

The Tempest

This is one of the funniest scenes in Shakespeare. Two friends—Trinculo and Stephano—were separated in a shipwreck and have landed on a strange island. Neither one knows whether the other one survived. They meet up with Caliban, a creature who lives on the island and who is a slave to the magician Prospero.

Characters:

Caliban, servant to Prospero

Trinculo, servant to Alonso

Stephano, Alonso's butler

Act 2, scene 2, (cut)

CALIBAN. *[Enters carrying a load of wood. Thunder]*

All the infections that the sun sucks up
From bogs, fens, flats, on Prospero fall and make him
By inchmeal a disease!

[Trinculo enters] Lo, now, lo!

Here comes a spirit of his, and to torment me
For bringing wood in slowly. I'll fall flat.

Perchance he will not mind me. *[He lies down and hides himself under his cloak]*

TRINCULO. Here's neither bush nor shrub to bear off any weather at all. And another storm brewing; I hear it sing in the wind. If it should thunder as it did before, I know not where to hide my head. *[Noticing Caliban under the cloak]* What have we here, a man or a fish? Dead or alive? *[He lifts up a corner of the cloak]* A fish, he smells like a fish--a very ancient and fishlike smell. A strange fish. Legged like a man, and his fins like arms! Warm, o' my troth! I do now let loose my opinion: this is no fish, but an islander who has suffered a thunderbolt. *[Thunder]* Alas the storm is come again. My best way is to creep under his gabardine. There is no other shelter hereabout. Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows. *[He crawls under Caliban's cloak so that both character's legs are poking out from underneath]*

[Enter Stephano, singing]

STEPHANO.

*I shall no more to sea, to sea
Here I shall die ashore*

This is a very scurvy tune to sing at a man's funeral.
Well, here's my comfort. *[Drinks from a bottle]*

CALIBAN. *[From under the cloak]* Do not torment me! O!

STEPHANO. What's the matter? Have we devils here? Ha! I have not 'scaped drowning to be afraid now of your four legs.

CALIBAN. The spirit torments me. O!

STEPHANO. This is some monster of the isle with four legs. Where the devil should he learn our language?

CALIBAN. Do not torment me. I'll bring my wood home faster.

STEPHANO. He's in his fit now, and does not talk after the wisest. He shall taste of my bottle. Open your mouth. Open your mouth. This will shake your shaking. *[Caliban drinks]*

TRINCULO. I should know that voice. It should be--but he is drowned and these are devils. O defend me!

STEPHANO. Four legs and two voices--a most delicate monster! *[Caliban drinks again]*

TRINCULO. Stephano!

STEPHANO. Does thy other mouth call me? Mercy, mercy, this is a devil and no monster! I will leave him.

TRINCULO. Stephano! Speak to me, for I am Trinculo--be not afeared--thy good friend Trinculo.

STEPHANO. If thou be'st Trinculo, come forth. I'll pull thee by the lesser legs. *[He pulls him out from under Caliban's cloak]* Thou art very Trinculo indeed. How cam's't thou to be the siege of this mooncalf?

TRINCULO. I took him to be killed with a thunderstroke. But art thou not drowned, Stephano? I hope thou art not drowned. Is the storm overblown? And art thou living, Stephano? [*He dances Stephano around in a circle*]

STEPHANO. Prithee, do not turn me about. My stomach is not constant.

CALIBAN. [*Aside*] These be fine things, if they be not sprites. That's a brave god who bears celestial liquor. I will kneel to him. [*He crawls out from under the cloak*]

STEPHANO. [*To Trinculo*] How didst thou scape? How cam's't thou hither?

CALIBAN. Hast thou not dropped from heaven? I'll show thee every fertile inch o'th'island, and I will kiss thy foot. I prithee, be my god. I'll kiss thy foot. I'll swear myself thy subject.

STEPHANO. Come on, then. Down and swear. [*Caliban kneels*]

CALIBAN. I'll show thee the best springs. I'll pluck thee berries. I'll fish for thee and get thee wood enough. A plague upon the tyrant that I serve. I'll bear him no more sticks, but follow thee, Thou wondrous man.

TRINCULO. A most ridiculous monster.

CALIBAN. [*sings*]
Farewell, master, farewell, farewell
No more dams I'll make for fish,
Nor fetch in firing
At requiring,
Nor scrape trenchering, nor wash dish
'Ban, 'ban, Ca-caliban
Has a new master. Get a new man.

STEPHANO. O brave monster! Lead the way. [*They exit*]