

NEVER FORGOTTEN, *For the Seventeen Hundred*

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To be free for African Americans comes with a price
To be brave enough to flee and offer your life
is a huge sacrifice
We understand and we have not forgotten you
We remember you annually
Knowing that some of you did not reach puberty
We ring bells,
Pour libations,
Lay wreaths,
And write you down in history
We lift our voices in song
Write victorious poems
And break bread in remembrance of your contributions
Calling you contrabands of war
Know that you fled far
to reach Alexandria and call it home

In a land
of a dirt free ground
We connect you to your descendants
And give them hope
Running our fingers over your name spelled out or unnamed
And claim
you now free
To take your rightful place in history
In memory
Of you
Telling a story that is true
Sad
Triumphant
You are ancestors now
Never to be forgotten