

Tom T. Hall, Salute To A Switchblade

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
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 good people)