From My Girl and the City

Everything that happens is words. But pure expression is nothing. SAM SELVON

we have lit these words many times on trips out trips in the nameless cities on beds Brackley could not forget all these words we come to say in the silent tongues on ghiskin evenings out in the chill autumn fingers clutching fingers in pubic pocket above tabletop love stories in Shabda the word holding soul bodies lost over years drowned in domesticity poetry couldn’t pay the bills fiction couldn’t cover the scent of mountain tops and hills spread with red saman poinciana red ixora rainflooded alleys ripe tamarind sugar cane stalks’ sharp edges sugar cane juice fermented in the stills twangy rums on tongues tasting only words we left behind loves we left behind nothing still the ancient Indian ancient Hindu Zero’s One more dip in the sea ashes from the flames dust to the ocean all these sentences cremated all these loves left behind all these words yours
today lines
and it is nothing
I am nothing
you are nothing
we are nothing
if words once words
are mantra
om bhur
om bhuwa
om swah
om swahaa'

SASENARINE PERSAUD

\footnote{All of these words are used at the end of certain mantras during puja, especially after the Vedic Gayatri mantra which is popular in the Caribbean: Bhur is earth; bhuwa is mid-space; Swah is deep space; and Swahaa is cosmos.}