

# "Terence, This Is Stupid Stuff" poetry paraphrasing & summarizing

In your comp book, compose a paraphrase (working through one numbered grammatical chunk at a time) of your assigned stanza. For the other three stanzas, write an objective single-sentence summary.

STANZA

1  
↓

'Terence, this<sup>1</sup> is stupid stuff: /1  
 You eat your vittals<sup>2</sup> fast enough: /2  
 There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,  
 To see the rate you drink your beer: /3  
 But oh, good Lord, the verse you make,  
 It gives a chap the belly-ache: /4  
 The cow, the old cow, she is dead; /5  
 It sleeps well, the hornéd head: /6  
 We poor lads, 'tis our turn now  
 To hear such tunes as killed the cow: /7  
 Pretty friendship 'tis to rhyme  
 Your friends to death before their time  
 Moping melancholy mad: /8  
 Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad: /9

Al Helal, Aiman	Ahnaf, Jawad
Atsavin, Lauren	Alfaro, Lily
Beaupin, Estelle	Arsenault, Vincent
Betita, Anton	Ashley, Alison
Browy, Jace	Bolinder, Jaden
Carlisle, Mercedes	Brooks, Diamond
Cubito, Anna	Burdick, Brass
	Carroll, Gabriel

STANZA

2  
↓

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,  
 There's brisker pipes than poetry: /10  
 Say, for what were hop-yards meant,<sup>3</sup>  
 Or why was Burton built on Trent?<sup>4</sup> /11  
 Oh many a peer of England brews  
 Livelier liquor than the Muse,  
 And malt does more than Milton can  
 To justify God's ways to man.<sup>5</sup> /12  
 Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink  
 For fellows whom it hurts to think: /13  
 Look into the pewter pot  
 To see the world as the world's not: /14  
 And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis past: /15  
 The mischief is that 'twill not last: /16  
 Oh I have been to Ludlow fair<sup>6</sup>  
 And left my necktie God knows where,  
 And carried halfway home, or near,  
 Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer: /17  
 Then the world seemed none so bad,

Cummings, Jasmine	Chavez, Darlene
Dann, Parker	De Napoli, Nico
Duckworth, Sam	Glenn, Areah
Farnsworth, Dailan	Greene, Bella
Grey, Mckenzie	Hahn, Gabi
Harris, Romeo	Harrod, Charlie
Ingram, Yana	Heyward, Jeremy

<sup>1</sup> This poetry Terence writes

<sup>2</sup> Snacks, "vittles"

<sup>3</sup> Fermentation vats for making beer

<sup>4</sup> Burton on the River Trent, an English city renowned for its breweries

<sup>5</sup> An allusion to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in which the poet claims his poetry will let readers understand God's mysterious ways.

<sup>6</sup> A town in Shropshire with a beer-tasting festival each spring.

And I myself a sterling lad; / 18  
 And down in lovely muck I've lain,  
 Happy till I woke again. / 19  
 Then I saw the morning sky: / 20  
 Heigho, the tale was all a lie; / 21  
 The world, it was the old world yet,  
 I was I, my things were wet,  
 And nothing now remained to do  
 But begin the game anew. / 22

STANZA  
 3  
 ↓

Therefore, since the world has still  
 Much good, but much less good than ill,  
 And while the sun and moon endure  
 Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,  
 I'd face it as a wise man would,  
 And train for ill and not for good. / 23  
 'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale  
 Is not so brisk a brew as ale: / 24  
 Out of a stem that scored<sup>7</sup> the hand  
 I wrung it in a weary land. / 25  
 But take it: / if the smack<sup>8</sup> is sour,  
 The better for the embittered hour; / 27  
 It should do good to heart and head  
 When your soul is in my soul's stead; / 28  
 And I will friend you, if I may,  
 In the dark and cloudy day. / 29

Johnson, Maggie  
 Johnson, Mariyah  
 Keith, Carly  
 Kurzner, Zak  
 Maldonado Oliva, Fionna  
 Morena, Scott  
 Orama-Lone, Jezer

Koutras, Melina  
 McCracken, Kayla  
 Mize, Emily  
 Monforte, Stella  
 Murtha, Christos  
 Naes, Gladys  
 Nguyen, Michael

