

# Mira Thakur's Poem

## An Intriguing Game

The steps come forward  
Quietly, surreptitiously.

Wading through the water hyacinth  
Squelching across the bog  
The steps come forward.

Piercing through the forest,  
Crossing the rickety bamboo bridge  
Of dead rivulets  
The steps come forward.

Small hutments crop up overnight  
Stealthily,  
Sliding, groping  
Climbing the walls of darkness.

Some guide the crowd  
Others stand alert.

And then the hungry JCBs go on a rampage...

The excavators roar  
And the new addresses cringe and wither.

The addresses disappear  
When the day breaks.

Darkness engulfs the forest  
And the steps  
Familiar or unfamiliar  
Again come forward.

A neighbourhood, a village  
Springs up  
In the wink of an eye,  
And spreads out on the barren land,  
The forest  
Like swarms of locusts.

The JCBs roar again  
Gnashing their teeth  
The hutments cringe in fear  
And the addresses disappear.

What sprouts up in the night  
Withers in the day

What withers in the day  
Sprouts up in the night.

The game continues...  
The intriguing game  
In collusion with time and opportunities.

*Translated by* **Nayan Jyoti Hazarika**

**Mira Thakur** is a prominent Assamese poet based in Guwahati. She has several collections of poems to her credit.

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