

GET 30% OFF THROUGH OUR WEBSITE!

JANE KENYON

The Making of a Poet

DANA GREENE

Demystifying the “Poet Laureate of Depression”

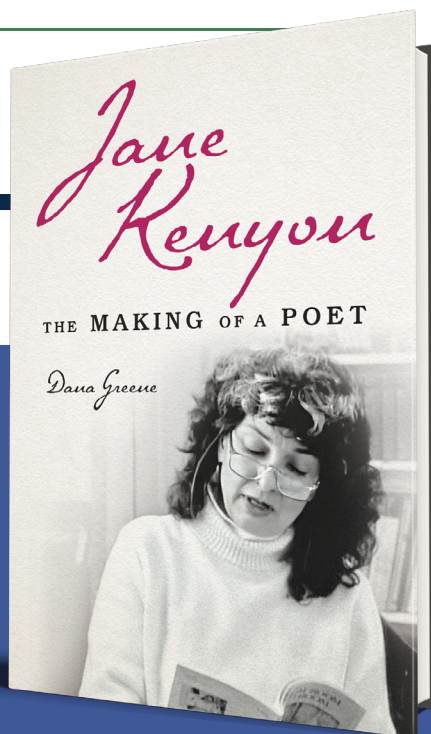
“Dana Greene’s compulsively readable biography of Jane Kenyon tells the poignant story of the poet’s life, her development and career as a writer, and her long marriage to and partnership with poet Donald Hall. Overshadowed for many years, in life and after her death, by her more famous husband, Kenyon emerges in Greene’s narrative as a fiercely independent and gifted artist in her own right. Greene takes pains to illuminate the complex dynamics of their relationship and to showcase the quiet power and beauty of Jane Kenyon’s work, liberating Kenyon from the prevailing *mythos* that casts her as a lesser poet and enabling readers to see her anew. *Jane Kenyon* is a triumph.”

—ANGELA ALAIMO O’DONNELL, author of *Flannery O’Connor: Fiction Fired by Faith*

Pleasure-loving, sarcastic, stubborn, determined, erotic, deeply sad—Jane Kenyon’s complexity and contradictions found expression in luminous poems that continue to attract a passionate following. Dana Greene draws on a wealth of personal correspondence and other newly available materials to delve into the origins, achievement, and legacy of Kenyon’s poetry and separate the artist’s life story from that of her husband, the award-winning poet Donald Hall.

Impacted by relatives’ depression during her isolated childhood, Kenyon found poetry at college, where writers like Robert Bly encouraged her development. Her graduate school marriage to the middle-aged Hall and subsequent move to New Hampshire had an enormous impact on her life, moods, and creativity. Immersed in poetry, Kenyon wrote about women’s lives, nature, death, mystical experiences, and melancholy—becoming, in her own words, an “advocate of the inner life.” Yet her ongoing success and artistic growth exacerbated strains in her marriage and failed to stave off depressive episodes that sometimes left her non-functional. Kenyon sought treatment and confronted her illness in her work and in public while redoubling her personal dedication to finding pleasure in every fleeting moment. Her career had reached new heights when leukemia cut her life short and left her husband the loving but flawed curator of her memory and legacy.

DANA GREENE is dean emerita of Oxford College of Emory University. Her books include *Denise Levertov: A Poet’s Life* and *Elizabeth Jennings: “The Inward War”*



OCTOBER 2023

224 PAGES. 6 X 9 INCHES

15 BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS

HARDCOVER, 978-0-252-04538-7
\$29.95 £25.99

E-BOOK, 978-0-252-05498-3

All rights: University of Illinois

SPECIAL 30% DISCOUNT

Use Promo Code **F23UIP** when ordering from our website, to receive a 30% discount. Offer good until June 30, 2025.

www.press.uillinois.edu

(800) 621-2736

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS

