

# Currawong Creek

*It was great to do an Aussie show with English children – only the badger was authentic.  
I had to explain some Aussie words (Akubra, lamingtons etc).  
Songs were lively and easy to sing. A great hit!  
Holy Cross School UK*

*We loved the show! It hasn't dated (did it way back in '88) – songs still current & catchy.  
Children really enjoyed it.  
Templestowe Hts PS*

*Easy to follow story, good balance of moods in songs. Very appropriate for the whole school format we chose to do. (We used chn. In grades 4-6 over 2 nights, A-K, L-Z, did a mini-musical with prep-3 and thus involved the whole school.) Sets were simple and costuming easy to do.  
The children enjoyed the songs.  
Mt Evelyn PS*

*Wonderfully jaunty songs. Great lines. Very entertaining. Easy to prepare & perform.  
Parents loved it & kids did a great job.  
Merbein Sth PS*

*All children enjoyed doing this show. The songs gave much variety and opportunities for a number of children to sing group solo work. Parents, teachers and children all pitched in to make our first production ever a good one!  
Traralgon Sth PS*

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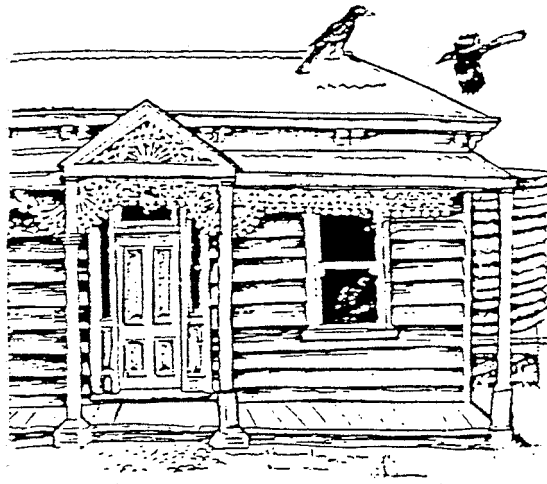
**Bushfire Press**

# CURRAWONG CREEK

a bush musical

book by Lynne Bartlett, Mark Leehy & Kevin O'Mara

music & lyrics by Mark Leehy & Kevin O'Mara



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# Production notes

## Synopsis

DAVE the Kangaroo is the boss of Currawong Creek – the worst-run sheep station in the outback. Also on the station are NORMA the Emu (Union Boss), WALLY the well-meaning but confused Wombat and KOOKY the Kookaburra (the Station Cook).

One morning, SARGE KOALA, the Captain of the Volunteer Fire Brigade is carrying out a routine 'bushfire-readiness' inspection of the property. In the mail box he finds a letter that arrived long ago. It is from WALLY's English cousin ARCHIBALD LAMMINGTON-SMITH BADGER. ARCHIE is arriving from England for a visit – that very day. Now, as it happens, some time back, WALLY's uncle Reginald paid a slightly disastrous visit to the Station. He accidentally caused a fire in the paddock that killed SELENGI the Snake.

ARCHIE arrives and the gang get him settled in. Enter the ghost of SELENGI - ready to take her revenge.

ARCHIE is keen to do his share around the place while he is visiting. DAVE tries to think of easy jobs for him to do – jobs where he is not likely to cause any trouble.

While he is cleaning the tractor, SELENGI appears to ARCHIE and introduces herself as a farming expert. ARCHIE is relieved to have some expert help and follows SELENGI's advice. She instructs him to soak the spark plugs in salty bore water (to clean them).

Following further advice from SELENGI, ARCHIE leaves the gates open for the sheep to 'rotate themselves', smothers KOOKY's lamingtons in cold gravy and cuts up the fire hoses for neater 'stacking'.

Needless to say, everyone is more than a little unhappy with ARCHIE. SELENGI appears again and advises him to make it up to them by organising a BBQ. Under her instruction ARCHIE unwittingly causes a huge fire in the woodshed.

Without hoses, all seems lost. Nobody knows what to do. So ARCHIE takes charge and organises a bucket brigade ('like they used to do back home in the War').

So, ARCHIE saves the day and goes from nuisance to hero, SELENGI has had her revenge and her ghost finally leaves the Station ... and all have a country-style wing-ding.

## Cast

**Dave Kangaroo:** Foreman of Currawong Creek. Slow talking but wise in the ways of the bush. He wears a broad-brimmed hat with ears, bib and braces, tail and large feet. Could also wear a carpenter's pouch.

