

1980

## After Mayakovsky

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After Mayakovsky · *David Ray*

Why donate blood to suicide is what  
the Russian poet asked. You might as well  
wander like a ghost to each quaint hotel  
and fill the crystal inkwell up or plot  
some grand historic novel that would not  
interest even you as a reader. Or tell  
your favorite stone what you conceive as hell.  
Or just sit and count everything you've got.  
But tell me what it is that whores might write,  
grateful for the work, with red trembling lip.  
These girls will rake their brains throughout the night,  
each at a tiny desk, beside a cup.  
And salesmen too will rise from squeaky beds  
to undertake revisions with bowed heads.