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 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.

TRINCUSO:
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]