



## Fighting Fair

*Anne Calhoun*

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**Fighting Fair** Anne Calhoun

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A brand new short story released in cooperation with WALK on the WILD SIDE BOOKS...

With a marriage in trouble, there's no such thing as fighting fair...

Jersey girl Natalie Copeland is ready to give up on a decade of marriage. Her husband Shane disappeared into the long, stressful hours necessary to make partner at his investment firm, and now their once-hot sex life has gone ice cold. She knows fighting for the man she loves against the adrenaline rush of deals and dollars is a fight she can't win.

The fast-track to partner came a high price, but Shane's not going to lose Natalie over his work. He knows winning back his headstrong, passionate wife won't be easy. Proving he's in their marriage forever will take everything he's got...and on Wall Street and in love, there's no such thing as a fair fight.

12,000 words in length, contemporary erotic romance.

## Fighting Fair Details

Date : Published July 15th 2011

ISBN :

Author : Anne Calhoun

Format : Kindle Edition 38 pages

Genre : Romance, Adult Fiction, Erotica, Novella, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, Erotic Romance, Short Stories, Bdsm

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## From Reader Review Fighting Fair for online ebook

### ♥Rachel♥ says

Fighting Fair is a short story only 38 pages long but it packs a punch. It's a story about a married couple who is still in love, but has grown apart. I loved the realistic feel this story had, and the steamy reconciliation! Whoa!

Natalie and Shane have been married for eight years and what started out as smoldering relationship has turned cold and distant thanks to Shane's obsessive commitment to his job and becoming partner in his firm. As a last ditch effort, Natalie signs them up for counseling.

"The truth hurt, made her ache inside when she let the possibility of their marriage failing enter her mind, but she couldn't go on like this."

Shane drags his feet until he realizes how close to breaking up they actually are. When he figures this out, he has no intention of "fighting fair," he's willing to do whatever it takes to make things work. He loves Natalie and he's damned if he's going to let her go. He gets her home and plans on "melting her from the inside out," oh my.

"Tingles spread as he caressed her cheeks, her forehead, the tip of her nose, then her mouth. Her lips parted slightly and her tongue flicked out, chasing the stimulus but his mouth was there soft and hot and open. His tongue caressed hers while his hand gripped her hair. Sparks skittered into the pit of her belly, and she whimpered. The sound cut off when he kissed her again, hard and deep."

This started out as sort of an antagonistic relationship because of the hurt involved, but it ended up powerfully sensual, and touching. Any married couple will tell you that you go through ups and downs periodically, and it's lovely to see an example of things turning around and getting back on track. I loved this short story, and will definitely be checking out anything else Anne Calhoun writes.

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### Gigi says

**Reread October 2016** Nope. Shouldn't have read this one again. The husband was kind of a dick.

A short read of a established hetero couple on the verge of a break-up that rediscover each other. Very hot! Anne Calhoun has become my **GOTO** author for a quick hetero fix!

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### Dina says

I think I would have loved this book if it had been a full-length story. I really liked the premise, but it needed more words/pages to make me connect with the H/h. Shane and Natalie were okay, I guess, but their

struggles didn't quite move me because I didn't get to "know" them that well. It isn't easy to get into much depth in short stories, but I've seen it done before so I know it *can* be done. As it was, I still liked this story. I only wish I had loved it... Yes, I'm greedy that way. ;)

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### **Steamywindows♥? says**

A great novella about what happens when a man neglects his wife in flavor of his ambition, assuming she will just go along. He has been so intent on his goal that he has lost sight of what he really values. When his wife says they need counselling, he shows up late! Seriously, the man needs a lesson.

...and he gets it when something momentous happens and she isn't around for him to share with. The resulting confrontation of her in a bar, talking with another man, jerks our hero into a supremely aware state, and a realization that he may have truly risked his marriage. What I wonder is what might have happened if it had taken him two years, as he originally thought?

I loved the heroine, she is definitely strong and when enough is enough, takes a stand. Hot and highly steamy make up sex. Great writing, an author to watch

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### **Karla says**

Sweet, emotional, passionate short story about a couple losing touch with each other and re-igniting the passion that brought them together. Letting someone know you love them is sometimes as simple as showing them why you fell in love with them in the first place. Making time to be with them even if it's just sharing a very hot bowl of ice cream!

Fighting the good fight to keep the one you love.

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### **Kelly says**

A short story about a couple who find a way (and OMG what a way!) to repair their troubled marriage. A sweet, sexy read. If you loved Liberating Lacey I think you'll love this too.

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### **Crista says**

First of all, thanks to my friend Baba for recommending this new-to-me author!

Whew! For a book that is only 12,000 words, this one packs one big steamy punch. I think this is a story that anyone who's been in a long term relationship could relate with.

Natalie and Shane met in college. He was her professor and the chemistry between them was apparent from the beginning. Shane waits until Natalie has her final exam graded, and then immediately asks her to dinner. The rest they say...was history.

