

Don Judson

[Untitled—from  
a series of poems  
*dearmother*]

The 3 birds frame  
a river at dusk

where children play  
pretending to catch bats—calling them souls—as in, “Emma, I’ve caught your soul  
again.” Hop  
scotch. Jump  
rope. Billy-Will-You. All summer in and out of yards.

I watch as you hesitate at the foot of a neighbor’s drive trace a finger across the faint  
blonde hairs of your arm. I am somewhere deep inside. Not yet even a thought.  
1946: Men broken by war sleep alone on screened-in summer porches: Behind them  
dreamlocked  
disembodied: the faces of wives who you will one day become. Here is the world—  
Sparse. Silent. We are left from it: Bird

alone,  
set before us the day.

