Thou Sayest...

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Cover Page Footnote

This poem is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol2003/iss4/22
One night last summer,  
savage Emmanuel  
snipped the screen window  
and plucked Lizzie  
from her nest.  
Imagine the little lamb, the  
inevitable horror—and he called it love.

Beautiful, benevolent,  
Elizabeth . . . consecrated to God,  
yet captured.

Emmanuel, the bearded street preacher,  
believed he was  
anointed by divine election.  
Took the child, to be Augustine Mitchell,  
his wife—and he called it love.

This claimed-to-be-man-of-God,  
led Lizzie through woods and bramble  
to his mountain shelter.  
Buried his bride  
beneath the earth  
in a hole covered by boards,  
cabled her leg,  
toggled her to a tree—and he called it love.

Rejoice!  
Rejoice!  
Mary Katherine  
Remembered Emmanuel  
Helped ransom Elizabeth  
From the bastard messiah,  
God willing, not too late . . .

Each night Elizabeth whispers  
herself to sleep, breathes aloud,  
“I pray to god,  
my Soul to keep.”  
Yet still from his prison cell—he calls it love.