

## **Breaking the Evil Spell -- by Starhawk**

Once upon a time, right now...

A mighty fortress, built of false ideas and unfulfilled promises, stood guard over the people. From within, rulers and bankers demanded tribute from the world. Where people were starving and thirsty, they raised the price of food and water. They turned children out of their schools, and the sick out of hospitals. Even in the rich city where the fortress stood, children went hungry. And though the people might try to rebel, the fortress was guarded by many soldiers and stocked with armaments.

But its most powerful weapon was a subtle haze of hopelessness and apathy which it spewed out into the atmosphere, an evil enchantment that kept the people going about their daily tasks and following their accustomed paths, never asking, "Is this where we want to go?" And when enemies attacked, and made the people fearful, they clung to the fortress because they could see no alternative, even when the rulers led them down the path of war.

The fortress seemed invincible. But in deep and subtle ways, it was flawed. Every broken dream, every cry of despair, opened a new crack.

And finally, the people said, "stop." At first it was just a few voices, mostly the youth and some of the wild old women. They went out into the streets, halted the people in their work, and said, "Open your eyes! Look at where we're going? Is this the road we want to walk down?"

In that moment, strange elemental beings appeared. With skin of mud, hair of leaves, brilliantly colored wings and eyes on fire, they wove and danced through the city, cutting through the web of lies and awakening the winds to blow away the fog of despair, reminding the people of what is far more real than gold piled in a vault -- the living powers of earth, air, fire, and water, and the love and care human beings can give to these and to one another.

Their songs and cries are the voice of the earth. They call on you, friend, to stop and ask:

"What are my deepest dreams and desires, for myself, my family, my people? And why should I ever settle for less?" For we too are earth, air, fire, and water, and we too are love.

There is another way to live. There is a new web we can weave. Another world, an otherworld, is possible, if you too will dance with us, speak your truth, add your voice to ours.

What serves life will stand,  
What does not will fall.

The power is in your hands,  
Love changes all.

---

Copyright (c) 2002 by Starhawk. All rights reserved. This copyright protects Starhawk's right to publication of her work. Nonprofit, activist, and educational groups may circulate this essay (forward it, reprint it, translate it, post it, or reproduce it) for nonprofit uses. Please do not change any part of it without permission. Readers are invited to visit the web site: [www.starhawk.org](http://www.starhawk.org).