Horns

By Kwame Dawes

In every crowd, there is the one with horns, casually moving through the bodies as if this is the living room of a creature with horns, a long cloak and the song of tongues on the lips of the body. To see the horns, one’s heart rate must reach one hundred and seventy-five beats per minute, at a rate faster than the blink of an eye, for the body with horns lives in the space between the blink and light — slow down the blink and somewhere in the white space between sight and sightlessness is twilight, and in that place, that gap, the stop-time, the horn-headed creatures appear, spinning, dancing, strolling through the crowd; and in the fever of revelation, you will understand why the shaman is filled with the hubris of creation, why the healer forgets herself and feels like angels about to take flight. My head throbs under the mosquito mesh, the drums do not stop through the night, the one with horns feeds me sour porridge and nuts and sways, Welcome, welcome.

Source: Poetry (February 2016)