

THE VIRGIN VINE AND THE IVY

M.L. McCarthy

Venus, creative immanence, makes her ark
The fiery marvel of the virgin vine,
Then leaves it. A drab wall, in wintry dark,
Crisscrossed with barren stems: here's no divine
Indwelling. April, coaxing out some green,
Cheers the dank lines of bricks: there sadness lazes
No more, till the full year renews the scene,
And heavenly fire in ardent leafage blazes.
Glory, green promise, ruined despair: this plant
In leaf, in shoot, in stem embodies them,
Instructive to our mind. Nor should we scant
The selfsame dark-green ivy's praise: for she,
When dour November's stripped the vine to its stem,
Still clothes the wall, emblem of constancy.

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