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1865 Bruk-Up

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thud thud thud
the endless dirge
to wind the land
to use thud
shovel against rock
thud thud
gravel too marl
to bed seed
too salt
to strengthen roots
thud thud

paul was minding them business
his mouth twisting how to frame
them demands
when the earth spoke
*pick up de bible in yu right hand*
*and them plan in yu left*

he was the studying
the soil and scriptures
but the wind kept talking to him
*listen paul* the voice said

he wasn’t ready to hear
*bogle is you same one*
*i and i begging*
*you ear for a moment*
the trees began to whistle

never enough food
from way yonder
them marching walking single file
marching in groups striding
machetes perched on their shoulders
tip pointed backwards
and is now he asking for guidance
is now he take up
their woes like wasp nest
his same baptist church
they come lean up against
he preacher he leader
mouth full of words

_ i know why it name_
_ stony gut_
_ no family can feed_
_ from the mawga ribs_
_ of a hillside_
_ the land hard_
_ like dry coconut_
_ that’s what i go tell them_

45 miles to spanish town
he trekked
bogle stand like
tall bamboo
his words
like lacatan banana
that melt in the mouth
but dem tun deaf ears
he come back
with a swollen tongue
still same way

he petitioned
400 strong with him
them faces yellow yam
them march to morant bay court house
400 strong on october 11
crying food water
school for our children
not even phlegm
the soil can cough up
but soldiers chase and beat them
so dem bun it down
right to the ground

now bogle in the thick of things
and the voice still say

_go on man press on_
he minding them business
and his friend
g w gordon
chatting up for them too
so dem hang him

bogle put down the bible
and pick up de struggle in both hands

he wake one october morning
with dry throat
he did know and he didn’t know
not even when the rope caressed
his neck

430 others with him
soldiers slaughtered
their frustrated anger
captured in flames
1000 homes burnt
before them sorrow mek news

oh morant bay thud
lawd paul bogle thud
wow morant bay thud

rock-stone drink blood