For Charlie, who stepped into that doorway
with me, with love – K.W.

To my mum, who taught me the importance
of being kind – R.D.

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Home for Grace

Kathryn White Rachael Dean

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One day, a woman appeared in a sleeping bag in the shop doorway. We saw her on our way to school. No one knew where she came from. No one knew who she was.

Each time we passed Mum smiled. Sometimes the woman smiled back.

One morning, Mum stopped to talk to her.
I didn't want to. She seemed strange,
sitting outside with all these odd things:

1 CUP
1 TIN LABELLED SPECIAL THINGS
1 GLASS BOTTLE
1 BIG SPOON
1 KNIFE AND FORK
1 PLASTIC PICNIC PLATE WITH A PICTURE OF A TREE
1 OLD CUSHION

And, tucked inside a quilted bag
was a scruffy, fluffy, ginger cat.
When we got home Mum said
the woman was called Grace.

Sometimes, as we hurried by, Grace was sleeping and didn't see us.
At other times, she was awake, talking to her cat.

Then one day, her cat came purring up to meet us.

She meowed and walked
around my legs in 'hello' circles.

I was shy.

"Her name is Luna because she wakes
when the moon rises and keeps me
company all through the long night.
She likes you," said Grace.
I liked Luna.