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An addict and I walked into the
basement meeting holding hands.
Court-appointed. We
drank coffee, Styrofoam cups,
edged closer to the circle,
finally sat. I believed a
good man was buried inside
him. When he became the bottle,
I closed my eyes, tried to
justify his hands on my throat.
Kill the drunk not-him.
Love the sober true-him.

Most people shared only their
names. A few told stories. I—
observer, lurker, fraud—
passed. What would I have said,
quiet girl who'd never been high?

Rain outside. He and I
stood under the awning, waiting.
Thank you for coming, he said,
understanding what I didn't: no
veil between not-him and true-him.
We're so good at fooling,
X marks any spot we want.
You're welcome, I said. The camera
zoomed out. We became small.

