

It's Only Once, Until It's Not  
By MacKenna Homa

My mind tugs at me,  
pulling, urging.  
*Have they responded yet?*  
No, focus.  
Keep your eyes up.  
*Maybe just a peek?*  
The slight twitch in my pointer finger,  
itching to make a move.  
Mom told me to never text and drive.  
Checking doesn't really count as texting.  
*How dangerous could it be?*  
My mind tells me no,  
but my body says yes.  
I glance down,  
not yet committed.  
*What could happen in a few seconds?*  
I can check when I get there.  
There's five more minutes of driving.  
I *want* to know now,  
but I don't need to.  
Keep your eyes ahead.  
The prospect of thrill confuses me.  
I know I shouldn't.  
*What is just once?*  
My mind flashes to this summer,  
with all those boys lost to crashes.  
My mother could be theirs,  
my siblings without their oldest sister.  
We hear it in the news,  
spread around town  
from ear to listening ear.  
I bet it was just once for them,  
until it wasn't.  
Until it wasn't a thought of should I,  
but rather when will I next?  
I fought the urge,  
and I arrived alive.