

# Canto 24



By Rachel Davern

# Summary

Dante, Virgil, and Statius continue to traverse the terrace of the gluttonous. Forese Donati walks with Dante and points out to Dante some of his fellow penitents: the poet “Bonagiunta of Lucca”, pope “Martin IV”, “Ubaldo de la Pila”, “Boniface”, and “Marchese degli Arguoliosi” (24.20, 29, 31, notes pg. 472). Dante engages with Bonagiunta in a conversation about the different poetic styles, with Bonagiunta acknowledging Dante’s “sweet new style” of lyric love poetry. Dante then turns back to Forese and the two commiserate about the decline of Florence. Forese prophesies disaster for Florence and for his brother, Corso Donati. Then Dante, Virgil, and Statius take their leave of the penitent souls but are distracted by another tree. A voice within the tree tells us how all the trees come from “The tree Eve tasted” and tells Dante not to be tempted to linger. The voice tells Dante, Virgil, and Statius “about the fault that fills the throat,/ followed by its deserved misery” (24. 128-129). Dante is then greeted by an angel who wipes away the sixth P on his “forehead” (24. 149).

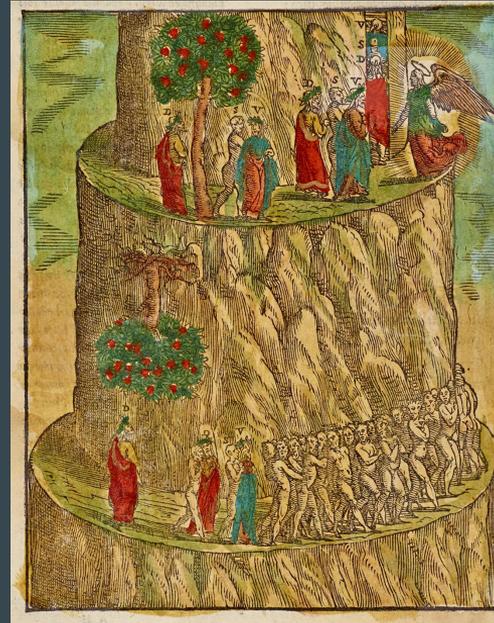
# Main Characters

Dante: The protagonist, he talks with Forese and Bonagiunta about poetry and the health of Italy and Florence.

Forese Donati: One of the penitents on the terrace of the gluttonous. He talks with Dante about the other penitents and about Italy and Florence.

Bonagiunta: One of the penitents that Forese introduces to Dante, he was a poet like Dante. He and Dante discuss the different styles of poetry that are used, specifically how Dante writes using “Love” (24.53).

Virgil and Statius: In this Canto we don't hear much from Virgil or Statius which emphasizes what Dante, Forese, and Bonagiunta talk about.



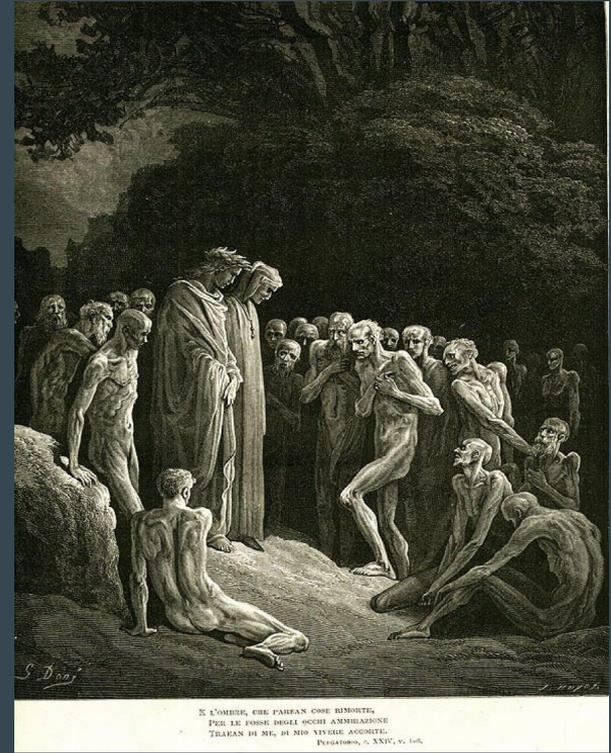
Purgatory:  
Canto 24

# Themes

**Love:** We can see the theme of Love in poetry when Bonagiunta and Dante discuss the styles of poetry. We see the theme of Love for one's own country when Dante and Forese talk about the future of Florence and Italy.

**Time:** Forese tells Dante that he has spent too much time with him and he must go on with the other souls. We see the voice inside the tree tell Dante to not get distracted and to not linger and waste time.

**Poetry:** *Purgatory* is a poem, and Dante is the poet. We see consistently how people address the topic of poetry with Dante. Virgil is also a poet and a great one, too, many other poets come up to the pair of them and talk about poetry. We meet Sordello, Statius, and Bonagiunta who are all poets who love poetry and its merits.



Dante and Forese with Bonagiunta and the other penitents.

# Stylistic Features

## Simile:

- Dante describes the way that Virgil and Statius talk and walk: “as a tall ship swept on in a fresh breeze” (24.3).
- Dante describes the shades: “like things twice dead” (24.4).
- Dante describes Bonagiunta’s silence: “As do those cranes that winter on the Nile” (24.64).
- Dante describes the shades hurrying away: “as a runner wearied in the race” (24.70).
- Dante jumps with fright when the voice inside the tree talks and he describes his scare: “like a shambling beast that meets a shock” (24.135).

## Allusion:

- An allusion to Dante’s *La Vita Nuova*: “*Ladies who have intelligence of Love?*” (24.51).

## Metaphor:

- Dante uses a metaphor when he calls centaurs “beasts of double chest” (24.121).



È NOI VENIMMO AL GRANDE ADDIOE ADENSO,  
CIBI TANTI FREGOH E LAGLEME KIRUTA.  
PUSCITANO, c. XXIV, v. 111 e 112

NOTE: A CLASSICA ILLUSTRATA.

La Divina Commedia. — Disp. 56.



Battle of Centaurs and Lapith. Painting done by Piero di Cosimo (Above)

The penitents scraping at the tree for food. Engraving done by Gustave Doré (left)

# Questions for the Discussion forum

## Canto 24

1. Explore Bonagiunta and his conversation with Dante. What does he add to the text?
  2. What does Forese say about his brother Corso and his sister Piccarda?
  3. What does the theme of Love add to the text?
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# Works cited

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Barolini, Teodolinda. "Purgatorio 24: Making Literary History." *Commento Baroliniano, Digital Dante*. New York, NY: Columbia University Libraries, 2014.

<https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/purgatorio/purgatorio-24/>.