

## TWELVE WOODCUTS BY DERYCK

Here you are, the thirteenth disciple  
At the last supper:  
On your left, no doubt is Thomas  
On your right Judas —  
Their unblinking eyes hone in on the wood  
A shower of Galloglaich is taking cover —  
The question is: will the English lancers  
Pursue the Irish horse for eternity?  
The smell of sweat, excrement, horse manure, blood:  
A javelin is thrown, but still they circle  
    And circle like the prettiest carousel  
At the funfair.

Twelve is more than the  
Company, for there is one more:  
Here is the artist, his hair is lank and greasy,  
He is drunk and sweat glistens on his brow.  
You are the absence that even Jesus dared not dream.

Once the pansies, stones, trees were lifted up.  
A dark mood, brown study  
Things that are hidden, dark words, backstabblings,  
Blood at the dim gateway  
    All that echoes in a moment's time.  
For all the pansies, stones, trees  
Were sucked up in a formless vortex  
And the old-placed evil was postponed  
Sent off to some never never land beyond the sea.

You, the artist, depict yourself as Jesus  
You are your own creation, the eyes glimmer.  
They love you, at last. As you gaze beyond  
Your creation, past the woods,  
The hurriedly-arriving Kern  
With arquebuses alit, and the Light Horse  
Disconnecting the lances placed in their backs

By your hand, and circling more and more  
Quickly as another evening comes  
Somewhere, sometime, in Ireland.

