

Kristen Flulher

About ready to begin the show
and the absent-minded
bashing of boys and men has already begun. Irascibility
caresses the back of their necks, into their ears and through their mouths,

defending their right to violence to comply with our hyper-masculinized society which, in
essence is a new form of the blame game, coming
first and foremost before their famed game of soccer or baseball.

Gawking at Mr. Katz's evidence in disbelief.
How could they be in the wrong when they do the can-can on a stage of green,
incandescent bulbs illuminating every move.

Just as the performance delves into the delicate dilemma, like
kids they shout and protest at the mere idea of such a thing,
like infants writhing in colic-infested bodies, howl their objection.

Men could *never* be to blame, when those athletic attendees could
never strike their calloused palm across a woman's cheek;
only rogues do that. And competitors could never be the

paternal villain that is so often convicted by even the dog, and then
questioned by courtroom strangers, only to relive the crime vicariously through NFL greats like
Ray Rice and Adrian Peterson. Rarely do those renowned sportsmen face

societal rejection because
they are the greats, and the greats can never waver
under the influence of Grey Goose or a bad temper because that would betray their

identity as the empathetic competitor that they undoubtedly are
while the woman quivering in the crook of the breakfast nook has hope, that an oxygen-
xenon compound will burst in the company of her assailant so she can

yearn his demise no more. Only then can she remove her cubic
zirconia ring from her withering finger, in an effort to
alleviate the horror that accompanies her every move and wish.

~In response to the Jackson Katz lecture on October 22, 2014.