STANZA  
 4  
 ↓

There was a king reigned in the East: / 30  
 There, when kings will sit to feast,  
 They get their fill before they think  
 With poisoned meat and poisoned drink. / 31  
 He gathered all the springs to birth  
 From the many-venomed earth; / 32  
 First a little, thence to more,  
 He sampled all her killing store; / 33  
 And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,  
 Sate the king when healths went round.  
 They put arsenic in his meat  
 And stared aghast to watch him eat; / 34  
 They poured strychnine in his cup  
 And shook to see him drink it up: / 35  
 They shook, they stared as white's their shirt: / 36  
 Them it was their poison hurt. / 37  
 --I tell the tale that I heard told. / 38  
 Mithridates,<sup>9</sup> he died old. / 39

Passero, Nick  
 Redinger, Gavin  
 Reed, Kimora  
 Riley, Michael  
 Scamardella, Gigi  
 Wisterman, Mara Jade  
 Ziad, Yassin

Preble, Kai  
 Ross, Hailey  
 Simpkins, Noah  
 Slater-White, Brogan  
 Smith, Jaydyn  
 Smith, Martha  
 Tucker, Avery  
 Tucker, Olivia

<sup>7</sup> sliced

<sup>8</sup> taste

<sup>9</sup> Mithridates VI, King of Pontus (133 BCE-63 BCE). The story of Mithridates and his immunity to poison comes from the Roman historian Pliny (23-27 CE).

'Terence, this is stupid stuff: / 1  
You eat your victuals fast enough; / 2  
There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,  
To see the rate you drink your beer. / 3  
But oh, good Lord, the verse you make,  
It gives a chap the belly-ache. / 4  
The cow, the old cow, she is dead; / 5  
It sleeps well, the hornéd head: / 6  
We poor lads, 'tis our turn now  
To hear such tunes as killed the cow. / 7  
Pretty friendship 'tis to rhyme  
Your friends to death before their time  
Moping melancholy mad: / 8  
Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad. / 9

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,  
There's brisker pipes than poetry. / 10  
Say, for what were hop-yards meant,  
Or why was Burton built on Trent? / 11  
Oh many a peer of England brews  
Livelier liquor than the Muse,  
And malt does more than Milton can  
To justify God's ways to man. / 12  
Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink  
For fellows whom it hurts to think: / 13  
Look into the pewter pot  
To see the world as the world's not. / 14  
And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis past: / 15  
The mischief is that 'twill not last. / 16  
Oh I have been to Ludlow fair  
And left my necktie God knows where,  
And carried halfway home, or near,  
Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer: / 17  
Then the world seemed none so bad,  
And I myself a sterling lad; / 18  
And down in lovely muck I've lain,  
Happy till I woke again. / 19  
Then I saw the morning sky: / 20  
Heigho, the tale was all a lie; / 21  
The world, it was the old world yet,

I was I, my things were wet,  
And nothing now remained to do  
But begin the game anew. / 22

Therefore, since the world has still  
Much good, but much less good than ill,  
And while the sun and moon endure  
Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,  
I'd face it as a wise man would,  
And train for ill and not for good. / 23  
'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale  
Is not so brisk a brew as ale: / 24  
Out of a stem that scored the hand  
I wrung it in a weary land. / 25  
But take it: if the smack is sour,  
The better for the embittered hour; / 27  
It should do good to heart and head  
When your soul is in my soul's stead; / 28  
And I will friend you, if I may,  
In the dark and cloudy day. / 29

There was a king reigned in the East: / 30  
There, when kings will sit to feast,  
They get their fill before they think  
With poisoned meat and poisoned drink. / 31  
He gathered all the springs to birth  
From the many-venomed earth; / 32  
First a little, thence to more,  
He sampled all her killing store; / 33  
And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,  
Sate the king when healths went round.  
They put arsenic in his meat  
And stared aghast to watch him eat; / 34  
They poured strychnine in his cup  
And shook to see him drink it up: / 35  
They shook, they stared as white's their shirt: / 36  
Them it was their poison hurt. / 37  
--I tell the tale that I heard told. / 38  
Mithridates, he died old. / 39