**Norma Emu:** Union representative. Brash, arrogant and bossy. She wears a hard hat and feathered skirt. She has a whistle around her neck.

**Wally:** A slow-thinking, loveable, funny wombat. He wears overalls or furry costume, gumboots and a floppy straw hat with ears and a daisy.

**Kooky:** A cantankerous, whinging kookaburra. Wears wings, a large apron and a chef's hat.

**Seargent Koala:** An ineffectual organiser, with military pretensions. Wears a furry costume, slouch hat with ears and a military jacket with badges and campaign ribbons.

**Archibald Lamington-Smith Badger:** British cousin of Wally Wombat. Bumbling but well-meaning. Wears a jacket or tails, waistcoat with fob-watch & bowler hat. Needs torn and singed set of clothes for bushfire scene.

**Selengi:** A sly, vengeful, ghost-like reptile. She wears a snake costume.

One or two sheep.

**Chorus:** Can be dressed in anything from country clothes to bird and animal costumes.

## Costume Hint

Most of the characters are Australian animals working on an outback sheep station. They can wear working apparel with appropriate tails, ears or feathers etc attached. The faces need not be covered with masks, as only a hint of the animal is necessary.

## Setting

Currawong Creek is an old, rundown sheep station in the outback of Australia. The action takes place outside the homestead - a rambling, timber-framed structure with a tin roof and gutters. It has a verandah and a chimney. The gutters are overflowing with leaves and debris and the entire homestead and surrounds are cluttered with rakes, shovels, broken down farming equipment and the like. Hay bales, gum trees etc can be either side. By the homestead is a gerrycan marked "PETROL", a packet of fire lighters, some old newspapers and kindling. There is a tractor stage left, a bucket marked "BORE WATER" stage right and an outside toilet marked "DUNNY", stage right.

## Props

Scene I: rubber chook, sock, yo-yo, telegram  
Scene II: suitcase, umbrella, briefcase  
Scene IV: "Farmers' Almanac", spark plugs  
Scene VI: Notebook and pencil  
Scene VII: tray of lamingtons, large nail file  
Scene VIII: bell, box of hose lengths, buckets, bucket marked "UNION PROPERTY"  
Scene IX: Akubra hat with corks

## Time

anytime

## The Season

Summer

## Songs, Music & Sound Effects

The Currawong Song  
What Did They See in Australia?  
Selengi's Song  
Cleaning Up Australia  
Storm on the Summer Horizon  
Bound for South Australia  
Saturday Night Down Under

The music can be played by solo piano, stage band, or the instrumental backing CD. All sound effects are included on the instrumental backing CD.

**SONG ONE**

**"THE CURRAWONG SONG"**

**CHORUS:**      Out in the bush, underneath the sky  
Down by the billabong  
Watchin' the wallabies hoppin' on by  
Sing a little Currawong Song.  
Be a Pioneer, be your own boss  
Underneath the old Southern Cross.  
Workin' in the city's just a dead loss.  
Come and sing a Currawong Song

**DAVE: 1.**      I'm Dave, the old man kangaroo  
Boss of this 'ere farm.  
I keep these jokers straight and true  
with me old-time charm.  
They might have a whinge every now and again  
But I guess they're not that bad.  
We're all just one big family-  
Ah! the times we've had.

**CHORUS**

**NORMA: 2.**      Norma's the name - I'm union!  
But look at all these blokes!  
I chase up all their problems  
And put up with their jokes.  
I try to help 'em when I can  
I'm right behind 'em all  
But do they listen? Nah - its' just like  
Talkin' to the wall!

**CHORUS**

**WALLY: 3.**      Hi! I'm Wal - you've prob'ly heard  
I'm just a wee bit slow.  
Dunno much 'bout books 'n' stuff -  
There's a lot that I don't know  
But I don't care - I love it here.  
Livin' at Currawong Creek  
With Norma, Dave an' Kooky,  
Got all the friends I need!

**CHORUS**

**KOOKY: 4.**      Kooky's what they call me  
Why? It's plain to see -  
This mob'd hit the flamin' roof  
If I was late with tea!  
The kitchen's where I spend my time,  
Workin; on me recipes  
Lizard pies and worm surprise,  
Mm-mm - what a delicacy!

**CHORUS**

**ALL: 5.**        So why don't you come and join us?  
                  We're pretty good company.  
                  We'll share a yarn down on the farm  
                  and boil up a billy of tea  
                  We hope you like our story,  
                  We hope you like the songs.  
                  Now let's get things started.  
                  Come on - sing along.

