



Watching the Night

By NEWorks Productions

Produced by Nolan Williams, Jr.

Narrated by Tonea Stewart and Michelle Riley Jones

Audio Footage from Smithsonian Institute

For use with Watching the Night (with mutes)

NARRATIONS

Narrative #1 – *following Fountain Hughes narrative*

The tradition of Watch Night began in 1863 with the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation. On New Year's Eve, slaves gathered in church houses and cabins around the country to "watch the night" as they literally waited for freedom.

As we gather today, we pause to remember the stony road we have trod. Lifting the voices and spirits of our ancestors, and praising God anew for the freedom we have all gained through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Narrative #2 – *following female slave #1*

When freedom was declared, Master wouldn't tell them. But Mutha she hear him telling Missus that the slaves was free, but de didn't know it...And he not gonna tell 'em til he makes another crop or two.

When Mutha hear dat, she said she slip out da chimney door, and then she run to da field against Masta's will and tole all da other slaves, and de quit work.

Narrative #3 – *following Uncle Felder*

The voices, thoughts and feelings you have just experienced came from people who were born slaves and survived the Civil War, and lived through the Reconstruction.

Former slave Tom Robinson said, "You can take anything, [and] no matter how good you treat it, it wants to be free! You can treat it good, and feed it good, and give it everything it seems to want.

But if you open the cage – its happy."

I'se free!

I'se free!