

OPEN ADMISSIONS

i was talking to charles webb
about the old standby rejection slip.

"we're sorry to inform you that
your manuscript does not fit our
editorial needs at this time,"

and it occurred to me how many women
have issued me pretty much the same
peremptory dismissal — i didn't fit
their current needs —

whereas when i think of all the women
i didn't turn away
even though they didn't precisely fit
into my present needs and plans,

well, i can actually feel something
beginning to glow, a sort of halo.

THE PRECISE MOMENT IN GENDER HISTORY AT WHICH THE SELF-STYLED PREY DISCOVERS HERSELF NO LONGER PREYED UPON

she had already made it clear
she only wanted to be "pals,"
still, she always seemed to show up
whenever i was planning to invite
someone else for a drink.

so as we walked towards the parking lot,
i said,

"i won't try to talk you into a drink
because i know how much work you have
to do,"

and she said, "wellllll ... if you could
promise to have me back to the library
in half an hour"

"hell, no," i said, "i don't want to be
rushing back and forth after the long,
hard day i've had. i want to unwind.
some other time maybe."

i smiled, shut the door, started the
engine, waved, and headed towards the bar.

god, i enjoyed the look on her liberated face.