

The New Girl

The new girl's smile is glued on
I remember how it feels to start somewhere new
before anyone knows your secrets
before anyone knows you.

A fresh start, mum says
Don't get it wrong again, they mean.

I wonder why she's here
Did she make bad choices too?

Her shoes too clean
and plaits too tight
smile so brittle it could snap in two -
perfect crescents.

The eyes are the tell
Eyes that can't match a smile
Eyes that stare too hard,
letting splintered secrets p

o

u

r