

**COOP IN THE YARD**  
by Thembi Duncan

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2 pp.

**CHARACTERS**

**COOPER:** Male, any ethnicity

**MS. THOMPSON:** Female, any ethnicity

**SGT. WHITT:** Male, any ethnicity

**MARINES:** Mostly male. At least two people, no more than four.

**SETTING:** Winter, 2013.

**SCENE ONE**

(It is morning in the office of the Chief Clerk of the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals. Two or three Marines are laughing uproariously. They have a roll of masking tape, pads of Post-it notes, a Sharpie, and a desktop computer. They are making armpit farts and slap-boxing. COOPER sits at his desk. He is exhausted and put-upon. Nearby, MS. THOMPSON sits at her desk, crying softly. Her desk is covered in masking tape and Post-it notes. Her desktop computer has been removed and replaced with a cardboard box with the word "Cumpooter" written in Sharpie. SGT. WHITT sits at his desk tending to paperwork. He phones COOPER, even though their desks are in very close proximity. COOPER picks up the phone.)

COOPER

(Into phone.) Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals, Cooper speaking.

SGT. WHITT

Cooper!

COOPER

Yes?

SGT. WHITT

The Marines are harassing Ms. Thompson again. She's over there whimpering like a feral cat with a staph infection. Fix it.

(WHITT hangs up. COOPER gets up and walks over to Ms. Thompson's desk. While slap-boxing, one of the Marines gets his nose broken and it starts bleeding profusely. The Marines crack up laughing, including the bloody one.)

COOPER

Ms. Thompson, have you printed out those affidavits yet?

(MS. THOMPSON blubbers something unintelligible. COOPER turns to walk away and nearly bumps into SGT. WHITT.)

SGT. WHITT

What did she say? Did you get those affidavits?

COOPER

She's having some difficulties, Sir.

(One of the Marines grabs another and accidentally breaks his arm. They fall out laughing.)

SGT. WHITT

I got two courts-martial on the docket, and if those affidavits don't get printed out STAT, how in the hell are they gonna be included in the case files for the judge?!

COOPER

Why don't I just print them out, Sir?

SGT. WHITT

Negative, Cooper! Ms. Thompson is responsible for printing out those affidavits. You're her supervisor. Do your job and make sure she does hers!

(He stomps away.)

(COOPER returns to Ms. Thompson's desk. She looks up at him and they share a tender moment. COOPER takes her hand and they walk silently to his desk. He holds her hand and guides it to the keyboard, and they press "Enter" together. The sound of a printer can be heard. The light changes. The Marines begin to hum the melody of "Head Over Heels" by Tears For Fears and surround the two lovers as they begin to dance slowly. The Marines continue to hit and slap each other occasionally. SGT. WHITT appears.)

SGT. WHITT

Cooper! Thompson! What the hell?!

COOPER

(Startled) Sorry, Sir.

(COOPER starts for his desk, but MS. THOMPSON does not release him. Instead, she jets out an arm in SGT. WHITT's direction and magically strikes him mute without touching him. Frustrated, SGT. WHITT keeps trying to yell at them in vain. COOPER and MS. THOMPSON return to dancing, and the Marines go back to singing.)

**End of Play**