

Guy Clark "Randall Knife"

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My father had a Randall knife
My mother gave it to him
When he went off to World War II
To save us all from ruin

Now if you've ever held a Randall knife
You know my father well
And if a better blade was ever made
It was probably forged in hell

My father was a good man
He was a lawyer by his trade
And only once did I ever see
Him misuse the blade

Well, it almost cut his thumb off
When he took it for a tool
Now the knife was made for darker things
And you could not bend the rules

Well, he let me take it camping once
On a Boy Scout jamboree
And I broke a half an inch off
Trying to stick it in a tree

Well, I hid it from him for a while
But the knife and he were one
And he put it in his bottom drawer
Without a hard word one

There it slept and there it stayed
For twenty some odd years
Sort of like Excalibur
Except waiting for a tear

My father died when I was forty
And I couldn't find a way to cry
Not because I didn't love him
Not because he didn't try

Well, I'd cried for every lesser thing
Whiskey, pain and beauty

But he deserved a better tear
And I was not quite ready

So we took his ashes out to sea
And poured 'em off the stern
And then threw the roses in the wake
Of everything we'd learned

And when we got back to the house
Well, they asked me what I wanted
Not the law books, not the watch
Oh, I need the things he's haunted

Oh, my hand burned for the Randall knife
There in the bottom drawer
And I found a tear for my father's life
And all that it stood for

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