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Author Unknown

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How was I to know?

Sung by ARTHUR REECE

I've got a situation at the Up-the-pole Hotel,
 I has to clean the knives and run about as well;
 I must say that I don't exactly feel at home, because
 It seems somehow other that I'm always in the wars.
 One day a fellow came and handed me a box,
 Which he says, "Take up to number twenty-three."
 I did as he directed me, but, lor! there - as a row;
 But I c'n't see why they blame it on to me.

How was I to know? How was I to know?
 Packed away inside the box They found a pair of baby's socks;
 From the place they made up their minds to go,
 They'd only been married the day before, but how was I to know?

The servant girls are quite enough to make me sling my hook,
 Their goings-on are awful, but the worst of all's the cook;
 They never give me any peace, they treat me shamefull-ee,
 And if there's any dirty work they leave it all to me.
 Last night we orders in a dozen tons of coal,
 And to see that they were right I had to go;
 The men began to shoot them, but they turns to me and say,
 "Ain't that someone shouting 'Murder!' down below?"

How was I to know? How was I to know?
 Our old cook was in de-pair-- She'd gone and hidden a peeler there;
 Every time a dollop went down below,
 The copper was dodging the lumps of coal, but how was I to know?

A nice old maid drove up to our hotel the other night,
 Of course, I went outside at once to help her to alight;
 Said she, "Young man, now tell the truth, for lies I cannot bear!
 Is this hotel respectable? If not, I'll go elsewhere."
 I told the lady that she needn't be afraid,
 She could thoroughly depend on what I said;
 Then she asked me if I thought the boss would care to guarantee
 That she'd find no naughty men beneath her bed.

How was I to know? How was I to know?
 Then I up and told her straight We'd found one once in number eight.
 "Lor!" she said, "to number eight I must go,
 D'ye think he'll be under the bed to-night?" Well, how was I to know?

One day I had to find a man, but couldn't, though I tried,
 I quite forgot the number of the room he occupied;
 Says I, "I'll look in every room I find in this hotel,"
 But when I went in twenty-nine I heard an awful yell,
 I stood inside the room-- I tried, but couldn't move,
 Oh! there's no mistake, I did feel jolly queer;
 I saw a lady in her bath-- at least I saw her face--
 And she said to me, "Pray, what's your business here?"

How was I to know? How was I to know?
 There I stood just like a goose, And tried to think of some excuse;
 Oh!" says I, "I'm willing at once to go, [know?
 But I thought you might want me to cut your corns!" Well, how was I to