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**Dante Alighieri**

**Inferno (The Divine Comedy #1)**



Title: Inferno (The Divine Comedy #1)

Author: Dante Alighieri

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## Description

Guided by the poet Virgil, Dante plunges to the very depths of Hell and embarks on his arduous journey towards God. Together they descend through the twenty-four circles of the underworld and encounter the tormented souls of the damned - from heretics and pagans to gluttons, criminals and seducers - who tell of their sad fates and predict events still to come in Dante's life. In this first part of his *Divine Comedy*, Dante fused satire and humour with intellect and soaring passion to create an immortal Christian allegory of mankind's search for self-knowledge and spiritual enlightenment.

## Insightful reviews

Andrew Spear: As though I could really give Dante anything but five stars? Seriously, *The Inferno* in general and this edition in particular is a great read. Anthony Esolen does a great job of not only placing the book in its historical context (almost anyone who can write numbers can do that), but also of helping the reader to appreciate and to almost step inside of the world-view held by Dante himself. This is accomplished both through the use of copious informative endnotes and through the inclusion at the end of the volume of a great number of selections from Dante's sources, including Virgil and Thomas Aquinas. Add to this a selection of illustrations by Gustave Doré, Esolen's poetic English rendering, and the fact that the text is bilingual on facing pages and (having genuinely looked a bit) I can honestly say I haven't found a better overall volume for reading and understanding "The Inferno".

*The Inferno* is beautiful poetry and a landmark of Western Culture. It represents an artistic synthesis of the most sophisticated Christian Theology just at the dawn of the Renaissance, presenting an overarching picture of the divine order, plan for, and justice of the universe, while simultaneously capturing with remarkable poignancy the nuances and full spectrum of actual human life and emotion; not just wickedness and suffering (of which there is plenty in Hell), but also love and the ties (and betrayals) that can occur in families, friendships, cities, states and religions.

As a modern reader the most difficult part of reading *The Inferno* is trying to empathize with a world-view according to which eternal punishment, sometimes of the most horrible and degrading sort, is indeed somehow not only permissible but actually required by justice itself. If anyone were going to convince me that this is actually the case, it seems that it would indeed be Dante, especially Dante aided by all of the scholarly and interpretive devices offered by Esolen. Nevertheless, by the end of Dante's journey through Hell I still found myself feeling that, while the journey of personal growth and redemption that he is going through is edifying and inspiring, the overall justice of the place through which he has traveled is not.

For me, highlights of the book include the inscription above the gates of Hell, the Classical Philosophers in the first circle of Hell, Paolo and Francesca in the second, the story of Ulysses' second voyage in Canto Twenty-six (made famous in the Alfred Lord Tennyson Poem 'Ulysses', which was itself made famous in the movie *Dead Poets Society*), Count Ugolino, and the concluding lines: "we climbed so high that through a small round opening I saw some of the

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turning beauties of the sky. And we came out to see, once more, the stars." (Canto Thirty-Four, 136-39)

This is not the first time that I've read the Inferno, but I definitely appreciated more the intellectual and cultural components of the book. While I like to attribute this to my having matured intellectually since the first time I read the book, the fact that I have been to Florence and have been learning to speak (a very small amount of) Italian probably played just as much of a role in enhancing my overall appreciation for the work.

Michael: What a joy to read literature that is not only well executed, but beautiful in spirit! Dante's work is one of the pillars of western literature, and justly so. Conceived and executed in a poetical form called "terza rima" and functioning on multiple levels of meaning simultaneously, the three books of the "Commedia" are a microcosm of human spiritual life. Care is lavished on every detail from the geography to the astronomy and everything in between. It is a monumental achievement, encompassing theology, politics, aesthetics, literary criticism, science, philosophy, metaphysics...you name it.

