

# Witchcraft Act 1563

## An Act agaynst Conjuracons Inchantments and Witchecraftes.

Where at this present, there ys no ordinarye ne condigne Punishment provided agaynst the Practisers of the wicked Offences of Conjuracons and Invocacons of evill Spirites, and of Sorceries Enchauntmentes Charmes and Witchecraftes, the wch Offences by force of a Statute made in the xxxiij yere of the Reigne of the late King Henry the Eyghthe were made to bee Felonye, and so continued untill the sayd Statute was repealed by Thacte and Statute of Repeale made in the first yere of the Reigne of the late King Edwarde the vjth; sythens the Repeale wherof many fantastick and devilishe psons have devised and practised Invocacons and Conjuracons of evill and wicked Spirites, and ahve used and practised Wytchecraftes Enchauntmentes Charms and Sorceries, to the Destruccoone of the Psons and Goodes of their Neighebour and other Subjectes of this Realme, and for other lewde Intentes and Purposes contrarye to the Lawes of Almighty God, to the Perill of theyr owne Soules, and to the great Infamy and Disquietnes of this Realme: For REFORMACON wherof bee it enacted by the Quenes Matie with thassent of the Lordes Spuall and Temporall and the Comons in this pnt Pliament assembled, and by thaauthoritee of the same, That yf any pson or psons after the first daye of June nexte coming, use practise or exercise any Invocacons or Conjuracons of evill and wicked Spirites, to or for any Intent or Purpose; or els if any pson or psons after the said first daye of June shall use practise or exercise any Witchecraftes Enchantment Charme or Sorcerie, wherby any pson shall happen to bee killed or destroyed, that then aswell every suche offender or offenders in Invocacons and Conjuracons as ys aforesayd, their Concellors & Aidours, as also every suche offender or offenders in Witchecraftes Enchantment Charme or Sorcerie wherby the Deathe of anny pson dothe ensue, their Aidours and Concellors, being of either of the said Offences lauffully convicted and attainted, shall suffer paynes of Deathe as a Felon or Felons, and shall lose the Priviledg and Benefite of Sanctuarie & Clergie: Saving to the Wief of such persone her Title of Dower, and also to the Heyre and Successour of suche pson his or theyr Tytles of Inheritaunce Succession and other Rightes, as though he had beene suche Attayndour of the Auncestour or Predecessour had beene hadd or made.

And further bee yt enacted by thaauthoritee aforesayd, That if any pson or psons, after the saide first daye of June nexte comyng, shall use practise or exercyse any Wytchecraftes Enchauntment Charme or Sorcerie, wherby any pson shall happen to bee wasted consumed or lamed in his or her Bodye or Member, or wherby any Goodes or Cattles of any pson shalbee destroyed wasted or impayred, then every suche offendour or Offendours their Councillours and Aydours, being therof lauffully caonvicted, shall for his or their first Offence or Offences, suffer Imprisonment by the Space of one whole Yere, without Bayle or Mayneprise, and once in every Quarter of the said Yere, shall in some Market towne, upon the Market Daye or at such tyme as any Fayer shalbee kepte there, stande openly upon the Pillorie by the Space of Syxe Houres, and there shall openly confesse his or her Erroure and Offence; and for the Seconde offence, being as ys aforesayd lauffully convicted or attaynted shall suffer deathe as a Felon, and shall lose the Privilege of Clergie and Sanctuarie: Saving to the Wief [as above].

Provided alwaies, That yf the Offendour, in any of the Cases aforesayd for whiche the paynes

of Deathe shall ensue, shall happen to bee a Peere of this Realme, then his Triall thereyn to be hadd by hys Peeres, as yt ys used in cases of Felonye or Treason and not otherwyse. And further to thintent that all maner of practise use or exercise of Witchecrafte Enchantment Charme or Sorcerye shoulde bee from hensforthe utterly avoyded abolished and taken away; Bee it enacted by thauctoritee of this pnte Pliament. That yf any pson or psons shall from and after the sayd first daye of June nexte coming, take upon him or them, by Witchecrafte Enchantment Charme or Sorcerie, to tell or declare in what Place any Treasure of Golde or Sylver shoulde or might bee founde or had in the Earthe or other secret Places, or where Goodes or Thinges lost or stollen should bee founde or becume, or shall use or practise anye Sorcerye Enchantment Charme or Witchecrafte, to thintent to provoke any pson to unlauffull love, or to hurte or destroye any pson in his or her Body, Member or Goodes; that then every suche pson or psons so offending, and being therof lauffully convicted, shall for the said offence suffer Imprysonement by the space of One whole yere without Bayle or Mayneprise, and once in every Quarter of the said Yere, shall in some Market towne, upon the Marcket Daye or at such tyme as any Fayer shalbee kepte there, stande openly upon the Pillorie by the Space of Syxe Houres, and there shall openly confesse his or her Erroure and Offence; And yf anye pson or psons, beyng once convicted of the same Offences as ys aforesayd, doo eftesones ppetrate and comitt the lyke Offence, that then every suche Offendour beyng thereof the seconde tyme convicted as ys aforesaid, shall forfaitte unto the Quenes Majestie her heires and successoures, all his Goodes and Cattelles and suffer Imprysonement during Lyef.