



John Ciardi, 1961 [2003], *The Divine Comedy*. New American Library. ISBN: [9780451208637](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0719554020) [English only, 310 pp.] Used: \$9+
 Allen Mandelbaum, 1982 [1995], *The Divine Comedy*. ISBN: [9780679433132](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0394708132). [Dual, 798 pp.] used \$10
 **Jean and Robert Hollander, 2003, *Purgatorio*. Anchor Books. ISBN: [9780385497008](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0385497008). [Dual, 844 pp.] Used: \$12+
 **Robert Durling, 2003, *Purgatorio*. Oxford Univ. Press. ISBN: [9780195087451](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0195087451). [Dual, 720 pp.] Used: \$11+
 **Robin Kirkpatrick, 2007, *Purgatorio*. Penguin Classics. ISBN: [9780140448962](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0140448962). [Dual, 580 pp.] Used: \$5+

What follows (in order) are the opening lines from each of the translations listed above. Which do you prefer? The recommended editions are asterisked. The recommendations are based on the quantity of notes, commentaries, graphics and indexes.**

1 Per correr miglior acque alza le vele
 2 omai la navicella del mio ingegno,
 3 che lascia dietro a sé mar sì crudele;

4 e canterò di quel secondo regno
 5 dove l'umano spirito si purga
 6 e di salire al ciel diventa degno.

7 Ma qui la morta poesi resurga,
 8 o sante Muse, poi che vostro sono;
 9 e qui Calliopè alquanto surga,

For better waters now the little bark
 of my indwelling powers raises her sails,
 and leaves behind that sea so cruel and dark,

Now shall I sing that second kingdom given
 the soul of man wherein to purge its guilt
 and so grow worthy to ascend to Heaven.

Yours am I, secret Muses! To you I pray.
 Here let dead poetry rise once more to life,
 and here let sweet Calliope rise and play

**To course across more kindly waters now
 my talent's little vessel lifts her sails,
 leaving behind herself a sea so cruel;**

**and what I sing will be that second kingdom,
 in which the human soul is cleansed of sin,
 becoming worthy of ascent to Heaven.**

**But here, since I am yours, o holy Muses,
 may this poem rise again from Hell's dead realm;
 and may Calliope rise somewhat here,**



To run its course through smoother water,
 the small bark of my wit now hoists its sail
 leaving that cruel sea behind;

Now I shall sing the second kingdom,
 there were the soul of man is cleansed,
 made worthy to ascend to Heaven.

Here from the dead let poetry rise up,
 O sacred Muses, since I am yours.
 Here let Calliope arise

**To run through better waters the little ship of
 my wit now hoists its sails, leaving behind it a sea
 so cruel,**

**and I will sing of that second realm where the
 human spirit purges itself and becomes worthy to
 ascend to Heaven.**

**But here let dead poetry rise up again, O holy
 Muses, since I am yours, and here let Calliope arise
 somewhat,**

To race now over better waves, my ship
 of mind – alive again – hoist sale, and leaves
 behind its little keel the gulf that proved so cruel.

And I'll sing, now, about that second realm
 where human spirits purge themselves from strain,
 becoming worthy to ascend to Heaven.

Here, too, dead poetry will rise again.
 For now, you sacred muses, I am yours.
 So let Calliope, a little, play her part,

<https://digitaldante.columbia.edu>

<http://dantelab.dartmouth.edu>

<https://dante.princeton.edu>