

ACT 2: WASHED UP ASHORE



There was a growling of thunder and the sky was overcast. On a desolate part of the shore, where a leaden sea lapped upon leaden sands, Caliban toiled. Under his burden of wood. Savagely he cursed his master, who, for the smallest offence, visited him with biting terrors and with hissing snakes.

"Lo, no lo!" He cried out suddenly. "Here comes a spirit of his, and to torment me for bringing wood in slowly, I'll fall flat...."

And down the monster fell, flinging his stinking cloak over his stinking head, and leaving nothing visible but his hairy legs and feet.

The spirit approached, a queer spirit in patched colours with tiny bells sewn to points on his sleeves and cap, so that he jingled like a town of distant churches. It was Trinculo, the King Of Naples' jester, an ageing fool who lived only on the echo of old jokes. Saved for the shipwreck by a Providence that plainly did not know right from wrong, he wandered across the shore until he spied the cloak and the ugly legs and feet.

"What have we here?" wondered Trinculo, peering at the strange object and poking at it with his toe. "A man, or a fish? Dead or alive? A fish; he smells like a fish; a very ancient and fish like smell..." Thunder growled and threatened again. Trinculo stared about him. There was no shelter anywhere. "Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows," he said and, shutting his eyes and holding his nose, crept under the creature's cloak.

Caliban, in mortal terror of the strange spirit, neither spoke nor moved.

Came sounds of a song: not magical in the island's sense, but heavy and peppered with hiccups. A portly fellow in important breeches, waving a bottle like a weapon against flies, came tottering and staggering along the shore. It was Stephano, the King's butler, who had floated to land on a barrel of wine. He kicked against the cloak, not in anger, but because he was too drunk to see it.

"Do not torment me:-O" came a voice that was thick and harsh. Cautiously Stephano examined the speaking bundle; found it had four legs and no head. Was not surprised. Prodded it.

"Do not torment me, prithee" moaned Caliban, putting out his head, "Ill bring my wood home faster".

Stephano pondered. "He shall test to my bottle" he said, and thrust it, vaguely, into the hazy, bristly monster's mouth.

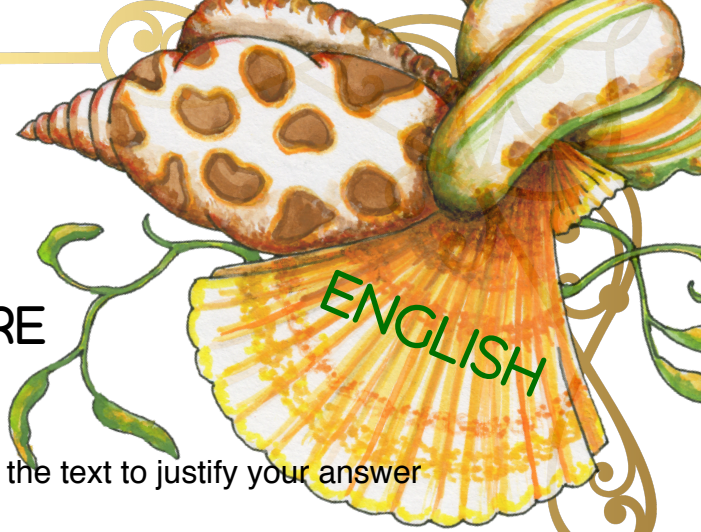
"Stephano!" Came another voice from the cloak. This was truly uncanny. Stephano flew into a panic. Then Trinculo came out, and the two friends embraced and danced about in their joy at finding each other alive.

Caliban looked on, awed beyond measure by the splendour of the new spirits, and in particular by the one who had given him wine. It seemed to hold a greater enchantment than even Prospero's "I will kneel to him" whispered Caliban, and crawled humbly towards the ponderous, swaying drunkard. "Hast thou not dropped from heaven?" He asked, staring up at the bottle.

"Out o' the moon." said Stephano; and Caliban believed him. The drunkard was charmed by his worshipper, and gave him more to drink; but the jester was not pleased. "A most ridiculous monster" he sneered enviously, "to make a wonder of a poor drunkard!"

Nonetheless, off they went together in a staggering bundle, to find where Stephano had hidden his barrel of wine; the butler hiccuping, the jester jeering, and the master singing and promising his new master all the wonders of the isle. "Ban, 'Ban, Ca-Caliban" he roared, "has a new master-get a new man!"

From Shakespeare Stories by Leon Garfield and Michael Foreman



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1. What is the weather like? Use evidence from the text to justify your answer

2. Circle the synonym for 'desolate'

deserted

joyful

populated

busy

3. Why is Caliban scared of his master?

4. What do you think Caliban's cloak is 'stinking'?

5. Why is Trinculo described as 'jingling like a town of distant churches'?

6. Underline the two words that show Trinculo wasn't sure about what he was looking at.

"What have we here?" wondered Trinculo, peering at the strange object and poking at it with his toe.

7. Why does Trinculo hide under Caliban's cloak?

8. 'Caliban, in mortal terror of the strange spirit, neither spoke nor moved'.
What word tells us that Caliban is scared?

9. 'A portly fellow in important breeches, waving a bottle like a weapon against flies, came tottering and staggering along the shore'.

Underline the two words show that this man was wobbling around and not walking normally?

10. 'Stephano flew into a panic. Then Trinculo came out, and the two friends embraced and danced about in their joy at finding each other alive'.

Why were the two friends so happy to see each other?

11. How do Trinculo and Stephano react differently to seeing Caliban? Why?