

**IN THE  
VANGUARD**

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In the Vanguard by Katrina Trask

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**KATRINA TRASK**

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BY  
KATRINA TRASK

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# IN THE VANGUARD

## ACT I

### SCENE I

#### MAY DAY

#### *The Village Green*

*Many large trees stand upon the Common. Flowering shrubs grow in profusion upon the turf. To the East, picturesque houses are seen through the trees; to the West, the distant hills. Here, the Common is more open; there are no trees. In the open space, several girls are gaily dancing; their light draperies are blown by the wind. Dancing, they wind in and out of a long garland woven of flowers, and as they dance, they sing.*

#### THE GIRLS

*Singing.*

Merrily dawns the month of May!  
Primroses pink and white,  
The golden sun is glad to-day:  
The stars will laugh to-night.  
Weave, weave the garland gay,  
To greet the month of May!

O happy are the song-birds now,  
May's plumage on their breasts!  
Secure within the blossoming bough  
They build their hidden nests.  
Weave, weave the garland gay,  
To greet the month of May!

## FIRST GIRL

*Eagerly, stopping the dance.*

There comes Elsa!

## SECOND GIRL

*Disdainfully.*

Bah! I hate her proud ways.

## FIRST GIRL

*Indignantly.*

Proud? — Elsa? — How absurd! Elsa is adorable!

## SECOND GIRL

Not proud? Look at the way she carries her head!  
She looks as though she thought we were the dust  
under her feet.

## FIRST GIRL

She can't help the way her head is set on her  
shoulders! She walks like that in her bath-room.  
*The Girls laugh.*



She does! I was there the other day — She was washing her hands — and she looked like one of the statues in the new Museum that Mr. Greart gave to the town; that one where the goddess is standing before the altar; Elsa looked as though she were performing a religious rite.

## THIRD GIRL

What a goose you are, Molly! Elsa is awfully nice, but she isn't much like a goddess; she wears too good clothes.

## SECOND GIRL

She is too top-lofty for me; I don't like her!

## MINNIE

*Sarcastically.*

Poor Elsa! How can she possibly bear it!

## ONE OF THE YOUNGER GIRLS

*Impetuously.*

I love her! What do you think, Minnie? Do you think she looks like a goddess?

## MINNIE

I think she is herself — that makes her a goddess!

## THIRD GIRL

You always talk such conundrums, Minnie. How could she be anyone but herself?

## MINNIE

Easily — we none of us are.

## THIRD GIRL

Are what?

## MINNIE

Ourselves.

## THE RECTOR'S DAUGHTER

*Who inherits her Father's lack of humour.*

Who are we then?

## MINNIE

I am my Father in second edition, Lizzie is her Mother in abstract; you are —

## THE RECTOR'S DAUGHTER

Well, what am I?

## MINNIE

O never mind!

## FIRST GIRL

Here comes Elsa!

*Between the trees, at the East end of the Common, a young girl enters; her swift step gives the suggestion of winged feet. She bears herself proudly, and yet with a gracious directness and simplicity; she is tall, lithe, beautiful; she is dressed in unrelieved white; she carries an open book; this is Elsa.*

## THE GIRLS

Come, Elsa! Come, join our May-dance!

*The Girls hold out the garland to Elsa and begin to sing again.*

## THE GIRLS

*Singing.*

“Weave, weave the garland gay” —

## ELSA

O stop dancing — Girls. Sit down — listen — I have something to read to you! I have found the most delicious thing! It is a picture of what we all feel these days — these stirring days, when war is in the air.

*Elsa sits upon the turf. The girls throw down the garland and seat themselves around her.*

## THE RECTOR'S DAUGHTER

Elsa, did you know Jack is going to the war?