Present day opens with Natalie in a marriage counselor's office waiting for Shane to arrive. Their marriage is in trouble. Shane's desire to provide and make partner with the firm has led to lots of work hours, missed dates, and neglecting his relationship with Natalie.

How realistic is that? Don't we all fall into unfortunate patterns from time to time where the most important people in our lives are sometimes overlooked and neglected. Fighting Fair gives us a glimpse into a marriage on the brink of destruction, and the evening that changes its course:)

Once Shane wakes up to the dismal state that his marriage is in, he wages a full out mission to remind Natalie of the love and passion that is still very much present for both of them.

I read this one in about 20 minutes, but it'll probably be the best 20 minutes of my day! It reminded me again of what is important in my own life, and I loved watching two busy individuals become "one" all over again! Great stuff!

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### **The Eleventh Hour says**

Fighting Fair is the story of a marriage at the crisis point, and the one night that supposedly saves an estranged couple from divorce. Natalie and Shane once had a passionate and committed partnership, but Shane's commitment to his work over his wife have strained the marriage to the point where Natalie is seriously considering cutting her losses and moving on. In a last ditch attempt to save their marriage, Natalie schedules a couples counseling session with a marriage and family therapist -- a session to which Shane is 20 minutes late and pretty dismissive with both Natalie and the therapist. When Shane makes partner at his investment firm a few days later, however, he realizes how empty his marriage has become and how close he is to losing Natalie for good.

Needless to say, given my 2 star rating, I didn't quite buy it. The story starts out pretty interesting, with the counseling session between Natalie and Shane. We see how good their relationship used to be, contrasted with how bitter and strained things have become between the couple. Natalie and Shane are shown to have some serious problems in their relationship, that are years in the making. These problems are magnified when Shane is at a party to celebrate his recent promotion to partner, alone, when he realizes that he has no idea where his wife is and that he wants her back with him. When he spies her talking to another man through the window of a bar, he assumes she's cheating on him and goes to confront her.

This is where the short story fairly unravels. From this point, the angst, resentment and emotions that had been building up between the hero and heroine devolve into a boring sex game of hide and seek, which I thought was unbelievable that Natalie would even agree to at all. At this point in the story, she's barely talking to him. She resents him so much that she can't even look at him without choking on her bile and bitterness. But, when they get home after Shane's accused her of cheating on him, he's like wanna play a game, lol? And she falls in line even though she's already got one foot out of the door. The sex scene itself was, in my opinion, a very drawn out, half-hearted apology from Shane to Natalie after years of ignoring her. Then everything's fine! I guess I wanted to see more actual emotional repairing of the relationship, because it seemed like they slapped a sex band-aid on the mortal wound of their marriage, and I wasn't very confident that any of this would last. I've had this problem before with Anne Calhoun novels, where the sex takes center stage and emotions come in a distant, distant second place. Just not my cup of tea. 2 stars.

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## Taryn says

This review was posted at My Secret Romance

I love **LOVE** this cover!

I am not one to read short stories. I've never really liked them and they've never done much for me. They feel rushed and it's just not possible to connect with the characters, in my opinion.

Well, I am sooooo eating my words now! **This is one hot, beautiful, romantic short story, with a side of light BDSM. Oh, how I loved this novella!** This is my first read by this author and it won't be my last. Anne Calhoun was able to write an erotic romance with a story line that can hold it's own. I think it's very hard for an erotic writer to have romance in their stories and it not just be about sex. I am definitely a fan of Anne's now and I will be getting more of her books very soon.

Natalie is fighting to save her marriage. She has gone as far as to enroll them in marriage consoling where Shane, her husband, often shows up late and nothing is accomplished. Natalie isn't getting the support that she needs from her husband, so she confides in her close friend Chris one night at a bar.

Shane was given a great promotion at work and wants to share it with his wife. He's on his way to see her only to find her with another man. What proceeds after that is very suspenseful and heart pounding, but leads to some smoking hot *beautiful* love making.

There was only one thing that bothered me with the novella. There is no way anyone can spot someone across the street at a bar in Manhattan, like Shane did with Natalie. I live very close to Manhattan and have been to the city many times. There are just too many people for that to happen. But, I let it slide. Every author is allowed one mistake :)

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## Jill says

Shane and Natalie are having marriage problems. Or at least that's what Natalie thinks. Shane's oblivious. So, she arranges marriage counselling.

This is a novella, so there's a limit to the plot....but not the sex scenes. This is my second Anne Calhoun book and I pretty much thought the same as the first book. It was okay. I very much liked the premise of a married couple trying to rekindle their love. And I liked that they realised that sex isn't *The Fix*. I find Anne Calhoun's writing doesn't really wow me. Her sex scenes were good but I never felt the couple's chemistry.

I think many readers will enjoy this quick erotic romance snack that comes with a side serving of nipple clamps.

**Steam: 4**

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## **Baba says**

**ETA June 27, 2015: Downgraded to four stars because of this:**

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

**I did a re-read today and I'm posting a new review.**

**"If you find yourself in a fair fight, your tactics suck."**

**- by John Steinbeck -**

It's hot. It's erotic. It's steamy. It's thoughtful.

