

Happy Hour: Bacchus Lounge

LYNDA GRACE PHILIPPSEN

The pianist lurches through
Autumn Leaves without feeling
and the din of chit-chat pushes at the ceiling.

No matter its shape, a piano
out of tune is anything but grand.
The Armani suit one table over brags

he's not been sober since Tuesday last;
the pair of stilettos with him,
malpractice lawyer, blows her nose

into her napkin and lays it on the table.
That settles it. I leave behind
more than I drank. Across the room

a waiter lifts a glass, polishes the rim
and sets it back on a table for two.
The pianist hashes *The Very Thought of You*.

How you would mock my desire.
How you would hate it here—
maroon velvet, black marble, cold fire.