The first book, the Inferno, chronicles the beginning of Dante's spiritual odyssey. He wakes one day in the middle of his life to discover that he is lost in a dark forest and surrounded by mortal dangers. Against all hope, rescue comes in the form of the ancient poet Virgil, who has been commissioned by Heaven to lead Dante back to the true path. Virgil, the personification of pagan wisdom, must lead Dante down through the nine circles of Hell where he will begin to learn the wisdom that leads back to life, which will ultimately be found only in Christ. Each circle in Hell is the final resting place of souls who have died in their sins, the punishments at each level being perfectly suited to the sin that defined the earthly life of the soul. The sins at each circle are progressively more vile than the circle before, and the punishments grow more horrible and gruesome.

Though the tortures of Hell are graphically described, Dante is not gratuitous. He is no medieval Quentin Tarantino. Part of his purpose is to reveal the hideous nature of evil and expose the ugliness of the soul that remains unrepentant and self-interested even after death. Dante's theology is solid and Hell is the place where true, lasting judgment is meted out and justice is finally satisfied. These are not popular ideas in our politically correct, selectively tolerant society. But exactly what have these flaccid new ideologies done for us except to shackle our thoughts, and silence dissenting voices? Give me Dante any day.

Sayers' translation is magnificent. She reproduces both the meter and rhyme, giving those of us who do not know Italian a taste of what the original must be like. Her explanatory notes provide much needed details that enrich the reading experience. Even more helpful was her dedication to Charles Williams which, in turn, led me to read "The Figure of Beatrice". It was there that Dante's meaning became more clear to me.

Ahmad Sharabiani: ?? ????? ??? ?????????? ??????? ?? ?? ?????? ?????? ??????? ?????? ??? ????? ?? ??  
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Richard Reviles Censorship Always in All Ways: Rating: 4\* of five  
The writer Says: This commonly praised model of Dante's masterpiece, which received the I. a. occasions ebook Prize and the Harold Morton Landon Translation Award of the Academy of yankee Poets, is extra idiomatic and approachable than its many predecessors. Former united states Poet Laureate Pinsky employs slant rhyme and close to rhyme to maintain Dante's terza rima shape with no distorting the move of English idiom. the result's a transparent and full of life translation that also is unique, student-friendly, and trustworthy to the original: "A fabulous success," as Bernard Knox wrote within the long island overview of Books.  
My Review: The Doubleday united kingdom meme, a booklet an afternoon for July 2014, is the goad i am utilizing to get via my snit-based unwritten reviews. modern day steered is the twenty-fourth, a ebook that reminds you of your English teacher.Ninth grade, or freshman highschool year, used to be The Odyssey, and 10th was once The Inferno. We used, in 1974, the then-newish Ciardi translation, made in 1954; it used to be particularly an event, for the reason that Ciardi (a poet of a few renown) translated it as poetry rather than as Italian-to-English words.Pinsky's translation makes an attempt the damn-near most unlikely feat of holding the terza rima (aba, bcb, cdc, etc.) rhyme scheme invented by way of Dante for this cycle of poems. the result's a noble experiment, one marked by way of many successes. There are a few bizarre such things as charges flowing over a number of stanzas, and there are some...odd...rhymes. yet hell, the fellow attempted a damned close to most unlikely feat! Italian is a language during which it is more durable \*not\* to rhyme than otherwise, and English resists rhyme with all its may well and main.So what's any reviewer to claim a couple of 700-year-old poem? not anything hasn't been stated via now. i'm anti-christian. The theology in the back of the full Divine Comedy appalls and repulses me. I communicate rudimentary Italian. Pinsky's efforts to breed terza rima are, to my ears, clunky and unnecessary. yet within the end, score a publication like this is often approximately what the take-away is for the reader. I remove a feeling of Dante as an intelligent, desperately lonely man, trying to make a Universe within which his life issues and is of a few moment. I stand in awed amazement at his gloriously baroque imagination. i'm gobsmacked by way of the sheer audacity of a medieval poet writing within the vernacular. If Dante used to be alive today, he'd be writing raps.Ugh. terrible thought.But nonetheless, i'm wowed at a root point by means of the joyous, exuberant viciousness and the unapologetic cruelty of Dante's score-settling fates for his enemies. What a guy! these raps he'd be writing today? they might encourage Wes Craven to make video clips and Clive Barker to jot down gore-fests! do this exercise: think a beat-box lower than the terza rima stanzas. learn a bit aloud imagining hand-claps on the finish of every stanza. this can be what i feel we, during this relativistic age, may still attempt for: to interpret the classics of literature and poetry through criteria suitable to today, as well as the criteria that we all know have been utilized on the time of the work's creation.Many extra layers to this paintings that way. After all, a literary vintage is a piece that is by no means complete announcing what it has to say.And right here one is. This paintings is authorized less than an artistic Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.

