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.
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.

[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.
**STEHANO:**
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.

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