HEALING ARTS

Materia Medica

Small Talk

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She kept her appointment
with a lawyer to ensure
a clean break between the here
and the after, skipped out
on her dental hygienist,
paid the minimum on her
credit card. She'll expire
before her Visa. This morning,
friends brought snacks and chitchat,
tired words about the power
of prayer, the importance
of attitude, the need
to rage against the darkness,
breathless sentences joined
by short phrases like "I mean"
or "you know," word putty
to fill the silence when all
that's left to say is goodbye.

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