

When the lights come up, the entire COMPANY is discovered on stage. They are arranged in a spread-out fashion, each an equal distance from the other, covering the entire playing area.)

COMPANY.

When they answered the bell
on that wild winter night,
There was no one expected—
and no one in sight.

(HENRY steps from the formation.)

Then they saw something standing
on top of an urn,
Whose peculiar appearance
gave them all quite a turn.

(HENRY winds his way through the formation.)

All at once it leapt down
and ran into the hall,
Where it chose to remain
with its nose to the wall.

(The COMPANY turns to speak directly to HENRY.)

It was seemingly deaf
to whatever they said,

(They all turn away.)

So at last they stopped screaming,
and went off the bed.

It joined them at breakfast

(HENRY elbows his way through the group.)

and presently ate
All the syrup and toast,
and a part of a plate.

It wrenched off the horn
from the new gramophone,
And could not be persuaded
to leave it alone.

(HENRY reclines on the floor.)

It betrayed a great liking
for peering up flues,
And for peeling the soles
off its white canvas shoes.

At times it would tear out
whole chapters from books,
Or put roomfuls of pictures
askew on their hooks.

(HENRY rises and stomps violently.)

It was subject to fits
of bewildering wrath,
During which it would hide
all the towels from the bath.

(HENRY runs at angles through the maze formed by the COMPANY.)

In the night through the house
it would aimlessly creep,
In spite of the fact
of its being asleep.

(HENRY sleep walks through the formation.)

It would carry off objects
of which it grew fond,
And protect them
by dropping them into a pond.

*(HENRY removes a watch, a wallet and a string of pearls from
various COMPANY MEMBERS and carefully drops them off
the apron.)*

It came seventeen years ago-
and to this day
It has shown no intention
of going away.

(The lights fade out slowly.)