The Alto's Lament

This poem was found on a small piece of paper folded and stuffed behind a central heating radiator in a church somewhere in England and published in the Daily Mail last year with a request to identify the author 'aka Bob the Organist' - do you know who wrote it?

1. It's tough to be an alto
when you're singing in the choir
The sopranos get the twiddly bits
That people all admire.

2. The basses boom like loud
trombones,
the tenors shout with glee,
But the alto part is on two notes
(or if you're lucky, three).

3. And when we sing an anthem
and we lift our hearts in praises
The men get all the juicy bits
And telling little phrases.

4. Of course the trebles sing the tune -
they always come off best;
The altos only get three notes
And twenty-two bars rest.

5. We practise very hard each week
from hymn-book and the Psalter,
But when the conductor looks at us
our voices start to falter.

6. "Too high! Too low! Too fast!
you lot -
you held that note too long!"
It doesn't matter what you do -
it's certain to be wrong!

7. Oh! Shed a tear for altos,
They're the Martyrs and they know,
In the ranks of choral singers
They're considered very low.

8. They are so very 'umble
that a lot of folks forget 'em;
How they'd love to be sopranos,
But their vocal chords won't let 'em!

9. And when the final trumpet
sounds
And we are wafted higher,
Sopranos, basses, and the tenors -
They'll be in the Heavenly Choir.

10. While they sing "alleluia!"
to celestial flats and sharps,
The altos will be occupied
with polishing the harps.

'Bob the Organist [Anon]'

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