

How many times is enough?

It varies subject to subject of course.

Or to put it another way, how many times is not too many?

How long is a piece of string? .... What matter, a ligature is a ligature.

Backwards and forwards. Forwards and backwards.

Though I incline solely to my master pianist hands.

Draft and redraft.

Windpipe tinkler.

Extinguishing the vital spark that led to its inception.

Diapason stopped.

The draining away of vitality.

Organist.

Any inspiration gone.

And conductor in one.

Enfeebled.

Batonless.

The words having lost all muscularity.

The maestro evokes entrancing resonances.

Their ability to grab by the throat and squeeze.

Atonal.

The blood throb that pushed boldness to the fore.

Wringing breathtaking refrains from mundane somatic prosody.

Pulsing the imagination.

Until quietus.

Until every sentence memorised by unintended rote.

And reprise.

Now sedimented on my bone barrow.

The delimitation probably lies less with physiology, than with Will.

Ready for pallid transplant.

For there comes a point when they surrender the trial.

Scanned so many times, like a prison searchlight for exfiltrations.

Their hands release mine and go to their own throat.

The ones that got away.

It is less of a forfeit to sacrifice life, than it is to continue the agonial.

The ones that got in the way.

Solely thinking about the flow.  
For the reader. Their modulated  
expirations.

Kiss of life through words, which  
themselves require resuscitation.

This ponderous, leaden  
compression.

One fingered contraction.

Cut cut cut.

Delete. Repeat.

Knuckle down. Knuckle under. Fist  
in mouth.

Once more, with feeling.

Memory cinders.

Starting out with a greenhorn's  
longhand.

Nib biting into the paper's  
tissue.

My words intaglioing their  
imprint.

Spelling out my stumbling spoor.

Obtaining me a colophon.

But not my signature.

Only painters ink their names on  
their canvasses.

Fleeting NYRB top ten listing.

Whilom brush with fame.

That point when it becomes a race for the  
bottom. They want to clock out before I'm  
ready for them to do so. Ironically they exert  
the power, for then I have to ease my grip.

Grant them remission.

And I have to be ready to clock that tipping  
point.

My sensitive fingers. Toccata.

Keenly responsive.

Reading petechiae's pointillism like Braille. As  
will the scions of Bertillon.

Trachea changes.

Daubing vermillion filigree.

Pentatonic notation on carnal staves.

Breve.

Just breve.

So not just instrumentalist, conductor, but  
composer too.

When their quavering breath stops, I massage  
the heart back into life.

I am not playing god.

Not even the angel of death.

I syncretise both.

Sometimes it requires an osculation of the  
azure lips. Pucker up.

End-is-near-meant.

A brush with death.

Baptismal royalty cheque, graduation to a typewriter.	Top ten on the FBI's most wanted. A portrait without a face.
Metal mounted ungual stamped.	Silhouetted. Shadow.
Punching through the paper.	When we are here dancing a duet.
With brute fury.	Our quickening syncopated heartbeats.
Betraying the impression of my defeat.	Until the diminuendo of one pulse.
Through carbon paper and liquid whiteout.	A slowing of tempo's temporality.
Photographic negative of what might have been.	Induces dulcet unison.
Corrigenda half-life.	Leaving soloist me in recital.
Erratic errata.	Chromatic scales.
Get it right first time, cut down the drafts.	In liminal time the tissue gilds its contusions.
Repetitive strain, carpal tunnel, tennis elbow.	Xanthic. Gamboge. Burnt umber.
Need it to come out all of a piece first time of asking.	Malachite.
The editor throws it back. Asking for seconds.	The livid impressions of fingers.
A sketch. A stab. A good first go.	Etched indelible cinnabar on their stretched carnal canvas.
Not quite up to snuff though.	
Red pencil, blue pencil, black struck through. Stuck like a pig.	A riot of color like a New England Fall.
Overly versed on his censorious rainbow palette.	Their rasping breath, the sound of the crisp fallen leaves trodden underfoot.
Expurgations of my lustrations.	

Dying of the light.	Dying of the light.
Obtain a firm grip on the material	Limp in my hands.
No visible marks.	Admire the lines. The craquelure.
Diacritics, dire critics.	What will my profilers impute this time?
Edit the book to death.	
Orchestral instead of operatic.	Action art.
Voices with distinctive keys and registers.	Rendering the inactive.
Mellifluously reading off the page	The Paradoxical hypoxia School.
Dulcet by the numbers.	A school of one.
Kill your darlings.	My signature incarnadine canvasses.
If the editor plays god.	Marked with all.
The publisher is the angel of death.	Save my name.
Let go.	Time to let go.
Let it all go.	Just let go.
To pot. To Hell.	Give in to it.
Have to part with it sometime.	Yield.
To pronounce it at an end.	Pronounce it at an end.
Write yourself a coda.	Coda?
Not for publication.	No, there is no pulse.
Gather up those exfiltrations.	Gather up all biological and trace incriminations.
All the things you wanted to include.	That's everything.
Fin.	Finale.