

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
afear'd--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
cams'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
cams'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*]