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Prepared by Will  
Borden for Harry  
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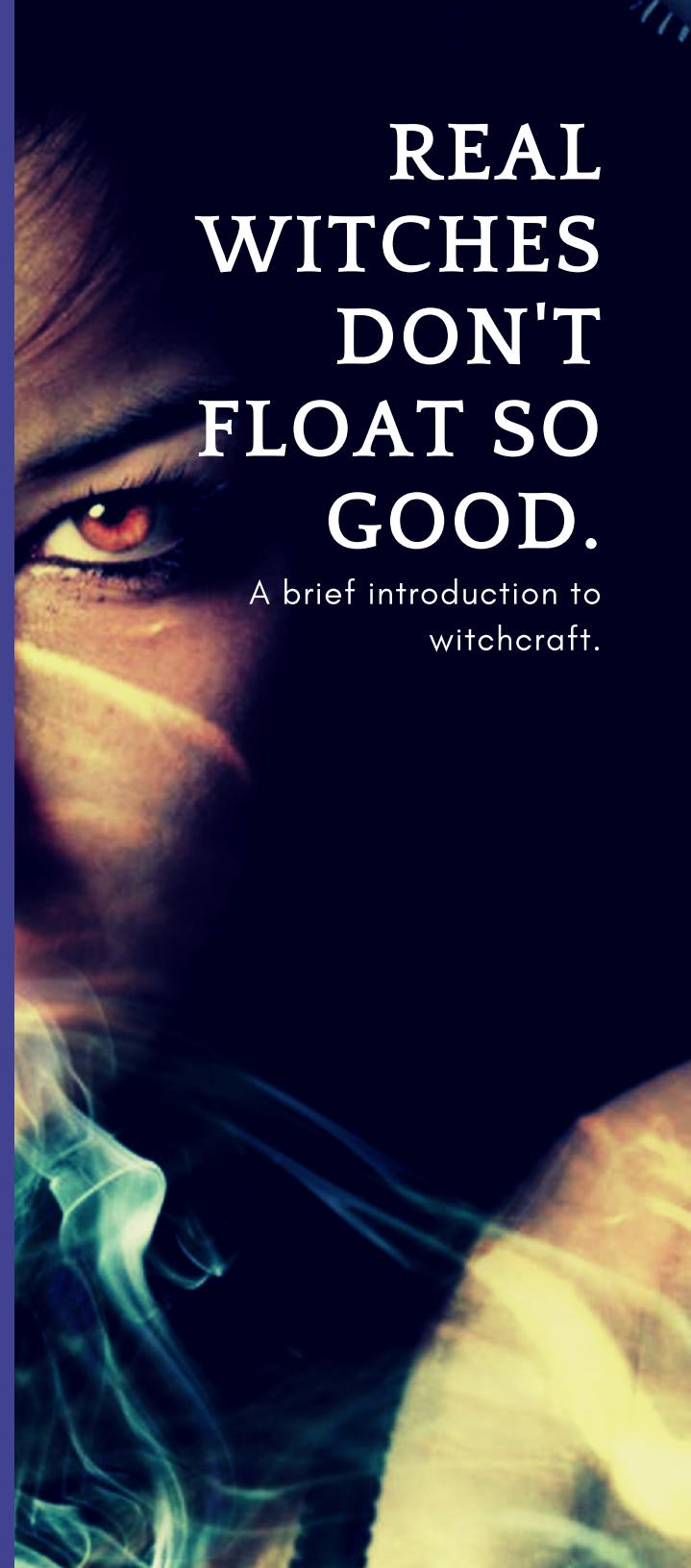


QUESTIONS?

[www.wizarddresden.com](http://www.wizarddresden.com)

# REAL WITCHES DON'T FLOAT SO GOOD.

A brief introduction to  
witchcraft.



## THE ORIGIN OF WITCHES

Early witches were people who practiced witchcraft—they used magic spells and called upon spirits for help or to bring about change. Most witches were thought to be pagans doing the Devil's work. Many, however, were simply natural healers or so-called "wise women" whose choice of profession was misunderstood.

It's unclear exactly when witches came on the historical scene, but one of the earliest records of a witch is in the Bible in the book of 1 Samuel, thought to be written between 931 B.C. and 721 B.C. It tells the story of when King Saul sought the Witch of Endor to summon the dead prophet Samuel's spirit to help him defeat the Philistine army.

The witch roused Samuel, who then prophesied the death of Saul and his sons. The next day, according to the Bible, Saul's sons died in battle, and Saul committed suicide.

Other Old Testament verses condemn witches, such as the oft-cited Exodus 22:18, which says, "thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Additional Biblical passages caution against divination, chanting or using witches to contact the dead.

Source:  
<https://www.history.com/topics/folklore/history-of-witches>

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**Real Witches don't float so good.**

- Harry Dresden

## THE "SWIMMING" TEST



AS PART OF THE INFAMOUS "SWIMMING TEST," ACCUSED WITCHES WERE DRAGGED TO THE NEAREST BODY OF WATER, STRIPPED TO THEIR UNDERGARMENTS, BOUND AND THEN TOSSED IN TO SEE IF THEY WOULD SINK OR FLOAT. SINCE WITCHES WERE BELIEVED TO HAVE SPURNED THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM, IT WAS THOUGHT THAT THE WATER WOULD REJECT THEIR BODY AND PREVENT THEM FROM SUBMERGING. ACCORDING TO THIS LOGIC, AN INNOCENT PERSON WOULD SINK LIKE A STONE, BUT A WITCH WOULD SIMPLY BOB ON THE SURFACE. THE VICTIM TYPICALLY HAD A ROPE TIED AROUND THEIR WAIST SO THEY COULD BE PULLED FROM THE WATER IF THEY SANK, BUT IT WASN'T UNUSUAL FOR ACCIDENTAL DROWNING DEATHS TO OCCUR.

WITCH SWIMMING DERIVED FROM THE "TRIAL BY WATER," AN ANCIENT PRACTICE WHERE SUSPECTED CRIMINALS AND SORCERERS WERE THROWN INTO RUSHING RIVERS TO ALLOW A HIGHER POWER TO DECIDE THEIR FATE. THIS CUSTOM WAS BANNED IN MANY EUROPEAN COUNTIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES, ONLY TO REEMERGE IN THE 17TH CENTURY AS A WITCH EXPERIMENT, AND IT PERSISTED IN SOME LOCALES WELL INTO THE 18TH CENTURY. FOR EXAMPLE, IN 1710, THE SWIMMING TEST WAS USED AS EVIDENCE AGAINST A HUNGARIAN WOMAN NAMED DORKO BODA, WHO WAS LATER BEATEN AND BURNED AT THE STAKE AS A WITCH.

Source: <https://www.history.com/news/7-bizarre-witch-trial-tests>