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# Reverend Burden Compares Mary LaFrance with His Wife Lavinia

by Robert Cooperman

My wife never presented me  
with proof she's strong  
in the Lord: a son.  
Mary has, or will,  
in five months' time:  
more my lawful wife  
in God's eyes  
than church-Lavinia  
ever was.

But I'm shackled to her,  
a prisoner of war  
who hates his cell-mate.

I'd sue for annulment,  
Lavinia's desert-womb a sin.  
But Mary and I'd have to quit  
Gold Creek, parishioners  
turning on me for tearing  
that contract asunder.

I want to spend my days  
here, beloved of my flock,  
my son rising to my pulpit  
when I lay down my burden  
of leading sinners  
to the Light.

If only I could find  
some Bible precedent,  
like the one about witches.

