

# The River of Life...

by Starhawk

On March 8, International Women's Day, 2003, thousands of women marched on the White House in Washington DC, demanding peace and standing up for the values of caring and compassion. The march included a pageant of giant puppets and an attempt to encircle the White House with giant pink ribbon. Below is Starhawk's fable to inspire the pageant.

The River of Life...

By Starhawk

Once a people lived along the banks of the river of life...

The river of life is a river of sweet water, that awakens the seeds of spring and nourishes all growing things.

The river of life is a storm wind, blowing fresh across the earth.

The river of life is the deep molten fire that shakes the continents.

And the people should have had all they needed for happiness and joy,  
But they were plagued by a terrible monster, the triple-headed monster of  
Greed, Hate, and War.

Greed sucked up all the colors of life and locked them inside his fortress.  
Hate severed the threads of love and taught the people to fear each other.  
War threatened destruction to anyone who opposed the monster's rule.

And the people were separate, and afraid, and poor.  
The threads of connection were frayed.  
The fabric of care unraveled.  
And War took the young and marched them off to slaughter and die in places  
far away.  
Greed stole their future...

The river of life ran dry.

The women saw the springs go barren, the new sprouts fail, the trees die,  
and the hills turn brown...

And they wept and mourned, and didn't know what to do.

The women, too, were divided, for some had more and some had less.

Old wounds and present injustices kept them apart.

But as War shook his fist, and threatened to unleash  
weapons to destroy the earth...

The women turned to each other; they said: "We are scraps of a torn fabric,  
but if we tie them together,  
we can bind wounds, dry tears,  
weave a net to carry heavy loads.

"We must amplify love, and throw off dread,  
Take back our power and spin a thread,  
A life-line, held in our strong hands,  
A living web of shining strands.

"And our hands remember how to spin.  
We spin freedom on the rising wind,  
We spin threads of life, the cords of fate,  
We spin love into a river that can overrun hate.

"We spin justice burning like a flaming star;  
We spin peace into a river that can overcome war.  
And if you want to know where true power lies,  
Turn and look into your sisters' eyes.

"So come mothers and grandmothers,  
Lovers and daughters.  
Come spinners and weavers,  
Tool makers, potters,  
Dancers and dreamers,  
Fixers and changers,  
Singers and screamers.  
Forget all the dangers.  
Come ancestors, guardians, Goddesses too,  
You who teach us, you who speak true,  
You who plant, and you who reap,  
You who soar and you who creep,  
You who cook, and you who drum,  
You who have been, and you yet to come,  
You who fight with the sword,  
You who fight with the pen.  
Unreasonable women,  
Unmanageable men.  
Come harpies and banshees and gorgons and Witches;  
Come sweet loving hearts and furious bitches!"

"Break the chains that have kept us bound.  
Weave a web to pull the monster down.  
In the face of truth, no lie can stand.

Weave the vision, strand by strand.

"We are sweet water, we are the seed,  
We are the storm wind to blow away greed.  
We are the new world we bring to birth;  
The river rising to reclaim the earth."

-- *Starhawk*

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