

Opening Doors, Unlocking Hearts

THE WORLD as it is currently constructed does not especially want—and plainly does not need—me in it. That statement seems so destined to elicit a rush of reassurances (*oh my dear of course we want you you have so much to contribute and then so many people depend on you for love your children especially and you have so many friends*) that I need to stop a moment to let them play out before I go on to explain.

That done, I shall proceed. I don't mean to belittle reminders of my worth. I crave them just as much as every other human being does, and I employ a variety of devices to solicit them, some more honorable than others, but my opening sentence doesn't happen to be one of them. And I don't want its force undermined by denial and pity, no matter how lovingly intended. I mean sim-

