

HEALING ARTS

Materia Medica

Red Nail Polish



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Hello

may I enter?

the Red nail polish

I brought it, like I promised

it's your favorite color—bright Red

we spoke yesterday morning, and you agreed

to let me buy some nail polish, I would go get it after work

the podiatrist trimmed your nails nicely, but they needed some color

Red—the same color as the blood that covered your gown
later that afternoon

bright aortic blood flowing out into the world through a
connection that should not exist

the bleeding stopped spontaneously, giving us time to estab-
lish the diagnosis

in clinical terms, a sentinel bleed from an aorto-esophageal
fistula

sterile words that obscure their implications for your life

I cannot fix this problem for you—nobody can

all I can do is to keep my promise

to bring you red nail polish

and hold your hand

awed by your

grace

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