

Tom T. Hall "Salute To A Switchblade"

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Me and Yates an army buddy o'mine
Were doin' three years in Germany at the time
We came upon these Frauleins in the bar
Yates said, "Darf isch zee be-gleit-en?", they said "Ya"
And 'Darf isch zee be-gleit-en means?', 'Can we sit with
you all?'

Oh we must have drunk ten quarts of German beer
My conscience and my sinuses were clear
I asked that Fraulein if she was a spy
She said, "Nein but do bis ain bissel high"
A condition not uncommon to the American soldier

Well, later on I went to be excused
When I returned I was a bit confused
Yates and his Fraulein had hit the air
Another guy was sittin' in my chair
A young soldier whom we shall get to know better

I said, "Excuse me mister that's my seat
I'd like to have it back sir if you please
That girl's a nurse and I've been awful sick"
The man looked up at me and said, "Mox-nix"
Which means that he was not overly concerned with my
health

Next thing I knew he had a switchblade knife
Oh Lord, I didn't know that Fraulein was his wife
I took off through that Gasthaus like a fool
Behind me I heard the crashing stools
As the police would say, he was in hot pursuit

Well, the waitress yelled there's MPs on the way
That's one more reason I didn't want to stay
As I went out the window somethin' went switch
And I giggled all the way home knowin' he missed
At the time it seemed like a laughing matter

But next morning my coat was lyin' there on the bunk
And when I saw that coat it made me jump
That man had cut my coat right down the back
A little bit more and they'd been playin' me taps

And knowin' the sad nature of that song I would decline
it

Well, later on I heard that guy got stabbed
They sent him home and didn't that make me glad
On love and marriage I want to say one thing
Oh lady, if you're married wear that ring
And the army has a new policy if you can't move it,
paint it
If it has a switchblade knife, salute it
Not necessarily an incident one would want to write
mother about
Germany being full of good soldiers and good people

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