railroad attempts to take possession of land leased to and improved by the farmers, they are challenged to defend themselves. The second volume of "The Epic of Wheat" trilogy, "The Pit", was published after Norris' death and the third installment, to be titled "The Wolf", was never written.

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