

## Remember the Boys by Rachel McKibbens

### **Introduction:**


*"I wrote this poem a few months after Dr. Christine Blasey Ford's stunning testimony about Brett Kavanaugh. Her story affected me deeply, and Kavanaugh's response to it reminded me of an incident in high school involving a star football player I confronted on behalf of a young woman he had harmed. So much of my youth was wasted on wishing I'd been born a boy. I believed, for too long, that femininity was synonymous with victimhood. I'm grateful to have evolved from that mindset."*

- Rachel McKibbens

**Directions:** Follow the steps provided below.

1. Read "Remember the Boys" by Rachel McKibbens (reproduced below), paying particular attention to the poetic elements and techniques McKibbens uses to express her attitude toward masculinity in America.
2. For each section of the poem provided below, determine, on a larger scale, what McKibbens attempts to convey about masculinity. What message is she trying to express with that specific line/word/stanza?
3. For each of the sections of the poem, find an image that reinforces, reflects, or reiterates McKibben's message behind the text.
  - Do not simply find an image that serves as a visual replica for the text. For example, in the first line of the poem, McKibbens recounts watching the boys "chucking rocks at the wasps' nest." The image you choose should not merely be a picture of boys literally throwing rocks at wasps' nests, but rather an image that the line of the poem is meant to express on a larger scale. In other words, ask yourself, "Why would McKibbens choose to select this particular detail about boys chucking rocks at wasps' nests? What does that image reflect about society? Masculinity?"
4. In the final column, briefly describe why you chose the image and how it reflects the text provided on the left. These explanations can be written in bullet points, not complete sentences.

**An example has been provided for you below:**

Poem	Image	Brief Explanation
<p><b>Remember the Boys</b> by Rachel McKibbens</p> <p>chucking rocks at the wasps' nest,</p>		<p><i>*Briefly express why your image reflects the message or sentiment of the text provided on the left.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meant to express a certain degree of recklessness of boys'/mens' behavior.</li> <li>- Behavior in the images conveys the disregard men have toward the safety and well-being of others, regardless of how it may affect or harm others.</li> </ul>
<p>their gathered hum then sudden sting at the nape of my neck.</p>		
<p>Oh, how I paid— still pay—for the recklessness of boys. Little Bretts. Little Jeffs. Little knives to my breast.</p>		
<p>How lucky they were to never be held down, to never see their voices crawl the air like fire!</p>		
<p>How desperately I yearned to be them, to storm the halls in macho gospel: matching blue jackets, blood-filled posture and made-you-flinch.</p>		

How different would I be, how much bigger,		
if I had been given room enough to be a country's golden terror?		