

# SCENES FROM A SONG by Susan Sloate

## Excerpt

Jimmy hesitated for a moment, then took a good slug and felt it burn down into his stomach. Only then would he trust him-self to strum the first chords of “Bawk Bawk”. He’d written it in a sardonic mood one day, when he heard Debby playing “The Twist” on her record player and wanted to make fun of it. It had never occurred to him he’d end up playing it for a bunch of guys in a seedy bar after midnight.

Jimmy took a deep breath and launched into the song, speaking as well as singing it. After he’d written it, he’d realized he could even dance it a little, too, and he made gestures as well:

Imitating a chicken, clicking his heels together, clapping his hands. His father had told him he was a natural showman, so he gave it his all.

When he began to ham it up in the dance part, the boys began to laugh, and they laughed right through to the end. Jimmy finished with the high whistle he’d learned the previous summer, and a final click of his heels before bowing to them.

Mark, Kellen and Hammy applauded enthusiastically, and Mick, who’d come back to see if they wanted another round, said to him, “Terrific, fella. Funniest thing I’ve seen since ‘The Ed Sullivan Show’. You a comic?”

“Are you kidding? He’s a musician!” Mark roared. “A great musician! And ‘Bawk Bawk’s a number-one hit if ever I heard one!”

He jumped onto the floor and imitated Jimmy, clicking his heels together, arms flailing like a chicken, and making the ‘bawk bawk’ sound. In a minute, Hammy and Kellen were following him.

“Play it again, Jimmy!” Mark shouted. “So we can dance it this time!”