PHILLIP STERLING

Phillip Sterling’s collections of poetry include *Mutual Shores* and three chapbook-length series: *Abeyance*, *Quatrains*, and *Significant Others*. He is also the author of the story collection *In Which Brief Stories Are Told* and is the editor of *Imported Breads: Literature of Cultural Exchange*. He spent much of August 2014 on Isle Royale, as part of the National Park Service Artist-in-Residence program.
“AND THE RUDE LEAVES FALL.”
—Wallace Stevens, “Metamorphosis”

The lawn is a rough lake
ignorant of weather. Bygones
forgotten. No rain stirs
the canoes of fallen warriors.

As if working lines in a poem
I stress the tines of a rust-licked rake
and count how many flex or bend
absurdly.

Someone may call these Souls
of the Dead, and welcome them,
and honor their ancient ways
in blazing ceremony at the shore’s edge.
And someone may simply hearten
to hard hours returning the yard.