Wow, I loved Fighting Fair! It's a short, yet very satisfying read. Anne could write a grocery list and I'd read and enjoy it. No doubt at all. I love her prose and how she writes so sensually! Touching is so essential and she describes it with such ease and my body and breathing sensors are running at full speed! Always. Anne, do you do it on purpose? I hope you know that you can really turn on your readers.

Shane and Natalie's marriage is in very serious jeopardy. Natalie is fuming since her husband is already late for their first marriage counseling. Further, Shane seems to be unaware of their problems.

*"When you announced you'd made this appointment was the first I'd heard we were having problems.*

They haven't had a real conversation in months. And they haven't been on a date in months. To put it simply: due to very demanding jobs, they don't spend enough time together anymore. Yes, I so agree! It's possible for both partners to have demanding schedules, yet still enjoy a satisfying, committed marriage. But there has to be a commitment to marriage and you do have to be willing to communicate early, often, and well. They'd agreed to the job, the long hours, but Nat had no idea what it would do to Shane, and to their marriage.

His idea of reconnecting as a couple is pretty tempting eventually.

*"You've got my attention, sweetheart."*

*<...>*

*"Looks like a fight. Sounds like a fight," he taunted softly, bracing a shoulder against the doorframe.*

*"Smells like a fight, like sweat and turned on woman. Oh, we're fighting, all right."*

Shane suggests to talk but Natalie declines. And Shane said:

*"Then let's play a game."*

Okey dokey, game on! Shane didn't want to play fair, yet he intended to fight fair. After numerous discussions they knew that there was no fair in a fight, though. Shane also knew that he wasn't fighting to beat her at a game. He was playing for their marriage and their future together, and he wasn't going to lose.

By voicing the right words and by touching the right spots of her body, Shane had the ability to satisfy her every need, to touch her to her very core. He'd taught her to need him, mind, body, and soul and then he'd all but disappeared from her life.

*"We're here," she said. But where? On the map of their lives together, where were they?*

After some seriously soul-shattering sex, Shane initiated the long awaited conversation and he showed Nat in a very convincing way where they were. I loved to see them together sitting on the kitchen floor and eating ice cream and finally talking. Definitely satisfying and sweet! You get to see that Shane is not a bad and shallow guy. It's quite the opposite, after all.

*"I remembered what you told me after our first fight, that you argued with people you trusted. I wanted to know if you still trusted me enough to lose it with me. If you did, we still had a chance."*

*"I love you, Shane," she whispered. "How doesn't matter. It's always been you. And Shane replied "I'm listening."*

I'm relieved, Shane, that you did realize something very important:

*"I couldn't have done it without you. You were always there when I needed to vent or strategize. I took that for granted. Whatever's coming, I don't want to do it without you. Without us.*

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### **Elizabeth (Liz) says**

Wonderful! Anne Calhoun is fast becoming a real favorite of mine! More please!

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### **Vishous says**

with short stories like this I always wish for them to be longer and to actually read their story, but I must admit that even in 40 pages the writer did an amazing job.

I love it when something so short turns out to be a big surprise!

the beginning actually made me really sad, the way their marriage was becoming nothing, but the way he actually realized and made her to forgive him....

well lets just say that i will be playing hide and seek very soon....

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### **Kristen says**

#### **4 stars**

*Fighting Fair* is a well written short story (40 pages) about a married couple whose relationship is on the brink of falling apart. This story has a great blend of real-life issues intermixed with a touching romance and

a steamy, light BDSM sex scene. For such a short story, I found the characterization to be stellar, the prose absorbing, and the chemistry off the charts. It's refreshing to read a story about an established couple who have problems (what couple doesn't?!) but are committed and in love. I wish more authors would take advantage of this plot device.

If you're looking for a quick, well written, light BDSM short story, *Fighting Fair* is a great read.

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### **UniquelyMoi ~ BlithelyBookish says**

I had just finished reading *Liberating Lacey* and had to grab something - *anything* else I could get my hands on by Anne Calhoun. I've seen my Goodreads friends discussing *Fighting Fair* so I decided to make it my next read. WOW! What a great choice!

*Fighting Fair* is the very short story of a married couple who, after ten years of marriage, have found themselves living more like roommates than husband and wife. Natalie, realizing that if they don't do something about this soon, there won't be anything left worth fighting for, signs Shane and herself up for couples marriage counseling but Shane doesn't really want anything to do with it and makes that pretty clear at their first appointment – which he showed up 20 minutes late to. It's not that he doesn't love Nat anymore, it's just that they've both been so caught up in his desire to make partner at the firm he works for that he's lost focus on what's truly important. All that changes one night when his boss reminds him that what he's worked so hard for isn't just his success, it belongs to Natalie, too. Shane decides to take his boss's words to heart and it turned out to be one of the sexiest, most romantic very short stories I've ever read.

For a short story it was great! Of course it was a hot, sexy story, but I also loved the characters, could invest myself in their relationship and their desire to rekindle that flame which was slowing dying out. I'll definitely be reading more by Anne Calhoun!

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