

*Kenneth Rehill*

## BUSH DELIVERY

"Box for bush delivery on Aisle Three,"  
The cashier's voice is broadcast over speakers.  
Minutes later, someone is packing  
The leather-faced man's purchases into boxes,  
Taping them tight for his homeward flight.  
Tommy, nine, with his mother, next in line,  
Watches, fascinated. He knows the meaning  
Of "bush delivery." This man lives far  
From Fairbanks, out in the vast, roadless  
Interior. Everything is bought in bulk:  
Lots of coffee, pancake mix, lantern wicks.  
He buys axes two at a time, Tommy notes.  
The man, with a fresh haircut, sap stains  
And scent of black spruce still heavy  
On his parka, will restock a cabin in a remote  
Location along a wild river somewhere far  
Out there. The man's hood, with wolf fur ruff,  
Is turned down, draping his shoulders.  
Like rolled tortillas, the leg furs hang  
And swing wide as he turns and his eyes  
Meet the youth's wide-eyed stare.  
Tight-lipped and stern, he acknowledges  
The kid's admiration with a quick  
Narrowing of his eyes. An hour from now,  
The kid will have forgotten a brief encounter  
The man will cherish all winter long.

