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Inferno: From The Divine Comedy



Synopsis

"Abandon all hope you who enter here." ("Lasciate ogne speranza voi ch'intrate.") Dante's Hell is one of the most remarkable visions in Western literature. An allegory for his and future ages, it is, at the same time, an account of terrifying realism. Passing under a lintel emblazoned with these frightening words, the poet is led down into the depths by Virgil and shown those doomed to suffer eternal torment for vices exhibited and sins committed on earth. Inferno is the first part of the long journey which continues through redemption to revelation - through Purgatory and Paradise - and, in this translation, prepared especially for the audiobook, his images are as vivid as when the poem was first written in the early years of the 14th century.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 4 hours and 10 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

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Customer Reviews

I have the entire set of this reading of THE DIVINE COMEDY, and I am extremely impressed. I was dubious, at first, as I had never heard of the translator, Benedict Flynn, and so I compared the text to that of the Durling/Martinez volume from Oxford and the Hollander volume from Doubleday. I was impressed. This is an excellent translation, smooth and poetic. I have a slight prejudice in that I prefer British voices in poetic readings, and thus I am very pleased with Heathcote Williams' fine performance of the text. He dramatizes the text with certain vocal inflections, but he does so in a way that does not, for me, distract from the actual beauty of Dante's poetry. I like his soft and at times breathy vocal tones, which add a subtle emotionalism to much of the text. The booklet that accompanies the discs is fabulous. An opening Note by Roger Marsh is followed by Notes discussing aspects of the text, thus: "CANTO III The Poets arrive at the door of Hell and pass through

to the antechamber. Within are shades who achieved neither praise nor blame in life, rejected by Heaven and Hell. Charon, who ferries the souls of the damned to Hades, refuses to ferry the living souls across the Acheron. Dante falls unconscious. good of intellect: souls who lost sight of the 'Supreme Truth' of God. great refusal: either Pontius Pilate or Celestine V who abdicated in favour of Boniface VIII."The booklet is infused with a gallery of the majestic Gustave Dore illustrations for THE DIVINE COMEDY. I love this audio set and highly recommend it.

I had trouble with some of Dantes english translations of the book when I was reading them. And some parts were hard to understand. But this audio book is the absolute best I have heard. I can easily understand and the special effects of the people in hell talking and the demons are wonderful. At the begining of each canto there is a musical theme that sets the person in the mood before the canto starts. Heathcote Williams voice is a delight to hear because it is so articulate and scholastic. Wonderful audio book of The Divine Comedy who want to bring the book alive and suspensful. At times I was very emotionally effected by the certain sinners in hell and how they suffered. I myself am a Catholic(which Dante was a devout Catholic), and I could see where some people would disagree with parts of the book (In the Inferno if you are not baptized you have no chance to goto heaven according to Dante, but the unbaptized don't suffer the way worse sinners would). But it the same time it shows the importance of Baptism, which some Christians today seem to ignore and just take as a "symbol". Either way for christians and non-christians alike this audio book is wonderful.

In a midlife crisis, Dante describes the first of three parts of a journey. With Virgil as his guide, travels the circles of hell and interviews the sinnersâ "many of whom are still in a state of torture and denialâ "until he finally passes through to Purgatory. I often try to match up recordings (read aloud through Audible.com) and the same translation on Kindle. Sometimes does this for me and itâ ™s called Whispersync. In this case, I tried several combinations and couldnâ ™t get it quite right. When I came across Heathcote Williams as narrator and the Benedict Flynn translation, I could not find the Kindle match-up. But because, Williams is such a good reader, I followed along with a different translation (Charles Eliot Norton in the GBWW by Britannica). I like to read and listen together, and I prefer the readability of this translation to Longfellowâ ™s. I recommend this translation for its readability. I also like Dorothy Sayersâ ™ rendition in English verse, and John Sinclairâ ™s prose version. Jean and Robert Hollander have a verse translation without rhyme.

Heathcote Williams' reading is outstanding and truly amazing. He creates and keeps straight dozens of unique voices. It brings the Inferno to life in a way you could never get from the written page alone. (You might also like Anton Lesser's reading of Paradise Lost, from Naxos.)

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