A

innocent sweet youth, you are a ghost

Of what I lately was,

And would I were to-day.

SWANZY:

And here is another personal confession by a gifted being,
Samuel Selvon, who had the whole gilded parade of the West Indies in front of him, people and kiskadees and poul trees
and yet cries -

FIGUEROA:

LUCKY LUCRE.

Oh luckless me!

The lucky lucre
And the sparkling coin
Slips my eager grasp
As running water slips the slope,
And leaves me clutching
Worthless rainbows, penny-priced poetry,
Un-ringing sunsets!

Everywhere I turn
I see an earthly angel's eyes
Love-lit for earthly riches.
And men who never dreamed a dream
Or symphonised a flower with a thought
Are pockets-filled with what they call
(Oh human mocker!)
'The filthy lucre!'

(Say, which is happiness
To hear the jingle-jangle
Of the glittered bits of gold,
Or catch upon the passing air
The children's dimpled laughter?)
To put a shirt upon my back
I say, "here, take a rose as price."
(Roses mask the wind with heady scent)
Or for a simple, staying kiss
"See, frangipannis at your feet!"
And what? No bargain this, for them!
Strangled with a lofty thought
But not a loaf of bread!
Cheap trees - beggars' beauty
Babbling brooks, but breadless days!
Sugarless stars, rice-less rivers
A farthing for a pretty phrase
A penny for your thoughts
A million for your sweat!

(Who is wiser than a miser?
At least he feasts his eyes
Greedily, gloatingly, while his riches last.
His ears - how delicately sensitive
To a bit of silver's tinkle!).

Not even this for me—
Oh lucky lucre! Luckless me!

SWANZ: That poem by Samuel Selvon ends our short poetry programme
on people. Most of the poems you heard are original. For
any budding writers, don't forget that we haven't seen many
poems on animals - people aren't animin, are they?