



Literary Feuds: A Century of Celebrated Quarrels--From Mark Twain to Tom Wolfe

Anthony Arthur

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A submarine's deadliest antagonist is another sub. Some of our most illustrious writers have tried their best to sink their enemies, using all the weapons at their command-wit, humor, sarcasm, invective, and the occasional right cross to the jaw. In these eight profiles of quarrels between famous authors, Anthony Arthur draws on a lifetime of reading and teaching their works to describe the feuds as lively duels of strong personalities. Going beyond mere gossip, he provides insights into the issues that provoked the quarrels-Soviet communism, World War II, and the natural tension between the critical and the creative temperaments among them. The result reads like a collection of short stories, with the featured authors as their own best characters and having the best lines. For example:

--Ernest Hemingway on his one-time friend and tutor: "Gertrude Stein was never crazy/Gertrude Stein was very lazy."

--Sinclair Lewis to Theodore Dreiser "I still say you are a liar and a thief."

--Mary McCarthy on Lillian Hellman " . . . every word she writes is a lie, including 'and' and 'the. ' "

These great writers are a quarrelsome bunch indeed, and these true tales of bookish bickering are guaranteed to enlighten and entertain even the most discriminating literature lovers.

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