

## DONALD B. CAMPBELL

### Thanksgiving List

I'm thankful for nothing.  
Weekends with no plans.  
Days without e-mails.  
The hours after takeoff,  
before landing, too late to  
change what I packed,  
too soon to check Google Maps.

Spaces between blackbirds who sit  
like musical notes on a power line.  
Miles Davis. "It's not the notes  
you play; it's the notes you don't play."  
His trumpet comes in just after  
the beat. It whispers, draws  
me close with a pause  
in "Bye Bye Blackbird".  
I squeeze myself between  
birds, into the trumpet's  
silence.

I'm thankful for a hundred things.  
My mother. Jazz records she left me.  
Dad's birdwatching guide. My best friend  
and her you-won't-believe-it stories.  
Charlie Parker—Bird—on alto sax  
in "Koko", a scattering of notes  
as fast as chickadees at a feeder,  
chaos wrapped around complex order.  
A swirling flock of words in my head.  
*Birthday party. No masks this year.*  
*Was that a meadowlark?*  
*Marco loves me.*  
*Loves. Me.*

I'm thankful for a thousand things.

Donald B. Campbell is a writer and English as a Second/Additional Language teacher in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. His plays have been performed in Saskatchewan and Alberta. He is a member of the League of Canadian Poets. His writing—including poetry, short stories, plays, monologues, and journalism—has been chosen in competitions and has been published in newspapers, magazines, print anthologies (including from Coteau Books, the League of Canadian Poets, and Streetcake in the UK) and online anthologies, as well as on websites (such as the Saskatoon Public Library) and on provincial and national CBC Radio.