

Virginia Smith Rice

I Meant to Close the Window

Where are those terror
ful nights we suffered
as children? Look in
boxes under the eaves,
unless attics have also
fallen away, like child-
tiny rooms crowded
with headlights that
slip over walls, square-
split by branches and
sirens. I can tell you
how it was, so yes, god
needs me (I will fast
asleep, packed into this
narrow world) but is it
enough? I ask him
for sight and he gives
me his. I ask for teeth
and he brings me them
all. I am rich with small
sharp stones that sprout
along shoulders, arms,
and seam each finger. I
ask him to come near,
come nearer, for a glass
of water, for the rest of
his breath. I ask for all
one can give to another,
a click in another's dark.

Virginia Smith Rice is the author of *When I Wake It Will Be Forever* (Sundress Publications, 2014). Her poems appear in *Cincinnati Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Meridian*, *Salamander*, and *Third Coast*, among other journals. She co-edits the poetry journal *Kettle Blue Review* and is associate editor at Canopic Publishing.