

EARTHWORM

You are absolutely off your head! How on earth do you propose to get a loop of string around a seagull's neck? I suppose you're going to fly up there yourself and catch it!

CENTIPEDE

The boy's dotty!

LADYBUG

Let him finish! Go on James. How *would* you do it?

JAMES

With bait!

GLOWWORM

Bait! What sort of bait?

JAMES

With a worm, of course. Seagulls love worms, didn't you know that? And luckily for us, we have here the biggest, fattest, juiciest Earthworm...

EARTHWORM

*You can stop right there!*

ALL (except EARTHWORM and JAMES)

Go on! Go on!

JAMES

The seagulls have already spotted him. That's why there are so many of them circling around. But they daren't come down to get him while all the rest of us are standing here. So this is what...

EARTHWORM

Stop! Stop, stop, stop! I won't have it! I refuse! I... I... I... I...

CENTIPEDE

My dear Earthworm, you're going to be eaten anyway, so what difference does it make whether it's sharks or seagulls?

EARTHWORM

I won't do it!

OLD-GREEN-GRASSHOPPER

Why don't we hear what the plan is first?

EARTHWORM

I don't give a hoot what the plan is! I'm not going to be pecked to death by a bunch of seagulls!

CENTIPEDE

You will be a martyr. I shall respect you for the rest of my life.

JAMES

But he won't *have* to give his life! Now listen to me. This is what we'll do... (ALL huddle around JAMES as he whispers the plan.)

OLD-GREEN-GRASHOPPER

Why, it's absolutely brilliant!

EARTHWORM

Oh, I shall be pecked to death!

CENTIPEDE

Of course you won't!

EARTHWORM

I will, I know I will! And I won't even be able to see them coming at me because I have no eyes! (JAMES goes over and puts his arm on the EARTHWORM's shoulder.)

JAMES

I won't let them touch you. I promise I won't! But we've got to hurry! Look down there! Action stations! Jump to it! There's not a moment to lose! All hands below deck except Earthworm!

ALL (except EARTHWORM and JAMES)

Yes, yes! Come on! Let's hurry!