

A Poetic reflection

My Father gave me twelve good men
And all of them I kept
Though one betrayed and one denied
Some fled and others slept

Judas, if love never ceases,
how could you, my friend, have come to
this: to sell me for thirty silver pieces,
betray me with a kiss?

In Hell there grew a Judas Tree
Where Judas hanged and died
Because he could not bear to see
His master crucified

Our Lord descended into Hell
And found his Judas there
For ever hanging on the tree
Grown from his own despair

So Jesus cut his Judas down
And took him in his arms
“It was for this I came” he said
“And not to do you harm

My tree will grow in place of yours
Its roots lie here as well
There is no final victory
Without this soul from Hell”

So when we all condemned him
As of every traitor worst
Remember that of all his men
Our Lord forgave him first.

- excerpts from *The Ballad of the Judas Tree*
by Ruth Etchells,
and *Judas* by Peter De Rosa