**FINAL CHORUS**

**Out in the bush, underneath the sky  
Down by the billabong  
Watchin' the wallabies hoppin' on by  
Sing a little Currawong Song.  
Be a Pioneer, be your own boss  
Underneath the old Southern Cross.  
Workin' in the city's just a dead loss.  
Come and sing a Currawong Song.  
Workin' in the city's just a dead loss.  
Come and sing a Currawong,  
Come and sing a Currawong,  
Come and sing a Currawong, song!**

**DAVE:** Ah.... that's the stuff! *(To audience)*  
A good song **REALLY** gets you going.

**NORMA:** *(To chorus)* So get going you lot!  
*(Chorus dawdle off grumbling)*

**NORMA:** Move it!

*(Wally starts to exit stage left Norma grabs him and drags him back)*

**NORMA:** Not you **BOOFHEAD**. Just the chorus.

**SARGE:** *(Off stage right)* Squad... Atten...shun. Present....**ARMS**....By the right....  
quiiiick.... **MARCH**... Left-right, left-right, left-right (Etc.)

**DAVE:** Here comes the cavalry.

*(Enter Sergeant Koala stage right. Marches to centre stage, still saying 'left-right' etc.)*

**NORMA:** *(Speaking over Sarge)* Not another fire drill!

**SARGE:** *(Halting himself)* **SQUAAAAAD....HALT!**

**KOOKY:** **ANOTHER** one for morning tea! *(Exits into homestead grumbling)*  
What **IS** this - open house? How far do they think my housekeeping'll go?

**SARGE:** Ahem! As officer in charge of the Currawong Creek Fire Station, I have just carried  
out a routine inspection of **THIS** property.

**WALLY:** Did you find my marble-bag?  
*(Wally moves aside miming marbles game)*

**SARGE:** **NO!....BUT UNDERNEATH** the blackberries I **DID** find your **LETTERBOX**.

**DAVE:** Anything in it?

*(Pulls sock from inside jacket pocket Dave takes sock gingerly, miming "pew"  
actions while holding nose.)*

And .....this.....

*(Sarge pulls rubber chook from coat, which Norma takes with similar disgust.)*

And... er.....**THIS**....*(Pulls yo-yo from coat)*

**WALLY:** *(Taking yo-yo)* Oh....Beauty! *(Goes to side trying to work yo-yo)*

**SARGE:** Oh... and *(taking telegram from pocket)*... **THIS!**

**NORMA:** *(Snatching telegram)* A telegram eh? Must be from union headquarters.  
*(Looks at telegram. Dave moves to Norma and looks over shoulder)*

**DAVE:** **NO...** England.

**WALLY:** England?

**SARGE:** And probably out of date! When are you going to start cleaning up this place?

**DAVE:** (*Reading telegram aloud*) Dear cousin Wallace -

**WALLY:** Who's Wallace?

**NORMA:** (*To Wally, thumping him*) **YOU!**

**DAVE:** - coming out for a visit. Meet me at train station 10.00 a.m. Thursday. (*looking around*) That's today! (*continues*) Signed.....Archibald Lamington-Smith Badger.

*(Norma and Kooky groan)*

**WALLY:** **WOW!**

**DAVE:** (*To Wally, questioningly*) Er... we're not going to have another Uncle Reginald problem are we Wally?

**NORMA:** (*Throwing hands in air*) **UNCLE REGINALD?!! AH!!!**

**WALLY:** What was wrong with Uncle Reginald??

**NORMA:** Are you crazy? (*Listing on fingers*). He drained the dam, blew up the dunny, tried to milk the bull, put laxettes in the chook pellets.... and what about his bonfire on Guy Fawkes night?

**SARGE:** (*Interrupting*) **BONFIRE?** That was no **BONFIRE**. It was more like a bloomin' **BUSH**fire.

**NORMA:** Yeh! It burned out the South Paddock and killed Selengi the snake.

**WALLY:** (*Puzzled*) Why'd he do that?

**NORMA:** Do **WHAT?**

**WALLY:** Put laxettes in the chook pellets?

**NORMA:** (*Clipping Wally's ears*) To make 'em **LAY** faster, dingbat.

**SARGE:** (*Looking around, clearing throat*) **AHEM!** Speaking of bushfires, there's a drill tonight in the community hall and I expect everyone to be there...

