

## **THE CRUCIBLE by ARTHUR MILLER**

### **Abigail's Monologue**

(It's the beginning of the play and the girls have been dancing in the woods. Betty passes out and then Reverend Parris finds them. Abigail is a mixture of innocence, slyness and at the same time she is also quite frightened of what might happen to them. Her uncle is the Reverend of the town and dancing and chanting is seen as witchery. Abigail lies shamelessly and she is a master manipulator. She is the leader of the group of girls who eventually have quite a few people in the village executed because, according to them, they were worshippers of Satan. This is the beginning where Abigail realises that she can manipulate the truth to her own benefit. The play is based on true facts about the village of Salem.)

**Abigail: I'm sorry, Uncle. Betty just fainted. There be no unnatural causes to it. We were just dancing a bit in the woods and then she fainted. I think maybe from a bit of exhaustion... nothing else.**

**Tabitha made a big fire and we were dancing around it. It was really hot... Tabitha was swaying by the big fire and she was singing her Barbados songs... you know the songs she always sings... nothing to it... just those songs with half the chanting and half the singing, just saying a lot of gibberish. And we were chanting and singing with her... and dancing. I think that is why Betty maybe fainted.**

**But Uncle... the rumour of witchcraft is all about in the town. Please help us. I think you'd best go and deny it yourself with the town folk. I'll stay here with Betty.**

**You can say we did dance... you can tell them that I confessed to it – and I'll be whipped if I must be. But they're speaking of witchcraft. Betty's not witched. She just fainted.**

**You see, Uncle... when we were dancing... you leaped out of the bushes so suddenly, Betty got so frightened that she fainted. And there's the whole of it. We did nothing more in the forest. We never conjured spirits. We never danced naked or called on the devil. It was just a bit of sports.**

**You must believe me, Uncle. I would never hurt Betty. I love her dearly. Poor, poor Betty... you must wake up now, my dearest Betty.**