

Not Him

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Alcoholics drink all the time.

faces falling loose around the head,
hair dull with shame.

he really wasn't an alcoholic

he only drank on week-ends
and he looked good.

alcoholics smell like sour beer

bodies yellow like the babies
jaundiced with the strain of living on their own

he really wasn't an alcoholic

he smelled like mint and leather
and his skin was bronze,

alcoholics lose their jobs.

random life styles chokes
their friends and family who finally leave.

he really wasn't an alcoholic

he worked hard and he only called her "*puta*"
when he was *borracho*; it's just the drink,
don't you think?

alcoholics go to bars

everyone knows who they are
drinking their pay while kids cry *hambre* eating
up their hearts

he really isn't an alcoholic

he drank his whiskey at home
and gave grandma his check every week

alcoholics die young

bodies rotting from the poison eating
livers and love.

he lied

about living
to see me finish school
pride eluded his life
when he died.