**NORMA:** If I hear one more word about a fire drill, I'll-

**DAVE:** (*To Norma*) Shouldn't you and Wally be gettin' down to the station?

**WALLY:** Yeah, come on Norma.

**NORMA:** I'm not goin' anywhere.... till I've had me cuppa! (*blows whistle*) Down tools! Teabreak!.

*(Kooky storms from homestead)*

**KOOKY:** (*Angrily*) No use blowing your whistle-the waters not hot!



**NORMA:** Not hot!

**KOOKY:** I've got more to do than run around after you lot. There's washing and ironing, meals to prepare, rooms to tidy....and I've got a splitting headache.  
*(Kooky exits, slamming homestead door.)*

**DAVE:** Well, there goes morning tea.

**NORMA:** Oh no it doesn't! Wally - **YOU** get the billy.

*(Wally gets a billy from the verandah and exits with Norma through homestead door. Dave shrugs shoulders and follows.)*

**SARGE:** *(Turning)* Just a minute....I haven't dismissed you yet.... oh... what the heck. **SQUAD....** Ten....shun! *(he comes to attention and turns right.)* To the fire station.... quick... wait for it... quick... **MARCH.** Left-right *(Etc...)*  
*(Sarge marches himself off stage right)*

***(LIGHTS DOWN HALF)***

**END SCENE I**

**SCENE II**

***(LIGHTS UP)***

**ARCHIE:** ***(Offstage)*** Yoo-hoo... Anybody there?...I say... Coo-ee!

***(Enter Archie stage left staggering with suitcase in right hand, umbrella under left armpit and briefcase in left hand. His clothing is askew and he is suffering from heat exhaustion. He drops his gear, piece by piece and collapses onto a hay bale down stage.)***

**ARCHIE:** ***(Exhausted)*** Where **IS** everybody? ***(sighs)*** I've travelled thousands of miles and **NOBODY'S** here to meet me... Oh for a nice hot cup of tea and a long cool bath. ***(Swatting flies)*** **OH**...theses dratted flies... honestly, I don't know what Uncle Reginald ever saw in this God forsaken country.

***ENTER CHORUS.***

**SONG TWO**

**"WHAT DID THEY SEE IN AUSTRALIA?"**

**CHORUS:** Oh, what did they see in Australia  
When they sailed here long ago?  
Talk about absolute failure,  
I already want to go home.  
A miserable place is Australia -  
The heat and the dust and the flies,  
They said, "This 'ere place will amaze ya,"  
They must have been telling me lies.

**ARCHIE: 1.** Far from the steps of my Charring Cross street,  
Far from old London's eyes,  
Out in the bush with the gruelling heat,  
Batting the dust and the flies - la, la-la-la, la-la

**CHORUS**

**ARCHIE: 2.** No bowler hats, No brollies of black,  
No pin-stripe suits in view.  
Only the sight, of trousers not right,  
Akubras and singlets of blue -loo,loo-loo-loo, loo-loo

**CHORUS**

**ARCHIE: 3.** No double deckers, no taxi cabs,  
A Rolls-Royce one just cannot find.  
Only a broken-down rusty old truck  
And a train that is never on time. lie, lie-la-lie, lie-lie.

**CHORUS.**

**INSTRUMENTAL VERSE**

**CHORUS**

**ARCHIE: 4.** No London bobbies, no changing of guards,  
No pomp and circumstance;  
Only the common folk leaping about  
To the sound of some ghastly bush dance la, la-la-la, la-la.

**FINAL CHORUS**

Oh, what did they see in Australia  
When they sailed here long ago?  
Talk about absolute failure,  
I already want to go home.  
A miserable place is Australia -  
The heat and the dust and the flies,  
They said, "This 'ere place will amaze ya,"  
They must have been telling me lies.  
They said, "This 'ere place will amaze ya,"  
They must have been telling me lies.

