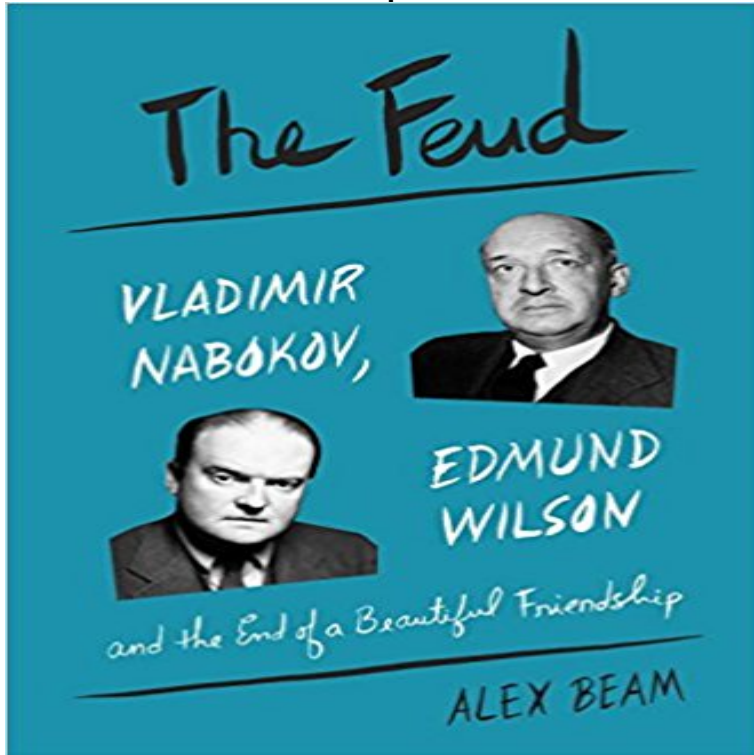


# The Feud: Vladimir Nabokov, Edmund Wilson, and the End of a Beautiful Friendship



Clash of the Titans! The deliciously ironic (and sad) tale of how two literary giants destroyed their friendship in a fit of mutual pique and egomania. In 1940 Edmund Wilson was the undisputed big dog of American letters. Vladimir Nabokov was a near-penniless Russian exile seeking asylum in the States. Wilson became a mentor to Nabokov, introducing him to every editor of note, assigning to him book reviews for *The New Republic*, engineering a Guggenheim. Their intimate friendship blossomed over a shared interest in all things Russian, ruffled a bit by political disagreements. But then came *Lolita*, and suddenly Nabokov was the big (and very rich) dog. Finally the feud erupted in full when Nabokov published his hugely footnoted and virtually unreadable literal translation of Pushkin's famously untranslatable verse novel *Eugene Onegin*. Wilson attacked his friend's translation with hammer and tong in *The New York Review of Books*. Nabokov counterattacked in the same publication. Back and forth the increasingly aggressive letters volleyed until their friendship was reduced to ashes by the narcissism of small differences. (With black-and-white illustrations throughout)

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