Part Three

TROUBLE ON THE LINE

I got so much trouble on my mind
Refuse to lose
Here's your ticket
— Public Enemy, “Welcome to the Terrordome”

Thanks for your time.
I don't have any time.
Thanks for your trouble then.
I don't have any trouble either…. nor do you, don't kid yourself.
— Pete Frame, Interview with Don Van Vliet, 1969

fuckflowers bloom in your mouth
will choke your troubles away
— Caroline Bergvall, Goan Atom
Take Apart: Room by Room

Not telling someone else’s story: listening. Which is (a) taking part. Which is taking (a) part. Here’s where I (and I-s) come in. What trouble have I? Only what I have reflected (on). We are and are not the same. Every self implies an other, and every other is a self. I am not you, but you are I. When we sing, when we are sung (to), we are the song. The song is (o)u*s' for its duration — takes our place. We tolerate trouble for that span. And more: We embrace trouble for a few minutes, then turn a side.

Right now on the hi-fi, spinning: Ann Peebles, *I Can’t Stand the Rain*. How can we take part in what we take in? How can we get closer to a song that goes away? The needle spins into the record, away from us.² Into us, as we remove ourselves. The trouble is the record becomes us, but we do not impress the record.³ There are other troubles, but this one bothers us even when the clouds go away. *I Can’t Stand the Rain* is too short, not long enough, and perfect. Or just right, which has the limit perfection tosses off, repugnant. All she needs to do is repeat herself: *If we can’t trust each other / We don’t need one another.* All we need to do is listen — take part. Five more minutes would be too many, after all. We exit through the entrance (or enter the exit) of “One Way Street,” *walking on troubled ground*.

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¹ That is, we own each other (our songs, ourselves), but not exclusively; still, we see the song as ourselves, which we pass on. *I'd like to buy the world a Coke and keep it company* is a sticky bottle of trouble in hand.

² Meanwhile the record spins into the needle, tightening on the spindle.

³ Except as we wear the record down — a de-inscription.