**CHORUS EXIT**

*(Archie yawns. falls asleep on hay bale.)*

*(An alternate idea for this song could be to have Archie fall asleep, dreaming of home, while the chorus dance around him singing)*

*(Wally runs out of homestead door in obvious discomfort, heading toward the toilet)*

**WALLY:** (Groaning) Ooh! Ooh!

**KOOKY:** *(Poking head round homestead door)* Hey you! Come back here and finish the washing up! *(slams door)*

**WALLY:** Gotta go... gotta go.  
*(Turns head. Does double take. Sees Archie. Runs back to homestead door)*

**WALLY:** *(Shouting)* Hey Fellas... He's here!...He's here!!

**DAVE:** *(Entering through homestead door)* Don't tell me the trains are running on time.

**NORMA:** *(Following)* Hang on.. Teabreak's not over yet - we've still got two minutes.

**KOOKY:** *(Following, waving tea-towel)* What about the washing up?

*(They assemble around Archie, who is still asleep)*

**DAVE:** SO...ANOTHER English Badger eh?

**KOOKY:** Well he better like bush tucker. I'm not cookin' any foreign muck.

**WALLY:** Doesn't look much like Uncle Reginald.

**NORMA:** He looks like trouble to me.

**DAVE:** Why don't we wake him up and find out?

**NORMA:** Don't look at me. I don't want anything to do with him.

**KOOKY:** *(To Wally)* He's YOUR cousin, hairy nose - YOU wake him.

**WALLY:** Oh goody goody gumdrops. *(Puts hand toward Archie's head. Archie wakes before Wally touches him, sees Wally and jumps up, startled.)*

**ARCHIE:** Oh goodness me... goodness me!*(Animals jump back. Wally falls over.)* You gave me such a start. *(Peering around at everyone).* Cousin Wallace?

**NORMA:** *(To Wally)* Get up, stupid.

*(Wally gets up)*

**WALLY:** *(To Archie)* We were just coming to meet you.

**DAVE:** Bit early, aren't you mate?

**ARCHIE:** Early? What do you mean early? I've been waiting at the station for ages. Does punctuality mean nothing in the colonies?

**DAVE:** Let me explain, Archie. We operate on Australian time here.

**ARCHIE:** What time is that?

**WALLY:** Time for a cuppa. *(To Kooky)* Put the billy on.

**KOOKY:** All you blokes ever think about is your stomachs.  
*(Kooky exits through homestead door, flapping his towel.)*

**ARCHIE:** *(Concerned)* I say, Billy seems a bit upset.

**DAVE:** Eh? Oh. *(Realizing Archie's confusion)* That's KOOKY. A BILLY's a tin you make tea in.

**NORMA:** And we haven't finished **OURS** yet... Norma's my name, Union Rep... Alright Wally-*(Norma starts to exit into homestead)* Get in there and make me a fresh pot.

**WALLY:** *(Follows)* But... but... but... what about cousin Archie?

**DAVE:** She's right. I'll look after him. Come on Archie. *(Wally exits into homestead. Dave picks up Archie's luggage)* Let's get you settled in.

**ARCHIE:** *(wearily)* Spiffing, simply spiffing.  
  
*(Dave and Archie exit into homestead)*  
  
*(BLACK OUT)*  
  
**END SCENE II**

**SCENE III**

***(STAGE LIGHTS GO UP HALF)***

***(SELENGI ENTERS STAGE LEFT)***

***(SPOTLIGHT ON SELENGI)***

**SELENGI:** Sssso! ....The **BADGER** is here! My hour has come... Revenge is finally mine!....But wait-where are my manners? I haven't introduced myself.

***(SPOTLIGHT OFF)***

***CHORUS ENTERS***

***SMOKE MACHINE ON***

**SONG THREE**

**"SELENGI'S SONG"**

**SELENGI: 1.**     Pleased to meet you, come right in  
                    This is where, the tale begins.  
                    A little song, to get you in -  
                    ('cause) I'm the one that's goin' to win!

**CHORUS:**

**Selengi - the serpent with the poisonous eyes.**  
**Selengi - one look and you're hypnotized.**

**SELENGI: My - my - my,**

**CHORUS: Ooh - well alright.**

**SELENGI: 2.**     Now I was born, in the dead of night.  
                    The lightning crashed, the moon was bright.  
                    The dingoes howled, at the sight.  
                    They knew that things would never be right with..

**CHORUS**

**SELENGI: 3.**     Whenever things, bump in the night.  
                    You sleep uneasy, you wake in fright.  
                    Not really sure, just where you are -  
                    Well that's just my calling card.

**CHORUS**

**INSTRUMENTAL VERSE**

**CHORUS**

**SELENGI: 4.**     Am I a ghost, am I a dream?  
                    Am I a nightmare, you think you've seen?  
                    Am I for real, or just a sham?  
                    You'll never know just what I am.

