

The instruments

by James Knight

Trombone

A trombone blusters his way
through the bright restaurant,
demanding to see the chef.

He's furious;
the prawns have given him
split
notes.

Violins

Four violins wait for a bus in the rain.
The pervading atmosphere of melancholy
makes their plaintive scrapings redundant.

Axe

The electric guitar
resents the nickname
"Axe".

It implies expectations
of destructive virility,
to which he doesn't feel
equal.

Grand piano

The piano has a morbid air.
In a certain light,
he looks like a skull
with black and white teeth.
His lid could be a gravestone.

Maracas

Never trust maracas.

Related to the rattlesnake,
they'll bite you if you turn your back on them.

Bass Guitar

The bass guitar's
base instincts
can always be discerned
if you watch him carefully.

Carnality pulses
in his languid
movements.

Sax

In public,
the saxophone
affects sexy suavity.

But when he gets home
he drinks Red Bull
and farts
belligerently
through the night.

Music box

The music box has a terrible secret.
Lift her lid and she'll sing it to you
in a faltering voice.

Organ

The church organ despises the puerile wordplay
of which he is frequently the butt.
Nevertheless, he takes great pride in his phallic pipes.

Harp

The harp's web was woven
by Arachne
to catch dream-flies.

Pluck a string
or stroke it,
listen to her
fanged lament.

Flute

"She's so elegant, so graceful!"
The flute tires of such compliments.
In the velvet night of her case,
she dreams of being a foghorn.

—

