

Dante introduces three beasts in the inferno



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In *The Inferno*, Dante introduces three beasts, which each individually represent a different symbolic meaning. They do, however, share a collective symbolic meaning, too. The three beasts are the lion, the leopard, and the she-wolf. Collectively, these three beasts share a symbolic meaning in that they represent all of man's sins. Individually, the leopard represents fraud, the lion represents violence, and the she-wolf represents incontinence.

The three beasts in *The Inferno* collectively share a symbolic meaning in representing all of man's sins. The beasts collectively represent all of man's sins, but they also display individual meanings, too.

Dante first uses the leopard to represent sins of malice and fraud. He explains that the leopard uses its spots as disguise when it is around its prey. Then when the prey least expects it, the leopard strikes. This trait of the leopard is used to show fraud in humans. Dante explains that people who are frauds usually come across differently. They normally present themselves as trustworthy people, rather than revealing that they are not. In the beginning of Canto XVII, Dante refers to a monster named Geryon. He states that " His face was the face of any honest man, / it shone with such a look of benediction; / and all the rest of him was serpentine" (Canto XVII 10-12). Here, Dante is referring to Satan, who represents fraud for Christians, and describes him as a snake. The viciousness of Satan is something that can be comparable to the leopard. The next beast that is encountered on the path is the lion.

After the leopard, Dante uses the lion to show sins of both violence and ambition. He explains how lions tend to satisfy their own needs by any

means, regardless of how violent the needs are. If a lion needs food, it will get food by being violent and ambitious. Lions fear no other animal, and they tend to be very aggressive. Dante shows how lions represent sins of violence and ambition due to their aggressive behavior. He shows that lions are comparable to humans in this aspect because some people become aggressive and violent when they need something. The she-wolf is the third and last beast that is encountered.

The last animal that Dante encounters on his trail is a she-wolf. He uses this beast to represent incontinence, adultery, and lust. She-wolves tend to be mysterious creatures and hunt in packs, which may be why Dante used it as the third beast. The sins listed above are sins that are irresistible. This means that if someone were to commit one of these sins, they are bound to follow up with another. The irresistible nature of she-wolves goes along with the irresistible nature of humans when committing these sins.

Dante does a good job in using three beasts to represent different sins. He also uses the three beasts to show a collective symbolic meaning. The beasts represent fraud, violence, and incontinence, and together they represent all of man's sins.