

# **THE JOYOUS MIRACLE**

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The Joyous Miracle by Frank Norris

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**FRANK NORRIS**

**THE JOYOUS  
MIRACLE**





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JOYOUS MIRACLE**

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FRANK NORRIS**

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THE  
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**M**ERVIUS HAD COME to old Jerome's stone-built farmhouse, across the huge meadow where some half-dozen of the neighboring villagers pastured their stock in common. Old Jerome had received a certain letter, which was a copy of another letter, which in turn was a copy of another letter, and so on

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and so on, nobody could tell how far. Mervius would copy this letter and take it back to his village, where it would be copied again and again and yet again, and copies would be made of these copies, till the whole countryside would know the contents of that letter pretty well by heart. It was in this way, indeed, that these people made their literature. They would hand down the precious documents to their children, and that letter's contents would become folk-lore, become so well known that it would be repeated orally. It would be



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a legend, a mythos; perhaps by and by, after a long time, it might gain credence and become even history.

But in that particular part of the country this famous letter was doubly important, because it had been written by a man whom some of the peasants and laborers and small farmers knew. "I knew him," said old Jerome, when Mervius had come in and the two had sat down on either side of the oak table in the brick-paved kitchen. Mervius—he was past seventy himself—slipped off his huge wooden sabots and let his feet