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Debbie: i am not certain the place the reproduction of the publication got here from. The copyright is 365 days earlier than i used to be born, yet i do not bear in mind choosing it up in a used ebook store. yet i suppose that is neither right here nor there. I want i'll in truth payment off five stars and say that my eyes have been opened. That i actually felt reworked through having learn this vintage of literature and i will make it element to re-read it each year at the anniversary of my having chanced on the mistake of my methods in now not examining it at age 5. But I can't. It used to be a protracted slog for me. issues did decide up whilst I give up analyzing the precis that preceded each one canto. This translator provides acknowledged summary, then the canto itself, then the footnotes explaining all of the humans and areas that will have fallen into the darkish recesses of background had Dante no longer immortalized them. Irony? simply because Dante evidently thinks little or no of the general public he populates hell with. And that ends up in my largest problems. it is a "burn book". A centuries outdated burn book, yet still. "Here are a lot of these those that did what I think of negative issues and here is what i'm hoping occurred to them within the afterlife." If the booklet hadn't been couched in non secular (and a really particular faith at that) terms, i do not be aware of that's may have lasted so long as it has. So, whereas i love the constitution of the work, the self-discipline it should have taken to stick to any such rigorous format, that is approximately all I admire. i've got the opposite thirds of the whole. i will most likely take on them simply to manage to say I learn the full Comedy. might be issues loosen up a bit and it will not consider like any such punishment for this reader.

Trish: this can be a ways and away the easiest and so much available translation i've got learn and that i checked out numerous considering that 2010. yet better of all is that it could possibly now be listened to, because it is learn with nice cognition via Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, Nobel Prize Winner Seamus Heaney, Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize Winner Louise Glück, and Bolligen Prize Winner Frank Bidart, in a brand new construction cosponsored through Penguin Audio and FSG Audio. It does not take lengthy to hear (5 hours), and it packs a punch, like the unique should still have. Dante's The Divine Comedy is an epic poem in 3 components and was once written within the 14th Century, at a time whilst oral traditions in storytelling have been nonetheless prevalent. One merits from listening to the paintings spoken aloud, as in all poetry. yet during this audio presentation we get merely half I, The Inferno and never Purgatorio and Paradiso. How I yearn to benefit that the latter elements can also be translated by means of Pinsky. i've got learn half I many times, half II once, and not half III. i might prefer to see what Dante has to claim approximately heaven. the full paintings was once initially entitled Commedia, and in later centuries different artists further the "Divine." The that means is the same: our God performs with us humans...setting us problems and seeing how we manage. many people fail. I got here away thinking about if this is often the model of hell that the Catholic Church promulgated and has adhered to for centuries. Wikipedia says it is, and that during fact, Dante drew on St. Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologica from medieval Christian theology. it truly is grim. it truly is horrible. it's hell in each definition. it's so just like what i used to be taught that i'm wondering now the way it is feasible that so little has replaced in Church teachings and on the imaginations of our spiritual leaders that not anyone has get a hold of a extra hellish (or even a different) scenario. How little lack of understanding is excuse for wrongdoing in Dante's eyes. we now have purely ourselves to blame, he says. How transparent our human ethical conundrums appear from this fiery pit. Remind yourselves of ethical wisdom, and listen, simply take heed to our best dwelling poets learn Dante.

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