

DON RUSS

## **TURTLE-CHILD**

Turtle-child, my turtle-limbs  
pulled in and under a big black bumbershoot,  
I practise—I play—at loneliness, a cold  
grey sky upon my tented back.

Out of the tub, in a house without heat,  
I huddle in a skimpy towel and guess I'm after all  
an orphan in an endless winter storm. I hear  
in snowy wind my mother's call,

and, fearful star-caped flier above  
the nearest world, I say it—say it all alone:  
love me, love my loving you, and sing  
me safe a nursery rhyme.