**FINAL CHORUS**

**Selengi - the serpent with the poisonous eyes.**  
**Selengi - one look and you're hypnotized**  
**My my my - ooh, well alright**  
**- ooh, well alright**  
**- ooh, well alright**

***CHORUS EXIT***

***(Selengi lies in front of tractor)***

***(BLACKOUT)***

**END SCENE III**

**SCENE IV**

***(LIGHTS UP)***

***(Enter Archie and Dave. Archie is carrying a large book marked "The Farmer's Almanac".)***

**ARCHIE:** ***(Walking around stage)*** I say, David old man - what a simply spiffing place you have here.

**DAVE:** We make do.

**ARCHIE:** Of course, while I'm here, I intend doing my fair share.

**DAVE:** ***(In horror)*** Oh NO!

**ARCHIE:** No, no. No need to thank me. Family loyalty and all that... Actually, I'm rather keen to get some "on the job" experience. And, to this end - I've brought along Great Uncle Reginald's **PERSONAL** copy of..."**THE FARMER'S ALMANAC**".  
***(Archie shows book to Dave)***

**DAVE:** Now, that's all very well Arch, but this isn't England. You've gotta move real slow out here. Not all the answers come from books. It takes a lifetime to become an experienced bushman. You've gotta start from the bottom and work up.

**ARCHIE:** ***(Enthusiastically)*** Well in that case, there's no time to waste. What's my first job?

**DAVE:** ***(Sighing and pushing back hat)*** Well that's a curly one. I'll have to think about that... tell you what, why don't you clean the tractor.

**ARCHIE:** Oh spiffing, simply spiffing!

**DAVE:** Well I'll be off now Arch. ***(Exiting right)*** Ooroo!

**ARCHIE:** Oh...er...yes of course...er..."**GURU**" David old boy. You can count on me.***(Archie sits on hay bale downstage and reads from almanac).***  
Tractor...Tractor...T...T....

***(Selengi rises from ground in front of tractor, looks around to see if stage is clear, then comes toward Archie and stands behind him.)***

**SELENGI:** Pssst...!

***(Archie looks right and left side, shakes head and continues reading.)***

**ARCHIE:** .....ah-here it is: "**TRACTOR** - a large mechanical vehicle used for...."

**SELENGI:** Psssst.....psssssssssst!

***(Archie looks between legs, shakes head, then goes back to reading.)***

**ARCHIE:** .....used for pulling farm machinery."

**SELENGI:** Sssssso!



**ARCHIE:**       *(Jumps in fright)* Oh! *(sees Selengi)* Oh, goodness gracious me! Goodness gracious me! *(takes out handkerchief and mops brow)* Who are you?

**SELENGI:**       Selengi.

**ARCHIE:**       *(Pulling himself together and holding out his hand)* Archibald Lamington-Smith Badger at your service.

**SELENGI:**       *(Extending hand)* Enchanted...Can I be of assistance Archibald?

**ARCHIE:**       Oh... well, er... yes. As a matter of fact, I could use some advice. Know anything about tractors, do you?

**SELENGI:**       Farming... the bush.... I know it **ALL**.

**ARCHIE:**       Oh what good luck! *(pointing to tractor)* Now, what do we do about **THIS** contraption?

**SELENGI:**       *(Walks around tractor, thinking)* Umm...Well let me sssee... how about the...er...no. Mmm, what about the ....er...no....Ah! I know! The **SPARK PLUGS**. Yes! The **SPARK PLUGS**!

**ARCHIE:**       Of course! The **SPARK PLUGS**! Jolly good. *(goes to tractor, examining wheels)* Now, where exactly are the spark plugs?

*(While Archie is looking for them, selengi takes spark plugs from engine and collects bucket marked "BORE WATER" which is next to tractor.)*

**ARCHIE:**       *(To audience)* I know they're here somewhere.... Let's see.... the what's its connected to the whosits, and the thingummybobs connected to the wigwam.

*(Selengi holds them under his nose)*

**SELENGI:**       Ahem.

**ARCHIE:**       Oh! There they are. Now....what exactly do I do with them?

**SELENGI:**       Sssssoak them.

**ARCHIE:**       Soak them?

**SELENGI:**       *(Holding up bucket)* In salty water from the bore. *(drops spark plugs in bucket and hands bucket to Archie)*

**ARCHIE:**       Spiffing, simply spiffing! *(Exits right with bucket)*

**SELENGI:**       Sssso long Sssssucker! *(Selengi curls up in front of tractor)*

**(BLACKOUT)**

**END SCENE IV**