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## Dante Alighieri

### The Divine Comedy, Vol. 3: Paradise (The Divine Comedy #3)



PENGUIN CLASSICS

**DANTE**  
*Paradiso*

Translated by ROBIN KIRKPATRICK

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(The Divine Comedy #3)

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## Description

### The radiant climax to Dante's awe-inspiring epic, in a definitive new translation

Having plunged to the utmost depths of Hell and climbed Mount Purgatory in the first two parts of *The Divine Comedy*, Dante now ascends to Heaven, guided by his beloved Beatrice, to continue his search for God. As he progresses through the spheres of Paradise, he grows ever closer to experiencing divine love in the overwhelming presence of the deity. Examining eternal questions of faith, desire, and enlightenment, Dante exercised all of his learning and wit, wrath and tenderness in his creation of one of the greatest of all Christian allegories. This edition prints Robin Kirkpatrick's impressive new translation alongside Dante's original Italian.

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## Insightful reviews

Al Maki: I think this is my third time through the *Comedia* - *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* - and I've found that I am most struck by *Paradiso* this time. Since I'm not a Christian, it's not the theology that I'm responding to, and I'm surprised to find a bunch of angels and saints more interesting than those villains down in hell, but of course it's not them, it's Dante: the conception and the execution. Because the story is so simple, his brilliance stands out clearly. If there's a better capolavoro from a culture that's comprehensible to me, I'd really like to find it. It's my first time through the Hollanders' translation and it is excellent. He is usually the one who gets first billing for his scholarship but my Italian is just barely good enough that I can see she did a beautiful job of "englishing" the poem.

David Withun: Many modern readers of the *Divine Comedy* arrive at the false conclusion that the *Paradiso* is the book of the *Divine Comedy* into which Dante put the least effort and for which he had the least passion. It is common in literature courses today to read only the *Inferno* and ignore the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso* altogether. It has commonly been described as too medieval, too pious, and not of the same quality as the other two books. To the modern reader, it appears especially weak when compared with the *Inferno*.

Ultimately, however, all of this entirely misses the point of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, namely that he saw the entire drama of the cosmos as a **comedy** a story with a happy ending. In the case of the cosmic drama, the story has not only a happy ending, but one of immeasurable joy and glory. In this sense, without the *Paradiso* the *Inferno* is a tour through nihilism and the *Purgatorio* nothing more than an updated version of the myth of Sisyphus, and, contrary to Camus's absurd contention, Sisyphus is indeed not happy. The *Paradiso* completes the *Divine Comedy* and is, in fact, the most essential of the three books.

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The *Paradiso* is only frequently seen as "too medieval" because modern man has forgotten the source and center of his own being is a Being. In the *Paradiso* Dante at least departs from the existential human condition and travels toward the meaning and fulfillment of human existence in the Trinitarian God who is Love. This completion of Dante's journey allows him at last to find the answers to his many questions about life, justice, reason, and faith. The modern mind might rebel against this finality, against wisdom itself, but it is nonetheless the destination for which he was created, and Dante knows this. Perhaps it is this which makes the modern mind so uncomfortable with the *Paradiso*.

This translation and commentary are the best available in the English language. Anthony Esolen, a Catholic himself, takes Dante quite seriously and allows Dante to speak freely and fully, without contradicting, interrupting, or undermining him. The notes throughout the length of the entire book provide a depth of insight I have not yet seen in any commentary on the *Paradiso*. The introduction is also a valuable gateway into understanding Dante, the story of the *Divine Comedy*, and the mind of the man of faith.

Dante's *Divine Comedy* is a guide through everything that matters told in the form of an enthralling story wrapped up in moving poetry. I recommend this book to everyone who can read and everyone who can't.

sarah massoni: this book is incredibly intimidating. but after reading the vita nuova and the other two books in the divine comedy, *paradiso* is literally the coup de grace, in the most beautiful and beatific way possible.

Mohammed Mokhallalati: For me, *Paradiso* is anticlimactic and uneventful. The text is heavy with uninteresting Christian dogmas- to the purpose of falling into didacticism. Beatrice provides insult to injure along with her obscure sophism that's jarring in comparison to the wittiness of Virgil. I actually pass over Virgil in *paradiso*. I believe *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* are stronger standard and subject matters than *Paradiso*.

Kelsey Hanson: *Paradise* is boring. Sorry to assert it and that I understand that I haven't got the perfect to criticize one of many maximum poets ever, yet darn all of it of the points that I loved from the opposite installations are gone... and that comes with Virgil. I pass over that guy. Why does he need to stay in hell it wasn't his fault he was once born too early. It makes use of an identical procedure with diversified spheres of heaven however it is so packed with spiritual philosophy and historical past approximately Florence for me to totally comprehend.

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