

# GULLS

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On a train to a place where I'll be a stranger  
to everyone, the girls in front of me trade their phones  
back and forth, their notes apps full  
of future baby names. They laugh over Bodie  
versus Brodie, agree everyone is over Quinn.  
Sarah's turning twenty-one and is mostly sure  
she wants one, maybe two. She pushes up her glasses  
the way I used to when I thought no one was looking.  
I'm trying to decide if a gray streak is inside  
or outside the window. While the gulls bob  
along the bay's frozen edges, a woman taps me  
on the shoulder, wonders if she can sit  
by me, talks about her daughter in Boston  
who works at the natural history museum.  
I pretend I don't realize I'm pretending  
to be interested. How quickly I mimic her  
tone, the warmth that bridges the void  
between our voices. When she gets off  
at her stop, she asks someone on the platform  
for directions. A strand of hair sticks to the white  
sleeve of her coat. I can tell it's mine  
by its darkness, how it curls, how easily  
the air takes it when she turns.