Trouble Songs: A Musicological Poetics

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Catch a Fire: One Thing for Another

We don’t need no more trouble (“No More Trouble,” Bob Marley and The Wailers, 1973) — enough is enough. Here again (but one year prior), as with Gil Scott-Heron’s “Lady Day and John Coltrane,” there’s a semantic economy (and a surplus) of “trouble” to wash your troubles, your troubles, your troubles away. The catch is the hook, caught in the throat, on fire, eternal return. More “trouble,” less trouble. Trouble called out, though its mark remains.

42 and more, as Catch a Fire, the album on which the song appears as the penultimate track, marks the major label debut for the band, and a watershed moment for reggae music — so the song’s eponymous line is a statement and a protection spell, a share and a shield

43 and its sign