

## Tich toch

(Tich toch) [\[1\]](#)

- Ch'è quel  
- O Zanni!  
- Che diavol è i lò  
- Vien fora  
- A sù in cantina  
- Ascolt'un poco  
- A' digh cha sù in cantina [\[2\]](#)  
- Ascolta dico Zanni  
- A' sù chi lò  
- Zanni che fai con la tua Franceschina?  
- A stagh mal ò Signur ch'ul me Patrù  
M'ha cazat fo di ca' con un bastu.  
- Hor che pensi di fare,  
Che non hai pan da mangiare?  
- Ai ho pensat, Messir, d'andà pel mond  
E darm co' me Muier plasir giocond.  
- Che ti farà le spes' hor di' meschino?  
- Merlot' à no savi ch'à i ho un bel Babui'  
Che darà spasso à ciascuna persona?  
E me Muier po mostrerà la Mona [\[3\]](#).  
- Lascia veder un poco  
La mona e 'l Babuino  
Salta, salta poltru'  
- Messir l'è orb ch'al no ghe ved bocu?  
- O bell'animaletto  
O com'è vezzosetto  
- O Fomna o Muier  
Mostra la Mona à un Zentil Cavaller  
- O bella mona, Dho, bel Babuino  
Balla la Mona e salt' il Babuino [\[4\]](#).

(Knock knock) [\[1\]](#)

- Who is it  
- hey Zanni!  
- Who the devil is it?  
- Come out!  
- I am in the cellar [\[2\]](#)  
- Listen a little!  
- I am in the cellar, I say!  
- Listen I say Zanni!  
- Here I am, let's go!  
- What are you doing with your Franceschina?  
- I'm feeling ill, Sir, because my master  
chased me away from home with a stick.  
- Now, what are you going to do,  
with no bread to eat?  
- I thought, Sir, to travel around the world  
and have joyful pleasure with my wife.  
- Who will pay the costs for you now, tell me, you miserable fellow?  
- Fool, don't you know I have a fine baboon,  
that will give pleasure to everybody?  
And my wife will afterwards show her monkey [\[3\]](#)  
- Let me see a little  
The monkey and the Baboon  
Jump, jump lazybones!  
- Is Sir blind and he can't see at all?  
- O fine fine little animal  
O how delightful it is  
- Hey woman, hey wife  
show your monkey to this gentleman!  
- Hey beautiful monkey, come on baboon!  
The monkey dances and the baboon jumps [\[4\]](#).

English translation by Luigi Cataldi and [Mick Swithinbank](#).

- <sup>1</sup> Probably from a Commedia dell'Arte sketch. The dialogue presents two characters: Zanni, talking a mixed dialect (Zanni is a mask depicting Bergamo labourers working in Venice), and a conversation partner, 'un zentil cavaller' ('a gentleman') talking Italian. When asked how to make ends meet, driven out by his master, Zanni reveals his future prospects. He will be a sort of manager, whilst his wife and his trained baboon will be the stars of an itinerant performance.
- <sup>2</sup> Probably 'wine cellar'
- <sup>3</sup> The funny aspect of the situation originates from the equivocal meaning of the word 'mona'. Florio's 1611 Italian/English Dictionary: *Móna, a nickname for a woman, as we say, Gammer, or goodie such a one, Also a Pug, an Ape, a Kittin*. 'Mona' is a venetian word used and understood in all Italy. Its meaning is not as obscene as the Italian (Tuscan) 'fica' ('pussy'). In addition it is used in a lot of popular expressions: meaning of 'stupid' in 'va in mona' ('go to the devil') and in the derived noun 'monada' or 'monata' ('stupid trick'). Zanni says 'E me Muier po mostrará la Mona' meaning that she will show the baboon, but the gentleman understands that Franceschina will show her pussy, so he asks for a demonstration. Zanni replies that the gentleman is blind, because, in the meantime, the baboon accompanied by Franceschina has appeared on the stage. Just at that moment the gentleman realizes his misunderstanding. We should observe that the public has the same point of view as the gentlemen and the author of the sketch the same point of view as that of Zanni.
- <sup>4</sup> In the last cue the gentleman, now aware of the circumstance, plays on the double entendre, because he refers to Franceschina and not to the baboon as 'mona' (translated here as 'monkey').
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