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Contemporary American Poetry

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I've been wondering
how woefully few junkies and alcoholics there are
amidst NPR's contemporary American poets,
even how few just plain smokers, and how
woefully many non-smokers, vegetarians,
globetrotters, and environmental activists.

How many poetry magazine editors
and non-profit publishers there are
among all those award-winning authors
of suburban and collegetown opuses,
multiply divorced and remarried ex-hippies
with paid-off mortgages and lawns,
how many professors
of literature and creative writing
who every now and then discover,
screw, and marry future NPR poets
and poetesses
from the ranks of their own students.

I wonder
how woefully few junkies and alcoholics there are
among future NPR American poets,
how few just plain smokers, even.

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Translated from the Bosnian by Wayles Browne
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