



Chapter Four VICTIMIZED TWICE

Victims have discovered that they are treated as appendages of a system appallingly out of balance. They have learned that somewhere along the way, the system has lost track of the simple truth that it is supposed to be fair and to protect those who obey the law while punishing those who break it. Somewhere along the way, the system began to serve lawyers and judges and defendants, treating the victim with institutionalized disinterest.

— **President Reagan's Task Force on Victims of Crime** report,
issued December 1982

This quote describes very accurately what I encountered while pursuing the rape case. It showed up over and over. It showed up on the day of the indictment, on the day you just read in the last chapter. It would again show up in giant spades on the day of the sentencing. Victims are tossed aside while the guilty one, Dennis D. Cooper, was treated with velvet gloves.

After spending thousands of hours and thousands of dollars helping crack the case, I never expected to be treated as invisible and sometimes worse, as dirt to be swept under a rug.